

**Postcolonial Minoritarian Characters: Transformative
Strategies for Re-Mediating Raced Marginalisation in
South African English Fiction**



By
Abdul Waghied Misbach

Dissertation presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Stellenbosch University (English Studies)

Supervisor: Professor Sally-Ann Murray (English Department)

April 2022

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 sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

April 2022

Copyright © 2022 Stellenbosch University

All rights reserved

Abstract

This dissertation consists of a research component titled “Speak, Love” and a creative component, the original novel *Time Will Tell*. The research essay is informed by strategic postcolonial imperatives and explores selected literary transformative strategies for remediating raced and related marginalisations to advance a social justice agenda. In adopting a minoritarian theoretical approach to fiction writing, it engages with silences of race, gender, belief and class. The creative manuscript, *Time Will Tell*, adopts certain narrative devices (among them the counterfactual, satirical and fabulist) to narrow the distance between minority and dominant ideologies. The research component emphasises a humanistic thinking that seeks to develop affinity, rather than divisions, between cultures, much like Goethe’s idea of *Weltliteratur*, or World Literature. The research draws on postcolonial ideas in an attempt to understand and dissect the manner in which certain canonical texts in English, including those of J.M. Coetzee, continue to effect social divisions rather than encourage unity. The study offers original insight that (in an approach not yet seen in Coetzee scholarship), argues for a clear link between *Disgrace* and Chaim Potok’s 1975 novel *In the Beginning*, whose protagonist is also named David Lurie. In my doctoral novel manuscript, I suggest that the much-lauded Coetzee harbours Orientalist and Islamophobic tendencies, supported and promoted by influential members of the academy and publishing. My discussion demonstrates, additionally via the novels of other authors, how deep-rooted prejudicial attitudes have sedimented, even among seemingly progressive thinkers and publishers. The creative part of the dissertation, *Time Will Tell*, employs absurdist and fabulist narrative devices to comment on the state of South African society, with the ‘reawakening’ of various historical figures into a tense, divided nation marked by malevolent machinations and counter-strategising. My main characters include Nelson Mandela (renamed Atallah in an allusion to Shakespeare’s Othello), Will (a version of William Shakespeare and *The Tempest*’s Prospero), Zarqa (a figuration of Sycorax and the mythical Arabian prophetess Zarqa Al-Yamamah), and Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd (renamed Henry Farwood). We also have Adolf Hitler (renamed Adi Hiedler), and Leni Riefenstahl (renamed H el ene Stahl). The primary inspiration for my novel is Timur Vermes’ *Look Who’s Back* (2014), a popular work which reanimates Adolf Hitler as a mass media celebrity in contemporary Germany. Through what might at first appear a preposterous premise (as in the Vermes novel), my narrative uses satirically layered storytelling methods to prompt trenchant

questions about such issues as economic exploitation, systemic racism, and entrenched historical privilege. My novel reminds us, as scholars Heynders and Bax have noted, of the efficacy of a “provocative realist setting” which may serve “as an obvious imaginary construct” in order to give a narrative “an innovative specific urgency” via a premise that “critiques actual events and concerns”. One of the dissertation’s key research questions expressed in the novel is the reimagining of canonical works (combining homage and critique) from the perspective of minor, marginalised characters. I effect this through a literary-imaginative disrupting of received Historical Truths and inherited (life) stories.

Opsomming

Hierdie proefskrif bestaan uit 'n navorsingskomponent met die titel “Speak, Love” en 'n kreatiewe komponent, die oorspronklike roman *Time Will Tell*. Die navorsingsopstel word ingelig deur strategiese postkoloniale imperatiewe en ondersoek geselekteerde literêre transformerende strategieë vir die herstel van rasse en verwante marginalisering om 'n agenda vir sosiale geregtigheid te bevorder. By die aanvaarding van 'n minoritêre teoretiese benadering tot fiksieskryf, gaan dit oor stilte van ras, geslag, geloof en klas. Die kreatiewe manuskrip, *Time Will Tell*, gebruik sekere narratiewe metodes (waaronder die kontrafaktuele, satiriese en fabulistiese) om die afstand tussen minderheid en dominante ideologieë te verklein. Die navorsingskomponent beklemtoon 'n humanistiese denke wat affiniteit, eerder as verdeeldheid, tussen kulture wil ontwikkel, net soos Goethe se idee van *Weltliteratur*, of Wêreldliteratuur. Die navorsing maak gebruik van postkoloniale idees in 'n poging om die manier waarop sekere kanonieke tekste in Engels, insluitend die van J.M. Coetzee, die sosiale verdeeldheid te bewerkstellig eerder as om eenheid aan te moedig, te verstaan en te ontleed. Die studie bied oorspronklike insig wat (in 'n benadering wat nog nie in die Coetzee-beurs gesien is nie) argumenteer vir 'n duidelike verband tussen *Disgrace* en Chaim Potok se roman *In the Beginning* van 1975, wie se protagonis ook David Lurie genoem is. In my doktorsale manuskrip stel ek voor dat die baie geprysde Coetzee Oriëntalistiese en Islamofobiese neigings bevat, ondersteun en bevorder deur invloedryke lede van die akademie en uitgewery. My bespreking demonstreer, ook via die romans van ander skrywers, hoe diepgewortelde vooroordeel houdings neersak het, selfs onder oënskynlik progressiewe denkers en uitgewers. Die kreatiewe deel van die proefskrif, *Time Will Tell*, gebruik absurditiese en fabulistiese narratiewe instrumente om kommentaar te lewer op die toestand van die Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing, met die ‘herontwaking’ van verskillende historiese figure in 'n gespanne, verdeelde nasie wat gekenmerk word deur kwaadwillige verwickelinge en teenstrategisering. My hoofkarakters sluit in Nelson Mandela (herdoop tot Atallah in 'n toespeling op Shakespeare's se Othello), Will ('n weergawe van William Shakespeare en die karakter Prosper van *The Tempest*), Zarqa ('n beeld van Sycorax en die mitiese sewende eeu Arabiese profetes Zarqa Al-Yamamah), en Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd (herdoop tot Henry Farwood). Ons het ook Adolf Hitler (herdoop tot Adi Hiedler) en Leni Riefenstahl (herdoop tot Hélène Stahl). Die primêre inspirasie vir my roman is Timur Vermes se *Look Who's Back* (2014), 'n gewilde werk wat Adolf Hitler hernu as 'n

beroemdheid in die massamedia in die hedendaagse Duitsland. Deur wat aanvanklik 'n belaglike uitgangspunt sou wees (soos in die Vermes roman), gebruik my narratief satiries gelaagde verhaalmetodes om dringende vrae te stel oor kwessies soos ekonomiese uitbuiting, sistemiese rassisme en gevestigde historiese voorreg. My roman herinner ons, soos geleerdes Heynders en Bax opgemerk het, aan die doeltreffendheid van 'n "uitdagende realistiese toonsetting" wat "as 'n voor die hand liggende denkbeeldige konstruksie" kan dien om 'n narratief "n innoverende spesifieke dringendheid" te gee deur 'n veronderstelling dat "kritiseer werklike gebeure en bekommernisse". Een van die belangrikste navorsingsvrae van die verhandeling wat in die roman tot uiting kom, is die herbeeld van kanonieke werke (wat hulde en kritiek kombineer) vanuit die perspektief van klein, gemarginaliseerde karakters. Ek bewerkstellig dit deur 'n literêr-verbeeldingryke ontwigting van ontvangde Historiese Waarhede en oorerflike (lewens) verhale.

Acknowledgements

My deepest gratitude to my supervisor Professor Sally-Ann Murray for her incisive guidance and advice, and whose assistance was more wide-ranging than she may know. This included welcome financial support from the Mellon Foundation to assist in the completion of this dissertation.

Much love for whom words are insufficient, for their support and patience: Zainuneesa Da Costa, my mother and storyteller's heart; and Sadia Phillips-Misbach, my soulmate, advisor and best friend. And to my late father, Yusuf Adam Misbach, whose broad artistic interests fuelled mine.

A special thanks to my supportive other mother Jawaya Phillips, my other late father Raschaard, sons Thaamier, Yazeed and Zubayr, brothers Shafiek, Khalil and Zayd, their partners and children. And to my daughter-in-law Ayesha Jeppie-Misbach. Also thanks to my special grandchildren.

I am immensely grateful to those who have been pivotal in saving and enriching my life: the Da Costa, Misbach, Phillips and Davids clans – uncles, aunts, cousins and friends; my life mentors from the rooms; and my dear friends from Cape Town, including those whose Kaaps and irreverent humour inspired the language use in this dissertation.

I remain forever indebted to my guides and mentors in journalism and academia. Also, *jazakAllah khairkom* to media colleagues, friends and teachers from the Middle East, who introduced me to Arabia beyond Orientalist discourses.

Much appreciation to Stellenbosch University's English Department staff for their efficient support, and material that sparked many ideas even though my participation at events was lacking.

While acknowledging these contributions to my dissertation, all errors and omissions are solely mine.

Table of Contents

Front matter

	Page
Declaration	2
Abstract	3
Opsomming	5
Acknowledgements	7

Chapters One to Four: “Speak, Love” (Research Essay)

Chapter Five: *Time Will Tell* (novel)

Chapter	Page
1 Introduction	
Speak, Love	11
Speak, Mnemosyne	16
Speak, Memory	29
2 Love’s Impediments	
Love’s Impediments and Other Disgraceful Lacunae	35
Forgetting Love: Material Orientalism and the “possession of minorities”	47

3	Magical Imaginaries	
	Magical Imaginaries: Narrative modes of reconciliation and inclusivity	64
	Caliban and كالبان: Language repertoires to serve postcolonial imperatives	81
4	An In-Conclusion	96
5	Time Will Tell	105
	Editor's note by M.W. Abdullah	107
	I, Atallah: My Awakening in South Africa	110
1	Seeler's Island	112
2	The Eye of Horus	116
3	Tata Talks	123
4	Speak, Love	133
5	Das Blaue Licht	137
6	Hélène and Henry	141
7	Destroyer of Pleasures	146
8	Majnun	153
9	Bantu Black	160
10	Litany of the Sea	174
11	The Marching Forest	181

12 The Panopticon **184**

13 Ratio Mortalis **193**

Bibliography

Bibliography **198**

Chapter 1: Introduction

Trends in local and international literature, highlighting silences of race, gender, belief and class. Background and rationale for a minoritarian theoretical approach.

Speak, Love

In its exploration of transformative strategies for re-mediating raced (and related) marginalisations in examples of South African fiction written in English, this dissertation is informed by various postcolonial imperatives. My study seeks to advance a social justice agenda in a country and a world marked by well-documented economic inequality that bolsters exclusionary cultural hegemonies. The Covid-19 pandemic, the worldwide “Black Lives Matter” movement and the “#MeToo” protests have brought the effects of this global inequality into further sharp relief, highlighting yet again the most vulnerable and poverty-stricken sectors of society, particularly foregrounding the systemic and structural racism and violence affecting black women and children, in terms of the provision of adequate healthcare, housing, sanitation, food security, jobs, a living wage, education and protection from crime and domestic violence. The dissertation explores how cultural production, particularly literature, can ameliorate these unequal human-made conditions, as will be discussed in greater detail with regard to the inclusive ideas of Johan Wolfgang von Goethe, Edward Said, George Steiner and others.

The dissertation has two parts: a research essay which analyses and critiques the publishing industry and academia with regard to the continued marginalisation of the Other, and an original creative component, the novel *Time Will Tell*. This work of fiction, within the speculative mode, uses a range of satirical, absurdist, fantastical and counterfactual narrative strategies (as will be discussed in greater detail later, here and in other chapters), reanimates an imaginatively reconfigured version of former South African President Nelson Mandela, former Prime Minister Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd, former German Chancellor Adolf Hitler, and former German actress and film director Leni Riefenstahl in a future Cape Town. This tactic embodies my authorial interest in exploring generative tensions between those who are considered marginal and historically consequential.

Here, it is apt to discuss the dissertation's division into five chapters. This first chapter provides the background and rationale for a minoritarian theoretical approach, and reviews trends in local and international literature, highlighting silences of race, gender, belief and class. The second chapter develops the articulation of the dissertation's theoretical grounding and framework, discussing aspects of minority discourse, and including a theoretical engagement with race, gender and economic exploitation. The third chapter discusses select fiction and non-fiction texts in the context of narrowing the distance between minority and dominant ideologies including Timur Vermes' fantastical and absurdist *Look Who's Back* (2014) that reanimates Hitler in modern-day Germany. The fourth chapter summarises the dissertation's major insights and methods and reflects on the barriers for a postcolonial writing and reading project such as this one, which include those encountered by black writers in the South African publishing industry. The fifth chapter is the original novel, *Time Will Tell*, which, through genre, character, setting, plot, story and voice makes an innovative case against the injustice of black people remaining economically, socially and culturally marginalised, and acting as mere footnotes to the white history of South Africa and the world.

The present chapter is divided into three broad areas, namely this current section, "Speak, Love", followed by "Speak Mnemosyne" and "Speak, Memory". "Speak, Love" outlines the central rationale of love motivating this dissertation; "Speak, Mnemosyne" outlines the motivation for using the historical figures of the seventh century Arabian witch/prophetess Zarqa Al-Yamamah and Sycorax from William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1611) as part of the creative inspiration for *Time Will Tell*. "Speak, Memory" provides a personal history and a construction of an identity recalling the lived conditions under apartheid and post-apartheid amid the challenges faced by a black man in a persistently unequal society.

On the research questions posed: across the various component chapters, this dissertation explores four predominant research questions in order to propagate a social justice agenda. Firstly, to what degree can a contemporary South African work of fiction influenced by forms of postcolonial thinking around key identity elements such as race, class and gender promote a social justice agenda? Secondly, how might questions of experimental genre and unusual modes of representation be imagined to carry a social justice agenda rather than being dismissed as 'escapist'? In other words, what might be the value, for a postcolonial fictional project, of attempting innovative combined use of elements drawn from the crime genre, the absurd, the satirical and the fantastical? Thirdly, how

might varieties of Afrikaans, particularly the use of Arabic-Afrikaans and related linguistic and stylistic strategies in the early Cape Muslim and other communities under colonial rule, embody a critical postcolonial mode of thinking and writing fiction? Fourthly, how might questions of alterity, authenticity, and the unstable relation of centres and peripheries influence a writer's shaping of a social justice agenda through the treatment of character, plot, voice, point of view and similar?

The expression of the dissertation's key research questions in the novel, *Time Will Tell*, employs various deliberate textual strategies. Among these is the well-known vector of retelling or reimagining canonical works. Notably, this may take the form of homage or critique or both, generally from the perspective of minor, marginalised characters. This is part of what is now being labelled the "minor-character elaboration" genre (Rosen), a theory discussed in Chapter Two. This method includes the use of elements traditionally beyond (or at a tangent to) the realist mode, such as exaggerated satirical impulses, absurdist emphases, the counterfactual historical mode, and fantastical flights, all with the goal of illuminating the author's pointed retelling of history, remedying the history of difference by foregrounding the 'ordinary' and equally human lives of the marginalised. (A discussion of the key narrative strategy of the counterfactual takes place in the next section of this first chapter.) The approach adopted in *Time Will Tell* is one of both homage and critique, recognising the value of Western canonical literature but also writing back to those who claim this literature's unchallenged hegemonic status, in effect 'returning the gaze' of the marginalised – indeed also *the voices* – to disrupt received authority.

This approach hopes for reciprocity in terms of valuing works written from Africa and the East to achieve greater understanding in a world of people who constantly seek to determine supposed difference as a means to achieve dominance. The approach aligns itself with the attitude of postcolonial scholar Edward Said who affirms the major influences for his humanistic approach to the world by citing – perhaps surprisingly, the uninformed might think – "leading ideas" from late eighteenth and early nineteenth century European thinkers. Among these he identifies the "supremely creative" contribution of Giambattista Vico, the Neopolitan philosopher and philologist preceding Herder and Wolf, followed by Goethe, Humboldt, Dilthey, Nietzsche, Gadamer, and "finally the great Twentieth Century Romance philologists Erich Auerbach, Leo Spitzer and Ernst Robert Curtius." I will discuss, briefly, only the contribution of Goethe and Auerbach, in line with Said's views of these writers' particular influence on his humanist ideas, with which I am in general agreement. Said praises

Goethe's interest in the beliefs and literature of the East such as the work of the irreverent Persian poet Hafiz. Notably, while often considered anti-West, or opposed to all things Western, a careful reading shows that Said proposes the development of a harmonious "World Literature", as Goethe and later Auerbach defined it, expressed through the respectful mutual study of cultures and languages:

To young people of the current generation the very idea of philology suggests something impossibly antiquarian and musty, but philology in fact is the most basic and creative of the interpretive arts. It is exemplified for me most admirably in Goethe's interest in Islam generally, and Hafiz in particular, a consuming passion which led to the composition of the *West-Östlicher Diwan*, and it inflected Goethe's later ideas about *Weltliteratur*, the study of all the literatures of the world as a symphonic whole which could be apprehended theoretically as having preserved the individuality of each work without losing sight of the whole. (Said xviii)

Auerbach makes the point in his 1951 essay "Philologie der Weltliteratur", as emphasised by Maire and Edward Said in their translation of the work, that calls for a world of recognising and valuing diversity as part of a harmonious whole, but laments that the world has unfortunately been moving in the opposite direction. Auerbach argues that for this idea of World Literature to succeed would require a deep understanding of all languages, or as many as possible, which may not be feasible in a global context in which a dizzying array of material has to be surveyed and understood (8). (Auerbach's argument, in my view, is equally applicable to contemporary times.) However, he also states (a line in keeping with the arguments of my dissertation), that a student or scholar need not study everything of the past in order to gain an understanding of the present, and to be able to formulate a vision for a future of cooperation and harmony between people (10). To achieve this "historical synthesis" would require what Auerbach calls "intuition" as to what "point of departure" would work, which would facilitate a message that radiates out to all human beings, so that they can "gain a proper love for the world". Auerbach most likely means here a message that can incorporate the best of one's "own nation's culture and language" and then transcend it so that it becomes implicated in a universalist collective (17).

Edward Said has considerable admiration for Goethe's role in attempting to achieve harmonious human relations through his literary productions. Goethe, when he was seventy in 1819, published his ode to love, in some of its forms, in the *West-Östlicher Diwan*, based on the celebrated Persian poet Hafiz's collected poems composed in fourteenth century Persia. Goethe's interest in Islam had been demonstrated earlier when he wrote a poem celebrating Islam's prophet Muhammad, "Song for Mohammed". He had also translated, from English into German, the first poem in the *Al-Muallaqat*, *The Suspended Odes* – from the group of seven long Arabic poems by various authors that are considered some of the best works of pre-Islamic Arabia, (as implied by Dowden in his 1913 introduction to his English translation of Goethe's *West-East Diwan*). Dowden does not name the poem, but it is the first of the seven and one of the most famous, written by the Bedouin king and sentimental lover Imru Al-Qais, expressing Al-Qais' love for his cousin Unaizah, when he stops at a campsite where she had once stayed. The poem contains perhaps a few of the most famous lines from pre-Islamic poetry: "Stop, oh my two friends, let us weep on account of the remembrance of my beloved, and her abode, situated on the edge of a sandy desert ... (Johnson 1–30)". Goethe had also been "charmed" by the Indian drama *Sakantula*, and he was similarly taken by Jami's *Loves of Laila and Majnun* that had introduced him to Persian poetry (Dowden xi–xii). Dowden believed that Goethe's primary motivation was "love" (xiv–xv), meaning a cultural love that affiliated him to a humanising world culture beyond the narrows of Germanic nationalism.

The point of all this detail is to demonstrate the inspiration behind the driving force of this dissertation, which is to find commonalities rather than differences between humans; in this case in the form of studying other cultures and creating literary/cultural products that emphasise harmonious understanding and living. The novel *Time Will Tell* incorporates Goethe's idea of love (for other people and cultures), as emphasised by Said. In his personal and public life, Said attempted to achieve a similar Goethe-like fusion serving to ameliorate tensions between opposing forces, in the form of musical production, bringing together Israeli and Palestinian musicians, as I will outline in later chapters. In the next section of this present chapter, I will discuss further how the novel *Time Will Tell* works towards this ideal or idealised state of fusion.

Speak, Mnemosyne

The creative part of the dissertation, *Time Will Tell*, is inspired by Nelson Mandela's oath-taking ceremony on 10 May 1994, with the now-famous opening lines swearing love and loyalty to the country's people: "I, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, do hereby swear to be faithful to the Republic of South Africa, and do solemnly and sincerely promise at all times to promote that which will advance, and to oppose all that may harm, the Republic ..." (*YouTube* 21 July 2015). Further inspiration for *Time Will Tell* is drawn from Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's incisive "Can the Subaltern Speak" (1983); Vladimir Nabokov's eloquently written memoir *Speak, Memory* (1966) alluding to Mnemosyne, goddess of the nine muses, and Robert Graves' *I, Claudius* and *Claudius the God*, with their meditation on sanity and love in the face of unbridled power and greed. The challenge of the creative component of the dissertation is to have marginalised voices equally valued and understood through their presence, or oftentimes absence, as urged in the works of Spivak, Said and others, which shape the critical paradigm of this dissertation. To achieve this, one has to consider the mechanics of the fictional production. How, for example, does one effectively convey the notion of love in fictional form, assuming unconditional love between human beings can be the basis for changing the world and countering its inequalities and cruelties? It is assumed here that every human being has experienced (or even imagined), at least once, unconditional love for or from a fellow human and/or animal. How, though, does one stay in a constant state of unconditional love?

Considering the predicament of the world, it is clear that this is an impossibility, and there have to be repeated, ongoing attempts to bring this condition into being. So how does the "desperate" man in Nabokov overcome the limits of the "fictionist" by recalling vividly, at will, the often lost and fleeting memories of powerful real and imagined feelings of unconditional love, whether Romantic or cultural, and conveying these effectively through words to influence as many readers as possible? I have no simple answers; nor does Nabokov. Here, I grant that this idealistic, perhaps naïve, even immodest idea for the creative part of the dissertation is nevertheless sustained by my reading of Nabokov's opening lines in chapter five of *Speak, Memory* when he tries to recall not only the image of his former French governess, but what appears to have been affection or love for her, a "treasured item of the past", its "personal warmth". As a fictionist, Nabokov's memory of her, to his regret, has been subsumed into the characterisation of a boy in one of his books, losing some of its potency (249–

250). The challenge then, is how to effectively dramatise such feelings of love in a work of fiction like *Time Will Tell*.

Before discussing the plot and characterisation of *Time Will Tell*, it is perhaps important to expand briefly on the speculative fiction mode in which the novel is situated, followed by a short discussion on the specific narrative strategies adopted, in particular the notion of the “counterfactual-historical mode” that will provide a more illustrative idea of the novel’s proposed social justice model that seeks to disrupt the current status quo and bring about radical change. The decision to adopt elements of the speculative mode stems from an interest in the mode’s flexibility to incorporate a broad range of genres including science fiction, fantasy, alternate history, and utopian and dystopian fiction. These genres are potent vehicles to interrogate a wide range of issues facing contemporary society as can be seen by its popularity in both film and literature. My introduction as a child to speculative fiction came via *The Thousand and One Nights*; and later through and a wide and abiding interest in film and books in the genre including *Back to the Future*, *Blade Runner*, *Alien* and *The Matrix*, George Orwell’s *1984* and *Animal Farm* and Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*. However, the most significant influence on the development of *Time Will Tell* is from Frank Herbert’s series of six *Dune* novels, the first novel published in 1968, with their focus on themes of power, social structure, race, religion, philosophy, language use and environmental concerns. A particularly compelling element of Herbert’s *Dune* is the allusion to Arab, Persian and Islamic thought, culture and language (the Bedouin-like Fremmen living 20,000 years into the future on the desert planet Arrakis, speak the fictitious Chakobsa, which is based on the ‘ancient’ Arabic vocabulary and script of Earth, in actuality contemporary Arabic). In *Dune*, the cultures of the Middle East and North Africa is reflected in the names formulated for the locations and characters. Herbert’s seminal work has become topical again with the release of the new *Dune* adaptation in 2021. Director Denis Villeneuve has been praised for *Dune*’s atmospheric filmmaking but critiqued for his ostensible Orientalist erasure of the Arabic and North African influences from the novels, and not hiring any Arabs or North Africans as actors, as argued by several film critics and academics in their previews and reviews (Armstrong; Durrani; Khaldoun; Venkrataman; Karjoo-Ravary).

Academic Ali Karjoo-Ravary perhaps sums up most cogently the critique of *Dune*’s shortcomings in his *Slate* article on 26 October 2021 “Is *Dune* a White Savior Narrative? Frank Herbert’s novel drew from Islam to critique the idea of the messianic Western man. Does the movie?” Karjoo-Ravary’s

arguments echo my critique, as expressed later in my dissertation, of the Orientalist nature of much past and current valorised cultural production of the writers in the West of portraying the East, or Orient. While praising Villeneuve's technical ability as a filmmaker, Karjoo-Ravary argues that his depictions have watered down Herbert's "sustained dialogue, character development, [and] painstaking worldbuilding" that was anti-colonial in its intent and focus, drawing on struggles including of the Algerians against the French occupation. For example, in Herbert's novel, writes Karjoo-Ravary, the Fremmen cheer for their Mahdi, Paul, with the phrase: "Ya hya chouhada". This is translated by the character Jessica, Paul's mother, as "Long live the fighters", which is mostly correct. The actual Arabic is: "Long live the martyrs (shuhadaa)", which was chanted by Algerians when Benyoucef Benkhedda (one of the leaders of the Algerian war of independence and the head of its first provisional government from 1961 to 1962) arrived in Algiers after gaining independence from France. It should be noted that Karjoo-Ravary also critiques Herbert himself for centring Western man while trying to launch a critique of colonialism and concludes that Herbert's Orientalism was simply a result of being a "product of his time". Karjoo-Ravary writes about Villeneuve's adaptation:

What's left when you take away all of those thoughts and ideas and all of that detailed exposition and replace it with sweeping vistas and a blaring Hans Zimmer score? What remains on the sandy plains of Arrakis is, in large part, a vague Middle Eastern and North African aesthetic, peppered with actual Arabic words and filmed on location in Jordan and Abu Dhabi. Unfortunately, that aesthetic is not neutral in Hollywood, and the image of an Arab-ish crowd or veiled wailing women, not to mention when it's injected with violence, has a history that is steeped in the dehumanization of entire peoples. It is certainly possible to reclaim and complicate these images, but that would have required an upfront act of subversion by the filmmakers. At the very least, it needed a multifaceted nonwhite character who survived to the end.

It is perhaps important to note here, briefly, that Muslim woman authors have recently been championing the speculative fiction mode focusing on Muslim, Arab and Eastern cultures and have been published by both independent and mainstream publishers. Blogger Aysha Khan in her 16 July 2020 article "Through sci-fi and fantasy, Muslim women authors are building new worlds", writes that over the past few years Muslim women have "quietly earn[ed] rave reviews with fantasy and science fiction narratives that upend both the genre's historic lack of diversity and popular depictions of women and Islam." Khan quotes science fiction editor, Khaalidah Muhammad-Ali, as saying that

her biggest grievance was seeing stories about imaginary worlds where only white people exist. Muhammad-Ali said that it “really bugs me to see a far-off future-flung store, and everyone is white, and everyone is assumed to be Judeo-Christian or atheist.” She did not believe that “100 or 200 or 400 years in the future, we will cease to exist, yet we don’t show up in stories about the future.” Khan also quotes Noor Hashem, a Boston University lecturer who has taught courses on Muslim science fiction, who argues that that the emergence of Muslim voices is part of the “new intersectional movement that’s happening.” Publishers were starting to take “more seriously the contributions of people of color and minority communities, especially after critiques of the whiteness of the genre”, Hashem said. By drawing on Islamic history and culture in their settings and characters, Hashem argued, many Muslim authors counter ideas of Islam as backward, while also critiquing notions that speculative fiction was born out of the European Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution. Hashem argues, states Khan, that speculative fiction has a long and largely overlooked history in Muslim societies, from the Arabian Nights to Bengali educator Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain’s 1905 *Sultana’s Dream*.

Among the writers identified by Khan who have received critical acclaim include G. Willow Wilson with *Alif The Unseen* (2012) and *The Bird King* (2019), and who is also responsible for developing Muslim and other marginalised characters for Marvel Comics. Also, Muslim author Hafsah Faizal debuted at number five on the 2019 *New York Times* bestseller list with *We Hunt the Flame* the first part of her *Sands of Arawiya* duology, which will be followed in 2022 by *We Free the Stars*. Another successful author is former *Washington Post* foreign correspondent Sabaa Tahir who debuted with *An Ember in the Ashes* (2015), which went on to become a *New York Times* and international bestseller. Tahir published three more novels in the series with Penguin-Random House including *A Torch Against the Night* (2017), *A Reaper at the Gates* (2020) and *A Sky Beyond the Storm* (2021), according to the publisher’s website. Tahir’s work has been scooped up by Paramount Pictures in a seven-figure deal, according to *Kirkus*.

In addition to science fiction elements, as influenced by *Dune* and similar works, in the fabulist and futuristic world of *Time Will Tell*, my novel provides an alternative history that focuses on a “constellation of basic and perennial issues: the role of human agency and responsibility in history, the possibilities of historical justice and repair, and the coherence of identity – of individuals, nations, and peoples through time” (Gallagher 4). *Time Will Tell*’s primary aim, in agreement with Gallagher’s

view in *Telling It Like It Wasn't: The Counterfactual Imagination in History and Fiction* (2011), is that “[n]o matter how distant the resulting creations seem from ours, they are meaningful primarily as plausible offshoots of some phase of our world, some version of what it nearly became.” The mode’s “vigorous ‘worlding’ thus deepens our perceptions of actuality by shadowing and estranging them. And perhaps most typically, the alternate worlds strip our own of its neutral, inert givenness and open it to our judgment” (15).

Historian Richard N. Lebow makes the equally cogent point in “Counterfactuals, history and fiction” (2009) that “counterfactuals have the potential to make us aware of the extent to which our deepest held assumptions about how the world works are themselves the result of inferences drawn from contingent outcomes” (57). Lebow agrees with Gallagher that the “thought experiments” of the counterfactual “provide a vantage point for taking ourselves outside of our world and our assumptions about it where they can be subjected to active and open interrogation” (58). The result of this, which is the aim of *Time Will Tell*, is to drag “into the open assumptions that are so deeply ingrained that they are taken for granted, but facilitate imaginative leaps in historical understanding” (58). Elisabeth Wesseling in “Historical Fiction: Utopia in History” (1997) sums up quite effectively the disruptive purposes of the alternate history that I have envisaged in *Time Will Tell*, as opposed to traditional historical fiction that attempts to place flesh on the bare bones of well-established historical fact. Wesseling states that the counterfactual proposes “an alternative outcome of the perennial historical conflict between the *vis inertiae*, the force that fosters the continual reproduction of the status quo, and revolutionary forces aiming at radical change” (205).

It is perhaps important now to outline, briefly, the key framing elements of *Time Will Tell*, the creative part of the dissertation, that will be expanded upon in later sections of this and subsequent chapters. *Time Will Tell* features the ‘return to life’ of Nelson Mandela and alludes to William Shakespeare’s marginalised character of the “Devil” from *The Tempest* whom he portrays as impregnating Sycorax, the “blue-eyed hag [who] was hither brought with child” (from the 1999 Vaughan and Vaughan Arden edition at 1.2.269). In addition, the character Nelson Mandela alludes to the co-opted European, Christian figure of Othello, or Atallah in some Arabic-language iterations, from one of Shakespeare’s most reworked plays in the Arab world (Ghazoul). Nelson/Atallah meets the love of his life Zarqa, a Muslim woman, alluding to the mythical Arabian prophetess/witch Zarqa Al-Yamamah (and also to Sycorax) and embarks on a mission to live a ‘normal’ life. However, Nelson/Atallah is drawn into

plans to save his country and the world from the destructive energies of characters who have also been returned to life – Verwoerd, Hitler and Riefenstahl. Here, partly in keeping with the ideological convolutions and legacies which characterise all postcolonial agendas, the framing story of *Time Will Tell* has as an intertext the story of Zarqa Al-Yamamah (Zarqa means blue in Arabic) from Southern Arabian folklore who could see for great distances, and who was blinded by the enemies of her tribe because of this power. The character features widely in Arabic folklore and modern story-telling and poetry collections (Jedamski 136; Al-Raisi; Richardson; Smart 65; Marcus 1).

There is some speculation that Shakespeare based *The Tempest* on the story of Zarqa Al-Yamamah. Kristina Richardson in “Blue and Green Eyes in the Islamic Middle Ages” (2014) argues that there is no evidence for Shakespeare having any access to literature featuring Zarqa Al-Yamamah, but that the association remains compelling. To imagine that Shakespeare drew inspiration for Sycorax from Zarqa Al-Yamamah becomes easier when considering that elements of the story also “reappear” in *Macbeth* (2). Richardson points out that R.A. Nicholson (347–8) has noted the similarities between the prophecies of Zarqa Al-Yamamah and the witches in *Macbeth*. Zarqa and the witches predict that marching armies obscured by tall leafy branches will attack and overpower the warned parties. Shakespeare uses the phrases “the wood began to move” and “leafy screens” in 5.5.33 and 5.6.1 in the New Cambridge Shakespeare edition. Nicholson says in his 1930 article “Some Notes on Arabian and Persian Folklore” (347) and his 1966 *A Literary History of the Arabs* (25) that Zarqa uses the words “I see trees marching”.

The colour of Sycorax’s eyes has elicited much scholarly debate, particularly in trying to locate her origin, which Shakespeare tells us is Argier, or Algiers (Vaughan and Vaughan 1.2.261). In the novel *Time Will Tell*, I allude to this debate and to the possibility that *The Tempest*’s setting is in Africa and that logically Sycorax would be a North African (Algerian), possibly Arabic-speaking woman (Vaughan and Vaughan 48; Luce xxxvi; Brotton 24). In my novel, the character Zarqa’s blue eyes are a feature of her magical powers, which references Sycorax’s magical powers in *The Tempest*. Leah S. Marcus in *Unediting the Renaissance: Shakespeare, Marlowe, Milton* (1996) has examined anxieties about blue eyes, North African ancestry and witchcraft. Marcus rejects the “overwhelming” conclusion by Shakespeare scholars in nineteenth and twentieth century editions that “blue eyes cannot mean blue eyes”, and instead possibly refer to weariness, debility or pregnancy (7). In nineteenth century literature and culture, “blue eyes were commonly associated with beauty,

innocence, and transcendence” so the “witch cannot have blue eyes, because the cultural image of blue eyes is overwhelmingly positive and Sycorax has to be understood as negative” (10). Richardson says the association of a North African witch with blue eyes, a feature which has predominantly positive associations for modern Western readers, “destabilizes” assumptions about “the white normative body as, if not good, then at least neutral” (2).

The basis for my character Zarqa’s pregnancy (and stature) in my novel *Time Will Tell* is derived from Shakespeare’s description of her. Shakespeare’s source is possibly the story of Charles the Fifth’s unsuccessful invasion of Argier, or Algiers, in 1541. This story is related in John Ogilby’s *Africa: being an accurate description of the regions of AEGypt, Barbary, Lybia, and Billedulgerid, the land of Negroes, Guinee, Aethiopia, and the Abyssines* (1670), possibly from an older source, states Ogilby. When Charles arrived there with 22,000 men aboard eighteen galleys and one hundred tall ships, there were only “Eight hundred Turks and six thousand Moors, poorspirited men, and unexercised in Martial affairs”. It appeared then that a witch in the town, unnamed by Ogilby, was sought for her help by the besieged inhabitants. The witch conjured up a “dreadful tempest” with heavy rain and stormy sea that saw over one-hundred-and-fifty ships lost, including those holding food and ammunition. Beset by hunger and loss of morale, Charles retreated to Sicily with his depleted army. Subsequently the witch was handsomely rewarded for the use of her “charms”. However, the inhabitants of the city over the years would not credit the witch for saving the city, and “to palliate the shame and the reproaches thrown on them for making use of a Witch”, they claimed that one of their religious leaders had been responsible for saving the city (230–1). In his analysis of this story, Charles Lamb in the *Complete Works of Charles and Mary Lamb* (2017) speculated that Shakespeare changed the story for his own purposes, with Sycorax, the witch, not receiving remuneration but being pardoned to save her life (1685). Lamb states that Ogilby probably had read earlier sources, including those of Leo Africanus, the Maghrabi traveller and diplomat, from his book *The History and Description of Africa and of the Notable Things Contained Therein* (1600). In my own creative project, I draw indirectly on these entangled cultural accounts, so as to offer a contemporary character, Zarqa, who mysteriously exceeds her ostensible cultural and historical contexts. (This dissertation also proposes a new linguistic etymology for Sycorax’s name, that is arguably more credible than those discussed over the centuries by Shakespeare scholars, as will be outlined in greater detail in later parts of this and other chapters.)

It is important at this stage of Chapter One to outline in greater detail the plot and characterisation of *Time Will tell*, so as to provide a guide to the discussion that follows of the various primary texts chosen for this dissertation. As indicated earlier, *Time Will Tell* is loosely inspired by William Shakespeare's final play *The Tempest*, particularly with reference to three effaced, marginalised characters: Sycorax, the "witch" and "blue-eyed hag" from Algiers who is dead for twelve years when the play begins; her husband/partner who is supposedly the Devil, who had impregnated her; and their son Caliban, whose name is possibly drawn from *kalb*, the Arabic word for dog (other etymologies will be discussed in Chapter Three), and who is portrayed as an unlettered brute and sexual predator. In *Time Will Tell*, these characters are recast as the characters Nelson Mandela (or Atallah), previously demonised as a terrorist and, in my narrative, facing similar challenges as an unemployed, young, black man in his rebooted form. The character alluding to Sycorax is Zarqa, as indicated previously, who is Nelson's/Atallah's lover and mother of his child, Thurayya. The character named Thurayya (a traditional Arabic spelling of the name Soraya) has magical powers, alluding to the Sycorax and Zarqa Al-Yamamah characters, but also to J.M. Coetzee's Soraya, the Muslim sex worker, who is a minor character in Coetzee's *Disgrace* (1999). I will discuss the possibility that Coetzee based Soraya on Sycorax in this and subsequent chapters.

Here, in my dissertation, the fantastical, absurdist imaginative impulse (in my novel) meets reality (truth matching fiction): The late President's heir and grandson Mandla Mandela has controversially converted to Islam, amid the opposition of several traditional leaders, and married Raabia Clarke, a Cape Town Muslim woman. Their children bear Xhosa and Arabic names (*BBC.com*: "Mandla Mandela's conversion to Islam sparks South Africa 'disquiet'"). The other character alluded to is Prospero, *The Tempest's* protagonist, magician and Duke of Milan, who scholars have argued represents Shakespeare himself, and who seemingly colonises the unnamed and seemingly uninhabited island while in forced exile but is later restored to his previous position. In *Time Will Tell*, Prospero is represented by William Prosper, the owner of The Globe Bookstore, who is a re-embodiment of William Shakespeare.

Briefly, the plot involves Nelson/Atallah awakening on Robben Island, which is renamed Seeler's Island, alluding to the behaviour of sealers clubbing seals and falconers seeling or sewing the eyes shut of falcons to tame them, itself a metaphor for the brutal imprisonment of political prisoners on Robben Island over several centuries. Nelson's/Atallah's arrival has been expected by William

Prosper and Zarqa who draw Nelson/Atallah into a project to counter the reactionary forces of the re-embodied Verwoerd, Hitler and Riefenstahl. The story is set in a future Cape Town of 2035, thus incorporating elements of speculative fiction (which will be expanded upon in Chapter Two). A key element of the story is the foregrounding of language as a means to unify rather than divide, alluding to Goethe's idea of a symphonic World Literature that celebrates individuality and difference. There is reference made to Arabic-Afrikaans (discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three), which implies how the first Afrikaans texts were written using the Arabic script by early Muslims at the Cape in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries – a previously ignored history that has now been recorded in various scholarly articles and museums in Cape Town, academic Saarah Jappie noted in her article on Arabic-Afrikaans. As part of this focus on language, this dissertation also provides, in Chapter Three, new etymologies for the names Sycorax and Caliban. For example, I propose that Caliban's name is derived not from *kalb*, which is Arabic for dog (Vaughan and Vaughan 48) but from *qalb*, which is Arabic for heart. This entails a change of only one letter, and a slightly different pronunciation – with *qalbaan* being the dual, “two hearts”. Such ostensibly minor changes, I argue, work to effect potentially important forms of cultural love and affiliation. In the next part of this section, I briefly provide an overview of the various adaptations/rewrites of *The Tempest* over the centuries that have encapsulated several literary movements and schools of thought, indicating how *Time Will Tell* positions itself in the postcolonial movement. In particular, I discuss Coetzee's *Disgrace* as a possible adaptation of *The Tempest*, a notion that has received scant scholarly attention.

Since it was written over four centuries ago, *The Tempest* has been one of Shakespeare's most discussed and adapted plays, and “has helped shape three contemporaneous movements – postcoloniality, post-feminism or post-patriarchy, and postmodernism – from the 1960s to the present” (Zabus 1). In her comprehensive study of the rewritings of Shakespeare's last play, Zabus states that the periods mirrored by these movements include the sixties' emergence of postcoloniality after the collapse of colonial regimes and the creation of independent nations; the rise of post-feminism and other liberation movements such as gay rights that challenged patriarchal practices; and the emergence, after World War Two, of the so-called postmodern condition and its varied critiques of received modes of representation and knowledge. As is also the case in the present dissertation's creative component, *Time Will Tell*, rewrites of *The Tempest* tend to have focused on several of the major characters from Shakespeare's play – Caliban, Miranda, Sycorax, Ariel and Prospero.

These figures have “come to augur ... postcoloniality, post-patriarchy, and postmodernism; and how these *fin de siècle* discourses vie for the ownership of meaning.” Zabus argues that in the “alter-native” Tempests that followed Shakespeare’s original play, there was an attempt to undo the hierarchy of lines and ideological importance, the “unequal ... power relations”, that marked Shakespeare’s characters, which in Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America, Australia, and Québec, Caliban become the “inexhaustible symbol of the colonized insurgent” (2). In Canada and the Caribbean (after the “Calibanic” phase), Zabus argues, Miranda is foregrounded, while in African American texts, Sycorax “embodies the threat of gynocracy. Both women characters as well as Ariel represent ‘Others,’ who potentially challenge patriarchy”. Facing this new hierarchy, Prospero, mostly in reworkings of *The Tempest* from Britain and the United States, has to grapple with the “eroding powers of his magic.” As “emblematic of postmodern Western man”, he must learn to negotiate with the other two factions even while seeking to “return” himself in different guises (2).

The Tempest-rewrites subordinate Shakespeare’s play to a wide range of ideological transactions and foreground the “repressed” palimpsestic layers of the original text, such as incest, rape, suicide, drowning, and murder, thereby surpassing the most lugubrious plots of Jacobean revenge drama. These “alter-native” plots serve to dismantle narrative authority and to reorient the circulation of knowledge. The singular, punctual Tempest is ousted by Tempests, which accommodate the multiple instabilities of contemporary texts and contexts. (2)

In her survey of the revised ‘Tempest’ texts and adaptations produced, including poems, plays, novels, film scripts and critical essays from India, New Zealand, East Africa and South Africa, Australia, Britain, Canada, the Caribbean, West Africa, Latin America and the United States, Zabus finds priorities reshuffled and new scenarios envisaged. These include the “deprivileging of Prospero” and the “obvious corollary, the ‘rise’ of Caliban; the gang-rape of Miranda by Calibanesque pornographophiles; her incarceration in a damp basement; Prospero and Sycorax outdoing each other through an escalation of conjuring tricks; the spatialization of the island; Sycorax as a computer; Ariel as a cyborg; Ariel and Ferdinand almost kissing” (2). In addition, these rewritings “are traversed by contemporary utopias and dystopias including ‘virtual’ disappearance, explosions, and end-of-millennium ecodisasters” (2). In other words, the material has been subjected to a plethora of innovative reworkings, in which the authors play fast and loose with representational modes, and with readers’ expectations of reality and the material shapings of different worlds. Such reconfigurings I

find inspirational for my own project. Overall, Shakespeare's original text becomes a powerful engine for disruptive contemporary imaginaries, incorporating politics, economics, social formations and forms of agency.

A particular impulse in *Time Will Tell* is engaging with Shakespeare's literary interaction with Islam, during and subsequent to the reign of Elizabeth I, encounters owing to England's growing trade and political alliances with Muslim nations in North Africa and the East. Shakespeare is one of many European/Western writers who are embedded in Orientalist discourse, seeking to demonstrate an "authority" over the Orient and the so-called Oriental, or seeking to defend the West against a barbaric, threatening Orient, as theorised by Edward Said in *Orientalism* (1979). The theoretical underpinnings of this dissertation are detailed in Chapter Two but it is instructive, at the present juncture, to provide a brief overview of how stereotypes of Muslims were developed and sedimented in literature and cultural production over the centuries, using England as an example.

Matthew Dimmock, professor of Early Modern Studies at the University of Sussex, points out convincingly, if somewhat provocatively, that "[w]ithout Islam there would be no Shakespeare." In "Shakespeare and Islam" (2015), Dimmock states that without Tudor and Jacobean England's "rich and complex engagement with Islamic cultures" Shakespeare's plays "would be very different, if they existed at all." There are, Dimmock contends, 150 references to Islamic motifs in 21 plays – to Turks and Saracens, to "Mahomet", and to Morocco and Barbary: "Take away *The Merchant of Venice* and *Othello*, both of which foreground encounters with Islam, and two of the best known and most frequently performed of the plays are lost." These references include, in the history plays for example, a rhetoric of crusade, of fighting for "Jesu Christ in glorious Christian field" (*Richard II*) against "black pagans, Turks, and Saracens" (*Richard II*), in order to, as Dimmock puts it, "define martial Christian valour and to demonise enemies." There are also references to silks, taffetas, bags of spices, Turkish tapestry, and Turkey cushions bossed with pearl (Harrison and Edelen 14–6; Brotton 23; Dimmock). These object materialities are "intended to signal a particular kind of opulence, but they simultaneously reveal England's expanding commercial horizons as the material products of Islamic cultures were increasingly brought into English homes", argues Dimmock. In effect, then, England was simultaneously producing 'Islam' and 'the Orient' as a cultural symbolic.

Dimmock is less critical than many scholars (Tilwani 2; Said 2–3; Farrukh qtd. in Smith ix) regarding Shakespeare’s representations of Muslims. He argues that Shakespeare was one of the first to challenge, with *Othello*, the popular and stereotypical “Turk play” on the Elizabethan stage. However, Dimmock does concede that *Titus Andronicus* could be categorised under the category of Turk play, which marks Shakespeare’s “early experimentation” with the “genre”, where Muslims are vilified and stereotyped, as in the representation of Aaron the Moor, which Loomba points out is a “textbook illustration for early modern stereotypes of blackness” (75). The stereotypes of Muslims as the Other has therefore substantive and deep roots, and as I argue later in this dissertation, is even echoed in current fictional narratives such as J.M. Coetzee’s *Disgrace*.

It is not within the scope of my work to provide an exhaustive list and critique of the worldwide or the South African iterations of *The Tempest*; there are many. They include South African playwright Janice Honeyman’s 2009 popular ‘African’ drama, set in a jungle, with rich postcolonial implications and clear allusion to South African politics (Billington; Connolly). In addition, there have been several laudable African adaptations of and/or allusions to *The Tempest*, including that by Zimbabwean Ndabaningi Sithole, the “first Black African writer” to identify Caliban as a Black African, in “The Cracked Myth”; Kenyan novelist and playwright Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s novels *A Grain of Wheat* (1967), *Homecoming* (1972) and his volume *Decolonising the Mind* (1986); and Nigerian Nkem Nwankwo’s poem “Caliban to Miranda” (1969) (Zabus 31).

What is most relevant for the discussion here, and for the South African context of my own writing, is the rarely considered adaptation of *The Tempest* offered by Coetzee in *Disgrace*. At last count, only three scholars addressed this angle of Coetzee’s by now much-commented on text (Wright; Bhattacharya; Hjul). In addition, David Attwell in his literary biography *J.M. Coetzee and a Life of Writing: Face to Face with Time* (2015) indicates that Coetzee did consider basing *Disgrace* on *The Tempest*. Coetzee drew parallels between his own daughter Gisela, his character Lucy and Shakespeare’s Miranda, in the “preparatory work” for the writing of *Disgrace*. Attwell states that Coetzee made a note (from his notebook on *Disgrace* dated 21 April 1996, in papers held at the Harry Ransom Centre in Texas): “Think of James Joyce on the girls in Shakespeare’s late plays” (201). As I argue in this dissertation, reading *Disgrace* through *The Tempest* opens up a line of inquiry that highlights with greater clarity the ideological fault-lines running through *Disgrace*, and the often less-

than-salutary scholarship on the work by largely white, and a few black, scholars and writers, which demonstrates a disregard for the minoritised characters in the text.

In South African literary criticism, the implications of *Disgrace*'s adaptation of *The Tempest* remain largely undiscussed, and what has continued to be completely unrecognised are the parallels between the black, possibly Muslim, character Sycorax and Coetzee's black ('coloured' in the old apartheid parlance) Muslim sex worker Soraya. In addition, Soraya as a victim of sexual violence is glossed over repeatedly in South African literary criticism. My attempts to have my own work published (*The Girl with the Red Flower*, written from the perspective of Soraya, as part of my 2017 Master of Arts degree at the University of the Western Cape, passed *cum laude*), failed to garner sustained support from publishers in 2018. In my various submissions to publishers, I had included a reference to the work of Michelle Cahill whose short story "Letter to John Coetzee" (2016) writes back to *Disgrace* from the viewpoint of the student Melanie Isaacs. (The details of my publishing attempt(s) are outlined in the next section of this chapter, "Speak, Memory".) Instead, for example, the publisher Pan Macmillan South Africa announced on 11 September 2018 it would publish *Lacuna* in April 2019, written by white author Fiona Snyckers. This is a novel which writes back to Coetzee from the perspective of Lucy Lurie, the daughter of David Lurie, Coetzee's white academic protagonist. In *Lacuna*, Snyckers invisibilises Soraya, her husband/partner and possibly children, and all the raped, black women in *Disgrace*.

Lucy Valerie Graham, in her incisive *State of Peril: Race and Rape in South African Literature* (2012) and in her 2014 article "Reading the Unspeakable: Rape in J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*", correctly identifies two of the raped women in *Disgrace* as Lucy and Melanie. However, Graham does not use the word 'rape' in her brief mention of the Soraya character, and nor does she link her to Sycorax. Graham continues in this vein in her March 2020 article "Intercepting *Disgrace*: *Lacuna* and 'Letter to John Coetzee'", which discusses Snyckers' *Lacuna* and Cahill's "Letter to John Coetzee". However, Graham *does* point out the serious flaws that lie at the heart of Snyckers' *Lacuna*. Here, she refers to critic Danyela Demir's scathing critique of Snyckers and *Lacuna*, Demir having previously been a lone critical voice in the academic literary landscape, in her taking of Snyckers to task. Graham, referring to Demir's detraction, says that "rather than telling the absent story in *Disgrace*, *Lacuna* perpetuates the silencing of women of colour in Coetzee's novel, namely the

student Melanie Isaacs and the sex worker Soraya, producing an exacerbated or doubled lacuna” (168).

Graham points out how *Lacuna* has generally been praised by critics, while Cahill has been “subtly reprimanded, by white male Australian critics, for straying into the perceived ‘whites only’ terrain of prose metafiction”. These ostensible failures are said to ‘insult’ Coetzee. Graham asserts that “[w]hatever the attempts to downplay the impact of her work, Cahill – a woman of Indian heritage, born in Kenya, educated in the United Kingdom, and currently living in Australia – presents a serious interception of *Disgrace*”. Cahill has successfully confronted “white male authorial power and the relentlessly white male gaze that prevails in Coetzee’s novel”, and has “transplanted Melanie from *Disgrace* into another fictional life, challenging the notion that Melanie is Coetzee’s creature” (172). Demir possibly sums it up best, commenting on Snyckers’ *Lacuna*, which was perhaps an attempt at writing back to Coetzee’s text in order to construct a feminist version of Lucy: “but Snyckers’ feminist version of Coetzee’s novel is a glaring example of privileged white feminism at the expense of racial and class justice” (73). Rebutting such narrows, Demir quotes feminist writer Flavia Dzodan as saying: “My feminism will be intersectional or it will be bullshit” (73). It is this intersectionality that I have attempted to embody with both my fictional manuscripts thus far: *The Girl with the Red Flower* and *Time Will Tell*.

Speak, Memory

This dissertation forms part of my lifelong attempts to contribute to a South African social justice agenda, exploring and promoting notions of love, or at least harmony, for humankind, influenced by narratives of resistance from across the world: struggles against slavery, colonialism and economic inequality. This approach to life has largely been as a result of my upbringing and education in Cape Town, including at the universities of Cape Town and Western Cape (and now at Stellenbosch University), and in my career as a journalist at various newspapers in South Africa and Saudi Arabia. This humanistic impulse has continued to drive my interests in post-graduate study, which began in 2017 at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), for an MA in English. It is at UWC that I became intrigued by Coetzee’s controversial novel *Disgrace* and wrote back to it with *The Girl with the Red*

Flower. (I had previously, in 2008, attempted to produce a novel with the Soraya character, that was rejected by a publisher based in Cape Town.)

My still unpublished MA novel reimagined a life for the Muslim sex worker Soraya, a minor character from *Disgrace*, a fictional work that appeared in a country newly emerged from apartheid, with Mandela having handed over the reins of government to Thabo Mbeki and crime rates apparently rising. I argued in my MA that Soraya should be considered a rape victim because of the systemic and structural racism and violence faced by black women and girls in South Africa, a notion that, as I have said above, has escaped the attention of most Coetzee scholars. Coetzee subsequently won the Booker prize for *Disgrace*. This came in the wake of facing both praise and severe criticism for the novel, with some scholars arguing that it correctly portrayed the state of white South Africa, real and imagined, in post-apartheid South Africa, while others critiqued it (among them prominent members of the African National Congress) for failing to show a nuanced view of the country, including providing space to black voices that would have provided some balance to the story. (Readers of the present doctoral dissertation will probably recall the basic plot of *Disgrace*. Coetzee's protagonist, Professor David Lurie, is disgraced for having an affair with a young coloured student, Melanie Isaacs, whom he later rapes. Choosing not to apologise, he leaves the university and retreats to his daughter Lucy's farm in the Eastern Cape, where she is raped by three young black men. Lucy, a lesbian, refuses to testify against her rapists and decides to keep the child from her violation, which exasperates Lurie. Lucy settles into a life of accommodation with her rapists on her farm, while Lurie retreats into a marginalised life.)

In my MA, I argued (12) that the flourishing of the crime genre, and often sensationalist reports of crime in South Africa after 1994 was linked to white fears over "excessive" violent crime by black perpetrators (predominantly males involved in rape and brutal murder) perceived as a form of retribution for apartheid, with the new black-led police force idly standing by (Warnes 981; Kynoch 430). Kynoch, as a corrective to such anxieties, argued that black people remained the main victims of crime and that the discourse of crime even in a democratic South Africa was shaped disproportionately by white voices (430). I have continued to make this assertion with my PhD study, which through my characterisation of Hendrik Verwoerd and others, seeks to demonstrate that black people remain the most vulnerable to crime in South Africa, and across the globe.

I had found it quite remarkable, when researching for my MA in 2017, that the character Soraya, who opens *Disgrace*, and is provided with no persuasive life, had attracted virtually no intensive scholarly interest from the plethora of Coetzee scholars who had been poring over the text since its publication in 1999. While these scholars were primarily white, they included several black Coetzee scholars, who I would preferred to have thought would (perhaps) have been more sensitive to such dubious erasures, considering the fraught history of violence against black bodies throughout the centuries of slavery, colonialism and apartheid in South Africa.

As partially outlined in the research essay of my Master's thesis, the standard defence of Coetzee's position, articulated by David Atwell, Derek Attridge and others (Kannemeyer 561–67) and including Gabeba Baderoon in *Regarding Muslims: From Slavery to Post Apartheid*, was that Coetzee silenced Soraya as a way of demonstrating the persistent silencing of black women, both historically and in contemporary times. I begged to differ. In my MA, I instead aligned myself with those (few) scholars and writers who declared that Coetzee had written a racist book and presented an ideologically-prejudicial political reading of the country (Misbach 5). Scholars who criticised the novel included writers Nadine Gordimer and Salman Rushdie, and academic Jakes Gerwel. I agreed with Rushdie's dismissal of the novel's "acclaimed revelatory vision" (340). Rushdie suggested that "[b]ecause whites have historically oppressed blacks, it's being suggested [in *Disgrace*], we must now accept that blacks will oppress whites" (340). However, not a single black character was developed into a "living, breathing" persona (Rushdie 340), and this could not but compromise a reader's investment of belief in the agency and experiential logics of the black characters.

Gerwel, furthermore, emphasised that *Disgrace* expressed "almost barbaric post-colonial claims of black Africans" in its representation of the novel's coloured or "mixed-race [bruin] characters" as "whores, seducers, complainers, conceited accusers", and in its "exclusion of the possibility of civilised reconciliation" (qtd. in McDonald 325). I also agreed with Rushdie, a canny observer of human behaviour, regarding Coetzee's portrayal of girls and women in *Disgrace*, which I extrapolated to include works across his oeuvre in my MA (Misbach 9–10). Rushdie makes an insightful observation:

To act on impulses whose source one claims not to understand, to justify one's plunges at women by one's 'rights of desire', is to make a virtue of one's psychological and moral lacunae. For a

character to justify himself by claiming not to understand his motives is one thing; for the novelist to collude in that justification is quite another. (339)

Albeit as a sidebar to my main discussion, I would like to note that this aspect of Coetzee's work, the portrayal of women and girls, perhaps invites further scrutiny and can possibly be the subject of future research for those scholars interested in considering the psychosexual effects on the young Coetzee of growing up with an alcoholic father. Coetzee's father, Jack, was disbarred for fraud (possibly stemming from his chronic disease of alcoholism). Young Coetzee had a strong, often domineering mother, Vera, who struggled to hold the family together financially and otherwise, and had to substitute for her emotionally absent husband (as outlined in Kannemeyer's biography). Living in an environment which subtly naturalised forms of familial trauma may have affected Coetzee (in the form of a condition known as Adult Child of an Alcoholic) and is perhaps reflected in a certain gratuitous depiction of sexual engagement with children and women across his oeuvre.

Returning to the focus of the dissertation: while entire books have been written about the existential crises of Coetzee's David Lurie, no one, including the three previously mentioned scholars writing about *Disgrace's* links to *The Tempest*, recognised the possibility that Coetzee sketched his minor character Soraya via inspiration from Shakespeare's Sycorax. Scholarly scrutiny of Soraya has been sparse, although Gabeba Baderoon writes a few incisive paragraphs about the Soraya character as a violated woman in *Regarding Muslims*, but also does not make the connection with Sycorax. In comparison, I contend in my dissertation that reading *Disgrace* through *The Tempest* would provide a different slant on Coetzee's work, and support the criticism that he, like many other 'Western' or white writers before him, despite being valorised for their portrayals, has continued the centuries'-long erasure and silencing of black people, depicting them with no agency, or as brutes. I argue in this PhD dissertation that Coetzee's depiction of black people dehumanises them and leads them to be treated with less sensitivity than white characters, who are given whole, complex lives as 'people' in works of art or in the attention they attract in scholarly study. Extending this argument, I argue that the lack of sensitivity towards black lives in fictional texts is not merely a question of aesthetics or representation, but results in real-world indifference, deprivation and violence.

If I may return briefly to my foiled attempts to find a publisher for *The Girl with the Red Flower*, as this speaks to the less-than-transparent, exclusionary nexus of publishing in South Africa. Having

sent out a summary and samples of the manuscript to various readers in late 2017, I subsequently sought a publisher for my work in early June 2018, including an approach to Pan Macmillan South Africa during their open-window for unsolicited manuscripts. On Monday, 25 June 2018, I received a request for my full manuscript, which stated: “After an initial review process, we would like to request the complete manuscript of *The Girl with the Red Flower* for further review. Please note that you will hear back from us in 6-8 weeks.” I did not hear back from them, even after sending them my full manuscript. On their website, on 11 September 2018, Pan Macmillan announced that they would publish a response to Coetzee’s *Disgrace* with *Lacuna* in 2019, written by Fiona Snyckers, from the perspective of Lucy Lurie.

Subsequently, I wrote an open letter to Pan Macmillan South Africa asking about my manuscript, a query which was published in the University of Johannesburg’s *The Thinker* journal in February 2021. The publishing company have, in a responding letter also published by *The Thinker*, apologised to me for losing/overlooking my manuscript but appear uninterested in launching a probe into the debacle and making the results public, as I have requested. Instead, the publishers bask in the (peculiar) success of *Lacuna*. Snyckers, having erased all the black women raped and abused in *Disgrace*, subsequently won two literary awards and cash prizes, which goes some way to support the minoritarian arguments made throughout this dissertation that, whether through omission or commission, Orientalist and Islamophobic attitudes are prevalent and flourishing in South Africa, and that those authors adopting these stances are often celebrated and rewarded. In a valorising context, there is little incentive for Pan Macmillan to consider that they may have erred in publishing a work such as *Lacuna*. On the contrary, there is ideologically blithe celebration: Snyckers was hailed as one of the company’s top authors prior to the South African *Sunday Times* awards in early 2021, and *Lacuna* will be published in January 2022 under the Europa Editions banner. (One wonders how Europa Editions will deal, if at all, with Snyckers’ disparaging depiction of black Muslim women.)

The approach of this dissertation is given further vigour in an age of heightened Islamophobia and racism such the “Black Lives Matter” movement, the Indian government’s controversial citizenship law, and ex-United States’ President Donald Trump’s ban on Muslims from several countries and his reported description of African and Asian nations as “shithole” countries, along with his alleged business deals with despots. The conclusions drawn in this dissertation, and the personal experiences outlined above, are not merely idiosyncratic anecdotes. Rather, they are in keeping with the views of

several postcolonial authors who have over several decades argued that certain authors and texts have continued to be valorised in publishing and academia despite effacing minority, alternative or dissenting voices. This view is summed up succinctly by Abdul R. JanMohamed and David Lloyd, in their influential edited volume on minority discourse:

One aspect of the struggle between hegemonic culture and minorities is the recovery and mediation of cultural practices which have been and continue to be subject to institutional forgetting. Thus archival work is essential to the critical articulation of minority discourse. At the same time, if this archival work is not to be relegated by the force of dominant culture to the mere marginal repetition of exotic ethnicity, theoretical reflection cannot be dispensed with. Such a theory would be obliged to provide a sustained critique of the historical conditions and formal qualities of those institutions, which have continued to legitimize exclusion and marginalization in the name of universality. One must always keep in mind that the universalizing humanist project has been highly selective, systematically choosing certain texts and authors and valorizing them as *the* humanist tradition while ignoring and at times actively repressing alternate traditions and attitude. (JanMohamed and Lloyd 8)

Chapter 2: Love's Impediments

Theoretical Grounding and Framework: aspects of minority discourse and the theoretical engagement with race, gender and economic exploitation.

Love's Impediments: Orientalism and Other Disgraceful Lacunae

Jeremy Rosen's *Minor Characters Have Their Day* (2016) provides a useful theory of genre that allows me to situate this dissertation's creative component, *Time Will Tell*, vis-à-vis other similar works. The genre that Rosen calls "minor-character elaboration" is a broad one. It encompasses the whole idea of "writing back" – often but not exclusively under the urgency of political, post-colonial imperatives in the sixties – that highlights or corrects perceived absences or gaps in canonical works (Rosen, Kindle Location 134). This element of my dissertation is an extension of the project undertaken by my previous academic work, in the form of the creative component of *The Girl with the Red Flower*. As discussed in Chapter One, this unpublished novel, written as part of my MA, foregrounds the minor character Soraya from Coetzee's *Disgrace*.

Rosen's theory of the minor-character elaboration genre provides insights into its flexibility and uses, and *Time Will Tell* fits quite aptly into the associated framework. Rosen argues convincingly that several writers, eschewing more political and/or literary advantages of the genre, have used it to simply produce entertaining fiction, or popular fiction. This is to meet the demand from readers and the desire of risk-averse publishers – large-scale corporate ones and smaller independent operators – to leverage the prestige of canonical works. A key driver is the global portability of the genre, its capacity to hurdle borders in ways that would allow "global media corporations who dominate today's publishing industry" to "establish transnational literary communities", with an obvious eye on profits (760).

In the popular, humorous or entertainment subset of the genre, perhaps the "most visible marker" (Location 139) for its uses in this category is Gregory Maguire's *Wicked, The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West* (1995), the successful, adult-themed Broadway play based on the novel of the same name, which derives its characters from L. Frank Baum's 1900 novel *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Another innovative use of the genre is John Scieszka's 1989 children's book *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs, by A. Wolf*. Scieszka's Alexander T. Wolf is the

aggrieved protagonist telling his side of the story in this parody of the well-known fable. Scieszka's book was turned into an animated short in 1996 and is available on *YouTube*. Consider also Christopher Moore's *Fool* (2009), which is the irreverent retelling of Shakespeare's *King Lear* from the perspective of Lear's jester, whom Moore names Pocket. Moore states in his Author's Note that he intended to use his "greasy hands ... [to] befoul" Shakespeare's "perfectly elegant" work, and he has made a career, ably supported by his publisher HarperCollins, of rewriting Shakespeare. His latest offering is a sequel to *Fool*, namely *Shakespeare for Squirrels* (2020).

In the literary subset of the genre, Rosen's main examples include Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) which gives life to Bertha Mason from *Jane Eyre* (1847) and Christa Wolf's *Cassandra* (1983), which revisits the Trojan War from the perspective of the Trojan prophetess. Rosen also highlights the work of Alice Randall with *The Wind Done Gone* (2001), which imagines a slave half-sister for *Gone with the Wind's* (1936) Scarlett O'Hara, and Margaret Atwood's *The Penelopiad* (2005), which transforms Penelope and a chorus of the twelve maids hanged by Odysseus into duelling narrators. In this category, Rosen has placed Coetzee's *Foe* (1986) that writes back to Daniel Defoe, and *Elizabeth Costello* (2003) which incorporates Molly Bloom from James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922). Rosen suggests that this novelistic range displays the variability and flexibility of the minor-character elaboration genre, but he also takes the opportunity to show how Coetzee critiques Defoe's representation of women and how he comments on race relations and the linkages between language and power through the black character of Friday (2513). Despite our differing views on particular authors and texts, Rosen's work has been instructive for my thinking and writing.

Time Will Tell, the creative component of my own dissertation, fits fairly neatly into the literary subset of the minor-character elaboration genre by featuring as co-protagonist a character whom I have named Zarqa, as already mentioned. She is a character with significant links to Shakespeare's Sycorax (and, as I contend, with Coetzee's Soraya). In my unpublished manuscript *The Girl with the Red Flower*, I renamed Coetzee's Soraya specifically as Soraya Nuruddeen, or Nur Al-Deen, meaning Light of the Faith. Soraya's character in *The Girl with the Red Flower* is merged with Coetzee's Mrs Noerdien, the Muslim assistant bookkeeper, who is another minor character in Coetzee's fictionalised autobiography, *Scenes from Provincial Life* (2011). (Noerdien is an anglicised spelling often employed by Muslims, of the Cape and elsewhere, to convert their Arabic

or Asian surnames into those that look and sound like English or Afrikaans names.) My merging of female characters is much like Coetzee's tactic with Defoe's, to produce *Foe*, with his character Susan Barton alluding to Defoe's *Roxana* (1724). In Coetzee's *Foe*, Susan Barton is the missing female narrator writing back to the white, male, colonising perspective of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*.

My various iterations of Zarqa allude primarily but not exclusively to Shakespeare's Sycorax from *The Tempest* and write back to Shakespeare by providing alternative etymologies for the name of Sycorax, purposefully distanced from Shakespeare's negative portrayal of difference, as explained briefly in Chapter One, so as to produce a narrative energy in keeping with my authorial emphasis on cultural love and supportive cultural conversation. The foregrounding of the re-worked character Nelson Mandela as the co-protagonist of *Time Will Tell*, further slots the novel into the flexible boundaries of the minor-character elaboration genre because here Nelson is a marginalised persona, not the once-influential, wealthy and often mythologised figure of the late former president of South Africa. Nelson, the fictional character, is brought into the world penniless and seemingly without any real prospects for a decent living, which is the fate of many black people today in South Africa and across the world. He is variously at the mercy of powerful groups with undisclosed vested interests, and struggles to find his own sustaining agency, and forms of meaningful connection. What manner of 'love' – cultural, romantic, collective – might Nelson/Atallah form through attachment, and to what kind of end, both personal and political?

In titling the present section 'Love's Impediments', I reference Shakespeare's sonnet 116 published in 1609 (Rowse 1525), extending the allusions, critique and homage to the Bard's work. The poem is a serious (if utopian) attempt to invoke characteristics of 'true love' between the minds of humans, an ideal shared intimacy that embodies a hopeful transcendence of all forms of current and historical anger, hatred and Othering. Perhaps it is important to provide the much-discussed poem here and then briefly outline its particular message. (In my novel *Time Will Tell*, I provide an Ajami-English version of the poem, which means that I have used the Arabic script phonetically to write it out.)

Let me not to the marriage of true minds

Admit impediments. Love is not love

Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

The poem is one of the most famous of Shakespeare's love sonnets and appears to provide a definition of love beyond that of romantic love, hinting at a more universal notion because there is no object of affection. In other words, there is no clearly defined beloved and "the poet-lover himself is submerged", according to Carol Thomas Neely (83). This is also the case with Shakespeare's sonnets 94 ("They that have power to hurt and will do none"), a meditation on the powerful being unwilling to hurt the vulnerable, and 129 ("Th' expense of spirit in a waste of shame"), being an analysis of the dangers of the powerful emotion of lust, which one can interpret as lusts of all kinds, including for material wealth and status. In addition, the poems appear to provide solutions, states Neely, with "attempts to step back and escape from the immediate painful situation – to contemplate, hypothesize, 'fix' it" (83).

This search for true love as a universal humanism forms part of the discussion in Chapter One with reference to Goethe's *West-East Divan*. Much of this discussion references Edward Said's scholarship and activism in relation to Goethe's writing, which includes the poem *Hegir* and the ideas of *Weltliteratur*, meaning the study of the world's literatures as a "symphonic whole" without

losing sight of the “individuality of each work” (Preface xvii). Such an approach, Said argues, represents a positive start to an envisaged reconciliation, the overcoming of true love’s impediments presently construed between often arbitrary and solidified distinctions: of East and West, White and Black, Arab and Jew, Israeli and Palestinian.

The hopeful vision carried in such overcoming would entail erasing the perceived differences between humans who may differ cosmetically and putatively in terms of ethnicity, colour and culture. As Said rightly points out, for example, the terms Orient and Occident have no “ontological stability” but are made up of human effort expended as “partly affirmation, partly identification of the Other”. This results in “supreme fictions [that] lend themselves easily to manipulation and the organization of collective passion” which mobilises “fear, hatred, disgust and resurgent self-pride and arrogance” (xvii).

It is these supreme fictions of difference that I have attempted to transcend in creating *Time Will Tell* (and previously, *The Girl with the Red Flower*). These fictions of difference I have also highlighted in my critique of Snyckers’ *Lacuna* and Coetzee’s *Disgrace*. I suggest that these works are a form of power that uses “knowledge to advance itself” (Said 332). The research element of my dissertation works from the premise that writers like Coetzee are part of a centuries’-old mode of Orientalism that serves to claim superiority over the Orient in some form or another, a stance in *ideas* that is then used to further subjugate and oppress the Other in *material*, concrete practices. (At a later point in the present chapter, for example, the way knowledge advances power will be discussed, extending Said’s argument via Silvestre de Sacy’s textual representation of Muslims as barbaric Oriental drug fiends, views that have morphed into contemporary oppressive policy and practice in such campaigns as the “War on Drugs” in Europe and the United States.)

Said in *Orientalism* critiques Goethe for the Romantic lens through which he views the Orient (167), but Said nevertheless uses Goethe’s sympathetic imaginative attitude to the Orient as a template and inspiration for how he believes peace movements should operate, and how social integration might be achieved in polarised societies across the world. Said referenced the positive aspects of the negotiated settlement in South Africa when visiting the country in 2001. He describes some of this in “The Book, Critical Performance, and the Future of Education” (2001), where he calls for a “humanistic and literary education ... [in the South African] plurilingual society” that was “emerging at last from a long period of distortions forced on it by apartheid”. In

such a context, he emphasises that “there is clearly a need to try to re-establish a wider, more generously inclusive sense of history and identity than was formerly possible” (15). Perhaps the Goethe-inspired initiative described below was Said’s valedictory gesture at the end of a life of struggle towards his self-avowed humanist ideals. For Said, employing a humanistic argument was useful to “open up the fields of struggle, to introduce a longer sequence of thought and analysis to replace the short bursts of polemical, thought-stopping fury that so imprison us in labels and antagonistic debate whose goal is a belligerent collective identity rather than understanding and intellectual exchange”. Important for my purposes is that he insists “stubbornly” on using the word “humanism ... despite the scornful dismissal of the term by sophisticated post-modern critics” (xvii). This is a commitment from which I draw strength in my own use, in this chapter, of the word ‘love’, which I suspect may elicit a similar academic scepticism. Said explains:

By humanism I mean first of all attempting to dissolve Blake’s mind-forg’d manacles so as to be able to use one’s mind historically and rationally for the purposes of reflective understanding and genuine disclosure. Moreover, humanism is sustained by a sense of community with other interpreters and other societies and periods: strictly speaking, therefore, there is no such thing as an isolated humanist. (xvii)

To this purpose, Said, as an amateur musician interested in classical music, established the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra with Israeli musician Daniel Barenboim, a cohort consisting of several Arab and Israeli musicians, an undertaking which also saw the pair establish the Barenboim-Said Foundation to sponsor musical education programs in the occupied territories. It is perhaps important to consider in more detail the symbolically and sympathetically imaginative project that Said and Barenboim undertook, because it helps to outline a range of actions needed for reconciliation, which forms part of the rationale for unusual works such as *Time Will Tell*. The musical initiative was not without controversy on both sides, with some labelling it a consorting with the enemy. On the one side was the Zionist regime (categorised as a neo-apartheid State), and on the other side the “Professor of Terror”, as Said had been stigmatised for years in right wing publications, a man who was ostensibly leading other Palestinian terrorists to commit violence against Jews. However, Said defended the musical project and provided a rationale for it in one of his last major public lectures on 29 January 2003 (he would die of cancer on 24 September that

year), entitled “Memory, Inequality and Power: Palestine and the Universality of Human Rights” at Berkeley.

Sixty minutes into the lecture – largely a considered denunciation of powerful forces opposing Palestinian statehood from within the United States, Israel and elsewhere – Said spoke about his “warm and special friendship” with Barenboim, in what some South Africans would regard as *toenadering*, or seeking some form of closer relationship. South Africa’s own cultural project between blacks and the Afrikaners was with sport, specifically white rugby, and while Said does not refer to the Springbok emblem in the lecture, he would likely have recognised it as motivated by the aim of promulgating a similar goal of peace and reconciliation between warring sides. I reported extensively as a journalist with *South* newspaper in the nineties on the use of sport as a means to seek reconciliation between the opposing sides in South Africa, and while neither sport nor musical projects can be a panacea for long-standing grievances and socio-economic inequality, nor does it follow that they are of no reconciliatory consequence.

In thinking this through, it also helps to outline how the opposite of such projects, or the absence of such projects, may be associated with increased division and polarisation. Said and Barenboim had set up the orchestra in Weimar, whose most famous resident, Goethe, had written there his “great mature masterpiece the *West-Östlicher Divan*, the West-East Divan. This work is an extraordinary act of homage to Islam generally and to the Persian poet Hafiz in particular”, as can be viewed on *YouTube* (starting from 1:09). Said praises Goethe as one of the first Europeans “to attempt some kind of artistic synthesis and involvement between what in those days were called the Orient, and Europe”:

His accomplishment was the magnificent *Divan* itself, as well as for our purposes the use of art, so to speak, to create an imaginative reordering of polarities, differences and oppositions. On the basis not of politics but of affinities, spiritual generosity and aesthetic self-renewal. We also exposed our students to Buchenwald, one of the most notorious of the Nazi death camps which lies only about six kilometres outside Weimar. Thus serving us to point out how very close together the great heights of culture can easily coexist with the deepest and basest evil. The point of all this is that a new paradigm emerged for us and our students ... where it should go, without saying, to differing and sometimes jarringly antagonistic backgrounds, and

whose interests, ambitions and histories and commitments were suspended as it were, in the interests of music. (1:09)

Said provides substantial detail of his friendship with Barenboim, nuances repeated here as part of a dissertation which is aimed at seeking an understanding that “despite the incredibly polarised, antagonistic and discordant world in which we live, there’s always a possibility of another, alternative type of social model”. This social model that Said envisages is not one of exclusion, silencing, superiority or the separation of one struggle from another, as is clear in *Orientalism* (331). Instead, the model is premised on forms of cultural imbrication, reciprocal respect, even love, by any other name.

Here, it is important again to emphasise what constitutes real love between humans, which is the essence of what Said argues for so eloquently when he speaks of creating “an imaginative reordering of polarities, differences and oppositions. On the basis not of politics but of affinities, spiritual generosity and aesthetic self-renewal.” Said and Barenboim, for instance, were inspired to name their musical project the West-East Divan Orchestra as an attempt to follow Goethe’s artistic and aesthetic example. It is clear that Said and Barenboim wanted to reflect Goethe’s feeling of affinity, human affection, or love, as I have named it, as expressed in his *West-Östlicher Divan*, for the poetry of Hafiz. Further, Said and Barenboim wanted to mimic the admiration that Goethe sought to express for the Persian, Eastern, Islamic cultures of the world that had been declared by many Orientalists to be backward, barbaric, irrational and anti-Western. A further practical expression of this love was the joint musical training projects undertaken in the occupied territories. As this chapter progresses, the link between my account of the Said/Barenboim initiative and my drive to write *Time Will Tell* will emerge more clearly in relation to my belief that works such as Coetzee’s *Disgrace* are the opposite of these expressions of generosity, respect and love that Said, Barenboim and Goethe saw as critical artistic dynamics to bridge differences between people.

This lack of love is arguably the criticism that Nadine Gordimer was expressing when she took issue with *Disgrace*, when stating, as quoted in Kannemeyer’s biography of Coetzee: “Now in this elegantly and powerfully written novel there is no deep feeling (except, maybe ... self-disgust), no love, until there is a need to put down a stray dog, the feeling for which is the sole life-affirmative emotion for anyone or anything in the professor” (562). Gordimer’s “professor” is obviously

Professor David Lurie, the protagonist of *Disgrace*, but arguably also refers to Professor Coetzee, the author of the work. Implicit in Gordimer's rebuke is the notion that Coetzee's view of South Africa's future was overwhelmingly pessimistic and, through his popularity among those with cultural influence, contributed to feelings of antagonism between citizens, especially against imagined Others. Gordimer seems to have drawn the conclusion that Coetzee's work contained no opportunity for a generosity of spirit and renewal, as Said puts it. Instead, Gordimer implies that Coetzee's fictional text contributed to an atmosphere of destruction, oppression and apathy, with the white characters David Lurie and his daughter, Lucy, both claiming to be treated like dogs in the new political dispensation (*Disgrace* 194, 200), and being violently forced to accept their lot under the yoke of rapists and ruthless land grabbers. Recall that in Chapter One, when discussing *Disgrace*, I referred to Coetzee's casting the white characters in post-apartheid South Africa as Calibanesque figures, as a means to imply that black people were now oppressing white people. I also referred to Coetzee possibly linking the etymology of the name Caliban to *kalb*, the Arabic word for dog, used as an insult, as several Shakespearean scholars have argued (Vaughan and Vaughan 33), Coetzee's take belying the privileged economic and social status that continues for the majority of white people in contemporary South Africa.

It is perhaps ironic that Gordimer's criticism of *Disgrace* and its professorial protagonist and author, is virtually mirrored by Coetzee in his critique of the Afrikaners and their lack of love or inadequate feelings of affinity toward black people during apartheid. The quotation below is from his speech when accepting the Jerusalem Prize in 1987, twelve years before the publication of *Disgrace*, published in his 1992 collection of essays, *Doubling the Point*:

At the heart of the unfreedom of the hereditary masters of South Africa is a failure of love. To be blunt: their love is not enough today and has not been enough since they arrived on the continent; furthermore, their talk, their excessive talk, about how they love South Africa has consistently been directed toward the *land*, that is, toward what is least likely to respond to love: mountains and deserts, birds and animals and flowers. (97)

Coetzee went on to say that apartheid and colonialism had served to ensure a "deformed and stunted inner life" for people living under its strictures, which resulted in a South African literature that was a "less than fully human literature unnaturally preoccupied with power and the torsions of power" (97). This meant, Coetzee argued, that South Africans in their artistic expression were

“unable to move from elementary relations of contestation, domination, and subjugation to the vast and complex human world that lies beyond them” (97). As Lucy Valerie Graham rightly points out in *State of Peril: Race and Rape in South African Literature* (2012), Coetzee did not exclude himself as a writer from this critique (11). However, her conclusion is that Coetzee has self-reflexively solved this situation through various narrative strategies which leave the novel open to a more sympathetic imaginative interpretation by the reader (152). My contention is that *Disgrace* is a somewhat shrill melodrama seeking to evoke Coetzee as a figure who is predicting or prophesying an imminent white genocide, the novel’s provocative politics glossed over by a cool and high literary tone. I contend that Coetzee’s negative assessments of Muslims and black people can be found in his other fictional representations, as well as in his stated views, as will be discussed in detail toward the end of this chapter. All such opinions, in my belief, serve preemptively to preclude socially restorative, reconciliatory possibilities of the kind imagined as a form of collective human love by the likes of Goethe, and Said. Any literary-stylistic brilliance attributed to Coetzee, then, is severely compromised (even *negated*) by the author’s social-imaginative failures which see his fiction endorsing rifts and ruptures rather than encouraging productive human relations.

Let me pursue this further. It appears that in the years between his Jerusalem Prize speech in 1987 and the publication of *Disgrace* in 1999, Coetzee may have come to the conclusion that black people would show a similar lack of love for white people when placed in positions of power, as had characterised white people’s debased abuse of black people under apartheid. Some may argue today, quite cogently, that black people politically in charge of the country are in fact showing little love for white people, considering what appears to be the capture of the State by various criminal elements. However, one cannot draw the conclusion from this thievery that *all* blacks are thieves and criminals and that *all* black people hate white people. Indeed, millions more black people suffer under such corrupt governance, than do white people. Perhaps a more plausible conclusion would be that some criminals, who happen to be black, are involved in State capture and that these criminals show little love toward white and black alike. (The question of crime is important because *Disgrace* appeared in 1999 at a time when crime rates, including rape, were supposedly out of control, with several white commentators placing the rise, statistically false as it turns out – see Graham 2 – at the door of the newly installed African National Congress government.)

At this point, it is important for me to link the preceding discussion to the genre of minor-character elaboration, in relation to the canonical works being challenged. The purpose here is to determine in greater detail the features of the genre in which these canonical works are situated, which would provide further clarity on the positionality of *Time Will Tell*. To delineate the elements of the Orientalist genre (consisting of novels by writers like Coetzee and Snyckers, I contend) it is again useful to return to Said's analysis and theorising of Orientalism. The word Orientalist has become pejorative since Said's work, and while acknowledging Albert Hourani's argument that Orientalist writing as a mode of Western cultural production may comprise elements of genuinely humanistic, scholarly and literary endeavours, not all examples being racist, hostile and exaggerated, Said insists nevertheless that there remains a significant link between knowledge used as power in the discourse of Orientalism.

This does not, however, conflict with what I say in *Orientalism*, with the difference that I do insist on the prevalence in the discourse itself of a structure of attitudes that cannot simply be waved away or discounted. Nowhere do I argue that Orientalism is evil, or sloppy, or uniformly the same in the work of each and every Orientalist. But I do say that the guild of Orientalists has a specific history of complicity with imperial power, which it would be Panglossian to call irrelevant. (342)

In my dissertation, I argue that in the dominant Western European mode of thinking, to which writers like Coetzee and others defer, and to a lesser extent in the American and related Imperial versions of this 'European' cultural line, the invention of the Orient is not only an imaginative tactic. It is also part of European "material civilisation and culture" with "supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles" (Said 2). This provided an historically informing ideological-experiential framework for various colonial administrators operating in Africa and Asia to consider the inhabitants and indigenous people they had conquered as "subject races", as Alfred James Balfour described 'these people' when he was a colonial administrator in Egypt for the British monarch from the late 1800s onwards (qtd. in Said 31). Lest we mistakenly imagine that such views were quickly outmoded, we need to understand that the more modern version of such cultural superiority was later sedimented, couched in scientific terms, by many others. Consider a few examples. Former American politician and diplomat Henry Kissinger described the Eastern/African mind as pre-Newtonian (non-logical)

while Westerners were imbued with the superior Newtonian (logical) minds (qtd. in Said 46). Or academic and American foreign policy advisor Bernard Lewis commenting on the Muslim mind with “The Roots of Muslim Rage” that appeared in *The Atlantic* in September 1990, which then inspired the late academic Samuel Huntington’s 1993 questioning essay “The Clash of Civilisations?” and later 1996 book with the emphatic title *The Clash of Civilisations*. The common denominator in the thinking of Balfour, Kissinger, Lewis and Huntington, and many others, was their ostensibly clear understanding of the inferior status of the non-European, non-American and non-Western mind, meaning, that is, the Asian and African mind. This is the lineage, I argue, that despite an author’s demurrals, continues to be reflected in the dehumanising Orientalising slant which marks the fictional work of such writers as Coetzee and Snyckers.

The historical evidence makes for a dismal accumulation of Orientalist stereotyping, a systemic cultural archive of categorical Othering. For instance, a more extensively illuminating example of the type of scientific study of the Asian and African mind, or the designation of the Orient and Africa as a laboratory for the detailed scientific analysis of an ancient and degraded region, is provided if we consider the work undertaken by Napoleon during his 1798 short-lived Egyptian invasion, which produced the multi-volume *Description de l’Égypte* (1809 to 1829). Napoleon’s massive enterprise of *savants* backed by an army of colonial conquest “dwarfs” the individual testimony of people like Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti, who in three separate volumes of what could be seen as writing back from a marginalised view, described the French invasion from the point of view of the invaded (334). The *Description de l’Égypte* provided a scientific and anatomical chart to the surveying Orientalist, about the constituent elements of the Oriental mind, character and temperament, with conclusions later reached that the Asian and African were illogical, barbarous and generally deficient in modes of civilised living. Despite being centuries apart, this is much like the minds and lives of nameless and silent Muslim women and blacks described and sketched by Snyckers and Coetzee in *Lacuna* and *Disgrace* respectively, with their dismissive schematisation of Eastern/African people into “passive, seminal, feminine, even silent and supine”, as Said outlines (138).

Similarities can also be drawn with Ernest Renan comparing Semitic people to non-Semitic people much like a “pencil sketch is to a painting” (qtd. in Said 149); and Gustave Flaubert’s and Gérard de Nerval’s descriptions of Eastern women working as dancers as erotic types: fair, undemanding,

sexually learned, delicate and coarse, while African women were characterised as dark, wild and savage, and equally willing to engage in sexual performance. This “ocular and sexual intercourse” as Karayanni describes it in relation to the encounters with the feminine Orient of the largely male and voyeuristic Western pilgrim, traveller and scholarly scientist, fails to offer any new mystical change or metamorphosis yearned for, leaving “dismissal as the only means to veil unfulfilled desire” (61). This Othering of Oriental and African women therefore demonstrates the obvious corollary of Flaubert’s and Nerval’s certain ideas about the purer or more demanding and civilised Western, European and French woman. All of this bolsters the arguments in this part of the dissertation that there was little love expressed in the Orientalist genre for the supposedly different Orient, once mystified as the root of the Divine and now discovered or demystified by modern writers like Flaubert as just plain and ordinary. Writers like George W. Curtis in *Nile Notes* (1856), who did not believe in the mystical Orient in the first place and did not seek to be initiated despite being sorely tempted as his desire-filled descriptions of dancers Kuchuk Hanem and Xenobia testify (138), regarded the Egyptian dancing women as “gossamer-moraled” and a “race dedicated to pleasure” (123). Curtis was a racist and misogynist as expressed in his description of many other women, including a “tall Egyptian female, [who was] filially related, I am sure, to a gentle giraffe who had been indiscreet with a hippopotamus” (132). Curtis further pointed out that while kohl on the eyes of beautiful women was mesmerising, he had come across a “coarse courtesan” drinking coffee and smoking in an Esna coffee shop, whose kohl-encircled eyes “made her a houri of hell” (137). There is a similar treatment of the often overlooked and under-studied role of the male African/Eastern dancer in the writings of the nineteenth century male European mind, marking an Imperial gaze that has reverberations in contemporary views of Western dominance and moral superiority over a debased and “lascivious” Orient, as Karayanni argues convincingly (67).

Forgetting love: Material Orientalism and the “possession of minorities”

The Orientalist mode has transitioned from the textual to the actual, becoming actualised politically and economically in the forms and practices of an “imperialist institution” (95), as Said argued in *Orientalism*. This argument was also made by others, including Said’s mentor Anouar Abdel Malek in “Orientalism in Crisis” in 1963, the essay which is the most direct ideological parent of Said’s *Orientalism* in 1979. Malek considered how Orientalism evolved from the

eighteenth to the twentieth century, into the “hegemonism of possessing minorities” (Abdel Malek 51). This was a bizarre situation, a “*preposterous* transition” (Said 96) even though applying texts “literally to reality is to risk folly or ruin” (93). One would not, for example, use the Bible to understand, say, the House of Commons, but some people have tried and it “seems a common human failing to prefer the schematic authority of a text to the disorientations of direct encounters with the human” (93).

It will be argued in further detail later in this dissertation, particularly in relation to Sacy’s work on Muslims and drugs, that academics studying the Orient have used their *textual* analyses to draw conclusions about *actual* Asians and Africans, narrowing ideas into flawed categories of ‘the Asian mind’ and ‘the African mind’, in textual tactics which paradoxically work to highlight human difference even as they invoke facile racial-ethnic similarity, and this contributes to a polarised world society. Such analyses then become accepted fact in the academy through citation after citation. In a circular conceptual economy, these scholarly-endorsed, accepted ‘facts’ are a critical feature of the Orientalist genre that then supports artistic production, which in turn serves to bolster these very same scholarly ‘facts’. Hsu-Ming Teo has pointed out cogently how this works in material ways. She argues that some authors make it their business to turn their textual attitudes into actual foreign and military policy with all the consequences that entails. Hsu-Ming argues, for example, that this occurred with Bernard Lewis who “leveraged his expertise on medieval Islam to comment on contemporary political events in the Middle East” (5), matters on which he was consulted by various American administrations and officials, including former US Vice President Dick Cheney and former President George W. Bush. Lewis’ “problem”, argues Hsu-Ming, was that he “attempted to explain complex historical events without recourse to the usual methods of analysis used to explicate other historical events in the Western world.” So Lewis failed to account for “[m]aterial factors, economic issues, local histories, external influences, changing political and sociocultural relations and ideas.” Instead, all were “dismissed as less relevant than the unchanging sway a monolithic Islam held over its adherents’ minds and behaviour” (6).

Hsu-Ming contrasts Lewis’ position with perhaps the most famous of the Orientalists H.A.R. Gibb, who made similar “grand, sweeping statements” about the “Arab mind” or “Muslim mind” and “Oriental despotism” based on his study of medieval Islamic texts”, although Gibb did “not attempt direct intervention in the political sphere as far as America’s troubled relationship with the Middle

East was concerned” (5). There is no doubt that Gibb made a significant contribution to bringing classic Arabic texts to the English-speaking world, of which *The Rihla of Ibn Battuta* in several volumes is only one example. This means that it would not be correct to say that scholarly Orientalism was (and is) one homogeneous mass of text, containing a certain hegemonic and superior “overbearing” attitude. Said agreed, as indicated earlier, that Orientalist scholarship produced and expanded an often sympathetic study of Middle and Far Eastern cultures but the net result was that it “overrode the Orient” such that an observation about a tenth-century Arab poet “multiplied itself into a policy towards (and about) the Oriental mentality in Egypt, Iraq, or Arabia”; or a verse from the Quran “would be considered the best evidence of an ineradicable Muslim sensuality” (96).

Hsu-Ming, like Said, does not argue that all Oriental scholarship was and is complicit with powerful colonial and neo-colonial interests. I am as interested in nuance as she is. Yet her general arguments support this dissertation’s thesis that writing back to or providing an alternative analysis of historical events is critical for a truly inclusive social justice project that values equally the lives of African and Asian people. Once again, there is a powerfully-entrenched historical lineage which needs to be understood in the process of working towards such justice. Sacy’s influential myth of the Hachichins is an instructive example of how texts can come to be circulated as fact through disciples, epigones, publishing presses, universities and libraries, and then insinuated into public policy with deleterious effects. David A. Guba shows how Sacy’s lecture at the Institut de France in Paris on 19 May 1809, titled “Dynasty of Assassins and the Etymology of their Name”, became part of various contemporary government policy formulations leading to the war on drugs and the mass incarceration, on often petty drug charges, of people from ethnic minorities – mostly African, Middle Eastern and Asian males (68). Guba’s 2016 article “Antoine Isaac Silvestre de De Sacy and the Myth of the Hachichins: Orientalizing Hashish in Nineteenth-Century France” shows how De Sacy had copied virtually verbatim an account of the infamous medieval cult of Islamic Assassins from Marco Polo’s travel writing (50). De Sacy repeated Polo’s account of the sect’s leader, the Old Man of the Mountain, his fortress paradise at Alamut in Northern Persia and his use of an “intoxicating poison” to drug his disciples and “transform them into mindless assassins”. From the eighteenth century onwards several French scholars, in disciplines including medicine, pharmacy, psychiatry, history, linguistics, geography, botany and agricultural science, published work drawing from Polo’s and Sacy’s accounts of the assassins of Alamut and their affiliation with the

Nizari Ismaili branch of Shia Islam, “giving Polo’s myth added historical context and academic veracity”. Although Sacy’s conclusion was challenged as far back as 1809, and was ultimately proven to be incorrect, it has appeared repeatedly in even more contemporary media as “established fact”. Especially problematically, Sacy’s utter fallacies were used by French and American politicians to justify the creation of “heavy-handed anti-drug legislation” (52). With their “repeated, mostly uncritical citations of Sacy’s work, French and European scholars steadily transformed the myth of the Hashish-eating Muslim assassins into common knowledge requiring, by the middle of the nineteenth century, no citation or reference to prove its veracity” (52).

In the United States Henry J. Anslinger, the first commissioner of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics (a forerunner of today’s Drug Enforcement Agency) and key proponent of the 1937 Marijuana Tax Act, supported his anti-cannabis campaign in the late 1930s with Sacy’s myth and etymological linkage of hashish and assassin. During a congressional hearing in late April of 1937, Anslinger relayed a “brief and humorously inaccurate account” of the “Assassins of Persia”, about a “religious and military sect” a thousand years before Christ, known for its use of hashish, now known as “marihuana”, who were noted for their “acts of cruelty, and the word assassin very aptly describes the drug” (67). This allowed Anslinger and his associates to use “nineteenth-century French stereotypes of Oriental barbarity in tandem with anti-immigrant and racist rhetoric against Latinos and African Americans to typecast marijuana as an ‘assassin of youth’ and danger to white America”. The implicit and explicit racism (or what Said called latent and manifest Orientalism) at the heart of America’s first federal drug regulation clearly opened the door for the creation of the nation’s current drug laws that “disproportionately target and systematically oppress ethnic minorities and especially the African American community” (Guba 67). Let me explain why all of this is pertinent to my own project.

As described above, these features of the Orientalist mode’s arguably loveless textual-positional superiority are applicable to literary contexts of writing, publication and reception. The word “loveless” here could in its extreme forms equally be rendered more bluntly as the behaviour and conduct of racists and white supremacists. The boundaries of this Orientalist genre, just like the minor-character elaboration genre, are quite flexible, incorporating works of academics like Bernard Lewis and Samuel Huntington, but also the artistic production of novelists like Coetzee and Snyckers. It is instructive to consider how both Snyckers’ and Coetzee’s schematisation of the

African and the Asian into the literary margins in *Lacuna* and *Disgrace* was largely supported and validated by the publishing industry and almost universally praised by literary critics, as pointed out in Chapter One. The critique of Coetzee's *Disgrace* is fairly well known and will be addressed briefly later in my study, with additional observations that have not been discussed in any detail since the novel's publication in 1999. For now, it is important to outline just how pervasive the critical support was for Snyckers' *Lacuna* and, by extension, the implied endorsement of her marginalisation of the black women already marginalised in *Disgrace*. This is a damaging economy not only of ideas, but of material force. The critical scholarship, for example, tends to focus on the white Lucy character, entrenching the author's preferred focus, along with the very lacunae which ostensibly underwrite her 'corrective' re-writing of Coetzee's omissions.

In academic Richard Alan Northover's "Lucy's Precarious Privilege in Fiona Snyckers' *Lacuna*" (2020) there is a purge of Soraya (Melanie gets two mentions) and Northover defends Snyckers as being a critic of white privilege. Northover does acknowledge the critique of both Danyela Demir and Lucy Valerie Graham (two scholars I reference in Chapter One of this dissertation), noting their objections that Snyckers upholds white heteronormativity and silences the voices more subject to precarity. However, he is dismissive of these views. He claims that Snyckers *justifies* such absences in her novel, and does "not simply provide a perspective allegedly missing from Coetzee's *Disgrace*, but, equally importantly, critiques the privileges enjoyed by white middle-class rape survivors" (1). This is similar to the arguments supporting Coetzee's *Disgrace* over the past twenty years. Interestingly, Northover posted his article on the *Coetzee Collective* Facebook page on 19 October 2020, to which academic and long-time Coetzee scholar Derek Attridge asked: "Does this meretricious work [referring to Northover's article and/or perhaps *Lacuna*] really deserve serious academic attention?" To which Attridge's fellow Coetzee supporter Linda Gilfillan answered: "It does not."

In *Litnet* on 10 July 2019, publisher and author Karina Magdalena Szczurek (widow of the late Andre Brink, who himself responded positively to *Disgrace*), re-erased Soraya and Melanie and their precarity as women of colour and rape victims in her comments on *Lacuna*. Szczurek urged readers, in a rather giddy review, to do themselves a favour by reading this "stunning piece of fiction" filled with "strength and beauty". Like Northover, Szczurek believes that Snyckers handled various topics "with aplomb", prominent among them white privilege and race. Such

apparent deftness on the writer's part she clearly thinks overrides concerns about the casual fate of the black characters in *Lacuna*. Once again, we see traces of the naturalised legacy of Orientalist views, even in the thinking of a contemporary South African critical commentator who might be expected to be better informed on literary critique.

There was a similar glowing tribute from Snyckers' fellow Pan Macmillan South Africa author Nthikeng Mohlele in "A Novel Response to *Disgrace*", in the *Mail & Guardian* on 12 April 2019. In this review, Mohlele, too, renders invisible and nameless the characters who are his fictional black sisters. Mohlele wrote his own creative response to Coetzee with the 2018 novel *Michael K*, in a self-confessed homage to his literary hero's *Life & Times of Michael K*.

It is perhaps instructive at this stage, before discussing further Mohlele's review of *Lacuna*, to reflect briefly on the case of Mohlele, whose *Michael K* is another example of how Pan Macmillan South Africa's management and editors appear to be foisting on the paying public poorly thought out work and presenting it as literary exclusives. Leading up to the launch of *Michael K*, Mohlele claimed – as it happens, incorrectly – to have been the first to respond in fictional form to Coetzee's novel featuring Michael K. On 15 February 2018, on Pan Macmillan South Africa's Facebook page, Mohlele said he found it strange that "for a writer as prominent and respected and as 'polarising' as JMC – awkward and artistically wasteful – that no direct reflections have been attempted or executed with his novelistic oeuvre". Australian author Gillian Dooley promptly corrected Mohlele, on the same Pan Macmillan South Africa Facebook page, by citing the short story "Letter to John Coetzee" written in 2016 by Australian author Michelle Cahill. Mohlele did not respond. It seems plausible to suggest, then, that Mohlele had thus not made much effort to research the work of Coetzee, and was oblivious to how many creative writers *had* as it were 'written back' to Coetzee's novelistic oeuvre, particularly *Disgrace*, including, for example, Elleke Boehmer with her short story "Sharmilla". This was a startling admission (and omission) for a writer who claimed in 2018 he had been reading Coetzee since his university days, and read *Life & Times of Michael K* about thirty times ("Kaya FM's Jenny Crwys-Williams interviews Nthikeng" on *Soundcloud*). In addition, Mohlele has a history with Coetzee, who endorsed his 2013 novel, *Small Things*, with a salutary blurb on the cover.

Mohlele, like Northover and Szczurek, praised Snyckers for her "pitch perfect" and "dazzling reading of history, literature, psychology, academia, trauma, race and gender relations and the

concept and practical implications of criminal and personal justice.” Mohlele provided no reference to any forms of history or justice for the erased black women, while asserting that *Lacuna* was “not a claustrophobic and one-dimensional book about rape”, declaring further, in a smitten tone, that Snyckers “[i]n full flight” has prose that “burns like embers” and “soars like an eagle”. Having failed to recognise the unlove in Snyckers’ work, Mohlele is now in the process of publishing *The Discovery of Love*, a collection of short stories, just as my dissertation is being completed. The irony is not lost on me that I am also writing about love in its various forms; just as I was writing about Coetzee at the time Mohlele produced his novel *Michael K*. Mohlele’s work is being published by Jacana, the company that had begun negotiations with me (including sending a draft contract) to publish *The Girl with the Red Flower*, but then inexplicably, without any explanation, abruptly ended all communication (which is a matter for another time).

And the fawning continues. Even well-known author Zukiswa Wanner wrote a glowing blurb for Snyckers’ work, in effect glossing over the long history of the erasure of black people in South African and world literature. A positive review note also came from eminently awarded author Lauren Beukes, who declared on the Pan Macmillan South Africa Facebook page on 30 August 2019 that “Fiona Snyckers’ novel *Lacuna* is furious and incandescent, told from the perspective of the rape survivor in [J.M.] Coetzee’s *Disgrace*. It deserves to win all the awards.” Beukes clearly thinks that there is only one rape survivor in *Disgrace*. Further, we have Jonathan Amid in “*Disgrace* op sy kop gedraai” on 8 July 2019 in *Beeld*. He too made no mention of the black women from *Disgrace*. In the same single-minded vein was the *Rapport* review on 16 June 2019 by Fanie Olivier, the translator of *Disgrace* into Afrikaans (titled ‘*n Oneer*): “Verkrachte vrou praat hier terug”. Reviewer Lloyd Gedye, in *New Frame* on 15 May 2019 (“*Lacuna* disputes the rape narrative of *Disgrace*”) stated that Coetzee’s Lucy had “an absence of real agency”, but did not recognise the other, agency-less black women in either Coetzee’s or Snyckers’ novels. Eusebius McKaiser, the former radio host, also had unqualified praise for *Lacuna*, in interviews with Snyckers in 2018 and 2019, available as podcasts on the Radio 702 website. He offered no incisive commentary on the missing black women.

The list of endorsements for *Lacuna* is long and, to my mind, given the focus of my doctoral dissertation, evidence of a peculiar, perplexing blindness. If Orientalism is the creation in the Western mind of the representation (in writing of all kinds) of an imagined Orient – a clotted

imaginary that coagulates disparities of the mythical, splendid, obscene, feminine, supine, and irrational – then the South African writers and reviewers mentioned above are perhaps subsumed into the core of an Orientalist cast of mind, whether blindly unseen, unwitting or blithely unconsidered, with some proponents worse than others. Said has rightly pointed out, as indicated earlier in this chapter, that in his theorising of the genre he does not argue that “Orientalism is evil, or sloppy, or uniformly the same in the work of each and every Orientalist” but that “the guild of Orientalists has a specific history of complicity with imperial power, which it would be Panglossian to call irrelevant” (342). Drawing on Said’s classification in the context of current South African literary criticism, I can scarcely avoid suggesting that the above-mentioned South African writers and reviewers lie in the Orientalist genre’s inner centre, dealing as they do in the representation of invisibility and Othering. Snyckers, her publisher and editor, and the reviewers mentioned above, are habitual purveyors of erasure, enabling the Orientalist genre’s historically “insensitive schematisation” of Muslims (to borrow Said’s remarks regarding Orientalism’s tendency towards the Orient). It can perhaps be concluded, then, albeit provocatively, that they are complicit with latent and manifest iterations of white supremacy and power.

In my letter to Pan Macmillan South Africa regarding the fate of my novel *The Girl with the Red Flower*, I pointed out how Coetzee’s supporters and scholars have routinely ignored any in-depth study of the Muslim character in *Disgrace*. This was certainly true as recently as 2019 in Sue Kossew and Melinda Harvey’s edited volume, (the very oddly titled) *Reading Coetzee’s Women*, published by Palgrave Macmillan. The book is based on the papers presented at a conference held in Italy in September 2016, and the contributions are written by academics from all over the world, all admirers of Coetzee, who himself attended and delivered a speech. The papers considered all of “Coetzee’s women” – his narrators, his characters, his relationship to women writers in South Africa and globally, (and several contributors note the lack of racial and ethnic diversity in the literary world generally). There is much consideration, and rightly so, of Lucy Lurie, at 124 mentions, but a lamentable lesser mention of Melanie Isaacs with 19. And, in these references, there is debate about whether she was raped or not. There is not a single mention of Soraya or Mrs Noerdien.

Another element bears consideration here. In similar fashion to the contributors of *Reading Coetzee’s Women*, despite knowing of my manuscript, Snyckers has rendered me nameless and

invisible as the writer of the unpublished novel *The Girl with the Red Flower*, from the time of her interaction with me on Facebook in September 2018. Snyckers chose obliquely to refer to me and my work for the first time, without naming me or my novel, in an interview on 1 February 2021 with Sarah Mosoetsa, chief executive officer of the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences. As far as her publicly available interviews are an indication, she also referred for the first time to other writers who had responded to *Disgrace* in the past. She did not name these writers. She was also clearly aware, without naming the text, of Elleke Boehmer's short-story collection *Sharmilla, and Other Portraits*, published in 2010.

Let us provide some detail here of Boehmer's work, and how it relates not only to the Orientalist genre, but also to the reverence in which Coetzee and his oeuvre is held in certain quarters of the literary establishment. This type of reverence, or deference, is in itself a key feature of the Orientalist genre, where the pronouncements of its proponents, like Sacy's creative imaginings on the Hachichins, are gradually entrenched as fact, citation by citation, over decades. In Boehmer's short story there is clearly an allusion to *Disgrace's* Soraya, the sex worker from Cape Town. Boehmer's protagonist in "Sharmilla", it should be noted, had been questioned by the police about her missing client, a Mr Charles, who had been a regular every week, much like *Disgrace's* David Lurie, the literature professor, had been a regular client of Soraya every Thursday afternoon. However, in the context of the deferential and highly partial Coetzee discourses reprised in *Reading Coetzee's Women*, what is further remarkable is that Boehmer does not mention either Sharmilla or Soraya in her essay published as part of this volume. In addition, her collection *Sharmilla* is not mentioned in Boehmer's accompanying contributor's biography, although her 2019 *second* short story collection *is* mentioned. The omission is peculiar. It need not take conspiracy thinking to suggest that there is arguably more than a touch of anxiety in Boehmer's decision not to reference any work she has produced that is *critical* of Coetzee. She seems determined not to transgress the unwritten *lèse-majesté* canonicity that has seemingly been adopted by Coetzee's dedicated following.

These considerations of Coetzee's possible sensitivities to critique, that seem to be adopted by Boehmer, have also been identified by academic and literary critic Wamuwi Mbao. Consider Mbao's review of an exhibition of Coetzee's boyhood photographs in Cape Town, written for the *Johannesburg Review of Books* on 5 February 2018 titled "JM Coetzee is tired". Mbao identifies

what he terms the “utterly white” setting, both in terms of people gathered and the decision to hold the exhibition at the Irma Stern Museum. Further, Mbao remarks the cult of personality that has developed around Coetzee among those attached to “white nostalgia”, with Coetzee’s disciples treating him variously as “Jesus” or “Scarface” or a “Maharishi”. The godlike view prevails and in their reverence most of the white people in attendance, writes Mbao, are safely assured of the rightness of their white moral universe. (As I have been suggesting, this seems a fair characterisation, too, of critical commentators who fawn over Snyckers’ *Lacuna*, a novel marked by an assertive re-marginalisation of Coetzee’s already effaced Muslim female characters.)

Indeed, a pertinent question can be posed about Coetzee’s views of Muslims, Arabs and Jews, considerations which will provide further clarity on his positionality within the Orientalist genre. I believe this question has become even more relevant given the possibility that the origin of David Lurie’s name may have been drawn by Coetzee from Chaim Potok’s 1975 novel *In the Beginning*, where the main character is an orthodox Jewish boy, David Lurie, growing up in the Bronx in the 1930s. This possible delineation of David Lurie as Jewish, based on Potok’s work, has not been considered by any Coetzee scholar over the past twenty years since *Disgrace*’s publication. To add to the complexity, there are two David Luries in Potok’s novel, the young boy David Lurie, and his uncle (who may possibly be his father) a David Lurie who had been killed in a pogrom in Poland. Young David thinks his father is Max, the brother of the slain David. Coetzee’s Lurie as Jewish is perhaps reinforced by the reference to a skullcap in *Disgrace*. When Coetzee’s David Lurie is ambushed and burnt on his head during the farm attack, he then wears his bandages like a “skullcap”, a detail which is repeated four times (113, 118, 125 and 132). It should also be noted that Coetzee’s David Lurie sees Petrus rubbing together his thumb and forefinger to indicate money, and thinking that it reminds him of how this stereotypical gesture was used to signify avaricious Jews in European history. Petrus adopts “the same meaningful cock of the head” (126). If there is credence to this proposed derivation of the name ‘David Lurie’, then perhaps Coetzee was casting his David Lurie as a Jew who is under attack and persecution by black people in the mould of murderous Nazis, aided and abetted by their sympathisers and collaborators (other black people). To some, this might seem a tendentious claim, yet in my view it carries weight, as it can arguably be understood as evincing Coetzee’s lack of love, as Gordimer put it, or perhaps contempt may be a more precise word, for Muslims and black people as versions of the Other. It must be recalled that Coetzee juxtaposes the Muslim woman Mrs Noerdien with Jewish owners of a car

parts business in *Scenes from Provincial Life* (2011) (479–480), and it is possible he may have done something similar in setting Soraya in *Disgrace* in contradistinction against the potentially Jewish figure of David Lurie.

I cannot make a great deal of this in my present study. A more in-depth, considered analysis is needed to do justice to this new possibility, including a closer reading of Potok’s work that would shed light on Coetzee’s thinking when he wrote *Disgrace* at a time of such turmoil in South African history, with whites complaining, for example, about high crime levels and forms of black threat. I will, nevertheless, provide some preliminary observations in this section. The issue of David Lurie’s Jewishness was raised with academic and pre-eminent Coetzee scholar David Attwell earlier this year, when I posed a question to Attwell about his view on Coetzee juxtaposing Muslim women with Jewish men during Attwell’s online lecture series “Literary Creativity in J.M. Coetzee”, held as part of the University of Cape Town’s Summer School from January 25 to 29. (Attwell’s quotations as they appear in my dissertation were later reaffirmed via email interaction.) During question time, Attwell responded by saying that the Jewishness of Coetzee’s David was not an “unambiguous and resolved matter”, although conceding the name is Jewish.

And what I can do is tell you about an interesting exchange with Nadine Gordimer that appears in the letters that are kept at the Harry Ransom Centre [at the University of Texas]. There is a letter from Nadine Gordimer in which she asks him why he has chosen a Jewish name for David Lurie; and he writes back to say, “Oh, I didn’t know this name was Jewish, I was thinking of the bird, the Loerie l-o-e-r-i-e.” He fudges the issue and just bounces it back to Nadine Gordimer. Well, that’s what he said to Gordimer in the letter but in the notebook there is an entry that reads: “Make him Jewish?” So he did think about it and he wasn’t responding with full candour to Gordimer’s question. So he was aware of the issue. However, I’m not convinced that it is fully [thematized] if I can put it that way because if David Lurie is Jewish then there is no hint I think of him being anything other than a fully secular, liberal intellectual ...

In his responses to me on Coetzee’s *Disgrace*, Attwell argues that David Lurie’s “intellectual affinities” are with the European Romantics and “with what they produced in English literature”. This may be so. However, in my view it is not completely accurate (or necessary) to claim that David Lurie, “in his inner life and his subjectivity”, does not embrace the Jewish tradition at all.

Attwell does admit that “There might be something around identity politics that I haven’t quite grasped but I don’t see the Jewishness as being fundamental to the construction of the character. I’m willing to be persuaded otherwise but that’s how I see it now.” While my own arguments around this issue still require development, I am hoping that this section of the research component of my dissertation might prove persuasive in prompting scholars to consider that in creating ‘David Lurie’ for *Disgrace* Coetzee was referring in an oblique way to the character’s Jewishness and to the themes highlighted in Potok’s work as it related to Jews, Muslims and Arabs – essentially, the political situation in that part of the Middle East where these cultural-religious identities most overtly interact. Perhaps Coetzee was alluding to Potok’s David Lurie’s rejection of Orthodox Judaism for a life as a secular intellectual when going against the wishes of his father at the end of Potok’s novel, with Potok’s David being inspired by the writings of English Protestant scholar S.R. Driver that call for modern interpretations of the Bible (352). (One wonders if Coetzee may have been thinking of his long friendship with the Driver family, and his long-term partner Dorothy Driver, had he made this allusion to Potok’s fiction.)

Additionally, Coetzee may have been alluding to Potok’s David’s sympathy for the Zionist project, which is also the subject of Potok’s 1969 novel *The Chosen*. It is true that nothing can be determined here with absolute certainty, but literary scholarship is adept at productive speculation in order to enable generative re-viewings of authors and texts around which received assumptions have settled, even sedimented. Just as Coetzee’s *Disgrace* arguably marginalises black and Muslim people, there is, feasibly, a similarly compromised sympathy in Potok’s fiction for the other side of the divide, the fate of those Muslims and Arabs living in Palestine. In his novel *In the Beginning* Potok provides little historical context for that long-standing Middle Eastern conflict and renders the Arabs nameless, faceless and barbaric. There is not a single reference to Islam, or Muslim and Christian Arab Palestinians, and Potok makes no mention of the ethnic cleansing that took place in Palestine, and that still continues. There has been barbarism from both sides, it is well known, but Potok’s rendering singles out the August 1929 Hebron killings. Through the character Max Lurie, readers learn that Potok’s Arabs “slaughtered [the Jews] like sheep” and “shot, stabbed and chopped [them] to pieces”; Jewish people “had their eyes pierced and their hands cut off”, and they were “burned to death in their homes” (151). Potok’s metaphorical use of animals as representative of the persecution of the Jews is reflected in *Disgrace*’s killing and burning of dogs, when Coetzee’s David Lurie carries a “crippled” dog “like a lamb” to his death by lethal injection,

with the body “burnt up” afterwards (214). (Coetzee’s *Elizabeth Costello* (2003) has a similar allusion to Jews being slaughtered like cattle, sheep and poultry, with cattle referred to 13 times from pages 79 to 194).

Beyond the metaphorical use of animals in relation to the slaughter of Jews, Coetzee’s David and Potok’s David share a love of animals, drawing an even closer similarity between the characters in the two novels. Coetzee’s David, for example, negatively views Petrus who plans to slaughter two Persian sheep for a social gathering. A further similarity between the two novels with regard to animals is Coetzee’s David referring sympathetically to an old billy-goat with “ravaged testicles” that is caressed and nursed by David’s married girlfriend Bev Shaw (78, 80, 81, 104, 123). Similarly, Potok’s David enjoys feeding and stroking a young billy-goat at a local zoo, which is referenced 29 times from pages 13 to 279. I will not further labour the issue. The point of all this detail is that there is seemingly more than a coincidental relationship between Coetzee’s *Disgrace* and Potok’s *In the Beginning*, and that it is plausible that Coetzee named his David Lurie after Potok’s two David Luries and not after Cape Town photographer David Lurie, as suggested by David Attwell to me in our email correspondence and by Ian Glenn in his 2009 article “Gone for Good: Coetzee’s *Disgrace*” (79). With Coetzee’s David linked in such a significant manner to Potok’s Jewish David, this then raises the obvious questions, as discussed above, of how Coetzee views not only Jews, but Arabs and Muslims. My sense is that Coetzee has an antipathy towards Muslims and Arabs, a feeling that perhaps reached its acme in *Disgrace*. While being very different from *Disgrace* in mode and genre, my doctoral novel manuscript hopes to offset such antipathy. A work such as *Time Will Tell*, whether in its inventive interest in black and Muslim lives, its wildly speculative reach and/or its experimentally encompassing supra-historical range, might provide a literary counter exposition against the tendencies of proponents of the Orientalist genre, such as Coetzee and Potok, disrupting their fictional worlds’ operational tendencies to vilify, marginalise and render invisible black and Muslim people.

Apart from my turning to the literary scholarship to support my claims, I believe it is important to outline Coetzee’s expressly stated views on Muslims. Such views denigrate, and by implication further support my dissertation’s rationale of foregrounding, instead, voices from the culturally-dismissed margins, including the voice of Soraya. One of my intentions in writing the novel is to redress what I believe is the often unseen grip of an Orientalist discourse on South African

literature. I recall here the controversial Salman Rushdie incident in 1988, in showing how little Coetzee thinks of Muslims and black people. Coetzee, his reserved public demeanour slipping somewhat, launched a vociferous attack on Gordimer and the Congress of South African Writers (COSAW) in 1988 over the decision to retract a speaking invitation for Salman Rushdie, who was facing death threats in the wake of the publication of *The Satanic Verses*. This was a few months before Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini passed an edict or *fatwa*, in February 1989, that Rushdie should be killed for ostensibly insulting Islam's prophet Muhammad in the novel. Coetzee was meant to speak with Rushdie at an event on 31 October 1988 at the Baxter Theatre, organised jointly by COSAW and *The Weekly Mail* (now renamed the *Mail & Guardian*). The South African censors had already banned Rushdie's book, and with threats being made by certain Muslim groups and individuals against the lives of Rushdie, the organisers and their families, it was decided to withdraw the invitation to Rushdie. This saw the normally reticent Coetzee publicly lash out at the organisers and Gordimer, essentially accusing them of censorship.

I believe, and will continue to believe, until I am otherwise convinced, that some kind of trade-off took place in a smoke-filled room, some kind of calling in of debt, some kind of compromise or bargain or settlement in which the Rushdie visit was given up for the sake of unity of the anti-apartheid alliance and in particular for the sake of not making life too difficult for Muslims in the alliance. (qtd. in Kannemeyer 706)

Coetzee's reaction implies that he had little understanding, as a privileged white academic living in a white suburb, of the danger posed to the organisers and their families. Instead, he made the unsubstantiated claim that COSAW had not "given us the full story" (qtd. in Kannemeyer in the Afrikaans version *'n Geskryfde Lewe* 706), with seemingly little care for how the Muslims and blacks who were part of the organising committee would fare having to go back to their communities under the threat of being maimed or killed for being part of the Rushdie event. Coetzee made no effort to hear their views first-hand. Instead, he assumed that they were guilty of censorship and cutting unethical deals in "smoke-filled" rooms. This constitutes a shockingly shrill "insensitive schematisation" of the Muslim and black organisers, implying that they were devious and duplicitous, in Said's categorisation.

In this first mention of Muslims in his speech, which the meticulous Kannemeyer transcribed from cassette recordings he himself located when Coetzee indicated he had not kept copies of his own,

Coetzee first groups all Muslims together as opposing free speech at the beginning of the delivery. He then goes on to again mention Muslims, but calls them “Muslim reactionaries” and “Muslim Right” while also pointing out there was religious fundamentalism as practised elsewhere by the “mullahs, the rabbis, the predikante, chanting their blessings” while not excluding “the madness of the secular apocalyptics” (706). Coetzee then goes on to describe himself as the rational, brave, white (prophet-like) saviour willing to face up to (unlikely) bomb attacks. At the same time, in a deft and imaginative sleight of hand, Coetzee casts himself *also* as a Calibanesque dog-like figure who is attempting to convince these oppressive, illogical, unlettered, unsophisticated and cowardly Muslims and blacks of the error of their ways:

I am here with my tail between my legs, like the rest of the participants, like the organisers too. That loose and fragile alliance of people, those who believe in freedom of speech and those who believe in freedom of speech for some people – we have suffered a crushing defeat. There are smiles in the mosques, there are chuckles in the corridors of Pretoria where they issued the troublemaker Rushdie with an entry visa and then watched as we proceeded to self-destruct. We are so demoralised, afraid even to pick up a telephone and dial Mr Rushdie’s London number for fear that someone will throw a bomb at us, that we have no sense of whether the Rushdie affair will in a year’s time have vanished from people’s memories or, on the contrary, will go down in history as a moment after which people simply got tired of pretending there was any place for the liberal shibboleths, freedom of speech, freedom of association and the rest, in the anti-apartheid struggle. (707)

In response to Coetzee’s tirade and accusations, Gordimer expressed dismay, saying that she was:

... extremely surprised, and shocked and distressed to find that I have come here to defend the Congress of South African Writers rather than to state the opposition of myself personally, the Congress of South African Writers, and all of us to the situation that has arisen over Salman Rushdie. I think that it is very surprising, to me, that my friend and colleague, John Coetzee, without really discussing it, with me or with anybody in the Congress of South African Writers, has sprung this public attack upon us. But that is his democratic right and that is what we’re here to defend. (qtd. in Kannemeyer 451)

Gordimer would also say, as quoted by Anton Harber in an article on 28 May 2013 “South Africa: Clash of the Booker Titans”, that Coetzee had got it completely wrong, and that COSAW had

stood firm in a meeting with some members of the Muslim organisations and sought assurances that Rushdie would not be harmed. But, Harber continued, the threats were real, and quoted Gordimer as saying: “What would you have done? Do you think Cosaw has the right to bring a man here to risk his life and safety for our principles?” Harber said Gordimer challenged Coetzee’s argument that the final question of whether to risk the violence should have been left with Rushdie, rather than to actively disinvite him. “What a copout? How was he to judge? He had not met these people, he had not seen the threats, the dangerous harassments, the notes under the door ... We could not agree to thrust the decision upon him and go out of it with clean hands.”

Later, Coetzee would respond to Gordimer, in an interview with Attwell, published in *Doubling the Point* (1992), and quoted by Kannemeyer, stating that he had in retrospect not considered the danger to Rushdie’s life. But he makes no mention of the vulnerability of all the black and Muslim participants and organisers, including the possibility that Gordimer’s life was placed at risk (Harber, it should be noted, does not record Coetzee apologising to Gordimer in his 2013 *Guardian* article):

... I became involved in an unforeseen and unsettling public disagreement with Nadine Gordimer over Salman Rushdie’s *Satanic Verses*. Rushdie had been invited to lecture in South Africa and had accepted: the disagreement was over whether, in the light of various menaces to his life (I am speaking of the time before the sentence of death was passed on him by Khomeini), the invitation should be withdrawn. I argued that it should not. In retrospect I think Gordimer, in her prudence, was right, I was wrong. (451)

In my view, it was not be the last time that Coetzee would get it spectacularly and publicly wrong. He would, I argue, repeat this with *Disgrace* ten years later, notwithstanding the Booker Prize and the other accolades accorded to that work. (Ironically, it is Rushdie who has provided the most eloquent and incisive criticism of *Disgrace*, as discussed in Chapter One.) The aftermath of Coetzee’s Rushdie speech provides a greater sense of what Coetzee thought (and may still think) about the value of Muslim and black lives when he offered no apology to those involved in the organisation of the Rushdie event. It is perhaps obvious but nonetheless important to point out that the absence of an apology in Coetzee’s case seems to assume no one to apologise *to*, thus rendering invisible those Muslims and black people who were part of the organising team. In Coetzee’s view, it seems that it was Gordimer, the fellow white person and intellectual, who deserved to be named

and to hear his public about-face, through an interview printed in a book with the subject of censorship as a diversionary tactic from the real life-and-death issues, as a fig leaf to cover what was quite shameful and potentially life-threatening behaviour. Coetzee's muted concession to being wrong reminds me of the retractions and apologies printed by newspapers, including several where I worked, often hidden away in a few lines on page five, while the original offending piece had been displayed on page one, with a colour picture, a triple deck headline, and shout outs on posters displayed on lampposts across the country. The damage had been done, of course, for which there was little recompense. Coetzee's *Disgrace* demonstrates just how inadequate and insincere his apology was in 1992 with regard to the Rushdie affair. I continue to draw the same conclusion as I did when beginning to survey his literary stance: he is an Orientalist, with all the negative connotations attached to that description that I have outlined in this chapter. In this category I have also included Snyckers, who is content not only to marginalise black people and Muslims in her fiction, but also, with the tacit support of her publishers, to render me and my work nameless and invisible.

Clearly, there is still a great need for literary counter voices in South Africa (and elsewhere) that could provide a corrective to the ongoing tendencies of work produced by those writers who persist in the Orientalist genre. This is an effort made particularly difficult because these producers are valorised by a comparatively blinkered and deferential literary press and associated scholarship. True, the Orientalist genre as I have described it is not uniformly the same or a homogeneous mass of text with no clear delineation. It has various shades and iterations, forms literary and documentary. Yet, the common denominator is Orientalism's relationship to knowledge used to advance inequalities of power. Beyond the space of the fictional text, we need to understand that such forms of power have become an entrenched *imaginary*, in that they are habitually expressed in a material manner in foreign policy, law enforcement and social prescriptions that have deleterious effects on already marginalised African and Asian people across the globe. In however small a way, I envisage that this dissertation and its creative component *Time Will Tell*, offer a contribution to a social justice project that foregrounds those from the margins, that emphasises the value of their lives and stories, and that hopefully, through the persuasive influence of its narrative, might assist in seeking redress in real, material ways for those who are characteristically Othered. In the next chapter, I provide details of the methodology of this corrective process in terms of the narrative strategies adopted in *Time Will Tell*.

Chapter Three: Maḡical Imaḡinaries

The use of various fictional methods in narrowing the distance between minority and dominant ideologies.

Maḡical Imaḡinaries: Narrative modes of reconciliation and inclusivity

Odile Heynders and Sander Bax in “Imaginary Scenarios: Literature and Democracy in Europe” (2016) convincingly argue that the narrative fictional strategy of producing sur(real) imaginaries, which offer a *vorstellung* (or proposed image) of how future individuals and powerful people act and think, can bring into sharp focus various contentious debates about the socio-economic and political state of contemporary society. This is the function of the imaginary strategy that I have adopted in my dissertation’s creative component, *Time Will Tell*, with a view to producing a novel which has the potential to illustrate narrative modes of reconciliation and inclusivity. Notice, for example, that in the title of the present chapter, “Maḡical Imaḡinaries”, I have used phonetically an Arabic letter ‘ج’ as a replacement for the same-sounding English ‘g’ letter. This is no mere trick. Instead, the replacement seeks to embody the key aim of my dissertation, which is to narrativise an inclusive social imaginary, and hopefully bridge the gap between majority and minority modes of thinking, writing *and* living. I further develop this detail of an experimental attempt at inclusivity later in the chapter. I hope my dissertation can contribute to a change in how readers think about historical events in relation to present injustices, and future possibilities for those who have been historically marginalised, even ostracised, by Euro-Western political power and cultural authority.

An ideal vehicle for my social justice project, as I have attempted to demonstrate in Chapter Two, is the literary subset of what Jeremy Rosen terms the minor-character elaboration genre that writes back to the perceived absences or gaps in canonical works. I believe this genre’s broad and flexible boundaries allow for the application of the imaginary *vorstellung* that Heynders and Bax outline in their article. I argue that the use of these imaginary scenarios can easily be recognised in various other novels that appear ostensibly *not* to deploy this narrative strategy, including Coetzee’s *Disgrace*, which seeks to comment on the current *and* future state of South Africa. (A more overt example of the imaginary scenario narrative from Coetzee’s oeuvre is the dystopian *Life & Times of Michael K.*) For *Time Will Tell*, I use the minor-character elaboration genre with my own imaginative (sur)real conception. The sur(real) comprises an imaginary scenario that builds its narrative projections –

which may variously draw on forms of the fantastical, absurd, counterfactual, surreal, ironic, satirical – on the accepted truths of a realistic setting in order to write back to the received history. There is discussion of the counterfactual, as a key element of the sur(real), in Chapter One and later in this chapter.

Extending my argument about works of fiction that evince the stereotypes characteristic of an Orientalist mode, the discussion in the present chapter groups on one side examples of imperialist and colonialist cultural production that, to my thinking, bolster division rather than reconciliation. Here, I include works I discussed earlier including Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and Coetzee's *Disgrace*, to which can be added Albert Camus' *The Stranger* (1942) and Michel Houellebecq's *Submission* (2015). In my engaging with the productive potentials of the imaginary scenario of the (sur)real, on the other side of this divide I place examples of those works of fiction I consider positive and inclusive: Timur Vermes' *Look Who's Back* (2016), George Steiner's *The Portage to San Cristobal of A.H.* (1981) and Norman Mailer's *The Castle in the Forest* (2007). I also refer briefly to novels such as Ira Levin's *The Boys from Brazil* (1976) and Phillip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* (1976). Overall, my selection of novels is influenced by the specific *vorstellung* around Hitler and the Nazi party that is an important feature of the conceptualisation and narrative strategies of my original fiction manuscript for this doctorate.

It is important to unpack a little Heynders' and Bax's concept of the imaginary scenario, and their theoretical perspectives on the (sur)real. Both of these they use to demonstrate how authors present "critiques of the dysfunction and disagreement in society and politics" (254). For Heynders and Bax, a main feature of the imaginary *vorstellung* entails a writer envisioning "the novel-as-scenario" in which "the text addresses readers as citizens and invites them to reflect on democratic practices" (254). In effect, such novels embody "an ingenious construction of reality" (256), a 'sur(reality)', which has great potential to persuade readers to reconsider naturalised "political realities and perspectives" (247). They base their theory of the imaginary scenario on Canadian academic Charles Taylor's social imaginaries, as espoused in Taylor's *Modern Social Imaginaries* (2004) which is essentially an attempt to understand how people in contemporary society collectively imagine their environment, which Taylor argues consists of the market economy, the public sphere and self-governing people. Taylor does not expressly comment on the novel as a genre, but his idea of the social imaginary can be extrapolated to literature. He argues that "like all forms of human

imagination, the social imaginary can be full of self-serving fiction and suppression, but it also is an essential constituent of the real. It cannot be reduced to an insubstantial dream” (Taylor 183). As Heynders and Bax propose, in relation to literary narrative “the concept of the imaginary scenario ... is a form of narrative or script in which a reflection on current societal issues takes place in a realist setting. It is a *Vorstellung* as mental image based on real events, topics, and discourses. The imaginary scenario ... prompts the reader to think about how to live together in society” (Heynders and Bax 252).

Heynders and Bax develop their theory by incorporating Italian academic Elena Esposito’s idea of *wahrscheinlichen realität* or probable reality. They invoke Esposito’s research to formulate their idea of the uses of the imaginary scenario in terms of the novel genre, as Esposito emphasises that an “author’s fictive reality has consequences for the real reality” (qtd. in Heynders and Bax 254). In other words, the fiction that Heynders and Bax choose to analyse to develop their theory, makes the reader aware of the world and vice versa so that “the world illustrates the fiction”. This means, rather than entailing a wholesale embrace of realism as a mode, the imaginary scenario may risk bold innovation, being “a fictional construct rooted in reality, critiquing societal issues and events really emerging” (254) yet also reaching beyond empirical givens. In outlining their theory, Heynders and Bax discuss Houellebecq’s *Submission* (2015) and Portuguese author Gonçalo M. Tavares’ *Learning to Pray in the Age of Technique* (2007). They attempt to demonstrate how these authors present, with varying degrees of effectiveness, a critique of society and politics as related to European Union concerns around immigration, terrorism, and economic and foreign policy (247). Heynders’ and Bax’s formulation has proven helpful to me. It has served to sharpen my thinking around the strategies adopted in *Time Will Tell*. Overall, in writing my novel manuscript, I have found inspiration in the notion of “imaginary scenarios” as providing “narrative constructions that blend fiction and reality, imaginative ideas and actual facts”, a combination that “challeng[es] readers to be active in negotiating meaning and reference,” and in “reorder[ing] our sense of how things are (Felski 83)” (Heynders and Bax 269).

While Heynders and Bax focus on novels which “offer imaginary scenarios that are conceivably plausible in the context of a contemporary” West (268), texts in which the “author creates a fiction that is probable and credible due to its real potential” (253), my own creative manuscript extends the parameters of their premise, and pushes beyond assumptions of the plausible and the credible,

employing elements of the (un)realistic in the form of magical and fabulist elements. This is similar to Shakespeare's use of magical and fabulist elements in *The Tempest*, imbued in the characters Sycorax, Ariel and Prospero to foreground themes of love, abandonment, sexual attraction (and frustration) and political machinations. In *Time Will Tell*, my character Zarqa (among other characters) is imbued with magical powers, alluding to Sycorax's powers (and to the powers of the mythical Zarqa Al-Yamamah), which are employed for the same purposes as attempted by Shakespeare. This is speculative creative thinking in keeping with several influential views on counterfactual history. My novel "is counterfactual in that it remakes the past. Counterfactual fiction almost invariably uses an antecedent – some rewrite of history – to produce a consequent in the form of an altered present" (Lebow 70). Here, while an element of such fiction, as in Roth's *The Plot Against America*, may be found by critics to be "counterfactual[ly] unconvincing", Richard Lebow contends that "its credibility... is beside the point". If the author, like Roth, "is self-conscious and reflective about his use of history and counter-history", despite being unevenly achieved the literary form of "counterfactual history can be used to offset inherent weaknesses of the genre of history", among them assumed truth status, "and become an effective rhetorical vehicle for advancing cultural or political projects" (Lebow 70). (I would argue that *The Tempest's* use of history and counter-history is unevenly achieved but that the text is nevertheless a powerful and influential play highlighting political and cultural issues, taken on its own rhetorical merits. One arguably uneven area in *The Tempest*, and not merely a gaping hole in the plot, for instance, is that Prospero can magically commandeer the forces of nature to trap and overpower his adversaries on the island to which he and his young daughter are banished, but is inexplicably powerless, and without magical abilities, when he is initially removed from his position as Duke of Milan.)

Time Will Tell employs a positive and inclusive imaginary scenario to counteract negative and divisive imaginary scenarios I have encountered in works of literature such as Coetzee's *Disgrace*. *Disgrace* adopts a (sur)real or imaginative *vorstellung* which, to my thinking, disparagingly and fearfully projects the likely future genocide of white (possibly Jewish) people by 'Nazi-like' Others bent on destruction, notably blacks, but by extension also Arabs and Muslims. The putative targets in *Disgrace* are envisioned particularly as ageing white men like the academically ineffectual and sexually diminished David Lurie, and his daughter Lucy Lurie, despite her liberal inclinations. Nor is Coetzee alone among contemporary white writers in his phobic anxieties. Houellebecq's *Submission* has the protagonist Francois, a middle-aged and sexually frustrated Parisian academic, observing a

Muslim Brotherhood coalition come to power in France in 2022. In this hostile, alienating environment (we are to believe), France is turned from a secular to a religious state. Jews emigrate to Israel for safety; women cover up and wear veils; polygamy is encouraged. Houellebecq is a self-avowed Islamophobe (see Kuper and Chrisafis) but is purporting, as some Houellebecq apologists have tried to argue with *Submission*, to offer a more nuanced and sympathetic view of Islam. In the media, Houellebecq and his sympathisers, including those writers and cartoonists at the satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo*, mount an argument for the work to stand on its own merits, or for its text to be considered autonomous from his personal, often vitriolic views of Muslims and Islam. (These arguments are similar to those advanced by defenders of Coetzee's *Disgrace* and by advocates of Snyckers' *Lacuna*.) In *Charlie Hebdo*, on 7 January 2015, the day that the magazine's publishing house was attacked by terrorists claiming to be Muslim, the satirical magazine had a cartoon promoting *Submission* by depicting Houellebecq preparing to celebrate Ramadan, in a magician's hat, as if predicting the future. (This prophet-like figure is reminiscent of both Coetzee's vatic statements during the Rushdie affair, and *Disgrace*'s David Lurie predicting a black-versus-white apocalyptic future.) Literary critic Mark Lilla claimed, in support of Houellebecq and dismissing claims of Houellebecq's Islamophobia and racism, that it would "take a long time for the French to read and appreciate *Submission* for the strange and surprising thing that it is." Lilla avers that Houellebecq has "created a new genre – the dystopian conversion tale", and that the Muslim takeover of France was "not the story some expected of a coup d'état, and no one in it expresses hatred or even contempt of Muslims":

It is about a man and a country who through indifference and exhaustion find themselves slouching toward Mecca. There is not even drama here – no clash of spiritual armies, no martyrdom, no final conflagration. Stuff just happens, as in all Houellebecq's fiction. All one hears at the end is a bone-chilling sigh of collective relief. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. Whatever. (Lilla)

Lilla's remarks are typical of the Orientalist's defence that writers like Houellebecq cannot be Islamophobes if they do not depict violence and "conflagration" between Muslims and non-Muslims (which of course also ignores Houellebecq's *admission* of being an Islamophobe). As Said has rightly pointed out, as I indicate in Chapter Two, Orientalism is an attitude of superiority adopted by the West over the East.

In contrast to the sympathetic views towards Houellebecq of Lilla and others, several writers have pointed out that Houellebecq's work is part of a campaign in the French media against the immigration of Muslims and Arabs, and immigration in general of people from war-ravaged and impoverished African and Asian countries. *Submission* was published "at the height of a long build-up of tension in France in which books, media and magazines had for months been relentlessly focusing on Islam as if the religion itself was a threat to France", writes Angelique Chrisafis in "Michel Houellebecq: 'Am I Islamophobic? Probably, yes.'" In addition, writes Chrisafis, the essayist Eric Zemmour had earlier topped the non-fiction bestseller list with *Le Suicide Français* (*The French Suicide*) in which he argued that "millions of Muslims might be colonising and transforming the country and should be 'repatriated'." Houellebecq, who told Chrisafis in the 2015 interview that he had not read Zemmour's work, was accused of "stoking this further by coming up with a highly implausible scenario in which an Islamist party takes over France, when Muslims in reality make up only a small percentage of the population." Zemmour, the son of Jewish *pied noirs* who had emigrated from Algeria when it became independent, had stated that young migrants from Arab countries (similar to Donald Trump's railings against Mexicans) "like the rest of the immigrants, must stop coming. All, all, all, because they have nothing to do here. I repeat it. They are thieves. They are murderers. They are rapists. That is all they are. They have to be sent back" (qtd. in Marlowe). Zemmour has been convicted four times in France for hate speech, but still remains on air, on the right wing CNews television channel (Marlowe). Such inflammatory racist hate speech gives context to Houellebecq's provocative, highly controversial treatment of Muslims and Islam in *Submission*.

Notably, other observers than I remain rightly unconvinced that Houellebecq is trying to depict a more nuanced view of Islam with *Submission*. Among these are Per-Erik Nilsson in his emphatically-titled article "Fuck Autonomy: Neo-Orientalism and Abjection in Michel Houellebecq's *Soumission*" (2020). Nilsson points out convincingly that Houellebecq's "depiction of an intra-Hexagonal clash of civilisations [echoes of Huntington's hyperbolic *Clash of Civilisations*, as I outline in Chapter Two] is far from sociological reality". Nilsson argues that Houellebecq "captures and reproduces central tropes in French far-right discourses on Islam that it is an ever-violent religious ideology taking hold of France, where French Muslims are depicted as fifth-columnists". Nilsson emphasises that Houellebecq's writings have consistently depicted Muslims as the barbarian Other, as Muslim murderers in the French countryside, "misogynist Muslim youth in the *banlieue*", Muslim terrorists bombing a Western tropical tourist paradise, or Islam demonised as an essentially "dangerous

religion” (601). For example, the protagonist in Houellebecq’s novel *Platform* (2001), white Frenchman Michel Renault, a Parisian civil servant, blames the killing of his girlfriend Valerie on Islamist terrorists:

Islam had wrecked my life, and Islam was certainly something that I could hate. In the days that followed, I devoted myself to trying to feel hatred for Muslims. I became quite good at it and I started to follow the international news again. Every time I heard that a Palestinian terrorist, or a Palestinian child or a pregnant Palestinian woman had been gunned down in the Gaza Strip, I felt a quiver of enthusiasm at the thought that it meant one less Muslim in the world. Yes, it was possible to live like this. (346)

Delphine Grass accentuates that a “very worrying trend about the novel is that it openly renews what Edward Said critiqued as the distorted representation of the ‘Orient’ in European literature.” Houellebecq appears to argue, writes Grass, that in the near-future described in the novel, religion offers “renewal to a consumer society in tatters, a society that has lost its drive for pleasure.” This form of renewal is the “veil of transcendence lacking in a materialist society. This is mostly obvious in the novel’s sexual scenes, and in the exotic language which surrounds them” (Grass). Houellebecq’s protagonist, Francois, has sex with two women, and the description of sex with one, Rachida, a 22-year-old Moroccan, most likely Muslim, is portrayed as “akin to spiritual rebirth”, writes Grass. This exoticising of the “Oriental” woman, in this case a North African Arab woman, is typical of the Orientalist genre, as I describe it in Chapter Two, in relation to the travel writing of various European writers in the nineteenth century, who saw the Orient as a form of renewal, particularly in their physical and ocular possession of African/Eastern women’s bodies, and popularised damaging ideas that have become widely entrenched. Houellebecq’s Francois, in his sexual encounter with Rachida “felt the stirrings of something new”; and later he hopes that he can see her “on a regular basis” (132) with the possibility of “having feelings for each other” and to replicate the “miracle” of his first visit (137). This encounter has echoes in Coetzee’s *Disgrace*, with David Lurie experiencing the “bliss ... the poets speak of” (5) in his sexual encounters with Soraya, whom he hopes but fails to see outside the transactional confines of Discreet Escorts (9). No longer able to see Soraya when she rejects him, Lurie returns to the emotionless sex of women like Dawn, who appears to be “coloured” and Christian, but despite her “[b]ucking and clawing” only “repels” him (7).

For my own part, (in line with Said's theories, and Nilsson's views), I aver that writers the likes of Houellebecq and Coetzee operate within the Orientalist genre in terms of their subject matter, circulating negative views of Islam and Muslims. Analogous Orientalist narrative features, with similarly anxious conceptions of an Africanised-Islamicised future society, can be found in Albert Camus' *The Stranger* (1942), whose *pied noir* French protagonist's existential and sexual angst in pre-liberation Algeria is predicated on his murder of an unnamed and unconsidered Arab man on a beach. In my view, Camus' *The Stranger* is one of a long line of ideological ancestors to both Coetzee's *Disgrace* and Houellebecq's *Submission*, and provides an imaginary conception of the current and future state of Algeria, in which the feelings and predicaments of the colonial figure remain of pre-eminent importance, with people of colour declared unnamed and invisible, or glossed over by arguments falling under the category of ironic absence. (This idea of ironic absence is an overriding feature of the sycophantic literary criticism of *Disgrace* produced by Coetzee's epigones and supporters that I discuss in Chapter Two.)

These ironic absences bring to mind Chinua Achebe's critique of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* that, Achebe argues, despite its much-lauded critique of colonialism and imperialism, nevertheless still operates in a racist mode. This happens by placing Africans in terms of "Western psychology ... as a foil to Europe, as a place of negations at once remote and vaguely familiar, in comparison with which Europe's own state of spiritual grace will be manifest" (Achebe 3). In addition, some African males, represented as mimicking their Western masters in terms of their ability to carry out complex work-related tasks, were no more than, as Conrad's protagonist states, "a dog in a parody of breeches and a feather hat walking on his hind legs" (59). Similarly, Achebe points out (4), Conrad, who Achebe pronounces a "thoroughgoing racist" (6), describes in quite vivid detail, through his protagonist Marlow, the erotic and exotic African woman as "savage and superb, wild-eyed and magnificent ... She stood looking at us without a stir and like the wilderness itself, with an air of brooding over an inscrutable purpose" (101). Achebe is apt when he says that Conrad's African woman (much like the Othered women in Shakespeare, Camus, Coetzee and Snyckers) meets Conrad's approval because she is "in her place" and also "fulfils a structural requirement of the story: a savage counterpart to the refined, European woman [distressed and mourning Kurtz's death] who will step forth to end the story." Conrad portrays the European woman as sensitive, tearful and almost angelic and she is given, as Achebe points out, "human expression [and] language" (4), in comparison

to the denigrated depictions of African women in *Heart of Darkness*. This is how Conrad depicts the European woman:

She had a mature capacity for fidelity, for belief, for suffering. The room seemed to have grown darker, as if all the sad light of the cloudy evening had taken refuge on her forehead. This fair hair, this pale visage, this pure brow, seemed surrounded by an ashy halo from which the dark eyes looked out at me. Their glance was guileless, profound, confident, and trustful ... By the last gleams of twilight I could see the glitter of her eyes, full of tears – of tears that would not fall. (124–127)

Admittedly, Achebe's scathing critique has its detractors, among them David Denby (1995). In *The New Yorker* Denby eschews a tone of scholarly disinterest and admits he is "angry" at the equally angry conclusions drawn by Achebe, Said and the intellectual left, whom he terms "politicised critics". Denby states that Achebe and Said have destroyed all sense of reading for enjoyment (by people like himself) and have failed to recognise how Conrad's work contains a *critique* of imperialism. At the end of his rebuke, Denby does acknowledge, somewhat half-heartedly, that Achebe and Said have allowed him and other white critics to see how Conrad was part of the colonising enterprise, but he still disputes the premise and extent of Conrad's imperial politics. I agree with Achebe's view, as I do with Said's, that being labelled as racist is a hard pill to swallow for those brought up to believe in the moral rightness of Western culture and its cultural products in literature, which they regard as universalised moral instruments. So Achebe's argument rings true to me: "white racism against Africa [and the East] is such a normal way of thinking that its manifestations go completely unremarked". Achebe argues that the deterioration of the European mind, in this case Kurtz's (as is the case for protagonists in other examples from Western literature mentioned in this chapter), takes place with Africa as a setting "which eliminates the African as human factor. Africa as a metaphysical battlefield devoid of all recognisable humanity, into which the wandering European enters at his peril." Achebe demurs:

Can nobody see the preposterous and perverse arrogance in thus reducing Africa to the role of props for the break-up of one petty European mind? But that is not even the point. The real question is the dehumanization of Africa and Africans which this age-long attitude has fostered and continues to foster in the world. And the question is whether a novel which celebrates this

dehumanization, which depersonalizes a portion of the human race, can be called a great work of art. My answer is: No, it cannot. (6)

In my doctoral dissertation, drawing on critiques such as Achebe's (and Said's) as both research concept and creative inspiration, I am committed to developing effective counter voicing to Western cultural production's habitual historical negation of African and Asian people. While this 'counter' energy is invested in my (as yet) unpublished MA novel *The Girl with the Red Flower*, where I write back in relation to *Disgrace*, in my PhD novel *Time Will Tell*, I widen the ambit beyond *Disgrace* so as to speak back to earlier literary precedents that involve an Orientalising subjugation. Prominent here is the culturally influential magical imaginary created by Shakespeare in *The Tempest* (as discussed in Chapter One), and including responses to this play by post-colonial writers like Aimé Césaire. In Shakespeare's last play, the existential predicament of the white, colonial figure could be said to develop a trope that serves as a key precursor for later generations of Orientalists, as the metropolitan European magus is foregrounded at the expense of debased and marginalised subjects: Sycorax, who is possibly a Muslim woman from Algiers, and Caliban, most likely her Muslim son. Perhaps ambitiously, in comparison with tendencies now long-established in Western 'white writing', my own manuscript *Time Will Tell* attempts to devise an imaginary narrative strategy so as to portray, in the historically divided, indeed experientially and ideologically divisive, South African context, an imaginatively sustaining, connected and inclusive world view. I bring together a deliberately (sur)real time premise and cast of characters from historically opposed camps and cultures, instead of relying on a more familiar realist-inflected literary treatment premised on difference and Othering.

In the service of illustration, let me address in further detail the remarkable similarity of the imaginary scenarios adopted in *The Tempest*, *The Stranger*, *Disgrace* and *Submission*. In each case, the authorial tactics render invisible, without agency, backward and barbaric, people of colour from Africa and the East. In effect, this comprises the almost identical tendencies of characterisation, voice, plot structure and story that form part of what Said calls strategic formation and strategic location in the Orientalist genre. All these works include the foregrounding of central protagonists who share emphatic similarities, evident when a reader is willing to use an optic which critiques naturalised conventions, rather than blithely endorsing them. Shakespeare, Camus, Coetzee and Houellebecq (and Snyckers, I might add) *all* give us abject and Calibanesque figures. Prospero, Meursault, David Lurie and Francois are all sexually frustrated and/or impotent male protagonists; they are white and educated,

some are academically-trained (Snyckers' Lucy is an academic). The social imaginaries of these authors occur in a range of cultural-historical contexts which in my view attests to the development and perdurable persistence of Orientalism's characteristically prejudicial views, and they are pitted against (and struggle to live with) varieties of threatening, alien, Muslim/Eastern, Others. The potential Muslim/Eastern angle of these texts, in particular, is admittedly unevenly evident across the texts in question. Yet I suggest the incontrovertible value of speculating about the centrality of these portrayals, in enabling forms of critical thinking regarding Shakespeare's possibly Muslim Sycorax and Caliban on their unnamed island, Camus' Arabs and Muslims in Algeria, Coetzee's blacks and Muslims in South Africa (and possibly Arabs and Palestinians in Israel and elsewhere), and Houellebecq's France overrun by Muslims.

To offer but a few brief examples of commentary, in order to make my point. As Md Habibullah and Nurun Nahar note, the "Arabs never speak for themselves; not a word is uttered by any of the natives in *The Stranger* ... When the natives are not represented with silence, it is with mysterious and threatening body language and sounds such as murmuring, laughter, the melody made by blowing through a reed, and by the drawing of knives" (17). In countering this depiction in *The Meursault Investigation*, Daoud tactically conflates Camus and Meursault, as an instructive commentary on authorial intervention and control. As Jennifer Solheim contends: "Through Harun, Daoud explores both the ethics of Camus creating a nameless Arab character to kill on the beach as part of a philosophical exploration, and the horror of a *pied noir* [literally, black foot, the term used to describe Algerian citizens of French origins] being canonized for killing an Arab." Daoud has adopted a position regarding Camus that is mirrored in Said's critique of the French-Algerian writer. In *Culture and Imperialism* (1994) Said recognises Camus' opposition to colonialism and imperialism, but points out that Camus remains part of this hegemonic system, even as a person striving to be a "moral man in an immoral situation" (174). Said does not accept that Camus' choice of an Algerian locale "seems incidental to the pressing moral issues at hand" and that the novels should now, consequently, in ahistorical fashion, be read as universalised "parables of the human condition". Camus, as Said argues aptly, is unable to escape his own authorial/authority position as a Frenchman first and Algerian second, which sees him kill an unnamed and unconsidered Arab in *The Stranger*. Similarly, in Camus' *The Plague* (1947), the Arabs killed by the plague in Oran remain unnamed while the French characters Rieuw and Tarrou "are pushed forward in the action" (176). This aspect of *The Plague* has obvious relevance for us today, living through a pandemic, with the plethora of media

reports highlighting what appear to be “vaccine apartheid” and the reluctance of large pharmaceutical companies to provide the formulae of their vaccines for generic production that would assist in the cheaper provision of vaccinations for largely poor, black and undeveloped nations. In fiction as in real life, it is therefore the value of black, Muslim/Eastern lives that are in dispute, not those of the rich, largely white West. (Camus, it should be noted, never supported Algerian independence – while championing struggles elsewhere against the Nazis, Italian fascists, Stalinists and white supremacists in the United States. Camus apparently feared the violent estrangement of French Algerian *pied noirs* by what he deemed indigenous Algerians with a penchant for violence. Instead, he wanted all Algerians to be granted French citizenship. See for further analysis of Camus’ contentious position in Algerian and French literature Youcef Oussama Boubnab’s 2020 “Albert Camus, *The Plague* and Race” in *Jadaliyya*.)

Even Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, a much-respected Western text, has provoked in me negative reactions based on the playwright’s Orientalising tendencies. While *The Tempest*, for example, is frequently invoked as a text amenable to an enabling postcolonial interpretation, turning attention to Sycorax unsettles this optic, and allows me to ‘recover’ her depiction from Shakespeare’s negativity, with a focus on her possible loving relationship with her son Caliban based on a new etymology for their names, as I discuss later in this chapter. In a recent essay that speaks obliquely to the minor-character elaboration genre, Öz Öktem offers his own fresh insight into the play’s political-ideological structure through a reading of “the offstage character” Claribel, a Neapolitan princess given in marriage to the king of Tunis. Öktem’s analysis shows something of women’s convoluted exchange value in the textual and social economy of *The Tempest*, an analysis which “undermines the play’s overconfident postcolonial interpretations based on the Prospero-Caliban relationship” (36). Through such a lens, in my PhD research other noticeable narrative patterns have also become evident across works by Shakespeare, Camus, Coetzee and Houellebecq: these texts juxtapose seemingly virginal or innocent white women (in some cases possibly Jewish) with sexually experienced, duplicitous and aggressive black, Muslim (Eastern) women: we have Prospero’s Miranda contrasted with Sycorax, Meursault’s Marina with the unnamed Arab mistress, Lurie’s daughter Lucy with Soraya (and Snyckers’ Lucy with invisible aggressive Muslim women), and Francois’ Myriam with all the veiled, submissive Other Muslim women in the text. I have pointed out in previous chapters how this typical schematisation of Muslims, which Said calls insensitive schematisation, forms part of a long and ‘illustrious’ European tradition, stretching back to antiquity. I believe these types of narratives

continue to feed into ideas of neo-colonialism resulting, as Said points out, in material consequences, such as domestic and foreign policies adopted by governments (as I have indicated in previous chapters). Said has written extensively in *Orientalism, Culture and Imperialism* (1994), *The Question of Palestine* (1992) and *Peace and its Discontents* (1996), as have many others including Noam Chomsky in *Failed States* (2006), of how virtually every Arab and Muslim country with strategic resources and in strategic locations is currently being overrun by foreign, mostly Western armies (this is apart from other non-Arab and non-Muslim countries facing similar imperialist intrusions in Latin America, Africa and the Far East).

In my reading for the research component of my creative, practice-led dissertation, I have been severely troubled to find the regularity with which many historical forms of Orientalised ‘Other’, especially those who are Arab-Muslim, have characteristically been marginalised in works which comprise a venerated Western canon. The numbers are, distressingly, too numerous to engage, and the examples of celebrated writers who evince this Othering occur across historically and geographically varied contexts. Further, this Othering is pernicious, since revered writers such as Shakespeare, Camus, Coetzee and Houellebecq – like many authors writing about or dealing with the so-called Orient – convey and express opinions that function beyond a delimited, literary sphere of influence. Their work is part of an entrenched system of cultural and corporeal colonisation that operates under the guise of a progressive liberalism ostensibly seeking to spread democracy. (For an incisive analysis of how South Africa’s liberals suddenly lose their ability to adjudge oppression and freedom of speech when confronted with the predicament of the Palestinian Arabs, and the outspoken activism of their supporters, see Stephen Friedman’s “The Palestinian blinkers that liberals don” published on 29 April 2021 in *New Frame*.) I find that the cultural production of these authors feeds into this system of domination, in which a cultured and superior West assumes authority over an uncultured and inferior East, and is perhaps the overriding reason for these authors’ valorisation with publishing contracts, awards and the attendant financial and other opportunities that arise from such validation.

What I see in these authors, as Said has argued, is that they are not using knowledge of other people derived from “understanding, compassion, careful study and analysis” for the purpose of “co-existence and humanistic enlargement of horizons”. Instead, they are using knowledge to “dominate

for the purposes of control and external dominion” (xix). I agree with Said when he argues that every European writing about the Orient is prejudiced in one form or another:

It is therefore correct that every European, in what he could say about the Orient, was consequently a racist, an imperialist, and almost totally ethnocentric. Some of the immediate sting will be taken out of these labels if we recall additionally that human societies, at least the more advanced cultures, have rarely offered the individual anything but imperialism, racism, and ethnocentrism for dealing with “other” cultures. So, Orientalism aided and was aided by general cultural pressures that tended to make more rigid the sense of difference between the European and Asiatic parts of the world. My contention is that Orientalism is fundamentally a political doctrine willed over the Orient because the Orient was weaker than the West, which elided the Orient’s difference with its weakness. (204)

In my own novel manuscript for the PhD, I expressly attempt to imagine a creative discourse which counteracts an Orientalist erasure and devaluing of black and Other lives. I try this by giving experimental voice and visibility to characters whose lives and histories have been habitually erased. Importantly, though, I work in a (sur)real mode, meaning *beyond* the comforting, familiar bounds of a realism that might too easily be conflated by readers with an ‘authentic presencing’ that conveniently absolves literary history of its habitual stereotyping by ‘overcoming’ such denigrations. Here, in comparison to the Orientalising texts I have mentioned by Shakespeare, Camus, Coetzee and Houellebecq, I affiliate my efforts with fiction on the more productive side of the imaginary scenario: works that positively seek a form of inclusivity rather than highlighting difference and effecting marginalisation. I will briefly consider three examples in the section that follows: Timur Vermes’ *Look Who’s Back*, George Steiner’s *The Portage to San Cristobal of A.H.* and Norman Mailer’s *The Castle in the Forest*. These are particularly important texts for the construction of my characters and imaginary *vorstellung* in *Time Will Tell*, since mine is a novel which also provides a future forecast that comments on current conditions. In *Time Will Tell*, I portray Adolf Hitler alongside Nelson Mandela and Hendrik Verwoerd as (sur)realistically living in (a future) contemporary society. My point is to provide commentary on a world that has seen the continued marginalisation of poor, largely black people, while elites, largely white people and beneficiaries of white historical privilege, endorsed by black collaborators, continue to operate an unequal system that entrenches their elevated socio-economic and political status. I adopt (and adapt) approaches taken by Vermes, Steiner and

Mailer who attempt to recognise and unveil the racism and prejudice contained in the figure of Adolf Hitler, yet at the same time acknowledge that this violence can provide an understanding of how negative ideas that operated in the past can generate productive analyses; lessons for the present, and the future. Vermes' *Look Who's Back*, for instance, situates Hitler in contemporary Germany, where he becomes a popular media personality playing himself, to an unwitting audience. This time-warp premise facilitates the unfolding of a layered plot, marked by repeated mis/apprehensions that serve to emphasise the brutal absurdity of Nazi policies. Through what might at first strike appear as a preposterous premise, characters take readers through complex, multidimensional, interlocked experiences of military subjugation, economic exploitation, racism, classism, sexism, xenophobia and homophobia. This reminds us that the sur(real) is not a simplistic social imaginary, but one able to recast a "provocative realist setting as an obvious imaginary construct [that] gives the novel a specific urgency", since the "*Vorstellung* critiques actual events and concerns" (Heynders and Bax 249).

Also important to my project are the debates around *Look Who's Back* (though academic scholarship *per se* is scarce). On the one hand, the novel is considered to comment successfully on historical and contemporary German society, and the translation aides in cultural understanding and affinity, processes which have the potential to ameliorate conflict between communities and nations (Norrick-Rühl and Ramdarshan 3). On the other, some commentators point out the danger of naturalising a Nazi past, via the author's satirically humorous methods. For example, American historian Gavriel D. Rosenfeld in *Hi Hitler: How the Nazi Past is Being Normalized in Contemporary Culture* (2015), argues that Vermes' novel (along with cultural texts such as Norman Finkelstein's *The Holocaust Industry* and Quentin Tarantino's film *Inglourious Basterds*) attempts to normalise the Nazi past through critical categories of universalisation, relativisation and aestheticisation. Those who *universalise* the Nazi past challenge the historical uniqueness of the Holocaust, like Finkelstein's work, emphasising parallels between past and present political situations or leaders, or pointing to broader underlying psychological, social, or economic tendencies in all cultures that render them vulnerable to fascism and racism. Those who *relativise* Nazi atrocities might create a dangerous, unjust equivalency between perpetrators and victims. *Aestheticising* the past uses various "unconventional" means of engaging with Nazi history, primarily humour, as in Vermes' *Look Who's Back* and Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds*, but also narrative devices and framing that are not entirely realist, factual and moral. I do not agree with his easy categorisations. As Anna Schaffner points out in her review article "Look Who's Back" (2015), Rosenthal outlines a promising but unfortunately

too schematic paradigm that assigns his case studies to one of two schools: “those that are moralistic, and that adhere to the exceptionality argument; and those that are normalizing” (3). Instead, many of the works Rosenthal discusses manage to offer both ethical *and* entertaining engagement. In so doing, they “adopt a position that does not trivialize the memory of the horrors and the crimes of the Third Reich, while at the same time also looking to experiment with modes other than the rigidly realistic, didactic, moralizing, or tragic” (3).

My own fictional writing strives for this doubled effect, and I have found inspiration in several sur(real) narratives that speak back to historical truth and forwards to future historical possibility via methods that refer to empirical reality but also twist and torsion the real. Consider, for instance, how Mailer’s Hitler is portrayed in *The Castle in the Forest* as a child who has a guardian that is a demon, in the guise of a Nazi officer, who works for Satan to nurture the young Adolf. It is this demon-guardian who narrates the youngster’s early years growing up. Mailer’s work was relatively well-received, with some reservations, by the critics. Adam Mars-Jones (2015) finds Mailer’s work “highly impressive for long stretches, but its flaws are perverse and even preposterous”, which are all found in the “insistent, maddeningly silly cosmological framework”. Mars-Jones’ critique of the illogical and “silly” premise and framing is, in my opinion, exactly the point of the unconventional narrative exercise that Mailer and others have undertaken with regard to the study of the Hitlerian personality. I would argue that Mailer’s approach allows for perhaps a closer scrutiny of the illogic and absurdity of Hitler’s and the Nazi party’s policies. In contrast to Mars-Jones’ critique, Beryl Bainbridge values Mailer’s work as a study of the nature of evil, in the various forms it takes in individuals. Mailer, writes Bainbridge, is a “master of prose” who “reinforces the belief that we kid ourselves if we lay the blame for hideous crimes on one single individual, even if it is the devil. We are all culpable.”

Such a reception contrasts with the vociferous reactions to Steiner’s depiction of Hitler in *The Portage to San Cristobal of A.H.*, where Hitler is found alive in the Amazon jungle and put on trial for his crimes against humanity. Steiner’s novella was controversial, with several critics complaining that Hitler was given the last word in the work, meaning that he was basically allowed by Steiner to explain himself. John Leonard of *The New York Times* in his review “Books of the Times” on 16 April 1982 insists that Hitler’s speech at the end of the novel made him “sick to my stomach” because it was “obscene” to end the narrative with Hitler speaking without providing a rebuttal. (At one point in my writing of *Time Will Tell*, I drafted a narrative ending which had H.F. Verwoerd presenting his

evidently crazed conclusions, but I elected to rework this, so as not to end with a violent voice that threatened the very collaborative empathies underpinning the restitutive imaginary scenario of my fictional world.) Steiner himself acknowledges that his book's themes were difficult to grapple with in the writing process. In an interview with *The New York Times*' D.J.R. Bruckner in "Talk with George Steiner" published on 2 May 1982, Steiner states that he intended the novel as a commentary on all types of seemingly intractable human conflicts across the globe, rather than endorsing Hitler and his Nazi regime. The conflict and misapprehension provoked by the novella attest to the continuing generational traumas of history, and suggest how important it remains, albeit also how difficult, for authors to attempt to engage historically challenging subject matters so as to foster debate and discussion. Steiner believes that a work of art, "like metaphors in language", can bring a reader into the argument, coaxing a reader to seek answers other than those which appear self-evident, or culturally obvious. In his talk with Bruckner, Steiner expresses pessimism about finding hope for humanity because of the intractable, endless wars being waged across the globe. At the same time, though, he emphasises his belief that works of art could tentatively contribute to building hope where there is seemingly none. Steiner, speaking to Bruckner on writing and language, explains that in *The Portage to San Cristobal of A.H.*, he offers commentary not only on the "horror and terror" of the Holocaust, but also, among other global wars and atrocities, Cambodia and Vietnam, El Salvador and Burundi. To deal effectively with these issues, which entail moral and imaginative distress, is to "grapple with the abyss if one can". Here, Steiner contends, the power of language itself can materialise as a force for positive or negative change. (This is an issue to which I am extremely alert, in my own dissertation novel.) Steiner explains:

The idea for the novel arises out of my lifelong work on language. Central to everything I am and believe and have written is my astonishment, naive as it seems to people, that you can use human speech both to bless, to love, to build, to forgive and also to torture, to hate, to destroy and to annihilate. In the gospel we read: "In the beginning was the word." And I am asking: Could there be a word at the end? If there is a divine word, a word of creation and forgiveness, is there by the same token a word of final destruction, a word which un-mans man? And did [even] Hitler come very near to knowing that word?

My dissertation is attuned to Steiner's wonder and fascination with the power of language as I explore the words that create a feeling of love and togetherness amidst those words that do the opposite. In

this regard, for example, what are the words in Shakespeare's *The Tempest* that seek to annihilate and “un-man man”, or to dehumanise humans? In the section that follows, I explore the words *kalb* and *qalb*, which could be said to sit on opposite sides of Steiner's metaphorical life and death equation. I ask whether Shakespeare's name for Caliban can be derived from a different root than *kalb*, Arabic for ‘dog’. In a creative move that seeks to build positivity, I suggest that the etymology for Caliban can be drawn from *qalb*, the Arabic for ‘heart’. In effect, then, I risk proposing an answer to the question that Steiner poses at the end of the quotation above: did Hitler know the word for the final destruction? My answer would be that all of us human beings know the words for life and for destruction, because we deploy these words daily to build or to break down, in arguments both petty and serious. There is no mystery involved in this process of seeking words that signify life-giving love or death-inducing erasure. We simply have to decide which form of power, as Steiner puts it, we want to deploy.

قاليبان and كالبان: Language repertoires to serve postcolonial imperatives

An important feature of my dissertation is language, driven by my wish to demonstrate the challenges, for my colonially-disruptive imaginative project, of using heteroglossic linguistic repertoires as modes to serve postcolonial imperatives. (I will explain more fully later in this section the use of the similar-sounding Arabic letters ق and ك – roughly analogous to the English ‘c’ as pronounced in Caliban – to indicate respectively the Arabic words *qalb* (heart) and *kalb* (dog). This will underscore my arguments around a new possible etymology for the names Caliban and Sycorax.) In *Time Will Tell*, I use the 26 letters of the Arabic alphabet to create *ArabiK* and *ArabiX* that is the basis of a secret language of communication between the characters Atallah (also known as Nelson) and Zarqa. *ArabiK* encompasses the phonetic reproduction, using Arabic letters, of a version of *Kaaps*, a vernacular spoken in Cape Town's city and surrounding areas by black Afrikaans speakers from mainly the Muslim community. *ArabiX* is an attempt to reproduce phonetically, with Arabic letters, some isiXhosa words used by my character Nelson Mandela, derived largely from Mandela's autobiography *A Long Walk to Freedom*. This is patently an unusual creative undertaking, subject to risk, critique, and even failure, but this is mitigated to a considerable degree by embodying the strategy in the story, plot and characterisation of *Time Will Tell*. The goal, following Steiner's

thinking, is to use words and language to join, to “bless, to love, to build, to forgive”, rather than to “torture, to hate, to destroy and to annihilate”. The invented secret language of Atallah and Zarqa comprises a form of communicating love, between two people from seemingly different communities. Beyond this, the cross-cultural code serves as a metaphor for the power of language to prompt reconciliation between people.

When discussing *Kaaps*, I refer specifically to the use of *Kaapse* Afrikaans, rather than those forms of Afrikaans claimed to be *suiwer* or pure, and other varieties spoken by various white Afrikaner communities and certain sections of black (or coloured in the apartheid classification) Afrikaans communities. The challenge, I have discovered, has been to seek located ‘authenticity’ without reprising stereotypical idioms. My use of the contrivance *ArabiK* alludes to how the early Muslims in the Cape in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries kept Islam alive under various oppressive colonial administrations by using the Arabic language innovatively to mimic Dutch and Afrikaans. This enabled them to impart various aspects of the religion, and to teach the ‘master’s language’ to each other. In addition, my reliance on this script will indicate how the early Muslims in the Cape, with various handwritten texts in Arabic-Afrikaans, contributed to the creation of standard and other varieties of Afrikaans, archival repertoires that have been historically undermined and marginalised in more mainstream accounts. The etymologies and development of Arabic-Afrikaans will not be considered in depth here, but have been addressed by several scholars and writers over a number of years (Davids; Dangor; Haron; Yunis; Mumin and Versteegh; Hoogervorst).

My turn to the Arabic script to write out English, Afrikaans, isiXhosa and *AfriKaaps* words is based on the system developed by various early Muslim scholars at the Cape, as outlined by, for example, Achmat Davids in his seminal *The Afrikaans of the Cape Muslims from 1815 to 1915* (2016), based on his Natal University MA (1991). On a technical level, for English sounds not found in classical and Modern Standard Arabic, including their equivalent written form, I use the Jawi, Farsi, Urdu and Ottoman Turkish keyboards to arrive at an approximate phonetic sound of Afrikaans. This includes letters such as ‘v’ for which the ‘f’-sounding letter is used from Arabic but with three dots on top ف from the Jawi keyboard, and ‘p’ for which the Urdu keyboard is used with the Arabic letter but with three dots below پ. For the expression of the *AfriKaaps* use of the sound ‘ch’, the Jawi and Urdu keyboards’ ‘g’ sound will be used, corresponding to ج, but with three dots in the middle چ. So, for the words that are pronounced in one version of *AfriKaaps* as ‘ch’, such as ‘bietchie’, instead of ‘bietjie’,

the Ɔ is used. Or ‘voetjek’ instead of ‘voertsek’ (Davids). My devising of this coded script using varieties of modulated letter characters or type styles from several languages aims to effect forms of validated, positive relations between people or ‘characters’ whom the historical record tends to have placed in opposing, divided realms of experience. At the same time, I hope to be able to have the code work in an engaging, embodied way that serves the deepening of fictional character relations rather than merely functioning as an ‘idea’ or ‘device’.

In some ways, in writing *Time Will Tell*, I thought of the manner in which J.R.R. Tolkien infused his created Elvish languages into the text and cover design of his *Lord of the Rings* novel (it *is* one novel, as the editorial notes for the 2004 edition state), by having Elvish quotations from the Elves’ fictional books or speech rendered untranslated or translated at various places in the novel. So, for example on page 66, the language on the ring kept by Frodo Baggins is outlined in Elvish, handwritten in Tolkien’s text, which Frodo cannot read, and for which he then asks Gandalf for a translation. Tolkien, a philologist, appeared to originate his stories in the very creation of language (much like George Steiner does, in a somewhat different manner). Carl F. Hofstetter writes, in “Elvish as She is Spoke” (2006), about how he believes Tolkien revealed his “storyteller’s heart to the world” with the publication of *The Lord of the Rings*, but also “a deeper heart still: that of the language maker, expressed most fully in Tolkien’s two chief invented Elvish languages, Quenya and Sindarin” (231). Tolkien deployed these invented words as proper names for characters, places and lands. In addition, eschewing “conversational” Elvish, he used Elvish in the form of “laments, hymns, poetry, spells, oath-taking, and cries made *de profundis*, and mostly therefore of a poetic or otherwise markedly formal nature” (232). As Tolkien wrote in response to an early review of the novel:

The invention of languages is the foundation. The “stories” were made rather to provide a world for the languages than the reverse. To me a name comes first and the story follows. I should have preferred to write in “Elvish”. But, of course, such a work as *The Lord of the Rings* has been edited and only as much “language” has been left in as I thought would be stomached by readers. (I now find that many would have liked more.) But there is a great deal of linguistic matter (other than actually “elvish” names and words) included or mythologically expressed in the book. It is to me, anyway, largely an essay in “linguistic aesthetic”, as I sometimes say to people who ask me “what is it all about?” (qtd. in Hofstetter 231)

Tolkien, in my view, is expressing here a desire to create a world of Elves as fully and comprehensively as possible, and sees language as a fundamental component of this world-creation. My aims are not as ambitious or as comprehensive as Tolkien's remarkable feat. Nevertheless, I purposely use and, indeed, *invent* language relations in the imaginative and just service of portraying a world that unites rather than divides. I have called my language, rather prosaically, my language of love. I am also unsure of how much of my invented language, which I will render in some form of simple Arabic calligraphy, my readers will be able to engage, and even tolerate. This is a difficult creative challenge. I have had to weigh up my options in the conceptualising of the novel, encouraged by the fact that some of Tolkien's readers, as indicated above, wanted to see more of the Elvish language. The unstable relation between 'more' and 'less' has necessarily been a flexible yet self-reflexive guide for me in deploying my invented 'ArabiK' language in *Time Will Tell*.

Contemporary South African writers continue to struggle with narratives inherited from the country's history of slavery, colonialism and apartheid, which organised people into hierarchies of race, but also of class and gender, creating disempowered minorities relegated to the margins. In current South Africa, the narratives of these minority writers' communities have remained largely isolated and marginalised, just as their communities, their homes, remain marginalised on the outskirts of the city. Among these groups are those who self-identify as coloured, Muslim or Malay, whose forebears were brought as slaves and political prisoners to the Cape. As a scholar and writer of fiction, I am attempting to demonstrate how the foregrounding of minoritarian narratives can create an imaginative space which remediates marginalisation and isolation through innovative modes of representation. The goal is greater representational inclusivity even while working through persistent tensions between what is perceived as dominant black and minority white communities. A further question is how to produce fiction that provides an effective intervention, particularly when there are such fluid constructions of mixed-race identities in the Cape, which exist *between* the naturalised norms that encourage people uncritically to invoke convenient notions of polarised black and white identities (Adhikari xi).

I wish now to turn in some detail to a discussion of the title of the present chapter. In this titling, I strategically replace one letter of a word, thus generating the possibility of new symbolic meanings. *Jeem* (ج) is the fifth letter of the Arabic alphabet and is infused here into English words to replace the letter 'g'. This is an example of one of the linguistic narrative strategies adopted in this dissertation

to advance a mode of inclusive thinking. I suggest that an emphasis on such hybridised fusion rather than on separatist difference can hopefully assist in advancing a social justice project, both imaginative and materially. My point is to destabilise what Said termed the “supreme fictions” that have continued to divide humanity on the basis of ethnicity, language and culture, resulting often in real economic inequality. With my somewhat simple example of combining English with Arabic, I make present at the textual, material level my argument for a humanistic unity in the spirit of Goethe’s idea (or ideal) of *Weltliteratur*, that would see the world’s artistic production as a symphonic whole, while equally recognising the voice of the individual, and providing space for the most eccentric utterance. In addition, fusing the two languages in these two words encapsulates at the micro level of expression the possible power of “magical imaginaries”. A small creative gesture on my part shows how to replace one letter of a hegemonic English language with another from a seemingly alien (Oriental) language, and not lose the word’s meaning. My effort, while minor, symbolically celebrates the richness of diversity that can be attained by forms of expressive linguistic and cultural mixing, so as to demonstrate love’s wealth in affirming affinities rather than entrenching antipathies. Perhaps one could write these words the other way, read from right to left using the letter English “g” as in مَگَکَلِ اِمَغَنَرِيز. This would render the expression incomprehensible to the English reader unfamiliar with the Arabic alphabet and script. However, it would make some sense to those familiar with Arabic, even at a rudimentary level, if explained that these are English words rendered phonetically using the Arabic script, rather than being an Arabic translation. The point is that, in this case, meaning and symbolism are largely dependent on the perspective of the reader or the observer; there is no inherently superior moral, ethical or intellectual advantage, less so a material one, that may be claimed, from whatever perspective one views these words. The expression “magical imaginaries” is also used here to highlight the imaginative narrative strategies adopted in *Time Will Tell* that provide a critique of current societal distortions and inequalities with a “*Vorstellung* of how (future) individuals and people in power might act and speak”, as proposed by Heynders and Bax. Here I postulate an inventive etymology to innovate a social imaginary, infusing new, positive meaning into the names Sycorax and Caliban.

As mentioned in Chapter One, the origins I propose for the names Caliban and Sycorax invoke love, devotion and caring. Instead of deriving the name Caliban from a negative conception (such as from the word cannibal, or dog; *kalb* in Arabic, written in my version of English-Arabic as كالب), I speculatively suggest that we consider it derived from *qalb* (قلب), which is Arabic for heart. Why is

this important? If Shakespeare's construction of Caliban is predicated on negativity and difference rather than inclusivity and reconciliation, I instead am proposing that Sycorax, the mother of Caliban, might have used the word *qalb*, which is Arabic for heart, as a term of *endearment* to describe Caliban. The word *qalb* is singular, so I am suggesting the dual and plural forms that Sycorax was describing, as a mother; the fusing of her heart with that of her son Caliban, and possibly the heart of her husband/partner, the father of Caliban, whom Shakespeare describes as the devil in *The Tempest*. This would allow for the use of the dual form *qalbaan* or قالباان, or alternatively *qalbayn* or قالبان. Even the plural form *qulub* or قلوب could work in this context. I argue that the singular, dual and plural versions of the Arabic word for 'heart' look and sound similar to Caliban. With my purposively disruptive re-interpretation, a familial love is invoked rather than Shakespeare's depiction of Sycorax, through the eyes of Prospero, as a witch and hag who bore her deformed whelp after communion with the Devil.

Furthermore, I counter Shakespeare's metaphorical use of the word dog to describe servility, subservience and lack of intelligence. In historical Arabia, Arabs have named their children after animals including the dog, to denote the affirmative aspects of this animal, which include loyalty, devotion, intelligence and a heightened sense of caring. It is worth thinking on these issues a little longer. *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (1997) states that Kalb ibn Wabara, the ancestor of the Banu Kalb tribe (date of birth unknown), was so named because of the positive qualities associated with the dog. Many members of the tribe initially clashed with the prophet Mohammad but later converted to Islam (492). Further, the Kalbids were administrators of the Umayyad dynasty in the Maghrib, Spain and Sicily in the middle of the tenth century and related to Kalb bin Wabara (496). *The Encyclopedia of Islam* offers a detailed exposition of both the unfavourable and favourable view of dogs by early Muslims. Stray dogs were useful for cleaning ancient cities of dead animals and other organic material but were considered a pest by some because they were carriers of rabies (*daa al-kalaab*). However, domesticated dogs were considered of great value, particularly those trained for hunting and as watchdogs. Muslims were also aware, *The Encyclopedia of Islam* states, of the "edifying story" of Qitmir, the dog belonging to the Seven Sleepers (*Quran* 110:17). Qitmir became the symbol of fidelity, considered the only dog allowed to enter Paradise, and given the power of speech. In my research into devising a new nomenclature, I further found that it was the scholar Abu Uthman Amr ibn Bahr Al-Kinani Al-Basri, also known as Al-Jahiz, who with his *Book of the Animals*, a seven-volume work describing over 350 species of animals, possibly partly based on Aristotle's eponymous

volume, wrote a great deal about the significance of dogs in Muslim cultures. In addition, there is speculation that the name *kalb*, as an analogy of ‘shape’, was given to other animals such as the *kalb al-maa* (fresh-water dog), which is the name for the otter and, in the western Islamic world, for the beaver. This shape-shifting quality is also germane to my speculative attempt to create generative links between apparently dissimilar forms, terms, cultures. It should be noted that *The Jewish Encyclopedia* provides considerable detail of the status of the dog derived from Hebrew scripture and states the biblical figure of Caleb, “signifies dog”, as the eponymous ancestor of the clan of Calebites, explaining that it was “thought that the dog was the totem of the clan” (497–8). In addition, it was thought that the “epithet ‘keleb’ (dog) [was] given as a nickname to miserly Jews”. The dog was initially considered a “semi-savage” species “held in contempt for its fierce, unsympathetic habits” and “not yet recognized” for its “nobler qualities as the faithful companion of man”. However, over time, the Jews came to recognise the positive qualities of the animal (630–2). In describing the history of eighteenth century Poland, *The Jewish Encyclopedia* states how “Russian brigands” would hang up Jews, Poles and dogs on the same tree with the inscription: “A Pole, a Jew, and a dog – all of one faith” (155–6).

In contrast to the largely positive symbolism of dogs in the Arab (and Jewish) world, as outlined above, the surmised lineage of Caliban from the word “kalebön” as Vaughan and Vaughan aver in *Shakespeare’s Caliban: A Cultural History* (1991) came to mean “vile dog” in England. This is because the word *kalebön* (while not entirely correct Arabic) for “vile dog”, “appeared often enough in the popular literature of Tudor-Stuart England for Shakespeare to have adopted it, consciously or unconsciously, as a pejorative name for a North African creature.” The argument is “reasonable but [the] absence of additional evidence has been fatal – almost no one endorses the Arabic derivative” (33). I agree with the view that the basis for the rejection of an Arabic-language etymology of Caliban is as spurious as the scholarship that rejects the North African lineage of Sycorax in favour of a lineage linked to the Caribbean. Theodor Elze, one early commentator favouring the African connection for Caliban, wondered in 1889 why did Shakespeare “who, forsooth, connected Tunis with Carthage and Widow Dido, have to devise, out of an American word, a name that all the while lay ready to his hand?” (qtd. in Vaughan and Vaughan 51). Critic J.S. Phillpotts, also quoted by Vaughan and Vaughan, similarly preferred “the Arabic *kalebön*” as the likely origin of Caliban’s name and posited an African genesis. “Little notice has been taken by commentators of Caliban’s being African by birth, his mother, Sycorax, having come from Algiers” (51). My argument in this dissertation, as I

have indicated before, is that while many scholars may have overlooked the possibility of considering the origin of the Caliban characterisation from North African sources, *all* of them have failed to recognise the possibility of the derivation coming from the Arabic *qalb* (heart) rather than *kalb* (dog).

Let me remain with this for the moment via the signifying figure of the dog (and broadly the lives of animals), bringing the discussion much closer to home in my critical engagement with Coetzee's *Disgrace*, Chaim Potok's *In the Beginning* and Snyckers' *Lacuna*. Firstly, I want to draw renewed attention to how Orientalism works, where one citation or idea, whether it is proven or not, as in the case of De Sacy linking Muslims with hashish-eating assassins through a detail from an unverified Marco Polo account, is then passed on from one writer to another, gaining credibility and ascendancy in scholarship and literature, and eventually passing itself off as an established truth. The idea of a dog-like figure, originating (perhaps from much earlier sources) and then expressed in Shakespeare's possibly limited understanding or misunderstanding of *qalb* and *kalb* (and of the name Sycorax, as I will attempt to demonstrate later), is then almost unthinkingly used to represent an abased character, an assumption which is then adopted by Orientalists like Coetzee and Potok. Secondly, I want to demonstrate how much similarity there is between Coetzee's and Potok's work, which bolsters my argument that Coetzee based *Disgrace* on *In the Beginning* as an intertext, although he has consistently denied this, even to those closest to him, perhaps because the admission of this key link would position him by affiliation as an Orientalist and Islamophobe.

A well-known edition of Coetzee's *Disgrace* has an emaciated, possibly stray, dog on its cover. I earlier pointed out that Coetzee, with *Disgrace*, is alluding not only to *The Tempest* but to Chaim Potok's *In the Beginning*. This claim is bolstered by Potok mentioning dogs 88 times in his novel, with Coetzee's *Disgrace* having 154 mentions of dogs. Potok's young David Lurie also loves visiting the zoo (mentioned 73 times), where he pets a billy goat (echoing *Disgrace*'s mention of this animal), and he visits lions, tigers, panthers, elephants, giraffes, llamas, foxes, wolves, bears, birds and fish. Potok also on multiple occasions highlights Jewish scripture and arguments around animals, including Noah saving animals in pairs during the Flood. It is of course not only the number of mentions of dogs and other animals that are significant: the David Luries in both Potok's and Coetzee's novels overall show extensive sympathy for the lives of animals. This thematic overlap is fundamental to my conviction that Coetzee named his character David Lurie after the two David Luries in Potok's novel. Such references and correlations feasibly lead me to envisage that the Coetzee novel owes a tangled

debt to the Potok novel. Certainly, both use dogs as narrative devices to explore complex relational questions of human and animal rights.

As in Potok's novel, the theme of animal rights runs through *Disgrace*. In addition, this theme is also a feature of several of Coetzee's fictional works including *The Lives of Animals*, *Elizabeth Costello*, *Slow Man* and the short story "The Dog". For a discussion of Coetzee's views on animal lives, see, among a considerable body of scholarly analyses, Bernard E. Morris (2000), Harold Fromm (2000) and John Rees Moore (2001). Beyond the fictional treatment of the lives of animals, as I indicated in Chapter Two, Coetzee has made it clear that he identifies *himself* in certain discomfiting circumstances with the abject figure of a dog in distress, as during the fracas he occasioned when Rushdie was disinvited from speaking in Cape Town and he characterised himself as a dog with "my tail between my legs". As I am suggesting, however, the patent canine correlations between *Disgrace* and *In the Beginning* hint at a dubious element of Coetzee's tendency to envisage black and Muslim lives as unworthy, debased, as if of less consequence than pariahed curs. It is quite startling to me that there is a dearth of scholarly analyses, in the twenty years since *Disgrace* was published, of this clear link between *Disgrace* and *In the Beginning*; it certainly was not at all difficult for me as an emerging academic researcher (simple journalistic legwork was sufficient) to uncover this connection. I am starting to veer towards the cynical view: this lacuna embodies deliberate, preferred omission on the part of Coetzee's epigones in the literary establishment who, in making their case for Coetzee as a key writer of South Africa's conflicted sociopolitics (and a Nobel laureate, no less), then *also* elect not to countenance possible elements of his informing belief system that cast doubt on his devaluing of certain 'Other' cultures.

For my part, I aver that Coetzee is guilty of the very limitations of the older forms of settler 'white writing' he critiques, in that his narrative treatments tend to dismiss black and Muslim lives, in what I consider to be a neo-Orientalist manner. The discussion of the dog on the book cover of a widely circulated edition of *Disgrace* serves my argument. The cover is not a matter of declaratively announcing or representing the self-evident focus and subject matter of the novel, or even of summoning the pathos of supposedly marginalised white lives. Rather, it is implicated in a paratextual apparatus and signifying activity that far more complicatedly gestures towards entangled thematics and informing belief systems, some of which – as my discussion makes clear – are *beyond* those obviously pictured in the selected image used to market the book. The cover, as it were, with its thin,

depreciated dog, uncovers more than the publishers perhaps intended. In my reading, it releases a discrediting, disgraceful repertoire of shadow ideas that cannot innocently be contained by a respectful, admiring attitude to the author J.M. Coetzee and his subject.

I will turn now to Snyckers' *Lacuna* that mimics the dog cover of Coetzee's *Disgrace*, using a photographic reproduction of the same picture in flimsy, cut-out, scrap-book style taped onto the cover of her own novel. Snyckers (and/or her publisher) seems to imply that Coetzee had drawn insubstantial conclusions about white and black precarity in the new South Africa, and that she, Snyckers, was in her fiction drawing the correct, more warranted conclusions with her textual portrayals. Snyckers mentions dogs three times in *Lacuna*. The most illuminating of these mentions is when her character Lucy Lurie considers humans to have "two dogs living inside us – the noble wolf and snapping cur – we can choose which one to feed. I choose to feed the wolf and starve the cur" (Location 1926). There are of course similarities between dogs and wolves, to which Snyckers possibly alludes, but beyond commenting on canine species, Snyckers' Lucy considers herself moving towards the future goal of a "noble" wolf/dog, which assumes embracing (rather than refusing or marginalising) the emaciated Calibanesque dog-like role as pictured on the cover. This metaphorical or philosophical musing by Lucy Lurie takes place in the context of Lucy declaring that she would want her fictional John Coetzee to live homeless in the Bo-Kaap and have his Booker Prize taken away and given to her, Lucy (and presumably Snyckers, for *Lacuna*). However, Snyckers' Lucy does not want to launch a social media campaign against her fictional John Coetzee because of the chances of success it may have in bringing her "enemy low". Snyckers' Lucy will therefore not feed the "snapping cur", not because she is a "good person" but because the self-disgust generated might overwhelm her, who is already in a self-disgusted state. Here then, in this comparison between the scrawny, snapping cur and the righteous wolf/dog, is the difference Snyckers appears to draw between *Disgrace* and *Lacuna*. In the former work, Snyckers implies that the starved, diseased dog represents the manner in which Coetzee (mis)represented Lucy in *Disgrace*, while the latter wolf/dog is the well-fed, good and loyal companion that lives happily (eventually) in the (supposedly) inclusive moral world that Snyckers has created. This interpretation is substantiated by Snyckers in her public pronouncements on her novel in relation to the Coetzee. (She also appears to be unaware, in my view, of the possibility of Coetzee's allusions to *The Tempest*, particularly referencing the power interplay between the characters Prospero, Caliban, Sycorax and Miranda; and for that matter the links between *Disgrace* and Potok's *In the Beginning*.)

Snyckers commented in February 2021, in her interview with Sarah Mosoetsa, the chief executive officer of the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences – the organisation that had in 2020 awarded *Lacuna* the best novel prize – that she “really loved the cover” of *Lacuna*. She had had the idea “early on” to transform the “iconic” cover of *Disgrace* for her own purposes. Snyckers told Mosoetsa that what “really sticks in one’s mind is that sort of farmyard dog that is looking out at the reader”. (The dog on the cover of *Disgrace* does *not* look out at the reader.) Nevertheless, at about 51 minutes into the video “Encounter conversation with 2020 HSS winner” this is what Snyckers states, as I transcribed it:

I wanted to continue with that [cover image of Coetzee’s] and the very brilliant designers at Pan Macmillan Picador came up with this idea, I think based on the title because *Lacuna* refers to a gap or an absence or something that is missing and in this cover, instead of the dog, we have a kind of white outline of the dog. It’s as though the dog has been ripped out and removed, leaving this lacuna behind and the fact that it’s been kind of being pasted on I think shows ... to me it indicates the threadbare life that Lucy, my Lucy, my character is living at the moment. She isn’t living a fully realised life. She’s been hollowed out by what’s happened to her. She’s been hollowed out by having her story taken away from her. And only at the end when she decides to write her own counter narrative, does she start occupying a kind of full personhood again. So ja that dog is a void, it’s a threadbare patched together, absent kind of thing.

In other words, Snyckers is implying in *Lacuna* that the real victim in *Disgrace* is Lucy Lurie, whose voice is silenced by Coetzee in favour of the narrative of the male character, David Lurie. This is similar to Coetzee’s protagonist transforming himself into the dog-like Caliban figure in *Disgrace*, as Coetzee also does personally, in his speeches. Yet such reverses or transferrals create *further* lacunae, ones to which Coetzee and Snyckers and indeed a publishing industry, seem disturbingly unwitting. As I have been arguing, in *Lacuna* Snyckers, as with Coetzee in *Disgrace*, renders black and Muslim people invisible, nameless and without agency. It does not occur to Snyckers that she has in fact repeated in *Lacuna* the very “hollowed out” life of black and Muslim characters that she criticises in Coetzee, taking away their stories in giving primacy and preference to Lucy’s voicing. In addition, like Coetzee, in her novel Snyckers labels these invisible Muslims (singling out Muslim women) as aggressive with regard to white (female) people, echoing paradoxically the very same critique she has of Coetzee’s work in terms of David Lurie’s ostensible claim of white genocide in a future South

Africa. The convolutions are tortuous. Snyckers (perhaps replicating her own white privileged world, places her white fictional female (and possibly Jewish protagonist) character under threat from the conflated Muslim/Oriental/Eastern/African woman. This is much like Shakespeare's Prospero and Miranda are threatened by Sycorax's 'black' magic and her racialised offspring in the form of the violent Caliban. Nor does Snyckers contextualise the Muslim women she glibly mentions in an African context; they are clumsily glossed as being from what Lucy Lurie describes as "basically a Cape Malay neighbourhood" (Location 238). The Muslim women are not given roots or cultural specificity linked to Africa, like the other "black" African women Snyckers later identifies in her novel (Locations 3331, 3334, 3337, 3343, 3345, 3359, 3394). In one other depiction of what could be considered Muslim women and children, Snyckers' Lucy Lurie imagines her fictional John Coetzee renting out little houses in Bo-Kaap to poor families at "punitive rates" with a "mother in rags" begging him for help for her and her children who are living in the dilapidated homes. While Snyckers is perhaps being sardonic, directing a riposte at the limitations of Coetzee's imagination in *Disgrace*, she *reprises* such limitations, inadvertently playing into a debased, narrow imaginary in which Muslim people necessarily fit age-old Western platitudes about indigent Others. This depiction of Muslim people without agency and living in run-down areas is a typical feature of Orientalist texts and imagery. For example, Linda Nochlin's seminal 1993 "The Imaginary Orient" outlines how Orientalist painters adopt positions of superiority or "architecture moralisée" over the Orient.

The lesson is subtle, perhaps, but still eminently available, given a context of similar topoi; these people – lazy, slothful and childlike, if colourful – have let their own cultural treasures sink into decay. There is a clear allusion here, clothed in the language of the objective reportage, not merely to the mystery of the East, but to the barbaric insouciance of Moslem peoples, who quite literally charm snakes while Constantinople falls into ruins. (123)

The innocent and tearful white woman then, in Snyckers' estimation, is transformed into the pre-eminent exemplar of a debased and marginalised Calibanesque figure, yet inviting a reader's empathy rather than horror at 'the brute'. This is similar to how the virginal Miranda, who is threatened with rape by the violent Caliban, is portrayed as the sole sexual victim in *The Tempest*. One should recall here how effectively Aimé Césaire's *A Tempest* talks back to Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, with Caliban speaking in his own "native language" to Prospero, challenging Prospero's claim to the island and to Prospero's (and Miranda's) depiction of the memory of his mother Sycorax as evil, dead,

invisible and without any earthly, maternal attribution: “I respect the earth because I know that it is alive, and I know that Sycorax is alive. Sycorax. Mother,” says Caliban to Prospero (1.2.127–129). Importantly, Césaire’s Caliban challenges the rape narrative of Shakespeare’s Prospero (which also applies to Snyckers’ rape narrative in *Lacuna*, which blithely renders invisible *all* the black sexually abused and raped victims of *Disgrace*):

Rape! Rape! Listen you old goat, you’re the one that put those dirty thoughts in my head. Let me tell you something: I couldn’t care less about your daughter, or about your cave, for that matter. If I gripe, it’s on principle, because I don’t like living with you at all, as a matter of fact. Your feet stink! (1.2.154–157)

To my mind, as I have argued above, both Coetzee and Snyckers, typical of Said’s “insensitive schematisation”, through sleight of hand and angled optic shift attention to their white characters through their imagery and characterisation, and by proxy to themselves as white authors in a potentially threatening post-apartheid social landscape, as vulnerable Calibanesque figures. This is at the expense of the greater precarity and invisibility of black and Muslim people. I argue that both Coetzee and Snyckers, in writing about Muslims, and glancingly portraying them in various states of invisibility, are indulging Orientalist ideas which in current cultural-political climates could even be said to register white supremacist inflections. Snyckers was attempting to reference the gender lacuna in Coetzee’s novel with the taped-on figure of a dog, but instead, as Danyela Demir protests, she created a double lacunae. There is also a deeper irony here, demonstrated by the insubstantiality of Snyckers’ conclusions. They are as flimsy as *Lacuna*’s cover, the novel bearing a title that acquires more prolific ironies for the gap that it exposes within the novel’s content and conceptualisation.

My own novel attempts a more generative, experimental engagement. In imagining an alternative origin story for the arguably Muslim woman Sycorax from *Argier* or Algiers in *The Tempest*, I have, in *Time Will Tell*, named my character Zarqa, who fights back against her attackers using euphemistically-termed ‘extra-judicial’ means. Zarqa captures the people who are threatening her, eschewing accepted judicial methods. While Zarqa’s methods might be ethically questionable, my novelistic strategy gestures to an inclusive and reconciliatory meaning in providing the character with a new, startling form of agency. Here, I should explain that I am also alluding to my MA, where in *The Girl with the Red Flower* I constructed the Soraya Nuruddeen character as driven by the active,

counter “perpetrating agency” of a female criminal. Soraya Nuruddeen was construed as a form of self-defence against the abuse of people like David Lurie. I drew on Sabine Binder’s views in her interviews in “Female killers and gender politics in contemporary South African crime fiction: Conversations with crime writers Jassy Mackenzie, Angela Makholwa and Mike Nicol”. Binder sees the fictional women created by these writers as empowered with female “perpetrating agency” (1). Similarly, Tiina Mäntymäki argues that female criminal characters enact female agency and serve as “critics of patriarchy” and challenge the “normative boundaries of ... gender, class and sexuality” (1), a point which has escaped academic attention.

In my novel *Time Will Tell*, I have named my co-protagonist Atallah Saqar. I have not provided Zarqa a surname, but have linked her to Atallah, with whom she is expecting a child, Thurayya, who would most likely, in a traditional manner, inherit the surname of her father. By using the word Saqar, I am connecting Thurayya also to Sycorax (as I have done with Zarqa herself). ‘Saqar’ in Arabic means falcon. Through this naming, in *Time Will Tell*, I metaphorically envisage Thurayya and Zarqa as the female falcon, which is larger than the male and known for its hunting skill, speed and power (Krüger, 2005). Thurayya and Zarqa are therefore counter-representative of Muslim femaleness that has been depicted as an invisible, inconsequential force as portrayed by the white writers under discussion. I also note that Shakespeare, and perhaps other writers from Europe at the time, were likely involved in mangling or misunderstanding Arabic words to create the name Sycorax. In my palimpsest counter-rendering, Saqar is changed in spelling but in sounding and visual appearance still resembles the word *sahira* used by her detractors to mean ‘witch’. In Shakespeare’s preferred name ‘Sycorax’, this term has been combined with *kuss*, a derogatory Arabic slang for the female genitals, a denigration which serves to isolate and exile her as a woman (Grigore and Sikaru). In *Time Will Tell*, I want to imagine an analogous woman who was banished from Algiers under flimsy and false pretences by patriarchal, fundamentalist forces on the suspicion of being involved in witchcraft. For this perceived crime, all those centuries ago, Sycorax was considered a ‘cunt’ and witch who entrapped and enthralled men and inflicted upon them diseases, a depiction which implies that she fully deserves whatever punishing measures befall her. I propose that Shakespeare mangles Sycorax’s perfectly meaningful name, much like he deforms her physical shape, into ‘Saqar kuss’ or *saqarkus*, *saqaraks*, eventually becoming Sycorax. Shakespeare does not allow the Muslim woman to speak to defend herself against such depictions; she has no properly spelt name or convincing, persuasive agency in the textual world. Instead, she can be spoken for and can be represented in whatever form feels necessary for the writer’s

imaginative purpose. This creates a tautological Orientalising contingency, for the Muslim woman is pre-conceived as having a mind filled with thoughts that are clearly discernible to the white, European mind, yet such thoughts cannot but be the product of the white mind that imagines them. As I have described and analysed above and in earlier chapters, these are the disparaging depictions of the voiceless and invisible that my dissertation attempts to disrupt with its unusual range, form and content.

Chapter Four: An In-Conclusion

Major insights and methods, and barriers for a postcolonial creative writing and reading.

Johan Wolfgang Von Goethe's idea of *Weltliteratur* is the compelling driving force behind this dissertation, which ambitiously (and idealistically) seeks to contribute to the development of an inclusive world literature expressed as a symphonic whole, all while recognising and celebrating eccentricities and differences. (The aim of my dissertation is to work towards what I term an AfriSaaps *Weltliteratur*" which I detail subsequently.) Goethe, it must be recalled, had demonstrated a much-praised willingness to recognise and engage with artistic and Othered cultures in the East, including Islam, as outlined in Chapter One. Such an endeavour, as idealised and Romantic as it may sound, seeks to advance a social justice agenda in South Africa, and in a wider world marked by well-documented economic inequality that bolsters exclusionary cultural hegemonies. Social justice within a literary ambit is the purpose of this study's exploration of transformative strategies for re-mediating raced (and related) marginalisations in select South African fiction written in English.

In the research component of this dissertation, from chapters one to three, there is a probe of measures needed to develop Goethe's inclusivity, eschewing the age-old "insensitive schematisation" that seeks to divide rather than unify, as Edward Said aptly describes it. This is a description that Said uses in the context of how the Occident developed an authority that "overrode" the Orient through military, economic and cultural means, an involvement motivated essentially by the desire to exploit resource-rich geographical locations. In this fourth chapter, working towards a form of 'conclusion', I briefly attempt to sketch a way forward out of the "supreme fictions", as Said puts it, that allow the hegemonic to justify their elevated status in a world order which entrenches inequality at the expense of the less powerful. This dissertation is concerned with cultural production, in particular the literary arena of publishing and academia, which in South Africa and abroad demonstrates how racism, classism, homophobia, xenophobia and Islamophobia remain entrenched in latent and manifest ways (terms used by Said).

The notion of AfriSaaps *Weltliteratur* suggests my counter strategy, an inclusive approach which, with a light hand so as to encourage a reader's willingness to engage with the unfamiliar, works

with a creative fusion of several languages – English, Afrikaans, Kaaps, Arabic and an instance of German – combined in Latin and Arabic script. The Arabic letters fused in the word AfriKaaps are ‘ق’ and ‘ك’, which are phonetic replacements here for the English letters ‘c’ and ‘k’. The word AfriKaaps is itself a combination of three words – Africa, Afrikaans and Kaaps. The word Africa refers to the continent’s people and raises the question of who ‘qualifies’ as African. Afrikaans signifies the word developed by the early Afrikaners to describe what they viewed was the onwards development of their own ‘suiwer’ or pure language. Kaaps is the word with origins in its early speakers in the Cape, largely slaves, political exiles and prisoners. Further, the use of the Arabic script here, as outlined over the course of this dissertation, particularly in Chapter Three, is a reference to how the Muslim slaves and political prisoners in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries at the Cape wrote the first Afrikaans texts using an adapted Arabic script. My deployment of the cursive, flexible Arabic script, so amenable to manipulation into exquisite artistic forms, recalls J.R.R. Tolkien’s phrase a “linguistic aesthetic” (qtd. in Hofstetter 231). Similarly, as I envisage it, the Arabic-Afrikaans, and the ‘real’ Arabic can be rendered in any one of several calligraphic forms that serve to beautify the text, to render it more pictorially pleasing and aesthetically attractive, even as English-language script and typesetting are unsettled. If this generates a positive response from the reader, it means that part of my aim has been achieved: to draw nuanced cultural and affective attention to the need to encounter in welcoming and affirming ways the Muslim/Arabic/Eastern world, rather than maintaining destructive oppositional binaries. In addition, I emphasise that I have used this method without resorting to superficial exoticism, since the Arabic and its script is inextricably linked to the story, being germane to the unfolding of the narrative premise and the relation amongst the characters. Consider, for example, how in the novel *Time Will Tell* I have written out the fourteen stages of love from classical Arabic – on a continuum from mild affection to individual destruction – to carry part of the story arc that traces the maturing relationship between Nelson/Atallah and Zarqa.

Since language is such an integral part of this dissertation, it is perhaps important to provide further detail, using this example of Arabic-Afrikaans, to demonstrate how, in my colonially-disruptive imaginative project, I employ heteroglossic linguistic repertoires as modes to serve postcolonial imperatives. In other words, how language can be used to unify rather than divide, by accepting difference as necessary and enlivening rather than as oppositional elements to be cancelled out or hierarchically ranked. This motive has a prominent place in my dissertation, in both the research

and creative components. As author, critic and academic George Steiner expresses it (see Chapter Two), the power of language can be used “both to bless, to love, to build, to forgive and also to torture, to hate, to destroy and to annihilate”. In this vein, in my dissertation I am alluding to the remedial action to recognise Arabic-Afrikaans that is currently underway, with several academics having written about the early use of this combinatorial language. Notably, it was Dutch/Afrikaner scholars who highlighted this literary aspect of the Cape Muslims’ linguistic achievements, with Achmat Davids in his important MA on *The Afrikaans of the Cape Muslims from 1815 to 1915* (1991), paying tribute to these two “brave Afrikaners” Adrianus van Selms and Piet Muller for “having had the courage to have focussed the attention of Afrikaners on the Arabic-Afrikaans publications during the heydays of apartheid in the 1950s and 1960s” (ii). In 2010, filmmaker Dylan Valley debuted with *Afrikaaps: The Documentary* highlighting this history of Arabic-Afrikaans. The film quoted the late activist and scholar Neville Alexander as saying that a long-overdue revamp of the Afrikaans dictionary was needed to recognise words that were either expunged by bodies such as the Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners (Society of True Afrikaners), or not recognised for their source in other languages from Africa and Asia.

Now, a new dictionary *is* being developed that will fulfil Alexander’s wish. Researchers from the University of the Western Cape are working on a Kaaps trilingual dictionary (meaning Kaaps, English and Afrikaans) that would pay homage to the early speakers of this “kitchen language”, as Alexander describes it, which is a mixture of Dutch, Malay and several Asian and African indigenous languages. The dictionary would simultaneously grant credibility to the Kaaps language and allow its speakers greater access to the economic and social life of the country. It is my hope that those involved in the development of the dictionary would not only include the origin of Afrikaans words to sources in Arabic and other languages, but also attempt to provide their rendering in Arabic script (there is no indication yet that this will occur) both as a form of respect to those early Muslim inhabitants, and for educational and social purposes.

The educational and cultural significance of Arabic-Afrikaans would link South Africa to several countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia that use a modified Arabic script to communicate in their own indigenous languages. Ajami, meaning foreign, is the word used to describe how the Arabic script is used for textual communication across the world, from Iran, Pakistan and India, to Africa and in the languages Yorùbù, Mande, Wolof, Fula and Hausa. However, in several African

countries where Ajami is used, the writers and readers are considered illiterate, and the use of the Arabic script to communicate indigenous languages has itself been marginalised in African countries (Verde). By recognising Ajami, almost 80 percent of the 50 million people in Nigeria would be considered literate. In addition, Ajami texts go back to the sixteenth century, (with some stone engravings to the twelfth century) and are written on medical, religious, social and political issues, providing a rich trove of material for researchers (Verde).

Despite encouraging developments such as the Kaaps dictionary, my previous chapters have implied that there are significant barriers to the broader social justice project with which I am concerned in this dissertation, even if we restrict our attention primarily to questions which relate directly to literary production. Suffice to say (without repeating what has been covered in the study thus far) large sections of the publishing industry and academia appear to be in a captured state, so to speak. Those involved in the capturing are members of the guild of Orientalists as Edward Said has defined it, bombastically encrusted with negative connotations of assumed superiority over the barbaric, supine, feminine and unlettered Orient and Orientals. (I use these terms Occident and Orient here to highlight how the world remains envisaged as divided in this manner, particularly by the powerful; however, as Said rightly says, there is no “ontological stability” to these categorisations, which are made by humans and can be undone by them.) To reiterate via Coetzee: in academia and literary criticism in general, there has been considerable commentary about the status and literary production of J.M. Coetzee, with much of the same material covered and ideas repeated in article after article. *Why?* Why is Coetzee so important? Because, fundamentally, in white-owned and -dominated institutions, Coetzee is still held up as the standard bearer, by influential members of the academy and publishing, for *all* South African literature production. Of course he has his merits. Yet even the icons ought not to be granted an unquestioning systemic iconography.

In my own study, I have provided, much to my own surprise, new research related to Coetzee, proposing and unpacking the link between *Disgrace*'s David Lurie and the two David Luries of Chaim Potok's *In the Beginning*. In addition, I have also drawn attention to the possibility that Coetzee's Soraya from *Disgrace* appears to have been sketched from Shakespeare's Sycorax. It would be particularly helpful, in working towards a reassessment of Coetzee in academia (and publishing), for scholars to tackle this material in earnest. Perhaps it is still early days. There has

been, of course, much reassessment of Coetzee continuing for several years, including quite vehement criticism, which I have outlined in previous chapters. The difference now emerging is a reasonable supposition that, viewed from previously ignored vantage points, Coetzee can be firmly placed in the category of an Orientalist with superior and racist tendencies, if not being categorised as a thoroughgoing Islamophobe (which brings to mind Achebe's label of "thoroughgoing racist" for Conrad, as discussed in Chapter Two).

On publishing: the modus operandi of many (if not all) of the gatekeepers in the industry includes outright rejection of supposedly undesirable submissions, with often paternalistic advice on how to develop the writing's "potential". The advice is based on, or justified by, assessment reports from contracted official readers who are supposedly unbiased experts in their fields. (Questions of marketability and profit I for the present leave aside, though they too are ravelled in the knotty question of ideological vested interest.) It came as a surprise to me that I failed to find a single publisher willing to publish my MA manuscript, *The Girl with the Red Flower*. There were, appreciably, measured and helpful rejections from some publishers but I suspect that a number of the responses were because they considered Fiona Snyckers' work (announced in August 2018, for publication in 2019) to be The True Counter to *Disgrace*, its authority lying in its feminist rebuttal of patriarchal codes. I, as a male writer (by definition denied Snyckers' expert insider understanding of feminist issues?), could not possibly compete with this powerful contemporary brand of counter narrativising. An acquaintance of Helen Moffett (Snyckers' editor), smugly scolded me on Facebook in 2019, for "mansplaining" when I dared to point out that there was more than one rape victim in *Disgrace* and that Snyckers had overlooked all the black women characters, including the one Muslim portrayed in the book. I chose not to respond at that time.

Snyckers, Moffett and the feminist allies who lauded *Lacuna* have been silent, in the wake of my published correspondence with Pan Macmillan South Africa, in which I offer a scathing corrective to the persistently white (and culturally white-washing) world view of both *Lacuna* and the local publishing scene. Perhaps none of them read my critique. Alternatively, it is understandable if critics, editors and writers are afraid to speak out because they have calculated that it may hamper their careers, or result in their losing assignments and contracts. It is unfortunate though, for such attitudes are not helpful to the development of an inclusive literary-cultural community in the long run; honest, open and *difficult* discussions are essential to bring about change in the literary-

cultural sphere. Edward Said implies as much in his six Reith Lectures in 1993, on the role of the intellectual in society. He articulates a productive approach when he advocated for an intellectual as a “ranting Thersites” (Lecture Three: Intellectual Exiles) constantly guarding against complacency to ensure a cogent critique of society which sides with the downtrodden and marginalised against the powerful and hegemonic even if this position risks unpopularity and exile. Said insists:

Even intellectuals who are life-long members of a society can, in a manner of speaking, be divided into insiders and outsiders, those on the one hand who belong fully to the society as it is, who flourish in it without an overwhelming sense of dissonance or dissent, those who can be called yea-sayers; and on the other hand the nay-sayers, the individuals at odds with their society and therefore outsiders and exiles so far as privileges, power, and honours are concerned. The pattern that sets the course for the intellectual as outsider, which is the role I believe is the right one for today’s intellectual, is best exemplified by the condition of exile – the state of never being fully adjusted, always feeling outside the chatty, familiar world inhabited by natives, so to speak, tending to avoid and even dislike the trappings of accommodation and national well-being. Exile for the intellectual in this metaphysical sense is restlessness, movement, constantly being unsettled, and unsettling others. (3)

In line with Said’s robust approach, the hard question has to be asked of Snyckers and her supporters: if the representation of women and rape in literature was such an important issue when Snyckers’ work was published, why is it now of no consequence when it concerns the disparaging erasure of black Muslim women? Can such female characters not be raped because they cannot even be seen or imagined, by those whose voices are loudest in the dominant literary establishment? I shudder to think it. I cannot endorse a literary-cultural system which would condone such self-serving tautologies in the service of rewarding novels like *Lacuna*, adjudged by two sets of South African literary panels to be superlative under the unconvincing rationale of Fine White Writing. When it comes to the imminent Europa Editions imprint of *Lacuna*, I cannot help but wonder in what form this international publisher will print Snyckers’ work, especially since it is now in the public domain that she *knew* I had written a manuscript highlighting precisely the plight of a Muslim female character. Will *Lacuna* be published internationally as it is, adhering to the Pan Macmillan first edition of the text, or will some revisionist sleight of hand be exercised on

Snyckers' original novel, addressing the perhaps more demanding needs of a multicultural, international audience? I cannot say. I find it difficult even to find for one case over another, since both variously embody elements of the Orientalist (or call it racist) attitude that in my view continues to plague contemporary literary production.

Bear in mind that my experience is not an isolated one in South Africa. Many authors of colour (so-called) or those beyond the narrow dominant 'white' cultural remit, struggle to get a publisher. Or, recall, for example, how Media24's majority white judges' panel in June 2020 awarded all its prizes to white male authors. Fervent criticism followed from several black authors, many published by Media24, including Fred Khumalo, Athol Williams, Niq Mhlongo, Nozizwe Cynthia Jele and Efemia Chela. Award winners Jonny Steinberg and Trevor Sacks, to their credit, lamented the lack of diversity of the panel and awardees. Also to their credit, Media24 apologised publicly for their mistake. In contrast, there has been little in the way of contrition from Pan Macmillan South Africa's management, who stand by Snyckers' book and its invisibilising of Muslims. This entails a self-serving and cynical affirmation of the contemptuous, closed cultural-ideological circle that tends to characterise publishing. Insider/outsider. No place in-between.

To extrapolate from the Media24 matter: Steinberg told *The Johannesburg Review of Books (JRB)* in mid-2020 that "there is a wider problem. Black literary talent is flourishing. The diversity of experience represented in South African literature is large. I would love to have competed in a field where this diversity was on display." The *JRB*'s editors themselves admitted to failing to see the imbalances in the Media24 awards when making the initial announcement of the winners. Given the *JRB*'s express commitment to transforming South Africa's literary discourse, this slip highlights how insidiously racism and prejudice operate, even in the minds of those who consider themselves progressive, or decolonised.

Nozizwe Cynthia Jele concurred with Steinberg, in the same article carried by the *JRB*, when she said that Kwela Books, which is part of the Media24 stable, had not made "enough effort in terms of publishing Black writers last year, which is part of the problem." In addition, they seemed to be publishing the same black people. "So if I, Niq Mhlongo, Sifiso Mzobe or Qarnita Loxton, for example, don't release a book, it's dry on the Kwela side." She added:

They need to be more intentional about publishing Black writers. When you look at Kwela Books of a few years ago and what it represented and the interest it drew, I mean, we published

with them because we were buying into their vision of finding and publishing Black talent. And if you look at Kwela Books now, that vision is no longer there. That whole imprint for me has lost its original goal or aim. You have to go out of your way to find talent. It's a concentrated effort. And if you don't, you end up here.

The thing is, this is the Media24 Books awards, they control it. And that whole company is very tone deaf in terms of picking up what everybody is trying to say or what everybody is struggling with. So yes, they could have at least diversified the judging panel. But for me, what's important is that there should have been enough books by diverse writers to select from to begin with.

Definitely it's a bigger problem. It goes way deeper. And for them to even begin to change the status quo, they need to invest in the talent and in keeping and cultivating that talent. There is really no reason for Kwela not to have more Black writers. There's really no excuse.

This thing is not surprising. But we are all paying attention now.

Is one conclusion to be drawn that this is the captured state of South African literature today, with black authors (and similar writers of colour or of cultures beyond the preferred norm of privileged whiteness) getting short shrift in the narrows of publishing's own version of Said's "supreme fictions"? A fairly reasonable conclusion is that entrenched gatekeeping needs to change, so that varieties of different, radical or indeed even eccentric voices might be heard. Such expanded generosity of spirit, method and materiality inspires my own doctoral study, in respect of both the critical and the creative components. In the research essay, I have purposely risked straddling eras and (sometimes) incommensurate ideas, not only critiquing creative texts associated with literary canonicity (among them *The Tempest* and *Disgrace*), but also drawing inspiration from thinkers associated assertively with expanding Western literary history's characteristically enclosed, hegemonic authority, such as Goethe and Said, and on creative writers who have tried to re-vision received 'truths' of History. My goal has been to bring texts, cultures, and languages into generative encounter so as to embody, in small ways associated with minor characterisation, stories that disrupt the complacent visibility of a sedimented and exclusionary Single Story. In the creative novel manuscript which accompanies the critical essay, I have sought to realise a generatively counterfactual sur(real) imaginary that is at once playful and serious. As Heynders and Bax insist,

“a sur(real) narrative imaginary need not be one thing or another. It may contain multiple energies, in a scenario that “is schematic and satirical but visionary as well” (260).

The extent of my success in the dissertation remains to be seen. Perhaps, as ever, only Time Will Tell.

Chapter Five: Novel: *Time Will Tell*

Time Will Tell

“My feeling is that one has to grapple with the abyss if one can.” – George Steiner on *The Portage to San Cristobal of A.H.*

“They are the traitors. Not me.” – Henry Farwood *aka* Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd, diary excerpt 2016

“An artist must share the absolute truth of his art, see it proliferate, gain ascendancy. With war if required.” – Adolf Hitler, handwritten annotations to *Mein Kampf*

Editor's Note by M.W. Abdullah

The narrative presented in this book is not a mere scholarly exercise. It is a rendering, in as lively a manner as possible – borrowing several techniques from the novelist – of the materials entrusted to me by my eternally youthful friends, Atallah (some know him as Nelson) and Zarqa. Their story echoes into the near and distant past. Reverberates into a yet unknown future.

This slim volume is a precis of documents running to several thousand pages. It is also sourced from hundreds of hours of audio and visual material, though this element remains relatively under-explored, and warrants further study. In compiling my account, I have adopted a reverential respect for the material modelled on the style of those dedicated scribes and artists, whether known to history or anonymous. These figures are my literary ancestors, like those who aided Uthman, the illustrious and rightly-guided caliph whose monumental achievement in antiquity was the ordering and compilation of a far more important canonical text, the Quran.

I have edited for brevity, clarity and exegesis the primary material; the handwritten and electronic diaries, letters, notebooks, sketchbooks and the like, compiled and filed meticulously over several years. Atallah's and Zarqa's record-keeping has made my work so much easier. In some places, I have made firm editorial interventions but I have always striven to follow my friends' precepts, seeking to be faithful to their message, and to their tone and style. If my account begins to resemble a story, rather than a documenting, such liberty embodies my attempt to give life to Atallah's and Zarqa's experiences and their many enfolded lives.

In my task, I have often imagined myself as Polybius. Sometimes I can even envision myself in his skin, writing that which might otherwise have remained untold. Polybius, the slave boy named after the famous historian for his remarkable mimicking of the writing of his master and teacher Tiberius Claudius Drusus Nero Germanicus, emperor of Rome. Widely known as Claudius. Today, even a skilled reader can hardly tell Polybius' and Claudius' writing apart, whether the material be dull or eloquent. This is testament to how a writer can rise from undistinguished beginnings to become a skilled technician, and a possibly persuasive narrator.

A challenge in my project has been to translate several sections of the handwritten notes that were rendered in Ajami, which has come to mean “foreign”, from an Arabic root. I am of the view that this falls into the realm of the translation of real and living languages, no matter how provincial

and obscure they may seem to those who have a circumscribed cultural generosity and a traditional intellectual training. Ajami is important. Ajami is the practice of writing a local language using the Arabic script, as occurs in various parts of the world, among them in Africa, in the languages Yorùbù, Mande, Wolof, Fula and Hausa. (For the Arabic-language “purists”, it is necessary to offer a reminder that this language is itself a result of linguistic innovation and reflexivity, with roots stretching into antiquity, borrowing along the way from Aramaic, Nabatean and so on. I venture that this hybridity only enhances, rather than questions, Arabic’s remarkable, sonorous ability to bear Divine messages.)

In the case of my friends Atallah and Zarqa, they were liberal in their use of the Arabic script to render local languages into different form: Afrikaans, particularly colloquial Afrikaans as spoken in the Cape region of South Africa; and some of their texts were written partially in Ajami-English. These Ajami texts record the correspondence between Atallah and Zarqa during an exceptionally difficult period in their lives and offer us insight into their experiences and relationship. As my story in the present volume will show, the role of Ajami here is crucial, for it blurs the lines between official history and local account, shaping a language of place and love which more conventional master narratives tend to ignore.

My own familiarity with the Arabic script derives from a lifetime of liturgical reading and recitation, and also from somewhat limited conversational practice in places where I have lived over the course of my meandering career. (It is distressing to note how many native Arabic speakers insist on conversing only in English, wherever they are in the world.) In addition, I am comfortable with Afrikaans, a second language of my South African childhood and early school years, and this knowledge has assisted greatly in the subtle task of translating the various varieties of Afrikaans used by Atallah and Zarqa. Furthermore, Atallah has, in his copious notes, provided the translation of (and explanation for) several isiXhosa words that he had rendered in the Arabic script.

My task has been challenging, and I trust I have risen to the occasion. There have been times when the material has delved into classical Arabic, or *al-‘Arabīyah al-Fuṣḥā*, which I have rendered simply for the lay person, rather than in accepted transliteration modes. Further, on such occasions, I have consulted linguistic experts for the more difficult parts, even though Atallah and Zarqa have invariably provided their own explanations in the materials I am handling as an archive. Their

fluency in several languages is one of the most remarkable aspects of their story, and the reasons and circumstances I hope will be illumined over the course of this book.

The assessment of this text I leave up to the reader and to the march of history. If the Great and Almighty Designer of all we survey spares me, granting me further longevity and mental clarity beyond my ninetieth decade, I hope to continue this most gratifying work, and welcome other interpretations when the full archive eventually becomes public.

M. W. Abdullah

N.B.: I have chosen to frame the narrative from the perspective of Atallah, beginning with a short note on his “awakening” that I found useful as an opening. This is simply because this note, and much of the written material, was in his own, neat hand. But I hope that Zarqa’s voice is equally represented over the course of the volume, as it should be. May God and my dear friends forgive me for my failings in this regard. – MWA

I, Atallah: My Awakening in South Africa

Many of my trusted friends of the current generation have disappointed me the most. I needn't outline here all their offences; these lapses, these *crimes*, the *kufir* are obvious to all of us. They must surely be known to those who have failed us so badly, whether they admit it or not. Heart. Conscience. Call it what you will. A person *knows*.

God knows I do not want to harp on failure. I want to write something uplifting. I don't want to be negative or insulting because it's not only the here and now that's important, but what I will leave to posterity, however small the contribution.

But this I must say: those who have stripped bare our hopes are truly of the *kuffaar*, the heathen, the unbelievers. They have deferred (even destroyed) all our deeply desired dreams. Look at how many of our people live in abjection on the Flats, the margins beyond The Wall, that monstrous edifice built by the self-serving corporate executives and bureaucrats of Peninsula City.

It's a matter of unlove, all of this. Unfeeling. A grotesquery of narcissism, self-absorption and entitlement that comes in various forms and guises, some with stabbing pains, others like slight taps on the shoulder. All cumulatively hurtful.

The pervasive feeling you see everywhere nowadays is a kind of aridity one can only find when the soul has left the body. Soulless they are. These villains, these cronies. Takers who do not even love themselves because they treat themselves as nothing more than voids that only possessions can fill. Just like our hated predecessors. Those equally hollowed-out souls who now gleefully point fingers and say: *We told you so*.

I have encountered more than several of these soulless-skins during my brief sojourn here; they stink to high-heaven, rotting in their heavy flesh. I still meet them, but no longer need to engage as my previous public role demanded. Generally, they wanted to take whatever I had. Even when I had no money; it was whatever they could drain from me to generate some imagined feeling in themselves. These soulless-skins yearned, most of all, for some form of dark sensory delights derived from my submission. From my grovelling at their feet. From all of us grovelling at their feet. In submission and awe.

Such obscenities and monstrosities I'd woken up to. I can't say why I was brought back here, at this moment, at this exact time. I'm still at a loss at the absurdity of it.

Is it worthwhile to be back just to love and be loved?

I'm not sure.

1

Seeler's Island

It's like being safely submerged within my mother's waters and then wrenched loose without any ceremony. Into this existence. So I imagined.

Except I was a fully-grown man, of perhaps twenty, or twenty-five. Or even thirty? I couldn't tell, looking at my body. It was a young man's body in good shape, firm and muscled in ways that I had forgotten over the years, in the growing dotage of my previous existence. Or rather, *plural* existences. I could feel the strength in my limbs, in my desire to live. An energy I had not felt for such a long time.

Then I thought: Why did I want to exist for a fraction of a spark on this ancient pale blue dot called home? Who or what planted this *wanting* so deep that it was impossible to dislodge? And who made me stand upright on two legs and insistent on declaring to the world my inconsequential importance?

When I opened my eyes, I was lying on my back, above me the ceiling with its cracks and fissures, flaking paint; a little damp in the middle and in the far corner a sheer spiderweb. Another of God's small things.

A cell. My cell?

I didn't know. It was different. Not like I remembered it at all.

In those initial few moments of being awake, I was groggy. I was disorientated, yes, but it all felt ... simulated. My name was Nelson and yet also it wasn't. I remembered another name, one that surfaced hauntingly from my confusion.

Atallah.

Atallah? Nelson?

When I weighed up the two, whispered them, spoke them aloud a few times, even shouted them out, I didn't feel like a Nelson. There was no weight to the name, no real substance. How tinny

and nasal it sounded, in my mouth and nose. N n n n nah. Lil. Sin n n n. I shook my head to rid my ears of the peculiar sounds.

Whereas Atallah, with that throaty letter *ayn* at the start, a deep strength pronounced something meaningful: ξ tallah, yet the full-bodied shape also suggested femininity and fertility. The script all swelling cursive curves. It's a moon letter, this pharyngeal fricative consonant; it goes back to the ancient Phoenicians' circle. A perfect life's circle. The word *ayn* is the eye. All this I sensed in my strange awakening.

Gift of God is what Atallah means. It was a name from another life. From another time I couldn't fully recall. Only fragments of memories flickered; jerky images on an old-style projector. I remembered a nineteenth century magic lantern that I had used once. Perceived flashes of a city, water, an island, soldiers, an intense love for a woman, betrayal, defeat and death. But who and why and where? Who was the betrayer, and whom the betrayed? As I came to, I was ghosted by a wash of others. The other lives of mine, if this is what the spectral feelings were, had been submerged again into that vast pool of divine mother's water, diffused outwards in molecular ripples, a spirit to be absorbed and embodied again.

As I slowly regained my senses, I remembered glimmers and gleamings of before. Water. Another Island. But there was still uncertainty. Waves and eddies that refused to settle.

A face appeared in the doorway. A black man. Tall, bronze, with a white, clear-eyed smile. He spoke in a warm, friendly tone, which was unexpected. Even more surprising, he spoke as if I had been expected.

"My brother, ah, I see you've arrived. There's someone waiting for you outside."

He smiled again and took my hand in his, guiding me out of the cell and down a long corridor. I passed empty cells with transparent plate glass doors; I glimpsed metal double-bunks, water basins and toilets. There were large rectangular windows, larger than those in normal cells, to allow a view of the gardens and trees outside. More like sparse hotel rooms than gaol fare. At last we came out into the sunlight. This was a relief because suddenly I realised how cold I felt. (The weather was warm enough, so the chill must have arisen though some illness, or perhaps the incorporeal eidolons I'd been experiencing, of lives before this one.)

“I’m Mohammad Cassius,” he said, still holding my hand, to steady me. He was in a black uniform with gold epaulettes. A handgun strapped low on his right thigh.

The Cassius, I wondered, the talker, the fighter? Mohammad? Here! Unbelievable. Was I awake? The questions spooled out in an unruly thread.

Looking around, I saw other guards in similar black uniforms, shoulders slung with dark rifles. They were guiding a gaggle of people headed to the prison section which housed my cell; people talking and laughing, in sunglasses, shorts, floppy hats, clutching their cameras and bottles of water. They walked past me without a glance. How did they not know me? A tour group, I later heard, visiting what was once a maximum-security prison.

On one side of the island, I saw at least five high-rise buildings, at angles to each other, so that one could, I suppose, get views of the sea and mainland from most of the rooms. It was as I thought: I read on a sign high up on one building the name: Seeler’s Island Hotels.

Mohammad led me to a man standing apart from the group, a fellow with a grey goatee who looked at me intently, the way some supremely confident or curious people can look you straight in the eye and not flinch. Or like some children stare sometimes in a contest to see who will look away first, or be the first to crumple in laughter.

Perhaps he recognised me, I thought, since he too smiled. He carried a piece of transparent material the size of his palm, the thickness of a pane of glass; some sort of a phone with a touchscreen, I thought. He offered this to me.

“I’m William, but call me Will,” he said, though not extending a handshake. Instead he held the device out to me with his left hand and with his right he tugged on his goatee, then smoothed his ponytail, fingered the gold earring in one ear lobe then the other, and pulled his shirt away from his protruding belly. So much personal tending; it was all done quickly, a familiar, practised routine of self-consciousness and casual vanity, whether preening or discomfited, it was hard to tell.

I hesitated, unsure, expecting a trick in his gesture. Poison on the surface, or an explosive device cleverly hidden. I looked him in the eye to show I was not afraid and took it from him. I touched the surface, and the front page of a newspaper emerged: *Peninsula City Daily*. He inclined his head, encouraging me to read.

“Wonderful news, isn’t it?” he said, pointing to a photograph on the front page, a woman: “Youngest Female President in the World.” I looked up from the odd headline, but the man only nodded again, indicating I should read further.

I scanned the page, moving to the sidebar. A story of an escaped tiger that was being kept as a pet by a billionaire rapper; another story of two dead in a multi-car pileup on the M2; a tokoloshe blamed for causing a politician’s infidelity and breaking up his marriage; an attempt to scale The Wall, leaving three hundred dead, “lamentable but understandable”. I didn’t know what the man expected me to find.

“The *date*,” he said, somewhat impatiently, as if talking to a child. “Read the date!”

I glanced at the top of the newspaper. *What?* Peered closely: July 2035. The man had taken off his hat, revealing a shiny bald pate which he mopped with a handkerchief. The day was unseasonably hot.

“No, it can’t be,” I said.

“But it is. The 18th of July—”

“No, I mean, is this year *that* year?” My expression was clotted, in my confusion.

“The year is as you see it.”

“You’re joking! Just tell me the right year!”

“Well, you *are* being peculiar, young man! Of course it’s 2035. Do you think me stupid? No, I won’t stand for your mockery of my acuity. I may be old and gouty, completely bald, but don’t take me for a fool.”

At that very moment, I felt foolish and dizzy and the man’s face started to blur. I felt myself losing ground and sense and ... passing out. Falling, mercifully, into darkness.

2

The Eye of Horus

“She saw you coming, Zarqa did.”

Will was talking to me but his voice sounded remote, like he was shouting from a far distance. Zarqa? He said Zarqa was warm, blossomy, like a summer’s day; with intense eyes like the sun. His words were echoing bubbles bouncing around in my skull. I rubbed my temples.

We were sitting side by side in an emerald blue transport capsule as we sped soundlessly toward the mainland. I could see in the distance the busy glints of the harbour; clusters of low buildings, perhaps just one- and two-storeys high. Green, blue, red. Boats moored. Helicopters on the roofs. Or wait: some other kind of vehicle? My mind was still hazy.

The capsule, perhaps the size of a small car, held only the two of us. This vehicle plied on a light rail suspended above the expansive bridge that ran from the island towards Oceanfront Harbour. Aerial sea ferries, Will explained. High-speed rail transport for transfers of ten minutes one way.

In truth, I felt completely transported away from myself. I had no recollection, even, of getting into the capsule. This *Zarqa*? Who was he talking about? And why was he speaking so intimately to me about this person?

“Ah, Zarqa ... A delight to have around. She’s insightful in so many ways. You’ll see.”

I began a garble of questions: “What’s going on ... why am I here how did I get ... why can’t I remember?”

“Patience,” Will reassured me. “The answers will come ... well some of them.”

I welcomed the silence as we sped high above the white-tipped waves. Will had been starting to grate on my nerves. I needed to get my bearings and he’d been making things worse with his incessant talk. Below us, through the capsule’s transparent glass floor, a disconcerting experience that made me nauseous, I could see large buses moving to-and-fro over the bridge; and people walking in groups on either side of the bus lanes. No cars. Perhaps to prevent congestion. For the moment, queasy as I was, I didn’t want to know why the City had built such an expensive structure to an island that didn’t seem a promising visitor destination.

But Will seemed to intuit, and answered my unasked question.

“The big attraction is that the entire structure is replicated on the ocean floor, like Europe’s ocean floor tunnels, allowing you to drive or walk over. And even stay overnight in hotel rooms, under the ones built on the island, Home2Oceans, the developers call it, or H2Os, home of the two oceans. The undersea structures have supersized windows, with floodlights lighting up the immediate surroundings. So you can see the kelp forest and the sea life.”

“Oh,” I said. Imagining this an inverted aquarium of sorts, was it then, by some strange measure?

“And, if you want an additional thrill, you can visit Seeler’s Island for the freak fighting shows they put on once in a while. Amazing exhibitions. Or you can see, and perhaps even touch, the monsters locked up in those transparent cells. They bring them in from prisons in the outlying areas, drug them for the touch experience.”

Listening to his account, however reasoned and clear, all the elements part of his familiar world, I felt scarcely any more grounded than I had before. Give it time, I urged myself inwardly. Time. Perhaps time will tell.

Uncertain and dazed as I was, I couldn’t help but think about the name of the island. A hedonist’s resort, it appeared. Seeler’s? Who was trying to seel who? To blind and keep blinded, eyes sewn shut like a falcon in training, fit only to be tamed? It was a practice with ancient roots. Who would use that name now? Who would want to reference that cruel manner of mastery? My heart flinched at the thought. Seeler’s. Such a brutal name.

Or was it a play on the practice of sealers, the clubbing of seals? Or some obscure joke that a perverse mind had conjured, taking superior pleasure in people not knowing what the name meant? Pleasure in poor fools, in fooling them? My mind lurched, struggling to process the idea of some master toying with us, at once implying and withholding from us our complicity in this tractile, bonded state.

And then out of my mind’s ether emerged an image of a large, pure white female *saqar*, one of those magnificent hunters larger and more powerful than the tercel, fettered and hooded on a leather glove on my arm. Was I too a seeler in another time and place? Unbidden, another sudden

image flew into focus: children, dead children; two of my birds swooping free in the sky. Falcons named after my poor dead little ones. I dug my nails into my thigh. *Wake up! Wake up!*

When we stopped and stepped down from the capsule, Will had to help me to a row of silver elevator doors because I was still unsteady on my feet, and we dropped without a murmur three floors down, emerging into a vast muted corridor about four hundred metres long. For an instant, as I stood there, my senses involuntarily recalled a different, more vital space. Perhaps it was the arch of the entrance. Or the presence of a companion steadying me as I imagined a comrade had once done at the entrance to the Aleppo Madinah Souq. The thick smell of spices and incense; the rich textures of raw silk, soap, copper, leather. The merchants, shouting. Children running.

I couldn't remember when I had visited the Levant, yet feelings arose: resting, recuperation; the languid entwining of a sweat-drenched woman. Naked. Rest from a long campaign of bloodletting. Cleaning white brain matter and tufts of hair from a broad blade. The struggle to drive from my broken dreams the rancid stench of bloated corpses. Human and horse. My nostrils clenched. How could any of this be? What was happening?

We walked down the Oceanfront corridor; on either side of the pedestrian mall were many shops, selling suits, leisure wear, electronics, coffee. A proliferation of desires and duties. Beyond the end of the corridor, out in the sunlight, I could see a bookstore, The Globe, the name rendered in blue italics, the letter 'o' as Horus' Eye, a feminized stylisation with kohl circling a deep blue pupil. Will's business.

The Globe was in a standalone building which had a large interior space with exposed wooden beams, and rows of shelves against all four walls, storage reaching up to the ceiling. A sign on the door said Closed For The Day. Inside, despite the gloom, I could make out the movements of several flexible, extendable mechanical arms, that seemed to be attached to a man. No, a robot that resembled a man but with octopus arms. This contraption was plucking books from several shelves simultaneously and placing them on a table in the distance, all while taking other volumes and returning them back to the shelves.

The bizarre automaton paused for a moment and turned its head to look at me. It was Will! A version of Will: young, slim, dark-haired. With ear-rings and pony-tail. Good God! The device seemed to be surveying me. Impassive. Expressionless. Sizing me up with large eyes and red

flashing pupils. Then it turned away and went back to its duties. I shivered. As I stepped back, Will, chuckling, put his hand on my back. “It’s okay young man. It’s okay. Just a little joke between Zarqa and me. The robot; the resemblance ...”

I recoiled. What kind of madman was this?

Then I saw the woman.

She was sitting at a desk on a raised dais, like a judge. She stood up, glided down the wooden stairs and walked over to me.

“Zarqa!” hailed Will.

Her eyes shone with a light I had never seen. Ever. Was she a robot like that ... *creature*? Was I too but a mechanical projection of my former self? And this ‘Will’ fellow also? Zarqa’s eyes were the Horus’ eye in the shop’s signage, embellished and piercing. Completely distinctive. She was my height. Wearing a loose-fitting, long-sleeved blue and white kaftan with silver and gold roses and petals. Pitch black hair. Sharp angular cheeks.

Will read in my face the effect she had on me, and laughed. “I told you didn’t I?” He laughed again, and tugged at his goatee. “I *said* she saw you coming.”

“Like Cassandra,” I murmured, without thinking, yet thinking of the mythical young Trojan princess with a foresight that no one would believe. Cassandra. Cursed with disbelief. Punished for breaking a promise to a god.

“Not exactly,” said Zarqa, having overheard my murmur. “For one, I don’t have her red hair like so many painters have shown. And two, I would never promise what they said she did, to satisfy a god’s desires in exchange for godly powers.” At this, Will laughed more heartily still, too loudly, his head thrown back. Spittle flying out of his mouth. I shuddered. Rather an exaggerated performance, I thought.

But Zarqa did not seem bothered by his stagey mannerisms, and just pushed him aside, gently. She came up to me and took my hand in hers. A cool, hard handshake. Almost crushing, in fact. Momentarily, I felt the callouses on her palms.

“Welcome. It’s really good to see you. Don’t be put off by Will and his little dramas, he’s enjoying your discomfort, as he does with all newcomers. And truly, that is his masterful idea of a joke,” she said, tipping her head in the direction of the automaton.

“Will. You will find him wilful in his ways, and wily. But even he might be out-smarted and I’ve told him that one day the robot could really replace him.”

I shuffled a bit awkwardly as she continued. “I hope he’s told you that the answers will come, in time. Though for now you must gather yourself. Rest, eat and sleep.” And with that she led me away.

No doubt you, reading this account, are left wondering. Perhaps you are even scoffing, scornful of the constantly strange turns of events to which these pages subject you. I beg your indulgence. Think, for a second, how I must have felt in those early moments after my return. My addlement. Perplexity. *Fear*. Moments of wonder interspersed with disorientation, and then again with pure, overwhelming terror: not knowing where I’d come from, what I was doing there. And to have my unknown benefactors say that they were *expecting* me.

In a city, a *country*, unrecognisable in so many ways from the one I knew. Had known.

A few minutes later, I was in some form of flying contraption. Not quite a helicopter, as there were no visible rotors. We lifted off vertically from the roof of The Globe, hovered effortlessly, then flew from the Oceanfront over the city towards the mountain. I peered below and saw that the light rail system I had travelled on from Seeler’s Island was ubiquitous in the city, snaking through several high rises that appeared to reach hundreds of floors into the sky. These gleaming oblongs with sheer facades had also been built up against the mountain, above The Drive highway, stacked like upright alien dominoes.

Far out in the distance I saw a wall – The Wall, Will said – and I sat forward to see more closely. With a wave of his hand in front of the capsule’s windscreen Will magnified the view, and The Wall came into suddenly enormous sight. A massive structure. Probably fifty metres high and about twenty or thirty metres in width. The monstrosity stretched right across the city’s margins, right over the huddled Flats, until I could not make out where it began and where it ended. I saw watchtowers every few hundred metres, each housing guards. Immediately beyond The Wall was a dead expanse, a kind of no man’s land or desolate sandy moat, and then rows and rows of homes,

all different sizes and shapes, seeming to stand and rise and fall haphazardly on every available pocket of space.

Down there, beyond The Wall, I saw people, too, small and diminished from my capsuled height, moving about. Cars. Buses. An old-fashioned railway crisscrossing the ground. There were no flying vehicles and no high rises. Will saw my quizzical look. Said that flying vehicles were forbidden in the Flats, since they would pose a danger to the security of Peninsula City.

No wonder the city centre looked so clean. The Wall was meant to keep it that way. Pristine. Holding back the barbarians at the gates via intentional degrees of separation that provoked deliberate tangles of misapprehension. High in the flying machine, I felt suspended, ungrounded.

Soon, I found myself within the giant walled city. In fact, a gated city within the city. A series of protected enfoldments that turned inwards, opening out strategically only for business, pleasure and related necessities. When I looked along the N1 highway, I saw similar gated areas along the route, all with the same polished oblong high-rise towers. The arrangement created the impression of a regularly serrated terrain, a manufactured land of perfectly-formed volcanic stone.

The flying vehicle looped and swooped across the face of the mountain, rising above it for a few moments. Momentarily I glimpsed other areas of more exclusive, protected settlements, to this side and the other side, and then we swept back down. “To my place,” Will announced. Milan House on Milan Street.

We landed on a rooftop helipad at Will’s three-storey home, a huge residence that spanned at least two-thousand square metres, I estimated. This in an area (a shadow memory surfaced) once a suburb dense with detached and semi-detached houses.

“My cottage, your *crib*,” Will said sardonically, as we walked in. Onyx white tiles. A living room with a marble and oak fireplace. A double-volume ceiling with a loft area that hinted at the edge of a king-size bed. There were patio doors leading to a garden, and we took a stone pathway that snaked through a manicured lawn, past a giant mulberry tree, leafless in mid-winter, that stood solidly in the centre of the garden between the independent cottage and the main house. On either side it was flanked by loquat and fig trees. A feeling of calm, generous plenty.

“That mulberry is a mess in summer,” said Will. “The ripe fruit.”

“Though it does bring the birdlife, the birds’ wonderful song!” Zarqa reminded him, as she leant on his shoulder, her bare feet enjoying the grass.

“That’s my home studio,” she turned and pointed back to the top storey of the house. “Windows facing the harbour and the mountain. And I can see into the garden.” She smiled. “But look, for now we’ll leave you in your cottage. There’s everything you need. Clothes. Shower. Food. If you want anything else, call on the intercom. There’s a screen in your kitchen. Ask for Ariel. Or just say your name to wake up the system.”

Any questions I might have had (well, wouldn’t *you*?) she waved away with an open palm. I noticed a slight shake of her head. Her pursed lips.

So I did my best to settle in to a very unsettling situation. I showered. Ate the vegetable soup which was warming on the stove. Devoured some of the grain bread and small spinach pies. That basic hunger satisfied, my mind turned again to questions. In bed, I thought of the possibilities. Any family I might still have, to guide me in this much-changed place. Whether anyone might recognise me as myself, when I barely knew myself who I was.

As I drifted off into half-sleep, I saw in the faint corridors of memory a kitchen table. I was in a shirt, sleeves rolled up. My tie loosened. Tired. From work, perhaps? I was not sure who I saw but the shape of a name emerged. A young woman. Ntoko? Cooking. Woodsmoke burnt my eyes and nostrils. The scent of meat and potatoes. On my knee I was bouncing a happy little boy. Was that ... my first-born ... Thembekile? I wished so hard to touch him, in reality, but abruptly I was wrenched away from my small son, hurled forward into the chain of years. Still sitting on my kitchen chair, spinning and settling, slowing and speeding off again, I found myself calling out names: Nomzamo and G...? Faces formed, flickered, faded. I cradled so many children laughing, crying, dying.

And then, to my surprise, and I suppose relief, I started weeping. For everything and everyone. For all those I had left behind; for those I would never see again. Who would never see me again.

I cried with a dead man’s grief until, utterly exhausted, I fell into a deep sleep.

3

Tata Talks

After seven days of sleeping, eating, sitting in the garden, reading (about a world of so much change and yet so little change!) and then sleeping some more, I sensed that this stage of the strange hiatus was over. I had to surface and find my life. I found myself alive, so I needed to make a living, to live. There would be board and lodging. Food. I could not expect my benefactors' endless largesse. Nothing lasts forever.

The way Will had been looking at me, with the hunger of a starving carnivore, I had troubling moments. I thought he might have designs on me, and I'd soon be tasked to provide his pleasure, whatever this might be. It was not implausible, given the man's obviously capacious feeling for the world, his exaggerated manner and expression. His evident appetite for life. But I was not sure. I couldn't trust my judgement. Not yet. It could be I was deluded. Will had his worldly ways and he could surely purchase a young stranger's body anywhere, at any time. He did not need me. There was something else going on that I had not yet understood.

Do not judge me. My quandaries and paranoias. Of course I had wondered about Will. What he wanted. Money? Fame? Beautiful women like Zarqa? Will seemed flabby, old. Unlike Zarqa, who was strong and lithe. He resembled a melted candle, sagging pouches for a backside. An elderly man whose appeal had waned at least a decade ago and who was almost entirely non-existent, except in the fanciful passages of his mind. Some days, in his rapacious energy, he seemed a man who was desperately determined to find a reason to live. A will. And Zarqa? What did Zarqa want? And what about Ariel?

I thought of Ariel often. In my new bizarre world, she had been my kindly, ghostly support while I recovered in the garden cottage. Always there yet never intrusive. Intuitive and insightful. I hadn't needed to ask for anything, because she had slipped in, just checking on me briefly each time, to say good morning.

After my forays into the garden to walk and read, I would return to a clean cottage, towels changed, bed made. Yet I never saw Ariel go inside to do anything. Was this some sorcery? Or was she a

cybernetic organism? A robot with projective powers or hidden tentacles, a being that could do everything at superspeed, while seeming to do nothing? My imagination roiled.

The amazing breakfasts she prepared! Most mornings there was fresh fruit, baked rolls. Eggs, scrambled and poached. Olives, yoghurt, sliced tomatoes, and cucumbers. A feast fit for any man, king or otherwise. And since I was always ravenous (not only for the taste but for aroma and touch), I ate most of it. Taking my fill.

And yet, also a peculiar void. An emptiness. For someone who was cooking for me, for everyone, Ariel didn't seem to be doing any of it. I didn't smell cooking. Didn't see her in the large kitchen in the big house. And there were no weird automata cooking there either. No replicas of 'Will' or of 'Ariel'. Only the appearance of the completed meals. I thought that I might have lost touch with reality, or had blackouts during all that activity, missing everything.

One afternoon, two weeks after I'd arrived, just before lunch I returned after a walk and found Ariel tending to the roses on the side of the house, on her knees, a gloved hand holding the shears. She stood up, and I was reminded again that she was unusually tall, almost two metres. Her long auburn hair framed sharp, angular features, falling feyly over her eyes, and on to her shoulders. I wanted to speak to her, so thought I'd risk being told to mind my own business.

"How do you do it?" I asked, picking up the stems she had cut and placing them in the bucket she was using.

"I thought you'd notice, sooner or later." She smiled. "Maybe much later. Glad you're better." She gave me a quizzical glance. "It's a gift I have; I've always had it. A talent for organising banquets, music, special effects. Some illusory. Some not." She smiled again, eyes crinkling, sparkling a little. "And as for why I'm here. Well, because Zarqa found me. She saw me coming just as she saw you coming, so I suppose we're similar in some respects. Kindred spirits, born again on islands." She paused. Placed the shears on the ground before she continued.

"My island is somewhere in the Mediterranean. What I can remember. A kindly Arab woman with the same blue eyes as Zarqa's. I recall her fisherman husband and their son, who was their heart, their *qalb*. They saved me. They became my hearts, my *qulub*."

I blurted, unable to help myself. “So ... you were also someone else? And the gift is doing things without people being aware? *Seriously?*” I looked at her askance. “I suppose you could have cut these roses too, without anyone noticing? Snip snip, just like that, right?”

She laughed. “Yes, I suppose I could, if I’d wished. Without shears even. I believe I can do anything because I am everything. I am nothing if not great possibility! How’s that for self-belief, right? And believe me, I have memories of other places, other times, just like you do. I’ve watched your confusion, my friend. I understand. And our Will, dabbling in some writing, his hobby, he’s written a little pantomime about my life and lives, you know. I don’t like the spin he’s put on things, but that’s okay. For now. I’ll leave him be and I won’t elaborate. Not now, while you’re adjusting. I don’t want to be the one to upset you.”

I felt some irritation at her knowingness, but chose to let the feeling pass. Instead, I asked: “And you’re working for Will?”

“No, not really. I choose to remain here because of Zarqa. For Will too, in a way. He’s not ... malicious, you must know, or masterfully controlling, even though it may sometimes appear so at first sight, the way he tries to pull the strings. He’s just eccentric, strange. That I’ll admit. But he’s doing good work, *they’re* doing good work. Both of them have been doing it for a long time except now events are coming to a head.”

Her ramblings and pronouncements left me more confused than ever, so I returned to practical issues. “But the cooking? How is that possible? How—”

“Why worry about it. The work’s being done, and it’s being done out of love. For you, for everyone else here. Consider it my gift. Lunch’s ready, by the way,” she said, pulling off her gloves and placing them in the bucket. “I’ll come back to this later. Let’s eat.”

She led the way into the kitchen of the big house. On the table: roasted butternut soup, grilled salmon, sautéed asparagus, small hot rolls and a large green salad. She was a vegetarian, so left the fish to me. She was gracious and amiable as we ate our shared meal, saying casually that she should start getting my paperwork together so that I could learn to fly. She’d teach me.

I scarcely knew what to think, so improbable everything seemed.

The following morning, Will telephoned my bedroom, jangling me awake. Good news, he declared! He'd set up a meeting to pitch me as the host of a TV show produced by HeldeAkker, a large entertainment, financial services, arms, biotechnology and construction conglomerate. HeldeAkker's subsidiary The Poppet Group would be directly involved, Will said. I thought it was presumptuous but agreed. What else was I going to do: refuse to work? I did not have the luxury. Anyway, it sounded like a relatively easy way to make money, and Will said Zarqa thought it was a good idea.

HeldeAkker? What a strange name. Reminded me of a cemetery for dead heroes. Someone's perverse humour. Like Seeler's, I thought.

The show would be along the lines of the American late-night sit down and personal interviews, engaging with celebrity, notoriety and asininity. A soporific, popular pantomime that could draw millions based on various combinations of wit, artful mimicry and religious-ideological affiliation. So said Will. My edge, Will said, was the *uncanny* resemblance to Madiba. That element would pull the punters, he laughed. Not to mention pull the wool over their already short-sighted eyes. As he guffawed, I could tell he relished the playful possibilities that his idea had released, the chance to ply a creative trade even as he ployed clever slants on truth. The working title he proposed for the show was *Tata Talks*, though he hadn't decided for certain.

The introductory meeting was held in Will's big house, around the large mahogany table in the dining room. Present were John Dube, the large-headed, squat CEO of The Poppet Group; his wife Tina (*call me Tienie*), tall, blonde, with rapid, staccato speech; their daughter Sonja who was a honey-skinned cut-out of her mother, and son-in-law Gerrit, a bespectacled graduate of several American business schools. Gerrit's stepfather, Henry, chairman of HeldeAkker, was a good friend of John Dube. Henry had made his initial money off lucrative deals with the government of Peninsula City, providing The Wall's construction and security. But business was slowing, I'd heard from Ariel. New councillors were perhaps coming after the next elections at the end of the year, meaning Dube's convenient open tap would be turned off. I studied Dube: he reminded me of someone ... Large head, no neck, jelly cheeks, pouty lips. Ah yes. Alfred Hitchcock. All very meaty, this abundant flesh. A man of altogether too much substance.

Perhaps I should also mention that The Poppet Group was known, when first established, as a porn production company. Historical costume dramas, pornographically rendered. Flounces and

unsheathed rapiers; big men and buxom women getting to grips via all the exuberant frills and furbelows that allowed history to disguise its violence. Will had chuckled, spittle and pieces of food flying, when he spoke to me the night before the meeting. But I shouldn't worry, he'd soothed, it wasn't porn any longer; the group had moved on to bigger, better, more socially-responsible work, and their production values were widely-recognised as first class for their category. In other words, they would offer product excellence, and all above board.

A little unnerved, I had spent a few hours online before the meeting, researching their work, and my digging confirmed Will's assessment. Back in the day, Tienie and Sonja had been the company's first risqué adult stars, though that had promptly changed with the arrival of principled Gerrit and the crucial patronage of his father. Then the company promptly cleaned up its act and became respectable, in order to continue cleaning up with corporate profits. Indecency, I was starting to suspect, was more difficult to gauge than it outwardly seemed.

Gerrit (all long locks and delicate fingers that were constantly pushing up his spectacles), was responsible for all the contractual matters. He turned out to be a sharp lawyer who casually belied his legal profession with t-shirts and jeans. I noticed how he watched all of us with a studied interest.

Then it was on to my audition. For my role, John asked me (somewhat predictably) to read part of a reworked Mandela speech, handing me a script with a slight smile on his lips and saying reassuringly that this was merely an informal screen test. He gestured for me to begin:

I, Nelson Rohlilahla Dalibunga Mandela, son of Gadla Henry Mphakanyiswa and Noqaphi Nosekeni (Nosekeni Fanny, the daughter of Nkedama from the amaMpemvu clan of the Xhosa, belonging to the Right Hand House), son of Mandela, son of Ngubengcuka, Royalty of the abaThembu, His Excellency President of the Republic, Sir Nelson: Knight of the British Empire, Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Lenin Peace Prize laureate, Gaddafi International Prize for Human Rights laureate, Citizen of the World's Nations, friend of His Excellencies Fidel Castro: Cuba et al. Also once known as kaffir boy, terrorist, White Afrikaner/English-loving counter-revolutionary Capitalist lap/running dog. And so on and so forth. I won't bore you with all my titles and biographical details. I want to tell you the strange story of my life.

Tienie, overly excited, jumped to her feet and exclaimed that *Oh My Word* I was the real deal. *Really*. John nodded, the flab on his cheeks quivering in anticipation of great things to come. He agreed there was going to be considerable interest in the planned show; from a wide audience. From the black public, certainly; maybe even luring those currently hooked on sports, court dramas, that sort of thing. Just to hear me speak would likely be enough for that crowd, John said. Their hero embodied. Still so infatuated, obsessed, with Madiba, after so many years.

Gerrit pointed out that there would also be excellent audience potential among other demographics: progressive Afrikaners, 'the English', Jews, Muslims, local Indians. And of course let's not forget the African diaspora! Gerrit went wild on a list: Nigerians, Somalians, Mozambicans, Congolese, Sudanese, Ethiopians, Libyans, Moroccans, Algerians and ... On he went. I was amazed at my continental pulling power.

Will waded in, and zealously began to flesh out the likely shape of the show. We'd do a pilot, he said, and if this was received well, we would produce another six episodes. All part of a series of one-on-ones with the very politicians who had succeeded Madiba! What a drawcard. Imagine Nelson third-degreeing that lot in a grandfatherly tone, or gently scolding them on occasion. People would lap it up, he laughed.

It wouldn't take much, said Sonja. She studied my face, head to the side: a little make-up; hair dye. A few grey streaks to get an older look. *Tata Talks* wouldn't work for a young Nelson, she said. Will agreed; we needed a certain gravitas, a seriousness that both belied and carried the satirical impulse.

The meeting lasted three exhausting hours, and afterwards, back in my cottage, I slept deeply, almost dead asleep for the rest of the day and on into the night, waking only to eat a marvellous meal prepared by Ariel. Garlicky, chilli-infused lamb roast with jacket potatoes followed by what she called her speciality: a sweet Umm Ali pudding, offset with the subtly bitter counterpoint of cardamom-infused *qahwa Arabiya*. She had told me before that she had a boyfriend once, a *sweet* Arab boy; had lived with him all over the Middle East. I hoped one day to hear more of her story but she seemed elusive; an unknown quantity.

In the morning, Zarqa phoned me with an update: my acting lessons would start the next day, since Will was eager to get the show moving.

“He is in a *hurry*,” she said, and I sensed her disapproval. As if reading my mind, Zarqa objected that such haste probably wasn’t wise, not if we wanted a really good production.

“Actually,’ I said. “I’d rather not even have acting lessons, if you don’t mind. How hard can it be to host my own show?”

But she would not relent.

“Lessons, coaching ... call it rehearsals, if you prefer that angle. Because you *will* be going through many trial runs to smooth out the creases. There’s no escaping it. That’s what Will wants. And as always, when Will wants his way, that’s the way things play out.”

I couldn’t quite tell, from her voice, whether she smiled or grimaced.

The following morning, Will arrived at the cottage, script in hand, Tienie and Sonja in tow, and a list of the questions that would be standard interview fare for the show: favourite this and that – celebrity, colour, food, holiday destination, sexual position, book, film, television programme. All rather banal, I thought. But Will insisted. An easy start, he said, no heavy politics, small talk with a few local celebrities. Keep it light. That would be part of the appeal with *Tata Talks*; Tata, a man revered but all-too-human, chatting person-to-person about ordinary, even inconsequential things, sidestepping heavy-handed History.

We went back to the mahogany table in the big house and started to rehearse, Will sitting across the table from me, allowing me to ask the questions while Tienie and Sonja looked on, appraising.

“Will there be a live audience?” I asked.

“Not at this stage,” Will shook his head. Perhaps I looked disappointed, because he continued. “It would up the cost. Overstretch the budget. Better we test the market first.”

Tienie added that a live audience would anyway be distracting in the beginning, and that there would be no canned responses either, as these too were dull and formulaic. Viewers could see through that outdated convention.

I did my best at the reading, but it was difficult to concentrate. Tienie and Sonja constantly leant over me, telling me to keep my hands on the table, to sit up and not slouch; to hold my head still when listening; to maintain eye contact with my guest.

“Nod sometimes!” urged Sonja.

“And the occasional smile!” encouraged Tienie.

I didn’t mind their advice, but their pervasive female presence ... that was hard to deal with. Perfumed hair. Jewelled fingers and wrists. Their breasts. For so long women had been beyond me, and these two made me realise that I was alive. Well and truly alive.

For the actual filming, we headed to Gerrit’s studio in Sea Point. His stepfather Henry had financed it, in a two-storey renovated Victorian that was a former residence for artists, which explained the eclectic mix of styles: art nouveau balustrades and railings; the front door an extravagant arabesque. When we arrived, Gerrit was standing on the upper balcony with Ariel, cigarette in hand.

What we saw outside, Gerrit said, was just the façade of the place. It had been demolished and rebuilt completely, down to the wooden floors and authentic powdery brick work. Henry’s generous financing. The studio set-up was the best that money could buy. Gerrit pointed to the seamless screens on every surface, including the ceiling, screens that doubled as cameras for shots from every conceivable angle, with audio able to pick up or smooth out the faintest sound.

The A.I. for the computer-generated imagery was so sophisticated, he said, that if the production director wanted to, he could simply create a facsimile of an actor and shoot an entire movie in digitised format, with the physical likeness and voice. Though that was illegal; the unions, he explained. They balked, because it would mean decimating livelihoods, the actors given a pittance in royalties.

We shot the pilot that day. Will directed with Tienie as co-director. Sonja was in charge of wardrobe and makeup. For me, she had selected a blue cashmere sweater under a navy-blue blazer, with matching tapered pants. A watch on my left wrist. Feet in crimson velvet slip-ons, with invisible socks. I scarcely recognised myself.

My first guest was mixed martial artist-turned-star author, Vuyiswa Ledwaba. She was a name these days, for her AfroKlit novels that were being made into a television series. Vuyiswa had read about Nelson at school and seen the footage of him taken over the years; she was obviously excited to be part of his new history in-the-making. She looked super hip, sporting a white velour tracksuit,

her sponsor's logo – tiger claws streaking blood on a white background – emblazoned on the thigh and the chest. Her cropped hair showed diamond studs glinting in each ear.

We sat in armchairs, diagonally across a small glass coffee table. An informal look, Will had said, like you're chatting in front of a homely fire. It would help the audience to connect.

"Show me that six pack," I cheekily prompted Vuyiswa, who pulled up her tracksuit top to reveal her tight abs.

"An *eight* pack," she corrected, "earned with much pain and dieting. Tougher now because I'm not fighting in competitions." Then Vuyiswa stared at me. Peered even. "But that's nothing, right. Not as remarkable as you, brother. I mean, *look* at you! It's like seeing the same person, reborn."

"Oh, I get that all the time."

"So you're not family to—?"

"No ... well not as far as I know."

"And where were you born?"

"The Western Cape. Seeler's Island, I think."

"Even the voice. Good God my brother. You're *him*. You've had a DNA test?"

Will was beaming. This was exactly what he'd wanted. Genuine surprise, amazement, bewilderment. Shock would be best. I had become the one being interviewed. This would hook an audience, certainly.

On cue, I took over. "It must be one of the strangest quirks of fate," I said, following Will's script. "Or a scientific anomaly. Or even a fact of the universe that energy is supposedly never lost or never degraded only converted into an altered state. Perhaps Nelson's molecular being, his soul, if you want to call it that, never died. Perhaps somehow it reformed, somewhere in the air or earth and was picked up by one of my ancestors and then passed on to me. Who knows how these things happen! Passed on directly to me, through some form of mysterious osmosis. I truly have no idea! So, to answer your question: no I haven't had the DNA test done. I'm still totally in the dark. Maybe I should, just to put my own mind at rest."

Vuyiswa nodded, thoughtfully. "I like that whole idea you're raising, bru about our ancestors."

I ran with this. “Some people say this whole idea of ancestor worship is nonsense, or going to visit a grave and praying there; that it’s stupid. Maybe; it’s only bones, hair, nails, teeth. Nothing else, right? I don’t want to get too serious about this on our first show, but we just don’t know, do we? Maybe spirits *do* live on. Yes, we can provide explanations, scientific rationales, for events in our corner of the Universe. But still: we’re no closer to working out Meaning, are we?”

“No, we haven’t figured things out at all yet,” Vuyiswa agreed.

“Anyway, what do I know. I feel I hardly know this place,” I said.

Will stopped recording. He liked what we were doing, the direction of the conversation, but it was time to switch it up, he urged; time to get less esoteric and to focus on Vuyiswa. Her new series. Her career, her daughter, her husband. Their family life. So off we went again, down this popular track, and after two hours Will had enough material to work with, and Vuyiswa and I posed for some stills, smiling widely. She asked me for my autograph. I asked her to sign copies of her books, and there were congratulations all round on a job well done. In two weeks, we’d surely have a successful broadcast, Will grinned. The show would be called *Tata Talks*; Will had made up his mind.

4

Speak, Love

During those early days at Milan House, I'd dream at night and even during the day of Kufa and an ancient lamplit mosque. Even smell the heavy incense burning, and feel the cool, gentle wind whispering in from the Euphrates.

It's a January morning, I'm prostrating for prayers and I hear a commotion. Panicked men are running past me to the exit. I run forward, strangely unafraid. See a man on his knees holding his head. Hear him groaning in pain. I rush to help him but his eyes say it's too late. Others crowd around, pushing me away. Now I am afraid. I run home.

In the afternoon I see a funeral procession, a shape shrouded in white linen carried on the shoulders of several men, a slow mournful column leading out of Kufa. A burial. An unmarked stone to mark the interment. Tears, rage, cries of war. Is it Ali who is dead? I take refuge in reciting the *fatiha*:

In the name of Allah Most Gracious Most Merciful ... Thee do we worship and Thine aid we seek ... Show us the straight way ... Those whose (portion) is not wrath and who go not astray.

I was day-dreaming this fugue memory in Zarqa's studio on the third floor, but not for long. She set to work and I watched as she took up a brush and began writing. Will was sitting to the side, watching. She was, as I would understand more clearly much later, eschewing the demands of the rhombic dot framework required of proportional calligraphic scripts, writing freely without regard for the size of the letters or their exact proportion to each other. She was more free-spirited in her interpretation, taking creative liberties that might give new meaning to inherited ways. Right then, she turned to me and accepted my gaze. Said she was translating a poem into Ajami-English, a piece about the union of true minds. A marriage, was the word she used.

She was incredibly innovative; in a contravention of the standard division between styles, she was using a combination of scripts, mixing both knotted and floriated. It was the Kufic script dreamt anew, strangely alluring in its synergy of thick straight lines, linear rigidity and floral imaginings. Most striking was the speed at which she progressed, as if writing in her own handwriting. Without thinking. I watched her from the side, her pen in hand, dipping and writing, her head bent over the paper. I felt an ache in my belly.

I do not have a copy of that wonderful creation, which she later embellished with paint and gold leaf. I have only the prosaic, typed-out version she had given me earlier that day, where she used letters from Farsi, Urdu and Ottoman Turkish to create phonetically the word constructions not found in Arabic. (I *do* possess an exact replica of what Zarqa told me was the world's oldest Quran, written and illuminated on deer skin a few years after the Prophet's death, but that is another tale for another time.) If you know the well-known poem and can read the script, from right to left, it's quite easy:

لنت مي نت تو ذا مرخ أف ترو ماندز

أدمت إمدمنتس. لف إز نت لف

وچ ألتریشن فندز

أو بندز وث ذا رموقا تو رموق.

أو نو! إت إز أن إفا - فكسد مارك

ذت لكس أن تمپستس أند إز نقا شيكن؛

إت إز ذا ستار تو إقري وندر، نغ بارك،

وز واث إز أنون، ألدو هز هایت بي تيكن.

لف، س نت تامز فول، ذو روزي لپيس أند چيکس

وثن هز بند نغ سکل، س کمپس کام؛

لف أولتاز نت وث هز بریف أواز أند ويکس،

بت بيرز إت أوت إيئن تو ذي إدج أف دوم.

إف ذس بي إرا أند آپن مي پرف، د،

آنقار روت، نور نومان إفا لف، د.

I was in the studio because Zarqa had asked me to come up, for the first time, for afternoon tea with her and Will. I agreed to try her masala tea, which she served with bite-sized milk-tarts, and cocktail samosas. And no, she didn't make the eats. That would have been a little too time consuming. As usual, Ariel magically prepared everything. But Zarqa's chai was her own. Infused with cinnamon, star anise, cardamom, fennel, peppercorn and nutmeg. A small, aromatic paradise that she had created.

Her studio was sparse, even empty. At first glance, I could not imagine that she produced her art in the large vacant space because there was no sign of creativity, not a single painting, illustration, or even a smudge of spilled paint or ink anywhere. On a table in front of a window facing the harbour, horizon shimmering in the distance, was one ink stand, one pen and one sheet of A-4 paper. That was all. Handmade Washi from Japan, she said.

When I think of it now, perhaps a *tabula rasa* is needed by some artists, to produce good art. A certain blindness is required, the provocative blankness of a piece of white paper. For Zarqa, the surroundings had to be devoid of any inspiration other than the mind's contents, freed from daily constraints, and from tiring reading and research; even unyoked from her calligraphy master's dictates. A space of possibility.

For the painting and illumination of a piece of calligraphy, she had a large cupboard, revealing her entire range of brushes and paints. Once she completed a piece, she cleaned up, closed up, and at some point she'd start again.

"Will cheats," she said, at which Will shook his head, as he served more tea and I indulged in three more tiny tarts. "He has machined copies made; some done by Will, robot Will I mean. They're similar, and in some ways perhaps superior to the hand-drawn work. There's the precision of lines and scales; the addition of layers of paint which allows for a raised roughness under the fingers. Buyers like that touch."

Will was not unsettled by her words, merely asking, "Is written language, like speech, a true delineation of time? Unlike music, which is not?" He went on a long exposition that drew on musical pieces, composers. Classic and contemporary. He played the piano, he said.

I shrugged. Shook my head. Said I didn't know much about any of this, never mind art or calligraphy. What I didn't say was that Will was giving me a headache, with his constant talk. His lecturing. Why did he always need to *dominate*? Play the know all.

"Which brings me to another idea I want to propose to you," Will said. With an artful pause he sipped his tea, then balanced the cup on his knee. "It's your own art. The art that you produce. Can produce. Like the art that you made in the past."

I must have looked confused at the idea of myself as an artist, whose work spanned the all-encompassing reach of time, present, past, future, because he persisted. "Come, you must have figured it out by now, I mean. That you *are* him. Or some version of him. Just as I'm some version of someone who has lived before, and so is Zarqa. And I don't mean by birth alone. But by resurrection, rebirth, re-formation. Whatever you wish to call it. But let's leave those questions for a moment. For all we know, even the DNA *is* actually identical, which is a matter of science. But what I'm interested in is creativity, invention and inventiveness: the artwork. Tata's handprints, the simple drawings of buildings, the signature. There's a market for all this, Atallah. Serious collectors pay serious money, especially for a new discovery. You will be very well off, and you'll help us, into the bargain ..."

I still betrayed my doubts, because he continued. "Zarqa would help with the production side of things, because I asked her nicely." He glanced at her, a little patronisingly. "And of course we'll have to formalise an agreement, to be fair to you and me, to us."

My head was spinning. First the TV show. Now this. *Us?* Who were we? Deeper and deeper. How much imagination would this take, how much creative cultural accounting could I stomach, in these ongoing demands of my presently bizarre, uncertain life? TV star. Artist. What next? "I'll have to think about it, if you don't mind. This seems a very big step."

"No rush," Zarqa smiled. She at least was warm and genuine. "Take all the time you need."

I nodded. Gave the glimmer of a smile in return. There was nothing else I could offer her, though when it came to Zarqa, my heart was always in my hand, as tiny as one of the folded delicacies I had so hungrily consumed. Zarqa. She made me feel so ... welcome. Wanted. As if she knew who I was. All of me. This body and life I was in now. What I had been. What I would become. I saw Will grit his teeth, but he said nothing.

5

Das Blaue Licht

I have a clipping of my very first review of my first television appearance on *Tata Talks*. Apparently, the “doppelgänger novelty wears off rather quickly in the pilot episode because one cannot get past the awfully slow delivery, the timbre of the voice resembling the sounds of mating frogs or a rusty saw being used on very dry wood.” The reviewer did not pull any punches.

As if that were not enough, the reviewer went on. The show “attempted to insert a long philosophical discussion on the meaning of life into the dialogue, a clumsy manoeuvre, which was clearly a turn-off for the general audience, as the low viewer numbers and social media responses have demonstrated.”

And further still: “Just shoot the idiot who recommended that a young man be made up to look so much older than he is, supposedly to celebrate the importance of our elders and their life’s wisdom. Bad move! Transparently *clumsy*. Mr Saqar may have considerable life experience for his age, but this patent fakery is certainly not the way to show it.”

I wasn’t heavily invested so didn’t care about being panned. Zarqa also was calm. But Will was furious, laying blame, despite his direction, on The Poppet Group’s Tienie and Sonja. He ranted. He raged. Threw all his toys, brewing up a storm of rebuke and rebuttal, refusing to take any responsibility for the debacle we had on our hands. And afterwards, when his anger found its lull, he rather petulantly jibed that I was already a has-been, a lost-cause loser; why on earth had he imagined he could work with me? He cloaked himself in scorn, deflecting. Sulking.

And so that was it. So much for *Tata Talks*. The show was over almost before it had properly begun. Too bad. It had been hasty and ill-conceived, and I was glad to see the back of it.

But even disasters live on, for a few days later Gerrit called. His step-father Henry had watched the show with a good friend, Hélène Stahl, a German writer and advertising director, and she felt that I could be used more effectively in a different vehicle, one that would play to my strengths. All I needed was experienced support, she said. We should talk. Tata should.

I was unsure. I'd need convincing, after the recent flop, so agreed at least to meet her. I needed an income, after all; had to find a way to live that wouldn't leech, and so along with Will and Zarqa we went to the studio in Sea Point. H  l  ne was sitting in the boardroom at the head of the table, working on a laptop. She was dressed elegantly. I recall a navy-blue pants suit, a sky-blue scarf draped around her neck. Her reddish hair was hanging loose. When we were introduced, she seemed preoccupied, leading me to sense something else, an undercurrent of which I was yet not properly aware. H  l  ne stepped up close and took Zarqa's hands in hers.

"You have spiritual eyes, my dear. I love blue. It's always been my favourite colour. There's something elemental about the shade, especially sapphire," she said to Zarqa. "*Das blaue licht* cannot be ignored, it demands to be announced to the world. There's such power in it. You must let me photograph you." She stepped back. Seemed to frame Zarqa for possible camera shots, cocking her head side to side.

"Looking at you reminds me of a story I love, about a carefree, misunderstood young girl and her fascination with mountains and blue crystals. A film was made of this story, you know, in an era when few women made films," she said. "And wait, now there comes to me another memory of a real girl I once knew, *der blaue engel*, may her dear soul rest in peace. Ah Marlene! What an actress. Actually, you resemble her a little, even in demeanour. You're so ... what's the word ... sophisticated. *Elegant*. You have the same sexual energy ... just like Dietrich. Me, I didn't have it. Perhaps that's why I'm a director, not an actress." H  l  ne posed and postured, skilfully giving the lie to her own claims.

But Zarqa was unmoved. "I will not be photographed," insisted Zarqa. "It's not that I'm camera-shy. I simply prefer anonymity. I have no wish to be known or recognised."

I heard then, for the first time, a sharp edge in Zarqa's voice, and wondered what all this was about. The brittle, guarded rebuff to H  l  ne's effusiveness. It was as if these two women knew each other. Emotionally intimate. Like two old, old friends.

"*What?* But *why* do you refuse me? That is so disappointing!" countered H  l  ne. "This would not have been Marlene's answer, no. She loved the limelight; was a bit of a media *hure*, if you would excuse me the vulgarity." She laughed, emphasising an arch levity.

Then H  l  ne stared hard at Zarqa, who did not blink, undeterred. “Ag, well, perhaps you might change your mind my dear. In time. But you’re right, I shouldn’t be talking about you, after all, for here is The Man I’ve wanted to see,” she said, turning to me and taking my hand.

“Incredible! The similarity! That is the first attraction, obviously, but more than that ... your youth, stature, assertiveness, honesty, vulnerability ...” She reeled off a long list of attributes, adding, “... and that something, that indefinable *presence* that separates the stars from the supporting cast. This is what H  l  ne has seen in you!” she emphasised, quite comfortable referring to herself in the third person.

“So let me be candid: *Tata* was a failure *because* it tried to erase this vitality, this ... how shall I say ... *throbbing* energy.” She clenched a fist, shook it in front of her face. The gesture vibrated with authority. “A foolish decision. Why do something like that?” asked H  l  ne, a rhetorical arrow cast at Will, who stared back defiantly but stayed tight-lipped.

H  l  ne smirked. “Dear William, my *dear boy*. Oh, the pain I feel, to find you, the great man, at a loss for words!”

“I should know! I know a little bit about filming the majesty of youth,” H  l  ne pontificated. “The sensibility and the form. That’s what art is about, isn’t it? Sublime beauty. They can call it what they like, the others, kitsch or a fascist aesthetic. Let them. That is not my concern. Because my intention, my aim, my *niyyah*, as the Moslems say, has always come from my artist’s heart.”

H  l  ne was a force to be reckoned with. What could I possibly say?

“Actually, I couldn’t agree more,” Will nodded, as if H  l  ne had not the second before tried to cut him down to size. Thoughtfully he stroked his earrings; toyed with his ponytail. “In my day, my youth I mean, this is what I always strove for—”

“Yes, yes William, *danke*. We all know about you, back in your day. The Life and Times and Achievements of The Great Man. Enough! But *now* ... could we please focus on the present? I’d like to get some bureaucratic necessities out of the way, yes? The business of this *current* production? I’ve given the show a working title, *The President*. Pedantic but also simple. Obvious. Audiences will immediately understand.”

I was more and more intrigued, despite myself.

“All of you” – Hélène gestured – “I would require that all involved sign a contract. I have the assistance of Henry Farwood’s attorneys, for Mr Farwood – *Henry* – has the utmost confidence that this time we’ll succeed.” She wittered his name a little coyly, reaffirming the inner circle. “He’s even personally put up the seed money for this venture, which is a measure of his certainty. And as you’ll see from the fine print, that means all licensing agreements, for merchandising and the like, must pass through us. We run the show and all spinoffs.”

“Ah, excuse me?” Will was not happy. He launched into his ritual: ponytail, ears, shirt. “We’d want further discussion about this exclusivity agreement, I’d say. After all, Atallah has been living with us, I conceived the pilot show, and he is considering our latest proposal for the sale of artwork. So *we* were partners long before you came on the scene!”

“No. On Henry’s instructions, I am to insist on exclusivity.”

A short showdown staring contest ensued, until she clarified, without conceding. “This is not to say that you cannot sign an agreement with Atallah on *other* aspects of his artistic output, which I would think covers whatever agreement you have with him on his artwork.”

I nodded, somewhat mechanically, a little overwhelmed. I decided to consider both proposals, for my own sake, though I was grateful to Will and Zarqa for their hospitality. I needed to think. How to work with the initiative? What was best for me? Two separate agreements? Was this possible?

I was quite exhausted, dealing with the endless questions that swooped like disturbed birds in my mind. And I could forget about finding clarity on the trip home, for we flew in silence back to Milan House, the sky itself thick with clouds of tension. Will was livid.

Before I went to bed, I thought I briefly heard raised voices. A while later I saw the third floor lights go on: Zarqa was in her studio.

6

Hélène and Henry

I was stripped to the waist, sweat dripping, a fake cut above my left eye and on my lip. Hands held to my chin in the guard position, skin torn off my knuckles. I slipped his straight right, and as his arm grazed my check and passed over my left shoulder, I stepped in and struck an elbow under his jaw. There was a cracking sound (supposedly of bone breaking), and his eyes widened with shock and fear. His legs gave out, and on his way down I brought my knee into his face and the soft cartilage of his nose spread and flattened.

“I *like* it!” said Henry Farwood, as the lights came up in the studio’s viewing room at the end of the highlights package of *The President*. The protagonist Nelson Dalibunga had just won his first bareknuckle fight and made the most money he’d ever seen in his life for his family.

Henry was a large man, with a corpulent, smiling, fleshy face and bulbous nose; sparse waves of oiled blond hair brushed back from his forehead. His voice was soft, measured. He sat next to Hélène, with a smallish, dark-haired man who had arrived late. Gerrit, Tienie, Sonja and Ariel were sitting in the back row. I sat a few seats away with Will and Zarqa.

“You don’t think it’s too violent?” Hélène asked Henry. Before he could reply, she gestured to a technician sitting in a glass booth above the seating of the room. “Please start recording. It’s material we can use later when putting together a documentary on the filming of this series.” I’d begun to notice that she was always canny and strategic, this woman. There were cameras all around the viewing room, red lights on.

“Too violent?” Henry repeated. “No, it shows how rough it was for him coming up. It’s an origin story. It’s gritty. Realistic. Bloody. And inspirational. Just what we need now.”

The small, dark-haired man spoke. “Agreed!” He seemed so *familiar*. A heavy German accent. Jerky voice, as if each word needed a kind of physical counterpoint with sharp exhalations. He had twitchy hands, shoulders, head. “It reminds of the old days in Munich, the beer hall days—”

“Adi is right,” said Henry sharply, turning to the small man. “The days before reunification, right, my friend? Though many people may not know the facts, being unfamiliar with the history. But

yes, the living wasn't easy for many Germans, especially from the East. It was tough for your parents and grandparents, I can well imagine."

Then he leaned in. "By the way, everyone, this is Adi, H  l  ne's manager and, in his own right, a well-known actor and impersonator from Berlin. He discovered H  l  ne, didn't you Adi? What a wonderful eye for talent."

"Zwar, I saw her for the first time in a film. She was dancing on the beach, a young girl, wild and boundless as the ocean. *Der Heiliger Berg*, a German classic. After that encounter, then I invited her over to see me in person."

"Ah, Adi. Such a joker. Always in character," said Henry.

"And you always remind me of that undisciplined meat eater G  ring. That *verraaier!* Isn't that the word you use in your primitive kitchen language?" Adi snorted. "Ja, so the action is *gut*, but one thing: Why are we making more films about people like *him*. Surely, there are more worthy subjects. It is a perennial problem, this endless diluting of our pure blood and society."

Henry smiled impatiently, as if dealing with an obstreperous child. "Don't mind Adi; he's totally immersed in his role for his next video. He becomes the part he's playing. Method acting in the extreme! H  l  ne ... won't you give us a presentation of what we've just watched. And pardon me now if I'm going to sound somewhat pedagogic, but I would like H  l  ne to present to us what meaning we can draw from all this, on an individual basis, and for our society. In particular, the measurable emotional content, the elements and variables that would heighten or blunt the emotions." He turned his head. "I hope this is being recorded H  l  ne." She nodded.

Henry continued: "I'm alluding here to a work that I admire: I would highly recommend the reading of an extremely insightful dissertation into human behaviour entitled 'Die Afstomping van Gemoedsaandoeninge', also available now in English translation. And just recently translated into German, of course," he said. "Look it up under the English title, if you like, 'The Blunting of the Emotions'. A 1924 dissertation, written by a most remarkable young scholar, an *uitlander*, born in Holland. But shaped by this land, and also he dramatically shaped this land. The sociopolitical landscape. What an influential individual. I understand he had in 1926 spent a few semesters in Germany and later in the United States, studying human psychology. In my view: all still relevant today. More than relevant even; absolutely essential, if you'll indulge my partisan position. This

scholar met many remarkable men during his fruitful academic study in Leipzig, Hamburg and Berlin, and his encounters bore most impressive fruit for this country later.”

I was completely out of my depth, listening to this perplexing, impassioned disquisition, but Henry simply smiled at Adi, who flicked a wrist at him, palm forward, and then quickly folded his arms as if he'd been caught out in a nervous tic, and was somehow embarrassed by the gesture. Or perhaps mindful that he was revealing inside information, or giving away an insider joke. This was certainly an odd bunch of characters I'd become tangled up with. I could only hope that clarity would emerge in time, as Zarqa had previously reassured me.

When I looked at Adi again I was thinking, *I know you!* but for the life of me, I couldn't make out how come he seemed so familiar, and where I'd met him. I scrutinised the slick black hair combed flatly to the side. He was what ... thirty, forty?

He had an old-fashioned look about him, the face clean shaven but for a clipped moustache wedged under the nose. I imagined him in lederhosen, hand on a jutting hip. (*Why?*) I edged forward in my seat and saw that he was wearing black boots, long ones, his khaki trousers tucked into them. A dark green jacket over a white shirt. A green tie. My mind ticked over, and I hoped his name would soon come to me.

I glanced at Henry, who now also seemed mysterious, less simply like a business investor. Who was he? And who even were the others who had so suddenly become the cast of my confused life? Hélène? Will? Zarqa? Old friends, acquaintances? Lovers? Foes? What could I say except that the plot thickened. My thoughts were clear as mud.

Hélène asked for the lights to be dimmed, and used a handheld remote to screen highlights from the pilot episode of *The President*. She began. “Nelson Dalibunga – the allusion should be clear – is our protagonist. He lives on the Flats. Beyond The Wall.” She paused the footage on an image of a young man. He walked in a street past gathering rubbish, battered cars and tightly-packed houses. She resumed play as the camera swivelled to The Wall in the distance. “He is a final year student at the Flats Community College, aiming to become a lawyer. An orphan who lives with his godmother, Milly, he funds his studies through a number of odd jobs, among them bare-knuckle fighting for Yago, a local warlord. The first five episodes of *The President* feature Nelson trying to avoid the politics of the Flats. He doesn't want to get involved in resistance efforts; he is drawn

instead into a criminal network, but it subsequently emerges – a nice dramatic irony – that it was Yago who killed his parents. The fifth episode ends with Nelson fighting Yago, defeating and killing him in a makeshift arena and taking over his position, but as a more benevolent warlord. Looking on these developments, with a mixture of fear and relief, is Yago’s sister Mona. She is a security software engineer, young and attractive of course, as she must be for our story, and about to be recruited by a leading company in The City. The circumstances are now in place for episodes five to ten, where Nelson begins to develop a relationship with Mona. There are inevitably narrative complications, for while Mona rises rapidly in Peninsula City, Nelson has to deal with the burden of being the head of a criminal enterprise who is trying to take as much as he can from the criminally wealthy to help the people on the Flats. So. A good story premise with promising series development, yes?”

But Will scoffed. “How does a viewer empathise with Nelson if he’s a criminal or potentially a criminal? And how does this storyline get past the censors in Peninsula City, who are constantly monitoring the media, concerned about crime and possible unrest beyond The Wall? We could be seen as inciting.”

“No problem on that front, Will,” said Henry, before H  l  ne could answer. I saw Adi nodding vigorously, but Henry lifted a hand to let him know he should be silent. Henry asked H  l  ne to pause the recording for a moment, so that he could explain. She gestured to the operator in the glass booth, and Henry continued.

“Truly, you do not have to worry, Will. Everything’s cleared. You must understand the subtleties here. Instead of having other instigators and anarchists beyond The Wall set the agenda, *we’re* doing so. *We’ve* set the parameters for this discussion of the conditions inside and beyond The Wall. The politics of it all. Surely with your long history you must know at least a little bit about ideological production? That’s what we’re busy with now ... And remember, H  l  ne’s area of expertise is filming all this as artistically as possible. She knows what she’s doing; how to tackle important issues within our vision. She’s done it many times before in her advertising campaigns, I can assure you. And she has the rigour and discipline of a soldier, framed by a marvellous sense of artistry and technical expertise.”

Will appeared about to speak again, but Zarqa placed a hand on his leg. Zarqa knew men like Henry, as did I. Still waters, running alarmingly deep. Henry. I had begun to sense that my life

was forever intertwined with his. A tricky entanglement. Dangerous even. The displeasure of such a man was hard to detect behind his masked demeanour. Men like Henry. When they were enraged, they did not necessarily shout. More often, they became chillingly polite and soft-spoken, adamantly reasonable in their murderous intent. So when it came to Henry and his plans, Zarqa's hand subtly reminded Will that it was best not to antagonise him.

Over thirty million viewers watched the first season of *The President* when it aired in December/January 2036. I have kept the first review of that show, too. H el ene ghost-wrote the piece for a reporter from the *Peninsula City Daily*, where Henry was the majority shareholder:

It is not only the uncanny resemblance, and the mimicry that Atallah Saqar has mastered as Nelson Dalibunga. It is the authenticity that he has brought to the role, in the dignified bearing of the great man himself. Saqar has been able to convey Nelson's compelling moral authority, his stature and gravitas. And this from a person who just over a year ago was known nowhere, not even registered with Nation Affairs. A man who had been working, his marketing people say, as a sheep herder in the Cape's rural areas. His story is fascinating. A refugee from the Maghrib, via Venice, Italy, we have heard, who was brought here as a ten-year-old child in the most harrowing of circumstances. And now millions of people are calling for him, a foreigner, to become president."

7

Destroyer of Pleasures

Ariel stood at the foot of my bed. Saying something about Will. Something had happened. I should please get up. She was calm and deliberate. Said she'd wait for me to get changed.

There'd been a fire at The Globe Bookshop and Will had been seriously hurt. Zarqa was already there. As we lifted off from Milan House, 4:30 in the morning, I could faintly make out banks of thick cloud on the horizon; it looked like rain arriving. We were not allowed by air traffic control to fly directly over The Globe, which was a disaster site, but as we circled we could see a mania of flashing police lights and the smouldering wreck of the building lit up by powerful beams from the fire and rescue vehicles.

In the seat next to me, Ariel's body tensed; she gripped my forearm, nails digging into my skin. Inexplicably, my face flushed with heat and I was grateful for the cover of darkness. We touched down at the Oceanfront's public helipad and covered the short distance on an elevated, tubular walkway to the elevators near The Globe's entrance.

Zarqa stood talking to a tall, black-haired man who was taking notes. Alongside, a petite woman recorded, hovering with a circular, multi-lens camera. Several similar cameras focussed on The Globe's wreck. Ariel and I went over, and Zarqa introduced us. They were Peninsula City detectives. The woman's face flickered momentary recognition, but she said nothing. The other detective took our details, and said he'd want to question us later. He'd taken a preliminary statement from Zarqa.

"Where's Will?" Ariel blurted. I suspected that she did not place much trust in the investigative abilities of Peninsula City's police department.

"He's alive," Zarqa reassured, and put an arm around Ariel's waist. "They've already taken him away to CareSaha City Hospital. But it seems serious. I'm told he suffered severe burns. Come, we should go and see him now."

As we stood there for a moment, taking in the devastated building, two police officers wheeled out robot Will. The automaton's many arms had melted into the limp tentacles of a dead octopus. The

hair was almost completely burnt off his head, and his clothes had shrivelled. He seemed to have shrunk into a being a few sizes too small for even his mechanical life. Involuntarily, I recalled at that precise moment how as a child I used to reduce crisp packets into miniatures with matches and careful heating. The competition among us kids was to compress the size while keeping the scale of the packaging as close to true as possible. I don't think we ever really succeeded, left time and again with a disfigured, molten mess.

Which seemed to be the fate of robot Will. While there was a metal armature below the surface, robot Will's face, plastic or silicone or some compounded pliable material of toxic forever chemicals, had similarly melted. The ears with the earrings had become misshapen globs. His eyes were eyes no longer, though scorched wide open. Staring orbs of metal, with red pupils, completely dilated, their flickering crimson lights now dead. And the aperture where his mouth had been was twisted into a grotesque gash.

The mechanical creature, bizarre as it had been in life, was gone, leaving me with a strange trace of loss, or was it of narrow escape? As I adjusted to what I was seeing, I struggled to imagine the implications for the real Will, whether he too was about to pass, lying so badly injured in the hospital. Did I wish him well, or did I want him otherwise?

As the officers came past us, robot Will turned his head sharply. I wasn't sure if this was done purposely, or if the movement of the officers had caused the head to swivel. Whatever the cause, *it* seemed to look at me with remorseless eyes and a disturbing grin. I trembled from the uncertainty, torn between faint sympathy and rising fear. And in the turmoil I stood rooted for a few minutes, unable to stop looking at the burnt figure. It seemed all too alive. Perhaps even alarmingly conscious.

Ariel pulled my arm firmly, "Come!" and I forced my eyes from robot Will as we hurried away. Still, unable to resist, I looked back and saw that the robot, as if with the natural powers of a raptor, had seemingly swivelled its head completely around to continue staring at us. Specifically, at me.

As we rushed back to the helipad, I was surprised that Zarqa had remained so calm. Not even the damaging sight of robot Will could fluster her. And then suddenly I thought: perhaps Zarqa had foreseen this catastrophe, just as she'd anticipated me coming into their lives. Could it be? I'd not spoken my thoughts out loud but she turned to me and said quietly that some things happen without

obvious forewarning, even though an apprehension may be still be felt, by some. “And sometimes it may be best to let events take place without any attempt at control. Chance. Fate. Who really knows how the world works.”

At CareSaha, we could not see Will. The ward sister said he’d already gone into surgery and that it would be best if we just went home. No point in waiting. And with that, we headed back to Milan House, the three of us, lost in a peculiar sense of absence.

There, in bed, I lay thinking. Less about Will, to tell the truth, than about Zarqa. I’d thought of her already for almost all the time I’d known her, and I’ll admit that I had selfish, even monstrous thoughts. As for Will: I wished Will dead. I heartily wished that he would die quietly in his sleep, without any further fuss. Just *go*, I pleaded silently, Will ... *be ... gone!* And then I pictured Zarqa all alone in her own bed, dark black hair spread over the pillow ...

She is weeping silently. I curl my body up behind hers, to comfort her, and as desire overcomes me I move to the rhythm of her sobs. In our gentle lovemaking she cries out. In delight or sorrow, I cannot tell. Perhaps, as ever in life, there are vestiges of both.

It took me a while to fall asleep after the chaos of the fire, and just before I did, the narration of Abu Hurairah slipped into my mind. Abu Hurairah, the father of cats. Companion of the Prophet. Memory fragments of death; the end of human pleasure replaced, a believer hopes, by the everlasting bliss of Hereafter in the Garden. Or the Barzakh. Drifting off to sleep, I berated myself. Sought to relinquish my sacrilegious adherence to a current, temporary existence, and my enslavement to the basest emotions.

And yet I could not stop thinking of Zarqa even as sleep claimed me. My thoughts kept opening and closing, drifting and seeking to settle. My body warmed to her missing touch. It was possibly the end of Will’s earthly pleasure, but certainly not mine, I thought, defiant. When I at last slept, however, my dreams were not erotic, or even pleasant. I was plagued throughout the night by wailing, howling creatures with razor-sharp teeth and glowing yellow discs for eyes. These fiends tormented me as I lay helpless in my grave, as if the narration of Abu Hurairah had come alive to destroy all my bodily desires. The jinns fed off my hope and longing, a hungry swarm to remind me of the eternal world of no place and no time.

In the morning I was exhausted and heavy-eyed. I needed strong coffee. I found on the kitchen countertop a typed copy of a poem, “When I Die”, by the esteemed Moulana Jalal Al-Deen Mohammad Rumi. Zarqa had left a note attached, saying she had translated Our Master’s words from Persian into English and then into Ajami-English. For reasons I had not yet worked out, she urged me to practice recognising the Arabic script and phonetics, and some of the loan letters and words she had used.

When I Die

وين آي داي

When I die
when my coffin
is being taken out
you must never think
I am missing this world

وين آي داي
وين ماي كوفن
إز بينغ تيكن اوت
يو مست نفا تنك
آي ام مسنغ دس والد

Do not shed any tears
do not lament or
feel sorry
I am not falling
into a monster’s abyss

دونت شد إني تيز
دونت لمننت او
فيل سري
آي أم نت فولنغ
إنتو عي منستا، ز أببس

when you see
my corpse is being carried
do not cry for my leaving
I am not leaving
I am arriving at eternal love

وين يو سي
ماي كويس از بينغ كاريد
دونت كراي فو ماي ليفنغ
آي أم نت ليفنغ
آي أم أرا فنغ أت إتائل لف

when you leave me
in the grave
وين يو ليف مي
إن ذا كريف

do not say goodbye
remember a grave is
only a curtain
for the paradise behind
دونت سي كدباي
رممبار ءي كريف از
أونلي ءي كاتين
فور ذا پرداس بهاند

you will only see me
descending into a grave
now watch me rise
how can there be an end

when the sun sets or
the moon goes down

يوول أونلي سي مي
دسننخ إنت عي گريڤ
ناو واچ مي راز
هاو كن ذي بي أن إند
وين ذا سن سنس أو
ذا مون گوز داون

it looks like the end
it seems like a sunset
but in reality it is a dawn
when the grave locks you up
that is when your soul is freed

إت لوکس لاک ذا إند
إت سيمز لاک عي سنست
بت إن رألتی إت إز عي دون
وين ذا گريڤ لکس يو آپ
ذات إز وين يو سول إز فريد

have you ever seen
a seed fallen to earth
not rise with a new life
why should you doubt the rise
of a seed named human

هاف يو إفا سين
عي سيد فولن تو آرث
نت راز وڤ عي نيو لاف
وا شد يو دوت ذا راز
أف عي سيد نيمد يومن

have you ever seen
a bucket lowered into a well
coming back empty
why lament for a soul
when it can come back
like Joseph from the well

هاتف يو إفا سين
ءي بكت لواد إنت ءي ويل
كمنغ باك إمتي
وا لمننت فو ءي سول
وين إبت كان كم بك
لاك يوسف فرم ذا ويل

when for the last time
you close your mouth
your words and soul
will belong to the world of

no place no time
وين فو ذا لاست تام
يو كلوز يو موث
يو وادز أند سول
ويل بلنغ تو ذا والد أوف
نو تام نو پليس

8

Majnun

I had fallen completely and utterly in love. It's surprising how even my tormented dreams of death were so easily forgotten in the obsession that overtook me, in the days that Will was hovering around death.

It was as if I'd never lived, had never experienced the depth of feeling one could have for a beloved. As the fugue overcame me, I did not eat at all. I left Ariel's food untouched. I lay awake in the grip of passionate feelings. Who was Zarqa seeing when she left the house? Who was she seeing in her house? I even suspected the stooped, grey-haired, gentleman who delivered her paints and brushes. In my mind I saw her caressing his face and he hers with his spotted, crooked arthritic hands.

But on the third day, when hunger and thirst overcame me, I gorged myself and fell asleep in a stupor, grateful for the mindless comfort of forgetting.

Because those first two nights I'd kept a vigil at my window, staring up at the windows of her studio, as if waiting for her to return home, when I didn't believe she had ever left. The greatest torment of all was anguishing over whether I existed for her as she existed for me. My beloved. I suspected, with some terror, that this version of Zarqa was a figment of my imagination and that she did not actually exist. My own obsession had created her.

And yet still I was obsessed. Zarqa Zarqa Zarqa. Everything was Zarqa, the gamut of breath and thought from my awakening to the missing zephyrs of sound sleep. I'm somewhat hesitant to say that I even went into the kitchen to take a fork that I had seen her eating with, at lunch in the garden. I lifted it from the plate and slipped it into my pocket, keeping it unwashed on the side of my bed. I took a scarf from the washing line too, but at least I did not steal any more intimate item of clothing. Not for a lack of desire. Hardly. But because that defilement would have diminished, demeaned, the heightened sense of love that I felt for her. It was not a sexual love, I told myself. Or: not only. This was something else. Higher. Elevated. Spiritual.

In my emotional state, I wrote out a poem I had learnt in the time before, retrieved from some obscure vault of memory. "If I Had Two Hearts". It was, I later discovered, "Lauw kana lee

qalbani” by Qays Ibn al-Mulawwah, the Najdi writer also known as Majnun, or the one possessed by jinn, for his intense and unrequited love of Layla Al-Aamariya, which drove him into the desert to lament and turn mad. Thinking on Zarqa, I added the Ajami-English, as best I could, for even though I worked without sophisticated insight I wanted to show it to Zarqa, to please her. I longed for my labours to be pleasing. The work took me almost two hours.

If I had two hearts I would have lived with one

إف آي هد تو هاتس آي ود هاف ليفد ويث وان

And dedicated the other to be tormented in your love

أند ددكيتد ذا أذا تو بي تومنند إن يو لف

But I have one heart possessed with love

بت آي هاف وان هات پوزسد ويث لف

It finds no sweetness in life, nor death comes close to it

إت قاندز نو سويتنس إن لاف، نو ديث كمز كلوس تو إت

Like a little bird suffering at the hands of a child

لاك آي لتل باد سفرنغ أت ذا هندز أف آي چالد

Fighting the pain of death while the child roughly plays with it

فاتنگ ذا پين أف ديث وال ذا چالد رfli پليز ويث إت

The child having no intellect doesn't feel empathy for its state

ذا چالد هفتغ نو إنتلكت دزن، ت فيل إمپث فو إتس ستيت

And the bird has its wings tied up, unable to escape

أند ذا باد هز إتس ونغز تاد أب، أنأبيل تو إسكيب

And then, to my relief, on the fourth morning of this intense, besotted behaviour of my love-frenzy, Zarqa called me on the cottage phone and asked if I wanted to try my hand at calligraphy. Oh how I wanted. If only she knew. If I was willing to learn, she said, she would teach me. I tried to keep my voice steady, but I fear that I may have given away my eagerness, for I croaked my thanks out of a dry throat, as if a man desperate for water.

“Alright then!” she said. “See you in the studio on Saturday afternoon; 2:30.”

I did not have long to wait; Saturday was the following day.

I couldn't sleep that entire Friday night. What would I wear: tracksuit ... t-shirt and jeans ... or a collar? Was my hair cut properly? Shave or stubble? What did she like? Did I look fat? Could I exercise to lose a few kilograms? Maybe a waterfast like a boxer to make weight? How much could be done overnight? What if she kissed me? How was my breath? Chewing gum. Okay I still had a morning to get to the shop.

My good God, I thought to myself at 3:30 in the dark hours of Saturday morning, pull your crazy, stupid self together! You have the mind and temperament of a hormonal teenager. I managed to fall asleep for a few hours and woke at 6, forcing myself to eat. When I caught a glimpse of myself in a mirror I noticed I had bags under my eyes, and my anxiety returned. I went to lie down, with teabags on my closed eyelids. Later, I replaced these with slices of cucumber. Clearly, I was a desperate man.

When I arrived upstairs, Zarqa was in an apron over t-shirt and track pants. At least I got that right. Hair tied up, painting a canvas on an easel. A frame around lettering I couldn't decipher, perhaps because I wasn't concentrating on the work. She looked briefly at me. *My God, she was so beautiful.* Smiled and said she had a project I could start on immediately.

She had cut a bamboo pen for me and mixed some ink, and now I was going to write out the Spectrum of Love from Classical Arabic on grid paper. Was she serious? How had her arrow hit

so true? Could she divine what I was thinking, see my heart beating in my chest? My throat constricted, sweat beads starting to form on my forehead and upper lip.

She handed me a page with words to copy: the English pronunciation of the fourteen stages of love, leading from inclination to obsession and destruction.

How did she know? Ah, of course she knew.

On the page I read:

Hawa (showing an inclination)

Wudd (expressing affection)

Hubb (similar to the seed's growth)

Shaghaf (passionate)

Sabbab (spilling the blood of one's heart)

Ishq (feeling inseparable from the beloved)

Wala (burning passion)

Gharam (obsession)

Huyyam (mystified love resembling extreme thirst)

Taym (resembling the feeling of being lost in the desert)

Walah (resembling losing one's mind)

Jawa (burning love similar to heartburn or stomach ache)

Fitna (resembling smelting metal)

Tawq (intense yearning leading to self-destruction).

She had written out the Arabic for me and said I shouldn't worry for now about size, proportion, shape. I should just write as I liked.

هوى – ودّ – حُبّ – شَغَف – صَبَاب

عشق – ولع – غرام – هیام
تیم – وله – جوی – فتنة – توق

This may be hard to believe, for obsessed lovers out in the world, but the two hours spent in Zarqa’s studio that Saturday afternoon, writing out those fourteen words over and over again, seemed to pull me out of the dense fog where I had been blinded and trapped. Perhaps, at last, I was starting to see ...

Yet, if I am to be honest, this was not before, still partially locked in the remnants of my lunatic state, I made one last ditch attempt to manipulate her.

“I’ve wanted to talk to you for a long time,” I said, feeling as if I had two hands tight around my neck.

She paused in her painting to put down her brush. Then sat on a chair to the side of the easel, hands resting on her knees. Looked at me. Waiting.

“I’m sorry to say this now ... you know, now that Will’s not here. I mean ... I mean that it may come across as ... forward. Insensitive.” I lifted a hand to wipe my upper lip and found that I still had the bamboo pen in my hand. I put it down. Was there now a ridiculous ink moustache above my mouth? “I’m ... I’m in love with you,” I blurted. “I *had* to tell you. How important you are to me. How you make me feel.”

She let me speak. I can’t remember how long I declared my love, or perhaps I choose to forget because it was so excruciating, so embarrassing. When I finally came up for breath, she spoke softly. And for that consideration I am now most grateful.

“It’s normal. All of this, Atallah.”

Lord, what a delight it was when her lips spoke my name! My chest constricted.

“You’ve just become embodied, if that’s the right word. You’ve been somewhere else, I don’t know where. No one knows. And now you’re here, in some ways newly born. You’re experiencing everything so intensely, as if you have never lived before. Of course this is unsettling; you don’t

even know who you *are*. I won't elaborate, but this was Will too, when I first met him. So long ago now. Come, I'll show you."

She went to her bookshelf. Took out a book the size of a slim paperback and handed it to me. "These are the poems Will wrote for me many years ago. He is, *was*, a writer in some other life. Now he's into this business. We're into this messy business, for reasons that will become clear to you. Soon, I think. I was waiting for you to reach this intense, impassioned stage, and then to pass it, to move beyond the obvious so that we could finally establish whether you're able to work with us, in partnership. And Atallah, I really think it's possible now that you have unburdened your heart. Shown me your care. And I care for you too, but not as a lover. So let me not waver; let me say directly to you, so there's no misunderstanding: I love Will. I will always love Will."

Her words were wounds. A series of pained punctures or blows to my heart, which beat and battered against a riot of feelings, my bound inner bird trapped within its ribbed cage. And yet it was clear that Zarqa hoped not to hurt but rather to soothe me with gentleness and kindness, so gradually the flurry of feathers and claws and gasping beak grew still inside me. Exhausted. I could see that she also was tired, so we agreed to leave each other to find some manner of separate peace. An early night. She hoped we would go together to see Will in hospital the following day.

That night I lay in bed reading Will's verse. I found some of it marvellous, evocative of longing and lament. Scored at times with a liberating, licentious levity. Some lines were simply barefaced lust. Outspoken vulgarity. No wonder she loved him. He seemed to know no limits.

I suppressed a strained laugh when I finished reading. For Zarqa was right. The little book was almost an exact reflection of how I felt about her. How I had felt. In its paged mirror something in me flew free. It was as if the heavy, giant grip crushing my skull, circled around my throat, had been loosened. I fell asleep dreaming of a clear, sparkling stream that bubbled through a meadow of lush grass, swaying with lilies and daffodils. Somewhat kitsch images, I grant. Clichéd. But I was immensely grateful for the stillness of a quiet mind at last.

On Sunday night just before visiting hour began at 7pm, we left together with Ariel for CareSaha. It had been a week since Will had been hospitalised. When we arrived, a small group of people was already waiting to see him, taking up all the seats. Friends from the theatre he loved to attend and book lovers from The Globe, said Zarqa, plus a miscellaneous mix of hangers on. Probably

more of them waiting outside. But only family was allowed in, and I was lucky to be included in this inner circle.

In his room, arms, legs and neck heavily bandaged, but face unmarked, Will lay immobile on his back. He seemed peaceful, even at peace, though of course no one ventured to remark the possibility of death. For many minutes, Zarqa held his hand, tears streaming down her cheeks, her lips moving, reciting a prayer for his complete recovery. We stayed with him for as long as the hospital permitted, and when we eventually left, the women disconsolate, Zarqa had to be prised from his bedside by Ariel. Zarqa sobbed. Cried, 'Will, Will' until after a while the word turned into another altogether, becoming 'weal' or 'wail' or some indeterminate sound equal to summoning her despair. It hurt me to see her so distressed, so thrown from her normal poise. But in my disguised heart I still could do no other than will her Will dead.

William passed away in the early hours of the following morning. He had never woken from the coma, but the nurses said he did cry out several times before he died. A guttural croaking sound, they said. Which perhaps was just a final gasp, or the screech of a broken spirit falcon leaving the body, though it might have been a word, or a name. Zgakarr? We would never know.

9

Bantu Black

“They’re coming for me. I have to go. Tonight!” Zarqa announced soon after Will’s funeral. It was a Tuesday morning, the second week of my break from filming with H el ene. Her fear bluntly disrupted what might otherwise have been an ordinary domestic scene. We were in the kitchen. She in a dressing gown, sash tied around her waist. Coffee was ready; she handed me a mug. Yet her eyes were puffy, their blue light dimmed. Had she been crying? I knew she’d been wanting to speak to me, and since everything about the situation suddenly seemed alarmingly ominous, I thought it probably best to sit down.

The wind had picked up. When I looked to the mountain, I saw the first tendrils of cloud creeping over the ridges ruffling the sky. Some days I liked the wind. It cleaned the place. Brought a deep blue to the sky and an intense clarity to everything you saw. That day, though, I turned against the coming wind, for it brought only a bracing chill. There was so much about Zarqa’s words I could not understand I wondered if perhaps she was losing her mind. But it seemed kinder to indulge her than to be confrontational.

“Tonight? Did I hear you right?”

“Yes! I’ve got no choice but to leave. They’re coming. Soon. A few hours, though I can’t say exactly when.”

“So ... you saw this, like you saw me ... in your ... visions?” I was trying to restrain myself from losing control. I wanted to fire questions at her; to raise my voice. We all know how anger masks fear.

She nodded.

“But ... *who’s* coming? I asked quietly, not only afraid to ask, but to hear some paranoid answer.

“Henry. Adi ... and H el ene, I think.” She said their names as if these business partners were her fearful enemies.

My heart was shaking. Was she sane? What had I missed, in these difficult days after Will’s death?

“Zarqa, you need to tell me what you mean. What they want with you.” I hesitated for a moment, hearing my voice had become shrill. I spoke again. More slowly. My tone lower, less anxious. “Won’t you explain what they want with you? I honestly don’t understand.”

“Because we know who they are!” she insisted, pacing, too agitated to sit down. “And I’m ... we’re ... standing in their way. That’s *why*. We know they’re up to something, something no good. We don’t have all the details, but it’s bad, that’s for sure. We’ve been trying to infiltrate, and avert.” Her fingers tightened around the mug. Knuckles whitening.

I felt lightheaded. Like I did when I first woke up on Seeler’s Island. Or when I first saw the date on the newspaper Will showed me. Dazed as I seemed when realising I had no idea who I really was, and that the only truth was my being completely *alone*.

I sensed that she was going to tell me something now, something that would again hurl me off balance, away from my fragile, emerging sense of self. For a moment, I didn’t want to know, and longed to find the strength just to walk away, into another version of the unknown. But my curiosity won out, keeping me in place.

“Zarqa: who is this ‘we’? Who are *you all*?”

She shook her head firmly; said nothing. This was not a woman about to share dangerous details that an evident disbeliever was all-too-willing to doubt.

“Atallah, I don’t think it’s wise to tell you everything. It’s not the right time for some big reveal, not when I may need you here, and you’ll be better served staying in the dark. But please trust me: I definitely have to go. I must leave immediately, because I’ve seen the coming danger.”

I leant towards her, trying to encourage her to say more. She did not retreat, or obviously rebuff, but raised one shaking hand to still me. “Look,” she said. “The arrangements I’ve made for leaving, the planning, all of this was done several years ago and kept in place precisely for a crisis such as this. Henry. Adi. Their associates: they believe I’m a major danger to them and their plans. They’ll try to have me arrested; they’ll throw around accusations, blame me for Will’s death, even though they don’t have any evidence. I suspect their idea is to keep me in the system for a few months, and then somehow neutralise me. Kill me maybe. For I have proof of who they are, especially Henry.”

She stood silent for a moment, then walked over to the open kitchen door and looked out into the garden. Abruptly, she turned around and pulled a notebook from her gown pocket. Brown leather cover. Shiny with wear. Slightly larger than my hand. She placed it on the counter and pushed it towards me.

“I wasn’t sure whether I was going to do this. I’ve decided. Just this very minute. I think it’s time.”

“And this?” I asked.

“A diary. Henry’s. From 2014.”

My face no doubt betrayed my scepticism.

“Atallah, it’s going to seem bizarre to you, I realise, but just open it. Read the first section and you’ll see: Henry is more than he seems. He’s been here a long, long time.”

Good heavens, I thought! What new story *now*? How much more was I expected to tolerate, to *believe*. This whole situation was getting way too much.

“He’s been embodied here, in our present, since that time, clandestinely working his secret way into political influence again.” Zarqa spoke in earnest.

I think I sighed quietly. Grappling with what could easily be thought nonsense, but willing myself to trust Zarqa, a wonderful, alluring woman with whom I was only recently head-over-heels. Still, I didn’t open the diary. Not yet. First, I wanted some answers.

“What is this, this whole ... embodiment ... story, Zarqa? I really am trying to get my head around it. Hoping to figure out who I am, never mind other people I’ve met through you and Will. And now you say there are *more* of these embodiments?”

She looked at me.

I continued. “Alright, this journal. How did you get it? How do you know it’s authentic and not some clever fake, a scam?”

It’s an understatement to say that I was incredulous. *What was she going on about? Had she lost her mind? Had I lost my mind to stay involved with these people?*

“We know it’s real. The real deal,” she said, managing a smile at her phrasing. “We’ve done the handwriting analysis, and DNA sampling from hair found in the diary. We’ve cross-referenced with genetic material we managed to source from the National Library and several other archives. It’s certain. And I’ve seen it too, in my visions. So *I’m* absolutely certain. Please, I want you to read it now. There’s no time to waste. I’ll give you fifteen minutes alone and then I’ll come back, and you’ll understand the urgency. Only the opening pages matter for now. The rest you can read later.”

“Okay,” I shrugged, though quietly astounded. And as she walked out of the kitchen, I opened the diary and began to read.

Here, below, is a transcript of those mind-altering pages. A copy of the first handwritten entry. I have translated it largely from the original Afrikaans into English, with light editing in parts:

10 May 2014

Worcester

On that strange day, I opened my eyes smelling cordite. I’d know that smell anywhere. Had I fired my pistol or had someone fired at me, or close to me? Or was I attending a shooting party of young people training to become expert marks with their .22 calibre arms, once again preparing to defend our Volk against assault? We were used to being attacked from all sides. The British and the bantu and this new black *Overlordship*.

But after a moment the smell faded. No, not cordite. I was confused. I was lying on my back. And there was ... yes, it was blood running down my face! And it was on my hands! I rubbed my palms against my clothes but I could not remove the red smears!

Yet as I came to, I realised that my senses were disorientated. There was neither the smell of cordite nor the drip of blood. Both were hallucinations. *Lewe Hemel, ’n mens se verbeelding!* How the imagination plays tricks. For a moment I had even thought it was teargas. Not the variety we used to fend off *indringers*, intruders, but the potent little canisters that the ladies, our vulnerable housewives, our dear women, had started carrying in their handbags since 1963, along with their lipsticks. Into my mind, despite the extraordinary circumstances in

which I found myself (I have a photographic memory), appeared an image of that innovative man who invented this amazing little weapon. So cunningly discreet. Unsuspecting. Of course sold responsibly, only to Whites over eighteen. Gunther Manfred Pruss. Aerogard *Traangas. Magtig*, but it can blind a threatening black for ten minutes with no long-lasting harmful effects. Enough time for a lady to escape the clutches of an individual *swart gevaar*.

I looked around me, where I lay. I was in the House, the National Assembly, where I assumed Parliament had been scheduled to meet. But no one else had arrived, that I could see. Or, perhaps they had arrived and then left me there all alone. Why on earth! Astounding! And actually the place looked strangely changed, papers strewn at the front where the Speaker of the House usually sat, and also some transparent plastic containers holding what appeared to be orange juice and water. My personal bodyguard Major Carl Richter was as usual nowhere to be found. Idiot. But what could one expect of someone who had fainted when that mentally retarded David Pratt had shot me twice in the face? (I know which agitators and enemies of the Volk guided Pratt's hand.) I could not rely on anyone except myself to get a job done!

It was a shocking thought: that this is what I had to put up with amongst my very own people. The lack of commitment, of vigilance. I sometimes have grave doubts about whether we have the backbone, among our own people, to defend the Volk. I fear the people are weak, lacking stamina for the long road ahead. Because we are only at the beginning, I believe. There is no doubt in my mind that the British and the traitor *verraaiers* among us are planning our destruction as we speak. All I am calling for is unity among Whites, the English- and the Afrikaans-speaking, the right-minded among us, so that we are aware of the reality facing us, meaning: the coming of a one-party bantu state with its members only concerned about their personal enrichment. How many times have I not warned of this in my speeches, in fact beseeched my countrymen to act?

At the recent meeting ... what was the agenda? I could not remember ... but I recalled that back in March we had gained control of the National Assembly in the elections, and now had a two-thirds majority. There was nothing to stop us from fulfilling our God-given destiny, since the State was captured in our hands.

I sat up slowly. Trying manfully to regain my strength and awareness. (I was caught in a situation eerily similar to AH's resuscitation, so to speak. AH, aka Adi, channelling one Adolf

Hitler. AH and I are men well-matched in the approach to our extraordinary experiences. Just like him I had to employ all my faculties, my deep understanding of the human mind and its psychology, to assess this oddly familiar yet unfamiliar situation.)

I should qualify all of this, of course, for in time, over the coming weeks, as those of my fears and questions I could not presently address through my own deductions and observations were subsequently debated in the correspondence I took up with AH, I came to have some reservations about the man.

The existence of AH I discovered through the reading of certain respected tabloid newspapers, rigorously applying my scholarly skills to lay bare the evidences to be discerned by those who knew where to look. AH proved in many respects inspirational, but I did come to make strategic notes to myself about the man, for further analysis. Judging from my interaction with AH, it is no wonder he was defeated so thoroughly by the British and their allies, including the Godless Communists. For it turns out he is a man ruled by his emotions, by his senses, whether on the battlefield or in private matters. A mitigating factor is that he surrounded himself with incompetent men, a difficulty that all leaders of vision face when choosing their manpower. I myself have run this risk. Just look at the people around me, including Botha. That short pants led the Afrikaner to commit cultural and political suicide, aided by those other self-serving incompetent *kortbroeke* who followed him. Myself, I am known to be calm, steady and deliberate under pressure. I do not panic, where a lesser man would have fallen to pieces.

Sitting on that bench then, even in my befuddled state, I knew I had to devise a plan of action. But how? Should I ask people for assistance? Leave the site? Try to contact members of my close circle, who strangely had not come to look for me? I decided, considering all these factors, that I should take a further step back to assess what was happening.

Instinctively I knew that I had to be quiet, and quietly I took this moment. But this pause was not enough. Having quieted my mind, I needed still to determine why I had found myself on the floor of the National Assembly Chamber. And why I had only a vague recollection of events that took place, except for that mad boy walking up to me. That half-breed coloured messenger. What had he done to me? I'd felt a sharpness in my chest and then I'd fainted. An

attack? A heart attack? Before I'd passed out, I'd seen them running towards me. My colleagues. Alarm etched on their faces. But where were they now? I was alone.

I slowly stood up, took a deep breath, and surveyed my surroundings. The two swing-doors to the National Assembly were where they had always been, about 20 or so yards from my seat. I took a few more deep breaths, steadied myself and walked. Immediately I felt a pain in my shoulder and chest. I stopped, gasping, gathered my strength again, and then made painfully for the doors, where I could see light filtering in from the outside.

When I pushed the doors open, I blinked, allowed my eyes to adjust before I stepped out. There were people moving about together, bantus and Whites and coloureds and indians. I closed my eyes and opened them again, thinking it some kind of mischievous trick. It was true! I saw the whole *gemors*, the terrible mess in front of my eyes. I suddenly felt faint and was near to toppling over when a hand steadied me, and a voice asked if I was alright.

It was a hottentot boy, slightly greying at the temples and chin. He was carrying a notepad and some smooth black device, perhaps a holder for his pens. It had the name Sonny printed in silver letters. His name, or a gift from his son? Also another curious device with an engraving that said 'Samsung', a careless misspelling of the biblical Samson, some ignorant hottentot corruption of Holy language.

I wondered if God was speaking to me, warning about the unreligious, the traitorous Satan worshippers in our midst. But then I wondered against some Divine message, thinking only that natives are always simple-minded folk, and in need of education suited to their intellect. When I studied the boy who was trying to assist me, I sensed that maybe he was a little more educated than most of his kind, for his hair was not as dry and crinkly. It appeared to me he was a better class of Cape malay, perhaps from the malay quarter in the upper parts of the city.

"I'm Mohammad," he said. He had a badge around his neck that read: Mohammad W. Abdullah.

The malay boy held my arm tightly; I had no choice but to allow him to support me in this somewhat undignified manner. He kept talking, he kept saying things to me, about a nurse, about medical help. And the most shocking thing is that he did not address me as Prime

Minister, or even Your Excellency. Not even as Doctor. At the very least, *Sir* would have been appropriate. I flinched, yet told myself to remain calm.

In retrospect I should have questioned him: *Do you know who I am young man? Do you realise you are speaking to the leader of your country? Reconsider how you address me!* But I said nothing, as I was, for all intents and purposes, at that moment beholden to him. What a shock that was, realising my dependence on this Mohammad, a *klonkie*.

I consoled myself that things would have been worse if it had been a bantu. Just imagine! You know I am all in favour of good neighbourliness among the races, but I hold that this cannot be achieved without considerable distance. Separation between our White personal selves and White homes, and the lives of these lower others. I remember wondering if this malay boy had been among those moved for their own good out of the District Six slums in February 1966 (which I of course thought was still the same year). My government had generously arranged to move these half-breeds to new apartment blocks on the Cape Flats, where they could start their lives fresh. Start over, away from the poverty and the gangs.

I allowed this Mohammad to guide me to a bench, where I sat. I obviously was not about to drink from the water he offered me, though I suppose it was a kind gesture. Still, he was somewhat impertinent to think a White would use the same vessel as a coloured. I would never share such intimacy; his lips had surely touched the container.

He claimed he was a journalist, just a hack, he laughed. Some incomprehensible drivel. But when he added that he was “covering the clowns”, I deduced some form of light entertainment organised by the four coloured representatives of the House, since this empty ignorance is always their only contribution to the serious debates of the White members concerning the affairs of the Fatherland, the Volk and our stewardship of the vast mineral resources bequeathed to us by the Grace of God. On matters of such import, the degenerates could contribute nothing.

This comment about the clowns also explained his motley garb: rough blue trousers, made from some kind of heavy canvas. And terribly faded, not right for anything but manual labour. And no tie and no jacket. Shockingly casual. Even when I vaguely remembered that these

pants were a new fashion – jeans, the American hippies called them – his outfit struck me as quite inappropriate for Parliament. Disrespectful.

Thank the Lord this odd fellow eventually left. He said he was heading to a press conference with the president at Tuynhuys, a preposterous claim which reinforced my deduction that the simpleton was involved in a type of pantomime amusement for Parliamentarians' wives and children.

That day was turning out to be one of great distress for me, also in terms of what I witnessed while I gradually regained my equilibrium. For a thinker of my calibre, the situation was a marvel, ripe for psychological and sociological study, and I made a mental note that I should order the deans of these departments at Stellenbosch University to consider my experience as fertile research material for some promising Afrikaner students.

Oh the things I saw! bantus and coloureds and women walked up and down past me that afternoon, engaging in conversation, and mixing as easily as if they were all equally White men socialising together. And the clothing! Some in a wide array of colourful tribal shirts mismatched with tailored pants and handmade shoes, or dressed entirely in smartly cut suits, not unlike mine. I was astounded to see some of these people embrace and kiss too, on the cheek and God Forbid! on the lips also, as they took leave of each other. It seemed I had landed in Sodom or Gomorrah, so casual was the physical freedom expressed by this easy multitude. Alarming though, I heard no Afrikaans. Even that malay boy did not speak in Afrikaans to me, choosing *English*. While I am of course completely fluent in both languages, with a facility for German and Dutch, it disturbed me to find my lovely mother tongue on the silent margins. *Die Taal* was made for greater things!

As I sat on that bench looking around, I saw a tall bantu, about as imposing as me, who resembled that violent agitator Mandela. I heard him speak perfect English to a group of excitable young people. Also a mixed group; another incredible fact. This young, well-built Mandela-lookalike was handing out autographs, posing for these youngsters who seemed uncannily to be capturing his image with odd personal devices. This lookalike even performed a little stiff-elbowed dance, jigging and smiling eyes crinkled in camaraderie, much to the mirth of the onlookers. I could not help but wonder what the world was coming too, with these peculiar people and their performances. Perhaps a circus really had come to town, after all.

There was a young woman next to this ‘Mandela’. Tall. Strikingly beautiful. Mixed-race, clearly but with the grace of strong European blood, as some of them occasionally possess. She looked at me with eyes of the bluest blue I’ve ever seen. Well, that was another strange turn; a feature almost too Aryan and attractive to be believed. It made me feel quite uncomfortable. To counter her bewitching charms, I turned my mind forcefully to my wife. My own loving spouse would be waiting for me at home with her pure Afrikaner hospitality, *koeksisters* and *melktertjies* at the ready. My senses revived more, at the thought. The mesmerising half-caste turned away and whispered into the ear of the Mandela double. Then she looked at me, and walked quickly away. After this, I found the Mandela bantu *also* looking at me oddly, in a strange, knowing way. And then he *also* walked away in the same hurried fashion. What should a man make of all this bizarre, emphatic scurrying? I did not know. I was left as alone and confused as when I’d first been raised up.

But as the minutes passed, my intuition grew. I realised that something was awry. It was about 3pm on that Tuesday (September 6, 1966, as I thought at the time), when I became aware that this was no pantomime or circus. This was something else altogether, something completely different.

After sitting on the bench for what seemed like two hours (ten minutes could stretch into ages, in my circumstances), I decided I could not solve my problem by remaining where I was. Aside from the pointed stares of the performing ‘Mandela’ and the dusky, blue-eyed beauty, no one was taking the least interest in me. For a second I wondered: is this how a black feels in my White world? Fortunately, the feeling disappeared as quickly as it had surfaced.

After intense deliberation, I decided to head unsteadily back into the House of Assembly. I was starting to think I would be obliged to stay there for the night. Fortunately, the floor was thickly carpeted, the temperature quite warm. Yet sleeping at my traditional seat was perhaps not the best place, because it was right at the front, close to where the Speaker sat and where the administration staff entered. So I decided to head up towards the back benches, to find a comfortable overnight spot.

Near the back benches, on one of the desks I found a few newspapers, *Die Kaapse Burger* and *The Capetonian Times*. The unrecognised titles stopped me in my tracks. Yet there was still an aura of familiarity to them as I thought of the newspapers I knew: those sympathetic to the

Afrikaner, and the other liberal publications staffed by British apologists and their sycophants. (In my time I had attempted to counter this propaganda as the editor of *Die Transvaler* but had been drawn into where the real power lies, which is politics, of course.)

What hit me like a bullet to the head, or struck like a knife in the chest, was the date: 1 February 2014. I felt dizzy. I had to sit down. Then I riffled through the publications like a madman. There was no doubt: this news was not from 1966. I saw stories from Parliament. I saw the black faces. The new president. The new members.

Here it was, the awful truth! The irrefutable, empirical facts! The absurdity of it all would have led an inferior mind back into denial, to safeguard his sanity. But me? I had the fortitude to face this perverse reality. Good Lord I had somehow been transported forward in time to this terrible new age.

I felt nauseous and rushed out to the men's restroom. (I had previously noticed the sign when I was outside.) As I hastened from the Assembly chamber and down a corridor, I saw for an instant (did I?) the two characters I had come across earlier, the tall black man and the blue-eyed woman. They stood in a doorway as I passed, as if they knew I would be heading that way. Impossible, I thought to myself. But I made a mental note to come back to this moment for further analysis. This is always my intelligent tactic, turning and returning until I know exactly where things stand.

My queasy feeling had intensified, and I bent over the toilet bowl in a stall. My body heaved and shook, spewing orange-coloured vomit. I wiped my mouth with a piece of toilet paper.

Still I felt no better. Instead, I felt my skin prickle as if hundreds of insects were crawling over my body. I immediately wanted to scratch but held off, fearing I might break the skin and cause an infection. Then, as quickly as it had started, the itching stopped. I stood there, my heart beating, my breathing ragged. When I had calmed down enough to exit the stall, I walked towards the basin to wash my hands. In the mirror, it appeared as if someone else was walking towards me, a stranger, tall, dark, sturdily built. A handsome man with light, tightly curled hair and an impressive nose.

The experience was extremely disconcerting, especially when I divined that this man was me. He was me. But I was black! The darkest bantu black! In a frenzy I put my hands to my face

and rubbed. Rubbed rubbed rubbed. Hard. But the colour would not come off! In horror I pulled my shirt open and *Goeie genade* had to face the extent of my terrible transformation: here too, I was black! black! black! Nothing but a woeful, dismal black.

I fell to my knees in agony, crying out, arms stretched to the heavens: “Why, Holy Father? Why me? What have I done to deserve this?” And then, on those cold tiles in the Parliamentary bathroom, I completely blacked out. (No pun intended.)

HFV – 10 May 2014

This was the startling account written by Henry in the diary Zarqa had handed to me, and over which I mulled, trying to take it all in. My thoughts were like tumbleweed rushing before a powerful, changeable wind. This way. That way. An immense, uncontrolled flurry. I didn’t know whether to laugh or cry at the information I had discovered. Henry: so he was ... Yes. Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd. And AH, Adi, he was ... Adolf Hitler? *How?* This was impossible. *Preposterous!* And if these men were historical re-embodiments, what about me? Was I ... he ... Nelson, alive in 2016? No no no no no. None of this could be possible. Perhaps this Verwoerd, this Henry, Hendrik, was hallucinating.

Yet I could not easily deny an account that seemed incontrovertible, drawn from this Hendrik’s actual experience. So my mind kept reeling, attacked by a flock of relentless questions. If it was him, Hendrik, how did he do it? How old was he then? How old was he now ... Fifty? And to have built himself up like this again ...? And who was Héléne?

I felt disorientated once more. The imaginary vice that I’d just escaped – my giddy obsession with Zarqa – was tightening around my head again. I closed my eyes and breathed in deeply.

I opened my eyes to Zarqa, who had come back into the kitchen, from her walk.

I shook my head. “Un-be-lievable.”

Zarqa settled on a barstool at the counter. “I don’t know *all* the answers, but I can offer a few. Yes, that’s Hendrik and Adolf. Versions of them. Embodiments. And Héléne is Leni Riefenstahl, though perhaps she is more difficult to recognise? We – there’s a group of us involved in this ... project – have been watching them for years. Following them. I’ve anticipated some of the

developments with the visions I have. Yet as you can imagine I couldn't convince people merely with my gift of mystical foresight. No one would have believed that story! I needed physical proof. And now, fortunately: *the diary*."

"We know it's Hendrik, as I said to you earlier, through the genetic tests. And we've been able to deduce the identities of the others. It's become clearer who we're facing. But why here, and why now, I don't know for certain. True, there are still some opaque elements to things, but we do not need to overanalyse. It appears to be a predictable, garden-variety white supremacist enterprise, with the aid of ... how shall I put it ... particular black reactionaries and vested collaborators. They won't tolerate any opposition from detractors like our group. Supposedly *we're* the political party poopers. The spoilers. I think the less you know, probably the better. Because when I leave, Atallah, you'll be staying behind."

"But Zarqa, you should surely stay here to reassess things; why the need to flee?"

"No, no, they're planning to use Will's death to get to me. Will left all his assets to me, and they'll try to say I planned his death. Sure the charges won't stick, but by then it'll be too late for me; they'll have me hostage and will try to mine my gifts for their own selfish gain. I've foreseen some of it, in flashes, and none of the possible scenarios ends well for me, so I cannot sit around and wait for that crowd to catch me. Because *they* are guilty! They did it. Hendrik and Adolf. They killed Will. Or had him killed. I suspect that their real target is our precious art archive. They want to destroy it, our valuable source of income, which we use to support change. Foolish, on their part. A mistake. We have nothing but copies in the archive. All our work is in a safe, secret place."

She stood up, anxious to prepare for her travels. I felt cheated, somehow, that she was leaving me still with so many questions, their answers tantalising close, but cunningly invisible. I must have looked disgruntled, because she offered a few more crumbs.

"Yes, I turned Hendrik black. I was close enough to him in passing to do it. And yes, that *was* you, or some version of you, who was with me in that doorway on that day. That incarnation didn't survive long, which I'll tell you about another time. Hendrik's blackness was the same; it soon faded. Lasted about twenty minutes. My powers are not that strong; they cannot effect enduring changes. Even so, Hendrik is enraged by my blackness device. Maybe that's another reason he is coming after me. It's deeply personal, for him. Shameful."

And with that, she headed up the stairs. Alone, again, and again with my mind and emotions roiling, I went out into the garden. Lay on my back on the grass and looked up at the deep sapphire sky. The wind had died down as if it had served its purpose in bringing the news, and the heavens unfolded on a screen of clouds upon a canvas of blue. I marvelled at the air's crystal clarity.

10

Litany of the Sea

That Tuesday evening I watched Zarqa pack as if she were heading to her death. She repeatedly recited a prayer I had given her, the “Litany of the Sea”. The route she had planned would take her along our coast in a series of small boats, and then she would fly out over the ocean, to a destination she would not reveal, even to me.

In this turmoiled time, all I could give her was prayer. I’d had a vivid recollection of the learned Magribi Sufi Abu Al-Hasan Al-Shadhili, who is attributed with the compilation of “Litany of the Sea”. Inexplicably, I knew the words by heart.

The story has it that the master (was he *my* master?) had once, on his customary pilgrimage to Mecca from his home in Alexandria, where he had settled after leaving his birthplace, asked his attendant to pack a pickaxe and aromatics for embalming. Already among the sheikh’s belongings were his two unstitched cloths of *ihram* for the Haj, that would also serve as a burial shroud in the event of death. (The *ihram* is a reminder to all pilgrims, all *Hujjaaj*, of the temporary earthly life: you will leave the world as simply as you entered it.) That year the sheikh travelled to a part of upper Egypt on his way to the Holy Land; he stopped to wash for prayer and prostrated twice and on the final prostration he died and was buried at the spot.

There were parts of the prayer particularly important to us because we, Zarqa and I, were seeking the Almighty’s protection from those who threatened us. Parts of the prayer – I give these in italics – are direct quotations from the Quran, and there is a supernatural power ascribed to the recitation in a combination of certain Arabic letters.

Verily *‘the Believers have been tried and grievously shaken, and when the time-servers and the sick-hearted say, “The promises of God and his Apostle to us are naught but delusion,” do Thou establish us and succour us and subject to us this sea as Thou didst subject the sea unto Moses, and as Thou didst subject the fire to Abraham, and as Thou didst subject the mountains and the iron to David, and as Thou didst subject the wind and the demons and the jinn to Solomon. Subject to us every sea that is Thine on earth and in*

heaven, in the world of sense and in the invisible world, the sea of this life and the sea to come. Subject to us everything ...

'Blot out the faces of our enemies, and transform them into vile creatures in the place where they be; then shall they not be able to go nor to come against us ... If we will, We shall blot out their sight, and they shall hasten one with another to the Bridge; how then shall they perceive. If We will, We shall transform them in their place and they shall not be able to go forth nor shall they return. Yaa-Seen. Faces shall be deformed. Ayn-Meem. Faces shall be humbled before the Living, the Self-Subsistent, and frustrated is he who bears a burden of wrong-doing. Taa-Seen. Haa-Meem. Ayn-Seen-Qaaf. He hath let loose the two seas that meet together, between them is a barrier, they cannot pass. Haa-Meem, Haa-Meem, Haa-Meem, Haa-Meem, Haa-Meem, Haa-Meem, Haa-Meem, Haa-Meem.' The matter is decreed, *Divine aid is at hand, against us they shall not be victorious.*

'Each one has attendant angels before him, watching over him at the command of God'.

Zarqa prayed intently, her desperate hopes exposed. I watched her, distraught. She packed light, a small suitcase and a rucksack. A few changes of clothing; some cash. And diamonds. Easy to conceal and to barter in an emergency. Plus several mobile phones with high level encryption.

The night before she left, she invited me into her bedroom. I was grateful, flattered. To be honest: ecstatic. She's seen our future together, I thought. My feelings were not after all in vain! But our love-making was too rushed, too urgent, and immediately afterwards she asked me to leave, saying that she'd like to sleep alone, if I didn't mind. I did mind. Of course! I was disappointed and more than a little angry, at these new blows to my pride, my male vanity. But I tried to appease my unruly feelings: this was not a rebuff, she needed to rest. There was a long road ahead.

I have kept her letters, every one of them from the time she left. She wrote me in Ajami-AfriKaaps, a cryptic layer of security, omitting even the clues of the *harakaat*. Take a look. Here's a sample, with my translation in square brackets.

23 January 2037

إك'س هي بي مي إيست ستنپ. هلل'ت حکم إني نخ، في فني فرك. خسکت اپ اوس.

[Ek's hie by my eeste stop. Hulle't gekom innie nag, vie vannie varke. Geskiet op os.]

[I'm here at my first stop. They came in the night, four of the pigs. Shot at us.]

إك'ت هلال حسن كم. أمل فت بين خماك. مت ورين، أوس إس أورات.

[Ek't hulle gesien kom. Amal wit beene gemaak. Moeti wurrini, os is orite.]

[I saw them coming. We reduced them to white bones. Don't worry, we're alright.]

هلال كما في كو. أوس إس رخ ف هلال.

[Hulle kama wee ko. Os is reg vi hulle.]

[Let them come again. We're ready for them.]

15 February 2037

إك'س بلي، بلي. مخ ما بلي أم ت سء أوس إس فيلخ. سري أم سو لنغ تخفتت.

[Ek's bly, bly. Moeg, maa bly om te sê os is veilig. Sori om soo lang tegevattet.]

[I'm glad, glad. Tired, but glad to say we're safe. Sorry to have taken so long.]

أپ لاس ت پت فني پت فس دا نخ فن هلال خفس. د كي كلمپ فن هلال.

[Oppi laaste patte vanni pat was daa nog van hulle gewies. Die kee klompie van hulle.]

[On the last part of the road there were more of them. This time many of them.]

توي أف دري خرپ فن أخ إياك. أوس مت أوب لاس ت منت أن پلنن خماكت.

[Twee of drie groepe van ag eyak. Os moet oppie laaste minit anne planne gemaakit.]

[Two or three groups of eight each. We had to make last minute changes to our plans.]

أس مت ألس أفخستت. أس هنتت خفتت أف أس سلل ف أوس فخرت.

[Os moet alles afgesittit. Os hettie gewieti of osse selle vi os wegegiriti.]

[We had to switch everything off. We didn't know if our cells were giving us away.]

نونت هي بير پلك حكيم. إك خت سلاپ. قل أك ت لنغ پرات!

[Nou net hi byrie plek gekom. Ek gat slaap. Wil oeki te lang praatie!]

[Just arrived at the place. I will sleep. I also don't want to speak for too long!]

After these early emails came others, which told about Zarqa settling in. She'd chosen a place in plain sight, in a quiet, well-guarded neighbourhood in the city. It's better that I don't have much detail of her haven, for security reasons. Who knows when a person might need such a safe harbour again. In May she sent a message that she'd discovered a strange new ability. (I will translate directly.) It was the second time I had experienced Zarqa so emotional. So flustered, unsure of herself.

15 May 2037

YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE THIS. I was sitting on the couch, too lazy to get up and fetch the remote from the table near the TV. I lifted my hand and playfully demanded, "Come here!" The remote flew into my grasp! Astounding. In all the years I've been around in this world, this has never happened before. I don't know what's going on. Something's changed. What it is, I cannot yet make out. I can't SEE anything these days.

And then soon after the remote levitated, I started lifting up objects. The vase with flowers. A book on the table. All done with merely a hand and a spoken order. I kept doing it, disbelieving, until I was able to move things without saying anything, without even moving my hand. Just a thought. I've done it a moment ago, with the television! Maybe if I work hard enough, I'll be able to lift myself off the ground. It's a wonderful sensation I'm discovering. Of power. Yet even for me this is strange. A disconcerting level of control.

20 May 2037

And now? Another outrageous skill! Is this a curse, or a further gift? I woke up this morning and didn't recognise myself. My face had changed. For the better part of two minutes – the *worst* part – my face had aged by at least fifty years or more. I had put on perhaps twenty kays. Baggy eyes. Jowls. Triple chin. My body a saggy mess. And my hair was white! I was hooped over. With age. And the most alarming thing, this person wasn't me. The eyes were rounder. But blue, also the deepest blue. The nose larger and wider. The ears closer to the head. She had no cheekbones. When I swore at the apparition in the mirror, I even heard a different voice. Higher pitched. Accented. It was so brief and then it all abated and I was back to normal. I haven't told anyone yet. I'm afraid to. Who knows what kind of risk I'd be considered now, both to myself and to others. Our people here. Those at home I'm in contact with. If they don't recognise me, who knows what they'll do.

20 May 2037

8pm

I'm afraid to sleep. I think my dreams are linked to what happened this morning. I remember now that I'd been dreaming of that older woman. She'd been talking to me. Gently. Smiling. Coaxing. *Qalbee*, my heart, she says in Arabic. It sounds like a warning. She's afraid for my safety. I remember thinking that if only I could look like her, sound like her, I could return home. My God! It seems my wishes are coming true ...

20 May 2037

10pm

Oh god oh god oh god what is *happening*? I just turned into a man! A *MAN*! Some silver fox with a beard and moustache. Tall, slender, ebony-skinned. Bookish type. I swear I fell asleep and then I woke up like that, as a man. And the change lasted longer this time. Three minutes.

Yes, I was more-or-less dreaming of a man, standing next to that old woman of my earlier dreams. But I didn't want to look like him. This *has to stop!* I need to clear my head. My mind. Of all images. I must completely empty myself. It's incredibly difficult. I'm trying.

21 May 2037

2am

It's all gone. I fell asleep. I woke up normal. But still I'm afraid. What if this happens again? What should I do?

21 May 2037

11am

Normal. No issues. I am myself when I wake up. Just so hungry. Actually, ravenous. Ate a whole roast chicken. Want another. Bizarre. Maybe just last night's energy-sapping metamorphoses.

22 May 2037

6pm

My friend, I don't know if this will come as good news or not. I'm happy, and hope you'll be happy too. I'm pregnant. I had no idea. I couldn't see anything; I mean, my body was the same. But then again: I'd been experiencing these weird manifestations, so ... And then recently I felt something move. Vigorously. So I began to suspect. Look, I've had children before. But this. It's different. Anyway, I went for a test, and it's confirmed. I think this has something to do with my powers. Not that I have them anymore. Everything has ... They're ... all gone. Yet still I feel consumed. Preoccupied with other lives. I'm eating so much. As if for more than one child. I am becoming enlarged with a new sense of being. A child. Children. I don't know.

23 May 2037

I think I'm going mad, but I hear a child speaking. She. She speaks to me. "It's alright Mother. Don't worry Mother. We'll get through this Mother." What is this succubus? She told me just now, in a deep, wet whisper, that her name is Thurayya. I don't know her! But she says she is mine. Ours. And that she is coming soon. God help me... what is happening to me? I begin to feel possessed.

For four days, I received no correspondence from Zarqa. I was a sleepless wreck. Paced around the cottage. Went up to her studio and just sat there. I searched for Ariel to hear if she had news from Zarqa. But Ariel wasn't around. Just disappeared. I called her on her mobile. Sent her messages. Nothing. No Ariel. No Zarqa. Two friends gone.

I did not yet dare try to call Zarqa. I didn't want to risk it. Then on the fifth day, Zarqa emailed again. Much calmer this time. Full of acceptance. She reassured me there was no need to worry. She was emotionally stable, and the child was growing well, although so fast that Zarqa's body could hardly keep pace, even though she was still eating unusual amounts. But it was okay, Zarqa said. She understood now. "Thurayya ... she's made me understand."

I collapsed into bed and slept, relieved to have news and to know that Zarqa was more settled, in herself. The idea of the child rose in my drifting sleep. My child! *Ours*. A girl as yet unknown to us, but already announced through herself as Thurayya. How deeply I slept, unconsciously in thrall to this other, unfamiliar life, and when I surfaced after a day and a half there was breakfast on the table as if life were completely normal, though Ariel was nowhere to be seen. Just to make sure that I was properly awake, I slapped myself. Hard. Once. Twice. Yes: I was here. This place was here. It was all real. I was not caught in some disorientating world.

11

The Marching Forest

“The compound lights go black. I make out the shape of a small, hovering aircraft, evading the radar and electronic defences. Black clad figures in body armour and full-face helmets dropping into the grounds. Running. Crouched. Rifles pressed to their shoulders. Four soldiers. They move to the villas overlooking the pool, using the untrimmed hedges and trees as cover. The solar lights of the pool have been sprayed with black paint. A dye is tossed into the water and it spreads within seconds, darkening the lights under the rippling surface.

“The villas are where the families live: Anne, Justine, Maha. The mothers, with the children. I look out of the window and see lights sparkling in their upstairs bedrooms. See gunshot flashes. Those flashes must be faint to everyone else, but they’re like spotlights to me. I see them through the branches and leaves. Even in the chaos there is at first no sound. Silencers on the weapons. Justine staggers out of her front door, a dark stain on her white t-shirt, spreading downwards, leaking to the top of her shorts. A black figure comes from behind and shoots her again. Justine is lifted momentarily into the air by the impact and then she falls heavily. I hear an explosion: beyond the gates a ball of fire arcs upwards, like a giant firecracker. I rush indoors. Someone is racing up my stairs. I’m petrified. Where are my weapons? Do I have any? I slip out onto the balcony and huddle in an alcove, hoping. I’m holding my belly and feel kicking under my hands. My *qalb*, I mouth. My lips move but there are no words. A black shape steps out onto the balcony, puts the gun between my eyes and fires. My head jerks back and strikes the wall. I fall. What is left of me falls, senses failing. I see the rifle move down and smash against my belly as I slump against the wall. The figure fires again. Several times. It dawns on me: he wants me *and* my child. The gunman pauses for a few seconds. Waiting? For what? A voice issues a command then the rifle moves up to my head. Again? *Yes*. The dark figure presses the cold metal against an eye and fires. Then the other eye and fires. Making doubly sure. Then the light goes out.”

This is the account that Zarqa writes of her terrifying vision. The premonition of being shot is clearly a warning. This time, she has written to me in Ajami-isiXhosa. She has become increasingly obsessed with encoding our correspondence to avoid detection. She says “!نكد” at the end. “Nceda!”

I'm helpless to help her. I cannot help, and can only say the obvious: she must leave.

For a whole week there are no messages from her. I feel myself a man at sea, battered in the middle of the ocean, giant waves crashing down, submerging me, tumbling my limp body around, arms and legs flailing. I swallow huge amounts of water. Filling my lungs. Gasp for air. Think I'm going to die. Then I'm brought to the surface again – *gagging, sputtering* – only to be smashed right down into the drowning darkness. Every day without news from Zarqa becomes a struggle to survive. I'm exhausted. Constantly afraid. I sleep only for a few fitful hours at a time, and every morning I wake with a start, almost unable to breathe.

Then out of the blue there is suddenly a call from Zarqa's phone. I press the answer button but don't speak. Wait to hear who's on the line. Unsure.

Then a voice says: "It's me, Ariel."

"Ariel?"

"Yes," she says, her voice hesitant, filled with anxiety, "I'm using Zarqa's phone. I'm here with her. She wanted me to come so I'm here with her. To help. Sorry I couldn't tell you where I was going. I know I just upped and left. Atallah ... Zarqa ... she's been shot. Worse even."

A pause, then Ariel speaks again: "They took her eyes. They think it's in her eyes, the power she has. But I'm trying to look after her, to help her recover. I believe if we have patience, so much patience, we'll find she's coming back. For one thing, her belly is healing amazingly well. Nothing like I've ever seen before. And I've seen it all, or so I thought. I've healed so many of them, so many of you, who had seemed so hopeless. But not as bad as this. Good grief no. But I promise you, right in front of me, it's incredible: Zarqa's healing. I cannot take the credit; her survival, her recovery, it's beyond me and my skills. Mostly I'm just sitting here with her, watching the transformation."

My body is shaking. *Zarqa*. Beloved. "Can I see her? *Please*."

Ariel warns me: "She's not an easy sight."

My phone flickers with an image. Dear God! She's covered in blood. Naked. There are bullet holes in her belly. Ariel moves the camera to Zarqa's face. Gaping holes where her eyes had been. Blood

matting her hair. The camera moves back to her midriff. Ariel's voice. "See here what's happening. See what I mean by incredible ..."

I witness the bullets slowly being pushed out of the wounds. The holes filling up, fleshing over. The scarred skin smoothing itself. If I did not know better, and did not trust Ariel, I would have dismissed with scorn what I saw with my own eyes. Explained what I saw as sophisticated computer-generated imagery. A cheap visual trick.

But it's actually happening. Ariel moves the camera back up to Zarqa's face. Skin, bone, tissue. Everything is re-forming and realigning. Eyebrows, eyelids. *Eyes*. I see a hint of blue. Irises. Pupils. From the blood-blackened holes, Zarqa's blue eyes gather intensity until a tentative blue light emerges. Her eyes flicker as she focuses.

Zarqa's voice is cracked, weak. "What happened?"

I am overcome. I start to weep. I drop to my knees. *Thank God! Thank God!*

"You were gone, my love," says Ariel. "I thought I'd never see you again. Yet here you are."

"I let them come," Zarqa says.

I cannot believe what I am hearing. She *allowed* this brutal violence? This is a death wish!

"I allowed it," Zarqa says again, struggling to speak. "Because Thurayya told me to let them come. We have played them at their own rough game, for now they think I'm gone. My supposed death has given us time. A little more time. It's time to stop running."

I am silent.

Zarqa says: "Don't you see, Atallah? I've found a way. Thurayya has found us a way. They are in darkness now, all three of them. Hendrik and his gang. I've changed them. Our Thurayya, she's gaining strength, and her power is helping me to alter them. You'll see. More and more, I can feel her authority growing inside my body. Atallah, our unborn child is a force to be reckoned with!"

12

The Panopticon

“You need to meet with them,” Zarqa says in a message a day later. “To talk before I come home. Thurayya is exhausted. I can feel her small shape is emptied of her powers, for now. She has to grow, to regain force. If we’re to continue thwarting Hendrik and his people, both of us must have more time to recover.”

I try to set up a meeting, but they refuse. (And of course, all filming has stopped.)

“Insist!” Zarqa demands. “Tell them *you know*. Then they’ll see you, I’m sure.”

So I try again, more emphatically, even though I don’t have all the information to hand, as Zarqa is being cagey, refusing to reveal exactly what she’s done.

“Dear Henry,” I email, almost making the mistake of addressing him as Hendrik, “it has become imperative that we meet. I suspect you know why. Believe me when I urge you: it is time.”

This time, the reply is immediate. “Yes. But we meet through a third party. A proxy.” He will not meet face-to-face.

I type quickly. Persisting. “No: *I* have to *see you*. I must give this message in-person.” I explain that Zarqa can help with the darkness he and his compatriots are living in.

He takes a few minutes to respond. A single word.

“Yes.”

He has no need to communicate more. The place. The date. He understands what I supposedly know, and that I will come at once.

The mountain-side house in Wellington is on a large farm called Little Blue Flowers. I drive along a roughly-tarred road that meanders along the edge of a silvered, sparkling river. The sky is the deepest azure. No mere blue. It’s 10am and already hot. I open the window and the cool air rising from off the river washes over my face. I love this. Have always enjoyed morning drives into the

country, away from the city's hums and screeches. It's the quiet. The stillness that everyone seeks but cannot stand for too long. I wonder about today. When the peace will be broken, and how I will manage.

I park under a venerable oak. A young woman waits at a carved Moroccan door. A door painted blue, with brass inlays and knobs. She has olive skin, hair tied in a tight bun. She wears an old-style servant's uniform that throws me back to thirties England, black dress with a frilled white apron. The dress with white collar and cuffs. So odd and out of place.

She leads me to a spacious dining room. The heavy curtains are drawn closed. Only faint glimmers of light at the edges peek through. She instructs me to sit at one end of the table. And says Master Henry tells her I must remain seated even when Master Henry joins me. Quiet as a ghost she leaves, closing the door silently behind her.

After a short while, three people enter the room. I see only their silhouettes, three figures taking up chairs at the opposite end of the table.

"Don't get up." The voice is Hendrik's. He heaves his stolid frame into a seat. I think it is Adolf who sits to his right, and Leni, I assume, to the left. A bizarre little triumvirate.

"Your associate, or whoever that woman is, she has something to do with this situation! This blackness!" shouts Adolf. "Do you know the punishment for this? For such *betrayal*?" Although I cannot see much at all, his furious speech has me imagine him frothing at the mouth. His shadow shape jerks with every word.

But it's best if I let them think I am still completely in the dark, which is partly true anyway. "What did she do? I don't know. I don't even know where she is. I'm just delivering a message."

"Don't play games, you *schwein*!" The shadowed Adolf turns to Hendrik. "And I thought you had taken care of this business. You have not."

"Yes, yes," says Hendrik, "I did. Yet it seems there are ... loose ends. We have incompetents working for us. Let us not get distracted. Let this man speak."

"Why don't *you* tell me what happened, as you see it?" I continue. "And let's all speak frankly now. Zarqa is mysterious, even to me. She has always been and I am trying hard to understand what is going on. I don't even know where she is. I have this message to deliver. That's all."

“Alright,” says Hendrik. “I am a reasonable man. I too want answers. Solutions. I am looking to solve the little problem we are experiencing with blackness. I’ve been here before, in this disgusting predicament. Not this long though.”

He gestures to Leni. The curtains slowly open, on remote.

As the sharp morning light floods in, at first I imagine I’m being fooled, for there are three strangers sitting across from me in the room. All three have a skin tone far darker than mine. Their hair is soft, tight curls, in little afros, their lips are full and thick, their noses large and wide. Beautiful Africans, black as the darkness in which they so recently hid.

I did not expect *this*. This appears to go well beyond what Zarqa had said she’d done to Hendrik the first time. This is a really impressive, thoroughly convincing achievement. And if it’s partly little Thurayya’s doing, a child not yet even born, then perhaps the tide is turning in our favour. I look at the three of them, trying to keep my face impassive. It’s all bizarrely funny but I can’t laugh. I realise how personal it must have become for Hendrik. And for that madman Adolf. Leni is morosely silent. As if none of this were her doing, still keeping to the view that she had never done anything wrong. An innocent bystander. Looking at them, I begin to sense now an even greater danger for us. The three of them are no doubt quietly enraged, nursing their hatred behind seeming calm.

As I’m watching them, their features start to morph – hair, noses, ears, chins. Their colour drains. “Something’s happening to you!” I exclaim, “You’re turning back into yourselves.”

Leni rushes out of the room. Hendrik and Adolf sit stoically, fixed on me until Leni returns, euphoric.

“It’s true,” she shouts. “I’m back. Ja!”

Adolf studies his hands. “So. Looks like your people took care of it after all.”

Hendrik is impassive. Continues to stare at me, eyes narrowed. He more than suspects, I think.

Two weeks later, Zarqa comes home to Milan House on a private flight in a surreal mauve sky. She's so thin that her enlarged belly might be masquerading as extreme malnourishment. She's unsteady on her feet as I help her down the steps. She looks and feels close to collapse. I tell Ariel that we need a doctor. A home visit, as it's too risky to take her to CareSaha. At the thought, dread constricts my throat: William died there. And I had wished him dead. I cough, to ease my guilt.

Ariel urges patience. "Zarqa will be okay, she just needs a few days. What she's done, she and Thurayya, it's sapped them. Maintaining those dramatic transformations over Adi and the others, imagine how much energy that demanded. You surely understand that's massively draining."

I nod. Leave Ariel with the last word.

As it happens, though, it's still Zarqa calling the shots, worn out as she is. For Zarqa will not let me sleep in the upstairs bedroom with her. Not even when I suggest the floor next to the bed. "I need Ariel. Ariel needs to be here. Please don't be angry."

Once again I can do nothing but nod. I sleep in the downstairs guest room.

Over the next few days, Ariel allows me in to bring Zarqa her food. Change the sweat-soaked bedding many times. To make me feel useful, I realise. And yet still I feel at a loss.

On the fifth day of her return, I wake up to the sound of busyness in the kitchen. Since I never hear Ariel, it can only be Zarqa.

She brings me coffee in bed. She's wrapped in a magenta gown, belly protruding. Her blue eyes are alert, bright, even though the dark rings beneath are still prominent. She seems steady on her feet now. The physicality of her presence almost overwhelms me, and I deliberately look away when I realise I'm staring. Instead, I glance at the clock on the bedstand. It's still early: 6:15am.

She gets directly to business. "I, *we*, have got to show you something. It's important you see for yourself. Atallah, I appreciate these last months have been bizarre, since you left the island and began working with us on our projects. I think many times you must have wondered what was going on; what we're all doing here, at the exact same time. All these figures from different historical epochs gathered like anomalies into the same developing moment. Everyone. It's no coincidence. And please, don't worry, Thurayya's well. She's very much alive and growing inside

me. I feel her. I hear her. We've had no choice but to be in this together! She needed so much from me, and I from her. What we did almost killed me," she smiles ruefully.

Once again, I feel out of my depth, scarcely more than a wordless infant. "What do you mean?"

"You know who they are, yes. These curious historical throwbacks. But you don't know why they're here, or what they want with you. Let me try to explain, okay? They wanted you involved because they needed someone with serious cultural credibility, some powerful popular influence to lead their takeover of Peninsula City. They wanted to entrench the status quo under a new set of parasites. As I said before. This is not complicated. Their motive is not complicated. It's ordinary greed, lust for power. As simple as that. And we ... our team members ... many of whom want to remain anonymous, they believe that this is happening across the globe. We want to stop this manipulative rally, to turn the tide from corruption towards ... well, empathy, affection, sharing. Or I suppose you could just say, towards a culture of *love*."

Love? All of this craziness for *love*? I'm still not buying it. "Why me? An actor in a political drama? That's far-fetched, Zarqa. Even if I am the spitting image of Nelson Mandela."

"It sounds absurd doesn't it. But look what happened with that failed painter, Adolf, who couldn't make it into the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts. Twice. They leveraged Adolf's demonic facility with words. That maniacal power he had over a vulnerable people seeking a Big Man after the depredations of the Great War. Just look how far it took him, all the way across Europe and almost across the world towards a thousand-year Reich. The effects of that realm, that Reich, are being felt to this day. And now he's back, isn't he? Here. Adolf. Adi. AH. Call him what you will. And with you it was a similar project. They thought they could leverage your likeness; the power of that likeness, and your voice, for the same purpose, to the same destructive ends. Good for their elitist one percent, but a devastating, malign cabal for all the rest of us, who long for another, more equal kind of world."

I shake my head.

"Believe me: it really is them against us – evil versus good, if you like. A continual loop through space and time, if you'd prefer a metaphysical explanation. But the situation now, Atallah, forget about the mumbo jumbo" – she could read my mind – "and *how* it happened, well, the current situation is really a legal one."

“It’s now become an issue of jurisdiction,” she says. “Extradition and possibly a specialised court. And how they get past that whole idea of giving up the search for a person once there is a reasonable expectation that the person has had an average or even exceptional lifespan and is now dead. The law is *blunt* in terms of the living,” she grimaces. “But it doesn’t exactly make provision for ghosts and avatars. Not yet.”

The gist, says Zarqa, is that her counter collective needs more time to plan and carry out its own mission. “To give us that time, we have to take them now. We can’t wait. Better to effect a pre-emptive move, we think; extra-judicial, yes, but the means justifies the ends. We already have Hendrik and Adolf and Leni. And we have others too. We’re holding them until we can work out their group’s convoluted scheme; the details of exactly why they’re here in Peninsula City, and also emerging elsewhere around the globe. Establishing The Bigger Picture of their global machinations is difficult. We require samples of hair, saliva, skin, for cross-confirmation with our database. And this evidence is sometimes hard to get and then to co-ordinate with historical accounts and contemporary political events and projections.”

Zarqa is nowhere near done with her explanation, although I (unsurprisingly) am losing focus.

“I wouldn’t have believed this either,” she says, “if I’d not seen it for myself. And even then some people might call me out for a scammer. But I know what I saw, and where I went. The astounding scale of the enterprise. Every word I tell you is true. Atallah, this is *not* fake news.”

We fly to a farmhouse in an undisclosed location. I recognise the irony when I see the place in which they’re held. Like Seeler’s Island: transparent cells, though built on the model of Bentham’s Panopticon. The prisoners are in cells on two floors of the six-floor prison, which circles the guard tower, says Zarqa. There’re only a few inmates at the moment, but soon that will change. We walk on the ground floor to the centre of the encircled area, then rise in an elevator to the top floor. As we enter the watchtower, I stop because in the middle of the tower I see a guard with a perfectly spherical transparent head on a cylindrical body of metal and glass. Another automaton. Or cyborg. I think of Will, without the outer, humanoid cosmetics.

Zarqa says: “Each floor has one guard like this, monitoring stationary and moving cameras every second of the day. Watching everyone. Each inmate. Recording everything.”

Everything? I feel my stomach turn. Is this really the Zarqa I thought I knew? Is this what her group is doing here, and has been doing? This ... this ... What will I tolerate, in the service of counter-insurgency? I'm stumped for words, because jagged memories whirl up, striking like desperate hammers against the metal doors of my mind. Breaking them open, revealing what has been concealed. (Deliberately suppressed forever? Or hidden only until I was ready?)

I remember. I knew the history. But now I see and feel it all. A terrible truth. I'm in a cell. And the place is not Seeler's Island but Seal Island. 'Robben' is the Dutch word. I am there for almost forever. A lifetime. Long hours, long days, long months; time accumulating into a quarry of years. Ghosts flit through the cells. I've seen them. Ghosts of those held against their will long before my days. Decades. Centuries. Other lives ago. Spectres clutch at me. So many hands flailing. Pleading. Figures beaten and maimed and wasting away. How do I know truth from falsity, distinguish rights from wrong? I close my eyes to settle my panic.

When I look again, I see Hendrik and Adolf in blue and white overalls, prison garb. The two men in adjacent cells, sitting on their bunks, reading. Adolf has painted a crudely defiant swastika on the inside of his transparent cell door. "In his own blood," Zarqa points out. "And as fast as it fades, just as quickly he does it over and over again."

Hendrik's and Adolf's proximity is encouraged, Zarqa says, for information gathering. The Watchman A.I. technology records everything these two do and say, evidence which can and will be used against them. Leni is one level down, on a female floor. I see guards opening their cell doors. The prisoners are restrained in ankle chains and wrist cuffs while moving from one area to another. "We use robot guards for this. Not so much for safety, but to avoid potential injury to the prisoner," she says.

"Still, even this is illegal, surely," I object to Zarqa.

She turns on me. "Would *you* let them loose? Let them walk about outside? Let them get on with their business, while we're still trying to work out what exactly it is they've been plotting? Do you forget what these bastards did to me?"

I have no answer.

“He, they, will speak, of course. They *will* answer questions. Because they must. Perhaps once you hear their criminal intent you’ll have a different view. Less sympathetic! Come.” Zarqa is curt. Even hostile.

The hearing is in a small room. We are outside in a gallery, hidden behind a one-way plate glass window. Hendrik sits at a table. Adolf and Leni sit behind him. They’ve been unshackled.

“Co-conspirators,” Zarqa explains. “We have confirmed their DNA. We know for certain who they are, these vile embodiments. We have an open-and-shut against Adolf. Leni will of course claim, and depend on a previous judgement, that she’s a *mitläufer*. You know the term? Used to describe those who supported Nazi atrocities by proxy, without directly participating. The kind of people who don’t want to upset the status quo but still go with the flow. Self-interested ‘fellow travellers’ you could call them. Convenient. And inexcusable. Judgement we now consider a legal precedent applicable to the current case. Why should the hangers-on escape punishment when the wheels turn? No! Our people believe she’s become a serial offender; that she’ll return time and again to continue working for and with those who expediently enrich themselves at the expense of others; who would casually kill others for their own advancement. Leni is a criminal, as much as Adolf. The group I’m part of, we don’t hold that those events in thirties Germany were a coincidence. Leni may insist she was an unwitting participant then, and we disagree, but she certainly can’t do so now. She deserves punishment. She must suffer as she has made others suffer.”

Zarqa’s anger transfixes me. Directs attention to the interview unfolding behind protective glass.

Hendrik says impassively, “I have nothing to say. Like my fellow accused here. I protest this gathering today, as I have all previous others. I do not consider this a court of law, or any type of legal inquiry. You have refused me a lawyer for my representation, allowing only a functionary appointed by a shadowy administration which has not revealed itself to me. *Why?* Why are you afraid to show yourselves? Do you fear I might exact some physical revenge, retribution for this farce? I seek my day in a proper court. That is all I will say. Like my peers.”

We walk back to the watchtower. More of these embodiments seem to be arriving. A guard calls the names. His resounding baritone echoes off the walls of the panopticon, making my ears ring

with the cacophony: Leopold ... Stalin ... Churchill ... Smuts ... Goebbels ... Bush ... Malan ... Botha ... Kruger ... Pol Pot ... Pinochet ... Hussein ... Thatcher ... Sharon ...

Good God! I see them shuffle in their shackles, herded to their cells. These familiar old names from the history books are ascribed to prisoners all so ... young! Young people. I don't recognise some of them. Names, bodies, figures from another world. Where did Zarqa's group find this loathsome, motley lot?

I press my nails into the palm of my hand: I'm well and truly awake.

13

Ratio Mortalis

The date has been set for the special inquiry into the extraordinary charges against Henry Farwood aka ‘Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd’, Hélène Stahl aka ‘Leni Riefenstahl’ and Adi Hiedler aka ‘Adolf Hitler’. The primary charge is that they, their very existence, is the result of cloning, a process illegal under the Artificial Human Replication Act of 2030, subsection 1(a) and 30(b). The secondary charge is that they sought via such genetic manipulation to secure commercial and political advantage.

Right now, I’m more interested in the media frenzy that has erupted. The reports in the *Peninsula City Daily* express outrage that “Henry Farwood, respected businessman and philanthropist, has been arrested on such spurious charges”. The HeldeAkker Group releases a statement welcoming the opportunity for “Mr Farwood and his business partners to clear their names of malicious accusations levelled by those determined to encourage the failure of their company, an enterprise which has created multiple jobs and brought great prosperity to the City”.

Hendrik has requested a public hearing. Zarqa and her band of mysterious allies have agreed, rather surprisingly. She is, to my mind, too calm. Too assured. She will remain hidden and anonymous throughout, and has appointed a law firm to handle all the material her group has accumulated, directing evidence to the Peninsula City prosecutor’s office. Hendrik has asked for the opportunity to make a public statement before the court on the opening day of proceedings. As the star of the television show *The President*, I’ve been invited to attend, and I’ve secured permission for a personal guest, Ariel.

We have booked a limoflyer to collect us at Milan House and while we wait in the living room, suddenly a suspicious interloper walks in. A short old man, overweight, balding, grey-haired ... who the devil ...? Ariel pulls a pistol from her purse: he might look harmless, but her quick actions indicate that you never know. Then the man speaks.

“Well, what do you think?”

It’s Zarqa! Ariel and I are incredulous.

“I couldn’t ... we couldn’t” – Zarqa rubs her swollen belly – “hide this too much. It may have been dangerous for Thurayya, I thought, though Thurayya disagrees; insists she has a way of changing a body that would not affect her. Anyway, it’s done, and we’ll be able to hold the disguise for as long as we want. Right, let’s go.”

We’re all more relaxed now, now that it’s clear who is who. We are all inside the same circle; no threatening stranger to come between us. Even in this extreme disguise, Zarqa seems more herself at Milan House than in the alienating confines of the prison, though I am still troubled by Ariel’s gun. The rapid change in Ariel from mysterious and elusive helpmeet, to potential marksman. *Ariel? What more don’t I know?* Most likely a good deal, if I am being honest with myself. But the unabridged facts of my new friends’ life stories and their entangled histories, these will have to wait for another, more leisurely day, when we have time to sit around and catch up and come completely clean with each other, as true friends would. Right now, carrying both the little I know and the uncertainty of the missing details, here I am. With Ariel, and her secret weapon. With Zarqa, who is an old man. With Thurayya, who has yet to show herself. I am ready to act (or enact) a script I have not fully read. It’s dawning on me: I have thrown in my lot with them. I have made my choice. And yet ... Given my own confused state, the chaos of my recent awakening, I find myself wondering: What choice did I really have?

“You’re obviously not going to take that along with you,” I say to Ariel, pointing to the gun.

“Of course I am.” She holds the weapon in her palm and with a quick flick folds it into a flat compact of highly polished mirror, the size of a credit card. “Magical, yes? A gift from Gerrit to me, from one of Daddy Hendrik’s latest prototypes. Nano-robotics. Linked only to me, biometrically. Appropriate isn’t it. All this shape-shifting tonight? For in case.”

We all laugh. *Yes, I think, it’s possibly a good omen.*

We’ve been given permission to land on the roof of the Peninsula City High Court building, which is only two-storeys, in the larger Justice District. Beyond the District, on the broadcast we’re watching in the limoflyer, we see the police have set up a security perimeter. Opposing protestors have formed. On one side, a small group of people carrying placards with photographs of Adolf Hitler. “The Messiah has come.” “Fourth Reich Now.” “Free our Fuhrer.” On the other side, the placards read: “Don’t play God.” “Beware of the Mutants.” “Avoid Human Extinction.”

“There doesn’t seem to be anyone calling for Hendrik’s freedom on the one side,” says Ariel. “They’re all worried about Adolf, which seems so strange. And the other side is just overplaying it.”

“Oh but that’s actually Hendrik’s doing,” says Zarqa. “Behind the scenes. He’s deliberately making it all seem absurd. Lunatic posturing. He wants the charges against them to appear as crazy as the protestors with their rabid Hitler obsession. And as bad as the other side with their end-of-the-world doom prophecies. I have it on good authority that he’s paid for both groups, and paid off some councillors. Otherwise Peninsula City would never permit such protests; not when we have troubles brewing beyond The Wall.”

I turn to Zarqa. “I’m inclined to believe you, though it’s hard to take you seriously, looking like that.”

We laugh. Very jolly. Still, I’m struck, again, by how calm Zarqa is. Preternaturally serene.

Having disembarked, we’re led down into the courtroom by a dark-suited government official, and guided to our seats in the upstairs gallery. We have a direct view of the judge’s seat and the witness dock. The place is packed. Celebrities. Politicians. Businesspeople. The whole front row has been claimed by photographers and reporters. The entire proceedings will be recorded, at Henry Farwood’s request to the judge. It’s *Hendrik*, I want to say aloud.

A court official orders us to stand. Justice Willem S. Spies enters. Then Hendrik and his fellow accused, all shackled, are led into the court. Hendrik takes his seat in the dock. Judge Spies says: “I’ve granted the defendant’s wish to make an opening statement. Proceed Mr Farwood.”

“Thank you, My Lord, for allowing me my day in court. I am eager to defend myself, with the assistance of my own legal team, against these spurious and unjust charges of social engineering; of attempting to subvert the laws of God, and of man, with alleged unlawful genetic manipulation.

“Let me say immediately, I am innocent. I remain innocent until proven guilty. My incarceration, in my view, is unlawful. Why hold me in detention? I am a man of the highest integrity. I have businesses that I run here. I have family. Roots in this place. Let me get straight to the crux of the problem: Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd. Can you seriously consider me to be this man, one and the same? When he died in 1966!”

Hendrik pauses. Lifts a glass of water. Drinks. Clears his throat. I watch him and think Zarqa is right. Hendrik is staging a carefully planned performance. Even in this opening gambit, things don't look good for us.

Hendrik continues, gesturing: "And do you really consider *him* to be Adolf Hitler?" He turns and points to Adolf, who's sitting, arms folded, in the section reserved for the accused. Adolf looks self-assured. Smug. "Just as," Hendrik says, "you consider H el ene" – he points to her – "this beautiful and talented creative person, to be Leni Riefenstahl? I have to disagree. Such allegations are preposterous. Absurd."

"What are the charges you are levelling at me? And who am I, *what* am I, this person you call a clone? I am Henry Farwood. Born and bred. I have a long, documented history in Peninsula City. I was birthed here. Raised here. Educated at the best schools money can buy. The factual history is on record. And it is certainly official that I have no link to the Afrikaner politician who died at the hand of a crazed person in Cape Town, decades ago."

He pauses again. Sips again. "If Dr Verwoerd is somehow my ancestor, what of it? I didn't know him. If my DNA is a match with his, so what? Surely we must take documented historical truth into account? If there are possible family links that I'm not aware of, or genetic connections ... these are bizarre anomalies. I'm no scientist, but I'm told this type of thing happens in nature all the time. Quirks. Sports of nature. I assert that I am not him. He lived his life and he died. His deeds are his, *ratio mortalis*. My life is my own, although I sympathise with his stance on the demonisation of the White race, and of the growing poor White problem."

I glance away from Hendrik for a moment to ask Ariel if she thinks the charges would stick, when I hear a commotion. I look back. See that Judge Spies blanch in his seat, shock on his face.

I look at the witness stand. Hendrik has changed into the black man I saw in Worcester at Blue Flowers Farm. The very same, with the same altered features. Yet he continues to speak, evidently unaware of what's happening. Gradually, though, his accent changes too, as he holds forth: "... Whites have been murdered in their homes, on the streets. The Afrikaner Volk, my Volk, deserves better protection."

His voice ... it sounds like mine. Or rather, not like mine, but like Madiba's. The slow emphases and deliberate pause and tonal gravitas! People recognise that voice anywhere. Pandemonium

erupts. Judge Spies is shouting “Order! Order!” and banging his gavel, though no one is listening. People stand up, cellphones at the ready, filming Hendrik.

A naartjie comes flying past my head. Strikes Hendrik on the side of his face. That stops him talking, but confusion is etched on his face. He places his hand to his cheek, wipes it. Picks up the naartjie that’s landed in front of him. At which he notices his hand, turns it over and back again, palm to dorsal. He gasps when he realises what has happened, and faces towards Leni and Adolf. The crowd moves as a single, collective head. Leni and Adolf have also turned black. Both try to cover their faces with jacket, or hands.

Any poise he might have had, busy with his deliberate court performance, Hendrik loses completely. He shouts. Rages with mad-eyed gestures: “It’s her! That witch! Where is she? She must be here somew—” Two police officers pull him off the witness stand and as they drag him away, he continues to seethe.

The crowds throng, amazed. The noise escalates. Official order has turned to demented disarray. Anxiously, I scan the benches for Zarqa. There she is! The bald, pudgy male form sits calm and focused, hands cupped under his ungainly belly, which moves slightly, an almost unseen will of its own. He has a cryptic smile on his face, blue eyes intense, unclouded. My spirit, in comparison, is racing. My being here seems impossible, and I cannot believe what has gone down. I am gripped by worry about what is to follow. Whether our precious secret will be safe; whether many other unknown shapes and possibilities might still need to unfold, before we can all be together, making a shared new life. I feel ready to implode, a mirror image of the court room. But Zarqa, a quiet centre in the melee, absorbs my unease with a comforting stillness that quells all queries. As if to say: Be at peace, Atallah, for only time will tell. And when he catches my eye he winks (I think he does), the blink of a moment passing as everything shifts into what is yet to come.

Bibliography

- Abdel-Malek, Anouar. "Orientalism in Crisis." *Diogenes* no. 44, winter 1963, pp. 104-12.
<http://home.zcu.cz/~dkrizek/SBV1/Texty%201/Abdel-Malek%20-%20Orientalism%20in%20Crisis.pdf>
- Achebe, Chinua. "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's 'Heart of Darkness'." *Massachusetts Review* 18, 1977. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/612953>
- Adhikari, Mohamed (ed.). *Burdened by Race: Coloured Identities in Southern Africa*. Cape Town: UCT Press, 2009. Print.
- . "A total extinction confidently hoped for: the destruction of Cape San society under Dutch colonial rule, 1700 –1795." *Journal of Genocide Research* (2010), 12(1–2) March–June, 19–44. https://www.sahistory.org.za/sites/default/files/archive-files/genocide_mohammed_adhikari.pdf
- "Why Ajam." *Ajam Media Collective* 2011. <https://ajammc.com/why-ajam/>
- "Afrikaner Newspapers and the Newspaper Industry from 1830." *South African History Online* 16 July 2018. <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/afrikaner-newspapers-and-newspaper-industry-1830>
- Alexander, Mogamat. "The Cape Muslim Vernacular." *The Cape Malays, Cape Muslims* 30 October 2014. <https://alexfam786.wordpress.com/501-2/>
- Al-Salem, Mohd Nour. "The Translation of Metaphor from Arabic to English in Selected Poems of Mahmoud Darwish with a focus on linguistic issues." *University of Leeds Centre for Translation Studies School of Languages, Cultures and Societies* August 2014. <http://theses.whiterose.ac.uk/7703/1/MyPhD%2017914.pdf>
- Amer, Sahar. "Medieval Arab Lesbians and Lesbian-Like Women." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* May 2009, Vol. 18, No. 2, pp. 215-236. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40663351>
- Amid, Jonathan. "Disgrace op sy kop gedraai." *Netwerk24* 7 July 2019. <https://www.netwerk24.com/Vermaak/Boeke/disgrace-op-sy-kop-gedraai-20190707>

Armstrong, Jennifer Keishin. "When political comedy is a case of life or death." *BBC* 6 February 2017. <http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20170206-when-political-comedy-is-a-case-of-life-or-death>

Armstrong, Peter. "Frank Herbert's Dune novels were heavily influenced by Middle Eastern, Islamic cultures, says scholar." *Day 6* 22 October 2021. <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/day6/introducing-the-metaverse-crisis-in-afghanistan-stuff-the-british-stole-islamic-influence-in-dune-and-more-1.6220405/frank-herbert-s-dune-novels-were-heavily-influenced-by-middle-eastern-islamic-cultures-says-scholar-1.6221670>

Attwell, David. "How J.M. Coetzee wrote his Booker prize-winning book." *Lithub* 29 September 2016. <https://lithub.com/how-j-m-coetzee-wrote-his-booker-prize-winning-book/>

---. *J.M. Coetzee and a Life of Writing: Face to Face with Time*. New York: Penguin Random House, 2015. E-book.

"Aung San Suu Kyi Plays Her Trump Card: The Daily Show." *Comedy Central UK* 14 September 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CuvrEHrQNnI>

Auerbach, Erich. (Trans. Maire Said and Edward Said). "Philology and 'Weltliteratur'." *The Centennial Review*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Winter 1969), pp. 1-17. Michigan State University Press Stable. <https://msu.edu/course/eng/320/johnsen/philology.pdf>

Baderoon, Gabeba. *Regarding Muslims: From Slavery to Post Apartheid*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2001. Kindle Edition.

Bainridge, Beryl. "Devil's Plaything." *The Guardian* 10 February 2007. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/feb/10/fiction.berylbainbridge>

Baldwin, Barry. "Ancient Science Fiction." *Shattercolors* 2006. http://www.shattercolors.com/nonfiction/baldwin_ancientscifi.htm

Balstad Miller, Roberta. "Science and Society in the Early Career of H. F. Verwoerd." *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (Dec. 1993), pp. 634-661. <https://www.bc.edu/centers/ila/events/postcolonial-reading->

[group/_jer_content/content/bcbootstraptab/content2/download_8/file.res/Miller%2C%20Roberta](#)

Barthes, Roland. (Trans. Richard Howard.) "The Reality Effect." *The Rustle of Language*, University of California Press, 1989. <https://ctlsites.uga.edu/eberle/wp-content/uploads/sites/78/2017/08/Barthes-The-Reality-Effect-1.pdf>

Bess, Jennifer. "Imploding the Miranda Complex in Julia Alvarez's *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*." *Johns Hopkins University Press, College Literature* (Vol. 34, Issue 1), Winter 2007. <https://www.amherst.edu/media/view/61350/original/alvarez%20-%20imploding%20the%20miranda%20complex.pdf>

Bhattacharya, Sunayani. "(Re)Appropriation: A Reading of *The Tempest*, *Kapalkundala*, and *Disgrace*." *University of Florida* 7 April 2009. <https://scholarcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2858&context=etd>

Bielenberg, Katharina. "Katharina Bielenberg: Why I wanted to publish *LOOK WHO'S BACK*." *MacLehose Press* 1 February 2018. <https://www.maclehosepress.com/blog/2018/2/1/why-i-wanted-to-publish-look-whos-back>

Bignall, Simone and Patton Paul (eds.). *Deleuze and the Postcolonial*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010. https://books.google.co.za/books?id=1zIkDQAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=Deleuze+and+the+Postcolonial+Simone+Bignall,+Paul+Patton&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwj1z9bSnv_hAhUfSRUIHS6VBzQQ6AEIKjAA#v=onepage&q=Deleuze%20and%20the%20Postcolonial%20Simone%20Bignall%2C%20Paul%20Patton&f=false

Bloom, Kelly. "Orientalism in French 19th Century Art." *Boston College University Libraries*, 2004. <https://dlib.bc.edu/islandora/object/bc-ir:102288/datastream/PDF/view>

Blystone, Brittney. "Extremes of Gender and Power: Sycorax's Absence in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*." *The University of Akron: Selected Papers of the Ohio Valley Shakespeare Conference* November 2014. <https://ideaexchange.uakron.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://scholar.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1034&context=spovsc>

- Boubnab, Youcef Oussama. "Albert Camus, *The Plague* and Race." *Jadaliyya* 1 September 2020.
<https://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/41648>
- Brink, Elsabé. "Reshaping Remembrance - The 'Volksmoeder': A Figurine as Figurehead." *Rozenberg Quarterly*. <http://rozenbergquarterly.com/reshaping-remembrance-the-volksmoeder-a-figurine-as-figurehead/>
- Brown, Kathryn. "Egyptian Voyages: Gustave Flaubert, Maxime Du Camp, and Fouad Elkoury." *History of Photography*, 38(2), pp. 161-172. 22 May 2014.
<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/78908904.pdf>
- Brotton, Jerry. "Elizabethan England's relationship with the Islamic world." *History Extra* 9 March 2018. <https://www.historyextra.com/period/elizabethan/elizabethan-englands-relationship-with-the-islamic-world/>
- . "This Tunis, sir, was Carthage: Contesting Colonialism in *The Tempest*." *Post-Colonial Shakespeares*, 1998. E-book.
- Bruckner, D.J.R. "Talk with George Steiner." *New York Times* 2 May 1982.
<https://www.nytimes.com/1982/05/02/books/talk-with-george-steiner.html>
- Bueckert, Michael. "Flight of the Boers." *Africa is a Country* 29 May 2018.
<https://africasacountry.com/2018/05/flight-of-the-boers>
- . "No platform for Apartheid." *Africa is a Country* 3 April 2018.
<https://africasacountry.com/2018/04/no-platform-for-apartheid>
- . "Searching for White Genocide in South Africa." *Africa is a Country* 2 February 2018.
<https://africasacountry.com/2018/02/searching-for-white-genocide-in-south-africa>
- Bunting, Brian. *The Rise of the South African Reich*. Penguin: Hammondsworth, 1969. E-book.
http://www.artsrn.ualberta.ca/amcdouga/Hist446_2011/documents_anc_old_site/The%20Rise%20of%20the%20South%20African%20Reich.pdf
- Burr, Ty. "'The Death of Stalin' is brilliant satire." *Boston Globe* 14 March 2018.
<https://www.bostonglobe.com/arts/movies/2018/03/14/the-death-stalin-brilliant-satire/baqC6S8nnVmTxpjbZtXrM/story.html>

- Césaire, Aimé. (Trans. Richard Miller). *A Tempest*. Internet Archive 10 August 2018. <https://archive.org/stream/tempestbasedonsh0000cesa#page/n5/mode/2up>
- Cahill, Michelle. *Letter to Pessoa*. Artamon: Giramondo Publishing, 2016. Kindle Edition.
- “Chappelle's Show – ‘Frontline’ – Clayton Bigsby Pt. 1.” *YouTube* Comedy Central 23 February 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JBC-9k3y1ew>
- . “Clayton Bigsby Pt. 2.” *YouTube* Comedy Central 23 February 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7oXFmuUHLQ>
- Camus, Albert. *The Stranger*. (Trans. Stuart Gilbert.) New York: Vintage Books: A Division of Random House, 1942. Print.
- . *The Plague*. (Trans. Robin Buss.) London: Penguin, 2001. Print.
- Chidamba, Kirkpatrick. “Ayanda Mabulu’s Latest Painting of Zuma and Madiba Draws Criticism.” *Enthuse Magazine* 21 April 2017. <http://enthusemag.com/news/3265/>
- Childs, Adrienne L. “Serving exoticism: The black female in French exotic imagery 1733–1885.” *Digital Repository at the University of Maryland*, 1999. <https://drum.lib.umd.edu/bitstream/handle/1903/16017/867217.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- Chomsky, Noam. *Failed States*. London: Penguin Books, 2006. Print.
- Chrisafis, Angelique. “Michel Houellebecq: ‘Am I Islamophobic? Probably, yes’.” *The Guardian* 6 September 2015. <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/sep/06/michel-houellebecq-submission-am-i-islamophobic-probably-yes>.
- Clarke, Len. “Many of South Africa’s Leaders Were Pro-Nazi.” *The New York Times* 25 July 1985. <https://www.nytimes.com/1985/07/25/opinion/1-many-of-south-africa-s-leaders-were-pro-nazi-146159.html>
- Coetzee, J.M. *Age of Iron*. London: Penguin, 1990. Print.
- . *Disgrace*. London: Vintage, 2000. Print.
- . *Doubling the Point: Essays and Interviews*. London: Vintage, 1992. Print.

- . *Elizabeth Costello*. London: Vintage Digital, 2003. Kindle Edition.
- . *Foe*. London: Penguin Books, 1986. Print.
- . *Giving Offense: Essays on Censorship*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996. Print.
- . *In the Heart of the Country*. London: Vintage, 2004. Kindle Edition.
- . *The Master of Petersburg*. London: Minerva, 1994. Print.
- . *Scenes from Provincial Life*. London: Penguin, 2011. Kindle Edition.
- . *Waiting for the Barbarians*. London: Vintage, 1980. Kindle edition.
- Dangor, Suleiman E. "Arabic-Afrikaans Literature at the Cape." *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde*, Vol. 45, Pretoria, January 2008. <http://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/tvl/v45n1/07.pdf>
- Daoud, Kamel. (Trans. John Cullen.) *The Meursault Investigation*. Alger: Editions Barzakh, 2014. Kindle Edition.
- Davids, Achmat (eds. Willemsse, Hein and Dangor, Suleman, E.). *The Afrikaans of the Cape Muslims from 1815 to 1915*. Pretoria: Protea Book House, 2011. Print.
- . *The Afrikaans of the Cape Muslims from 1815 to 1915*. Master's Thesis. <http://etd.uwc.ac.za/xmlui/handle/11394/7190>
- Deleuze, Gilles and Guattari, Félix. (Trans. Dana Polan). *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986. https://complit.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/COL1000-Week02-September23_GillesDeleuzeFelixGuattari.pdf
- Deleuze, Gilles and Guattari, Félix and Brinkley, Robert. "What Is a Minor Literature?" *Mississippi Review*, Vol. 11, No. 3, Essays Literary Criticism (Winter/Spring, 1983), pp. 13–33. <http://parenthetic.org/minorliterature.pdf>
- Demir, Danyela. "Who's the 'gap'? Reviewing Fiona Snyckers' *Lacuna*." *The Thinker*, Issue 81, Quarter Three, 2020. http://www.thethinker.co.za/resources/Thinker_81/81%20demir.pdf
- De Vries, Willem. "Afrikaans is a major African asset – Dele Olojede." *Litnet* 22 November 2018. <https://www.litnet.co.za/afrikaans-is-a-major-african-asset-dele-olajede-the-more-we-eliminate-this-diversity-the-lesser-we-become-says-africas-first-pulitzer-prize-winner/>

- DeVito, Elizabeth. "Orientalism and the Photographs of Eugène Delacroix: An Exploration of Vision, Identity, and Difference in Nineteenth Century France." *OhioLink ETD* June 2011. https://etd.ohiolink.edu/!etd.send_file?accession=ohiou1306869542&disposition=inline
- Dimmock, Matthew. *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England*. London: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2005. Print.
- . "Shakespeare and Islam." *Oxford University Press Blog* 27 December 2015. <https://blog.oup.com/2015/12/shakespeare-and-islam/>
- Donaldson, Andrew. "Steve beaten by voice from a stomach." *IOL* 29 November 2014. <https://www.iol.co.za/news/opinion/steve-beaten-by-voice-from-a-stomach-1788424>
- Dousemetzis, Harris. "Report to the Minister of Justice, Advocate Tshililo Michael Masutha, in the Matter of Dr Verwoerd's Assassination." *Sahistory.org.za*. https://www.sahistory.org.za/sites/default/files/file%20uploads%20/report_to_the_minister_of_justice_2.pdf
- Du Preez, Max. "South Africans' blood ties with Indonesia and what it means today." *News24* 2 October 2018. <https://www.news24.com/Columnists/MaxduPreez/south-africans-historic-ties-with-indonesia-and-what-it-means-today-20181002>
- Durrani, Haris A. "The novel 'Dune' had deep Islamic influences. The movie erases them." *Washington Post* 28 October 2021. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2021/10/28/dune-muslim-influences-erased/>
- Du Toit, Pieter. "How Johann Rupert's charm offensive backfired." *News24* 6 December 2018. <https://www.news24.com/Analysis/how-johann-ruperts-charm-offensive-backfired-20181206>
- Du Toit, Pieter; Davies, Marc. "Parliament's Ghosts: Where Verwoerd And Vorster Still Rule." *HuffPost* 2 February 2017. https://www.huffingtonpost.co.za/2017/02/14/parliaments-ghosts-where-verwoerd-and-vorster-still-rule_a_21713530/
- "Encounter conversation with 2020 HSS Awards Winner." *YouTube* 1 February 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wd9pGPax4UU>

- Eward-Magione, Angela. "Decolonizing Shakespeare: Race, Gender, and Colonialism in Three Adaptations of Three Plays by William Shakespeare." *Graduate Theses and Dissertations*, 2014. University of South Florida. <https://scholarcommons.usf.edu/etd/5628>
- Esposito, E. "The Reality of the World and the Realism of Fiction." *Studio Roma*, 2016. http://www.strozzina.org/manipulatingreality/e_catalogo_ee.php - content
- Etman, Colleen. "Feminist Shakespeares: Adapting Shakespeare for a modern audience in the Hogarth Shakespeare Project." *University of Charleston*, Master of Arts, 2017. <https://thesiscommons.org/d25xy/download/?format=pdf>
- Fanon, Frantz. (Trans. Constance Farrington). *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press, 1963. Print.
- . "Algeria Unveiled." *Decolonization: Perspectives from now and then*. New York and London: Routledge, 2004. https://academics.skidmore.edu/blogs/transnational-s19/files/2014/08/Fanon-Algeria-Unveiled.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0HGPTz-8jOngRrABiociOUTsLb92OgfU_VDXavGqL_IINBtP8eHySV1Y
- Flaubert, Gustave. *A Simple Soul*. Project Gutenberg 18 February 2006. E-Book. <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1253/1253-h/1253-h.htm>
- Finkelstein, Norman. *The Holocaust Industry*. New York: Verso, 2000. E-book.
- Fleischer, Matthew. "Opinion: America is at its breaking point but white women won't stop frivolously calling police on black people." *Los Angeles Times* 3 June 2020. <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2020-06-03/svitlana-flom-amy-cooper-george-floyd-police-racism>
- Friedman, Stephen. "The Palestinian blinkers that liberals don." *New Frame* 29 April 2021. <https://www.newframe.com/the-palestinian-blinkers-that-liberals-don/>
- Fromm, Harold. "Review: Coetzee's Postmodern Animals." *The Hudson Review*, Vol. 53, No. 2 (Summer, 2000), pp. 336-344. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3852898>
- McKaiser, Eusebius. "Free advice to authors and publishers." *Facebook* 23 September 2019. <https://www.facebook.com/eusebius.mckaiser>

- Galer, Sophia Smith. "How art created stereotypes of the Arab world." *BBC.com* 18 October 2019. <http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20191017-how-art-created-stereotypes-of-the-arab-world>
- Gallagher, Catherine. *Telling It Like It Wasn't: The Counterfactual Imagination in History and Fiction*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2018. E-book.
- Garceau, Ben. "Where does Caliban's name come from." *Humanities Core Research Blog*, UC Irvine, 5 February 2018. <https://sites.uci.edu/humcoreblog/2019/02/04/where-does-calibans-name-come-from/>
- "Germany lifts total ban on Nazi symbols in video games." *BBC* 10 August 2018. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-45142651>
- Gersh-Nesic, Beth. "Spotlight on Laure, Manet's Other Model in "Olympia" in the Musée d'Orsay." *Bonjour Paris* 21 February 2017. <https://bonjourparis.com/art/spotlight-laure-manets-model-olympia-musee-dorsay/>
- Gevisser, Mark. "The Moral Struggles Aroused by Verwoerd." *Business Day* 30 July 2019. <https://www.pressreader.com/south-africa/business-day/20190730/281487867955994>
- Giliomee, Hermann. "Apartheid: A Complex Heritage." *Workshop on the Economics of Apartheid*, UCT, 20 March 2013. <https://econrsa.org/system/files/workshops/papers/2013/giliomee.pdf>
- . "Education in SA: Is Verwoerd to blame: Hermann Giliomee on whether Bantu Education was a destructive intervention or part reform?" *Politicsweb* 3 September 2012. <http://www.politicsweb.co.za/news-and-analysis/education-in-sa-is-verwoerd-to-blame>
- . "Reconsidering Verwoerd and Bantu Education: Hermann Giliomee replies to the criticisms of Martin Prew." *Politicsweb* 13 September 2012. <http://www.politicsweb.co.za/iservice/reconsidering-verwoerd-and-bantu-education>
- Gloton, Maurice. "The Quranic Inspiration of Ibn 'Arabi's Vocabulary of Love Etymological Links and Doctrinal Development." *The Muyhiddin Ibn Arabi Society*, Vol. XXVII, 2000. <https://ibnarabisociety.org/ibn-arabis-vocabulary-of-love-maurice-gloton/>

- Gottlieb, Roger S. (ed.). "Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937)." *An Anthology of Western Marxism: From Lukács and Gramsci to Socialist-Feminism*, pp. 113-119. <http://www.csun.edu/~snk1966/Gramsci%20-%20Prison%20Notebooks%20-%20Intellectuals.pdf>
- Goulard, Hortense. "Germany's anti-Islam Pegida movement launches political party." *Politico* 19 July 2016. <https://www.politico.eu/article/germans-anti-islam-pegida-movement-launches-political-party/>
- Goethe, Wolfgang. (Trans. Edward Dowden). *West-Eastern Divan*. London and Toronto: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1913. Internet Archive. <https://archive.org/details/westeasterndivan00goetuoft/page/n17>
- Grigore, George and Sitaru, Laura. "Curses and Profanity in the Languages and Cultures of the Middle East and North Africa." *Romano-Arabica Journal*, University of Bucharest Center for Arab Studies, 2019. <https://romanoarabica.files.wordpress.com/2019/03/romano-arabica-xix-2019-final-2.pdf>
- Graham, Lucy Valerie. *State of Peril: Race and Rape in South African Literature*. New York: Oxford University Press 2012. Google Books Edition.
- . "Intercepting *Disgrace: Lacuna* and "Letter to John Coetzee"." *Safundi*, 21:2, 166-175, DOI: 10.1080/17533171.2020.1728956. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17533171.2020.1728956>
- Graves, Robert. *I, Claudius and Claudius The God*. Penguin: New York, 1986. Print.
- Griffiths, Christian. "Review of Timur Vermes's *Look Who's Back* (trans. Jamie Bulloch)." *The AALITRA Review: A Journal of Literary Translation* 10 (Melbourne: Monash University, May 2015): 28-30. <file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/735-2750-1-PB.pdf>
- Grosfoguel, Ramón. "Decolonizing Post-Colonial Studies and Paradigms of Political-Economy: Transmodernity, Decolonial Thinking, and Global Coloniality." *TRANSMODERNITY: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, 1(1) ISSN 2154-1361. <https://cloudfront.escholarship.org/dist/prd/content/qt21k6t3fq/qt21k6t3fq.pdf>
- Guba, David A. "Antoine Isaac Silvestre de De Sacy and the Myth of the Hachichins: Orientalizing hashish in nineteenth-century France." *Social History of Alcohol and Drugs*, Volume 30

- (2016), pp. 50-74.
<https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/pdfplus/10.1086/SHAD30010050>
- Habibullah, Md and Nahar, Nurun. “Albert Camus’ *The Stranger* and Islam: A Postcolonial Study.” *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Development Studies* (IJEDS) 5(1) 2017, 13-24.
<http://ijeds.org/index.php?journal=ijeds&page=article&op=view&path%5B%5D=107>
- Hamad, Ruby. “How white women use strategic tears to silence women of colour.” *The Guardian* 7 May 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/may/08/how-white-women-use-strategic-tears-to-avoid-accountability>
- “Half of SA whites say apartheid not a crime against humanity.” *Sapa* 3 December 2014.
<https://businesstech.co.za/news/general/75044/half-of-sa-whites-say-apartheid-not-a-crime-against-humanity/>
- Harber, Anton. “South Africa. Clash of the Booker titans.” *The Guardian* 28 May 2013.
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/may/23/salman-rushdie-nadine-gordimer-jm-coetzee>
- Haron, Muhammed. “Achmat Davids places the Cape Muslims on the South African linguistic map.” *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde*, 49(1):161-175, December 2011.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262652858_Achmat_Davids_places_the_Cape_Muslims_on_the_South_African_linguistic_map
- Harrison, Joseph G. “If Hitler were found alive?” *The Christian Science Monitor* 14 May 1982.
<https://www.csmonitor.com/1982/0514/051440.html>
- Harrison, William, and Georges Edelen. *The Description of England: The Classic Contemporary Account of Tudor Social Life*. Washington D.C. and New York: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1994. E-book.
- Haversham, Estella. “Mansplaining womansplained. About time.” *Facebook*, March 2019. Screenshot. Personal files.
- Heynders, Ollie and Bax, Sanders. “Imaginary Scenarios: Literature and Democracy in Europe.” *Pivot, A Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies and Thought*. Vol. 5. No. 1 (2016): Visionary

- Texts, Past and Present: (Re)visionings and (Re)imaginings.
<https://pivot.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/pivot/article/view/40256/35241>
- “Hendrik Verwoerd talking about apartheid.” *YouTube* 10 December 2010.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xHgU1Jw6oyw>
- Herbert, Frank. *The Dune Saga Collection: Books 1-6*. New York: Penguin Random House, 1965. Print.
- Hitler, Adolf. (Trans. James Murphy, 1939.) *Mein Kampf*, 1925
<http://www.greatwar.nl/books/meinkampf/meinkampf.pdf>
- Hjul, Lauren Martha. “The Family in Shakespeare’s Plays: A Study of South African Revisions.” Rhodes University, thesis, January 2013.
http://vital.seals.ac.za:8080/vital/access/manager/Repository?view=null&f0=sm_subject%3A%22English+drama+---+17th+century+---+History+and+criticism%22&sort=null
- Hofstetter, Carl. “Elvish She Spoke.” *The Lord of the Rings 1954-2004: Scholarship in Honor of Richard E. Blackwelder*. Wisconsin: Marquette University Press, 2006. E-book.
- Houellebecq, Michel (Trans. Lorin Stein). *Submission*. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2015. <https://archive.org/details/submission0000houe/page/n9/mode/2up>
- . *Platform*. New York: First Vintage International Edition, 2004. Print
- Hourani, Albert. *A History of the Arab Peoples*. London: Faber and Faber 1991. Print.
- Howell, Jennifer: “Decoding Marc Garanger's Photographic Message in La Guerre d'Algérie vue par un appelé du contingent.” *Dalhousie French Studies*, Vol. 92 (Fall 2010), pp. 85-95.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/41705538>
- Hsu-Ming, Teo. “Orientalism: An Overview.” *Australian Humanities Review* 54 (2013): 1-20.
<https://research-management.mq.edu.au/ws/portalfiles/portal/16854445/mq-29826-Publisher+version+%28open+access%29.pdf>
- Ibn Hazam, Abu Muhammad Ali. (Trans. A. J. Arberry). *The Ring of the Dove: A Treatise on the Art and Practice of Arab Love*. London: Luzac & Company 1997. E-book.

“Infographic: The Spectrum of Love in Classical Arabic.” *Qatar Foundation International* 20 April 2018. <https://www.qfi.org/blog/infographic-love/>

Inglourious Basterds. Dir. Quentin Tarantino. The Weinstein Company. 2009.

Irving, Clive. “Islamic Terrorism Was Born on This Mountain 1,000 Years Ago.” *The Daily Beast* 7 December 2017. <https://www.thedailybeast.com/islamic-terrorism-was-born-on-this-mountain-1000-years-ago>

Jallow, Maïmouna. “The power of telling our own stories.” *Africa is a Country* 3 January 2019. <https://africasacountry.com/2019/03/ruffling-feathers-and-the-power-of-telling-our-own-stories>

JanMohamed, Abdul R. and David Lloyd. *The Nature and Context of Minority Discourse*. Oxford UP, 1990. E-book.

Jappie, Saarah. “The Arabic-Afrikaans Tradition of the Cape.” *The Chimurenga Chronic* 9 June 2015. <https://chimurengachronic.co.za/writing-the-city-in-a-different-script/>

---. “History, Heritage, Identity: Arabic manuscripts in Cape Muslim Families.” *The Archival Platform* 18 April 2011. http://www.archivalplatform.org/blog/entry/history_heritage/

“Johan Pienaar is nie die eerste verraaiër van die Afrikanervolk nie and sal ook nie die laaste wees nie.” *Afrikaner Volksparty* 13 March 2018. <http://www.afrikanervolksparty.org/index.php/afrikaner/6798-johan-pienaar-is-nie-die-eerste-verraaiër-van-die-afrikanervolk-nie-en-sal-ook-nie-die-laaste-wees-nie.html>

Johnson, David. W. “Representing the Cape ‘Hottentots’, from the French Enlightenment to Post-Apartheid South Africa.” *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (Summer, 2007), pp. 525-552 (28 pages). The Johns Hopkins University Press. https://www.jstor.org/stable/30053727?read-now=1&refreqid=excelsior%3Af6b89cf762a4096ebaa1188e8226da6&seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

Johnson, F.E. *The Suspended Poems*. Mumbai: Education Society’s Steam Press, Byculla 1893. <https://archive.org/details/alsabalmuallaqat00johnrich/page/n5/mode/2up>

- Kamaldien, Yazeed. “Bo-Kaap residents fight for heritage preservation.” *Yazkam* 24 November 2015. <https://yazkam.wordpress.com/2015/11/24/bo-kaap-residents-fight-for-heritage-preservation/>
- . “Zonnebloem: Cape Town’s latest gentrification hotspot.” *Yazkam* 31 May 2016. <https://yazkam.wordpress.com/tag/bo-kaap/>
- . “De Waterkant residents claim city officials, developers make life hell.” *Yazkam* 31 May 2016. <https://yazkam.wordpress.com/tag/bo-kaap/>
- . “‘Rampies sny’ a Cape Town Muslim celebration of Prophet Muhammad’s birthday.” *Yazkam* 12 January 2015. <https://yazkam.wordpress.com/2015/01/12/rampies-sny-a-cape-town-muslim-celebration-of-prophet-muhammads-birthday/>
- Kannemeyer, J.C. *'n Geskryfde Lewe*. Jeppestown: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2012. Print.
- Kantarbaeva-Bill, Irina. “Anglo-Ottoman Anxieties in *The Tempest*: from Displacement to Exclusion.” *Caliban French Journal of English Studies* 52, 2014, 43-51. <https://journals.openedition.org/caliban/553#ftn1>
- Kareem, Mona. “Arabic literature and the African other.” *Africa is a Country* 5 May 2019. <https://africasacountry.com/2019/05/how-do-arabs-talk-and-write-about-black-people>
- Karjoo-Ravary, Ali. “In *Dune*, Paul Atreides led a jihad, not a crusade: Here is why that matters.” *Al Jazeera* 11 October 2020. <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2020/10/11/paul-atreides-led-a-jihad-not-a-crusade-heres-why-that-matters>
- . “Is *Dune* a White Savior Narrative? Frank Herbert’s novel drew from Islam to critique the idea of the messianic Western man. Does the movie?” *Slate* 26 October 2021. <https://slate.com/culture/2021/10/dune-2021-movie-vs-book-white-savior-islam.html>
- Katz, Cindi. “Towards minor theory.” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 1996, volume 14, pages 487-499. <file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/towardminortheory.pdf>
- “Kaya FM's Jenny Crwys Williams interviews Nthikeng Mohlele.” *Soundcloud*, 2018. <https://soundcloud.com/panmacmillan-za/kaya-fms-jenny-crwys-williams-interviews-nthikeng-mohlele>

- Kelley, Sonaiya. "Words and Pictures: Viral artist Harmonia Rosales' first collection of paintings reimagines classic works with black femininity." *Los Angeles Times* 21 September 2017. <https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/la-et-cm-harmonia-rosales-the-creation-of-god-reimagined-20170919-story.html>
- Kenney, Henry. *Verwoerd: Architect of Apartheid*. Jonathan Ball: Cape Town, 2016. Kindle Edition.
- Kew, Janice. "Steinhoff on the Brink: A Chronicle of Collapse at Retail Giant." *Bloomberg* 28 November 2018. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-11-28/steinhoff-on-the-brink-a-chronicle-of-collapse-at-retail-giant>
- . "How Saving Steinhoff Became Heather Sonn's 14-Hour-a-Day Mission." *Bloomberg* 18 May 2018. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-05-18/how-saving-steinhoff-became-heather-sonn-s-14-hour-a-day-mission>
- Khalil, Khaldoun. "Erasing Arabs from Dune." *Inkstick* 1 November 2021. <https://inkstickmedia.com/erasing-arabs-from-dune/>
- Khan, Aysha. "Through sci-fi and fantasy, Muslim women authors are building new worlds: In the past few years, Muslim women have quietly taken the speculative fiction publishing industry by storm." *Religion News* 16 July 2020. <https://religionnews.com/2020/07/16/through-sci-fi-and-fantasy-muslim-women-authors-are-building-new-worlds/>
- Khoury, Jeris. "Zarqa' al-Yamama in the Modern Arabic Poetry, A Comparative Reading." *Journal of Semitic Studies*, September 2008. 53(2):311-328. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240582077_Zarqa'_al-Yamama_in_the_Modern_Arabic_Poetry_A_Comparative_Reading
- Khoza, Amanda. "Apartheid was not a crime against humanity - AfriForum CEO." *News24* 14 April 2015. <https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/apartheid-was-not-a-crime-against-humanity-afriforum-ceo-20180514>

- Kim, Elaine H. "Asian American Realities Through Literature." *A Companion to Asian-American Studies*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/1354257.pdf?seq=1>
- Kirchick, James. "If Donald Trump were black, would the GOP base accept him? The answer is obvious." *Los Angeles Times* 12 August 2016. <http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-kirchick-black-trump-thought-experiment-20160812-snap-story.html>
- Krog, Antjie. "Antjie Krog: Should power listen to poetry?" *The Guardian* 26 September 2012.
<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/sep/26/antjie-krog-should-power-listen-to-poetry>
- Koelb, Clayton. "Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature (review)." *Modern Fiction Studies*, Volume 33, Number 2, Summer 1987, pp. 376-378 (Review) Published by Johns Hopkins University Press. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/244346/pdf>
- Kossew, Sue; Lamond, Julianne and Harvey, Melinda (eds). "Thematising Women in the Work of J.M. Coetzee." *Australian Literary Studies* Volume 33, No. 1.
<https://www.australianliterarystudies.com.au/issues/volume-33-no-1>
- Krueger, A.R. *Living in Strange Lands: The Testimony of Dimitri Tsafendas*. Playscripts Inc.: New York, 2001. Print.
- Kruger, Loren. *The Drama of South Africa: Plays, Pageants and Publics Since 1910*. London: Routledge, 1999. E-book.
- Kynoch, Gary. "Fear and Alienation: narratives of crime and race in post-Apartheid South Africa." *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 47:3, 427-441, 2013.
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/00083968.2013.869178>
- Lamb, Charles and Mary. *Complete Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*. East Sussex: Delphi Classics, 2017. E-book.
- Lane, Edward William. *The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*. London and Toronto, 1908.
http://www.iapsop.com/ssoc/1923__lane__manners_and_customers_of_the_modern_egyptians.pdf

- Lanktree, Graham. "Donald Trump wouldn't have made it off the block if he was black, says Ta-Nehisi Coates." *Newsweek* 11 March 2017. <https://www.newsweek.com/donald-trump-wouldnt-have-made-it-block-if-he-was-black-says-ta-nehisi-coates-700719>
- "Laugh them out of power." *The Economist* 30 August 2013. <https://www.economist.com/international/2013/08/30/laugh-them-out-of-power>
- Lapore, Jill. "What Our Contagion Fables Are Really About." *The New Yorker* 23 March 2020. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/03/30/what-our-contagion-fables-are-really-about>
- Leith, Sam. "'Look Who's Back' by Timur Vermes." *Financial Times* 2 May 2014. <https://www.ft.com/content/dff65380-cbc7-11e3-9f27-00144feabdc0>
- Leonard, Charles. "O broeder, where is the volk now?" *Mail&Guardian* 12 April 2013. <https://mg.co.za/article/2013-04-12-00-oh-broeder-where-is-the-volk-now>
- Leonard, John. "Books of the Times." *The New York Times*, 16 April 1982. <https://www.nytimes.com/1982/04/16/books/books-of-the-times-066591.html>
- "Letter to Pessoa by Michelle Cahill." *State Library New South Wales* 22 May 2017. <https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/letter-pessoa-michelle-cahill>
- Loomba, Ania. *Shakespeare, Race and Colonialism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002. E-book.
- . Loomba, Ania and Martin Orkin (eds). *Post-Colonial Shakespeares*. London and New York: Routledge, 1998. Print.
- Look Who's Back*. Dir. David Wnendt. Constantin Film, 2015. Film.
- Luce, Edward. "Salman Rushdie: 'Trump is not a reader, is he?'" *Financial Times* 22 September 2017. <https://www.ft.com/content/6b307804-9d2a-11e7-8cd4-932067fbf946>
- Lute, Kim. "If Donald Trump Were A Black Man." *Huffington Post* 17 June 2016 (updated 18 June 2017). https://www.huffingtonpost.com/kim-lute/if-donald-trump-were-a-bl_b_10408396.html

- Luce, Morton (ed.). *The Arden Shakespeare: The Tempest*. London: Methuen and Company Ltd., 1919. Internet Archive.
- Madondo, Bongani. "Nelson Mandela's 'new' collection of prison dispatches signs his name across our hearts: Bongani Madondo reviews The Prison Letters of Nelson Mandela." *The Johannesburg Review of Books* 6 August 2018. <https://johannesburgreviewofbooks.com/2018/08/06/nelson-mandelas-new-collection-of-prison-dispatches-signs-his-name-across-our-hearts-bongani-madondo-reviews-the-prison-letters-of-nelson-mandela/>
- Mailer, Norman. *The Castle in the Forest*. Random House: New York, 2007. Kindle Edition.
- Malan, Rian. "What a lost prison manuscript reveals about the real Nelson Mandela." *The Spectator Australia* 18 January 2014. <https://www.spectator.com.au/2014/01/the-mandela-files/>
- Malone, Duvalier. "Malone: What if Donald Trump was black?" *Clarion Ledger* 12 August 2016. <https://www.clarionledger.com/story/opinion/columnists/2016/08/12/malone-what-if-donald-trump-black/88651372/>
- Mandela, Nelson. *Long Walk to Freedom*. Little, Brown and Company: New York, 1995. Print.
- Mäntymäki, Tiina. "Volatile Performances: The Dangerous Trickster Woman as Murderer in Contemporary Crime Fiction." *ResearchGate*, November 2014.
- . "Lover, Avenger or Deadly Delusionist? Women murderers in Contemporary Crime Fiction." *University of Vaasa*, 2012. http://www.vakki.net/publications/2012/VAKKI2012_Mantymaki.pdf
- Mars-Jones, Adam. "When a master addresses a monster." *The Guardian* 11 March 2007. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/mar/11/fiction.features2>
- McDonald, Peter D. "Disgrace Effects." *Interventions*, 2011, 4:3. 321-330. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1369801022000013851>
- Marcus, Leah S. *Unediting the Renaissance: Shakespeare, Marlowe, Milton*. 1996. E-book.

- Marx, Christoph. "Hendrik Verwoerd and the Leipzig School of Psychology in 1926." *Historia* 58, 2, November 2013, pp. 91-118. <http://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/hist/v58n2/05.pdf>
- Matus, Adrian-George. "Translating Collective National Fears Through Best-Sellers: Michel Houellebecq's *Soumission* and Timur Vermes' *Er Ist Wieder Da*." *Metacritic Journal*, 2016. <http://www.metacriticjournal.com/article/41/translating-collective-national-fears-through-best-sellers-michel-houellebecqs-soumission-and-timur-vernes-er-ist-wieder-da>
- Misbach, A.W. *The Girl with the Red Flower*. University of the Western Cape, 2017. http://etd.uwc.ac.za/bitstream/handle/11394/5884/Misbach_MA_Arts_2017.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y
- . "The Publishing Race." *The Thinker*, Vol. 86 No. 1 (2021): Quarter 1 - 2021 / Volume 86. https://journals.uj.ac.za/index.php/The_Thinker/issue/view/43
- Miller, Stuart Creighton. *Benevolent Assimilation: The American Conquest of the Philippines 1899-1903*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1982. Kindle Edition.
- Mumin, Meikal and Versteegh, Kees (eds). *The Arabic Script in Africa: Studies in the Use of a Writing System*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2014. E-book.
- Mohlele, Nthikeng. "[#NthikengWritingTip](#) 5: There are no and should not be such things as minor characters in books. Such characters belong in the trash basket and not in manuscripts." *Twitter* 27 March 2018. <https://twitter.com/hashtag/NthikengWritingTip?src=hash>
- . "Q and A with Nthikeng Mohlele." *Pan Macmillan South Africa* 15 February 2018. <https://www.facebook.com/PanMacmillanSA/photos/ms.c.eJwzNDA0NTUxMTAwbQ0NbCwsNAzRBixMcUQQVVjZmAA1gUABOwOXQ~-.bps.a.10155440059895888.1073741906.284796235887/10155440059940888/?type=3&theater>
- . "A novel response to 'Disgrace'." *Mail & Guardian* 12 April 2019. <https://mg.co.za/article/2019-04-12-00-a-novel-response-to-disgrace>
- . "Someone famous read Michael K this way: microscopic. Like a detective!" *Twitter* 19 April 2018. <https://twitter.com/NthikengMohlele/status/986987912322519040>

- Moore, John Rees. "Review: Coetzee and the Precarious Lives of People and Animals." *The Sewanee Review*. Vol. 109, No. 3 (Summer, 2001), pp. 462-474. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27549067>
- Moore, Christopher. *Fool*. London: Hachette Digital, 2010. E-book.
- Morfin, Marcelina. "An Introduction To 'Orientalist' Art In 10 Famous Works." *Culture Trip* 18 November 2016. <https://theculturetrip.com/europe/france/articles/the-top-10-orientalist-artworks/>
- Morris, Bernard E. "Reviewed Work: The Lives of Animals by J.M. Coetzee." *Harvard Review*, No. 18, Metamorphoses (Spring, 2000), pp. 181-183/<https://www.jstor.org/stable/27561484>
- Murray, Sally-Ann. "The Idea of Gardening: Plants, Bewilderment, and Indigenous Identity in South Africa." *English in Africa*, Vol. 33, No. 2, Postmodernism: A South African Perspective (Oct., 2006), pp. 45-66. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/282357200_The_Idea_of_Gardening
- Myburgh, Pieter-Louis. *The Republic of Gupta: A Story of State Capture*. Cape Town: Penguin Random House, 2017. Kindle Edition.
- Nabokov, Vladimir. *Speak, Memory*. New York: Random House 1989. Print.
- Naggat, Carole. "Women Unveiled: Marc Garanger's Contested Portraits of 1960s Algeria." *Time* 23 April 2013. <https://time.com/69351/women-unveiled-marc-garangers-contested-portraits-of-1960s-algeria/>
- Nattrass, Nicoli. "Why are black South African students less likely to consider studying biological sciences?" *South African Journal of Science* 2020;116(5/6), Art. #7864, 2 pages. <https://doi.org/10.17159/sajs.2020/7864>. <file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/7864-Main%20document-45707-2-10-20200524.pdf>.
- Neely, Carol Thomas. "Detachment and Engagement in Shakespeare's Sonnets: 94, 116, and 129." *Modern Language Association*, Vol. 92, No. 1 (Jan., 1977), pp. 83-95. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/461416> Accessed: 26-12-2015 06:06 UTC

- Nicholson, R.A. *A Literary History of the Arabs*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons 153-157, Fifth Avenue 1907. E-Book.
- Nochlin, Linda. "The Imaginary Orient." *Art in America*, May 1983, pp. 118–131, pp. 187–191. <https://pages.ucsd.edu/~bgoldfarb/cocu108/data/texts/NochlinIO.pdf>
- Norricks-Rühl, Corinna and Ramdarshan Bold, Melanie. "Crossing the Channel: Publishing Translated German Fiction in the UK." *Springer Science and Business Media*, 2016. <http://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/1493060/8/Ramdarshan%20Bold%202016%20Crossing%20the%20channel.pdf>
- Krüger, Oliver. "The Evolution of Reversed Sexual Dimorphism in Hawks, Falcons and Owls: a comparative study." *Evolutionary Ecology*. 19 (5): 467–486. doi:10.1007/s10682-005-0293-9. S2CID 22181702.
- Lebow, R. N. "Counterfactuals, history and fiction. Historical Social Research." *Social Science Open Access Repository*, 2009: 34(2), 57-73. <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.34.2009.2.57-73>
- Obiedat, A.Z. "The Semantic Field of Love in Classical Arabic: Understanding the Subconscious Meaning Preserved in the *Hubb* Synonyms and Antonyms through their Etymologies." *The Beloved in Middle Eastern Literatures: The Culture of Love and Languishing*, Alireza Korangy, Hanadi Al-Samman and Michael C Beard (eds). Chapter 13, 300–323, 2018. E-Book.
- Ogilby, John. *Africa: being an accurate description of the regions of AEGYPT, Barbary, Lybia, and Billedulgerid, the land of Negroes, Guinee, AETHIOPIA, and the Abyssines*. Yale University Library Digital Collections. London: T. Johnson, 1670. <https://collections.library.yale.edu/pdfs/11534702.pdf>
- Olivier, Fanie. "Verkragte vrou praat hier terug." *Netwerk24* 16 June 2019. <https://www.netwerk24.com/Vermaak/Boeke/verkragte-vrou-praat-hier-terug-20190614>
- Oltermann, Philip. "Germany asks: is it OK to laugh at Hitler." *The Guardian* 23 March 2014. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/mar/23/germany-finally-poke-fun-hitler-fuhrer>

- Ortiz, Jonah. "Column: If Trump Was Black." *Empire State Tribune* 30 March 2017. <https://www.empirestatetribune.com/est/2/16/2017/opinion-if-trump-were-black>
- Orwell, George. "Rudyard Kipling." *www.orwell.ru* 24 September 2015. http://orwell.ru/library/reviews/kipling/english/e_rkip
- Owen, Roger. "Edward Said and the two critiques of Orientalism." *Middle East Institute* 20 April 2012. <https://www.mei.edu/publications/edward-said-and-two-critiques-orientalism>
- Öktem, Öz. "'We know little of the king's fair daughter, Claribel': The Challenge of Islam in *The Tempest*." *English Studies in Africa*. Vol. 63, 2020. Issue 2. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00138398.2020.1852688>
- Pauw, Jacques. *The President's Keeper*. Cape Town: NB Publishers, 2017. Kindle Edition.
- Peck, William H. "The Dancer of Esna." *Williamhpeck.org*, 2009. http://williamhpeck.org/the_dancer_of_esna
- Pelzer, A. N. (Ed.). *Verwoerd Aan Die Woord: Toesprake 1948-1962*. Pretoria: Afrikaanse Pers-Boekhandel, 1963. Print.
- Pillai, Manu S. "The Tale of the Two Shakantulas." *Live Mint* 22 December 2017. <https://www.livemint.com/Leisure/1riLTi7w6XI5lbOD8jzKOO/The-tale-of-two-Shakuntalas.html>
- Popescu, Monica. "Of Masters, Scholars and the Global Prize Economy." *Berfrois* 29 August 2013. <https://www.berfrois.com/2013/08/monica-popescu-masters-scholars-and-the-global-prize-economy/>
- Prasso, Sheridan. *The Asian Mystique Dragon Ladies, Geisha Girls, And Our Fantasies of the Exotic Orient*. New York: Public Affairs, 2005/6. Kindle Edition.
- Prew, Martin. "Sorry, but Verwoerd and his ilk are to blame! Martin Prew responds to Hermann Giliomee's article on Bantu Education." *Politicsweb* 10 September 2012. <http://www.politicsweb.co.za/news-and-analysis/sorry-but-verwoerd-and-his-ilk-are-to-blame?sn=Marketingweb+detail>

- Pilgrim, David. "The Sapphire Caricature." *www.ferris.edu* August 2008.
<https://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/jimcrow/antiblack/sapphire.htm>
- Pormann, Peter, E. "1001 Cures: Translation Movement." *Muslim Heritage* 27 September 2019.
<https://muslimheritage.com/1001-cures-translation-movement/>
- Qualey, M. Lynx. "'Chronicles of Majnun Layla & Selected Poems': A Different Kind of Crazy." *ArabLit Quarterly* 4 November 2014. <https://arablit.org/2014/11/04/chronicles-of-majnun-layla-selected-poems/>
- "Racial Perspective Advert – South Africa, Soweto." *YouTube* 20 June 2007.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UcWsTwvtyOI>
- Richardson, Kristina. "Blue and Green Eyes in the Islamic Middle Ages." *Open Edition Journals*, 2014 pp.13-29. <https://journals.openedition.org/anisl/3051>
- Rivkin, J and Ryan, M. *Literary Theory: An Anthology*. London: Blackwell, 2004. Print.
- Rodima-Taylor, Daivi; Kurfi, Mustapha H., Ngom, Fallou. "Refuting that colonial Africa lacked written traditions." *Africa is a Country* 1 October 2019.
<https://africasacountry.com/2019/10/refuting-the-claim-that-precolonial-africa-lacks-written-traditions>
- Roodt, Dan. "'Apartheid made maths difficult for blacks' and other myths – historian Hermann Giliomee defends Bantu Education." *Praag.org* 6 September 2012.
<http://praag.org/?p=1386>
- . "Dan Roodt: #Plaasmoorde has again made South Africa a global topic." *Praag.org* 15 March 2018. <http://praag.org/?p=20572>
- Rose, Rob. *Steinheist*. Tafelberg, 2018. Kindle Edition.
- Rosen, Jeremy. *Minor Characters Have Their Day*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2016. Kindle Edition.
- Rosenfeld, Gavriel D. *Hi Hitler! How the Nazi Past is Being Normalized in Contemporary Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. Kindle Edition.

- Ross, Alex. "How American Racism Influenced Hitler." *The New Yorker* 30 April 2018. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/04/30/how-american-racism-influenced-hitler>
- Roth, Philip. *The Plot Against America*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2004. Internet Archive. <https://archive.org/details/plotagainstameri0000roth/page/n7/mode/2up>
- Rowse, A.L. (ed). *The Annotated Shakespeare*. Greenwich House, 1988. Print.
- Rushdie, Salman. "May 2000: J.M. Coetzee." *Step Across This Line: Collected Non-Fiction 1999–2002*. London: Vintage, 2003. Kindle edition.
- Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1979. Print.
- . *Covering Islam*. New York: Vintage Books, 1981. Print.
- . *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1993. Print.
- . *The Question of Palestine*. New York: Vintage Books, 1992. Print.
- . *Peace and its Discontents*. New York: Vintage Books, 1996. Print.
- . *The World, the Text, and the Critic*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983. Print.
- . "Crisis [in Orientalism]." *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader*. (Ed. by David Lodge and Nigel Wood.) Harlow, England: Pearson, 2000, pp. 271-286. https://www.uni-bamberg.de/fileadmin/uni/fakultaeten/split_lehrstuehle/englische_literatur/Materialien/Houswitschka/Orient/Edward_Said_Crisis_in_Orientalism.pdf
- "Salman Rushdie Thought Trump Was Too Boring for His New Book." *Late Night with Seth Myers* 4 October 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bxf3TyfdHkQ>
- Seale, Newton; Seale, Bobby. "10-Point Platform." *PBS* 15 October 1966. <https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/workers/black-panthers/1966/10/15.htm>
- Sentilles, Sarah. "Colonial Postcards and Women as Props for War-Making." *The New Yorker* 5 October 2017. <https://www.newyorker.com/books/second-read/colonial-postcards-and-women-as-props-for-war-making>

- Schaffner, Anna Katharina. "Look Who's Back. Review of: Hi Hitler: How the Nazi Past is Being Normalized in Contemporary Culture by Gavriel D. Rosenfeld." *Times Literary Supplement* 28 October 2015. pp. 1–3. https://kar.kent.ac.uk/51241/1/Look%20who%E2%80%99s%20back%20_%20TLS.pdf
- Scholes, Lucy. "Re-Covered: The Protest Writing of South Africa." *The Paris Review* 25 July 2019. <https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2019/07/25/re-covered-the-protest-writing-of-south-africa/>
- Scott-Reyes, Laurie. "Extricating Sycorax From *The Tempest's* Baseless Fabric." *Harvard Extension School*, 2017. <https://dash.harvard.edu/bitstream/handle/1/33826001/SCOTT-REYES-DOCUMENT-2017.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- Shakespeare, William (ed. A.R. Braunmuller). *Macbeth*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. Print.
- . *The Tempest*. (eds. Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan). London: Thomson Learning, 2001. Print.
- Shakir, Evelyn. "'Imaginary Homelands'" – Lebanese American Prose." *Al Jadid*, Vol. 9, nos. 42/43 Winter/Spring 2003. <https://www.aljadid.com/content/%E2%80%9CImaginary-homelands%E2%80%9D%E2%80%94Lebanese-american-prose>
- Silmi, Amirah Mohammad. "Combat in 'A World not for Us:' Revolutionary Writing in Aimé Césaire and Ghassan Kanafani." *University of California*, Berkley, 2016. https://digitalassets.lib.berkeley.edu/etd/ucb/text/Silmi_berkeley_0028E_16345.pdf
- Snyckers, Fiona. *Lacuna*. Johannesburg: Pan Macmillan South Africa, 2019. Kindle Edition.
- . "Lacuna: A Response to *Disgrace*." *The Eusebius McKaiser Show* 2 April 2019. <https://omny.fm/shows/mid-morning-show-702/the-literature-corner-book-reviews-with-fiona-snyc>
- . "Literature Corner: Book Reviews with Fiona Snyckers." *Podcast on The Eusebius McKaiser Show* 20 September 2018. <https://omny.fm/shows/mid-morning-show-702/the-literature-corner-book-reviews-with-fiona-snyc>

- Snyckers, Fiona and Jansen, Edna. "The Women Left Behind." *Franschhoek Literary Festival* 18 May 2019. <https://www.flf.co.za/flf-event/the-women-left-behind/>
- "South Africa: Nelson Mandela's Swearing-In - 1994." *YouTube* 21 July 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yexrhv5V0mw>
- Shatz, Adam. "Stranger Still." *The New York Times* 1 April 2015. <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/05/magazine/stranger-still.html>
- Solheim, Jennifer. "The Art of Making Ghosts Live: On *The Meursault Investigation*." *Fiction Writers Review* 15 October 2015. <https://fictionwritersreview.com/review/the-art-of-making-ghosts-live-on-the-meursault-investigation/>
- Sparks, Allister. "Verwoerd and his policies appalled me." *News24* 12 May 2018. <https://m.news24.com/Columnists/AllisterSparks/Verwoerd-and-his-policies-appalled-me-20150512/Comments?p=9>
- "10 things Johann Rupert said about the SA economy during THAT interview." *Fin24* 6 December 2018. <https://www.fin24.com/Economy/South-Africa/10-things-johann-rupert-said-about-the-sa-economy-during-that-interview-20181206-2>
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Can the Subaltern Speak." *Internet Archive* (1983) 20 November 2016. <https://archive.org/details/CanTheSubalternSpeak/mode/2up>
- Steiner, George. *The Portage to San Cristobal of A.H.* The Kenyon Review New Series, Vol. 1, No. 2, The Portage to San Cristobal of A. H. (Spring, 1979), pp. 1-120 (120 pages). https://www.jstor.org/stable/4335030?read-now=1&seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents
- Szczurek, Karina Magdalena. "Book review: *Lacuna* by Fiona Snyckers." *Litnet* 10 July 2019. <https://www.litnet.co.za/book-review-lacuna-by-fiona-snyckers/>
- Taylor, Charles. *Modern Social Imaginaries*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004. E-book.
- Taylor, Mildred Europa. "Meet the artist who received backlash for painting God as a black woman." *Face2FaceAfrica* 30 March 2019. <https://face2faceafrica.com/article/meet-the-artist-who-received-backlash-for-painting-god-as-a-black-woman>

The Unedited Full Text of the 1906 Jewish Encyclopedia. Jewish Encyclopedia.com.
<https://jewishencyclopedia.com/>

Thamm, Marianne. *Hitler, Verwoerd, Mandela and Me: A Memoir of Sorts.* Tafelberg: Cape Town, 2016. Kindle Edition

“The Empty Chair Podcast Episode 4: Reading *The Plague*.” *PEN South Africa*, 27 May 2021.
<https://pensouthafrica.co.za/the-empty-chair-podcast-episode-4-reading-the-plague/>

“R3.5 billion plan to make it safer for Afrikaners in South Africa.” *BusinessTech* 5 October 2015.
<https://businesstech.co.za/news/lifestyle/100266/r3-5-billion-plan-to-make-it-safer-for-afrikaners-in-south-africa/>

Thoburn, Nicholas. “The People Are Missing: Cramped Space, Social Relations, and the Mediators of Politics.” *Springerlink.com* 5 September 2016.
<https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/s10767-016-9236-4.pdf>

Thompson, Jason. “The Account of the Journeys and Writings of the Indefatigable Mr. Lane.” *Aramco World* March/April 2008.
<https://archive.aramcoworld.com/issue/200802/the.indefatigable.mr.lane.htm>

Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring.* London: HarperCollins, 2009. E-book.

Scholtz, G.D. *Dr Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd 1901–1966.* Perskor: Johannesburg, 1974. Print.

Sher, Antony. *I.D.* Nick Hern Books, London, 2004. Print.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. “Can the Subaltern Speak?” *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1994. 66-11.
<http://planetarities.web.unc.edu/files/2015/01/spivak-subaltern-speak.pdf>

The Death of Stalin. Dir. Armando Iannucci. eOne Films, 2017. Film.

Valdivieso, Sofía Muñoz. “‘He hourly humanizes’: Transformations and Appropriations of Shakespeare’s Caliban.” *SEDERI: Yearbook of the Spanish and Portuguese Society for English Renaissance Studies*, Number 7, 1996, pgs 269-272.
<file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/Dialnet-HeHourlyHumanizes-1979896.pdf>

- Valley, Dylan (dir.). *AfriKaaps: The Documentary*. Plexus Film, 2010.
- Van Dongen, Els. “Trauma, remembrance and art in South Africa: An impression.” *Medicine Anthropology Theory* 1 March 2001. <http://www.medanthrotheory.org/read/9222/trauma-remembrance-and-art-in-south-africa>
- Van Donzel, E., Lewis, B. and Pellat C.H. *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1997. E-book.
- Van Robbroeck, Lize. “Reshaping Remembrance – The Voortrekker in Search of New Horizons.” *Rozenberg Quarterly*. <http://rozenbergquarterly.com/reshaping-remembrance-the-voortrekker-in-search-of-new-horizons/>
- Van Vuuren, Hennie. *Apartheid, Guns and Money*. Johannesburg: Jacana Media, 2017. Kindle Edition.
- Van Woerden, Henk. (Trans. Dan Jacobson.) *A Mouthful of Glass*. Jonathan Ball: Johannesburg and Cape Town, 2000. Print.
- Veal, Sara. “The Mystique of Asian Women in Literary Fiction.” *Devata.org* 23 April 2010. <http://www.devata.org/mystique-of-asian-women-in-literary-fiction/#.X0UNITwzBIW>
- Venkatraman, Sakshi. “*Dune* appropriates Islamic, Middle Eastern tropes without real inclusion, critics say.” *NBC* 29 October 2021. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/dune-appropriates-islamic-middle-eastern-tropes-real-inclusion-critics-rcna4111>
- Verde, Tom. “From Africa, in Ajami.” *Aramco World*, September/October 2011. <https://archive.aramcoworld.com/issue/201105/from.africa.in.ajami.htm>
- Versteegh, Kees. “Islamic learning in Arabic-Afrikaans between Malay model and Ottoman reform.” *Wacana* 16. 284. 10.17510/wacana.v16i2.379. <file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/versteeghislamiclearning.pdf>
- Vermes, Timur. *Look Who’s Back*. MacLehose Press: London, 2014. Kindle Edition.
- Vegter, Ivo. “The Broederbond: A prototype for State Capture.” *Daily Maverick* 25 February 2020. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2020-02-25-the-broederbond-a-prototype-for-state-capture/>

- Verwoerd, Melanie. “‘AfriForum is taking us to the edge of the abyss.’” *News24* 12 September 2008. <https://www.news24.com/Columnists/MelanieVerwoerd/afriforum-is-taking-us-to-the-edge-of-the-abyss-20180912>
- Verwoerd, Wilhelm. *Bloedbande: 'n Donker Tuiskoms*. Tafelberg: Cape Town, 2018. Kindle Edition.
- Verwoerd, Wilhelm J. *Verwoerd: Só onthou ons hom*. Protea Boekhuis: Pretoria, 2016. Print.
- Von Goethe, Johann Wolfgang. (Trans. Edward Dowden). *West-Eastern Divan*. London and Toronto: J.M. Dent, 1914. Web. 7 October 2019. <https://archive.org/details/westeasterndivan00goetuoft>
- Wagstyl, Stefan. “Founder of Germany’s Pegida movement found guilty in racism trial.” *Financial Times* 5 May 2016. <https://www.ft.com/content/9129fcd6-114b-11e6-bb40-c30e3bfc63b>
- Wasserman, Helena. “Shock over fake Trump and Verwoerd quotes in award-winning Apartheid Museum ad.” *Business Insider SA* 23 August 2018. <https://www.businessinsider.co.za/shock-as-award-winning-apartheid-museum-ad-used-fake-trump-and-verwoerd-quotes-2018-8>
- Wasserman, Herman. “Revival of Afrikaans Anti-Apartheid Paper.” *iAfrica* 4 March 2019. <https://www.iafrica.com/revival-of-afrikaans-anti-apartheid-paper/>
- Watts, Cedric. “‘A Bloody Racist.’ About Achebe’s View of Conrad.” *The Yearbook of English Studies*, Vol. 13, Colonial and Imperial Themes Special Number (1983), pp. 196-209. <https://www.northalleghey.org/cms/lib9/PA01001119/Centricity/Domain/1305/A%20Bloody%20Racist%20by%20Watts.pdf>
- West, Cornel. “Ta-Nehisi Coates is the neoliberal face of the black freedom struggle.” *The Guardian* 17 December 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/dec/17/ta-nehisi-coates-neoliberal-black-struggle-cornel-west>
- “White-only community showing strong growth.” *Sapa* 12 February 2015. <https://businesstech.co.za/news/general/79618/white-only-community-showing-strong-growth/>

- Wilkins, I. and Strydom, H. *The Super-Afrikaners: Inside the Afrikaner Broederbond*. Jonathan Ball Publishers: Cape Town, 1978. Print.
- Wilson, G. Willow. *Alif*. New York: Grove Press, 2012. E-book.
- . *The Bird King*. New York: Grove Press, 2019. E-book.
- Wood, Felicity. "The Occult, the Erotic and Entrepreneurship: An Analysis of Oral Accounts of ukuthwala, Wealth-giving Magic, Sold by the Medicine Man Khotso Sethunsa." *Alternation Journal* 15,1 (2008) 338-366.
<http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/Files/docs/15.1/16%20Wood.pdf>
- Worden, Nigel. *The Making of Modern South Africa: Conquest, Apartheid, Democracy*. Wiley-Blackwell 2012. Internet Archive.
https://archive.org/details/makingofmodernso0000word_k0u0
- Wright, Laurence. "Disgrace as J.M. Coetzee's *The Tempest*." *Renaissance Poetry and Drama in Context: Essays for Christopher Wortham*. (eds. Andrew Lynch and Anne M. Scott.) Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2008. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/145045905.pdf>
- Younge, Gary. "We can't breathe." *New Statesman* 3 June 2020.
<https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/uk/2020/06/we-cant-breathe>
- Yunis, Alia. "The Handwritten Heritage of South Africa's Kitabs." *Aramco World* March/April 2019. <https://www.aramcoworld.com/Articles/March-2019/The-Handwritten-Heritage-of-South-Africa-s-Kitabs>
- Zabus, Chantal. *Tempests After Shakespeare*. Palgrave: New York, 2002. Print.
- Zaheer, Mohammed. "How Muslims Became the Good Guys on TV." *BBC* 21 June 2019.
<http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20190620-how-muslims-became-the-good-guys-on-tv>

