

Temporality and the past: Recollections of apartheid in selected South African novels in English

by

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“The truth is that memory does not consist in a regression from the present to the past, but, on the contrary, in a progress from the past to the present. It is in the past that we place ourselves at a stroke. We start from a ‘virtual state’ which we lead onwards, step by step, through a series of different *planes of consciousness*, up to the goal where it is materialized in an actual perception: that is to say, up to the point where it becomes a present active state ...”

Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory* (1950:319)

**Student number: 31740936**

I declare that *Temporality and the past: recollections of apartheid in selected South African novels in English* is my own work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been acknowledged by means of complete references.

.....

SIGNATURE

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DATE

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## SUMMARY

The study provides a theoretical account for the representation of apartheid in South African fiction. Narrative strategies employed in the post-apartheid novels *The innocence of roast chicken* (Richards, 1996), *The smell of apples* (Behr, 1996), *All we have left unsaid* (Case, 2006) and *Thirteen cents* (Duiker, 2011) reveal that depictions of the past contribute to narrative structure and the production of meaning. Genettean temporal relations, namely narrative order, duration and frequency are a systematic method to analyse the selected novels, since it enables a contrast between the narrative past as the *histoire*, and the narrative present as the *récit*. Retrospective events are constructed as memories, thereby are complemented by Bergson's psychological and philosophical theory in the analysis and interpretation of the dualistic interaction between the apartheid and post-apartheid temporal centres adopted within the novels. The representation of apartheid may be seen as sub-themes and time as configurations of temporal zones.

Title of dissertation:

### **TEMPORALITY AND THE PAST: RECOLLECTIONS OF APARTHEID IN SELECTED SOUTH AFRICAN NOVELS IN ENGLISH**

Key terms

Gerard Genette, structuralism, narratology, South African fiction, Jo-Anne Richards, Marc Behr, Maxine Case, K. Sello Duiker, Henri Bergson, temporal relations, memory, recollections of apartheid in fiction, apartheid and gender, apartheid and guilt, apartheid and secrets

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **1 INTRODUCTION, OVERVIEW AND SCOPE**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter deals with the title, aim, background, initiating research question and hypothesis of the study. It also provides a literature overview of the topic, an outline of the theoretical approach, the research methodology and the structure of the study.

#### **1.2 TITLE OF THE STUDY**

Temporality and the past: recollections of apartheid in selected South African novels in English.

#### **1.3 AIM OF THE STUDY**

The aim of this dissertation is to investigate narrative strategies used to represent apartheid in a selection of English-laguage South African novels.

The study aims to account theoretically for the way in which apartheid is represented in English-language South African novels. It is hoped that this study will shed light on narrative strategies used by South African novelists in the depiction of the past. Also relevant is that it aims to contribute to scholarly literary discourse by drawing upon the concepts of narratology and exploring their applicability in South African contemporary fiction.

Rather than conducting a survey of trends apparent in South African novels, the purpose of the research study is to investigate a more technical aspect that has to do with the writing itself. While a large amount of research has been conducted on apartheid as a theme in literature, studies that look purely at theoretical aspects seem few.

## 1.4 BACKGROUND

The analysis of temporal narrative strategies employed by South African novelists to depict apartheid has largely been ignored, hence this study seeks to reveal the function of formal temporal aspects in the representation of the apartheid past in a selection of contemporary South African fiction in English. This study, "Temporality and the past: recollections of apartheid in selected South African novels in English", offers a view that narrative strategies used by novelists in the depictions of the past contribute to the structuring and the production of meaning as evident in South African novels written in English. Genettean temporal relations are a systematic method for analysing selected novels and for facilitating informative interpretation of these narratives. It is also useful to contrast the narrative representations of the past with those of the present, as these factors are parallels of the two temporal centres of this study: the apartheid and post-apartheid periods. Furthermore, since recollections are sometimes seen as a result of "memory", it is fitting to consider its influence as a source for recollections of apartheid.

Since apartheid became a defining feature of South Africa from 1948 until its demise in 1994, it is prominent in a body of scholarly investigation and as a topic in novels. Rather than investigating social and historical implications of apartheid in the representation of apartheid or political factors which may have impinged on the creation and production of South African fiction, this study investigates how temporal relations describe, illustrate, comment upon as well as represent apartheid in a selected number of English-language South African novels published in the post-apartheid era.

The non-racial democratic elections in April 1994 marked the end of the apartheid era and signalled the beginning of the post-apartheid period. This is relevant because the novels selected for analysis in this study were published after 1994.

Dating from the colonial era, segregation has a long and complex history in South Africa. Dubow (1994:1) holds that, although the Natives Land Act of 1913 represented a statement of intent by the Union of South Africa, it was from the 1920s that segregation became a national programme which amounted to “an amalgam of political, ideological and administrative strategies designed to maintain and entrench white supremacy at every level”. However, according to Worden (2012:94), despite segregationist legislation advantaging whites from earlier years, apartheid emerged through various Afrikaner nationalist political formations in the 1930s, which then enabled the growth of specific ideology and legislation in the 1940s and beyond. This was because ethnic identity determined the course adopted by successive white governments to implement apartheid. Dubow (1994:1) emphasises this view by noting that apartheid itself is “conventionally regarded as having been introduced following the electoral victory of the Nationalist party under Dr Malan in 1948”. Furthermore, Van der Vlies (2012:8) notes that, as a social phenomenon, the novel in English also has a long history in South Africa dating from colonial times.

## **1.5 RESEARCH PROBLEM**

This study focuses on South African English literature published after 1994 that theorises the apartheid past. During the second half of the twentieth century a greater number of literary studies on South African literature were conducted and necessarily examined writing during apartheid. This was a global phenomenon. The situation changed after 1994 as the examination of such writings became less conspicuous, resulting in under-representation of research focusing on the writing of apartheid within the context of a democratic South Africa. This study seeks to explore how temporal relations as applied in English-language, post-apartheid South African novels represent the experience of apartheid.

Since South Africa is in the third decade of democracy there is an established body of literature that spans most of all socio-cultural groupings. In terms of the availability of narrative texts, as well as the

historical distance from the previous regime, it is an opportune time to conduct such a study. This area has not been adequately explored and should yield a rich store of data that informs how South African narratives are being formulated and what the status of their development is.

As the research problem seeks to analyse literature as a subject area, the themes, forms and structural attributes of South African novels will be analysed by embarking on a content and structural analysis. The research does not seek to analyse the subject of apartheid as such, but to analyse and explain, theoretically, the technical devices (particularly the temporal devices) that South African novelists have employed to represent aspects of apartheid. Genette's theory provides a method to identify narrative strategies informative of a particular author's construction of apartheid. This study is based on three research questions, each related to an aspect of the research problem.

**1.5.1 Research Question 1:** How can Genette's concept of narrative *order* be applied to a selection of post-apartheid South African novels in English to describe, analyse and interpret how events are ordered in the narrative text (*récit*) and the story (*histoire*) to establish how this contributes to the narrative representation of the past and how this renders the meanings specific texts confer on the past?

**1.5.2 Research Question 2:** How can Genette's narrative concept of *duration* be applied to a selection of post-apartheid South African novels in English to describe, analyse and interpret how the representation of seminal and seemingly non-seminal events function in the representation of aspects of the apartheid past and the meanings assigned to these?

**1.5.3 Research Question 3:** How can Genette's narrative concept of *frequency* be applied to a selection of post-apartheid South African novels in English to describe, analyse and interpret how

the frequency of events presented in narratives relate the meanings specific narratives convey with regard to the past?

## **1.6 THE RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

To investigate the field demarcated by the problem statement formulated above three interrelated hypotheses focused on narrative time are postulated:

### **1.6.1 Hypothesis 1**

Genette's concept of narrative *order* can be applied to a selection of post-apartheid South African novels in English to describe, analyse and interpret how events are ordered in the *récit* or narrative text and the *histoire* or story to establish how this contributes to the narrative representation of the past and how this renders the meanings specific texts confer on the past.

### **1.6.2 Hypothesis 2**

Genette's narrative concept of *duration* can be applied to a selection of post-apartheid South African novels in English to describe, analyse and interpret how the representation of seminal and seemingly non-seminal events function in the representation of aspects of the apartheid past and the meanings assigned to these.

### **1.6.3 Hypothesis 3**

Genette's narrative concept *frequency* can be applied to a selection of post-apartheid South African novels in English to describe, analyse and interpret how the frequency of events presented in narratives relate the meanings specific narratives convey with regard to the past.

## 1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW

In the rise, implementation and enforcement of apartheid, scholarship varying in approach has been produced, from surveys of South African literature to polemics. Stephen Gray (1982), for example, produced a publication titled *English South African literature in the last ten years: a survey of research developments*. In contrast, Michael Chapman (1988a:25-53), in his article “The liberated zone: the possibilities of imaginative expression in a state of emergency” identifies writers whom he castigates as being “eurocentric”. Chapman’s analysis of South African novels and their scholarship differentiates between writing in English that is socially relevant and literature that is “empty of social circumstance” and that therefore does not contribute to an anti-apartheid message.

Oppositional points of view characterise debate in this period. Yet another, between Michael Chapman and Teresa Dovey, is captured in three writings. Teresa Dovey (1988:119-133) proposes an initial argument in *The Novels of J.M. Coetzee*. Chapman (1988b:327-341) proposes a counter to the argument in *The writing of politics and the politics of writing: on reading Dovey on reading Lacan on reading Coetzee on reading...(?)*. Lastly, Dovey (1988:483-491) rebuffs Chapman in *Critical response*. These academic debates are in concert with the socio-political unrest of the 1980s. The debate involves, firstly, the application and restatement by Dovey of postmodernist theory to analyse the novels of South African author J.M. Coetzee. Chapman contested the relevance and applicability of postmodernist theories in the analysis of South African narrative texts.

According to Worden (2012:141), it was during the 1980s that the apartheid government’s State Security Council obtained more powers to act against increasing resistance by anti-apartheid groupings. As a part of society, authors (who may or may not have been aligned to political parties) were also subject to apartheid laws.

In the post-apartheid era too, there is a rich store of scholarship which addresses the representation of apartheid in South African fiction and non-fiction. Although the majority of research has been directed at apartheid as a theme, studies on the theoretical aspects in writings representing apartheid seem proportionately few. One notable exception is a special edition of the *Journal of Literary Studies/Tydskrif vir Literatuurwetenskap* (1989) which published conference papers of an event hosted by Unisa's Department of Theory of Literature. Scholars use J.M. Coetzee's novel *Foe* as a starting point to critique the relevance to and applicability of modern twentieth-century literary theoretical positions (Freudian, Foucauldian, self-referentiality, feminist, historical, post-structuralist, Marxist as well as aspects of postmodernism) to South African narratives. A number of writers demonstrate the applicability of literary theory, not only to interpret South African narratives in a way that reveals social and cultural relevance and political commentary but also as a way to account for the aesthetics and artistic development of the South African novel in English.

Writing in the post-apartheid era, Chapman (2010:103-117), borrowing Elleke Boehmer's formulation, contrasts the use of "second-hand, borrowed or inherited [theoretical] models" and a politically driven critical discourse of the 1980s. For Chapman, this debate is still relevant in the literary criticism of a post-apartheid South Africa. In his article "The case of Coetzee: South African literary criticism, 1990 to today", Chapman (2010:103-117) brings to bear the reception of texts, along with the work of philosophical and psychological theorists that inform the analysis of narrative texts. He partly refutes his earlier dogmatism and states that "there is no simple fit between philosophies of the Other in the North and philosophies of the Other in the South" and suggests (2010:103-117) as an alternative a "critical approach" to South African literature that incorporates "what creative writers produce (their subject matter) and the more abstract language of critical discourse".

Post-apartheid literary scholarship is distinguished by multifaceted literary approaches. According to Gräbe (1993:106-236), these encompass the study of racial identities, competing ideologies, apartheid history, literary production as well as the viability of contemporary narrative strategies to engage with and depict “socio-political issues in post-apartheid societies”. Additionally, Barnett (1999:287-301), in an article titled “Constructions of apartheid in the international reception of the novels of J.M. Coetzee”, links the representation of “particular accounts of South African culture and politics” and the reception of South African literary fiction. His study finds a political intent in the way that depictions of apartheid are interpreted by international readers of South African novels. This reiterates that although this area of scholarship may be seen to lack a strategic focus linking literary theory to representations of apartheid, scholars are curious and anticipate that a full exploration of this link may yield valuable academic knowledge.

Supportive of that notion is evidence that in the last few years studies exploring the narrative representation of apartheid in the post-apartheid period have become more frequent. As an example, in a journal article titled “Introduction: South African fiction after apartheid”, Attwell and Harlow (2000:1-9) discuss essays which analyse the state of post-apartheid South African literature and state that the presence of history and context in post-apartheid fiction supersedes studies investigating the use of narrative techniques to reconstruct apartheid. They speculate that in the early 1990s a number of South African writers experienced an existential crisis – a state of being which prevented uniform artistic responses to South Africa’s immediate past.

Attwell and Harlow have selected themes which include a discussion on how novelists have grappled with the tension of “charting new directions and discharging old ways” in post-apartheid writing. They hold that the apartheid past is inescapable as it intrudes on post-apartheid literature in a way that assumes a “personal key”. The authors see ethical, philosophical and historical aspects of fiction as appropriate criteria to characterise post-apartheid South African literature.

Attwell and Harlow's discussion of fiction encompasses, among many themes, a personal account of reportage on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) by Antjie Krog, and intimate experiences recounted in a novel by Mark Behr as well as intimacies in a short story by Ivan Vladislavić. These fictional or fictionalised narratives look back into the past by taking on either a "confessional" tone, or by addressing the country's "historical context". The historical contextual lens is a way of charting transitional socio-political changes (from apartheid to post-apartheid), which produces various literary genres and is informed by diverse theoretical approaches.

Medalie (2010:35-44) also notices the pervasiveness of personal recollections in post-apartheid South African novels. In the article "The uses of nostalgia", he discusses personal recollections which are imbued with a sense of "nostalgia". For example, he identifies novels which he characterises as "My apartheid childhood revisited". In these instances the retrospective narratives address not only the socio-political context, but are overlaid with psychological and philosophical overtones. Medalie alludes to the construction of memory as the way in which the novel's post-apartheid narrative becomes an "investment" in the narrative of the past (apartheid era).

In other research, Medalie (2012: 3-15) finds that recollections are a narrative strategy employed to give an account of apartheid ideology in the South African novel in English and focuses on this topic in the article "To retrace our steps: the power of the past in post-apartheid literature". He emphasises, as Attwell and Harlow similarly do, that in the post-apartheid novel the past "makes its influence felt in the present". Medalie sees culture and politics as a means of marking the shift between the temporal centres of the apartheid and post-apartheid eras. He describes characters that experience "inner growth", against a "dystopian" geographical and metaphorical place in the following novels: J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*, Zakes Mda's *The heart of redness* and Marlene van Niekerk's *Agaat*. Medalie's thesis is that the relationship between a troubled apartheid history and an uncertain post-apartheid "here-and-now" is a source to examine the representation of the past

narratively. Additionally (as do Attwell and Harlow), Medalie (2009:51-65) in the article "*The cry of Winnie Mandela: Njabulo Ndebele's post-apartheid novel*", highlights how academic discussion on apartheid and post-apartheid novels speculate on the possible shape of a new post-apartheid discourse. Investigations of narrative strategies to represent apartheid are not prioritised.

Cloete (2005:49-67) posits the construction of identity as a significant factor in post-apartheid English literature. He aligns this development with "political transformation" in South Africa as well as with the twenty-first-century ethos in which the examination of a character or person's geographical place and globalisation is prominent. Interestingly, Chapman (2002:224-239) also sees the exploration of identity as a factor in the discourse of post-apartheid literature. In his article "The politics of identity, South Africa, storytelling and literary history", he privileges history as an appropriate medium to analyse post-apartheid literature, and sees post-apartheid literature as a vehicle which describes "what it is to be South African" and as a means to search "the past in order to understand the present". At the same time, he acknowledges the interaction between South African post-apartheid writers and "global discourses". He assesses South African literary endeavours through the theories of post-structuralism, deconstruction, historical studies and ubuntu. Ultimately he sees post-apartheid literature as a means to "reinvent a sense of self in society". This view coincides with Attwell and Harlow's assessment that South African writing favours the use of personal histories and is also concerned with the (socio-political) context.

In another article, Chapman (2009:1-23) locates post-apartheid literature within the theoretical ambit of "world literature" as well as a "transnational" literature that responds to global and (South African) national socio-political impulses. His article "Conjectures on South African literature" examines the category "'South African Literature'". Chapman also discusses the historical categories of literature produced in the "post-apartheid" as well as the "post-post-apartheid period". In the analysis of various fiction and non-fiction narratives, he frames his discussion by taking into account

the relevance of memory, language, geographical space, history, ideology and the meaning of texts as a means of reporting on contemporary theoretical debates on the development and status of post-apartheid literature.

Due to the volume and variety of scholarship, only a selective discussion on the relationship between apartheid, fiction and literary studies can lead to the formulation of a positioning statement in the study itself. This study will take the form of a literary analysis to consider a selection of novels written in post-apartheid South Africa, thereby highlighting the advantages and pitfalls of a retrospective point of view on the apartheid period.

## **1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

French literary theorist Gerard Genette is identified with structuralist theory. According to Macey (2001:366), the application of the theory involves the consideration of literary strategies employed in a text to convey a message by expanding on general narrative typologies and structures. The purpose of narratology is not solely to account for individual texts but also to treat them as an example of an extensive category of genre. In a similar vein, this study identifies a sample of texts which may as a group indicate commonalities or disparities in how temporal relations are an effective method to represent apartheid.

According to Culler (1980:7), Genette's narratological methodology offers a systematic theory to identify and illustrate the "basic constituents and techniques of the narrative". Genette's (1980) methodical and comprehensive approach, namely to differentiate between the sequence of narrative events as the story (*histoire*) and the discourse which tells the story as the text (*récit*), is appropriate to employ in this study. According to Macey (2001:265), the advantage of distinguishing different aspects of a narrative text is that it allows the reader to be aware of the underlying structure of the narrative.

Culler (1980) elaborates to say that Genette's theory systematises, explains and offers precise definitions of concepts, terms and phenomena specific to narrative texts. Genette's (1980:22-23) approach combines narrative theory, namely the definitive characteristics underlying narrative literature in general, and criticism, the latter which incorporates identifying "specific features" of a text as well as analysing how concepts within a text describe that text. This is a means of arriving at an interpretation of that text. Thus, in analysing the novels, the course of the study necessarily draws upon Genettean temporality. Genette's dual approach – to elaborate on methodological aspects so as to achieve a cohesive theory as well as to embark on a criticism of a narrative text – facilitates a meaningful and informed reading of it. It is also important to note that this dissertation is not a study of Genettean narrative theory as such, but a selective appropriation and application of it, as a means for investigating the representation of the apartheid past in selected South African novels in English.

The method to be followed is to consider Genettean temporal relations in the presentation of events in four English-language South African novels so as to analyse the manipulation of time in narrative texts. Relevant aspects are order, duration and frequency. Ultimately the theory is a tool to ascertain how the experience of apartheid is represented. Sentences, paragraphs and pages of text within each of the books are the way in which temporal relations are realised. The books to be analysed represent the accessible population.

Since the theoretical basis for the concepts of order, duration and frequency is established, there is no danger of having conflicting understandings of the meaning of temporal relations. Yet, according to Babbie (2010:46), it is still useful to write out the researcher's understanding of these concepts in a way that "operationalises" them. Stating these concepts in the researcher's words enables a

common and consistent understanding of their meaning during the process of analysing the chosen texts. The concepts of temporal relations are defined below.

Firstly, the “order” of events refers to the practice of altering the chronology of events in the narrative text (*récit*). According to Rimmon-Kenan (1996:46), it is through analysing the narrative text that an underlying chronological sequence of events may be reconstructed as part of the story (*histoire*). The narrative text is the one the reader encounters in the process of reading the text. Time deviations may consist of either referring back to the past or in anticipating the future. In referring back to the past, Bal (1988:54-59) uses the operative terms *retroversions* or *flashbacks* and employs the term *anticipations* to denote time deviations anticipating future events.

Secondly, Rimmon-Kenan (1996:51) notes that temporal relations refer to “duration” to account for the rhythm of the narrative text. In the first option, the presentation of an event may take on an extended permutation. Rimmon-Kenan (1996:52) adds that in this instance, more time (as measured by the number of paragraphs or individual sentences written in the text) is spent on an event in the narrative than on the same event in the story. The second option of “duration” is a synoptic presentation of an event in the narrative text. This may, for example, involve reducing the time span of an event that may occur over several years in the story to a few lines in the text. Rimmon-Kenan (1996:54) notes that the third aspect of duration refers to a scenic presentation of events in the narrative text in which dialogue is represented. In this instance both the narrative text and the story are closer in their temporal relation.

The third aspect of temporal relations, “frequency”, provides a means for measuring the frequency with which an event is narrated in the *récit*. Option one is a technical application where the narrator in the narrative text relates once an event occurring many times in the story (*histoire*). Option two is a technical application where an event which happens once in the story (*histoire*) is mentioned a number of times in the narrative text (*récit*).

The advantage of Genettean narratology is that this theory acknowledges that narrative techniques, in this instance temporal relations, as employed by an author of a novel, prompt and guide the reader to analyse and interpret the narrative text in a particular manner. This is made explicit in his analysis of Marcel Proust's monumental novel *In Search of lost time*. Hence analysis and interpretation are important for this study.

Structuralist narratology combined with Henri Bergson's philosophical theory of time can assist in analysing and interpreting the selected novels. Firstly, as the study is concerned with past recollections, it is useful to incorporate it into a theoretical framework that accounts for the use of memory as a narrative strategy because in the novels selected for this study, temporal relations structure the text in such a way that the recollections of the past become central to the narrative. Bergson, in *Mind energy* (1975:188), dissects the process of remembering as encompassing recollections of "past deeds" and perceptions occurring while a person is engaged in "present actions".

Bergson's theory may be applied in the discussion of the narrative structure, as it amplifies Genettean temporal relations. As Genette sees memories as aspects of temporal relations, where past events are represented as retroversions, the relationship between the *histoire* (where the narrative past may be abstracted) and the *récit* (where the narrative present may be represented) may be said to correlate with Bergson's theory on recollection and perception respectively.

Bergson discusses memories as taking the form of images, meaning that images of past recollections attach themselves to images perceived within the current situation, that is, a recollection may be said to position itself adjacent to a perception that invokes it. According to Lawlor and Moulard-

Leonard (2013), Genette's conceptualisation of memory accounts for how humans adjust the images they recall of the past via a psychological process which Bergson likens to a "movement" which is described as either rotation or contraction – a process analogous to operating a telescope.

While Bergson sees memory dichotomously as recollection and perception, he also recognises that both elements of memory are organised by a network of relations since the past and the present collectively comprise memory. Hence Bergson's philosophical approach reinforces Genettean theory on time in narratives.

## **1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The methodology to be followed is to analyse novels in order to investigate technical aspects in the representation of apartheid within a post-apartheid historical and narrative context. As the study's primary aim is to uncover narrative strategies and not to abstract meanings from the novels no content analysis in the traditional sense is required. Kumar (2011:402) notes that ensuring that the findings of a study address the research problem is a factor that promotes the validity of the research.

The operationalisation of Genette's theory, as set out above, has provided a means to define the concepts of order, duration and frequency. In turn this enables these concepts to achieve a stable, regulated meaning so that there are common descriptive, explanatory, interpretative, analytic and evaluative procedures for the study of narrative strategies in the selected novels. Babbie (2010:134) emphasises that an operational definition provides an unambiguous description of concepts described in a study. The assumption of this study that strategies of narratology are used to describe "apartheid" will be probed by conducting a qualitative analysis.

The objective of analysing the novels under discussion is to probe and explore the writing strategies so that these strategies can be described. The data will be collected to conduct a qualitative content analysis by scrutinising the novels to determine their narrative strategies. The units of analysis will be order, duration and frequency, which are linked to the research problem so as to ensure that the study investigates what it intends probing. The qualitative data will be analysed by summarising and interpreting the characteristics applicable to each of the aspects of temporal relations (order, duration and frequency). These summaries will be based on the operationalised or regulated definitions of the narrative strategies and the results will be reported via a narrative explanation of the application of temporal relations in these novels.

The various steps in conducting a content analysis as enumerated by Kumar (2011:278) have been adapted to suit this study. The first step involves identifying the three concepts (order, duration and frequency) in the novels. The second step is to classify the various concepts as they appear in the narratives texts under the main categories of temporal relations. Step three involves the integration of the narrative concepts and establishing how these strategies are rendered in the novels in a text.

The findings and conclusions of this study will be quantified according to these categories and concepts that operate in this manner: The first category is the temporal aspect “order”, under which the concepts of retroversions and anticipations fall. The second category is the aspect “duration”, under which extension and synopsis fall. The third category is the aspect “frequency”, under which fall firstly, repeated story events mentioned once in the narrative text, and secondly, story events occurring once mentioned several times in the narrative text. To verify the study’s qualitative methodology, the prevalence of order, duration and frequency will be counted according to the number of times each of these aspects is mentioned in this study’s Chapters 3 and 4. According to Du Plooy (2009:133, 214), using qualitative and quantitative methods to interpret the data increases the internal validity of this study.

Incorporating Babbie's (2010:193) comments on research methodology, this study is best served by a non-probability sampling method, that is, a purposive sampling method. This method has been implemented with the specific purpose of selecting novels which represent apartheid and have been written during the post-apartheid period in South Africa. Important population parameters are novels written in the English language by South African authors.

The target population (Babbie, 2010:199) is all English-language South African novels written in the post-apartheid period about the apartheid era from which a selection is made. The data will be collected by employing a discursive theoretical method (narratology). A qualitative methodology is advantageous for this type of study which is primarily exploratory and describes and interprets narrative techniques within the selected novels. According to Kumar (2011:394), a qualitative research approach is flexible, descriptive and explanatory in the way that it promotes an in-depth understanding by a thorough study of a small sample. The nature of the research questions employed in this study requires that observations gleaned from the analysis of the novels are recorded in a descriptive format. Babbie (2010:394) agrees that a qualitative analysis allows for an "interpretation of observations", which is a useful tool for this study. The report on the study's results should also articulate whether the assumption (that novels use temporal relations to describe apartheid) is found to be correct.

### **1.10 SCOPE OF RESEARCH**

The scope of the research is delimited by the selection for analysis of novels (primary data) published in the post-apartheid period of South African history (1994-2004). The selection consists of the four novels *All we have left unsaid* by Maxine Case; *The smell of apples* by Mark Behr; *Thirteen cents* by K. Sello Duiker and *The innocence of roast chicken* by Jo-Anne Richards. Primary sources also include Gerard Genette's *Narrative discourse* and Henri Bergson's *Matter and memory*. Secondary

sources include articles and books expounding upon and critiquing Genettean temporal relations as an analytical tool. Also informing this study are academic debates and commentary on theoretical approaches of analysing and interpreting English-language South African fiction.

### **1.11 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY**

The structure of the study is as follows:

Chapter 1 discusses the title, aim, background, initiating research question and the hypothesis of the study. A literature overview of the topic is also provided, as is an outline of the theoretical approach. The research methodology and the structure of the study are also discussed and the scope of the research is presented.

Chapter 2 encompasses a detailed discussion of the theoretical focus of the study. The most applicable theorist is Gerard Genette. The first subsection, “Genette’s temporal relations”, entails a discussion on Genettean temporal relations with a focus on the concepts of order, duration and frequency. The focus on these concepts is a means of uncovering the narrative strategies authors employ to represent apartheid. These remarks determine the theoretical framework as temporal relations are central in the analysis of the selected novels in Chapters 3 and 4. Also noteworthy are the hallmarks of Genettean theory, and the motivation behind applying this theoretical method so as to enable a meaningful reading of the post-apartheid novel in English.

Also pertinent is the notion that the process of deducing the underlying web of temporal relations (the *histoire*) leads to the reader drawing interpretation from the text being read (the *discourse*). Writing about his method of analysis, Genette (1980:22) acknowledges a link between criticism and his endeavour to develop a comprehensive theory of narrative. Thus a meaningful reading of the

text arises out of analysing narrative texts. A critique of temporal relations is probed as well as its applicability to the selected novels.

The second related theoretical orientation involves an exposition of memory. This subsection, “Henri Bergson: memory as a construct”, discusses the way in which memory has been formulated in literary theory. In the selected novels, memory is a central narrative device. Bergson proposes that there are two components in any remembrance, namely, the event being recalled and a perception of it experienced in the present. He also conceptualises memory as consisting of a series of images which progressively consolidates into a perception in the narrative present. Bergson concludes that the past or a recollection of it, and the present or a perception of it, are contiguous to each other. Bergson’s psychological and philosophical approach complements Genettean temporal relations and contributes to the analysis and interpretation of the recollections of the past in fiction.

In all the novels selected, various characters recall their childhood experiences growing up in apartheid South Africa. This study contends that the organisation of temporal relations facilitates conjuring up memory. As memory is a result of active narrative reconstructions of events within a character’s defined existence it is necessary to investigate the philosophical and psychological implications of memory as a narrative device in temporal relations.

By discussing Genette’s theory under various subsections below, the discussion in Chapter 2 situates Genette as a structuralist who exceeds this theoretical approach. This subsection, “Narratology as a field of study” states that narratology is a product of structuralism. Some of the qualities of narratology are emphasised, for example that a narratological approach involves the study of the underlying structure of narratives as well as the differentiation of textual components. It is notable that narrative texts are analysed according to their divisibility and are combinable to generate a number of interpretations. Macey (2001: 382) refers to Vladimir Propp who conducted a study of folk tales which found that they conformed to an organisational template. In this generic template,

he surmised that events and character roles served the specific purpose of driving or delaying developments within the narrative plot, creating the potential to generate a great number of stories. Also discussed in this subsection is Claude Bremond's (in Macey, 2001:51) theory that describes the development of events in narrative in greater detail by describing stories as if they adhered to a "logic of the narrative". While there is no one-to-one relationship between Propp, Bremond and Genette, the subsection finds that narratology demonstrates how narrative texts are able to generate a number of stories or interpretations. Genette (1980:37) draws attention to this aspect by analysing Marcel Proust's novel *Jean Santeuil*.

The discussion in "Parallels in Genette, Todorov and Barthes's structuralism" mentions some of Genette's importance as a practitioner of structuralism. Stated in this subsection is Todorov's suggestion that there is a general grammar of narratives to which all stories are subservient. However, Genette expands on Todorov's approach by considering the relationship between the narrative and the story as a basis for analysing narrative discourse.

In *Narrative discourse*, Genette (1980) incorporates commentary from a range of sources. These include Plato, Aristotle, Russian formalism, Tzvetan Todorov and Roland Barthes. Describing a method for attributing meaning within narrative texts, Barthes refers to an unexplained element in a narrative text, an "enigma", which is the hermeneutic code which he developed to classify meaning in narrative texts. Barthes isolates different units of texts, or "lexia" and attributes codes as if they denoted a number of meanings. Genette (1980:57) explains this code as representing a "principle of differed or postponed" meaning. In this way he moves beyond looking at the underlying structure of a narrative as if it produced one prevailing meaning, suggesting that meaning is not rigidly defined.

Genette also reshapes narrative enigma in terms of temporal relations or as an anticipated event that may also convey emotion as happens when tension is created when the reader or the character

in the story is unsure whether an anticipated event will occur or will be circumvented. Genette (1980:56-57) refers to Barthes's codes in his explanation of narrative order in *Narrative discourse*, thereby exceeding the scope of structuralist analysis because his approach progresses beyond the classification of text. As is evident from the above, he incorporates the psychological aspect of emotion to delineate a number of uses of narrative order. Here Genette (1980:57) interprets temporal relations as representing the "life portrait" of a character.

The discussion in the subsection "Genette exceeds structuralism" highlights Genette's definitive structuralist approach and illustrates some of the ways he uses to employ structuralism to interpret narrative texts. This is shown by drawing on elements from Russian formalism, which Genette (1980: 11) cites as an example of the notion that formalists analyse narratives and poems to demonstrate that narrative techniques and poetic structures "combine to produce literary texts". Also discussed in this subsection is how he applies elements of structuralism in a different way by emphasising the relationship between the narrative and the story. He exploits the relationship between the *récit* and the *histoire* through the concepts of order, duration and frequency, which encompass temporal relations.

In elaborating on the importance of the discursive aspect of narrative texts, Genette (in Bertens, 2008:57) posits that a third-person narrator is always present in the story, thereby taking forward the aspect of narration in structuralist theory by reworking existing theoretical concepts. According to Bertens (2008:59), Genette's approach exemplifies an advanced structuralist process which "map[s] how exactly actual stories are embedded in other stories, or how focalization shifts during the course of the story".

The subsection "Genettean mood as a device to structure temporal relations" discusses the concept of narrative mood and elaborates on how Genettean theory exceeds structuralism. Narrative mood

introduces the aspect of “focalisation” or the agency of seeing unfolding events, which is distinct from their narration. In the novels analysed in this dissertation, aspects of narration and focalisation coincide because the novels are structured as if narrated by homodiegetic narrators, that is, narrators that participate in the events they are describing. Genette describes narration of events in terms of temporality. Firstly, in mimetic narration, events may be related as if the narrator were close to the events described. The proximal distance conveys least visibility of the narrator in the narrative text as the narrator quotes dialogue to appear as if the characters were speaking for themselves. Secondly, in diegetic narration, events may be related as if the narrator were further away from the unfolding action. Here the narrator is prominent in relating the events. Genette notes that recollections may be narrated mimetically or diegetically, in addition to analysing memories as retrospective distortions of chronological order. Bergson’s theory of memory complements Genettean theory in that Bergson sees memory as comprising a perception of the recollection of a past event in the narrative present. Genette analyses relations between the narrative present as an aspect of the *récit* and the narrative past as an aspect of the *histoire*. As with Genette’s analysis of *In search of lost time*, Bergson’s philosophical theory of memory is integrated into the analysis and interpretation of the novels discussed in this study. Genette shows that structuralism derives meaning not only from a semiotic relationship between codes, but narrative memories are interpreted psychologically and philosophically. Bergson frames his discussion on memory in terms of a duality between the body and the soul. Genette (1980:167-168) also refers to a trace of memory, here using Bergson’s theory of memory as taking the form of images, to examine the philosophical nature of the past in fiction.

In *Narrative discourse*, Genette (1980) invokes the psychological term “involuntary memory” to analyse remembrance. This idea is discussed in the subsection “Genettean temporality as an aspect of voluntary and involuntary memory”, which also discusses his incorporation of psychological conceptualisation of time into the interpretation of narrative text. According to Weiten (1992: 258),

in the theory of psychology, implicit memory refers to the undertaking of tasks that do not require intentional remembering while explicit memory refers to tasks that do require this. Drawing a parallel between psychology and narrative theory might suggest that the description of implicit memory approximates involuntary memory and explicit memory approximates the representation of voluntary memory in narratives.

Since Genette reconfigures memory as retroversion, his analysis explains the way that temporal shifts between the past and the present function as a structuring device to emphasise the anachronistic nature of the passage analysed. Genette (1980:78) argues that the narrator is significant in rendering memories as thoughts in the narrator's mind. Accordingly, the psychology of a character is achieved through the structuring of temporal relations, which is why theories of narrative psychology are necessary to analyse and interpret the recollections of the past in fiction.

Another informative aspect for this study is the differentiation between two historical periods as described in the subsection "Apartheid and post-apartheid socio-political differences". A distinction is made between the apartheid and post-apartheid periods in South Africa. Segregation had been in practice since colonial times, but was formalised as a totalitarian ideology of apartheid in 1948. For the purposes of this study, the democratic elections of 1994 mark the beginning of the post-apartheid period. Where apartheid fosters a white supremacist ideology, the post-apartheid state adopts a socio-political agenda to cultivate racial reconciliation, a humanitarian social outlook in a climate of racial and economic equality. Pivotal to the discussion on the selected novels are the temporal centres determining the apartheid and post-apartheid periods. A brief discussion on these socio-political issues therefore provides a context for the selected novels.

Chapter 3 deals with a detailed discussion of the two novels Jo-Anne Richards's *The innocence of roast chicken* and Marc Behr's *The smell apples*. Firstly, *The innocence of roast chicken* is analysed

following Genettean temporal relations. The relevant aspects are order, duration and frequency, which provide a device for determining the discrepancy in the organisation of events as read in the narrative text (*récit*) and the underlying chronological arrangement in the story (*histoire*). The latter is abstracted upon reading the narrative text, which also reveals other ways in which the organisation of time in a novel shapes the arrangement of events. The content analysis of the novel involves identifying elements demonstrating temporal relations and interpreting observations to give meaning to the novel.

Guiding this analysis is the declaration that in the novels the apartheid period is represented as a recollection by a character or characters. Elements of Bergson's theory of memory are explored as part of this discussion.

Secondly, Mark Behr's *The smell of apples* is also analysed following Genettean temporal relations as explained in the above two paragraphs.

Chapter 4 provides a detailed discussion of Maxine Case's *All we have left unsaid* and K. Sello Duiker's *Thirteen cents*. Firstly, *All we have left unsaid* is analysed following Genettean temporal relations. The relevant aspects are order, duration and frequency, which are a means to determine the discrepancy in the organisation of events as read in the narrative text (*récit*) and the underlying chronological arrangement in the *histoire*. The latter is abstracted upon reading the narrative text, which also reveals other ways in which the organisation of time in a novel shapes the arrangement of events. The content analysis of the novel involves identifying elements demonstrating temporal relations. This is followed by an interpretation of what has been observed. Furthermore, a study of the novel's temporal relations leads to a meaningful interpretation of the novel.

Guiding this analysis is the declaration that in the novel the apartheid period is represented as a recollection by a character or characters. Elements of Bergson's theory of memory are explored as part of this discussion.

Secondly, K. Sello Duiker's *Thirteen cents* is analysed following Genettean temporal relations, which takes into account attendant temporal elements. The *récit* and *histoire* are analysed so as to illustrate how temporal relations inform interpretation. Bergson's philosophy of memory complements narratology as the novel frames recollections of the past as memory.

Guiding this analysis is the declaration that in the novel the apartheid period is represented as a recollection by a character or characters. Elements of Bergson's theory of memory are explored as part of this discussion.

Chapter 5, "Findings and conclusions", undertakes a detailed discussion on the findings and conclusions arising from the analysis of the novels. A theoretical account is given of the way in which apartheid is represented in English-language South African novels. There is a description of how this study sheds light on narrative strategies used by South African novelists to depict the past, and an investigation into the applicability of narratology to South African contemporary fiction.

Information gleaned from the research conducted on the sample is discussed and presented in the form of data, themes and categories. A summary of findings and conclusions, implications, contrasts and recommendations is also included. Furthermore, generalisations to the sampled novels are proposed, and the applicability of Research Questions 1, 2 and 3 is discussed. Findings and conclusions are also aligned and informed by a discussion of Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3.

## CHAPTER 2

### 2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This study's point of departure is that Genettean theory of temporal relations is appropriate for the analysis of narrative strategies used in South African novels. This theoretical discussion isolates themes that enable interpretive insights and also enables a discussion of the narrative structures of post-apartheid South African novels. Four novels have been selected to analyse the methods adopted in South African post-apartheid novels to represent recollections of the country's apartheid past in fiction – they constitute the sample of this study. The primary theoretical text is Gerard Genette's (1980) *Narrative discourse*. The book, in equal measure, provides an analysis of Marcel Proust's multi-volume novel *In search of lost time*, and is a compendium of narrative theory that makes a statement on narratology as well as on poetics. Henri Bergson's theory of memory supplements the analysis and interpretation of post-apartheid South African fiction.

Narratology developed from structuralism, and for this reason a select number of permutations of structuralist theory are discussed in this chapter. In fact, in elaborating on his theoretical statement, Genette draws substantially from a number of sources, namely Plato, Aristotle, Russian formalism, semiotics, Vladimir Propp, Tzvetan Todorov and Roland Barthes. His structuralist analysis is applied in this chapter. The purpose is to illustrate the multifaceted nature of structuralism and its appropriateness for in-depth analysis and interpretation of, among many themes, self-blame, gender relations, the construction of memories, the expansion of temporal zones and the subdivision of temporal time in *The innocence of roast chicken*, *The smell of apples*, *All we have left unsaid* and *Thirteen cents*.

Genettean temporal relations emphasise the relation between the *histoire* and the *récit*. This is an informative process when we consider Genette's reformulation of memory and recollections of the past in the form of retroversions. The *récit* refers to the narrative text and the *histoire* refers to the (chronological) story which may be abstracted from the narrative.

This chapter also discusses how Genette exceeds structuralist identification and classification of the constitutive parts of narrative texts. His conceptualisation of narrative mood and voice assists in explicating numerous possible ways in which recollections may be structured in a narrative text. Given this, it is necessary, I argue, to incorporate Bergson's philosophical and psychological theory of memory. Bergson sees the structure of memory as encompassing perception in the narrative present, which exists adjacent to the recollection of an event from the narrative past. As Bergson and Genette's theories complement each other, using them in conjunction facilitates a methodical analysis which yields illuminating interpretive data.

It is also necessary to delineate the two major temporal centres noticeable in all the novels under discussion. To this purpose this chapter briefly defines social, cultural and political relations prevalent during the apartheid and democratic eras so as to provide a context for the interpretation of the novels. For example, all the novels adopt apartheid-era racial classifications as a basis for representing the apartheid and post-apartheid periods.

## **2.2 GENETTE'S TEMPORAL RELATIONS**

Macey (2001:157-158) observes that Genette favours a link between criticism and the development of a comprehensive method of analysis. His structural principles of classifications for the study of narratives are set out in *Narrative discourse* (first published in 1972). Meister (2009:338) sees Genette's contribution in three ways: Firstly, his narratological taxonomy elucidates how temporal

structure functions while taking into account the dynamic manner in which the narrative text may be represented in a narrative work, for example a novel. His theory takes into account the text itself that is being represented, and the differences in the telling of the story, namely the forms of narration. Secondly, Meister (2009:338) says, in *Narrative discourse* Genette also systemises the “mode of narration and its underlying logic of narrative communication”. Thirdly, Genette’s approach sets out “the epistemological and normative ... constraints of the gathering and communication of information during the narrative process”. Taking the above-mentioned achievements into consideration, Meister concludes that Genette introduced “terminology and neologisms”, which, together with his “taxonomy of discourse” soon became the “narratological lingua franca” in narrative theory.

In establishing a theory of narrative, Genette (1980:26-29) states that he sees the narrative text as a form of discourse because there is “an act of telling”, which in turn is dependent on the “action of telling since the narrative discourse is *produced* by the action of telling”. He designates the word *story* to identify “the signified or narrative content” which may be reconstructed from a reading of a narrative text. He designates as “narrative” the signifier, or statement (this is the text that the reader encounters). Thus for Genettean temporal relations, narrative discourse involves a “study of the relationships between narrative and story”.

Genette distinguishes three aspects of narrative fiction: *histoire* or story, *récit* or narrative text and *narration*. Rimmon-Kenan (1996:2-3) refers to story as a narration of a succession of fictional events. She notes that the text is a reference to the discourse produced in the telling of events. The text, told through narration, is read by the reader.

For Rimmon-Kenan (1996:2), the “term *narration*” implies a “*communication* process in which the narrative as message is transmitted by addresser to addressee” as well as “the *verbal* nature of the

medium used to transmit the message". Rimmon-Kenan (1996:3-4) sees this communication process as an interaction between a "fictional narrator transmitting a narrative to a fictional narratee" and notes that the act of telling and writing suggests a narrator, or focaliser, an entity that filters narrative content through a "prism" or perspective.

According to Meister (2009:336), in narratology the concept of time was explored by Lämmert (1955), who proposed that "the phenomenology of individual narratives ... [is traceable] to a stable, universal repertoire of elementary modes of narrating". Lämmert "distinguished various types of narration which stretched, abbreviated, repeated, paused and interrupted and skipped and eliminated sub-sequences, while other types perfectly imitated the flow of narrated time".

Meister's (2009:337) discussion on French structuralism is informative of the way in which events are conceptualised as one of the significant aspects of narrative texts. According to Meister (2009: 337), Barthes's contribution to structuralism was a proposal recognising "a functional systematics of narrated events which distinguishes 'kernel' events" as "obligatory events that guarantee the story's coherence" and also optional "satellite" events which, accordingly, function to "embellish the basic plot".

### **2.2.1 Order**

The order of events refers to the practice of altering the chronology of events in the narrative text (which the reader encounters in text form) and the story, which may be abstracted from analysing the narrative text. This becomes apparent when the relationship between text time and story time is analysed. According to Genette (1980:30), events begin and end a story or narrative. The reader may analyse the configuration of events as the first, the second, the last, or an event before, during and after a period of time. An underlying chronological sequence of events may be reconstructed as part of the story. Genette mentions that *reach* is a way to designate the amount of time a narrative text

goes backwards or forwards in time and extent as a way of describing the length of the reach of the looking back or forward in time.

In his conceptualisation of time, Genette (1980:33-35) emphasises a distinction between story time and narrative time as essential determinants that clarify “connections between the temporal *order* of succession of events in the story and the pseudo-temporal order of their arrangement in the narrative”. The distinctions of time also apply as an aid to discuss “connections between the variable duration of ... story events or story sections and the pseudo-duration (in fact the length of the text) of their telling in the narrative”. Genette (1980:34) also identifies “connections of frequency”, where the “repetitive capacities of the story and those of the narrative” are revealed and notes that factors relevant to his conceptualisation of temporal order include the manner in which that reading time is “actualised”, and the linearity of the reading process and that the “written narrative exists in space and as space”.

For Genette (1980:35-36), temporal *order* is an aspect of what he terms “anachronies” or time deviations in the *story* and *narrative*. These are possible to quantify through imagining a hypothetical “zero degree” which would enable “a condition of perfect temporal correspondence between narrative and story”.

Rimmon-Kenan (1996: 44) explains that story time, conceived as a linear succession of events, is no more than a conventional, pragmatically convenient construct. On the other hand, text time “is a spatial, not a temporal dimension”. The comparisons between text story and narrative text are drawn as a way to facilitate comparison and engage in discussion. She insists that “[t]he narrative text as text has no other temporality than the one it metonymically derives from the process of its reading”. According to Peck and Coyle (1993:153), metonymy refers to a “figure of speech in which the name of an attribute of a thing is substituted for the thing itself”.

Rimmon-Kenan (1996:45) notes that

[t]he disposition of elements in the text, conventionally called text-time, is bound to be one-directional and irreversible, because language prescribes a linear figuration of signs and hence a linear presentation of information about things. We read letter after letter, word after word, sentence after sentence, chapter after chapter and so on.

Rimmon-Kenan (1996:45-46) expands on the successive nature of unfolding events to say that

[t]ext-time is thus inescapably linear, and therefore cannot correspond to the multilinearity of “real” story-time. But even when we compare the text-time to the *conventional* story-time, i.e. to an ideal “natural” chronology, we find that a hypothetical “norm” of the complete correspondence between the two is only rarely realized, and almost exclusively in very simple narratives. In practice, although the text always unfolds in linear succession, this need not correspond to the chronological succession of events and most often deviates from it, creating various kinds of discordances.

For Genette (1980:36), anachronies saturate much of literary narration in the construction of narrative texts. Besides his focused analysis on the temporal structure of *In search of lost time*, he identifies a number of texts where there is a presentation of a crisis followed by a retrospective presentation of events preceding the current state of affairs.

Genette (1980:48) employs the following terms: analepsis or retroversions/flashbacks, to refer to the presentation of a sequence of events in the narrative that refer to a chronological past; prolepsis to refer to a sequence of events presented in the narrative that anticipate or convey the future; ellipsis (1980: 53) to account for “a skip over a moment in time” in a narrative; and paralepsis to account for an event which has been “sidestepped”.

These terms assist in analysing and examining the narrative to establish how meaning may be conveyed through temporal relations, thereby facilitating the deduction of discrepancies between the narrative text and the story and determination of which and how events are emphasised. This process therefore aids the reader in interpreting the narrative text by enabling him/her to attribute meaning to a particular narrative text as related by the narrator active within the text. For example, Rimmon-Kenan (1996:46) suggests that an analepsis structures the narrative text in a way that conveys background information of an event. On the other hand, a prolepsis is a means of both drawing the reader's attention to the past and potentially serving to heighten tension in the narrative text because the reader does not know whether an event will actually take place.

Rimmon-Kenan (1996:47) acknowledges that both "analepsis and prolepsis constitute a temporary second narrative in relation to the narrative onto which they are grafted and which Genette calls "first narrative". She adds that "[t]he 'first narrative'... is the 'temporal level of narrative with respect to which anachrony is defined as such". Interpretation is aided by the notion that the aspects of temporal relations outlined above are not rigid categories per se, but also explain various temporal relations within a narrative. Genette (1980:66, 77) quotes a "partial analepsis" and a "partial prolepsis" as examples.

In his analysis of Proust's *In search of lost time*, Genette (1980:68) identifies a sequence of events that are structured in the narrative text as internal and external prolepsis. In another example, Genette (1980:69) recounts the representation of events which follow an internal and external analepsis. He interprets this example of temporal relations as demarcating not only the narrative present and the past, but also as emphasising the representation of a character's memory or memories.

Genette's (1980:68) analysis sees the representation of a character's thoughts as an aspect of the character's mind or mental make-up. He suggests that the narrator, in a sequence within the text of *In Search of lost time*, perceives his story as being unified by a "thread" of events presented in the narrative text as memories. This psychological aspect of memory becomes important in Genette's explanation of the structuring of the novels through the manipulation of temporal relations. Genette (1980:78) emphasises this view by noting that "the very ideas of retrospection or anticipation, which ground the narrative categories of analepsis and prolepsis in 'psychology' take for granted a perfectly clear temporal consciousness and unambiguous relationships among present, past and future".

### **2.2.2 Duration**

Regarding duration, Genette (1980:87) recommends that a relationship between a temporal and spatial dimension be analysed as the most appropriate measure to account for the rhythm of the narrative text. For example, duration of the story (*histoire*) may be measured in "seconds, minutes, hours, days, months and years", but is approximated with the amount of pages occupying a narrative text (*récit*). This means that the number of sentences it takes to represent or narrate an event will be considered.

According to Genette (1980:88), an analysis of duration is most practical and informative on a "macroscopic level" and therefore involves the scrutiny of "large narrative units", which requires making a decision as to what constitutes "large narrative articulations" within the text's chronological and temporal landscape. He further suggests that the global structure and the length of the narrative determine what is considered as a long or a short duration of time and similarly what may be considered as a large or a small number of sentences, paragraphs and pages relative to that individual narrative text.

One option of narrative duration as stated by Genette (1980:95) is a synoptic representation of an event in the narrative text, for example by reducing the time span of an event that is seen to occur over several years in the story to a few sentences in the narrative text. Rimmon-Kenan (1996:52) points out that the reader experiences this summary of an event or a succession of events as an acceleration of narrative time. An opposite permutation applies where the presentation of an event may be extended, resulting in relatively more sentences, paragraphs and pages being used in presenting an event in the narrative text, whereas less time is spent on the same event in the story. Bal (1988:51) sees duration as an aspect of the rhythm of the narrative text. A prolonged description of an event in the narrative text may be perceived as a slowing down of the rhythm and speed of the text.

Genette (1980:87) points out that where there is dialogue in a text, the time in the narrative text is approximately the same as the time in the story, that is, “isochronic”, as he terms it. A scenic representation of events in a narrative text is such an example.

Genette (1980:99) also proposes another option of duration, namely a “descriptive pause” in which descriptive passage(s) suspend the development of a successive representation of events, thereby not “contribut[ing] to a particular moment” within a story. Genette (1980:106) also notes that another permutation of duration involves a temporal ellipsis which may be stated explicitly or implicitly. This occurs when a retrospective “gap” or the omission of an event is perceived when the reader reconstitutes story events in contrast to their representation in the narrative text. When the text is analysed, the “gap” may be placed in its chronological sequence. This then allows the reader to interpret the text and attribute meaning to the story. Ultimately, this process describes one of the ways in which the reader gains insight into the aesthetic properties of a particular novel.

However, as can be seen in Rimmon-Kenan (1996:52), an argument can be made for disputing the way in which Genette equates the transposition of temporal data to spatial data. Firstly, Rimmon-Kenan concurs with Genette that “the data of order, or of frequency” can be transposed from the temporal plane of the story to the spatial plane of the text because this process is the same as saying that “episode A comes ‘after’ episode B in the syntagmatic of a narrative text” or alternatively saying that “episode C is told ‘twice’”. Following Jefferson and Robey (1997:49), syntagmatic relationships may be taken to refer to “simultaneous relationships” between the constituent parts of language. Accordingly, Rimmon-Kenan (1996: 51) notes that these statements can be compared with other “assertions such as ‘event A is earlier than event B in the story’s time’” or “event C happens only once”. She holds that these comparisons are “legitimate and relevant”.

She notes that, on the other hand, comparing the “duration” of a narrative to that of the story it tells is a “trickier operation, for the simple reason that no one can measure duration of a narrative” and emphasises that she considers the duration of a novel as “nothing more than the time needed for reading” it. She concludes that reading time varies according to particular circumstances and therefore nothing allows the reader to determine a “normal speed of execution”.

### **2.2.3 Frequency**

Genette (1980:113) explains that frequency is a way to relate the number of times an event is narrated (thus repeated) in the story versus the frequency of mentions in the narrative. Some of the options of frequency entail a narrator in the narrative text (*récit*) relating once an event occurring many times in the story (*histoire*), or an event occurring once in the story but mentioned a number of times in the narrative text. Therefore Genette, as Rimmon-Kenan (1996:46) has it, considers text time and story time in terms of the relationship between the number of times an event appears in the story and the number of times it is narrated in the text.

Genette (1980:114-116) regards these techniques as a tool to facilitate analysis, systemisation of concepts and interpretation of narrative texts. In *Narrative discourse* (1980), he consistently offers variations, alternatives and functions (which aid the writer's structuring of a narrative) to most theoretical propositions. As far as frequency is concerned, he maintains that in a narrative text, "none of the [repeated] occurrences is completely identical to the others, solely by virtue of their co-presence and their succession". Therefore the presentation of events and the discrepancy between the number of times events are mentioned in the the *récit* and the *histoire* present interpretative options. In this way temporal relations assist the reader to analyse, interpret and infer meaning from the narrative text.

Genette (1980:114) proposes four options for the way in which the repetition of singulative events can be quantified as a relationship between the *histoire* and the *récit*. The first option, a "singulative narrative", is apparent when an event occurring once in the story is narrated once in the narrative text and therefore read as a singular event in the narrative. What is important to Genette is the "quality of the repetitions" rather than the number of repetitions. The second option is an "anaphoric type" of narrative which describes an event which occurs a number of times in the *histoire* and is narrated just as frequently in the *récit*. The third option describes a "repeating narrative". This refers to multiple retellings or repeats of an event in the *récit* that occurred once in the *histoire*. Genette points out that these multiple retellings of the event may be "stylistically" varied or may be the result of information provided from differing focalisations. The fourth option entails identifying the "iterative narrative" in a text, where an event is narrated "at one time" in the *récit* while it occurred a number of times in the *histoire*. Genette surmises that this form of repetition may function as a device to facilitate description in a narrative text and to foster thematic links in the structuring of a novel.

In the structuring of a text, the frequency with which an event is repeated in the *histoire* and the *récit* reveals how a text's "temporal field" may be extended. Genette (1980:118) refers to "generalising iterations or external iterations" within a text and how the narration of an "iterative passage" within a "singulative scene" may be constructed to extend the "temporal field of the scene inserted into it". On the other hand, Genette (1980:119) notes that an "internal or synthesising iteration" is apparent where repeats of events are contained "within the period of time of the scene itself".

Besides serving to structure narrative texts, iterations may also account for a text's aesthetic value. Genette (1980:121) suggests that "pseudo-iterative" repetitions of scenes are represented through wording that is rich, precise and detailed. Accordingly, the interpretation of such passages of text does not mean that events described "occur and reoccur in that manner, several times without any variation". Instead they may be interpreted to suggest that such events are "not required to be taken literally".

Genette (1980: 127) goes a long way to illustrate the versatility of repetition as a structuring tool. For example, he suggests that the frequency with which events are repeated in a narrative may be seen to form a series and that an iterative series may be "composed of a certain number of singular units". In writing of a "determination" of a sequence of events Genette suggests that an iterative series may be defined by and within its "diachronic limits". Following Jefferson and Robey's (1997:49) explanation of diachronic language study, Genette uses diachrony to refer to how these iterative events represent a "change through time".

In his analysis of narrative strategies, Genette also deduces that an iterative series may take a form in which events that are repeated are structured to give the impression of a (linguistic) rhythm and

that the reader may also account for the (temporal) “extent” of these diachronic units (made up of an iterative series).

Genette’s (1980:128-129) manner of analysing frequency in terms of its determination, namely the way in which events are composed in a narrative text, illustrates the flexibility with which repetition may be used to structure a text. For example, a number of events may be analysed as if they amounted to one iterated event. Genette also analyses frequency in terms of specification, namely the manner in which events may be grouped as if they occurred within the rhythm of a “constitutive unit”. Additionally, being aware of the possibility that units of iterated events may be extended provides yet more evidence that analysing temporal relations of a narrative text has the potential to reveal numerous methods and elaborate techniques which may structure narrative texts.

Genette (1980:140) finds that other forms of iteration are applicable beyond a series of consecutive events or a diachronic unit, so that in the application resulting in “internal and external diachrony” there are iterative narratives that take into account “real diachrony” or the development of events over time. This form of iteration is apparent where repeating events forms part of the progression of time within the narrative. Real diachrony is a representation of events that are repeated in a way that represents “transformations” of characters as well as change in circumstances. As an example, this development over time or external diachrony may be apparent in the representation of events in such a way that the age of characters, or their defined social or geographical circumstances are taken into account. On the other hand, an iterative unit spanning several years “can very well be narrated only on its own successiveness ... without letting the passage of time” form the representation of the diachronic series or unit.

For Genette, external and internal diachronies best represent the narrative thread of a novel when the arrangement of episodes approximates the unfolding of events in parallel manner. In his analysis

of *In Search of lost time*, Genette (1980:142) attributes aesthetic value to the way the construction of iterations (within diachronic units) presents a story not as a “train of events bound by a causality but a *succession of states* ceaselessly substituted for each other”. This is but one instance where the analysis of temporal relations informs the reader’s interpretation of the text, which in turn motivates the receiver of the text to attribute aesthetic value to it.

These tools of analysis are not rigid categories but have varied permutations. Genette’s (1980:156) analysis and formulation of a theoretical statement (based on *In Search of lost time*) produce a number of ways in which temporal relations are informative in the analysis, structuring, and interpretation of narrative texts. Some of these aspects are discussed below.

Genette (1980: 158) explores how analysis enables a “laying bare of technique”, thereby allowing the reader to contemplate the process of attributing an “aesthetic” to a narrative. Genette’s (1980: 156) analysis also promotes the notion that the study of “anachronisms” reveals these as a structural device to represent, generally, “memories” or specifically possible “involuntary” memories. Allied to this idea are the processes of “remembering” or “recollections” as well as “reminiscences” which represent the character(s) or narrator(s) as being engaged within the text.

Additionally, Genette (1980:160) observes that analysis of temporal relations in Marcel Proust’s novel draws out philosophical aspects of the nature of time in a number of ways: firstly, that time may be construed as “extra-temporal” from the confines of a narrative; secondly that psychological time may be thought of as a “pure state”; and thirdly, that a character or reader may be thought of as being either “inside” or “outside” of narrative time. Moreover, among the many ways in which he connects time to literary endeavour, Genette points out that there exists a “rule” of time, as well the perception that time as literary device may be distorted. On an ontological level, he values temporal

devices because they are a means to describe how humans as existential beings may conceive of their conscious and dreaming experience as “subverted” or “perverted”.

Since there are many commonalities and divergences in the way that Rimmon-Kenan (1996) conceptualises temporal relations, her discussion is considered here because it elaborates on Genette’s theoretical approach.

Rimmon-Kenan (1996:43) sees time as a “textual arrangement of the event component of the story” and argues that time may be seen as a “constituent of the physical world” since “individuals and societies continue to experience time and to regulate their lives by it” and sees the nature of time as encompassing both ontological and material considerations. A number of principles are informative for a study on temporal relations in the post-apartheid South African novel in English. These are that time may be construed as successive entities; that repetition enables readers of a narrative text to recognise pattern and disjuncture, and that a narrative can look backwards and forward in time.

Rimmon-Kenan (1996:44) also suggests that “aspects of the world” and time itself may be represented in narrative text as a theme and “also a constituent factor of both story and text”. She notes that the “peculiarity of verbal narrative is that in it time is constitutive both of the means of representation (language) and the object represented (the incidence of the story)”. Thus time in narrative fiction can be defined as the relations of chronology between the story and the text.

Genette’s discussion of time enables the researcher to generalise and conclude that it is possible to account theoretically for most possible permutations of temporal relations as they may be applied to organise a text. Furthermore, in considering Genette’s findings in his analysis of a number of texts, one may be specific and state that the analysis of temporal relations provides a theoretical basis for

approaching narrative structure and that an analysis of temporal relations aids the interpretation of narrative texts.

### **2.3 HENRI BERGSON: MEMORY AS A CONSTRUCT**

Since recollections are prominent as a narrative device in the novels under analysis it is informative to explore theories on memory. Henri Bergson's (1859-1941) theory is informative for discussing the structuring of temporality in the novels and it also serves to justify interpretation of the novels.

Bergson (1950:232) begins his deliberations on memory by first outlining a dualism between the body and the soul. He frames the topic of memory in this way on the grounds that "the interests of a living being lies in discovering in the present situation that which resembles a former situation, and placing it alongside of that present situation in what preceded and followed the previous one in order to profit from the experience".

In terms of discussing narrative structure, the applicability of Bergson's argument quoted above rests on its providing a way to consider how recollections of past events relate to present circumstances in the narrative text. As far as interpretation is concerned, Bergson's argument is a tool to amplify Genettean temporal relations where bringing together and separating events in the narrative text support a particular interpretation of the narrative text.

Bergson's view that recollections intrude within the unfolding present situation allows readers to interpret the use of memory as a structuring device in the selected novels. This then may lead the reader to surmise that socio-political aspects of apartheid are similarly structured to illustrate how they intrude in the post-apartheid South African fictional milieu. The technique of using memory as a device to structure these novels provides for their multi-faceted interpretation. Bergson's conceptualisation of memory arises from exploring a number of relationships that attain from usually two extreme philosophical positions, for example between matter and perception. According

to Robinson (2013), matter, as a materialist observation of epiphenomenal consciousness, sees mental events as being caused in the brain but having “no effects upon any physical events”. In developing this train of reasoning, Bergson (1950:299), in various formulations, isolates a realist-philosophical point of view and finally the human body not as a repository of memories or recollections which are somehow manufactured and stored in the brain or the human body in a way that enables these recollections to be recalled at a later stage.

For Bergson (1950:209), matter formulated as the brain or the human body is a way of referring to the body as “an instrument of action only”. Bergson sees action as a way to describe the coming about of memories. Rather than conceptualising memories as (psychological) material that is located and can be extracted from the brain, he sees memories as a combination of perception and recollections – as being contiguous to each other.

Bergson discusses recollections as taking the form of images that attach themselves to images that are perceived within a current situation. A recollection may be said to position itself adjacent to a perception which invokes it. Bergson (1950:321) points out that there is a considered selection process in the matching up of recollections and their “contiguous” perceptions. However, he (1950:313-324) states that a remembrance is not a regressive movement reaching into the past to retrieve memories, but is a way to describe how the mind “transmits from one key to the next”. Using Bergson’s (1950:319) conceptualisation, it may be said that the past attains a progressive movement of experiences which advances towards an ever-unfolding present. As he notes that “our past” as “living beings” is “that which acts no longer, but might act and will act by inserting itself into a present sensation from which it borrows the vitality”. He adds that “[i]t is true that, from that moment when the recollection actualises, it ceases to be a recollection and becomes once more a perception”. Therefore, for Bergson (1950:325), “every perception fills a certain depth of duration [and] prolongs the past into the present and thereby partakes of memory”.

A philosophical position that is the extreme opposite of matter, the brain, and also the opposite of realist perspective is an idealist perspective. Whereas in realism philosophical discussion centres on the body, in idealism the emphasis is on the soul. Within this realm, other concepts that Bergson uses to theorise about memory include the understanding of memory as a form of perception and a form of spirit. Thomasson (2012) discusses Roman Ingarden's studies of "fiction and the ontology of art", which usefully capture differences between realist and idealist philosophical approaches. A realist viewpoint emphasises that "real entities" exist "entirely independent of our minds". On the other hand, an argument from a transcendental idealist position asserts that "social and cultural entities", which are conceptualised as "purely intentional objects", owe their existence, "at least in part, to human consciousness".

Yet, both extreme philosophical positions are a discursive method to interrogate different theoretical positions which enable Bergson to fully explore duality. Bergson (1950:299) argues that as regards memory, the body "retains motor-habits [or actions] capable of acting the past over and over again". He also adds that the body restarts "attitudes in which the past will insert itself, or again, by repetition of cerebral phenomena which have prolonged former perceptions, it can furnish to remembrance a point of attachment with the actual ... ". This process illustrates the interdependence of the brain or body (or materiality) on the one hand and perception (or intentionality) on the other as joint components of memory since the "brain does not store up recollections of images". Bergson develops hypotheses of extreme positions of, namely, the "body" and the "soul" to push "dualism to an extreme" as a means of facilitating a discussion on memory.

Bergson (1950:313) sees memory as a way of "continuing and retaining the past in a present enriched by it". Therefore, if memory is forever inscribed in the present, then this notion of temporal relations allows an interpretation of South African novels where the reader quantifies the

perpetuation of apartheid as a social phenomenon in post-apartheid society. Also, Bergson's theoretical proposition of memory is informative in that it contributes to legitimising literature that memorialises the past as a viable discipline in the development of a South African literary tradition. For Bergson (1950: 313), the past is neither characterised by a set of events which follow themselves "in a present which repeats [these events] in another form" nor is it about considering events which "flow away". Lastly, the value of Bergson's theory lies in its providing an instrument to corroborate Genettean temporal relations. Both these theoretical approaches allow for an academic and justifiable methodology to analyse the post-apartheid novel in English.

#### **2.4 NARRATOLOGY AS A FIELD OF STUDY**

According to Peck and Coyle (1993:178), narratology is a by-product of structuralism. Structuralism posits that narrative texts have underlying structures and that different components organise narrative text. These different components, for example temporal relations, are identified and analysed in terms of how they are related to each other. Genettean narrative order, for example, considers discrepancies in the chronological ordering of events between the *histoire* and the *récit*; duration allows an analysis of the length of narrative time or the number of sentences used to describe an event in the narrative text. Lastly, narrative frequency enables a discussion on differences and similarities in the number of times a narrator mentions events according to the *histoire* and the *récit*. Genette's theory may be classified under narratology because it refers to the analysis of narratives.

In terms of temporal relations, Genettean narratology may be seen as having absorbed the poetics of Russian formalism. This idea could be illustrated by juxtaposing Vladimir Propp's analysis with the way in which Genette integrates the basic notion of identifying aspects of a narrative to explain temporal relations. In line with this, Macey (2001:264) states that Propp's morphological analysis of

Russian folk tales demonstrates that a “limited number of narrative elements (‘functions’) and roles can be combined in different ways to generate an almost infinite number of stories”.

Comparable to Propp’s approach to the analysis of narrative texts, in *Narrative discourse*, Genette isolates a number of narrative elements. For example, he discusses narrative order in the analysis of a scene taken from Proust’s *In search of lost time*. The point of examining Genette’s analysis is not to draw a one-to-one relationship between Propp and Genette’s analytical approaches. Rather it is to establish that Genettean structuralism is able to elaborate to a far greater extent the manner in which a narrative element, for example order, is combinable, thereby allowing generation of several interpretations of a scene from *In search of lost time*.

In the analysis below, Genette (1980:37) discusses a scene from Proust’s *Jean Santeuil* which literary theorists, such as Reid (1976:501), regard as a “first draft” of *In search of lost time*. Genette (1980:37-38) analyses a seven-sentence excerpt in which the protagonist Jean has a perception of an event from his past which he experienced with another character, Marie Kossichef. The scene renders Jean’s impressions in the narrative present which he compares “with those [impressions] he once thought he would be experiencing today”. Genette (1980:37) isolates aspects of narrative order to analyse and interpret this scene in terms of how “the future has become present but does not resemble the idea of it that one has had in the past”.

The narrative present involves Jean finding a hotel where Marie Kossichef lives; the narrative past involves the love affair between Jean and Marie Kossichef. Thus narrative possibilities may be generated if one considered Jean’s impressions of his past with Marie Kossichef from the focalising position of the narrative present. Equally so, a different set of narrative possibilities may be generated when considering Jean’s impressions of his past relationship with Marie Kossichef, from the focalising position beginning when he was still in a relationship with her.

Genette divides the excerpt according to sections that determine various aspects of the narrative past and the narrative present. By considering the discrepancy between the *histoire* and *the récit*, he finds that there are a number of ways in which individual remembered events may be combined and describes this process as a “perfect zigzag” that may be analysed by drawing attention to the memory and the past. Genette (1890:38-39) also points out that the narrative text omits “elementary temporal indicators” so that “the reader must supply them himself in order to know where he is”.

Genette (1980:39) finds different aspects of the retrospective process illustrated in this scene, for example, a “subjective” retrospective that is “adopted by the character himself”. He calls the narrative present “section A” to determine the starting point of the narrative. The narrative past is labelled “section B” and is deemed a subordinate retrospective because it is a representation of the character’s focalisation. Hence analysing different components of temporal relations illustrates how the bringing together of events occurring in the narrative past and the present as an aspect of the *récit* generates “an infinite number of stories” or interpretations within the narrative. Genette demonstrates this concept by building narrative progression, by, for example, looking at the scene as if it began at section A or by looking at how the events connect as elements of the past from the vantage of section B.

As is evident above, narratology enables an analysis of a text that shows events as following or deviating from a sequence. Along similar lines Claude Bremond (in Macy, 2001:51) refers to events adhering to a “logic of narrative”. Using as an illustration Bremond’s *Le message narrative*, Macy (2001:51) notes that Bremond conceptualises characters that occupy roles within a narrative and adds that Bremond writes of character roles that may be structured so that they are “inserted into sequences within the plot of a narrative”. Therefore, he says, these “sequences, at every point of the narrative, open up a set of alternative sequences”.

According to Bertens (2008:53-54), one of Bremond's proposals is to consider a model that discusses the "logical possibilities any narrative will have" and provides a systematic working out of different phases that all narratives adhere to. Referring to Bremond's proposition of a model, he points out that "even though the model operates on a high level of abstraction, it allows us to see a pattern – a structure ... that might otherwise escape us". This line of thinking prepares the ground for Genette's structuralist theory. Bertens (2008:55) emphasises that "the ultimate goal of narratology is to discover a general model of narration that will cover all possible ways in which stories can be told and that might be said to enable the production of meaning".

Macey (2001:51) notes that Bremond's contribution to structuralism is that he extends Propp's "morphological analysis of folk tales". Bremond introduces the aspect of logic to explain the structuring of stories according to roles "played by a subject/character defined by a process/predicate". Says Macey (2001:51): "According to Bremond, all narrative can be analysed in terms of roles and sequences, which can be analysed in a quasi-grammatical manner".

Bremond (1980:387-411) elaborates on this stance in "The logic of narrative possibilities". He posits that a narrative text may be structured in such a way that the narrator orders the "chronological succession of the events he is relating". In telling these events the narrator therefore gives them meaning and achieves chronological succession and the production of meaning by linking the events "together in the unity of an action directed towards the end".

Although Genette does not discuss Bremond directly in his analysis of *In search of lost time* Bremond's theorem is included in this discussion because it illustrates that structuralism provides an umbrella for a variety of proposals, all seeking to provide a comprehensive account of, as well as invent, new concepts to explain the narrative text.

#### 2.4.1 Parallels in Genette, Todorov and Barthes's structuralism

Macey (2001:264) draws attention to Tzvetan Todorov's reference to a "grammar" of literature which can "provide a formal description of narrative possibilities", and adds (2001:382) that there exists "a universal grammar of narrative [that] generates the individual stories that make up the body of literature".

Genette (1980:29) expands on Todorov's approach by stating that analysis of narrative discourse involves "a study of the relationships between narrative and the story". One of Genette's aims in *Narrative discourse* was to expound on the theory of narratology by proposing "a new demarcation" of narrative as a field of study. Genette (1980:26) regards the events recounted in a narrative, as well as "the narrating act" from which the narrative text is produced, as elements in the analysis of literature. These aspects are combined in the rendition of the story or *histoire* and its telling or *narration* as a *récit* or narrative text.

Since Genette (1980:27) asserts that it is evident that "the level of narrative discourse is the only one directly available to the textual analysis" and adds that textual analysis "is itself the only instrument of examination at our disposal in the field of literary narrative, and particularly fictional narrative" a discursive analysis of the novels under discussion may be conducted by taking into account their narration.

Genette (1980:27-29) stresses the narrative text and the way the narrative content is structured as relationships between the story and its narration that constitute the criterion for a literary study. Accordingly, a structuralist theoretical approach excludes a consideration of the author's biography and documents related to the author's work as informative for analysis. Genette (1980:29) reiterates that analysis of narrative discourse is "essentially, a study of the relationships between the narrative

and story, between the narrative and narrating, and (to the extent that they are inscribed in narrative discourse) between story and narrating”.

In *Narrative discourse*, Genette (1980:8) incorporates the analytical work of Todorov in developing and compiling a comprehensive platform for narratology; includes Plato’s commentary on diegetic and mimetic narration in *The Republic*; draws on Aristotle’s mimesis and diegesis in *Poetics*; incorporates the theories development of the Russian formalists in asserting a narratological perspective; and draws on the work of Roland Barthes, among others. Culler (in Genette, 1980:8) notes that Todorov and Barthes are relevant to provide a framework for the way in which Genette established his narratological methodology.

In writing about temporal relations, mood and voice, Genette refers to aspects of Barthes’s theoretical approach. An example of his incorporation of narrative order is discussed below. Genette (1980:56-57) suggests that retrospective or anticipatory events may be presented in various forms in a narrative text and refers to Barthes’s conceptualisation of a narrative future that appears in the *récit* as an unexplained “enigma”, where the chronological order of events is distorted as the narrator relates anticipatory events.

An enigma is an aspect of Barthes’s hermeneutic code which he developed to analyse the structuring of codes to produce meaning in a narrative text. Barthes’s (2002:vii) structuralist analysis of the novella Honore de Balzac’s *Sarrasine* (1830) posits a method in which he isolates different units of text or “lexias” and attributes codes as if they denoted meaning. According to Webster (1997:99), Barthes’s study aims to illustrate that different codes of meaning function as a part of a network of “its internal structures” through which meaning is generated by language or by signs or codes within a narrative text.

Barthes's hermeneutic code creates an enigma by showing how a narrative text creates tension or expectation while the reader waits to find out whether an anticipated event will occur or will not. The following dialogue illustrates this tension. The narrator (Barthes, 2002:233) quotes a dialogue between Young Marianina, described by the narrator as a "young girl", and the narrator. The narrator speaks first.

"So, I'll call tomorrow around nine and reveal this mystery to you."

"No," she replied, "I want to know now."

In the extract above, Barthesian enigma arises when the narrator omits relating certain information, or omits relating events to the character Young Marianina. This omission also denies the reader full disclosure of the narrative text, thereby complicating the interpretation of the scene. The narrator refers to a "mystery", thereby creating a gap in Young Marianina's knowledge and also introducing an expectation that there are events to be revealed. The result, Genette (1980:57) explains, is that there is a "principle of deferred or postponed significance". Full interpretation of such a scene is therefore only possible when the recollected event is analysed within the context of the character's "life portrait now suddenly 'captured' in the web of structure and a cohesiveness of meaning".

The enigma is an abstract concept invented by Barthes to account for general operations within narrative texts. This is the reason Genette uses this scene to discuss narrative order in *Narrative discourse*. His analysis of the scene above reshapes Barthesian enigma as a prolepsis. The classification of an anticipatory event in the *récit* facilitates analysis of the event as an aspect of the *histoire*. Hence Genettean theory emphasises the relation between the story and its telling as a narrative text.

The way in which Genette incorporates and reformulates Barthes's hermeneutic code demonstrates Genette's expansionist approach to narratology and emphasis on the manner in which *Narrative discourse* presents a collation of structuralist analytical and interpretive methodology. Another trait Barthes (2002: xvii) and Genette share is their emphasis on rigour in practising literary criticism. Both regard rigour as consisting "not in a choice of code but in a consistent reading once one has chosen a code".

#### **2.4.2 Genette exceeds structuralism**

Bertens (2008:54) points out that even though Genette exceeds structuralism by "introducing a number of completely new categories, he more often redefines already existing categories and insights in terms of *relations*". Genette (1980:11) emphasises the analysis of narrative discourse in terms of "relationships between narrative and story, between narrative and narrating and between story and narrating".

Singer and Dunn (2000:246) state that by helping to "establish temporality as an inescapable register of intelligibility" of narrative texts Genette transcends an exclusive structuralist approach. Within this context, Singer and Dunn (2000:241) understand structuralism as a "single hierarchically arranged system of codes".

One may illustrate the way in which Genette exceeds structuralism by comparing his theory to Russian formalism. While formalism represents one of the earliest developmental phases of structuralism, Genette exemplifies its apotheosis.

Existing categories of structuralism have developed via Russian formalist theory. For example, the Russian formalists conceptualise *fabula* to distinguish in the literary work the chronological order of

events and actions. The *syzhet* designated the presentation of the events and actions in the “actual story” (Bertens, 2008:55).

The formalists firstly propose a methodology (Macey, 2001:336) by emphasising the “intrinsic qualities of the literary text”. Secondly, they suggest (2001:337) that literary composition involves arranging literary devices, for example syntactic forms, into an order that produces “maximum poetic effect”. Thirdly, Macey (2001: 337) adds, formalists propose that literary devices contribute to the poetic nature of a literary composition. Thus the foregrounding of artistic devices within a literary composition makes those devices “appear strange” as if these were being “perceived for the first time”.

For his part, Genette (in Macey, 2001:158) is not primarily concerned with contrasts of formal features within a literary work but instead regards formal features as “not fully visible in individual works”. Together with Russian formalists, he recognises that “narrative techniques and poetic structures ... combine to produce literary texts”. However, where the former emphasise the analysis of components that enable literary works to achieve artistic fruition, Genette argues that components of narratives rather indicate “the forms and devices that make possible the existence of texts”.

Genette surmises that the relationship between *histoire* and *récit* can be expressed in terms of the relative positions of the chronological order (*histoire*) and the narrative order (*récit*) to each other at any given point. Bertens (2008:55) notes that there may be a retroversion where the “narrative order lag[s] behind the chronological order events”. The relationship between the two may be scenic, as occurs where the time in the *histoire* is “synchronic” with the time in the *récit*. Another alternative involves the narrative order “run[ning] ahead” of the chronological order.

Genette also sees the *histoire* and *the récit* as aspects of duration. As Bertens (2008:56) points out, Genette expresses this interdependent relationship in terms of the time it takes for the event to be narrated in the narrative text as a *récit*, versus the amount of time it takes for the same event to occur “in the reality of the narrated world” as an aspect of the *histoire*. This enables a narration, as an option, to “speed things up” or approximate an “equal duration” between an event and its narration.

Frequency provides a tool to indicate the relationship between the number of times events are narrated in the *récit* versus the number of times the same events may be said to have occurred “in the world” as an aspect of the *histoire*. Moreover, Genette conceptualises the narration of events in terms of the narrative’s structure, but Bertens (2008:57) notes that “as a structuralist, Genette does not take as a starting point the writer who sits behind a desk and considers the available options, but the variations that are offered by the relations between the various elements that play a role in the way that stories are told”. A structuralist perspective posits that a “third-person narration must have a narrator and that this narrator will always be present in the story”, in other words, this narrator will also be the protagonist of the story, and is known as the homodiegetic narrator for being both protagonist and narrator.

Bertens (2008:58) refers to Genette also introducing the term “focalisation” to discuss the way in which narrative texts structure the narration of events “and the world that is being narrated”. The focaliser accounts for the way in which the narrator gives a “perspective of one of the characters”. According to Macey (2001:158), Genette also identifies a number of levels of narration, which are informed by his study which separates three areas of a narrative, namely *histoire* or story, *diegesis*, *récit* or text/plot and narration.

Bertens (2008: 59) says that “focalization then allows Genette to draw broad distinctions between various types of narrative”. In conceptualising the aspect of focalisation within a narrative text, Genette incorporates an approach espoused in New Criticism, as Bertens (2008:58) notes, by for example taking cognisance of Cleanth Brooks and Austin Warren’s (1943) notion of “the focus of narration” which emphasises the differentiation of different aspects of narrative texts..According to Bertens (2008:59), in contrast, Genette reformulates the relationships between the *histoire* and the *récit* to allow for a “highly sophisticated analytical apparatus” – a methodology that enables new insights into the analysis of narrative texts. Bertens adds that narratology is a process to “map how exactly actual stories are embedded in other stories, or how focalisation shifts during the course of the story [... and in the] interpretation of complex texts”.

Genette (1980) exceeds structuralism in another way by incorporating criticism and rhetoric in his analytical methodology and proposes a systematic narrative theory based on his analysis of Marcel Proust’s *In search of lost time*, while at the same time providing a theoretical basis for analysing and interpreting the novel. Singer and Dunn (2000:246) reiterate that “Genette’s method respected the French structuralist distinction between story and discourse, whereby the intersecting axes of lived time (story) and structured time (discourse) were deemed to be essential coordinates on which narratives yielded up their meanings”.

According to Singer and Dunn (2000:246), a “structuralist narratological” approach classifies narrative texts according to “the static and paradigmatic aspects of narrative structure”. By contrast Genette prefers “the intrinsic dynamism of the temporal axes upon which the narrative structure is plotted”. Thus an analysis of the structure of a narrative and in particular the organisation of events as plot in the *récit* “determines the possibilities of narrative experience”. The process outlined above illustrates the vast scale by which Genette surpasses Singer and Dunn’s (2000:241) notion of structuralism as a “single hierarchically arranged system of codes”.

### 2.4.3 Genettean mood as a device to structure temporal relations

In Genette's (1980:10) view, mood denotes "the character whose point of view orientates" the narrative perspective. On the other hand, voice denotes the character that is relating the unfolding events in the narrative text. Genette sees the character's perspective as focalisation, which means that focalisation may be voiced through a narrator or narrators who may or may not be participating in the events they are relating. In turn, the narration of the story may take numerous permutations within a narrative text. In this study, focalisation is mostly through the homodiegetic narrator, which is apparent when the narrator is participating in the events the character is relating.

As a structuralist, Genette moreover sees focalisation as a form of structuring information within the narrative text. Since this study considers Genettean temporal relations as a tool to analyse and interpret recollections of the past in fiction Genette's (1980:168) conceptualisation of focalisation as determined by the distance the narrator occupies in relation to the events being related is pertinent to this study. When the character is furthest away the events narrated are a *diegetic* form of narration. In this instance the narrator is conspicuous in the narrative as the character relates events under her/his purview.

In a mimetic form of narration the narrator recedes and creates the impression that the characters are speaking for themselves. Genette (1980:166) contends that a mimetic narration allows the narrator to convey more information in the narrative text. Conversely, a diegetic narration allows the narrator to summarise events, thereby permitting the conveying of, relatively, minimal information.

Focalisation therefore extends a structuralist analytical approach by going beyond identifying and classifying components of a narrative text.

Genette brings to bear aspects of mood in the analysis of narrative texts to fully explore and account for complex relationships between the *histoire* and the *récit*. For example, in *The innocence of roast chicken*, the adult narrator, Kate, recalls her childhood and relates various memories of the past from the vantage point of the child and adult's focalising distance. Similarly, in *The smell of apples*, the adult and child narrator, Marnus, also focalises and narrates events from two main vantage points. In this novel, as an exception to the other novels in this study, the narrator relates his own death. In *All we have left unsaid*, the adult and the younger Danny narrate and focalise from the temporal positions of childhood and adulthood. In *Thirteen cents*, for the majority of the *récit*, the narrator gives way to the dialogue of various characters.

In this way Genette's concept of mood and voice enables a structuralist analysis of the temporal relations operating in the novels. Following Genette's approach, in this study the first step is to identify various components so that complementary relationships of order, duration and frequency between the *histoire* and the *récit* can be analysed. The second step is to probe what meaning is attained from the relationships between the *histoire* and the *récit*. Analysing temporal relations enables the reader to ascribe meaning and also facilitates the interpretation of narrative texts.

In addition to the above, this study also considers how Bergson's philosophical theory of time is applicable in the analysis and interpretation of the recollections of the past in fiction. This is done by structuring past events as memory, and applying Genette's theory which enables the analysis of memory as temporal relations. In an example, Genette analyses the representation of a character's memories as a form of temporal relations. In putting this idea forward, Genette (1980:44) discusses an extract from Proust's *In search of lost time*, stating that the narrator's remembrance of childhood events is structured in the form of retroversions. Genette (1980: 45) points out how "the miracle of involuntary memory" is Proust's device to integrate the narrator Marcel's recollections within the first section of Volume 1, *Swann's way*. Genette (1980:43-44) analyses the "micronarrative" of

*Swan's way* according to 9 subsections and illustrates that the narrative fluctuates between analepsis or retrospection and ellipsis or omissions of events (among other considerations of the temporal relationship between the narrative present and the narrative past). He also highlights "the remembering activity of the intermediary subject", namely the narrator Marcel.

In writing about narrative mood, Genette (1980:167) discusses how the adult narrator Marcel perceives the emotional pain of a childhood incident anew. In this example, the narrator recalls his childhood longing for his mother's affectionate bedtime kiss. After a suspenseful period, the mother does give Marcel the attention he has been seeking, but still this unleashes a torrent of sobs from the child. Says the adult narrator:

Many years have passed since that night. The wall of the staircase up which I had watched the light of his [Marcel's father] candle gradually climb was long ago demolished. And in myself, too, many things have perished which I imagined would last forever, and new ones have arisen, giving birth to new sorrows and new joys in which those days I could not have foreseen ... (Proust, 1984:39).

Genette's (1980: 167) concepts of narrative mood and temporal relations enable the interpretation of this scene. He points out that "the narrator is present as a source". While the narrative is structured such that there are elements of mimetic (showing) and elements of diegetic (telling) narration and elements of telling or diegetic narration, and as Genette classifies mimetic and diegetic narration as temporal distance where the focalising agent is near and far respectively, this scene illustrates the manner in which narratology serves the interpretation of the text.

Also worth considering is Genette's (1980:167) comment that the adult narrator Marcel's memory may be seen as a "memory both very old and very new". Genette is here singling out Marcel's statement (in Proust 1984:39), when he talks about his experiences that "have perished" as well as

“new ones that have arisen”. In the Bergsonian (1950:232) manner, memories comprise events of the narrative present existing contiguously with events of the narrative past. Genette (1980:179) writes that Bergson’s theorem assists in interpreting “the narrative present of philosophical experience”.

Additionally, Bergson’s theory of memory enables Genette to probe the way in which temporal relations yield meaning in *In search of lost time*, and he includes the above scene in interpreting the structuring of memory in this novel. In this passage, Genette (1980:69) identifies a prolepsis that Proust has inserted within the narrator’s recollection of the past, as illustrated in the following sentence: “And, in myself too, many things have perished which, I imagined, would last forever ...”.

Genette (1980:69) sees the insertion of this prolepsis as a testimony “to the intensity of the present memory”, and as serving to “authenticate the narrative of the past”. As apparent in Proust (1984:39), the anticipatory statement authenticates Marcel’s memory when the narrator says: “It is a long time, too, since my father has been able to tell Mamma: to ‘Go along with the child.’ Never again will such moments be possible for me”. The process outlined above demonstrates how meaning may be drawn from following a structuralist analysis of a narrative text.

Following Bergson (1950:232), a narrative text may be analysed to discover how an event occurring in the narrative present may be linked to an event occurring in the narrative past. For Bergson, a memory consists of both events placed alongside each other so that a recollection does not stand alone but is a conglomerate of preceding and following events. This allows a narrator to present a character as “profiting from the experience”.

In a similar manner, Genette incorporates Bergson’s theorem in his analysis of *In search of lost time*. For example, Proust explains the way in which the narrator Marcel recalls his childhood experiences

when he is an adult. This memory is triggered when he eats a “petites madeleine” (Proust, 1984:48).

The passage reads:

And suddenly the memory revealed itself. The taste was that of the little piece of madeleine which on Sunday mornings at Combray (because on those mornings I did not go out before mass), when I went to say goodbye to her Leonie would give me, dipping it first in her own cup of tea or tisane. The sight of the little madeleine had recollecting nothing to my mind before I tasted it ...

Later on in the scene, the narrator, Marcel adds:

And as soon as I had recognised the taste of the piece of madeleine soaked in her decoction of lime-blossom which my aunt used to give me (although I did not yet know and must long postpone the discovery of why this memory made me so happy) immediately the old grey house upon the street, where her room was, *rose up* like a stage set to *attach itself* to the little pavilion opening on to the garden which had been built out behind it for my parents (the isolated segment which until that moment had all been that I could see) (Proust, 1984:51; my emphasis).

Here, in the Bergsonian manner, Marcel perceives an occurrence, namely the taste of the cake in the narrative present, which is contiguous to a childhood event when he was served the same snack by his aunt Leonie. Although the narrator emphasises the sensory stimuli brought on by the madeleine, the visual aspect of the memory is also important to the structure of this scene.

Firstly, Bergson (1950:321) sees recollections as taking the form of images of past recollections that attach themselves to images that are perceived within a current situation. So the recollected image of a piece of madeleine soaked in Marcel's aunt's decoction of lime blossom (Proust, 1984:51) may be said to position itself adjacent to the adult narrator's perception that invokes it. Marcel's perception in the narrative present reads as follows:

I raised to my lips a spoonful of the tea in which I had soaked a morsel of the cake. No sooner had the warm liquid mixed with the crumbs touched my palate than a shudder ran through me and I stopped, *intent upon* the extraordinary thing that was happening to me. An exquisite pleasure had invaded my senses ... (Proust, 1984:48; my emphasis).

Evidently, the adult Marcel's eating of the cake soaked in tea at his mother's house ignites the memory of a cake soaked in aunt Leonie's decoction of lime blossom. Initially, he ate this snack as a child while at Combray. While the perception arises out of a sensory stimulus, namely "exquisite pleasure", the narrator describes the memory of the occurrence as an image in his mind and notes that this image metaphorically rises up like a stage and attaches itself to a little pavilion in a garden.

Other ways in which Bergsonian theory of memory complements Genettean structuralism are evident. Proust notes that the image of his aunt's old house rises up in his mind as a memory. This is aligned to the Bergsonian (1950:319) theorem which contends that memories are rather a progressive movement from the past advancing to the unfolding present. Also of import are Genette's comments about Marcel's remembrance(s) of eating the madeleine. Genette (1980:167-168) argues that where the narrator is prominent in the telling of a scene, the narrative text presents the story's "image" and therefore the "trace" of the event recalled.

As this study is confined to temporal relations, the discussion on narrative mood is minimal. This is because mood and voice are considered mainly as conduits through which the narration of the texts may be analysed and interpreted. The content or story produced is mediated in the narrative text singularly by a homodiegetic narrator in each of the novels under discussion.

#### 2.4.4 Genettean temporality as an aspect of voluntary and involuntary memory

More than being concerned with memory as such, Genette (1980:54-55) also distinguishes between voluntary and involuntary memory to supplement the analysis and interpretation of the past in Proust's novel. The incorporation of psychological and philosophical conceptualisation of time and memory enables the analysis of memory as a form of temporal relations.

As an aspect of the theory of psychology a parallel may be drawn between implicit and explicit memory. Weiten (1992:258) defines implicit memory as "apparent when retention is exhibited on a task that does not require intentional remembering". In contrast, explicit memory "involves intentional recollection of previous experiences". In the same vein, Genette writes of voluntary memory with reference to the structuring of memories where a character is presented as making an effort to remember an event from the past in contrast to involuntary memory as a spontaneous memory that a character experiences.

In the first example, Genette incorporates psychology theory to discuss narrative order in *The Guermantes way* (Volume 3 of *In search of lost time*). He (1980: 54-55) analyses how a section of this volume is structured as "three reminiscences owed to involuntary memory". Accordingly, Genette sees these recollections as occurring in "the purest form", as they are "deliberately chosen or devised because of their causal and commonplace character". He says recollections enable a "comparison between the present and the past" and illustrate that narrative texts differentiate between the past and the present via temporal relations as they coincide and differ as aspects of the *histoire* and the *récit*.

Secondly, Genette argues that narrative text may be structured to convey certain information by representing a character that possesses a psychology. This serves as another narrative technique to portray retrospection. To illustrate this, Genette (1980: 78) analyses *Time regained* (Proust, 1949),

the concluding volume of *In search of lost time* to illustrate how Proust structured the thoughts and behaviour of the homodiegetic narrator.

This way of structuring the narrative creates an “anachronic” narrative that accounts for the retrospective nature of the novel. Genette (1980:78-79) holds that the narrator is significant in rendering memories because a retrospective quality of the novel “is totally present in the narrator’s mind at every moment”. As temporal retrospection or anticipation “ground[s] the narrative categories of analepsis and prolepsis in ‘psychology’”, distorting the chronology of events in the *récit* achieves the aim of representing “temporal consciousness”.

Thus Genettean structuralism is used as a tool to analyse how the “narrator’s mind” or aspects of psychology permeate the narrative. Genette’s first idea is that analepsis and prolepsis orientate Proust’s narrative to the past. His second idea is to illustrate that temporal relations represent the narrator’s thought process. These declarations may be explored by elaborating on Genette’s analysis in an extract from *Time regained*

#### Sentence 1

How many times these people had returned to my vision in the course of their lives, the differing circumstances of which seemed to offer identical characteristics under forms and for various ends: and diversity of my own life at turning-points through which the thread of each of these lives had passed was compounded of lives seemingly the most distant from my own as if life itself only disposed of a limited number of threads for the execution of the most varied designs.

#### Sentence 2

What, for instance, were more separate in my various pasts than my visit to my Uncle Adolphe, than the nephew of Mme de Villeparisis, herself cousin of the Marshal, than Lengrandin and his sister, than the former waistcoat-maker, Françoise’s friend in the courtyard of our home?”

#### Sentences 3 and 4

And now all these different threads had been united to produce here, the woof of the Saint-Loop *ménage*, there, that of the young Cambremers, not to mention Morel and so many others, the conjunction of which combined to form the circumstances so compact that they seemed to make a unity of which personages were mere elements. And in more than one case a being to complete another in the conflicting spheres of my memory (Proust, 1949:343-344).

For ease of discussion, the paragraph above has been divided into four sentences. Sentence 1 establishes the retrospective nature of this passage – the narrator for example refers to people that have “returned” to his vision, a recollection of past events therefore. Sentence 2 summarises the narrator’s “various pasts”, thereby, according to Genette (1980:78), establishing a “network of [entangled] memories”. Sentences 3 and 4 make explicit that the events the narrator describes are memories and imply that there is mental activity or thoughts.

A few sentences below the extract above, the narrator, while ruminating on the mental process of unfolding memory, suggests that a remembered object is positioned adjacently to the object that invokes it (Proust, 1949:344). The narrator mentions a character finding, at an antique store, an item of furniture that is identical to the one he owns. The narrator goes on to explain that when the character discovers this item, he mentally reproduces the one he possesses and makes them a pair – the remembered item of furniture and the item perceived by the character in the narrative present are then mentally reconstituted as two identical objects. This is another example of Genette surpassing structuralism by incorporating philosophical and psychological theory in analysing *In search of lost time*.

## 2.5 APARTHEID AND POST-APARTHEID SOCIO-POLITICAL DIFFERENCES

Apartheid, a defining feature of South Africa from 1948 until its demise in 1994, is prominent in a body of scholarly investigation and as a topic in novels. However, because the initiation and development of apartheid was all-encompassing and complex, this study does not fully investigate social and historical implications of apartheid in the representation of apartheid or political factors which may have impinged on the creation and production of South African fiction. This study rather investigates how temporal relations describe, illustrate, comment upon as well as represent the recollected complicity with or resistance to apartheid in a selected number of English-language South African novels published in the post-apartheid era. Thus, a limited discussion on apartheid is appropriate.

According to Beinart and Dubow (1995:3), apartheid, meaning “apartness” in Afrikaans, impacted on a number of social relationships and was underpinned by legislative acts which severely denied the rights of people classified as “non-whites”. The authors (1995:4) also note that this totalitarian ideology informed discriminatory legislation which restricted access and defined exclusion from various facilities and services from “education and health, to transport and recreation”. Accordingly, apartheid developed as a set of “practices seeking to legitimize social difference and economic inequality in every aspect of life”. This ideology seeped into cultural aspects as well, emphasising differences of race, ethnicity, social status as well as language. Apartheid also prescribed geographical areas for human settlement according to race.

Dating from the colonial era, segregation has a long and complex history in South Africa. Dubow (1994) holds that, although the Natives Land Act of 1913 represented a statement of intent by the Union of South Africa, it was from the 1920s onwards that segregation became a national programme which amounted to “an amalgam of political, ideological and administrative strategies designed to maintain and entrench white supremacy at every level”. However, according to Worden

(2012:94), despite segregationist legislation advantaging whites from earlier years, apartheid emerged through various Afrikaner nationalist political formations in the 1930s, which then enabled the growth of specific ideology and legislation in the 1940s and beyond. This was because ethnic identity determined the course adopted by successive white governments to implement apartheid. Dubow (1994:1) emphasises this view by linking the beginning of apartheid with the electoral victory of the Nationalist party in 1948.

Beinart and Dubow (1995:8) also note that a significant factor in the development of apartheid is that it was resisted and challenged, both overtly and covertly; its implementation and its legislative mandate were challenged, as were the social and cultural practices that marked the hallmarks of “apartness”. Beinart and Dubow (1995:9-10) also note that, conversely, besides apartheid being enforced by Afrikaner nationalists, another aspect of this ideology is that it exploited competing aspirations of the oppressed. For example, the authors posit that in the 1920s an Africanist agenda in which black, “mission-educated” elites proposed alliances with chiefs sought inspiration from “specifically African forms of Christianity” as a way of articulating a need for self-determination and for creating a “separate African identity”. Similarly, in discussing “the cultural politics of racism”, Back and Solomos (1995:407-41) note that research in the field suggests that “the oppressed themselves [produce] their own discourses about race and identity in the context of their own experiences”.

Interestingly, Beinart and Dubow (1995:11) relate that an “anthropological notion of cultural relativism was readily adopted by segregationist ideologues” in the 1920s. This was a method to contrive a “distinct identity of different cultures and the internal coherence of African societies”. Therefore “Christian Nationalist thinkers embellished this idea of the primacy of separate cultural identity among both Afrikaners and Africans”. Cultural differences were presented in a “highly

idealized and distorted fashion” to entrench specific nationalistic tendencies as well as to establish “ethnic and racial identities”.

According to Van Eeden and Vermeulen (2005:177-205), the Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge, an Afrikaans cultural body, lobbied for the inclusion of Christian National Education in South African schools from 1948 onwards. Beinart and Dubow (1995:11) observe that the “nuances and contradictions of interracial contact have long been a central preoccupation for writers of South African fiction, though less for academic researchers whose concerns have tended to be more theoretical”.

During South Africa’s history of segregation and apartheid, the political formations and state forces advocating more constricting forms of apartheid continually mutated. Borrowing Beinart and Dubow’s (1995:15) terminology, constructions of the apartheid state as a “monolithic entity” may therefore be refuted. The notion of Afrikaners as comprising a culturally and ideologically unchanging, static “*volk*” or nation may also be rejected. So too did the shape of community, religious and political formations resisting apartheid also mutate over time. Following Beinart and Dubow (1995: 9), it may be argued that an unyielding conceptualisation of African peoples as being “available for incorporation into colonial” and apartheid society does not reflect the interconnected nature of apartheid and the resistance to it. Drawing from postcolonial studies, Back and Solomos (2002:15) explain that “a number of scholars have shown that in reality colonial societies were by no means static and unchanging in their articulation of racial ideologies and social relations”. While acknowledging that the different historical periods between colonialism and apartheid produced interrelationships, according to Worden (2012:13), they were “dependent on time and place” – an idea which may plausibly be extended to apartheid South African society because it is informative of an analytical process. Furthermore, throughout both the apartheid and the post-apartheid periods,

symbols and historical sites and ethnic consciousness have been used to define and entrench South African identities.

The elections of April 1994 mark the legislative beginning of post-apartheid South Africa. As a preliminary reading of the novels under discussion in this study illustrates, comparable ideologies, socio-political factors as well as cultural identities and practices may be placed within both historical periods. Some of the differentiators between these periods include the repeal and invalidation of discriminatory legislation and the jettisoning of separatist, state-sponsored social engineering projects. In the post-apartheid period, a democratic dispensation is evident in political, social, economic and cultural arenas. Another feature of post-apartheid society is that political and civil rights guaranteeing freedom of (artistic) expression under a new constitution are part of the state's mandate. Worden (2012:149) notes that post-apartheid South Africa consists of a multiparty democracy.

However, social indicators which are set out in various chapters of the *South African survey 2009/2010* (Kane-Berman, 2010) illustrate that apartheid inequalities impact on post-apartheid South Africa. For example, although improved, the South African education system (Roodt, 2010:363) produces fewer African matriculants than other race groups. This perpetuates patterns of employment shared between apartheid and post-apartheid periods in which the majority of Africans are pushed into low-income jobs while unemployment (Holborn, 2010:181) also remains high, perpetuating social inequalities to the detriment of Africans. According to Lebone (2010:534), land restitution, a legislated process to "give back land to those who were dispossessed through apartheid legislation" similarly illustrates the cultural, social, political and economic relation between the two periods. Lebone also reports that the transfer of land to Africans is "slow". This is one of the key indicators to relate the apartheid and post-apartheid periods since the effects of the apartheid policies are not only emblematic of the dispossession of Africans, but land (the farm)

appears as a theme in the novels under discussion in this study. The indicators mentioned above provide quantitative data showing the relation between the past and the present. Therefore in the analysis of South African novels, Genettean temporality as a tool to uncouple the underlying chronological story (which is differentiation of the past and the present) from the narrative text (which is read in the unfolding present) is applicable.

As Worden's (2012:163) discussion of post-apartheid society demonstrates, cultural attachments informed by apartheid categorisations materialise in post-apartheid South Africa as social, political and economic factors. Additionally, as Bergson's (1950:232) theory of memory shows, present circumstances (perceptions) and past occurrences (recollections) coexist adjacently. The present and the past inform how a person perceives present circumstances and learns from them.

Another proposition is that the more varied cultural milieu in the post-apartheid landscape has arisen out of a state agenda to foster "national reconciliation" (Worden, 2012:163). According to the *SA Yearbook 2010/2011* (2010:31), during the first decade of freedom in South Africa, the state aimed to achieve democracy as well as the social and economic betterment of all South Africans. To attain this, an environment was created where all of South Africa's cultures are affirmed (*White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage*, 1996). Improved socio-cultural conditions also enabled the writing of novels about apartheid from a plurality of cultural, racial and ethnic experiences.

## CHAPTER 3

### 3 TEMPORALITY IN *THE INNOCENCE OF ROAST CHICKEN* AND *THE SMELL OF APPLES*

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the novels *The innocence of roast chicken* (Richards, 1996) and *The smell of apples* (Behr, 1996) in terms of how they represent the apartheid past by means of various sub-themes. Some of the sub-themes are shared by the novels, while others are unique to the particular novel. To avoid duplication temporal relations will be discussed selectively.

#### 3.2 JO-ANNE RICHARDS'S *THE INNOCENCE OF ROAST CHICKEN*

##### 3.2.1 Synopsis of the story

*The innocence of roast chicken* is narrated by Kate. The novel's present is 1989. The adult Kate also narrates the events of her life in 1966, when she is also known as Kati. As an aspect of the *récit*, the reader encounters the character in a story told by the homodiegetic narrator. This type of a narrator is also a character in the story. Kate is a disgruntled or, according to her lawyer husband Joe, a "bitter" English teacher living in Johannesburg (Richards, 1996:16). In the novel's narrative present Kate relates the story of life in apartheid South Africa, in which socio-political events point to the demise of apartheid. The narrator also relates her personal story and the story of her deteriorating marriage. **Kate describes the activities of suburbinites who, she sees as choosing shabby clothes as a means to disguise their wealth. Thus the *récit* conveys the state of white affluent society during apartheid (p. 14).** In a context where the narrator relates a process of socio-political and personal transformation, this society is seen as being aware that their classification racially (and ironically) as "white" (p. 74) has brought them privilege at the expense of the majority of the South African population, which the narrator constructs in racial terms as "black" or "African" (p. 4).

Racial classification was one of the defining practices of apartheid. Similarly, the theme of the racial divide between “blacks” and “whites” is a component of the events of 1966 as narrated by the adult Kate. Kate, her parents and two brothers’ visit for Christmas at Ouma (Grieta) and Oupa (Johnnie’s) farm in the Eastern Cape is described. Kate’s mother is the daughter to the elderly couple, who are described as getting too old to run the farm. The narrative presents Kate’s interactions with her family, relatives, neighbours and servants within this farming community. The castration of a black male labourer serves as a key event in both narrative periods.

Within the rural setting of the farm, the narrator sketches events to represent the past in which black farm labourers and domestic workers are without social and political rights. The narrator describes the dependency and lack of agency of the workers in contrast to Ouma’s benevolence and absolute power. Events which happened on the farm constitute the source of Kate’s memories about her life. Most of these recollections form the *récit*. However, in the description of a number of events the adult narrator draws attention to the act of remembering by self-reflectively using the words “I can’t remember” (p. 10) or words similar to “my most urgent memory ...” (p. 10) or a variation on these words: “if I recall ...” (p. 29).

### **3.2.2 Synopsis of the structure**

The novel is structured in alternating chapters, in which the narrator recounts events of either 1989 or 1966 (see Fig. 1). These represent a gulf of 23 years. However, the chapters do not follow a strict sequence of alternation as some time periods extend over a number of chapters. Consequently, out of the novel’s total number of 247 pages, 149 consist of Kate’s narration of the events of 1966 while 80 pages contain the narration of the events of 1989. The remainder of the pages are made up of an eleven-page prologue and a two-page epilogue. In contrast to all the other chapters, both are undated.

Narrative present	Chapter 1 <i>Prologue</i>	Chapter 2 1989 ... <i>15<sup>th</sup> October</i>		Chapter 4 1989 ... <i>22<sup>nd</sup> October</i>			Chapter 7 1989 ... <i>28<sup>th</sup> October</i>
Narrative past			Chapter 3 1966 ... <i>Seventeen days to Christmas</i>		Chapter 5 1966 ... <i>Sixteen days to Christmas</i>	Chapter 6 1966 ... <i>The same day</i>	

continued:

Narrative present			Chapter 10 1989 ... <i>29<sup>th</sup> October</i>			Chapter 13 1989 ... <i>17<sup>th</sup> November</i>	
Narrative past	Chapter 8 1966 ... <i>Fifteen days to Christmas</i>	Chapter 9 1966 ... <i>Fourteen days to Christmas</i>		Chapter 11 1966 ... <i>Nine days to Christmas</i>	Chapter 12 1966 ... <i>Eight days to Christmas</i>		Chapter 14 1966 ... <i>Six days to Christmas</i>

continued:

Narrative present		Chapter 16 1989 ... <i>3<sup>rd</sup> December</i>		Chapter 18 1989 ... <i>15<sup>th</sup> December</i>		Chapter 20 <i>Epilogue</i>
Narrative past	Chapter 15 1966 ... <i>Five days to Christmas</i>		Chapter 17 1966 ... <i>One day to Christmas</i>		Chapter 19 1966 ... <i>Christmas Day</i>	

**Fig. 1:** Diagrammatic representation of the structure of Jo-Anne Richards's *The innocence of roast chicken* in terms of temporal orientation: narrative present in irregular alternation with narrative past

Narrated in the pages concerned with the time frame of 1966 are events which the narrator describes as occurring within specific days. The days leading to Christmas Day are grouped in chapters and arranged as an ever-diminishing series of dates tapering towards Christmas Day. The dates, which serve as headings of chapters, enable the narrative to summarise a considerable period of time, namely 17 days into 11 headings or into 41 words. This also gives the impression of an accelerating pace (Genette, 1980:97-99) evident in the chapter headings below:

“1966 ... Seventeen days to Christmas” (p. 13), “1966 ... Sixteen days to Christmas” (p. 43), “1966 ... The same day” (p. 55), “1966 ... Fifteen days to Christmas” (p. 79), “1966 ... Fourteen days to Christmas” (p. 91), “1966 ... Nine days to Christmas” (p. 119), “1966 ... Eight days to Christmas” (p.

135), "1966 ... Six days to Christmas" (p. 163), "1966 ... Five days to Christmas" (p. 173), "1966 ... One day to Christmas" (p. 199), and "1966 ... Christmas Day" (p. 225).

As Bergson (1950:319) holds that memory does not consist of "a regression from the present to the past" but resides in the present where remembrances and current perception contribute equally to the representation of both, his theory of memory as a progressive movement from the past to the present is useful in analysing this aspect of the novel. For example, the narrator Kate recalls events which took place in 1966. The character narrates events from the date furthest away from Christmas Day 1966, and systematically progresses to Christmas Day. This insight, which comes about from applying Genettean temporal relations and Bergson's theory on memory allows the reader to give an account of the structure of the novel and to interpret the text in a particular manner.

As an aspect of the *histoire*, the representation of the past in this reconstructed chronological ordering of these chapters underlines Bergson's (1950:319-324) notion that "the mind transmits from one to the next". Here an analogy may be drawn whereby each chapter is constructed as an image in its own right. This follows Bergsonian theorem that the mind may conceptualise past events as images. In this way the past attains a progressive movement of experiences.

Understanding the structuring device in the Genettean sense is informative. In the context of the whole novel as a *récit*, as shown by Genette (1980: 290), these chapters abstracted above appear as a temporally distorted amalgam. This disturbance of the chronological order of events points to a representation of the past that informs interpretations in which past events describing Kate's life in 1966 are combined with the (same) narrator's recollections of the past as an adult in 1989. In this way the narrator links events 23 years apart. Therefore the reader may, for example, interpret the past as an expression of cause and effect. For example, the narrator Kate says: "[M]y grandmother's

attempts to toughen me were no defence against the events which caused the collapse of my life and the devastation of my childhood – or so it seemed to me at that time” (p. 3).

The above quotation is taken from the prologue of the narrative. The narrator considers her young and older selves. Firstly, she relates how she interacts with her grandmother while on a Christmas visit to her grandparent’s farm in the Eastern Cape in 1966. Secondly she refers to “the collapse” of her life as an adult woman living in Johannesburg in 1989. Speaking in 1989, Joe says to Kate: ““What was it Kate? It’s absurd that we could’ve lived together all these years and I feel I don’t know the largest part of you. The thing that’s made you – more than any other – into what you are”” (p. 223).

The narration on page 3 is a recollection of a group of events which occurred when Kate was 8 years old. Since it is the adult Kate speaking, this passage is a retroversion. At the same time it may be said that the narrator is anticipating these events since in terms of the chronological order these events have not happened. The dialogue between Kate and Joe (p. 223) is Kate’s recollection of events, now, as a woman in her thirties. She narrates events that show her as a cynical adult (p. 221). Thus the analysis of temporal relations brings together two temporal centres, namely the past and the present in Kate’s life. These events are brought together in the *récit* to show that specific events have had a negative impact on her, have caused a “collapse” of her life. Described in the narrative are instances illustrating the character’s antisocial behaviour as an adult. The following extract illustrates how the past and the present are brought together in a single passage. The narrator recounts:

Years later, I searched the book of Isaiah to find the words which had stayed with me. Those words which had lived in my churning thoughts as the final warning from God that He expected of me the goodness that would hold the baying, circling evil from my farm and my family. But the full force of

His warning exploded in me only much later that holiday ... I hadn't yet fully recognized the omens of little things. It was only later that I recognized how early the awfulness had begun ... (pp. 56-57).

Thus temporal relations build coherence of the fictional world by linking and dispersing a leitmotif of adversity within a narrative text.

Similarly, the events of the present day (1989) are structured into chapters that are allocated a specific date. These dates begin on "15<sup>th</sup> October" of 1989 and progress to "15<sup>th</sup> December" of that year. The arrangement of the events as occurrences happening within specific dates is a structuring device. Additionally, taking into account the order of events within the *récit*, these anticipatory chapters, as the headings show, convey a sense of tension. Genette (1980:72) describes anticipations as a mark of "narrative impatience". The last part of the novel is an undated chapter which takes the form of an epilogue and concludes some of the themes used to describe apartheid South Africa in 1966.

Broadly speaking, the novel explores the theme of apartheid South Africa through employing, to a large extent, retroversions of the chronological order of events. Part of the novel's time frame, that is, between 1966 and 1989, also projects into the future, namely post-apartheid South Africa. It is from the time span of the narrative's present in 1989 that anticipatory events may be inferred upon analysing the discrepancy of the chronological telling of events in the *récit* and their projected occurrence when considering the *histoire*. As an example, the narrator describes a rally to welcome released activists, long imprisoned by the apartheid government. Speaking in the chapter titled "1989 ... 29<sup>th</sup> October", the adult Kate observes: "Every one of the released men is expected to speak. As I read their names off the back of a T-shirt just below me, I wonder how many of these men we'll ever hear of again. But today is their day. Today we will listen to them" (p. 113).

Where in the novel's present the narrator observes hope of a jubilant crowd, the representation of apartheid is made complex by anticipating a less happy time when some leaders of the anti-apartheid movement will be forgotten. The manipulation of time in this manner presents a dimensional representation of the apartheid past.

Another structuring device apparent in the novel is that each period has almost an exclusive cast of characters and a different geographical locale. In 1966 Kate, her two brothers, parents, grandparents, white neighbours and a coterie of black domestics and farmhands inhabit the farm which is situated in the Eastern Cape. In 1989 Kate is married to a labour lawyer, Joe, and other characters are her friends, her husband's colleagues and some school children.

The novel was published in 1996, namely in post-apartheid, democratic South Africa, and may be analysed firstly as a network of Genettean temporal relations between its present-day occurrences and past events within its demarcated time frame of 1966 and 1989. However, the novel may also be understood as a single unit, in which the apartheid period (1948 to 1994) stands in contrast to the democratic era (1994 to the present day). Analysing *In search of lost time*, Genette, mentions the macrostructure of the novel. Similarly, the novel's temporal structure here may be seen as a self-sufficient hermetic world describing apartheid South Africa. The macrostructure of the novel may be represented as follows:

A1 B1 A2 B2 B3 A3 B4 B5 A4 B6 B7 A5 B8 B9 A6 B10 A7 B11 C

A and B are chapters representing the narration of the events of 1989 and 1966 respectively. C describes undated events which occur after 1966 but are temporally closer to 1989. The numerals denote that the chapters A (1989) or B (1966) have different content since different events are described within each chapter. This study analyses the microstructure of the novels under discussion and relies on Genette's theory of temporal relations.

### 3.2.3 Apartheid as a theme and its sub-themes

Apartheid as a theme is explored as an aspect through various sub-themes, some of which include the unequal socio-political relations between blacks and whites, the ethnic identity of Afrikaners, patriarchy and matriarchy in racially divided societies as well as filial relations. An aspect of the novel describes the differences between the apartheid past and the present as forms of generational differences. For example, Elaine, who is the protagonist Kate's mother, is described in the narrative text as rejecting the traditional ways of the past and adopting modern social mores. Informative is the narrator's description of clashes between Ouma ("Grieta") and Elaine (p. 61). By pointing out that by changing her name from Helena to Elaine and by wearing the then fashionable miniskirts, Ouma accuses her daughter of rejecting indigenous Afrikaans culture and heritage by adopting English culture. The narrator represents Ouma as holding a view that English culture is without the substance of traditional Afrikaner values. Ouma's conservatism is highlighted through a number of events. For example, the narrator quotes Ouma in prayer: "Our Father, on this day of our Covenant with Thee, we thank Thee for Thy deliverance of Thy people from the Zulu hordes. We thank Thee for our victory against the godless at Blood River".

Afrikaans speakers commemorated December 16 as "Day of the Covenant" or "Day of the Vow" (South African History Online (SAHO), 2014f). This day was observed as a public holiday after the Nationalist Party came into power in 1948. The "Nationalist Party government set about politicising the day to legitimise their apparent uniqueness and historical relationship with God" (South African History Online (SAHO), 2014g). This appropriation capitalised on socio-political circumstances brought about by the Battle of Blood River in 1838. After the Battle the Kingdom of AmaZulu was vulnerable to the demands of land as well as the establishment of a republic, Natalia, by the Voortrekkers in 1839. Natalians raided black-owned farms in nearby Eastern Cape prompting the annexation of Natal by British soldiers in May 1844. The Crown Colony was established in

December 1845 and henceforth December 16 was known as Dingaan's Day (South African History Online (SAHO), 2014g).

The narrative represents Ouma as highlighting the importance of this day by having morning prayers with her family (pp. 119-120). In the prayer, Ouma recalls past events (of the 1800s) to say that the Battle was deliverance from the "Zulu hordes" (p. 119) and hereby asserts that the Battle is integral to Afrikaans heritage and culture. Additionally, since Afrikaners were driven out of Natalia by the British, Ouma regards the "Day of the Covenant" as a differentiating factor between Afrikaans- and English-speaking white South Africans.

The narrator relates that her English-speaking father, who is Ouma's son-in-law, disapproves of Ouma's prayer by mumbling a "gruff ... Amen" (p. 119). As if to underline ethnic differences Ouma explains the importance of praying on this day in a dialogue between herself and Kate's brother Michael. The narrator quotes Ouma: "'We always pray for people who don't know God,' said Ouma. 'But in actual fact, Dingaan's Day is just what you English inappropriately call it'" (p. 120).

A few sentences below the quotation above, Ouma positions the superiority of Afrikaner values in saying to Michael: "'I know you people don't care much for this tradition at home. But while you're here you'll learn to respect the ways of your forefathers ...'" (p. 120).

Another example involves a lunch during which Ouma's brother, Oom Frans, asserts the authority of Afrikaans culture in a prayer. In this scene (p. 55), Oom Frans's reading of Christian scripture represents how, during the apartheid past, the language functioned as an ideal conduit to God. In the extract below, Oom Frans is addressing Kate:

‘Jy praat vlot Afrikaans,’ Oom Frans said, opening his eyes after I, the youngest, had stumbled and raced through a short Afrikaans grace that my mother had once taught me. Oom Frans’s planed face softened into a surprisingly kindly smile. ‘But in honour of our Engelse family – you are not included in that Elaine ...’ he added with a rumbling chuckle which gentled his sardonic nod towards my mother, ‘... we will now speak some English’ (p. 57).

This extract is a narrative representation of tension between English-speaking and Afrikaans-speaking South Africans, and also reiterates that ethnicity was an essential component to separate, categorise and advantage people during the apartheid past (Worden, 2012:94).

#### **3.2.4 Apartheid, self-blame and guilt**

This interpretation of the text comes about through analysing temporal relations. In the chapter titled “1966 ... Eight days to Christmas” (pp. 135-150), the overriding temporal relation is a retroversion from the present of 1989 to the past. Additionally, analysing the frequency in which an event is narrated in the *récit* in comparison with the occurrence of the same event as part of the *histoire* may assist the reader in drawing certain conclusions. As an example, one day at her grandparent’s farm, Kate baits chickens to kill each other (p. 132). This event occurs once according to the *histoire* but is narrated a number of times in the chapter under discussion (p. 136). Here temporal relations allow the reader to arrive at an interpretation that highlights Kate’s propensity for self-blame.

Kate’s self-blame is portrayed through a number of guises, including blaming herself for the drowning of kittens when she relates that they were killed because one kitten had scratched her (p. 90). Kate also tells the reader that she assumes responsibility for the incident when a petrified black domestic worker is bitten by a dog Kate has been asked to hold (p. 176). After a detailed description

of the event, Kate's grandfather comforts her. The narrator relates the event as a dialogue in this manner:

"But her ear ..." I started to weep, in great shaking sobs.

"Poor child, it's an awful thing for you to have seen. But ..."

Oupa gave a deep sigh, "... these things happen, you know. I'm just so sorry you had to see it."

"But you don't understand, Oupa. It was because of me."

"Oh now, what nonsense is this?"

"It happened because of me. I wasn't holding her properly. I thought she'd sit. Like with the meerkats" (p. 179).

In terms of duration, this extract shows that the temporal relation between the *récit* and the *histoire* is close in this scenic representation. The narration of this event is spread over 5 pages (pp. 176-180), and in the majority of the paragraphs the narrator quotes the characters participating in this event. Analysis of the scene as a unit within the *récit* indicates that the narrator has opted for an extended presentation. Comparatively, as an aspect of the *histoire*, the biting of the black domestic worker took place within a few minutes. This extended permutation of the duration of the event is also significant because other events occurring within a few minutes are not described in such an elaborate manner. Duration then combines with other forms of temporal relations to draw attention to this event. When the *récit* is analysed in terms of the frequency with which an event is narrated, it is apparent that the scene relating how a domestic worker is being bitten by a dog surfaces again on pages 200, 201 and 202. The representation of the scene, in terms of the duration and frequency, underlines the importance of this event in supporting the sub-theme of self-blame.

The character's iterations blaming herself culminate in the novel's most significant occurrence, where Kate assumes responsibility for an event which is evident in all the memories (from 1989) the character has of the farm:

Later I wondered if it could've been that which started what happened that day. If I, like Judas, hadn't set off some inexorable process towards violence and mangled horror. And, if I had, could have stopped what happened if I'd acted differently. If I hadn't presumed, and had begun to take His favour for granted again. Could I, could Judas, have done any different? (p. 231).

This is significant because "white guilt" is one of the sub-themes used to describe apartheid in the novel. Neil (Kate's elder brother) encapsulates this theme in a scenic dialogue between himself and Kate:

"Maybe it's all our faults," he said roughly, "for letting the things happen. Don't you know that's what the Germans said in the war, that it wasn't their fault and it wasn't fair to blame them? But you know what? They were all guilty, for letting things happen. It's the same here. We're to blame, me and you" (p. 104).

The adult Kate recalls events in a way that shows that she takes the blame for instigating (as an eight-year-old child) the castration of a black youth on Christmas Day 1966. The narrator's description of this event and similar ones highlights white guilt as a theme in the interpretation of the novel.

The theme of white guilt in South African narrative has received attention from scholars who see this as one of the defining characteristics of works written in the early years of post-apartheid fiction. The works of both Jo-Anne Richards and Mark Behr have been analysed in this manner because their novels feature white child protagonists growing up during the oppressive period. Heyns (2000:42-66) finds that Kate's unwarranted reason for feeling guilty about Johannes's castration may be interpreted as establishing a case for the supposed collective guilt of white South Africans about the oppression of black people. He explains that the theme of white guilt implicates whites on the basis

of being “part of a system that [made] those atrocities possible and even necessary to its own survival” (2000:52).

Violent acts, namely the rape (p. 237) of a white woman by her black labourer on a farm and the collective retributive castration (p. 245) of the labourer by white men are the central premise of the novel. This is made more potent because the farm on which the violence occurs once belonged to Kate’s grandparents, and because Kate’s father is a passive bystander to the castration. It is through analysing how temporal relations represent this aspect of apartheid that one may interpret Kate’s father’s failure to stop Johannes’s mutilation as an analogy for white South Africans who may be said to be complicit with the oppressive apartheid government. This leitmotif is evident when the narrator comments on Neil’s discontent. Says the narrator:

William’s son striding from us again, stopped to throw over his shoulder: ‘Anyway, I have to get to work now. The *ou Miesies* says I have to get work from the hard `baas next door.’ He paused, and his voice filled with bitterness, finished; ‘he’s full of apartheid, that one.’

Neil didn’t reply as John began to trot across the veld, back towards the warm safety of our farmhouse and the happy boys’ room.

Neil sighed, walking slowly now, his face scrunched into a tight frown. My stomach had tightened and I felt the ugliness approaching again, darkening the threatening day. And this time it wasn’t on the next far. (p.104).

### **3.2.5 Apartheid and gender relations**

Another informative aspect of temporal relations in this chapter is the analysis of the duration of time with which events described in the *récit* compares with the amount of time the same event is said to have occurred in terms of the *histoire*. An extended scenic exchange, as characterised by the dialogue between Ouma and Elaine, reveals that the time between the *histoire* and the *récit* is close.

For the purposes of comparison, an approximation is made between the variable time it takes a reader to read a text as it appears in paragraphs in the novel (which is a spatial element) and the amount of time in which the event occurred, which refers to the duration of an event experienced by those characters. Analysing the duration and order of events reveals the way the author links white guilt, urbanisation, Afrikaner nationalism, the co-option of women as agents for patriarchy as well as interrogates the socially ascribed role for Afrikaner women to nurture their children.

This discussion demonstrates that various aspects of temporal relations do not operate in isolation within a narrative text, but that considering the interaction between elements of duration and order, as in this instance, is an effective interpretive tool that helps to explain the complex nature of texts. The dialogue between Ouma and Elaine (pp. 138-141) ostensibly refers to an event in which the young Kate and her brother Michael insulted a neighbouring farmer, Van Rensburg, a day earlier. However, the dialogue also brings in events from other temporal time zones into Ouma and Elaine's present time of 1966 so that in the modulation of temporal pasts the themes mentioned above may be inferred.

In the novel's time period of 1966, Ouma marks the temporal past, while her daughter Elaine marks both characters' temporal present. At the same time Ouma and Elaine's stories are told in 1989 by the narrator Kate. Therefore in Genettean terms, there are two forms of retroversion in operation. These "pasts" are also represented as differences between generations (Tobin, 1978:5). Ouma's past is the generation of her father who lost his farm during the 1920s Depression in South Africa. In the *récit*, the narrator quotes Ouma who speaks at length about the displacement of Afrikaners and the ensuing poverty of her family. Worden (2012:65-68) writes of the 1920s in terms of South Africa's "poor white problem" and social upheaval. Thus temporal relations allow for an interpretation which recognises how the emotional relationships are portrayed in the *récit*.

The layered interaction between mother Ouma and daughter Elaine shows how gender relations represent an aspect of the apartheid past. In the telling of the story, the narrator introduces several issues of gender difference in the narrative. Macey (2001:156) notes that in cultural terms, “gender could be equated with socially constructed notions of femininity and masculinity”. In the example below, Ouma adheres to Afrikaner nationalist traditions as a guide for social conduct. Ouma says to Elaine:

“Just look at you.” Ouma sounded as though she was spitting the words from her lips, to have them gone from her flesh as rapidly as possible. “With your teased hair and painted nails. And, *Magtig*, you insist on wearing those short skirts on the farm – and in front of all the boys too. What do you think that looks like? What kind of values does that give your children, what kind of solidity for life?” (p. 141).

Ouma’s definition of femininity and womanhood is verbalised in this dialogue largely through statements of omission, by not saying what Elaine *should* wear. Instead Ouma says she should *not* be attired in teased hair, painted nails and short skirts. In terms of its themes, the narrative may be interpreted to say that represented is a clash of ideas about constructions of gender between an older and a younger woman. In another sense, the narrative highlights a “confusing relationship between motherhood and sexuality” (Zinn, 2000:246-269). Expressed through the representation of Ouma is that Elaine, as a mother, ought not to wear short skirts.

There is also a racial element which may be interpreted to mean that Elaine’s wearing short skirts threatens and subverts apartheid racial hierarchies. Ouma refers to black male farmhands as “boys”, thereby ranking these men as socially inferior to white women. Ouma’s utterances link the younger woman’s dress sense to the undermining of conservative apartheid social and moral standards. As

an older woman, Ouma is represented as if she appropriated a role to define and maintain the adherence to values of womanhood.

Regarding narrative duration, the scenic representation of the interaction between Ouma and Elaine means that the *récit* and the *histoire* are closer in temporal relation. Dissolving the time difference between the narrative past of 1966 and the narrative present of 1989 allows the child and adult narrative perspectives to merge. As an adult Elaine embodies a feminist consciousness, and this idea permeates the telling of this episode. Gold (2004:428-434) writes about Virginia Woolf's "concept of a parallel between masculine aggression, the 'tyranny of a patriarchal state,' and 'the tyranny of the Fascist state'". This concept is useful in analysing the structuring of patriarchy in the novel where the oppressive nature of the apartheid state is replicated by the manner in which (white) men suppress women, blacks and children. The trope of oppression may be identified in *The innocence of roast chicken*, *The smell of apples* and *Thirteen cents*. Regarding *The innocence of roast chicken*, although the episode between Ouma and Elaine is supposedly related within the child narrator's realm of 1966, it is the adult Kate who objects to Ouma unfairly accusing Elaine of compromising moral values. Elaine responds to Ouma's above-quoted comments:

"Those are my clothes, Ma!" She was shouting now, but her voice sounded thick. "Not that you bother to see how people actually dress in the world, but I'd like to tell you that, no matter how you try to make out that I look cheap, wearing a miniskirt doesn't make you a slut. Everyone I know wears minis. It's the fashion. What's wrong with that?" (p. 141).

The structuring of temporal relations aids an expansive interpretation of this episode. The dialogue between Ouma and Elaine also mentions divergent world views between Afrikaans- and English-speaking white South Africans. For example, Ouma accuses Elaine of encouraging her children to devalue their Afrikaans heritage and reprimands her:

“There is nothing in those children, nothing at all of their *volk*. And nothing in them of me. I am an Afrikaner. I’m proud of it, proud of my people and my heritage. There’s no pride in their nationhood. Nothing but scorn, for me and what I stand for. You and your children consider yourselves superior, above me with my simple farm ways. You think you’re better, and so do your children” (p. 140).

The relationship between Ouma and Elaine is described in terms of filial proximity as mother and daughter, as the following dialogue between the two characters illustrates. Says Elaine:

“And what you seem to forget is, no matter how I dress and whatever my children say, I’m still your daughter and they are still your only grandchildren. You’d better make do with us.” (p. 141).

To this Ouma responds:

“I forget nothing. But I know something else. Being a daughter means more than taking ... more than just taking the life that was given to you ...” (p. 141).

This interaction between Ouma and Elaine explores the notion of motherhood. In this dialogue, Ouma and Elaine debate ideal attributes of a mother. Ouma sees shortcomings in Elaine as mother, as Elaine also sees shortcomings in how Ouma has mothered her.

Ouma says to Elaine:

“What I am saying to you is that there’s more to motherhood than a difficult birth. May God help me, but I still care for you, and your children, but being a mother means passing things on. I’ve passed nothing to you, you with your red nails and short skirts that offend me every time I see your legs” (p. 142).

There is a confluence of the sub-themes of gender, ethnicity and class in the structuring of the narrative to represent the apartheid past. The extracts are taken from Chapter 12, "1966 ... Eight days to Christmas". In this chapter, temporal relations bring together the current event, namely a morning swim shared by Kate's father Jim and all his children (p. 135), with the recollection of the killing of a chicken, an occurrence for which Kate blames herself (p. 136). Other events represented include Ouma's morning prayer conducted in Afrikaans; the neighbouring farmer's visit to complain about Kate and her brother Michael's disruption at his farm (p. 138); the life of English-speaking white women in the city (p. 141); the recollection of Elaine being sent to boarding school as a child (p. 143); as well as the adult narrator's memory of the childhood lunch held after Ouma and Elaine's quarrel (p. 146).

The interaction between the recollections of past events and the telling of events of the narrative present may be interpreted in terms of gender relations. The structuring of the episode involving Elaine being sent to boarding school is in the form of a scenic duration, and therefore contributes to the realisation of the sub-theme and representation of the apartheid past.

Additionally, in the narrative, gender relations are manifested in interactions between men and women. An example relating to the usurpation of Ouma's position as a matriarch on the farm is an incident at the family breakfast when Ouma's brother, Oom Frans, visits the farm. The child narrator makes this observation about Ouma: "It was clear to me that she, as undisputed head of the family, should be placed at the table's starched white end, but awarded this distinction to Oupa, who sat now with an expression of infinite sweetness for Ouma" (p. 60). This episode may be interpreted as saying that patriarchy undermined white women during the apartheid past.

During the time frame 1989, the adult narrator relates her experiences as a teacher by adopting a disparaging tone when speaking about her students. Firstly, as some girls are waiting to enter the

school library, she describes them as “shallow-faced girls who bob from their chairs in blonde bounces, chattering outside the door with squeals of exaggerated vivacity” (p. 151). Kate reports that she also dislikes the way “ultra cool girls” look, as they have “waved hair” and wear “overly short gym slips” (p. 152). These girls are also described as having “a vast preoccupation with sex ...” (p. 153). Kate notes that the girls will “reach their own disappointment in the years of fumbled, sweaty embraces to come. And in the welcoming response that’ll be expected of them – as it’s been expected of all those women before them – as it’s been expected of breasts and pressing penis” (p. 153). She also despises girls she describes as adolescent intellectuals and emphasises that their interest is in attracting “their male counterparts at the bus stop” (p. 154).

Kate links sexuality to the subservience of women. She insists that women employ underhand tactics to attract men and yet end up denied sexual expression. Kate’s view points to women’s sexuality being defined within patriarchy during apartheid. Her observations are occurring in the narrative present. However, the *récit* provides a background and context for her utterances through retroversions in chronological ordering of events, for example when she refers to an optimistic time when she first became a teacher (p. 151). When Kate speaks about the “ultra cool girls”, there is a retroversion to the school principal’s disapproving visit to the library (p. 152) and reference to an anticipatory detention of the girls after school (p. 152). In relating the interaction between herself and “intellectual” girls, she also anticipates the girls’ future visits at their homes, where the narrator expects the girls to wallow and enjoy “their delicately agonized images of themselves” (p. 154).

Analysing the use of temporal relations to structure the narrative enables an interpretation positing that seemingly privileged white young women were oppressed by patriarchy during the apartheid past. Kate’s cynical disposition is linked to the leitmotif of being unfulfilled. Later in the narrative, she describes sex with her husband as one-sided, for his pleasure and constraining for her.

Sexual engagement enables the narrator to consider femininity and masculinity as an expression of power relations. She notes:

My guard, I suppose, loosens slightly as I feel a film of contemptuous revulsion spread over my eyes. Suddenly my frail wrists are manacled in the imprisoning grasp of his hands. Panic flies, hot and acrid, to my mouth as my hands are roughly pinioned above my head.

“Stop it! Let me go!” I can hear the high-pitched fright in my voice (p. 67).

In concluding this interaction with Joe, Kate says:

Slowly he raises himself, perplexed now, the familiar hurt spreading over his open features. Rage smothers me like a hot blanket. How could he never understand? How could it never be brought home to him how close sex brings him, and all men for that matter, to the totally primitive, the bestial. Even gentle new-age men lose their thin veneer in the act of conquering, which so closely resembles a wrestled fight to the death (p. 68).

As a way of emphasising a feminist message, the narrator moves beyond the telling of this event and recalls the primitive era in human development, hence the narrative may be interpreted to mean that sex reinforces patriarchal gender structures which predate Western civilisation. According to Zinn (2000: 246-269), an aspect of feminism in the writing of the post-apartheid narrative involves women taking “vengeance for every woman who’d ever been gagged by a man”.

### **3.2.6 A global network of temporal relations**

As a global network of temporal relations, it is evident that the novel aims to connect events of 1966 and 1989. This is to support the notion of the family’s farm as a “perfect place” that becomes corrupted. In her childhood years (1966) Kate explains:

Everything had to be the same, and I knew it was my responsibility to hold it together, because only I realized how important it was to keep everything as it was before. And to be good. Good enough to avoid His wrath ... He'd granted us this perfect place – the farm. The farm was all about Christmas – in some ways I thought it existed for Christmas (p. 85).

The narration of the events of 1966 and 1989 is to service the sub-theme of self-blame. The notions of perfection and martyrdom are fleetingly captured in the extract above and transmuted in the novel's epilogue when the narrator reconstructs the farm in terms of mourning the corruption of a rural idyll.

The prologue to the novel serves to establish the context of forthcoming events. As does the majority of the narrative, the narrator frames the events as a form of memories. The narrator, as the character Kate, makes herself visible on a number of occasions. She begins the novel describing the farm where she grew up as "idyllic", a notion that she questions throughout the text. She also gives a political history of South Africa by relating events to apartheid-era legislative practices, political figures and organisations and links these to the construction of herself, Kate, as a "real" existing person in the geographical locale of the suburbs of Johannesburg and a rural farm in the Eastern Cape. The narrator quotes herself by addressing the reader in this manner:

This is an unpleasant story, and it puts me in a bad light. But, I've decided that if I am to speak of that year and that life, it has to come out now, I have to tell it all no matter how badly you might think of me ... (p. 5).

In terms of the *histoire* of this story, the initial events may be found on page 223 rather than on page 1. Below is a conversation between the characters Kate and her husband Joe. After being described as bickering for two months (from 15 October to 15 December), towards the end of the period that the narrator has chosen to highlight, the couple decide to reconcile. Kate's telling of the story could

therefore be seen as an attempt to purge the past so as to begin life on a new footing. In this extract the narrator quotes Kate's husband Joe

"Just start slowly, Kati. Tell me in your own time."

"Well, maybe first I could start by telling you how nice it was, how idyllic. What a perfect childhood I had before that time. I think that's what I'll do. The rest of the story'll come in its own time" (p. 223).

As a form of the *récit*, the novel starts on the date "1989 ... 15<sup>th</sup> October". Although this is the novel's present, the narrator is writing of events that have already occurred. The act of writing and telling is in itself retrospective and is a way of representing the past. As an exploration of the sub-theme of self-blame, in this chapter Joe asks Kate questions that are significant in the development of the plot of this novel. These are:

"What causes you to be so bitter?" (p. 16).

During the same conversation, Joe says to Kate:

"I want to go to the coast this Christmas." He meant the East Cape coast, where we both grew up.

"You know I don't go to the Eastern Cape, ever."

"What is it about that place? What happened to you there?"

The dialogue quoted above illustrates the way in which the majority of past events are represented. There are brief explanatory passages in between the scenic representation of events as an aspect of duration between the *récit* and the *histoire*.

In Chapter 3, “1966 ... Seventeen days to Christmas”, Kate’s remembrances make it clear that she is recalling the events of 1966 from the present of 1989. She writes: “I can still remember every feel and smell of that holiday. Every minute has the clarity of a glass-encased specimen ...” (p. 20).

This chapter, having reverted to the past, then proceeds in the *récit* by largely following a chronological ordering of events. At this early stage of the story, the narrator sets the scene of the ordinary workings of the farm. Here the adult Kate questions the recollections of her eight-year-old self. She notes: “Perhaps it’s the memories of that suggestible, fanciful child, who died that holiday and was replaced by this dark-filled shell, that makes me remember it [the farm and the family holiday] as a grub nestled in the heart of a perfect pear” (p. 21).

Besides recording in the *récit* how the domestic workers served the family, the eight-year-old narrator describes retrospectively the selling of a portion of the farm and deviates from the chronological order of events by anticipating a visit by her mother’s family (p. 35).

Chapter 4, “1989 ... 22<sup>nd</sup> October”, mostly follows a chronological ordering of contemporary events in apartheid South Africa. The narrator describes a socio-political climate in which the demise of apartheid is seen to be imminent. Furthermore the troubled narrator is battling a hangover. Through a scenic rendition of a social occasion, the narrator characterises a group of white middle-class friends as using anti-apartheid paraphernalia, by way of wearing African National Congress (ANC) T-shirts to appear fashionable. The chapter starts with the narrator describing the aftermath of the party. She then segues to the party itself, which takes the form of a scenic representation of the event. Finally she reverts to the aftermath of the party, while maintaining for the most part a scenic representation of events.

Typically, in the narrative text, time is not static, but shifts to serve the representation of many “pasts” rather than seeing the apartheid era as a singular block of time.

The next two chapters, “1966 ... Sixteen days to Christmas” (Chapter 5) and “1966 ... The same day” (Chapter 6) support the interpretation of the novel under the sub-theme of self-blame. Firstly the narrator describes how Ouma disregards the beating of Albert’s son Johannes (a child to one of Ouma’s farmhands) (p. 47) by the neighbouring farmer, Van Rensburg. Kate blames herself for this event.

In the next chapter, Chapter 7, “1989 ... 28<sup>th</sup> October” (pp. 67-77), Kate and Joe continue to bicker, even as they (as characters) recall their courtship while at university through a retroversion. Kate is sceptical about the description of South Africa’s relinquishment of apartheid as a miracle (p. 74). The characters read newspaper reports. This adds another layer to the management of temporal relations. In the first instance there is a retroversion concentrating on the actions of Kate and Joe. Secondly, there is another temporal distance between the events that are reported in the newspaper. The newspaper reader reads about past events. In the *récit*, these temporal relations are brought closer together in the representation of the past.

Chapter 8, “1966 ... Fifteen days to Christmas” (pp. 79-90), is mostly a chronological representation of life and events on the farm, amongst others preparations for Christmas Day. The time frame of 1966 is expanded by a retroversion which refers to the “old ways of [the] *volk*” (p. 89).

In Chapter 9, “1966 ... Fourteen days to Christmas” (pp. 91-104), Kate narrates her visit to Van Rensburg’s farm with her elder brother, sixteen-year-old Neil (p. 98). The narrator informs the reader that Van Rensburg’s farm is built in a rough manner and that the farm labourers suffer ill-treatment. Upon spotting Johannes, the siblings try to speak to him without the latter responding.

They encounter Van Rensburg. The earlier beating of Johannes is recalled and Van Rensburg's brutal manner in the present moment are brought together in Neil's characterisation of Van Rensburg as a "[b]loody rabid rock spider" (p. 103). Says Neil about the farmer: "They are not like us. They are cruel and treat their Africans badly" and he adds later: "'They're the kind that keep apartheid in this country'" (p. 103).

The narrator quotes several speakers at an African National Congress rally in Chapter 10 titled "1989 ... 29<sup>th</sup> October" (pp. 105-117). Subsequently the *récit* substantially follows a chronological unfolding of this event. A common denominator in the sections narrating the events of 1989 is the scepticism of the thirty-something-year-old Kate. Invariably, in the novel's narrative universe, Joe interprets Kate's confrontational disposition as a symptom of her traumatic childhood. Therefore retroversions repeatedly interrupt the flow of events in the narrative present.

It is apparent in Chapter 11, "1966 ... Nine days to Christmas" (pp. 119- 135), that the narrator often selects the characters of Kate and her older brother Michael as guides for the reader to understand the operation of apartheid within a family. This is evident not only in the description of how adult servants interact with prepubescent children as if they were their intellectual superior, but also in the adventurous events which the characters embark upon.

One such adventure is a visit to Van Rensburg's farm, where Kate and Michael encounter Johannes. There is a dialogue between "William's son" John, who is a young adult and the eight-year-old Kate. John protests against Van Rensburg's so-called "new ways" of treating farm labourers and says they are actually "old ways ... [that] should die" (p. 129). The characters also disturb the notion of time as a rigid category of either the "past" or the "present." Through Bergson's theory of memory (1950:232) it may be deduced that the old ways of apartheid may coexist with a "new way" of post-apartheid as he holds that any "present situation" has the potential to resemble a "former

situation". This placing of a present situation and a past situation alongside each other enables the participants to "profit" from such an experience.

Chapter 12, "1966 ... Eight days to Christmas" (pp. 135-151), features Van Rensburg as a catalyst in the novel's exploration of a stated divide between English- and Afrikaans-speaking white South Africans. This divide is also one of the defining aspects of apartheid. Although there are retroversions as well as Kate's incomplete memory, the prevailing temporal relation is the scenic duration in the ordering of events.

The adult Kate modifies her critical stance towards Joe and South Africans in Chapter 13, "1989 ... 17<sup>th</sup> November" (pp. 151-163). On the other hand, the narrator relates Van Rensburg's extreme and unrestrained prejudice towards blacks in Chapter 14, "1966 ... Six days to Christmas" (pp. 163-173). The narrator starts with a statement recalling an adventure trip involving Kate, Michael, as well as Van Rensburg, his son Kobus and a child servant, Jonas. The narrator's comments are peppered with memories and quotations of dialogue. Thus all three aspects of temporal relations carry forward common themes between chapters as a way of representing the past.

Chapter 15, "1966 ... Five days to Christmas" (pp. 173-180), begins with a quotation of a dialogue, and then proceeds with a chronological description of a black worker's visit to the family's kitchen hand, Dora. For the most part a scenic presentation of events prevails. Similarly, dialogue between Kate and Joe is prominent in the following chapter, "1989 ... 3<sup>rd</sup> December" (pp. 181-198). As in previous chapters dealing with 1989 (p. 74), the presentation of past events happening in another part of the country and at a different time are brought together with unfolding interaction between Kate and Joe. Kate and Joe live in the suburbs and one of the examples brought into their lounge, is the killing of black workers in Witbank. Kate's scepticism about South Africa's future is represented.

In the next chapter, “1966 One day to Christmas” (pp. 199-210), the narrator relates Kate’s prayer in anticipation of Christmas Day. As in the previous chapter of 1966, the narrator mentions her anxiety that there may be “death and violence” (p. 199) on the farm. The way in which Kate’s foreboding is stitched together mostly through retroversions and a few anticipatory events across most of the chapters in the novel serves the sub-theme of self-blame. These are on the following pages, firstly in chapters concentrating on the time frame of 1989: pages 11, 18, 41, 69, 70, 117, 220. On chapters centred on the time frame of 1966 Kate’s foreboding is narrated on these pages: 57, 85, 102, 104, 121, 126, 130, 132, 137, 147, 200, and 220.

Chapter 18, “1989... 15<sup>th</sup> December” (pp. 211-225), consists of dialogue and minimal commentary as quoted by the narrator. The pivotal chapter, Chapter 19, “1966 ... Christmas Day” (pp. 225-245), sees the realisation of Kate’s foreboding in which the narrator describes violent acts. The eight-year-old Kate’s witnessing Johannes’s castration and ascribing the violent turn of events of the day to herself are two facets shown by the narrator to motivate her social interactions in subsequent years. In this chapter the narrator draws attention to the minute-by-minute unfolding of events. After narrating activities undertaken by the household on Christmas morning – breakfast and lunch – there is a change of pace suggested by the words “Tick, Tick, Tick” (p. 233). They serve as an onomatopoeia for the sound of a clock counting the forward momentum of seconds or minutes.

Following another description of afternoon activities, another countdown is relayed. A third, final countdown paves the way for the description of gathering “Eastern Cape winds”, followed by the narrator’s use of sound in the *récit* by quoting “a powerful Skree-ee-bang” of a door. It is then that events leading to the castration of Johannes begin. Along with aspects of temporal relations mentioned before, this further delineation of narrative time gives the impression that events are occurring in the present moment. This contributes to the multifaceted way of representing the past. Following this chapter is an epilogue in which the narrator relays the aftermath of the sexual assault

of Van Rensburg's wife, the fate of her attacker Johannes, as well as the frustrated actions of the "manne", namely farmers residing in the district. This epilogue operates in conjunction with the previous chapter. In the epilogue, through temporal ellipsis, narrative time accelerates from the farm of 1966, where the eight-year-old grows up, to Kate as a teenager and finally to Kate as an adult.

Therefore, in the Bergsonian sense, memory, like time, progresses. As a process of accumulation, the novel's management of temporal relations may be interpreted to mean that South Africans ought to resolve the past to gain social stability in the present. Adopting Bergson's theorem, it is as if the novel proposed that the past is not an aspect of life that is left behind in years gone by, but is present in the way society perceives the present circumstances.

### 3.2.7 Expansion of temporal zones

Analysing the temporal aspect of frequency (Genette, 1980:118) also demonstrates that the iterations of the apartheid past serve to extend the time frame the characters refer to. In one sense, the description of the assault on Johannes extends the novel's local time frame. In terms of the structural organisation of the novel, it is apparent that this event occurs once in the *histoire* but is repeated eight times by the narrator (on pages 32, 47, 48, 99, 101, 121, 122, 128) in the telling of the story as the *récit*. Genette (1980:118) observes that there are events that serve as external iterations. This is apparent in a dialogue between Ouma and John:

"You were wrong to give your slave boys to that bad master." The words burst between his tight lips. He wasn't looking at Ouma now, he was holding me, my unwilling eyes caught by his agonised gaze.

"Do not dare question my actions, John, or things will go badly for you." Her voice was still quiet, but her coal eyes flared. When I was older, and could recall the look and the sound of the anger, I thought

that it was then that she most showed, in those glowing dark eyes and taught, high-cheeked face, the French peasant blood of her forebears (p. 33).

The narrator's reference to the "French forebears" brings to the fore the history of the French Huguenots (South African History Online (SAHO), 2014a), a community of Protestants who had fled northern France to settle in the Cape in the 1600s. This discussion of events within a "local scene" extends the past of the current recollection, and the "temporal field" comprising the iterative section of 1966 is exceeded. In Bergsonian terms, in other words, the past is progressing forwards by approximately 300 years. The representation of Ouma's coercive power is amplified by evoking a historical precedent of oppression. Borrowing Bergson's (1950:313) formulation, it may be said that evoking the memory of the Huguenots enriches the reader's interpretation of the present. In the interpretation of the narrative text, an analysis of temporal relations informs the reader of the exploitation of blacks. According to the narrative, there is a long-standing practice in the Cape of repressing blacks, forcing them to occupy inferior social positions.

In this way social and political resonances permeate throughout the events described and the interactions between characters in different social (or class) positions. Narratology as a scientific methodology that exposes the underlying structures within narrative texts through analysing the unfolding temporal relations that bring together and separate events also proves to produce meaning. Therefore the reader interprets the supremacist ideological frame operating during apartheid as a consequence of the events described by the narrator in the *récit*.

Since the novel was written in 1989, some five years before democratic elections in South Africa, some events recounted by the narrator allow for sections of the novel to be considered as a form of anticipation, as the following example illustrates. The narrator says:

The sadness comes in the pathos of the inevitable – the clay and mud syndrome. Clay feet of real live politicians, and mudslinging between above-ground political parties. Outside of mythology, very few lions ever get to lie with lambs. Give them a few months. They'll be brutalizing and stabbing each other in the back with the best of them (p. 114).

### 3.2.8 The past constructed as a succession of generations

“I wandered as far as the stream, seeping its gentle tears down the sides of the valley. Blackened stones crossed the path here, wet and moss-encrusted. They must have been set there a generation before ...” (p. 98). In terms of the *récit*, the adult narrator Kate is recalling, in 1989, the events of the past. Considering the chronological sequencing of events as part of the *histoire*, earlier in the course of unfolding events Kate promises (p. 223) her husband Joe to tell her story. She says, “if we’re to be whole, if we’re both to survive, we both have to face what’s made us what we are. At some stage this has to be done”. So, in 1989 (p. 223) the character begins the narration in this manner: “There’s a story I have to tell you. And I have a feeling it’s going to take a long time to tell.”

From reading the *récit*, it may be inferred that traumatic events of Kate’s childhood have contributed to the character’s cynical disposition as described in the novel. This points to Genettean temporal relations that facilitate the interpretation of the meaning of the text. As for the beginning of Kate’s story as *histoire*, it extends beyond the boundaries stated explicitly in the *récit* as periods “1966” and “1989” – events which took place “generations” ago are incorporated, as illustrated on page 98.

The following extract is another example that illustrates how the past is constructed as a generational contest between parents and their children. Here Ouma’s elder brother, Oom Frans, yields his speaking turn to Ouma:

Smiling wryly at Ouma, he [Oom Frans] allowed her to continue.

“Anyway, as I was saying, when we lost the farm, Pappie loaded us all into the wagon and we trekked very slowly down the Langkloof to the Eastern Cape. It took us years. Magtig, those years were hard” (p. 60).

In the interpretation of this passage, the reader considers the order of events in the *récit*, which are not in chronologic order but are read in respect of their supposed chronological order in the form of the text's *histoire*. Hence the manipulation of the order of events brings together the pasts: 1877 (the Great Trek), 1966 (at the farm), the present (1989); and the future which in terms of the novel's time frame was then an unknown date of the democratic South Africa.

These episodes narrated by Kate offer a glimpse to test this study's hypothesis that, mainly, Genettean temporal relations are a viable theoretical approach to explain how this sample of South African novels describes apartheid. This discussion of temporal relations confirms that temporal relations are a useful methodology to account for the way in which South African novels written in the post-apartheid era describe apartheid in fiction.

### **3.2.9 The construction of a text as different levels of memories**

The adult narrator self-reflexively frames the recollections as memories, where there are “good” and “bad” memories. The very act of remembrance and memories are a major part of the construction of *The innocence of roast chicken*. Besides being apparent in the novel's macrostructure, the homodiegetic narrator relates events mainly in two ways, namely by stating “I remember” (p. 5) and also by narrating as an adult remembered events which occurred during her childhood in 1966. The language of remembrance takes many formulations. Sometimes the narrator denies remembering, as happens when she uses the words: “I can't remember if I screamed ...” (p. 22). Similarly the negation of memories may take this form: “I vaguely remember ...” (p. 40). At other times the narrator lets the reader know about an attempt to remember, as when Ouma tells Oupa “... ‘try to remember, you are an old man, not *mos 'n kind*.’” (p. 23).

Another example refers to the mental grasping of memory as an aspect of time. Kate says: "But I held that memory in my head ..." (p. 11). The narrator also combines a number of memories and recalls them as generalities, as in this instance: "Perhaps it's the memories of that suggestible child ..." (p. 21). She also phrases the act of remembering by using the words "...if I recall..." (p. 29) or by constructing it in this way: "When I was older and could recall ..." (p. 33). A variant of a recollection in which the adult narrator represents the temporal distance of the event that is recalled may read: "But years later, when I was awkwardly almost grown, I remembered ..." (p. 126).

Some memories are implied in the text, as when the narrator quotes Joe: "I genuinely believed that my love would open up your pitiful, damaged little psyche and that one day I'd know what it is that did this to you." (p. 70). At times memory assumes an immediacy of the present as when the narrator notes: "I suddenly remember ants ..." (p. 109). In some areas memory is used to specify a time frame, as when the narrator says: "That was the year, you see, in which I first noticed ..." (p. 137).

In Genettean terms, temporal relations represent not only the distinction between the past and the present but also the many levels of the past. As is apparent in the examples above, some events of the past are further away from what the narrator perceives at a given moment in time. This idea fits in with Bergson's theorem (1950:232) that the character discovers in an unfolding event the "resemblance of a former situation" and places that situation adjacent to events preceding and following it "in order to profit from the experience". As an example, the narrator witnesses the capture of the rapist Johannes (p. 243). She remembers that the farmers who had been tracking Johannes "had the look of the hunt about them" (p. 243). As for Johannes, at that moment the narrator perceives him as "a wounded, cowering animal ...". The description of this scene resembles an earlier event in which Kate witnesses chickens fighting and says that she sees that the "horror of this death was in the greed and gratification of the hunt ..." (p. 136).

The narrator places the castration of Johannes as part of defining events of her childhood from which she can learn. As an adult, Kate describes the retributive act on Johannes as “the hardest part” (p. 242). Therefore, in the Bergsonian sense it may be said that she “profits” from past experiences. This idea is captured in her statement “When I was older, I realized that, after all, I had been just a child, powerless to deflect the horror, not strong enough to be chosen as a cosmic goalie ...” (p. 1).

As an aspect of the *récit*, the narrator’s description of the killing of the chicken serves as an anticipatory event to the castration of Johannes. This line of thinking is justified by the way in which the narrator, telling the story 23 years later, links these events by seeing them as an aspect of the “hunt”. Analysis of the interaction between the *récit* and the *histoire* establishes how the past is represented. In the *récit*, the past takes the form of memories. Both Genette and Bergson’s theorems assist in the analysis and interpretation of the text.

As the adult narrator achieves a perception regarding the events of her childhood, she narrates these in the Bergsonian manner as memories progressing from the past to the present. Following the management of temporal relations outlined above, the narrative representation of the past renders the meaning that *The innocence of roast chicken* confers on the past, namely that white South African families had been under pressure to resolve the dual impact of English colonial culture and the Calvinist movement on Dutch settlers. The Afrikaans community, as presented in the narrative, inherited these polar influences. Although this conflict takes place within a family, it is presented as a microcosm of South African society.

Memory, in the form of recollections of past events describing the life of the protagonist Kate is used as a means of conveying various sub-themes aggregating to apartheid. As a structuring mechanism,

these memories collectively and individually take on a variety of permutations in the narrative text as forms of temporal relations. The whole narrative text is a recollection; however, also apparent are recollections within the recollection, which is the novel.

### **3.3 MARK BEHR'S *THE SMELL OF APPLES***

#### **3.3.1 Synopsis of the story and discussion of the structure**

The novel is structured as alternating sections between the present, which is circa 1988 in Angola near the then South West Africa and the Cape Province in 1973 South Africa (see Fig. 2 below). As in *The innocence of roast chicken*, the cast of characters is predominantly exclusive to a historical period and geographical locale. In this novel, the adult narrator relates events that involve his family and other characters while stationed as a lieutenant in the South African Defence Force. Prominent in the earlier period is the character Frikkie Delport, an eleven-year-old boy, who is a friend to the narrator Marnus. Also partaking in the events are his sister Ilse, his mother Leonore Erasmus (née Stein) and his unnamed father, "Dad".

Narrative present		Chapter 2 1988		Chapter 4 1988		Chapter 6 1988	
Narrative past	Chapter 1 1973		Chapter 3 1973		Chapter 5 1973		Chapter 7 1973

continued:

Narrative present	Chapter 8 1988		Chapter 10 1988		Chapter 12 1988		Chapter 14 1988
Narrative past		Chapter 9 1973		Chapter 11 1973		Chapter 13 1973	

continued:

Narrative present		Chapter 16 1988		Chapter 18 1988		Chapter 20 1988	
Narrative past	Chapter 15 1973		Chapter 17 1973		Chapter 19 1973		Chapter 21 1973

continued:

Narrative present	Chapter 22 1988		Chapter 24 1988		Chapter 26 1988		Chapter 28 1988
Narrative past		Chapter 23 1973		Chapter 25 1973		Chapter 27 1973	

continued:

Narrative present		Chapter 30 1988	
Narrative past	Chapter 29 1973		Chapter 31 1973

**Fig. 2:** Diagrammatic representation of the structure of Mark Behr's *The smell of apples* in terms of temporal orientation: narrative present alternated with narrative past.

The characters presented in the earlier time frame of 1973 minimally participate in the narrative's present situation. For this period, the adult Marnus is a lieutenant in the apartheid-era South African army. The characters and events mainly exist as Marnus's direct experiences. Marnus keeps the last letter from his mother while on this mission in southern Angola. Mentioned in the letter is Marnus's family's long-serving domestic worker Doreen. Two main moments, which are outside of his present army world, intrude on Marnus's narrative present. The first is when he hears his father on a Voice of America radio report (p. 83); the second is his mother's letter, which he carries during his assignment (pp. 133-136). In the first, the manipulation of time as a *récit* links Marnus and his father, thereby uniting three geographical locations; namely Angola, Cape Town and the United States of America. The letter presents a deviation from the chronology of events as it was written by Leonore

at an earlier time and dispatched from Erasmus senior's office in the Cape to southern Angola. The second entity also functions to juxtapose the domestic and the military worlds.

Characterised by the narrator as conservative, the patriarch Erasmus is a major general in the South African Defence Force as Marnus notes in this retroversion: "Just before my birthday, Dad became the youngest major-general ever in the history of the South African Defence Force" (p. 14). The Erasmus family are elites within apartheid society in the South African city of Cape Town. The arrangement of the order of specific events suggests an interpretation of the text that shows a confluence of capital and the apartheid state. For example, Frikkie's father is described as a "big nob at Sanlam" (p. 4).

Worden (2012:96) points out that Afrikaner nationalism "created its own symbolism and its own history stressing the unified experience of the Afrikaner *volk*". Part of the strategy to foster unity among Afrikaners involved the founding of institutions, among them the Afrikaner Bond and through it the building of "a strong Afrikaner nationalist bourgeoisie" (Worden, 2012:97). Allied to these manoeuvres was the consolidation of Afrikaner capital to "set up the large trust and insurance companies Santam and Sanlam in 1918". The homodiegetic narrator informs the reader that the seniors Delport and Erasmus "attend meetings" (p. 112) together. Both families have "Coloured" domestic workers. Gloria works for the Delports and Doreen, who has a son, "Little-Neville", has been employed by the Erasmus family for many years. Doreen stays on when Marnus and Frikkie promise each other to enlist to fight in the South African Army (p. 71). Ilse, Marnus's sister, also moves out of their home (p. 134).

The novel was first published in 1993, a year before the start of South Africa's democratic era, and it is through the events set in the 1970s and taking place within this socially privileged and politically connected family that the novel describes apartheid. As the ruling family patriarch, Marnus's father

is kindly but a predator and pederast, a vicious soldier in war and an oppressive husband. The narrator describes Erasmus's involvement in a covert military operation with a general from Chile, who comes to stay with the family. The Chilean general's visit to the family enables the narrative to explore some aspects of apartheid, for instance the history of Afrikaners in East Africa (then Tanganyika) and the sexualisation of Ilse within a paradigm of subservience.

The narrator also describes events in which Leonore, a former opera singer, is involved with high art besides being occupied with uplifting the poor: she introduces a poor Afrikaans girl, Zelda, to affluent social gatherings. In a limited way, Leonore is thus engaged in the betterment of poor people whether they are Afrikaners or blacks and also collects blankets for black people living in "shanties" (p. 134). In joining the theme of altruism and self-serving altruism, the novel represents the past as a tapestry of conflicting social relations. The bringing together of disparate ideas by channelling them into a single temporal zone allows for a nuanced interpretation of how the novel portrays the apartheid past.

Also prominent are the relations of servitude between Leonore, a mother who gives up a career to become the centre of an Afrikaans home, and Doreen, a domestic worker. The terror perpetrated against victims of apartheid is explored through events that involve Little-Neville, a "Coloured" and Frikkie, an Afrikaans boy, respectively.

### **3.3.2 The past constructed as a series of secrets**

A prominent way in which Mark Behr's *The smell of apples* describes apartheid is by exploring the notion of secrets. By presenting the manipulation of events as temporal relations, the narrator conveys how and why most characters harbour secrets. Just about all the characters have a secret. The discrepancy between the ordering of the events in the form of the *histoire* and the *récit* contributes to the narrative representation of the apartheid past. One of Leonore's secrets is that

she sees her sister, "Tannie Karla", clandestinely (p. 102). The patriarch bans his wife from seeing Karla when he finds the latter unacceptable for "mixing with blacks and saying things against the government" (p. 106).

However, subsequently Leonore also rejects her sister after the latter, in a scenic presentation of this event, admonishes Leonore for treating her "Coloured" workers badly as well as for submitting to her husband's dominance. An extended permutation in the duration of the number of paragraphs spent on the description of this event underlines its prominence as a form of *récit*. In an argument in the form of a dialogue between Leonore and Karla, the *récit* and the *histoire* are closer in their temporal relation. As an element to organise the novel structurally, this event may be interpreted as consolidating supportive and anti-apartheid views as represented by the characters.

Leonore's other secret activity is listening to and singing jazz. As an example, while driving her children to extramural activities she covertly listens to the music of Ella Fitzgerald and Nat King Cole. This may be interpreted as reinforcing the notion that apartheid functioned to normalise secrets in all areas of life, including domestic and state secrets. Informing this interpretation are aspects of temporal relations, namely, the recollected retroversion of a past event combined with the frequency (once) in mentioning that Leonore and her daughter Ilse, according to the narrator, "often do all kinds of harmonies" (p. 102).

The patriarch Erasmus enjoins his family as a collective in the subterfuge involving the visiting Chilean general. The narrator relates how Marnus and Ilse are initiated into practising deception, in which the creation of a false identity and the invention of a false context is used to mislead South Africans. Marnus narrates:

“Dad said that this visit had to be kept a secret, just like some of the others, and that we should call him Mister Smith who’s on business here from New York” (p. 18). This theme is revisited later in the *récit* where the secrets and lies are justified by giving the reason that “everyone hates South Africa” (p. 80). This information is communicated via the eight-page representation of an extensive dialogue (pp. 73-81) between Marnus and Frikkie. This serves to inform the reader of the apartheid government’s secret cooperation with America’s Central Intelligence Agency (p. 80), the Cold War between Western governments and Communist Russia (pp. 80-81) as well as the extension of conscription to white males in South Africa during the apartheid era (p. 81).

Ilse is six years older than her eleven-year-old brother Marnus. She is flirtatious and is then seen by the narrator secretly visiting the Chilean general one night. The narrator recalls this event retrospectively in the following manner:

The General is standing in front of Ouma’s dressing-table, looking at himself in the big oval mirror. The underpants he’s wearing aren’t the same as the scants Dad and I wear; they’re more like rugby-shorts. I can see the scar clearly. I look at his face in the mirror, and my heart starts beating like mad. Even though I can’t see very clearly, I can make out a reddish reflection in the mirror right next to him. I turn my eye to the door, but I can’t see that far. I move over a little to look through the other hole, but there I can’t see that far. I move over a little to look through the other hole, but through there I can see only the bed right below me. Quickly I move my eye back to the bigger one. He’s still exactly where he was, and the reflection from the doorway hasn’t moved either. I know it’s Ilse (p. 156).

In addition to the retrospective temporal reordering of events in the *récit*, this episode also serves to anticipate the sexual violation of Frikkie (p. 174). Both scenes unfold in the same bedroom with Marnus following a similar pattern in the way that he observes the general and Ilse (p. 155) and the patriarch Erasmus and Frikkie (p. 174). This view is confirmed in Marnus’s recollection:

Then I think of the holes in the knotty pine.

Quietly, so the beams don't creak, I cross the carpet. I roll it away carefully until both holes are open. I gently lower myself onto the floor. With my one eye shut, I look down into the bottom (p. 174).

The first sentence of the extract above interrupts the chronological succession of current events and redirects the reader to the earlier event between the general and Ilse. The representation of this event as anticipating the tragedy of Frikkie's abuse illustrates how temporal relations foster thematic unity within this novel. By the time the narrator relates Frikkie's sexual abuse, the reader interprets the text to note that apartheid promoted a culture of domination and secrecy in which a few individuals (in this instance presented as white military men) exercised unchecked power.

The novel suggests that the apartheid state depended on spying to maintain its hold on the population. The narrative text may also be interpreted as a critique exploring the nature of secrecy during apartheid. For example, the narrator is ambiguous regarding Marnus's activities as a spy. The reader is led to believe that Marnus discovers two of the novel's significant secrets coincidentally rather than by actively seeking to spy on his father and the visiting general. In a way the narrator presents spying as a valid action since it exposes the Chilean general and Ilse's "secret" (p. 156). On the other hand, the narrator is "embarrassed" when detected "peeking out the window" (p. 30). The chronology of the events indicates that Marnus is caught two nights before the encounter between Ilse and the Chilean general and three nights before the violation of Frikkie.

In this way the text prompts a discussion on "innocence" as represented by the child Marnus. Innocence is linked to surveillance, because Marnus stumbles upon "watching" the guest bedroom while tracing the general's movements in the house. Thus the character is not presented by the narrator as if he is spying on his father as such. Furthermore, the themes of innocence and

surveillance are linked to voyeurism. The narrator describes Marnus's observations as a form of ritual, as the following quotation demonstrates:

Slowly I get off the bed and tiptoe to the centre of the room. It's almost full moon and the light is falling in through the window. Where the carpet is rolled back, two small patches of lamplight shine up through the holes in the floorboards. I lie down on my side so that my knees won't rub against the floor. When I roll over on my stomach I bend them up ... (p. 154).

It is informative to revisit the narrator's observation of Frikkie, as it elucidates the way in which the character Marnus functions as a focaliser. He begins his description of Frikkie's violation in this manner:

Quietly, so the beams don't creak, I cross the carpet. I roll it away carefully until both holes are open. I gently lower myself on the floor. With my one eye shut, I look down into the bottom room ... (p. 174).

In the first of the two extracts, where the homodiegetic narrator sees Ilse visiting the general, his narration is imbued with a sensory and voyeuristic tone. For example, there is a description of "Ouma's dressing table", which has an "oval mirror", some comparison of underwear, but most interestingly, the narrator never sees Ilse directly, instead catches or apprehends glimpses of her as a "reddish reflection in the mirror" (p. 155). As if to emphasise the primacy of images rather than dialogue, Marnus says of the two characters: "I can't understand why they don't say anything. All they do is look at each other and he's smiling like they have a secret" (p. 156).

Both episodes describing the sexual exploitation of minor children by adult males are structured in a way that follows a sequential chronological narration of events. There are secondary retroversions to previous events. The most notable ones are, firstly, the narrator's reference to Ilse and the general's previous discussion of strangers as literary figures. Both Ilse and Marnus are reading the novel *Moby*

*Dick*, in which a character “Queequeg” is described as a “dark and mysterious stranger” and likened to the Chilean general (pp. 150-151). The second retroversion functions to link the two episodes together. It is apparent when Marnus says, “Then I think of the knotty pine” (p. 174). Thus within an event which occurs later according to the *récit*, an earlier event is recalled.

Both events are also pivotal in the global structure of the novel in that their placing within the novel’s chronological sequence results in the impression that events are building towards a climactic point in the *histoire*. They may also be regarded as pivotal because proportionally more paragraphs are used to describe them individually and as a unit. Because of their elevated status within the novel, their representation allows the reader to interpret the apartheid past as corrupt. The novel makes a positioning statement (at the time of its publication) advocating dismantling of apartheid institutions, among them, the army, as well as South Africa’s then plutocratic and secretive society.

Events leading up to the novel’s dual pivotal points (as they link via temporal relations) are described over 150 pages. Where the book consists of 200 pages, the narration of this event, namely the sexual violation of Frikkie, covers approximately 9 pages. Initially these pages may seem inconsequential, but when one looks at the number of pages as a form of duration, it is clear that more pages are allocated to narrating these events in comparison with their reduced time, when seen to be narrated as an aspect of the *histoire*. Both events unfold in a matter of minutes rather than hours, a day, a week, months, and years.

As children Frikkie and Marnus share secrets, starting with Marnus allowing Frikkie to copy his mathematics homework. The two Standard 3 boys deny this when their teacher confronts them. This shows the close link between secrets and lies, lies being an essential component bolstering apartheid. The two boys’ secret is taken a step further when they swear an oath as “blood brothers”. First they share a “small secret”; later on they share a bigger secret which arises when Marnus

witnesses the patriarch Erasmus sexually violating Frikkie. This is the novel's most significant secret as it brings together many aspects of apartheid. In the penultimate page of the novel, Marnus sums up the difficult events of the previous few days:

I lie on my back and think of the holiday and of Frikkie and of next year. Then it's as if I suddenly know: it's *better* that Frikkie didn't tell me what happened this morning. We know everything about each other. We don't share our secrets with anyone except each other. If I want to tell anyone something in the greatest secrecy, I tell Frikkie. And I know that if he wants to tell someone something, something that he doesn't want anyone else to know, he tells me, and *only* me. If he doesn't even want to tell me about Dad, then he'll *never* tell anyone. And it's right that way.

Between us the secret will always be safe (p. 199).

The novel incorporates elements of piety as one of the means of unmasking the pretence of morality, ethics, values, and claims that apartheid did not constitute a political ideology but represented superior civilisation and moral authority. According to the events describing the apartheid past, this was one of the ways proponents of apartheid silenced criticism. Temporal relations link the sub-themes of apartheid through altering the chronological temporality of events besides conflating two events that occur within the Erasmus household. A way of extending the interpretation of the novel is to consider the punishments and abuses visited on the children Little-Neville, Ilse and Marnus as framing apartheid to show that it incubated a kind of corrupted trinity. The novel foregrounds the suffering of children in a network of temporal relations. Ultimately these relations lead to the interpretation that apartheid was structured in such a way that it was not possible to be innocent.

### 3.3.3 Two primary temporal centres: 1974 and 1988

Within this broad framework, overriding temporal relations incorporate a number of retroversions. Firstly the adult Marnus recalls events of 1974, while diverging from the present-day narrative of 1988. Another retroversion is in operation within the time frame of 1974, because the events of Leonore's younger years as an opera singer may be reconstructed from the *récit* as having occurred earlier in her younger years (p. 141).

It is significant that the events described as a form of the *récit* occur in the years 1974 and 1988. In 1974 the narrator relates a week in Marnus's life during the month of December. Similarly the narrator also describes a week in the life of Marnus as a twenty-five-year-old lieutenant engaged in a clandestine operation in southern Angola during the War (p. 11). The narrator brings close together in the *récit* Quito Caunavale (p. 28), an apartheid-era battle site, where a series of battles were fought after which in 1988 both the Cubans and the South Africans claimed victory. The narrator also mentions "the ruins of a village called Chitando" (p. 28). These ruins may be interpreted to be the result of any number of raids during the 1980s. According to South African History Online (SAHO), (2014c), South African forces attacked the South Western People's Organisation (SWAPO) at this location. As a form of the *récit*, the text brings together events in 1980 and 1988 to highlight the devastation the uprooted Angolan populace suffered. This illustrates that apartheid deployed coercive power beyond South African borders.

Within this overarching framework of the novel, there is the recollection of memories, anticipations of future events as well as episodes when the chronology according to the *récit* and *histoire* are almost simultaneous. In terms of temporal relations, it is possible to successfully analyse the novel from a number of different angles, some of which include analysing the time as a week in which Little-Neville is attacked by white men. Alternatively the novel may be analysed in relation to the adult Marnus recalling the events of his childhood growing up in Cape Town 15 years after their

occurrence. Another example is the patriarch Erasmus's remembrance of growing up in "Tanganyika" (p. 15) or "German East Africa" (pp. 15, 21-22). Yet another time frame involves the months in which Marnus's dad disappears during the apartheid army's military incursion into Angola (p. 66), Mozambique (p. 66), as well as the then Rhodesia (p. 81). Time in the novel is divided into temporal units, for instance days, as when there is a day-to-day description of events during the visit of the Chilean general; weeks, when the narrator notes that the general will be visiting their home during the "first week of December" (p. 19); hours, when the narrator relates the prize-giving at Jan van Riebeeck School when the politically conscious Ilse is appointed as prefect, as well as minutes as illustrated by the representation of the prize-giving ceremony in extensive detail. In this instance it is apparent in the dialogue between Leonore and one of Ilse's teachers that the time frames as aspects of the *récit* and *histoire* are almost the same. Additionally, in analysing the order of events, the narrator observes that Marnus is also expected to follow in his father's footsteps as a head boy at Jan van Riebeeck School. These divisions of time do not operate in isolation but undergo various combinations that facilitate the interpretation of the text. Thus the description of this school ceremony reveals that apartheid as an ideology and government legislation was supplemented by institutions where prescriptive acts reinforced conservative values and served to foster social control.

#### **3.3.4 Expansion of temporal zones**

Another consideration is that the narrator constantly alternates relating events of the narrative past and the narrative present within chapters. Narrated are recollections of events occurring in the different historical epochs. From a discussion on South African History Online (SAHO), 2014b), it is apparent that the historical significance of the Cape Malay community as descendants of whalers and fishermen from Java (now Indonesia) is a formative event in South Africa as is recalled in the *récit*. This includes culturally significant and environmentally sustainable whaling by the Cape's indigenous communities (p. 9) versus the exploitative industrial whaling that Imperial Britain

established in the Cape (p. 84). The apartheid-era practice of displacing local fishermen is apparent where the narrator remarks that industrial fishing is causing the depletion of fish, thereby marginalising local “Coloured” fishermen, who have been fishing for generations (p. 81).

Temporal relations contribute to the representation of these events, one during the 1800s and the other in 1974. The narrator later recaptures the following event:

Back then, thousands of whales came into the bay every year. The boat that belonged to Jan Bandjie’s great “*oupagrootjie*” from Java used to bring in eighty to a hundred whales some years. And his boat was only one of many. Everything went well until the Battle of Muizenberg in the 1800s, when the English took over the Cape. Many boats were taken away from the fishermen, and most of them had to find work on English ships or in factories, because the small boats couldn’t compete with the big ships. Since our government built nice homes for the fishermen higher up on the track, there are even fewer boats going out of Kalk Bay harbour every morning (p. 121).

Another time frame refers to the period 1770s-c.1800s when the Khoekhoe and San as the indigenous incumbents during the pre-colonial era faced the onslaught of *trekboer* commandos (Worden, 2012:13). The narrator refers to Frikkie’s “*oupagrootjie*” getting “hunters to hunt Bushmen on his farm in the Cedarberg” (p. 8). This is complemented in the *récit* by the narration of enforced racially segregated living areas in 1988. The eleven-year-old narrator observes that Doreen is relocated from Newlands to “living in Grassy Park, where the government has built nice houses for the Coloureds” (p. 23).

Additionally, in regard to the retroversion concerning whales mentioned above, Genette (1980:53) writes of a retrospection which “although dealing with individual events can refer to iterative ellipses, that is ellipses dealing not with a single portion of elapsed time but with several portions taken as if they were alike and to some extent repetitive”. Thus one may propose a similar but modified approach in the reading of these lines of text:

Something happened a few weeks ago which I want to tell you about. One afternoon, after my last student had left, I came up here to your bedroom to look out at the bay. (I do it at times.) ...

While I was sitting in the window-sill, caught up in my own thoughts and staring out to sea, I saw something in the swell. It wasn't deep, actually quite shallow, just a few metres beyond the rocks. A whale! Marnus, can you believe it? In the middle of autumn and right up close to the beach! ...

Then Doreen said she wished you were here to see the gigantic fish, you who were always so caught up with the whales when you were a boy ... (p. 135).

In line with Genette's analysis of *In search of lost time*, one may illustrate leaps in retrospective narrative time as being thematically linked. Thus Leonore's spotting a whale may refer to any occasion in the past years when the eleven-year-old Marnus "walked around" the beach near his home. This recollection is iterative because, as quoted above, on another childhood fishing excursion Marnus came into contact with Jan Bandjies, who told him about how his ancestors from Java had been involved in whaling. While for Marnus's mum the memory is an opportunity to entertain a fond remembrance of the past, for the reader this becomes in Genette's words "a preceding series" (1980:55). On other excursions Marnus perceives (as does the reader) the nascent whaling culture during the 1800s and the onset of aggressive industrialisation which diminished the whale population in South Africa. Also related in the preceding series are Marnus and Ilse's experiences of reading the novel *Moby Dick*, by Herman Melville, which includes the story of a man's obsessive hunt for a whale.

### **3.3.5 Events leading to the novel's pivotal moment**

It is worthwhile to briefly consider events leading to what this study has identified as a pivotal moment (namely, the violation of Frikkie) of this novel. The events described here are not exhaustive, but emphasise how temporal relations structure the novel. As temporal relations link

events thematically, they facilitate interpretation. Although the bulk of the narrative text is centred on the past (1974) the novel is not static in how the sub-themes of apartheid interweave different historical time frames, as an analysis of temporal relations below reveals.

The nature of history is a major theme of the novel in the light of history being about the past. As an example, the narrator, perhaps ironically, finds that Marnus is implicated by history firstly on a personal level as his father's son since both occupy senior ranks in the South African Defence Force. Secondly, Marnus is implicated by history on a societal level since, to borrow Robinson's (2012:1-54) formulation, he is "a South African of Afrikaner descent". As a soldier fighting during the Border War, Marnus is integral to the perpetuation of apartheid history. In the Bergsonian manner, the narrator here underlines the link between the past and the present:

I feel Dad's face against my chest and my arms around his head, and I feel safe. But for now it is a different safety. Death brings its own freedom, and it is for the living that the dead should mourn, for in life there is no escape from history (p. 198).

Bergson (1950:313) asserts that memory enables the retention of the past "in a present enriched by it". In the example above, Marnus's memory of the past takes the form of his father's face. This image enriches Marnus's perception that death presents an escape from the burden of the past –the conflictual past which includes Erasmus senior's killing of black men when deployed in Rhodesia (p. 71). The significance of Erasmus senior's actions becomes evident in Marnus's narration. The representation of the killing of "terrorists" is achieved when his father projects slides on a wall. The narrative in this way conjures up images, which, in Bergsonian theory, are an essential component of memory. The use of imagery in the representation of the memory of Rhodesia by the child narrator complements the adult Marnus's memory of his father's face. The events in Rhodesia are presented in this way: "Now the four terrorists are lying in a heap and you can see they've been shot. Their

bodies are covered in blood. The one who was standing in front on the previous slide has his legs stretched open towards the camera and his black thing hangs almost to the ground” (p. 171).

With reference to Genette’s (p. 29) formulation of the novel’s temporal distortions, the *récit* links the representation of historical events with the memories of Marnus, his father, his mother and to a lesser extent characters described as “Coloured”, so that the reader is exposed to apartheid social inequality as well as political oppression of black people dating from pre-colonial, to colonial, to apartheid South Africa.

Regarding events centred around 1974, chronological unfolding of occurrences includes the following: Marnus allowing Frikkie to copy his mathematics homework (p. 5) and the boys jointly spying on the visiting Chilean general (p. 99). Included also is the much-anticipated Erasmus family trip to Sedgefield to spend their December holidays as well as the anticipated arrival of “Little-Neville” (p. 31). Eventually the reader realises that the missing Little-Neville has been hurt badly. An anticipation introduces tension into the reading of the novel in that the reader never knows the state of Little-Neville’s recovery. As a comparison, the reader learns that the adult Marnus and Frikkie join the army (p. 71) and it may be inferred that the grown-up Ilse works somewhere in the Cape (p. 134).

Other events centred around 1974 include iterated events, for example the narrator’s description of Marnus taking a shower with his father. These events are narrated as a *récit* on pages 62, 192-193, and given equal weight as *histoire*. The frequency of references to these events delineates character in the way the text is constructed. It reveals, for instance, that the patriarch is solicitous and this functions as a theme illustrating his predatory intent. Following Genette (1980:115), the narration of these events is found in singulative passages. While these iterations are descriptive (1980:117), they also serve as a background to events of import. In various retroversions the reader learns that the

general, ostensibly a good father, is a calculating killer (p. 171), a patriarch who oppresses his wife (p. 101) and a father who is emotionally unavailable to his son (p. 98).

Regarding the time frame of 1988, the events that precede the pivotal moments in the *récit*, but which, in terms of chronology follow after the violation of Frikkie include the following:

Marnus's deployment in southern Angola (p. 11); an attack by Cuban MIGS on Marnus's platoon (p. 12); Marnus's memory of his mother Leonore's last letter to him (p. 18); the Cubans' attack on Lieutenant van Schoor and his men (p. 42); the killing of a South African lieutenant (p. 82); the attack on Marnus and his men (p. 100); Marnus escaping to the safety of the town of Quleuque in the East of Angola; reading his mother's letter in which she remembers him as golden-haired child (p. 133) and Marnus on the run (p. 136).

Strictly speaking, as an aspect of the *récit*, 16 pages (pp. 157-173) separate the events which constitute this study's pivotal moment. As an aspect of the *histoire*, a number of hours separate the events. Some of these occurrences are discussed below:

The events round the time frame of 1974 include the following. The narrator states that it is the last day of school (p. 158); Leonore picks up Ilse, then Marnus and Frikkie from their respective schools and later she sends the two boys to buy bread (p. 162); Marnus and Frikkie encounter Chrisjan (p. 163). Although this encounter occurs in less time than the boys' walk to and from home, as a measurement of the duration of the encounter, it is described over four pages (pp. 163-66). This elaborated telling of events highlights their importance and may be interpreted as a comment on the bad treatment of "Coloured" workers as a consequence of prescribed social equality under apartheid. Another key event is the description of a slide show where the patriarch Erasmus casually shows images of a "terrorist" he has captured and mutilated in the then Rhodesia.

There is a discrepancy between the *récit* and the *histoire* in the narrative representation of Frikkie's violation. The events below show the alteration of the chronological order of events. Marnus wakes up alone in the lounge (p. 173); Frikkie's violation is narrated (pp. 173-177); the following day the narrator relates Little-Neville's transfer to Groote Schuur hospital (p. 180); the trip to Sedgefield is anticipated (p. 180); Frikkie leaves Marnus's home the same morning but a number of hours later after he has been violated (p. 182); Leonore, Ilse and Marnus visit Little-Neville at Groote Schuur hospital (p. 188); Marnus's father arrives with a bag of gifts from the Chilean general (p. 191); and invites Marnus to take a shower with him (p. 192); Marnus takes the gifts to his parents' bedroom, then takes a bath and afterwards each family member opens their gifts. Marnus has been given the general's epaulettes (p. 193); Marnus refuses to let his father fit the epaulettes on him (p. 196); Marnus's father beats him (p. 196); after which they both cry (p. 197); later the patriarch attaches the epaulettes onto the camouflage suit Marnus has since worn (p. 197); Ilse visits Marnus in his room (p. 198); the following morning the patriarch prays before the family leaves for Sedgefield (p. 200).

The events of 1988 include the following: Marnus is pursued by a black section commander while running towards the Cunene River to the town of Qalueque in southern Angola (p. 156); Marnus reaches Cunene dam (p. 167); Marnus arrives at Qalueque (p. 177); Marnus is awakened by troops (p. 186); Qalueque base is attacked (p. 187); the black section leader attends to Marnus, however, Marnus dies (p. 198). The novel ends on page 200 with the departure of the family for their holiday. Interestingly, the narrator narrates his own death and it is after the reader has learnt of his death that the novel concludes. Temporal relations contribute to the representation of these events in a way that overcomes this inconsistency of chronology according to the telling of the story in the *récit*.

Discussed below are events subsequent to the events of Ilse and the general, and Frikkie's violation by patriarch Erasmus. These occur during the early hours of the morning following the prize-giving ceremony at Ilse's school:

The time frame of the year 1974 incorporates the following events: Marnus and Frikkie choose to eat apples for breakfast (p. 179); Marnus smells Frikkie's hand, a few moments later Frikkie washes his hand with sunlight soap (p. 179); Marnus helps Frikkie wash his hands with Dettol to eliminate an unpleasant smell. When Marnus asks him about the cause of the smell, Frikkie cries (p. 179); Marnus and Ilse argue (p. 180); Marnus and Frikkie fetch their bicycles from the garage (p. 180); Ilse and Marnus anticipate visiting Little-Neville at Groote Schuur (p. 180); Frikkie pumps the bicycle tyres (p. 181); and clenches his teeth on account of the pain he is suffering as a result of his violation a few hours earlier (p. 181); Marnus and Frikkie walk to the main road, where they ride along the pavement of Main Road towards Kalk Bay (p. 181); Frikkie and Marnus ride their bikes to Oranjezicht (p. 181); Marnus and Frikkie go back to fetch Frikkie's bag from Marnus's home (p. 183); Marnus and Frikkie say goodbye and Marnus cycles to Simonstown (p. 182); Frikkie catches the 10:15 train to his home (p. 182); Marnus goes to the Simonstown naval base (p. 183); Marnus takes the train back to Kalk Bay (p. 185); the Erasmus family leaves for their holiday (p. 186).

### **3.3.6 Recollections of the past as a bygone era**

Since the majority of temporal interactions are in the form of retroversions, the narrative is about a bygone era. The past is narrated as part of historical events and also as memories that invade the narrative present. Memory is a prominent theme in the novel. Two extracts illustrate how an analysis of memory as a structuring tool and representation of the past is informative. Speaking about his father, Marnus relates:

He says he'll *never* forget what the Communists and the blacks did to Tanganyika. And Dad says we *shouldn't* ever forget. A *Volk* that forgets its history is like a man without a memory. That man is useless (p. 38).

In the second extract Marnus is referring to his mother, Leonore:

When she talks like that, she always looks like someone who's missing something. I think she misses the farm where she grew up, just like Dad misses Tanganyika. Dad always says the things you remember from childhood are your most precious memories. You never forget the things you were taught or the things that happened to you as a child. Those things make up your foundation for the future (pp. 184-185).

Following Bergsonian theorem, the structure of the narrative text typically moves from past events and progresses to present-day perceptions. Bergson (1950:232) holds that memories are a combination of perceptions and recollections. It is from the perspective of present occurrences that recollections of past events exist contiguously. He posits that "the interests of a living being lies in discovering in the present situation that which resembles a former situation, and placing it alongside of that present situation in what preceded and followed the previous one in order to profit from the experience". In the example below, the narrator recalls events of the family on their last day before they depart for a holiday. The same morning the Chilean general has departed and left gifts for the family Marnus receives the general's epaulettes, which he refuses to model when his family asks him to wear them. His father takes him to the bathroom to beat him, but they reconcile a moment later:

[Dad] hugs me and holds me tightly against his chest, until I feel his tears through the shirt of the camouflage suit. I put my arms around his head and we both cry, holding on to each other. We stay like that for a long time, Dad and me together, with him kneeling on the bathroom floor (p. 197).

This summary and brief quotation represent the initial stage of Marnus's memory and is furthest away from his perceptions as an adult. Bergson (1950:319-321) describes a series of steps which consolidate into "planes of consciousness" and points out that recollections take the form of images. This aspect of memory is the step furthest away from the event or memory described next in the narrative text as follows:

Then he says: "Well, well. What's up with all this crying? Bulls don't cry." And he pulls a funny face at me so that I start laughing. Mum and Ilse are standing at the dressing-table. Mum is holding both Ilse's hands. Dressed in her long paisley dressing-gown, Mum looks like on the photograph against my window-frame where she's singing. But now she's just standing there looking at me. She looks at me the way you'd look at someone you're seeing for the first time, in a place where you never expected to find them (p. 197).

As the narrator categorically positions similar images describing identical events decades apart it may be argued that the passage below represents, as Bergson (1950:325) describes it, "a moment when the recollection actualises, ceases to be recollection and becomes once more a perception".

These similar images are described as follows:

The first image: "[Dad] hugs me and holds me tightly against his chest, until I feel his tears through the shirt of the camouflage suit. I put my arms around his head and we both cry ..."The second image: "I feel Dad's face against my chest and my arms around his head, and I feel safe. But now it is a different safety" (p. 198).

The moment of perception is achieved shortly before Marnus dies as the narrator describes below. Bergson's theory of memory helps the reader to establish how the ordering of these events has contributed to narrative representation and how this renders meanings specific to *The smell of apples*. As one may observe that Genettean theory is used in this study to discuss structure and interpretation, Bergson's theory supplements the interpretation of the novel. Understanding philosophical elements that may be gleaned from reading *The smell of apples* is informative as this

study aims to bring to the fore that South African writers communicate apartheid by employing various techniques of literary theory.

The events quoted above (except the description of the second image) appear on the last pages of the novel and take place in 1974. They involve the child Marnus, whereas the event narrated below – Marnus’s death – involves the adult Marnus. Here there is a split between the focaliser and the homodiegetic narrator.

In the *récit* the reader sees that these events are brought closer together, whereas, by considering the narrative as a chronological *histoire*, they are apart by decades. The mentioning of Marnus’s death is a retroversion of the chronological order of events. The narrator’s representation of events involving the child Marnus is a recollection within a recollection of an event in which the adult character dies.

Other images or recollections that are closer still to the adult Marnus’s perception within the narrative present are embedded in the quotation below:

The black section-leader’s face is beside me. He asks whether I have any feeling in my legs. He tells me I will be fine. I try to shake my head, to warn him. I try to speak to him, to tell him that I knew all along, just like all the others.

But I am dumb.

I feel Dad’s face against my chest and my arms around his head, and I feel safe. But now it is a different safety. Death brings its own freedom, and it is for the living that the dead should mourn, for in life there is no escape from history (p. 198).

The adult Marnus’s perception is that “there is no escape from history”. Bergson (1950:313) sees memory as a way of “continuing and retaining the past” in a present enriched by the past. This

narrative representation allows past and present events (in the form of memory and perception) describing apartheid to be analysed as conveying an anti-apartheid message. This interpretation of the narrative text recognises that there were personal, emotional as well as social ways in which apartheid diminished the lives of black and white South Africans. The novel avoids a didactic representation of apartheid but engages in many subtle portrayals of it. Bergson's theory of memory facilitates a philosophical and spiritual discussion in which apartheid may be said to have corrupted the soul of both the perpetrators and the victims of apartheid.

In Genettean terms, the event of Marnus's death in the narrative text precedes his childhood self. This manipulation of the chronological order sees the representation of the apartheid past constructed as a memory. The narrator writes of memory as "history". This encourages the interpretation that past acts of oppression have consequences in the present-day circumstances. The bringing together as part of the *récit* events decades apart in terms of chronology magnifies for the reader that the adverse laws and social relations during apartheid incubated and that over a period of time they did not diminish in their power to cause harm on personal and societal levels.

### **3.3.7 Apartheid and victimisation**

Apartheid as a repressive strategy of social engineering and a massive ideological force violated most aspects of the lives of the South African population. To manage the complex way in which apartheid took form, in the narrative text certain sub-themes conglomerate to describe a fuller picture of the nature and effects of apartheid through the structuring of temporal relations. For example, analysing the frequency with which an event describing Marnus watching dolphins relates a meaning that the novel conveys with regard to the past. Eleven-year-old Marnus narrates: "Sometimes the whales come in the bay. In spring and summer I can sit and watch them for hours" (p. 27).

In terms of the *histoire*, it is apparent that the event describing Marnus's observation of whales takes place on numerous occasions, yet it is not given prominence because the narrator narrates it only once. For reasons of aesthetics, it would be unappealing for the reader to be told this mundane action repeatedly. However, this event may be seen to operate in conjunction with Marnus's subsequent observation:

But there aren't as many whales now as Jan Bandjies says were here years ago. One year we didn't even see a single one, and Jan said it was because the bay doesn't belong to nature anymore. He says the bay has been taken over by the factories (p. 27).

An analysis reveals that, when we consider the order of events, it becomes apparent that there is a retroversion as the narrator relates an event that took place some time ago. The narrator says: "One year we didn't even see a single one ...". Manipulation of the frequency of the number of times an event occurs and of the chronology works in concert to relate the meaning that during apartheid "nature" was exploited for economic development ("factories"). This event is transformed into a memory that the reader encounters in the narrative text as Leonore's last letter to Marnus (p. 133), and presently serves as a recollection in which Marnus's mother reminds him that as a boy with "shiny blond hair and your eyes the colour of the bay on a summer's day" he was "always caught up with the whales".

This may be interpreted as an illustration of the different responses different generations of Afrikaners had to apartheid. These passages suggest that the older generation regarded apartheid as a time of innocence and prosperity, whereas the younger generation was aware of the wanton destruction of nature and the dissolution of a way of life for "Coloured" fishermen. The bringing together of these different aspects of temporal relations also highlights the appalling treatment under apartheid of "Coloured" people at the Cape – a prominent sub-theme in the novel.

Similarly, as an aspect of duration, in this instance the extended number of paragraphs in which the narrator relates the burning of Little-Neville by “three white men” (p. 138) illustrates the representation of this seminal event as functioning to represent an aspect of the apartheid past. Within the *histoire* aspect of the story, the burning of Little-Neville takes place in a relatively short space of time. The narrator conveys that the effects of the burning are quite damaging to Little-Neville since the furnace over which he was held burned intensely (p. 131). The narrator describes the event in this manner:

Mum gets up from her haunches and leans against the basin. She presses her lips together and starts speaking slowly: “Little-Neville and one of his cousins went to the railway yard in *Touwsrivier* – to steal some charcoal. They wanted to take it to Doreen’s sister, before coming to Cape Town.” She closes her eyes before going on: “Then someone caught him. They took off his clothes and rubbed lard or something all over his back. And then ... they held him up in front of the locomotive furnace.” Now mum is crying and I’ve also got tears in my eyes ... (pp. 130-131).

Little-Neville’s burns are recounted on numerous occasions in the narrative text. Some of these are on pages 130-131, 138-139, 140, 160, 167, 180, 187-188 and 190-191. The amount dedicated to this event highlights its importance in the telling of the story. Temporal relations promote an interpretation that takes into account the complexity of the web in which apartheid entangled its targets. The reader may interpret how prejudicial legislation compromised the quality of life of black or “Coloured” South Africans. The novel highlights the negative aspects of apartheid in terms of inferior health services, poverty, being open to violent attacks as well as denial of human rights and any recourse to law when attacked.

## CHAPTER 4

### 4 TEMPORALITY IN *ALL WE HAVE LEFT UNSAID* AND *THIRTEEN CENTS*

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The discussion in this chapter considers the novels *All we have left unsaid* (Case, 2006) and *Thirteen cents* (Duiker, 2011) in terms of how they represent the apartheid past and, where applicable, the post-apartheid present under various sub-themes. Some of these themes coincide, while others are unique to the particular novel. As in the novels, these sub-themes are intertwined, and are so reflected in the discussion below. This discussion avoids duplication by being selective in the discussion of the different aspects of temporal relations.

#### 4.2 MAXINE CASE'S *ALL WE HAVE LEFT UNSAID*

##### 4.2.1 Synopsis of the story

In the novel *All we have left unsaid*, the homodiegetic narrator Danny or Danika relates her childhood experiences growing up in Cape Town during the mid-1980s. In a first-person narrative, Danny's recollections are prompted by the imminent and ultimate death of her mother May. This event occurs over a few months.

In terms of temporal relations, Genette (1980:62) writes of the practice of beginning the novel in medias res as a means of (in this instance through the character of Danny) "retriev[ing] the whole of the narrative's antecedents".

Danny grows up in a middle-class township near a southern arterial road in Lansdowne, which was racially designated under apartheid laws. It is through relationships, primarily among female characters that the narrator describes the past. The adult Danny, who is in her twenties, recalls her seven-year-old self mostly in relation to her elder sister Lilian-Rose [sic] or Lili. At the beginning of spring 1984, the sisters are contentedly living with their stay-at-home mother.

They happily anticipate their father's fortnightly visits. Trevor works at a motor plant in Port Elizabeth. Along with school, their lives revolve around going to nearby beaches and visiting their maternal grandmother whom they call Ma. However, escalating anti-government protest activities against apartheid spill over into their hitherto placid township. This happens when some residents, most notably their Moslem neighbours, start agitating against apartheid.

The narrator relates that May's marriage to Trevor was the result of an early pregnancy, an event which determines the fractious relations between Ma and Trevor on the one hand, and also between Ma Matthews, Trevor's mother and May, Danny and Lili. Later on in the *récit*, May has a failed pregnancy resulting in strained relations with Trevor who resigns from work, increases his use of alcohol and becomes physically abusive to May. Seeking independence, May finds work and goes back to school, thereby becoming self-supporting after the patriarchal Trevor has denied her an opportunity to work. May's life also transforms as she becomes a participant in promoting school boycotts and work "stay-aways" even though this political action exposes her daughters to being arrested or harmed by the apartheid police.

In descriptions of the relationship between Ma Matthews and her granddaughters, the class differences within coloured communities are apparent. Ma Matthews's home is located in an economically impoverished area where crime is ever-present. Ma Matthews venerates Trevor and

his father at the expense of the women in the family, but Ma is nurturing towards Danny and Lili on the affluent end of the social spectrum.

One of the thematic elements in the novel is food and cooking. This theme is used to define social relations and also informs the novel's feminist ideological orientation. Racial and class differentiation is also evident as part of the story as when Trevor and other characters disparage blacks.

As an adult narrator Danny also notices the way in which Ma Matthews conveys a positive coloured identity by promoting the family's multiracial precursors. Of Ma and Ma Matthews, Ma is the superior cook and promotes cultural values by teaching the sisters to make traditional food such as "pumpkin bredie" and "konfyt".

When May is on her deathbed in the working-class hospital this prompts the narrator to recall her first stay at the hospital when the sisters were children and she had been admitted for attempted suicide. May's stay in hospital brings the adult Lili back from London, where she lives. May's sister Astrid, who has been estranged from May, also arrives. May's death is a pivotal event of Danny's adulthood as it gives her an opportunity to reassess her childhood growing up during apartheid as well as evaluate her life as a young adult in post-apartheid South Africa.

Similarly, as an aspect of duration, in this instance the extended number of paragraphs in which the narrator relates the burning of Little-Neville by "three white men" (p. 138) illustrates the representation of this seminal event as functioning to represent an aspect of the apartheid past. Within the *histoire* aspect of the story, the burning of Little-Neville takes place in a relatively short space of time. The narrator conveys that the effects of the burning are quite damaging to Little-Neville since the furnace over which he was held burned intensely (p. 131). The narrator describes the event in this manner:

Mum gets up from her haunches and leans against the basin. She presses her lips together and starts speaking slowly: "Little-Neville and one of his cousins went to the railway yard in *Touwsrivier* – to steal some charcoal. They wanted to take it to Doreen's sister, before coming to Cape Town." She closes her eyes before going on: "Then someone caught him. They took off his clothes and rubbed lard or something all over his back. And then ... they held him up in front of the locomotive furnace." Now mum is crying and I've also got tears in my eyes ... (pp. 130-131).

Little-Neville's burns are recounted on numerous occasions in the narrative text. Some of these are on pages 130-131, 138-139, 140, 160, 167, 180, 187-188 and 190-191. The amount dedicated to this event highlights its importance in the telling of the story. Temporal relations promote an interpretation that takes into account the complexity of the web in which apartheid entangled its targets. The reader may interpret how prejudicial legislation compromised the quality of life of black or "Coloured" South Africans. The novel highlights the negative aspects of apartheid in terms of inferior health services, poverty, being open to violent attacks as well as denial of human rights and any recourse to law when attacked.

#### **4.2.2 Synopsis of the structure as a circulation of meanings**

The novel is structured as alternating sections in which the narrator recounts events covering the time span of spring 1984 to summer 1985 as well as the time span of the novel's narrative present. These sections are not designated as "chapters", and are also not allocated numerals according to a sequential order. However, this discussion will refer to chapters according to their numerical order in the novel so as to facilitate discussion differentiating between the apartheid past and the post-apartheid present. Actually, this (limited) introduction of the word(s) "chapter(s)" and allocation of numerals strictly only states the structure of the novel as organised as an aspect of the *récit*.

For the earlier period, namely the novel's past, the sections are titled as follows:

“Spring 1984” (p. 18) or Chapter 2; “Spring 1984” (p. 33) or Chapter 4; “Summer 1984/5” (p. 49) or Chapter 6; “Summer 1985” (p. 69) or Chapter 8; “Autumn 1985” (p. 87) or Chapter 10; “Autumn 1985” (p. 100) or Chapter 12; “Autumn 1985” (p. 115) or Chapter 14; “Winter 1985” (p. 125) or Chapter 16; “Winter 1985” (p. 141) or Chapter 18; “Winter 1985” (p. 154) or Chapter 20; “Spring 1985” (p. 177) or Chapter 22; “Spring 1985” (p. 201) or Chapter 24; “Spring 1985” (p. 223) or Chapter 26; “Summer 1985” (p. 242) or Chapter 28; and “Summer 1986” (p. 250) or Chapter 30.

The temporal orientation, that is, the narrative present alternated with the narrative past, except for the last two chapters, is set out in a diagrammatic representation of the structure (See Fig. 3 below):

Narrative Present	Chapter 1 Prologue		Chapter 3		Chapter 5		Chapter 7	
Narrative Past		Chapter 2 <i>Spring</i> 1984		Chapter 4 <i>Spring</i> 1984		Chapter 6 <i>Summer</i> 1984/5		Chapter 8 <i>Summer</i> 1985

continued:

Narrative Present	Chapter 9		Chapter 11		Chapter 13		Chapter 15	
Narrative Past		Chapter 10 <i>Summer</i> 1985		Chapter 12 <i>Autumn</i> 1985		Chapter 14 <i>Autumn</i> 1985		Chapter 16 <i>Winter</i> 1985

continued:

Narrative Present	Chapter 17		Chapter 19		Chapter 21		Chapter 23	
Narrative Past		Chapter 18 <i>Winter</i> 1985		Chapter 20 <i>Winter</i> 1985		Chapter 22 <i>Spring</i> 1985		Chapter 24 <i>Spring</i> 1985

continued:

Narrative Present	Chapter 25		Chapter 27		Chapter 29		Chapter 31	Chapter 32
Narrative Past		Chapter 26 <i>Spring</i> 1985		Chapter 28 <i>Summer</i> 1985		Chapter 30 <i>Summer</i> 1986		

**Fig. 3:** Diagrammatic representation of the structure of Maxine Case’s *All we have left unsaid* in terms of temporal orientation: narrative present alternated with the narrative past, except for the last two chapters

The narration of the events per season for 1984 and 1985 are spread as follows: those of Spring 1984 over two chapters (Chapters 2 and 4); those of Summer 1985 over three chapters (Chapters 6,

8 and 10); Autumn 1985 over two chapters (Chapters 12 and 14); Winter 1985 over three chapters (Chapters 16, 18 and 20); Spring 1985 over three chapters (Chapters 22, 24 and 26); and finally Summer 1985 over two chapters (Chapters 28 and 30).

Curiously, even though in terms of the duration of the text the narrative present occupies less space in the *récit*, this period is narrated in more chapters than those dealing with the past: 17 chapters are allocated to the narrative present while 15 chapters are allocated to the narrative past.

Moreover, evident within these sections of retroversions is a variety of temporal relations which includes the manipulation of the order of events, the difference in frequency of relating events as well as the similar approach the narrator follows to emphasise or reduce the importance of events by casting events within a prescribed number of paragraphs.

The sections that deal with the narrative present appear in the *récit* as pages in between the sections mentioned above. These chapters are undated, but are provided with section headings. The present is therefore organised under the headings discussed below. The subheadings that appear per the following chapters are as follows: In Chapter 1: "Break the silence" (p. 9); "Are you having a bad day?" (p. 13); "No alarms and no surprises" (p. 15); and "Spark" (p. 17); Chapter 3: "Sunday morning" (p. 30); and "The bombshell" (p. 32); Chapter 5: "Try not to breathe" (p. 44); "Just sitting here waiting" (p. 45); and "Snake Oil" (p. 47); Chapter 7: "Beautiful girl" (p. 65); and "Spinning plates" (p. 66); Chapter 9: "Goodnight girl" (p. 84); and "Precious moments" (p. 85); Chapter 11: "We make corrections" (p. 94); "So smooth" (p. 95); and "How I dearly wish I was not here"; Chapter 13 : "I will be your friend" (p. 105); "So far away" (p. 107); "Like normal" (p. 109) and "The stranger in bed" (p. 111); Chapter 15; "Better days" (p. 118); "Just to hear you breathing"; "A waking dream" and "All we have left unsaid" (p. 124); Chapter 17: "Happy birthday to you" (p. 131); "Bulletproof" (p. 132); "Blood is thicker than water" (p. 133); "A woman with a plan" (p. 136); "Something for the

pain" (p. 137) and "Good life" (p. 138); Chapter 19: "Pure" (p. 148); "Another day" (p. 150); and "The weight of memory" (p. 151); Chapter 21: "Appearances are everything" (p. 170); "Nothing else matters" (p. 172); "Nautilus" (p. 174); and "Be careful what you wish for" (p. 174); Chapter 23: "Absolution" (p. 193); "Spring queen" (p. 195); "Disappear" (p. 197) and "Bitter tears" (p. 198); Chapter 25: "This must be the place I waited years to leave" (p. 217); "Relative stranger" (p. 218); "Father figure" (p. 220); and "Why should I care" (p. 222); Chapter 27: "Supernatural" (p. 234); "Would you like to talk about it" (p. 18); "Lost in the dark" (p. 237); and "Mysterious ways" (p. 239); Chapter 29: "Cool in a crisis" (p. 244); "Waiting for the night to fall" (p. 245); "Will the crowd disperse" (p. 247) and "Silent all these years"; Chapter 31: "Aftershock" (p. 255); "Sadness" (p. 257); "Praying for time" (p. 258); and "Tears in my hand" (p. 260). In this last section, which is Chapter 32 of writing dealing with the narrative present, there is no intervening retroversion to past years. Instead the narrative continues as is illustrated by these subheadings: "This is home" (p. 264); and lastly, "Don't speak" (p. 266).

Out of a total number of 262 pages forming the *récit*, the chapters relating to the past consist of 148 pages, thereby occupying a longer duration of narrative time, and if we take the global structure of the novel into account, it is apparent that the narrator spends more time in a retroversion to describe the past than to describe the narrative present which occupies 114 pages of narration. However, there is a dynamic set of temporal relations both between and within the alternating chapters as the narrator goes back and forth between the present and the past. In quantitative terms there are 32 sections which alternate between the narrative present and the narrative past.

The last two sections, on page 225 and 264 respectively, deviate from this alternation as in both the narrator relates events from the narrative present. In this way the *récit* rather provides numerous glimpses of the past through abundant retroversions. One possible interpretation of the way in which the text is organised is that there is a proliferation of sub-themes that constitutes the broad

theme illustrating the apartheid past. Another interpretation may be that Danny's remembrance of the past takes the form of memories that surface in the form of images. These images only achieve narrative coherence (and meaning) once they are consolidated into perception.

If the Bergsonian theory of memory is applied, these pasts or memories emerging from all the sections may be regarded as consolidating into an abiding perception. In the last section of the novel Danny, at the death of her mother, relates going to clear out May's house and garden. She says:

I find myself in the back yard. It is an unruly riot of colour. For a moment, I am reminded of some of my mother's canvases. There are variegated tulips, purple-blue irises with their bright yellow beards and daffodils, some withering away, others coming into bloom. And masses of her favourite ranunculi and sweet-smelling freesias in containers.

"How did they survive?" I wonder aloud. "With no water ...". I remember my mother telling me that bulbs must always be wet in order to flower.

Then I realise. They survived because they had to. Sometimes we can grow without nurturing. Growing just because we can and must (p. 265).

As an aspect of the *histoire*, the narrative present consists of events occurring from the spring of 1984 and concluding in the summer of 1986. As they appear as dates serving as headings for different sections of the book, these seasons indicate that the narrator relates only the events taking place within approximately 27 months. This calculation of time assumes that year one takes place from September 1984 to the same month in 1985; year two from September 1985 to September 1986; and the last year from summer 1985 to summer 1986. Since December is in summer, three additional months of Danny's childhood are part of the *récit*.

It is important to note that the dates serve to organise the narrative text rather than functioning as a rigorous measure of chronological time. This is apparent in the way that the narrator relates a broad

spectrum of events preceding “Spring 1984” and surpassing “Summer 1986”. This means that these dates do not strictly demarcate the description of the beginning and end of the protagonist’s remembrance of childhood. By the same token, as an aspect of the *récit*, the section titled “Spring 1984” serves to introduce the reader to the characters Danny and Lili as their younger selves.

The other end of the spectrum, the section titled “Summer 1986” broadly, rather than strictly, represents the narrator’s final looking back into her and her siblings’ childhood. Here the narrator recalls her mother’s attempted suicide and narrates it as a child in 1984.

As a form of *récit*, Danny continues telling the story where the child narrator has left off and narrates the last two chapters of the novel as an adult. For example, she relates that after her mother’s discharge from hospital, having survived the suicide attempt, she from that moment onwards “knew that [she] would forever be responsible for [her] mother’s well-being” (p. 255).

In a prolepsis skipping time by a few years, Danny tells the reader that Lili moved away from home “as soon as she could” (p. 255). Four sentences later the adult narrator reverts to relating information on the event of her mother’s stay at the hospital (p. 255).

As far as the delimiting time frame of “Spring 1984” – “Summer 1986” is concerned, it is noteworthy that the chapter preceding the beginning of this defined period serves an anticipatory purpose. As an aspect of the *récit*, the narrator captures the first chapter from page 9 to page 17. Here, as part of the narrative present, Danny relates that she and her sister Lili are at the hospital, keeping vigil at their mother’s bedside. Then on page 11 there is an analepsis in which Danny recalls a childhood experience when she and Lili were waiting at a hospital also in a state of anxiety about their mother. This event, which turns out to be May’s attempted suicide, happened in the summer of 1986.

In the excerpt below, Danny describes how her mother's placement in a private ward invites sympathy as it indicates her imminent death. She relates how in the narrative present this occurrence gives way to the recollection of an unhappy memory:

The frantic activity, the foetid smell of antiseptics and the unnaturally bright lights trigger my memory. Against my will, I recall another night, another waiting room; the same fear that my mother was dying.

But that was so long ago. I have forced myself to forget that time, so that now it surfaces only in the restlessness of dreams ... (p. 11).

After this retroversion the narrator resumes describing events of the present day. After a few sentences the narrator relates that the adult Danny and Lili are waiting at their mother's bedside. Her first telling of this event anticipates its fuller exposition 250 pages later. May's suicide attempt is narrated fully as an aspect of the *récit* on pages 250-254. It would appear that the theme of sisterhood is significant here, and that temporal relations produce the meaning of this theme. Because the events of 1986 (the sisters waiting together during May's suicide attempt) are juxtaposed with the events of the present day, namely the sisters awaiting May's death at her bedside, it is imperative to interpret them meaningfully. These events build on the sisters' existing relationship. For the first time the reader encounters the sisters as a unit. As siblings, they play together and compete with each other. Ultimately, however, Danny and Lili's sharing a happy situation represents their mutual affection. This is exemplified when Danny says: "Yes, we are all happy when our daddy is home" (p. 29).

In the very last paragraph of Chapter 1, which is primarily oriented towards the narrative present, Danny ponders "a few memories of [her] childhood" (p. 17). She thinks about how to start telling the story of her childhood:

Where do I start? “Always start at the beginning,” my mother advised me when I was a young girl, “and the rest will follow” (p. 17).

Chapter 1 also serves to anticipate Chapter 2. In the Bergsonian manner, Danny’s perception in the present triggers the recollection of a memory. This perception is centred on her mother and it unfolds in stages. Firstly Danny confesses that she and her sister know that their mother will not leave the hospital alive. She says:

[w]hat we are waiting for is news of our mother. It is no longer whether she will live, but when the end will come ... (p. 9).

The second stage of Danny’s perception is when she realises that the smell of antiseptic and the bright lights of the hospital ward trigger a long-held childhood memory (p. 11). The narrator describes the culmination of Danny’s perception as a negated memory. She says:

For the longest time, I had few memories of my childhood. Then suddenly I did. They came at once. Not in slow drips and nuances, but a deluge. Yet I cannot recall the catalyst. There was no tea-soaked madeleine – although perhaps a pumpkin fritter sprinkled with crunchy cinnamon sugar would be more evocative (p. 17).

Analysing this event allows the reader to see how temporal relations facilitate the development of themes across the span of time within the *récit*. In Chapter 1 the adult narrator speaks of her childhood, and in Chapter 2 the child narrator starts relating events describing her childhood. Temporal relations, namely the retroversion in the form of Danny’s memory allows for the time span of approximately 15 years to be bridged seamlessly.

The events of Chapter 1, "Spring 1984" (p. 18), occur in the present, and the narration starts with Danny's earliest memories. This (the narrative present) serves as a perception that precipitates the recollection of a past event in the form of a memory. Temporal relations also foster thematic unity. Furthermore, the iterations of this event as well as the extended duration in the way that the narrator describes May's attempted suicide indicate its elevated status as part of the plot.

Following Genette's (1980:53) analysis of *In search of lost time*, one may adopt this interpretive strategy. An analysis of the events may be said to illustrate how the novel, in Genette's words, circulates meaning. For example, when the reader is first told of this event on page 11, it seems as if the event were "provided" with a meaning. May's suicide may be said to linger in the characters Danny and Lili's memories as, in Danny's words, "our ghosts" (p. 12). When Danny narrates May's attempted suicide at greater length (pp. 253-254), in the latter narration the suicide attempt assumes a different meaning. Danny intimates that the memory of the attempted suicide provides an opportunity for redemption and overcoming adversity. Prominent in Danny's narration below is the notion that facing adversity has provided an opportunity for the mother and her daughters to realise collective regeneration and empowerment. A rather sceptical Danny notes:

It seems as if it has always been the three of us. Me, my mother and Lili. My friends used to marvel at how close we were, but it is the closeness of survival. It is like being taught the sacred truth, then realising that what you were taught is no truth (p. 249).

#### **4.2.3 Apartheid and its sub-themes**

As is the approach in the other novels in this study, apartheid is analysed in terms of how the organisation of temporal relations suggests various sub-themes. In *All we have left unsaid*, the

novel's scrupulous mining of seminal events makes it possible to identify a surfeit of sub-themes. However, to achieve depth in the discussion and embark on an informative analysis, not all sub-themes will be discussed. Selected themes are discussed below.

#### **4.2.4 Apartheid and gender**

One of the prominent aspects of the novel is the proliferation and range of the representations of female characters. The narrator is a woman, Danika, nicknamed Danny. The novel relates to at least three generations of women, namely Danny; Danny's mother May; and Danny's maternal grandmother Ma, and her paternal grandmother "Ma Matthews" respectively. The two grandmothers represent the narrative time furthest away from Danny while her mother represents a temporal dimension midway between Danny and her sister Lili. The sisters, as well as their childhood friends and adult acquaintances represent the temporal dimension closest to Danny, the homodiegetic narrator.

By describing the character of the neighbour, Aunt Ruthie, as a "gossip", the narrator reinforces the theme of gender stereotyping. The function of the male characters, the narrator's father Trevor and his friends, as patriarchy is apparent in the way she characterises their actions. As a man, Trevor does not want his wife to work and, as a father of two daughters, he hankers after a son. However, patriarchy is not confined to male characters only; Trevor's mother, Ma Matthews, similarly represents patriarchy as is illustrated by the description of events in which she gives preferential treatment to Trevor at the expense of the female characters. The narrator relates a story as told by her mother:

She tells us a story about the first time she had supper at his house. Before they got married. Our father is the eldest of five children and the only boy. He was very spoilt, even though his family was poor, our mother says. Our grandmother, Ma Matthews, dished the stew. First a big plate with most

of the meat and potatoes to our grandfather, and then the second-biggest to our father. The women, including our mother, shared the rest. "There were only a few bits of meat on the plate," our mother tells us ... (p. 21).

According to the *récit*, the scene occurs within a retroversion in a section titled "Spring 1984" (p. 18). In terms of the order of events there has been a deviation from the narrative present to the past; the child narrator relates an event which occurred before she was born. Although this event is constructed as her mother May's memory, the reader actually learns of this event as Danny's memory because the narrator is an adult woman in terms of the *histoire*.

The novel uses temporal relations to structure the text, thereby contributing to the narrative representation of the past. Events occur within allocated temporal or time periods. In this instance the events that occurred in the past are recalled by the character as a memory belonging to both May and her daughter.

A few pages before the above description of Trevor's preferential treatment at supper, the child narrator describes how her father "tries to force us to take [his shoes] off for him, but we refuse ..." (p. 19), and reports that "neighbourhood men" generally demand the same from their wives and daughters. In this way events that occur in other geographical locations and at different times are linked to Danny's specific experience and her description of male characters in such a way as to resonate as a purposive action of male dominance.

The sub-theme of conflictual gender relations between patriarchal and feminist ideas combines in various permutations in the novel. The most obvious is how cooking and eating provide a platform for the narrator to explore these themes. Concluding her recollection of her mother's memory of the supper quoted above, Danny notes:

Once everyone had grabbed their food, the younger sisters scrambled for anything left over in the pot – gravy, a bit of more rice – but they were quickly elbowed out of the way by my father. I think that is why my mother always dishes such large helpings for him (p. 21).

Bergson's theory of memory – which holds that present perception invokes recollections that are positioned adjacently alongside this perception (1950:321) – illustrates how in this scene the child narrator matches a recollection of the past with its “contiguous” perception (1950:321), and gains insight into her mother and father's actions.

In terms of the *histoire*, the event described above occurs early on in the child narrator's description of formative life experiences. The organisation of time in the novel serves not only to structure the *récit*, but to contextualise events that appear as leitmotifs. The memory of this supper also connects with the description of Trevor and Ma Matthews's disappointment at not having a son in the family (p. 83). The event also provides a context for the way in which Trevor compels May to depend on him financially (p. 144) as well as for Trevor's physical abuse of May (p. 145).

The abuse of May is recalled within the time frame “Winter 1985” (p. 141); Trevor's disappointment within the time frame “Summer 1985” (p. 69); and May's financial dependency within the time frame “Winter 1985” (p. 154). Positioning events as the narrator's recollection of the past structures these events as a network of memories, thereby enabling the narrator to describe them. This structuring also facilitates the analysis and interpretation of these events within the canon of South African novels.

#### 4.2.5 Expansion of temporal zones

The way in which the narrative retraces a time period in the past is illustrated in the extract quoted below. Danny is speaking to Ma Matthews, who has done the former's hair in "tight plaits". Danny says:

"I look like a Chinese," I exclaim, too scared to say anything else. It is the wrong thing to say.

"What's wrong with looking Chinese?" she demands. "Don't you know my father, your great-grandfather was Chinese? You girls know nothing about our side of the family, it seems!" (p. 79).

Ma Matthews's riposte in this dialogue is structured as the child narrator's recollection within the time frame "Summer 1985" (p. 69). Ma Matthews refers to her past, a period which exceeds the boundaries of time that contain the description of events in *All we have left unsaid*. According to South African History Online (Saho), (2014h), there have been two waves of Chinese immigration to South Africa: indentured labour imported from 22 June 1904 (which was terminated in a massive repatriation programme in March 1910); and another form of immigration which began in 1892 with the arrival of Chinese traders from Canton. When the apartheid government prohibited immigration in 1950 many Chinese entered South Africa via neighbouring countries. The narrator's relating Ma Matthews's recollection represents the way in which apartheid constructed social division through racial classification. The way in which the event is positioned in the *récit* may also be interpreted as a commentary highlighting the apartheid government's hostility to targeted immigrants.

One may elaborate on the narrator's description of Danny's hairstyle to explore the social construction of race in the narrative text and to illustrate how temporal relations configure this event as a sub-theme of apartheid. It may be extrapolated that Danny as a child racially classified by apartheid laws as "Coloured", regards looking "like a Chinese" as if it means belonging to an inferior social group.

The theme of racial hierarchies is illustrated in examples discussed below. In the first example the narrator relates a dialogue between Trevor and May. To his wife's dismay, the character Trevor voices his intention of leaving his well-paying job in Port Elizabeth. The child narrator in a recollection from the time frame "Autumn 1983" (p. 87) quotes her father, Trevor, as follows:

My father looks at her, looks at Lili and me; then he carries on. "It's enough our company treats darkies like they're something special. Ever since that code came in. Why, you should see how many darkies are managers on the assembly line ..." (p. 93).

In the second example the adult narrator is recalling her mother May's memory when Trevor resigned from his job. Danny says:

I found out years later that the company wanted to put a black man in charge of him. That's probably the reason why Trevor quit, knowing him – but of course he wouldn't tell me. (2008:99).

Here the narrator recalls the same event within two different temporal zones, perhaps some 15 years apart. The reiteration of this event illustrates its importance within the narrative, and distortion of the chronological order enables its interpretation as a sub-theme of racial classification under apartheid. Temporal relations as representing the past enable the reader to group the event involving the Chinese, the events involving coloureds and blacks and other permutations of interactions under a common theme. Also apparent in the novel is the way in which characters differentiate affirmatively and pejoratively between blacks and coloureds as ethnic identities of South African people (pp. 92-93).

#### 4.2.6 Subdivisions of time

Analysing the conceptualisation of time as subdivisions of minutes, hours, days, months, years and other possible groupings, may also be a way to discuss how temporal relations contribute to narrative representation of the past. In the novel there are several classes of recollections or memories which are either defined or undefined. As an example, on page 10 the adult narrator says:

There are so many signs – things that we noticed, yet only realised the meanings of later. Things we know but do not talk about. Like the ominous moving to a private ward so the family can sit with the patient in peace, without being disturbed (p. 10).

Here, as an aspect of the *récit*, the narrator's conceptualisation of the past is undefined. Yet as an aspect of the *histoire* the narrator's current actions in the present are quantifiable: Having arrived at the hospital to visit her mother Danny leaves the room to smoke a cigarette. The extract is a retroversion because mentioned are "things that [have been] ... noticed" as having happened in the past.

The example above may be contrasted with a defined lapse of time. The adult narrator notes:

With the help of my manners and charm, I have managed to work my way up to my current position as a copywriter at a respectable advertising agency in Cape Town. I started here almost six years ago ... In those days it was all about whom you knew. Affirmative action had barely touched the industry (p. 15).

This retroversion illustrates how temporal relations represent the apartheid past and the post-apartheid present. This is apparent as the narrator comments on the enactment of the affirmative action policy, which is a legislative imperative introduced by the democratic government.

In the novel, time is also expressed as an aspect of frequency, that is, it refers to the number of times the narrator relates an event occurring on a specific day. This is juxtaposed with the number of times the event may be said to have occurred as an aspect of the *histoire*. Recollecting events from the time frame “Spring 1984” (p. 18), the narrator says:

My father takes supper time very seriously. And other mealtimes like Sunday lunch. Every Sunday, we have the same things: roast meat or chicken, boiled pumpkin with cinnamon, cauliflower cheese or squash with nutmeg grated on top ... (p. 20).

The narrator relates only once in the *récit* the multiple events when the family has lunch on Sunday, but these lunches may be related numerous times as an aspect of the *histoire*.

In another example, the child narrator informs the reader that her father “comes home for the weekend twice a month” (p. 26) – an illustration of an event occurring repeatedly according to the *histoire* being narrated once. Furthermore, the narrator refers to a defined period of the week contrasted with another defined period of a month. Thus temporal relations allow the representation of the past as numerically lengthy or short periods of time.

Another aspect of time that the narrator adopts to convey events of the past is through the observance of culturally or religiously significant days. Speaking of her maternal grandmother and her sister Lili, the child narrator says: “Ma comes to fetch us to help her get ready for Christmas, like she does every year” (p. 52). Here the narrator’s recollection of the past incorporates a detailed description of the cooking of the Christmas pudding. In many parts of the novel the act of cooking is described elaborately. Therefore the extended duration in the allocation of space to describe cooking in the novel positions these events prominently as an aspect of the *récit*.

The narrator also conceptualises time as an undefined period lasting a number of years. In this example the adult narrator observes:

Over the years, Lili and I filled in the blanks as to how Auntie Astrid came to marry her Italian. It was important for us to know those things after all. We were always ferreting out the family gossip, or gossip of any kind really. With so many secrets, our need to know was insatiable ... (p. 136).

The narrator also relates an undefined time frame of a lunch between the adult narrator and a colleague (p. 173). The regressive and progressive aspect of time is also apparent in the novel. An example illustrating the former is captured by the child narrator when she says: "The night after my father leaves ..." (p. 201) while the latter aspect of time differentiation is apparent when the narrator says: "The day before we are to go back home, our Mother calls and tells Ma about the helicopter that circled above the houses early that morning ...". Here the child narrator's recollection tells of the anticipated event of going home, while in the past of the "Spring of 1985" (p. 213) the narration anticipates an event that is due to happen in a day's time. Hence, in the Bergsonian (1950:232) manner, the present and the past adjoin each other in a continuum of remembrance and experience.

The example below illustrates a description of the novel's smallest unit of time. The narrator says:

...Waiting for the inevitable next breath. I take it back, I am not ready! No one can ever be ready for this!

Seconds pass, then a full minute, all of us not daring to exhale. Eventually the reverend breaks the spell and calls the nurse. It is over (p. 261).

Also relevant is that the sections in which the narrator relates the past are organised climatologically as seasons of the years 1984, 1985 and 1986. This broad outline of the narrative's global temporality

serves to suggest the progress of time from past events furthest away from the narrative present to those nearest to the narrative present. In this fashion *All we have left unsaid* reaffirms the meaning of a consequential factor within present-day (post-apartheid) occurrences. This interpretation is also deduced from analysing the novels *The innocence of roast chicken* and *The smell of apples*.

In concluding the analysis of this novel, it is informative to discuss briefly the narration of events that are not the narrator's direct experience but reports of events read in the newspaper, heard on television or even described by another character. This illustrates another way in which chronology is circumvented in the telling of the story as an aspect of the *récit*.

In the example below, the child narrator relates how television represented apartheid. Danny says:

We are aware that bad things are happening in our country every day. The word for bad things is "unrest". Every night we watch the TV news, desperate for respite. P.W Botha comes on every night, wagging his finger at us in admonition. Railing against those who want to see the downfall of this land ... (p. 166).

This description of events out of their chronological order brings the events of the "unrest", the apartheid-state repression and Danny's family in a coloured township together within one temporality. P.W. Botha was recorded at a different time and the unrest also happened at a different time and place. The chronological order of these events may be reconstructed as follows: Unrest occurs in the townships during the day; P.W. Botha speaks against it and is filmed by a television crew; during the same afternoon the footage of these two events is edited and prepared for a news bulletin; that evening the footage is broadcast on television as part of the news; and lastly Danny and her family watch the news bulletin on television and voice opposition to apartheid and

scorn for P.W. Botha. Temporal relations here bring together the opposition to apartheid and repressive apartheid forces.

The narrative text may be interpreted as formulating an anti-apartheid message. This view is informed by the way in which the *récit* displays the distortion of the chronological order of events as they would unfold as an aspect of the *histoire*.

Interestingly, in the extract quoted above, temporal relations also bring together fictional characters (Danny et al.) and people in history (P.W. Botha) to generate the aesthetics of realism.

### **4.3 K. SELLO DUIKER'S THIRTEEN CENTS**

#### **4.3.1 A synopsis of the story as a series of intersecting relationships**

In the novel *Thirteen cents*, speaking in the first person, the homodiegetic narrator Azure relates two stories of his childhood. Although these stories occur at different temporal zones and geographical locations they are intertwined via temporal relations as an aspect of the *récit*. The reader initially encounters the narrator as a street child living in Cape Town. The novel's narrative present is not explicitly stated as the post-apartheid time period but can be inferred from the graffiti "*Mandela se poes*" that the character Azure sees in a building in Cape Town as well as from the narrator's comment "the writing is on the wall" (p. 49).

The expression of racial and ethnic prejudice defines how characters speak about and to each other. The comment above may therefore be interpreted as an objection to the installation of a black government in 1994. Wicomb (1998:91) comments on selected texts or "narratives" written during the early days of post-apartheid South Africa, noting that these were structured as forms of "textual construction" of coloured identity and adds that they were also a process of "ethnographic self-

fashioning” of coloured peoples. Wicomb (1998:92) interprets the combination of these elements as a reflection on the “political behaviour of coloureds in South Africa” immediately after the transition to democracy. She writes of discontent and how this was represented in literature and how it influenced social behaviour during the early years of South Africa’s democracy.

Among other clues that also suggest that the novel is set during the early years of post-apartheid South Africa is the narrator’s reference to music prominent during 1994/1995 in South Africa. He refers to the band TKZee (p. 39), whose music was popular in South Africa in late 1997 and early 1998 (according to the website [music.org.za](http://music.org.za) (2014)). The narrator also mentions a popular song of TKZee, “Shibobo” (p. 18).

The reader encounters Azure three years subsequent to his arrival in Cape Town. At this time he has moved away from the city centre and now mostly sleeps near a swimming pool in Sea Point (p. 9). He spends considerable time walking from place to place looking for avenues to get something to eat, avoiding being beaten by the characters Gerald and Allen as well as finding opportunities to make money. A regular pastime is smoking marijuana which, as suggested by the frequency with which the narrator mentions it, assumes more importance to the character than food. The narrator also describes Azure’s forays into being procured as a child prostitute by older white men on the beachfront.

Even though he is the protagonist, the narrator relates Azure’s story by means of constructing several interactions in relationships with various characters, amongst others as a child of thirteen with a number of adults. The nature of these relationships is primarily abusive and exploitative. These relationships then determine the content of the *histoire* while their representation is achieved through the narrator’s description of events in the *récit*. The relationships unfold in a circuitous

manner. For purposes of clarity it is informative to classify and discuss these relationships under the days in which they occur.

#### **4.3.2 A synopsis of the story as a series of intersecting relationships: Gerald**

As far as the narrative is concerned, the pivotal relationship is between Azure and the gangster Gerald. In this character, the novel's sub-themes of racial construction and racism, gender and masculinity as well as violence coincide to represent post-apartheid racism. The extract below is a description of an event occurring on day one of the narrative. Some of the novel's themes are illustrated as well as the nature of the relationship between Azure and Gerald. Azure speaks first in this dialogue:

*"Sealy," I say, a little nervous.*

*"Jy's dik geroek, ne?"*

*"Sorrie, ek bedoel Gerald."*

*"Jy, tsek jou naai, ek is nie 'n kaffir nie," he says and awakens my calm senses with a fist across my face. I fall but pick myself up quickly and start running. I run out as quickly as I can. A few blocks away from the bridge I realise that I don't have my flip-flops. I wait at least five minutes before I go back. Gerald is nowhere in sight but the car is there. I take my strops and run. "Jy, jy!" I hear him behind me but I keep running. Once far from the bridge I slow down and calm myself (p. 19).*

As far as the thematic material is organised through temporal relations, it is evident from the narrator's quote that Gerald prefers violent interaction and that he is a racist. The language that the character uses illustrates an expression of a violent form of masculinity in which dominance is achieved through rape. This is evident in the interpretation of the words *"jou naai ..."*. The sudden attack on Azure is part of a sequence of actions in which violence, gender, race and masculinity converge.

Dialogue is the primary form of narrative representation throughout the novel. This emphasises the narrative present. Within the novel's context men dominate women through beatings, threat of rape as well as the abusive act itself. For example, Allen, who hires out women for sex with men, says to one of these prostitutes: "I should *naai* you for all the shit you cause, you stupid bitch ..." (p. 14). The narrator also reports that Gerald relates to Azure in the same fashion.

Out of 164 pages, the narrator mentions and represents Gerald in a substantive manner. Outlined below are some of the interactions between Azure and Gerald. According to the *histoire*, on day 6 of the narrative, Gerald instigates Sealy to assault Azure and a few minutes later he also assaults Azure (p. 41), after which he organises that Richard and several gangsters take Azure to the Somerset Hospital (p. 41). On Gerald's orders Richard takes Azure from the hospital and locks him up for three nights in a small room at a house in Woodstock (pp. 45-46).

On the fourth night of Azure's confinement, or on day 9 of the narrative, Richard instructs Azure to wash and, accompanied by a number of men, drive Azure to a block of flats in the city where they keep him in a room for the night. On day 10, namely the following morning, Richard gives Azure a "whole chicken" to eat (p. 50) and that night a plate of *breyani* while they are smoking dagga and other drugs. Afterwards Richard takes Azure to a separate room and sexually assaults him. Three of Richard's friends join in the assault (pp. 53-54).

The next day (day 11 of the narrative), Richard takes Azure to Gerald's shack under the bridge where he will now live (p. 55). There Gerald renames him "Blue" (p. 56) and gives him one shoe back (p. 57). Later during the course of day 11, the narrator reports a dialogue between Azure and Vincent, in which Vincent notices that Azure has been given his "old shoes back" (p. 61). Azure/Blue also informs Vincent that he has been ordered to be back at Gerald's shack "by five" (p. 64).

Azure wanders around the city and Sea Point, in his words, “like a dog” (p. 67). Before 5 p.m. he returns to Gerald’s shack under the bridge, where Gerald gives him a “cooldrink” and blue tracksuit pants made of glittering material. He warns Azure/Blue never to wear an orange-coloured item of clothing (p. 68) and shows him a “huge scar” with horns on his naked back (p. 70). Gerald brings red and orange plastic dishes and Lifebouy soap and both he and Azure wash themselves.

Afterwards Azure wears new clothes and Gerald wears a “bright orange T-shirt and white jeans” (p. 73). Azure is told to leave and “come back tomorrow” (p. 74) and spends the night engaging in transactional sex (pp. 80-94). On day 12 he meets Vincent for the last time as Vincent will be leaving Cape Town (p. 99). Azure goes back to Gerald’s shack under the bridge (p. 101) and Gerald cuts off the plaster on Azure’s leg with a saw (p. 101). He kicks Azure for wearing an orange-coloured bomber jacket. Azure runs away (p. 102). In a retroversion on day 18 Azure learns from Sealy that Gerald has been killed (pp. 134-135).

#### **4.3.3 A synopsis of the story as a series of intersecting relationships: Allen**

Azure pays Allen, a “pimp”, protection money (p. 14). As a character Allen has no redeeming qualities, therefore his relationship with Azure represents the violent seedy aspect of street life. As related by the narrator on day 1, Allen also deals in stolen goods, sells Azure flip-flops and takes Azure’s sturdy shoes (p. 15). Subsequently, on day 6, Allen goes back on giving Azure shoes (p. 31). In terms of the duration of the narrative text, relatively fewer sentences are used in the description of this character. The narrator’s synoptic approach suggests that Allen may be seen as a component of a tableau that includes coloured gangsters who, in Vincent’s words, terrorise Azure (p. 34).

Another component of this tableau of racism includes Richard who, following events happening on day 10, says to Azure “... *julle kaffirs stink*” (p. 54). On day 6 of the narrative, Vincent encourages Azure to adopt mannerisms that will make him appear “to be the blackest person” (p. 35), in this

way proposing to the blue-eyed Azure that he has to compensate for the colour of his eyes. Vincent explains to Azure that blue eyes make him a target for people who covet this trait as an emblem of racial superiority. Vincent says of Allen: "He's another bastard who thinks he's white" (p. 36).

Also included is Gerald who dominates the tableau, as is clear from the frequency with which the narrator mentions him, as well as the comparatively lengthy descriptions of his interactions with Azure in the narrative text. Firstly Gerald objects when Azure mistakes him for dark-skinned Sealy. As is evident in the narrator's description of events taking place on day 6, this mistaken identity unleashes dire repercussions for Azure. It is also a pivotal point in the development of the plot.

Azure's interaction(s) with Allen assume a marked scenic representation of temporal relations, thereby minimising the temporal distance between the *récit* and the *histoire*. Allen's violence may be analysed in conjunction with the violence meted out by the rest of the members of the tableau. Temporal relations are used to represent these intersecting relationships, and in the process to generate the meaning of the text. These scenes establish the manifestation of racially motivated violence. The narrative text locates racially motivated violence within the context of post-apartheid South Africa. The skin tone of characters features as a recurring theme in the novel. While the narrator hints at degrees of light and dark pigmentation of characters, the events of physical and verbal abuse described appear under a banner of what Wicomb (1998:105) calls "a totalizing colouredness". For Wicomb (1998:98), the term coloured does not "cover heterogeneous sets of communities differentiated by class, language and religion ...".

It may also be stated that in the interactions where Azure is depicted as a sexual commodity, he is paired exclusively with characters that represent white men. Here again, the portrayal of Azure's dehumanisation takes the form of racial denigration.

#### **4.3.4 A synopsis of the story as a series of intersecting relationships: Liesel**

Another eventful relationship is with Liesel, who lives under a bridge and with whom Azure develops friendly relations. In the novel's prologue, the narrator relates that Azure buys "buttons" or drugs from Liesel and that he also regards her highly because she pays him back when she has borrowed money (p. 3).

At the beginning of the narrative, Azure describes his interaction with Liesel in terms of establishing the current state of affairs (in medias res) so that, as in the Genettean (1980:36) manner, the interaction between the two characters serves as an exposition of the story to follow.

Liesel features sporadically, yet at significant moments in Azure's fictional life. For example, as is evident on day 38 of the *histoire*, Liesel warns Azure to run away before Sealy assaults him (p. 38). However, as the story progresses their friendship wanes, as is illustrated when Azure goes to her to buy "two stops" or drugs (p. 101) following Vincent's departure to Port Elizabeth (p. 99). Later, on day 6 of the narrative, Sealy informs Azure that Liesel "used to put stuff" in his (Azure's) "zol", thereby harming him (p. 135).

#### **4.3.5 A synopsis of the story as a series of intersecting relationships: Sealy**

Sealy is also a gangster who lives in a shack under the bridge as do Liesel and Gerald. Azure spends time lighting up "joints" and listening to the music of TKZee with Sealy (p. 18). On Vincent's advice, Azure goes to the bridge to see Gerald. It is then that Sealy uses excessive force to assault Azure on Gerald's instruction (pp. 38-41). According to the *histoire*, this event occurs on day 6. Following the beating, Azure sees Sealy only approximately 8 days later. In the time that passes Azure is taken to hospital where his foot is put in a cast (p. 41) and he is then also locked up in a house in Salt River for three days (p. 45).

Azure is in contact with Sealy 89 pages later: after 4 days on the mountain, on day 18 of the *récit*, Azure leaves and goes to the bridge, where Sealy tells him that Gerald is dead and that most of the shacks under the bridge have been destroyed (p. 134). From day 19 onwards, Azure reports that he follows Sealy where he goes (p. 150). Then the narrator reports that Azure and Sealy go to Salt River “a lot”. However, later Sealy starts leaving Azure behind when he goes there (p. 152).

At this stage of the narrative, time as an aspect of the *histoire* becomes undefined. Speaking about his time living under the bridge in Sealy’s shack, the narrator reports: “One night three police vans come in” (p. 152). When the shacks are destroyed Azure says that he has given “away all of Sealy’s stuff” (p. 153). One may surmise that this episode between Azure and Sealy has occurred over a period of three days. In that time, since Azure’s descent from the mountain into the city, the community under the bridge is forcibly removed by the police. The narrator concludes the interaction between Azure and Sealy in this manner:

I give away all Sealy’s stuff and vow to go back to the streets. They can go wherever they’re going without me, I say to myself and leave as the bulldozer takes apart everything in sight (p. 153).

#### **4.3.6 A synopsis of the story as a series of intersecting relationships: Vincent**

The narrator describes the friendship between Azure and Vincent, also known as Mandla (p. 90), as supportive and mutually beneficial. Markedly, there is no violence between them. The narrator relates that the two characters ran away from Mshenguville together (p. 35). As compatriots in Cape Town they share meals together. On one occasion (day 6) Vincent advises Azure to go to Gerald even though Gerald has threatened to assault him (p. 34). Vincent also promises Azure a pair of shoes (p. 37).

After “a couple of days”, a period defined by Vincent on page 37, Azure bumps into his friend (p. 58). They actually meet again on day 11 of the narrative. Vincent decides that this day is Azure’s birthday and buys him “*mnqusho*”, “*mageu*” and “*zol*” (p. 60). After spending the night with a character named Mr Lebowitz, with whom he has transactional sex, Azure meets Vincent in Cape Town on day 12 (pp. 95-96). Vincent tells Azure that Gerald has “*takkies*”, a pair of shoes that Vincent had promised Azure (p. 98). Azure leaves Vincent at the train station (p. 99).

Fifty pages later in the *récit*, or on day 19 according to the *histoire*, Azure memorialises Vincent in this manner:

I used to hate dodging because I liked saying the times tables but I dodged for Vincent because he was nice to me. He would beat up boys who beat me up because I had blue eyes. He was always my friend, Vincent. That’s why I used to dodge school with him ... All the other kids wanted to be his friend but he chose me as his special friend. I never forget that. Sometimes when I feel down, I think of the day Vincent beat up the biggest boy in school because he was bullying me.... (p. 149).

The narrator goes on to relate in detail how a bully, named “Rotten Sibu”, wanted to help himself to Azure’s lollipop and how Vincent defended his friend vigorously. Azure concludes this recollection by saying of Vincent: “He was my special friend forever after that” (p. 149). As he departs from Cape Town, Vincent sums up their friendship as a bond between brothers. In the extract below the narrator quotes this dialogue between Azure and Vincent. Azure speaks first:

“Look, I used to copy from you in school: now just copy everything I said and you’ll be fine,” he says and hugs me.

He’s the only person who ever hugs me.

“You’re my big brother,” I say, “I never had a big brother” (p. 98).

The relationship between Azure and Vincent brings together the themes of fellowship and racial solidarity. The *récit* manages temporal shifts between relatively short periods of time as they align events that show the maltreatment of Azure at the hands of characters racially classified as coloured. This follows apartheid-era nomenclature, which is evident in how the narrator describes the interactions between Azure, Gerald, Sealy and Allen. As is apparent in the analysis of *The innocence of roast chicken*, *The smell of apples* as well as *All we have left unsaid*, past experiences are reignited in present-day actions and events in which characters partake.

Besides Azure, Vincent is also the only character in both the Mshenguville and the Cape Town time frames. Azure's mother and father are recalled in the Cape Town time frame as memories.

#### **4.3.7 A synopsis of the story as a series of intersecting relationships: Bafana**

The minutiae of living on the streets, for example when the child protagonist is hungry and is scrounging for food are described in the novel via a representation of the friendship between Bafana and Azure. Theirs is an uncompromising friendship without sentiment. The narrator says:

He's still a *lytie*, Bafana is only nine years old and he's on the streets. And he is naughty. He has a home to go back to in Langa but he chooses to roam the streets. He likes sniffing glue and smoking buttons when he has money. I don't like that stuff, it makes my head sore. But I like smoking ganja, quite a lot actually. Now Bafana when he smokes glue and buttons he becomes an animal, really. He starts grunting and doesn't speak much and he messes his pants. So whenever I see him smoking that stuff I beat him. I once beat him so badly he had to go to Groote Schuur to get stitched ... (p. 3).

According to the *récit*, Azure helps Bafana to take his morning bath before they go searching for food. According to the *histoire*, Azure is not characterised one-dimensionally as a victim of abuse. The narrator describes how he enforces his authority by means of violence.

Structurally the character of Bafana serves to link Azure to Joyce and Vincent. For example, the narrator relates that after Azure leaves Joyce (the old woman with whom he has had constant contact), having failed to get his money, he “bumps into Bafana” (day 11) who tells him that he saw Vincent earlier that day and that Vincent is going “back home” (p. 77). In this way, temporal relations, as interactions between the immediate past and the immediate present, represent the post-apartheid era as a violent and dangerous place for children.

#### **4.3.8 A synopsis of the story as a series of intersecting relationships: Joyce**

Azure also has constant contact with an old woman, Joyce, who feeds him discarded food from the restaurant where she works (pp. 6-7). He learns to trust her and gives her a portion of his earnings so that she can save the money for him (pp. 11-13). After leaving Gerald (p. 75), Azure goes to Joyce’s flat to collect his money on day 11. Joyce assaults him and chases him away (pp. 75-76).

Initially, through the narrator’s description, Joyce offers a representation of how Azure seeks nurturing and looks forward to the future. For the reader this emphasises that Azure is a child. This is illustrated in the extract below where Azure is talking about opening a bank account. He says:

And every time you put in money they make money for you by lending out your money. They are very clever people who work at banks. That’s what Joyce says. She says she ordered a banking place for me at First National bank and that all my money is going to be safe there. Every time I make money I give her some and she puts it away for me in the safe. It’s my plan to do something with it one day. I’m not sure what I can do with it or how much I have saved but I have a feeling that it will come in handy one day (p. 12).

An analysis of temporal relations reveals that Azure is speaking in the present but is anticipating a future event in which the money that he is saving helps him in some way. The narrator here

represents Azure's attributes as a hopeful child through temporal relations. That Joyce later proves to exploit Azure underscores the portrayal of a vulnerable child that has been thrust into the world of adults.

In showing an innocent vision of Joyce, the narrator characterises her in terms of her good deeds. Below is a retroversion that upsets the chronological ordering of events. Even though the reader encounters Joyce for the first time in the *récit*, according to the *histoire*, she has supplied food to Azure on previous occasions. In the excerpt below Azure tells why he never wants Joyce to see him on drugs:

I've worked too hard to see someone mess up a regular meal for me. She's nice, the auntie who gets the food for me. Her name is Joyce but she likes me to call her Auntie. She says I remind her of her son in Lichtenburg (p. 6).

On day 11 Azure attempts to get the money he has been saving from Joyce. This event is related as an unfolding scene. This presentation of events allows for a closer temporal relation between the *récit* and the *histoire*. The narrator employs this technique often in the description where Azure is verbally, physically and sexually abused. The immediacy of these descriptions implicates the reader as a witness in the ensuing violence. In the dialogue quoted below Azure speaks first:

"Joyce, I need my money. I'm in trouble," I tell her.

"Hey don't call me that," she says and slaps me across the face. "I'm old enough to be your grandmother." I look at her with surprise.

"Auntie, please, can you go to the bank? I need my money."

"Your money? After all I did for you. You can't get that money. The bank won't give it to you," she says with cold eyes.

"You mean you won't give it to me" (p. 75).

#### 4.3.9 A synopsis of the story as a series of intersecting relationships: Oscar

Azure interacts with Oscar for one night. In terms of the novel's *récit* and *histoire*, this is quite a brief relationship and yet it has a significant structural, thematic and narrative purpose. As a way of following the progression of events according to the *histoire*, the events mentioned below are related:

After waking up at Lebowitz's house, an older, married man who has paid Azure to have sex (p. 95), Azure leaves to meet with Vincent (p. 97). He goes to buy a jacket on Long Street in town (p. 99), and afterwards goes to Gerald's shack. Azure runs away (p. 102), and continues to walk out of the city towards Table Mountain (p. 103). In the early evening, "while it is light", he washes his pants, as well as his body (p. 108). He collects firewood and lights a fire in a cave where he finds refuge for the night (p. 109). On day 12, Gerald and Azure interact at night. Particularly they talk and smoke marijuana (p. 117).

This relationship is important because at this stage the novel leaves behind the material world as the character Azure enters a spiritual realm. This is apparent in the novel's adoption of metaphorical language when the character enters various dreaming and hallucinatory states. Here the narrative time as an aspect of the *récit* is briefly suspended and time becomes elastic as Azure incorporates into his present circumstances "Saartjie" and San hunter-gatherer religious beliefs. The novel employs the diminutive "Saartjie" (South African History Online (SAHO), 2014i), as an intertextual reference to a real person Sara Baartman (c1789-1815).

Thus the representation involving Sara Baartman and the San brings to bear colonial perpetration of violence against the Khoi and the San. According to South African History Online (SAHO), (2014i), the sexual exploitation of Sara Baartman is documented as part of South African history. In this way the novel links the sexual exploitation of Azure and that of Sara Baartman by distorting the chronological

unfolding of these events, thereby incorporating them mutually in a contemporary story. This facilitates an interpretation in which the exploitation and trafficking of vulnerable people for economical gain are highlighted.

Additionally, as the *récit* turns to relating Azure's memory it may be analysed according to the Bergsonian formulation of the spiritual aspects of man. According to Alexander (1957:63), Bergson points out an alignment between sin and materiality. Bergson's philosophical ideas are useful to interpret how the narrator ends Azure's story in the last two concluding chapters of the *récit*. This analysis is conducted not as an attempt to provide motivation for the character, but rather to investigate how temporal relations may place events in such a fashion that the *récit* represents ideas about spiritualism.

Alexander (1957:62) notes that Bergson's philosophy posits that "all human activity has ultimately religious significance and must be understood in the light of a universal divinely inspired creative process whose end is the union or the reunion of beings".

Taking Bergson's ideas into account, it is informative to see Azure's departure from the material world of the city as rejecting the violence and the rape which principally represent the novel's account of post-apartheid South Africa. Gerald's death represents the defeat of evil, and, because the narrator represents Azure and Gerald's actions as well intentioned, they symbolise the opposite of evil. The narrative suggests that virtue is akin to the ascendance of God (pp. 138-139). The departure from the material world is an attempt to transcend to an affirming spiritual realm as is evident in the text not only in the metaphorical language but also in the iterations referring to Azure's dead parents. The narrator relates Azure's parents in a way that conjures them as images rather than as characters participating in specific events.

Additional affirmation is apparent in how the character grasps for mystical relevance through ancient rituals, as exemplified by the trance dance. It is to be noted that Azure is not interested in Sara Baartman as a woman who has had a material existence but, as is clear in these later chapters, he sees her as an image transporting him into a spiritual realm. These links are brought about by temporal distortions which marry unrelated historical and contemporary events within one temporal dimension as an aspect of the *récit*.

#### **4.3.10 Azure's story**

A number of retroversions highlight an earlier time in Azure's existence. The narrator relates the character's experience as a ten-year-old living in Mshenguville, an informal settlement in Soweto. According to the website Soweto.co.za (2014), this economically depressed informal settlement – that has only minimal water and sanitary facilities – was established in around 1988. This state of poverty approximates Azure's minimalist retelling of life there. Ten-year-old Azure lives in Mshenguville with his mother and father. He confesses to being a "naughty child" who likes stealing matches from his mother's "secret hiding place" (p. 47). The thirteen-year-old narrator relates that when he was younger than his current age at Mshenguville (approximately ten years old), he burned his parent's bed by accident (p. 47). However, despite relating that his father "hit" or "beat" him for everything he did that his father "didn't like", this misdeed went unpunished (p. 47). Azure's father also beats his mother (p. 24).

The narrator also relates children's play at the informal settlement as prescribed in sexual engagement. Because of his blue eyes, Azure is bullied at school and by fortune attracts protection from an older boy, Vincent. This is demonstrated by an event at a playground, when Vincent fights off a bigger boy, "Rotten Sibuh" (p.149) and is punished by the principal for assaulting Sibuh. This altruistic act seals a bond of friendship between the two. As a ten-year-old, Azure finds his parents dead in their shack. It is at this stage that the friends hitchhike to Cape Town together (p. 90).



narrated in Chapter 5 (p. 21); day 5 in Chapter 6 (p. 28); day 6 in Chapters 7 and 8; part of day 6, which is narrated as a retroversion as well as days 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 in Chapter 9 (p. 46) which begins with a synoptic description of Chapters 6, 7 and 8. Then there is a synoptic retroversion to Azure's childhood, 3 years on from the narrative present (p. 47). Days 10 and 11 describe an interaction between Azure, Richard and Gerald. A sequence in which the narrator describes Azure's hallucination involving seagulls interrupts the chronological order of day 10 (p. 51).

The events of day 11 are also described in Chapter 10 as well as in chapters 11 (p. 65), 12 (p. 75) and 13 (p. 80). In Chapter 10 the narrator inserts another narrative in the form of a story. Vincent adapts the narrative from the film *Jurassic Park* and tells the story to Azure (pp. 60-63). In chapter 11 the narrator mentions Azure's dream (p. 65) as well as the retroversion to his childhood (p. 69) in a synoptic manner. Chapter 13 consists of an extended description of transactional sex between Azure and a character named Mr Lebowitz (pp. 80-94). In this chapter there is a synoptic retroversion, in which the narrator relates an episode from Azure's childhood three years hence (p. 90).

In Chapters 14, 15, 16 and 17 the narrator describes the events of day 12.

Here the narrator also retrospectively relates an event from 3 years hence (p. 98). The narrator relates that later that day, he has a dream (p. 100). In Chapter 15 there is a synoptic anticipation of day 13 (p. 108). In Chapter 17 the narrator increasingly employs metaphorical language by appropriating the story of Sara Baartman (p. 119) and blends in the narrative of *Jurassic Park* as well.

The events of day 14 are related in Chapter 18 (p. 124). The narrator's reporting that Azure spends days 14, 15, 16 and 17 on a mountain points to an acceleration of time as units of 4 days. This way of managing time may be analysed as a partial prolepsis because the narrator does account, in a

minimalist fashion, for Azure's activities. In this time period, the narrator describes Azure's dreams (pp. 126-130).

On day 18 the narrator reports that Azure leaves the mountain. The events of day 18 are described in Chapters 19 and 20. The narrative present is resumed in Chapter 18 (p. 131). However, on page 133 there is a retroversion where the narrator describes events which occurred during the time that Azure was on the mountain. In Chapter 20 (p. 142), the narrator continues describing the events of day 18.

In the middle of chapter 20 the narrator begins to relate an event occurring on day 19 (p. 145). There is also an extended retroversion to Azure's childhood in Mshenguville (p. 147). In Chapter 21 the events of day 19 are described. The events of a successive number of days are elided as the narrator announces on page 152: "One night three police vans appear ...". These may be accounted for in narrative time as days 20, 21 and 22.

On page 153 the narrator announces that "[t]he next morning four lorries come in ..." to start the description of events of day 23. Here again there are two retroversions to Azure's childhood (p. 154). The narrator also describes Azure's slide into a hallucinatory episode (pp. 157-159). In Chapter 22 the narrator describes events of day 20 and relates a hallucinatory episode on pages 161-164.

#### **4.3.12 Exploration of sub-themes in a global network of temporal relations**

A few chapters have been selected for discussion of the above-mentioned topic. These chapters typify trends so evident in the novel's structure.

In *Thirteen cents*, the global network of temporal relations predominantly emphasises the narrative present. This is achieved primarily in two ways: firstly by rendering the duration in which the events

are described as a scenic representation and secondly by rendering the narrative present via Azure's narration in which he recounts events as if they were unfolding.

However, within the prevailing narrative present, there are retrospections to three pasts. The first is a retroversion to pre-colonial South Africa and the second to three years hence to Azure's ten-year-old self growing up in Mshenguville. Thirdly there are retroversions to brief temporal periods, namely days, within the narrative present.

Chapter 1 (pp. 1-4) serves as a prologue in which the narrator Azure gives his name and describes himself as having "blue eyes and a dark skin" (p. 1). He also gives information about his age, and that he lives on the streets of Sea Point, located in the city of Cape Town (p. 3). The temporal orientation of the chapter, and in effect all 22 chapters, is the temporal present. Interestingly, the retroversions in the narrative tend not to serve as a means of juxtaposing the novel's narrative apartheid past and post-apartheid narrative present. Instead retroversions function to illuminate present circumstances.

An example in Chapter 1 is Azure's recollection of being beaten up for having blue eyes (p. 1). Another example is the killing of Azure's parents three years hence (p. 2). The narrator conflates these events almost as a singular recollection. Although these retroversions may be legitimately analysed as a regression to the time of apartheid, their significance is that they dissolve the temporal differentiation between the past and the present. The representation of these events underlines the notion that the post-apartheid period is redolent with racism, ethnocentrism and other forms of inequality. According to the novel's message, these forms of discrimination are thriving in the post-apartheid era.

Another prevalent form of temporal alteration in the novel is duration. This aspect refers to the number of sentences, paragraphs and pages used to describe events. In the majority of instances there is a scenic presentation of events, which shows the novel's alignment of the *histoire* and the *récit*. Analysing the scenic representation of events is informative because it consolidates the representation of the narrative present. The relentless oppression that the street children Azure, Bafana and Vincent experience is described. Dialogue between characters is the preferred mode of representation in all the chapters except Chapters 1, 15, 21 and the last chapter, Chapter 22.

Chapter 2 (pp. 5-10) is also discussed in depth for illustrative purposes. The chapter is structured mostly as a scenic exchange between the characters Azure and Bafana. Where there is no dialogue, the narrator quotes Azure in a way that emphasises the narrative present as in the following: "I go on like this for about five minutes", "I slap him at the back of his head ..." (p. 5) and "I walk towards the fountain ..." (p. 7). Other sentences/phrases are used as variants of these examples to emphasise the narrative present.

In this chapter the narrator for the first time relates that thirteen-year-old Azure's chief economic activity is as a child sex worker. In this and other representations of sexual engagement to follow, the text is structured in a way that prioritises duration. This is on account of the extended descriptions of these episodes. The descriptions of sex and violence take up comparatively more pages of written text than other events. The narrator alternates between a scenic rendering and the telling of the event as if it were unfolding in the narrative present. This focuses the reader's attention on the fact that this is a sexual act between a child and an adult. As this is a central theme in the novel, this idea deserves some discussion. Alternatively, in the *récit*, the violation of Azure might have been structured as if an adult narrator were recalling his sexual abuse that happened when he was a child. *Thirteen cents* avoids this type of temporal representation.

Maintaining the narrative present, specifically during the representations of sex, shows the character as an active participant. In one instance the scenic representation of Azure's violation implies that the child is gratified. This is apparent in how the narrator describes Azure in a transactional sexual encounter with a mature man. The narrator prefaces the detailed description of the act with comments on how the minor party finds pleasure and distaste while the two are having a shower (pp. 8-9). In another example the narrator quotes Azure as saying:

He puts down his glass on the table. I put my hand on his crotch and rub it. He opens his pants and his dick pops out. I stroke it gently.

"You like that don't you?" I say while I rub it.

"I know how to please a man. I know these bastards ..." (p. 84).

The temporal representation of this episode provides a context for the interpretation of this scene. The reader may very well question whether s/he is complicit in legitimising a non-judgemental portrayal of child abuse. In light of the prevalence of this crime in South Africa, a non-judgmental representation of child abuse undermines legislative, ethical and moral norms regulating sexual conduct in South African societies. This small digression hopefully illustrates that there are a number of ways that temporal relations inform the analysis and interpretation of narrative texts.

For the most part all the chapters in the novel follow a chronological representation of the order of events. As a rule, in *Thirteen cents*, the narrator lingers in describing Azure's interactions with the characters Joyce, Allen, Gerald, Vincent and Sealy.

Analysing the temporal relations in *Thirteen cents* also helps to expand on the sub-theme of racism. For example, Chapter 5 begins with a retroversion going back a "couple of days" (p. 21) but soon reverts to a scenic exchange in which Azure speaks to Bafana. In the novel, language is used to

delineate characters racially and ethnically, therefore the language they speak may be regarded as a sub-theme linked to the representation of racism in post-apartheid South Africa. In *Thirteen cents*, multilingualism is prevalent when the characters speak. This method of structuring a narrative text is more pronounced than in *All we have left unsaid*, *The smell of apples* and the *The innocence of roast chicken*.

An extract from *Thirteen cents* illustrates that in the novel language is a source of social power. Azure speaks first in this dialogue between himself and two hobos:

I can hear that they are both Afrikaans but I don't attempt to speak their language. That's how grown-ups fuck you. If you're too eager to please, to say hi and make a friend they think you're a *moegu* and take you for a ride.

"It's going to be warm tonight," I offer.

"We'll sleep well," Pieter says.

"Not if you snore," David says.

"Ag, los my uit, man. Ek es moeg."

"Praat jy Afrikaans?" Pieter asks.

I shake my head.

"Engelsman, ne?"

"Sotho," I say.

"Jo'burg," David says.

"Ja."

"I thought so. You don't find many Sotho *mense* in Cape Town. All the darkies speak Xhosa here" (p. 25).

The character Bafana does say a few words in Xhosa, whereas all the coloured characters are quoted as speaking Afrikaans and English. The scenic representation above adheres to the sub-theme of

racism to represent a society which is fractured according to race. Race is expressed through language and this determines social hierarchies.

Within scenic temporal relations some of the “large narrative articulations” (Genette, 1980:88) are conveyed. Mimesis, as a form of representation, gives the illusion that the narrator is absent, thereby permitting the presentation of maximum or essential information without any (superfluous) description of surroundings. This is illustrated in a dialogue between Azure and Vincent. Below Azure speaks first:

“So where are you going? Are you going back to Jo’burg?”

“Fuck no. To what? I haven’t seen my family in three years. No, I’m going to PE.”

“Oh,” I say. He’ll miss Cape Town.

“But East London is better” (p. 98).

In his analysis of *In search of lost time*, Genette (1980:166) differentiates between mimesis, or the creation of the illusion of showing events without the narrator’s focalisation and diegesis, in which the narrator is prominent in the text as a character relating events he is observing. This narrative aspect may be referred to in terms of being an application to facilitate “realism” within a novel. However, as Macey (2001:255) notes, structuralist theories do not regard the semiotic sign as possessing the ability to “imitate an external reality”. Therefore, in analysing the narrative text in terms of its formal devices, Genette (1980:166) relates mimesis to “a temporal determination – narrative speed”. Analysis of the extract above in particular and the novel in general, shows that the omission of extraneous narrative material gives the impression of accelerating narrative time.

#### 4.3.13 Subdivisions of time

Analysis of the conceptualisation of time as subdivision in *Thirteen cents* reveals the way in which temporal relations contribute to the narrative representation of the present and the past. In one sense, the narrator categorically recalls events of the past, as in the example below:

I lost my parents three years ago. Papa was bad with money and got Mama in trouble. The day they killed them I was away at school. I came back to our shack only to find them in a pool of blood. That was three years ago. That was the last time I went to school (p. 2).

In the Bergsonian manner, Azure's memory is triggered by his perception within the narrative present. The narrator quotes "coloured fruit sellers" who tell him that he should go to school, thereby implying that he is living on the streets by choice. In this situation, Azure is hurt by the realisation that the fruit sellers assume that he simply does not want to go to school. The character reflects that he is in a predicament because he is an orphan. The past and the present are linked in the *récit* in this manner:

"*Julle fokken mannetjies moet skool toe gaan,*" the fruit-sellers yell. It's easy for them to say that. I lost my parents three years ago ... (p. 2).

Here the past and the present are contiguous to each other (Bergson, 1950:209). In the narrative present, Azure faces the difficulty of trying to obtain food and he is unfairly judged as if he does not want to go to school. This triggers the memory of the killing of his parents. As Alexander (1957:53) notes, it is in this way that "memories are incorporated in all self-conscious activity". The bringing together of these events through temporal relations in the *récit* highlights the idea that victims of violence, oppression or discrimination are innocent and that the motivations and actions of perpetrators mark them as compassionless transgressors of human rights.

Other subdivisions of time in the novel are constructed metaphorically. As an example, Azure says: “Morning creeps in slowly. Bafana sleeps curled in a half-moon beside me” (p. 5). Alternatively on the same page, time is subdivided into smaller units in this example where Azure is speaking to Bafana:

“Bafana, son, get up, we need to get breakfast.” I poke him. “Bafana ... Bafana.”

I go on like this for about five minutes before he gets up (p. 5).

These temporal constructions emphasise the narrative present as described by the narrator.

In another instance Joyce’s friend is described as having gone home “for a few days ...” (p. 11). Azure expresses an anticipatory event by saying that “one day” he will benefit from saving money through Joyce (p. 12). Similarly, Allen, a man who forcibly hires women out for sex, reminds a prostitute that she received what he considers excessive monetary compensation “yesterday” (p. 14). In another instance Azure speaks of “the last couple of days ...” (p. 21). The character also determines a time period of eight days (p. 45) and another time period of three days (p. 46).

Additionally, a day in the narrative present is specified. For example, Bafana says to Azure: “Oh, Vincent. I saw him today ...” (p. 77). In identifying an hour of the day Azure notes that “[i]t’s late” (p. 26). As the *récit* progresses, the narrator speaks in variants of syntagmatic or word combinations similar to the phrases outlined above. These subdivisions of time also help the narrator to differentiate the occurrence of events within a narrow temporal time frame, that is, within the context of the prevailing scenic representation of time as an unfolding present. In these scenes, Azure also refers to past or anticipated events. The combinations of defined and undefined time frames render a coherent narrative of Azure’s experiences rather than a telling of isolated events.

The narrative text is constructed in such a way that retroversions going back three years feature as Azure and Vincent's memories of events that happened exclusively in Johannesburg. These appear intermittently within the *récit* – some of them on pages 2, 33, 47, 70, 73, 90, 93, 98, 147-149, 154, 161, 162, 163, and 164. Here the narrative time and the geographical place exceed the geographical locale of Cape Town. In one instance the narrative goes back even further, where the character Gerald speaks about Azure's early days of his life. In this dialogue, Azure speaks in short sentences while Gerald is quoted as speaking in paragraphs. The example below quotes Gerald:

“That's why you have blue eyes and love water. You're always thirsty because he [Azure's father] did the same to your mother, before you were born. When you were in your mother's stomach you taught yourself how to swim, to love water ...” (p. 73).

Another aspect regarding the subdivision of time concerns the narrator's telling of a number of dream sequences or hallucinations. Some of these are described on pages 51, 65 (Chapter 11); page 100 (Chapter 14); page 119 (Chapter 17); page 132 (Chapter 19); pages 144 and 146 (Chapter 20); page 158 (Chapter 21); as well as on page 163 (Chapter 22). These digressions from the chronological ordering of events in the narrative present structure the text as explained below.

It is informative to ascribe dates to the novel's time frame of 1992-1995 to account for the narrator's differentiation of the apartheid and post-apartheid eras. The latter date applies because it is a year into South African democracy. The abolition of influx control laws allowed much wider social interaction between blacks, coloureds, Indians and whites within the city of Cape Town, as is described in the novel. The date ascribed to the beginning of the period is deduced by counting three years back. This is because the narrator traces Azure's memory back by that amount of time.

In the context of the information above, the reader may also analyse Azure's hallucinations and dreams as an extension of temporal zones prescribed by the novel. As an example, one episode of the narrator's description of hallucinations is reminiscent of San hunter-gatherer religious practice. According to the South African History Online (SAHO), (2014j), the San social organisation designated a role for a "medicine man" to stipulated duties, one of them being to perform a trance dance. This extends the novel's time frame to the pre-colonial era in South Africa (p. 158).

As these hallucinatory episodes use metaphorical language they also introduce a suspension of time. It may also be said that they distort time as a means of disturbing the linearity of events that describe Azure's material world. The example below is typical of the employment of metaphor:

The heads of white bodies float like kelp. I look away as the water creeps closer. I start running towards the highest point of the mountain. Underneath I crush little frogs and lizards. Birds cry in the sky. There is just a cloud of confusion on the mountain. I run till I start seeing other people. They run and howl with panic (pp. 162-163).

## 5 FINDINGS

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses findings arising from the analysis of *The innocence of roast chicken* (Richards, 1996); *The smell of apples* (Behr, 1996), *All we have left unsaid* (Case, 2006) and *Thirteen cents* (Duiker, 2011). These novels constitute the sample of this study and as this is a non-probability sample, the generalisations made below are applicable only to the novels that have been investigated. The study was initiated through three assumptions, which have been found to be appropriate for the description, analysis and interpretation of how temporality is applied in the recollection of apartheid in selected South African novels in English. Genettean (1980) temporal relations provide the theoretical background for this study.

### 5.2 Findings: Jo-Anne Richards's *The innocence of roast chicken*

**5.2.1 Research Question 1:** How can Genette's concept of narrative *order* be applied to a selection of post-apartheid South African novels in English to describe, analyse and interpret how events are ordered in the *récit* or narrative text and the *histoire* or story to establish how this contributes to the narrative representation of the past and how this renders the meanings specific texts confer on the past?

The content analysis of the novel has revealed that the narrator devotes more narrative time to relating the past, which is 1966, than narrating the events of the novel's narrative present, 1989. This is apparent in the narrator's use of recognisable phrases which assume these, or similar formulations such as "I can't remember" (p. 10); "my most urgent memory..." (p. 10); "if I recall ..." (p. 29).

The phrases referring to remembrance and memory also point to the structuring of the past as memory in the narrative text. It is also made apparent via the headings of chapters, which identify specific dates of the year 1966. These phrases distort the chronological order of events as the homodiegetic narrator Kate departs from narrating unfolding events according to the novel's narrative present. This distortion of the order of events as an aspect of the *histoire* allows the relation of past events as the *récit*. The adult narrator recalls events of growing up on a farm in the Eastern Cape, in the process recalling what she considers to be happy and unhappy memories. One of the prominent events in the novel is the castration of a labourer, Johannes. This event is given prominence by being mentioned in retroversions as well as through the duration of the narrative. These aspects of temporality are structured as memory in the *récit*. Memories of the apartheid past define Kate's fictional life.

Within the time frame of 1989 some informative retrospective events involve the narrator Kate's description of political events, among them a political rally, as well as her lawyer husband Joe's involvement in a mine labour dispute. The most significant retroversion is Kate's narration of her childhood, which is sustained over 11 chapters. Generally, the narrator orientates the presentation of events according to apartheid racial classifications; for example, the adult Kate specifically identifies black women at the political rally (p. 113) and similarly, in describing an event at her husband's law firm she highlights the race of a newly appointed black lawyer at her husband's firm (p. 16).

As repressive apartheid ideology assumed various forms, it has also been useful to analyse retroversions into the apartheid past through the prism of sub-themes of apartheid. In the novel, the retroversions into the past assume multifaceted permutations. Sub-themes that surface via the narrator's description of events include self-blame, gender relations as well as the exploration of Afrikaner, South African English and Xhosa ethnic identities. This is highlighted by retroversions to

the Huguenot and Voortrekker traditions, the examination of urban South African English culture and a description of the subservient attitude and behaviour of the Xhosa workers on Ouma Grieta and Oupa Johnnie's farm.

The narrative text represents the narrative of the apartheid past through distorting the chronological order of events. The researcher analyses the *récit* so as to interpret the novel under discussion. The retroversions differentiate the novel's recent apartheid past as well as other historical pasts, for example the 1920s (pp. 138-141) and the 1600s (p. 33) from the novel's narrative present in which there are tangible signs of the demise of apartheid, such as the political unbanning of the African National Congress (ANC) which the narrator describes and which delineates the apartheid past. The novel also delineates the past by anticipating a post-apartheid period in South Africa in which there is a democratically elected government. Kate anticipates the future by speculating whether anti-apartheid activists will live to enjoy the attainment of social and political equity p. 113).

As an aspect of the narrative ordering of events, anticipatory deviations in the *récit* assume minor importance when compared to recollected events. For example, within the sub-theme of self-blame, the way in which the child narrator blames herself for the killing of a chicken (p. 132) may be interpreted as an anticipatory event creating the narrative context for the novel's pivotal moment, that is, the castration of Johannes (p. 245), the pinnacle point that separates her childhood of innocence and her adulthood.

It is ironic that as the narrator recounts the demise of the oppressive system of apartheid, the imminent end of this oppressive regime also marks the end of her rural idyll. Analysing the structure of the novel as complementary sub-themes exploring the iniquities brought by apartheid legislation emphatically positions the novel as an argument against apartheid supremacist ideology. Equally

important is that an analysis of temporal relations uncovers a nuanced representation of the past and the present, which adds aesthetic value to the novel.

Also relevant as a descriptive, analytical and interpretive tool is Bergson's theory of memory. For example, the retroversions of 1966 in the *récit* start from the day furthest away from Christmas Day and progresses towards the day. Analysis of the progression of events in the Bergsonian manner indicates that the characters experience the past and the present as being contiguous to each other. Therefore the apartheid past of 1966 and the apartheid past of 1989 are both represented to illustrate that inequality is prevalent in both eras although there were marked socio-political differences in both periods. Throughout the novel, Kate's recollections persistently intrude within unfolding moments, that is, as Bergson (1950:313) puts it, memory continues and retains "the past in a present enriched by it". For the year 1966 the narrator presents interactions on a farm in which black farm workers are depicted as children, whereas in 1989 she describes socially interacting with her husband's black colleague. This is an illustration of the language of memory captured through qualitative data.

Chapter 3 of the dissertation, which discusses the analysis of the *Innocence of roast chicken*, discusses 14 instances of narrative order in contrast that contrast with 4 instances of narrative duration and 2 of narrative frequency (see Fig. 5 below).

Quantitative data underlines that the *récit* is orientated towards the past. As stated in Chapter 3 of this dissertation, the past of 1966 is narrated over 149 pages as compared to 89 pages which are allocated to the narrative present.

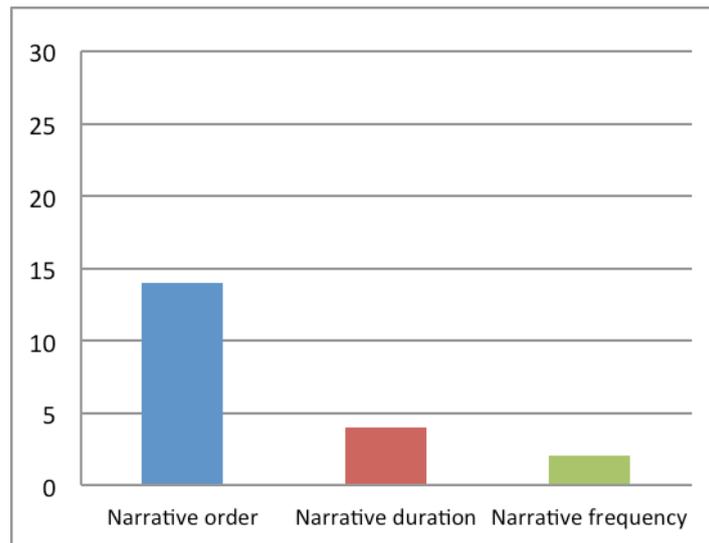


Fig. 5: The prevalence of temporal occurrence in *The innocence of roast chicken*

**5.2.2 Research Question 2:** How can Genette’s narrative concept of *duration* be applied to a selection of post-apartheid South African novels in English to describe, analyse and interpret how the representation of seminal and seemingly non-seminal events function in representing aspects of the apartheid past and the meanings assigned to these?

Narrative duration is the second most prevalent method of managing temporal relations in *The innocence of roast chicken*. In particular, extended permutations in the description of selective events mark these as important within the *récit*. Prolific occurrences, as well as extended durations support the narrator’s emphasising of sub-themes. The child narrator’s recollection of an event in which a dog bites a domestic worker on the farm is an informative example for exploring extended duration. According to the *histoire*, the action of biting itself is swift, yet the narrator lingers (p. 176). The description of this event is contained in five pages. Besides the extended number of paragraphs in which this event is told, it also assumes a scenic presentation through dialogue between the domestic workers and between Kate and her grandfather.

The analysis of this novel also reveals that invariably, where there is extended recollection or description of an event, the narrator tends to favour a scenic representation of that event with the

result that conversations abound in the novel. The child Kate engages in dialogue with her family on the farm as well as with the farm workers. As an adult she engages in lengthy verbal quarrels with Joe. There are also extended exchanges between Magriet and her workers on the farm and also most notably, an exchange between Magriet and Elaine (p. 61). The mother-daughter interaction also reveals another aspect in which Afrikaner nationalism provided a moral justification for gender inequality. The technique of using a scenic exchange reduces the distance between the descriptions of an event of the narrative past and one of the present. This method highlights unequal gender relations as a common factor between the temporal frames of 1966 and 1989.

Taken as an isolated event, a domestic worker being bitten by a dog seems to be a non-seminal event. However, in interpreting this event as integral to the theme of self-blame, it is revealed as a seminal event and is hence accorded prominence by the narrator. The application of narrative duration emphasises social and political inequality as is apparent in the narrator's rendition of the interaction between Magriet and Elaine. It is also apparent in the descriptions of the unequal relations between a black older woman who is represented as socially and culturally inferior, and a white child (Kate).

Notably, narrative duration operates with other techniques of temporal relations to represent the past. For example, the dialogue between Oupa and the child Kate combines duration and frequency as the narrator mentions the incident of the domestic worker being bitten by a dog at length and also mentions it frequently (pp. 200, 201, 202) and retrospectively as an event that has occurred.

**5.2.3 Research Question 3:** How can Genette's narrative concept of *frequency* be applied to a selection of post-apartheid South African novels in English to describe, analyse and interpret how the frequency of events presented in narratives relate the meanings specific narratives convey with regard to the past?

In *The innocence of roast chicken*, the frequency in which the narration of events relates the meanings of the text is subsumed by narrative order as well as narrative duration. The castration of Johannes is the most prominent event that the narrator mentions. According to the *histoire*, the event occurred only once but is mentioned repeatedly as a device to structure the *récit* as well as to facilitate the assignment of meaning.

For most of the *récit*, the adult Kate relates the castration of Johannes by omission, as she narrates the event as part of generalised dissatisfaction with past events. It is only in the last chapters that the character's source of unhappy memories is revealed in a detailed narration. This event is also presented as a culmination of a number of fronts. Interpreting the novel under the theme of self-blame reveals that that Kate uses Christianity to arbitrate between what is ethically good and bad. Since she regards the castration of Johannes as something bad she then sees the attack on Johannes as a fulfilment of evil. It is also a climactic plot device whereby all of the character Kate's misadventures are explained by a singular occurrence. This is evident in the dialogue between Kate and Jim during the temporal period of 1989, where Jim badgers Kate seeking that she confront traumatic events of the past.

A further two of the most prominent iterations involve the events that support the sub-theme of self-blame. These are the descriptions of the domestic worker being bitten by a dog and the killing of a chicken.

Analysing the temporal aspect of frequency (Genette, 1980:118) also demonstrates that the iterations of the apartheid past serve to extend the time frame the characters refer to. The description of the assault of Johannes extends the novel's local time frame to the Huguenot period in South African history (p. 33). In terms of the structural organisation of the novel, it is apparent

that this event occurs once in the *histoire* but the narrator repeats it eight times (pp. 32, 47, 48, 99,101,121,122 and 128) in telling the story as the *récit*. The number of times the narrator repeats mentioning this event draws attention to its importance and highlights the maltreatment of black workers on farms during the apartheid era.

### **5.3 Findings: Mark Behr's *The smell of apples***

#### **5.3.1 Research Question 1**

As far as this research question is concerned, the content analysis of *The smell of apples* reveals that the narrator spends more time narrating past events, namely of a period in 1973. As an aspect of the *récit*, this means that the chronological order of events has been manipulated as a device allowing for the narrator's recollections. The narrator, Marnus, recalls events of his childhood 15 years prior to his becoming a soldier. In terms of the novel's *histoire*, the narrative present is 1988 and involves the adult narrator Marnus, a soldier stationed on the border between Angola and South West Africa. In this novel, the most significant contribution to the narrative representation of the past is through the distortion of the chronological order of events as is illustrated.

Considering the time frames of 1988 and 1973 there is a discrepancy in the number of events occurring within a specific time span. Represented in the *récit* are events surrounding the adult character Marnus within a shorter time span than representations of events involving the child character. The exact period is undefined in the novel, but an analysis of the sequencing of events suggests that the narrator relates only a few weeks in the life of the adult Marnus. On the other hand, the narrator relates events within a period of approximately a year in the life of the child Marnus. The novel is structured as alternating episodes between the past and the narrative present.

Within the defined temporal periods there are further retroversions and anticipations which expand the temporal zones in which the characters exist. If we take this factor into account it is apparent that the narrator favours recounting events of the past.

The novel actualises retroversions by organising a unique arrangement of temporal relations such as manipulating chronological order so that the text produces characters that keep secrets, which suggests that the past is constructed as a series of secrets: Marnus, his friend Frikkie, Marnus's father, his mother Leonore and even the family's domestic worker Doreen all hide information from one another. Doreen's secret is exposed when the character Marnus discovers her covertly listening in on Leonore's singing (p. 45).

In the *récit*, retroversions are also structured to support sub-themes representing the apartheid past. Another sub-theme refers to the sexual exploitation of children. This method of structuring the *récit* illustrates the manner in which apartheid had a deleterious impact on society. This sub-theme is structured so that retroversions function to link two significant episodes: the sexual exploitation of Ilse and the sexual violation of Frikkie. Together and individually these events are pivotal in the global structure of the novel as they may be seen as building to a climactic point in the narrative. Broadly this sub-theme resonates widely when the physical abuse of another child character, Little-Neville is taken into account. The network of retroversions foregrounds the suffering of children. An analysis of the manipulation of chronological order facilitates an interpretation of the novel which takes into account that apartheid robbed children of their innocence.

From the order of events, it becomes evident that fewer anticipatory events than retroversions are narrated. For the most part, where the narrator mentions anticipatory events, they do not alter the course of the novel significantly, for example when the child Marnus anticipates the family going

away for a holiday (p. 199). Alternatively, there is an anticipated event that does have a significant impact on the relationship between the story and the narrative text. It may be said that the representation of the sexual violation of Ilse anticipates the sexual abuse of Frikkie. This view may be justified by noting that the narrator, in recollecting the past, arranges the chronology of these events to show how Ilse's sexual exploitation by the Chilean general (p. 156) functions as a preparation for the narration of Frikkie's sexual abuse (p. 174).

There are other sub-themes that may be useful to denote the apartheid past. The Afrikaans family as represented by the interactions of the Erasmus family may be seen as an institution for gender and racial oppression. Erasmus senior channels Leonore into the role of homemaker at the expense of her singing talent. Leonore denigrates her coloured employee as rootless, disloyal and considers coloured people in general to be immoral. In linking traditional values of the *volk*, Erasmus senior also proffers justification for apartheid by claiming a moral high ground; Marnus remarks on apartheid-era industrial whaling as representing socio-economic progress as opposed to the exploitation of the environment (p. 27); the narrator conveys the way in which Erasmus senior emphasises to Marnus the achievements of prior generations in Tanganyika as a strategy to instil nationalistic ideas; and lastly, the narrator represents aspects of apartheid ideology in a manner that sees this phenomenon as either spiritually ordained or as an erosion of the spirit.

Most significantly, in this novel analysis shows that the manipulation of the order of events in the *récit* brings together events occurring in disparate geographical locales. Once again the structuring of the narrative text prompts an interpretation. One example involves an occurrence in which the adult Marnus hears his father on a radio broadcast while he is stationed in southern Angola (p. 83). This occurrence may be interpreted in the *récit* to convey the notion that the military and domestic worlds were contiguous to each other during the apartheid past; the narrative text represents Marnus's anxiety in the war zone and mirrors similar unease in South African suburbia.

Retroversions convey history. Analysis also found that the character of Marnus is implicated by history. Since history is a major theme in the novel, the narrator makes this apparent through recollections of pre-colonial culture (p. 9), also through recollections of the community of Afrikaners in Tanganyika who immigrated to South Africa (p. 15) as well as by narrating recent histories of the enactment of apartheid during 1973 and 1988.

In line with other novels analysed in this study, the past is analysed as a recollection of memories. The management of time in the novel also fosters an interpretation in that the subdivision of time into years, months, weeks, days, hours and minutes is activated through recollections of the past. These retroversions structure the text by encapsulating a series of temporal time frames within one narrated episode, as illustrated in the letter Leonore writes to Marnus, in which the events she describes evoke early whaling culture in 1800s, Marnus's fascination with whales as a child in the time frame of the 1973 as well as the narrative present in 1988 (p. 133).

Quantitative data underlines that the *récit* is orientated towards the past. As stated in Chapter 3 of this dissertation, the past of 1966 is narrated over 149 pages while 89 pages are allocated to the narrative present. Furthermore, in Chapter 4 there are 20 instances in which narrative order is discussed; these contrast with 6 instances of narrative duration and 4 instances of narrative frequency (see Fig. 6).

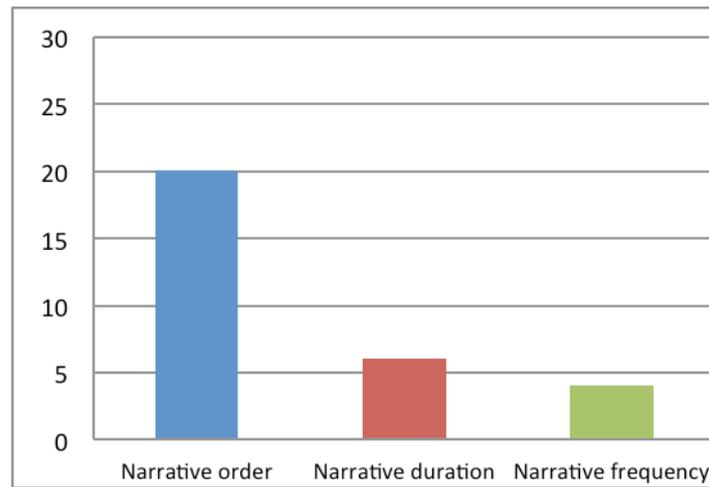


Fig. 6: The prevalence of temporal occurrence in *The smell of apples*

Even though explicit references to memory and history are minimal, these are important thematic and organisational elements of the *récit*. For example, Erasmus senior notes: “A *volk* that forgets its history is like a man without a memory. This man is useless” (p. 38). More than a decade later, according to the novel’s *histoire*, Marnus, at his dying moment, notes: “Death brings its own freedom, and it is for the living the dead should mourn, for in life there is no escape from history” (p. 198).

Memory is primarily used to structure the past in a way that facilitates interpretation of the negative effects of apartheid. Where the apartheid past is recalled in the novel, it is as a period of Afrikaner prosperity. For example, the narrator mentions that Frikkie’s father is a senior executive at a leading insurance company, Sanlam (p. 4) and further observes: “The Delports are very rich and Frikkie’s mother and father both drive Mercs. They don’t have a holiday-house like us ...” (p. 112). The Erasmus family are also socially and economically prosperous. It is ironic, however, that Afrikaner prosperity presents a burden for the younger generation.

The novel suggests that Erasmus senior represents the unquestioned old repressive socio-political order, while the adult Marnus represents a generation burdened by history and fighting a war they have not created and about whose benefits they are confused. In the representation of Erasmus

senior's butchery in Rhodesia the narrator imbues the past with glory. As Erasmus senior is seen to experience them, military invasions then became a repository for beliefs that bind the Afrikaners as a nation, but, as the narrator relates his activities during the South African Border War, for Marnus the past is something to be escaped.

The narrator recalls memories as a child (in 1973) and also as an adult (in 1988). Bergsonian theory assists in the analysis and interpretation of the way in which the text fashions a complex narrative representation of the apartheid past. The narrative text may be considered as a form of image advancing to a present-day perception. Seen as an aspect of Bergsonian theory, Marnus's death is represented in philosophical terms. He experiences a memory of himself and his father crying (p. 197) and this memory solidifies into the character's perception upon his death (p. 198). Bergson says that "from the moment the recollection actualises, it ceases to be a recollection and becomes once more a perception" (1950:325). Analysing how these events are structured in the *récit* reveals that the text suggests sub-themes that represent the apartheid past.

### **5.3.2 Research Question 2**

In *The smell of apples*, the temporal aspect of duration emerges as a successful strategy to highlight specific events. For example, the dehumanisation of coloured people is prominent as a sub-theme. The representation of racial prejudice experienced by adults, for example the abandonment of the loyal Chrisjan by Leonore (p.106), corresponds thematically with the representation of the loss of childhood innocence. This is made apparent by the narration of a seminal event describing the burning of Little-Neville (p. 130). According to the *histoire*, the burning of the child occurs within a short period of time. However, there is an extended narration of this event, which represents the circumstances leading to the incident. The narrator also describes how this event occurred. Therefore an extended duration of narration is essential because it allows a representation which

includes various facets of this occurrence. In this instance, duration operates in conjunction with the temporal device of narrative frequency – the event occurs once according to the *histoire*, but is related under various dramatic contexts as an aspect of the *récit*.

The apartheid past is also represented through a sub-theme highlighting the sexual exploitation of children by white men. This is apparent in the analysis of events involving the Chilean general and Ilse (pp. 150-151) and the sexual violation of Frikkie (p. 174). The narrator represents these events in proportionately more paragraphs than he represents less harmful events in the *recit*. Quantitative data confirms that approximately 9 pages out of the novel's total of 200 pages cover these events. Significant also is the additional combined use of retroversions and narrative duration. Temporal relations of duration, frequency and retroversion operate in combination to facilitate the representation of the narrative past as well as the interpretation of the novel.

Another combination of temporal devices involves extended narrative duration and a retroversion. An example of this combination involves the extended description of the event where Ilse is made a school prefect. An anticipatory event is brought into a dialogue between Leonore and a teacher where they anticipate that Marnus is expected to follow in Ilse's footsteps. The representation of this event positions it as a key event in that it is thematically rich and structured to facilitate a seamless cooperation of a number of temporal aspects.

Manipulation of the chronological order of these events brings them closer to and facilitates an interpretation that takes into account how conservative values served to foster social control, in line with apartheid ideology. As an isolated occurrence Ilse's school function appears to be a non-seminal event, but when temporal aspects are taken into consideration it may be interpreted as an enriched representation of the apartheid past. It may be inferred that the school, as an apartheid

institution, was used to inculcate conformity as well as conservative social norms and political ideology in learners, teachers and parents.

Another element of duration, the scenic representation of past events through dialogue, plays a critical part in the structuring of the narrative text. Seminal events that incorporate dialogue include an exchange in which Marnus and Frikkie seal their friendship by becoming blood brothers (pp. 73-81). As measured by the number of pages, it is apparent that a scenic temporal aspect combines with extended duration as the narrator spends a long time relating this scene. This reinforces the sub-theme of secrecy. An extensive scenic representation is also apparent in the narrator's description of the event of Ilse's promotion to school prefect (pp. 148-149). Within this one event, there is dialogue between Leonore and one of Ilse's teachers (p. 147) as well as between Leonore and Ilse (p.148). Represented here is Ilse's rebelliousness.

### **5.3.3 Research Question 3**

Frequency as an aspect of temporality functions in a numerically limited yet significant way in *The smell of apples*. The narrator distinguishes between the frequent repetition of one event and narrating a number of times in the *récit* an event that occurs once as an aspect of the *histoire*. For example, the narrator repeatedly mentions Marnus taking a shower with his father. These events occur on a regular basis and the narrator does not actually represent the minutiae of a particular event but instead iterates the fact that Erasmus senior prefers to share a shower with his son.

The telling of one of these events, as the narrator does on pages 62-63, suggests that other showers that father and son share do not have specific meaning, but if one analyses these events as a sub-theme of the novel they may then be interpreted as conveying meaning. The representation of showers suggests underlying sinister meaning. In a similar fashion, Genette (1980:116) writes of

iterative events in which “a single narrative utterance takes upon itself several utterances together”. If we apply Genette’s idea here, it is then apparent that these showers, initiated by the father, provide “an informative frame” for his sexual violation of Frikkie.

Frequency as a structuring device is informative as it is subtly suggestive. The father-son showering arrangements delineate character to aid the narrative representation of the apartheid past. Under the sub-theme highlighting the victimisation of vulnerable members of society, the narrative structuring of these showers reveals a predatory aspect of masculinity, as represented by Erasmus senior.

The narrator’s description of the burning of Little-Neville is repeated eight times in the *récit*. Since, according to the *histoire*, this event occurred once, its retelling in the *récit* emphasises its thematic and structural import. The representation of the manner in which Little-Neville is burnt, as an aspect of the *récit*, suggests that the human rights of coloured people were disregarded. The event also illustrates that victims of apartheid, as targets of violence, had no legal or societal recourse to justice.

Meaning is also conveyed through the application of temporality in which an event that occurs a number of times according to the *histoire* is narrated once as an aspect of the *récit*. An example is Leonore’s letter to Marnus in which she reminds him that as a boy he was enthralled by whales. Frequently mentioning, in the *récit*, a singular event of Marnus’s watching of whales would have compromised the novel’s aesthetic composition. Therefore the narration of this event as a memory conveys poignancy in the representation of Leonore’s last letter to her son (p. 135).

Lastly, as discussed under Research Question 2, frequency is also combined with other forms of temporal relations to facilitate narrative representation and interpretation of the apartheid past.

## 5.4 Findings: Maxine Case's *All we have left unsaid*

### 5.4.1 Research Question 1

Genette's concept of narrative order is applied by conducting a content analysis of *All we have left unsaid*. Analysing the discrepancy between the chronological order of events as an aspect of the *histoire* and their distortion as an aspect of the *récit* reveals that the narrator predominantly relates events of the past.

Further analysis of the *récit* indicates that events of the narrative present occupy 114 pages in comparison to those of the past occupying 148 pages. Within the predominating temporal zone of the narrative present and past there are further retroversions. There are 25 instances of narrative order in the discussion of the novel in Chapter 5, which by far outnumber the mentioning of the instances of narrative duration (this temporal relation is mentioned 6 times), as well as of narrative frequency, which is mentioned 3 times (see Fig. 7).

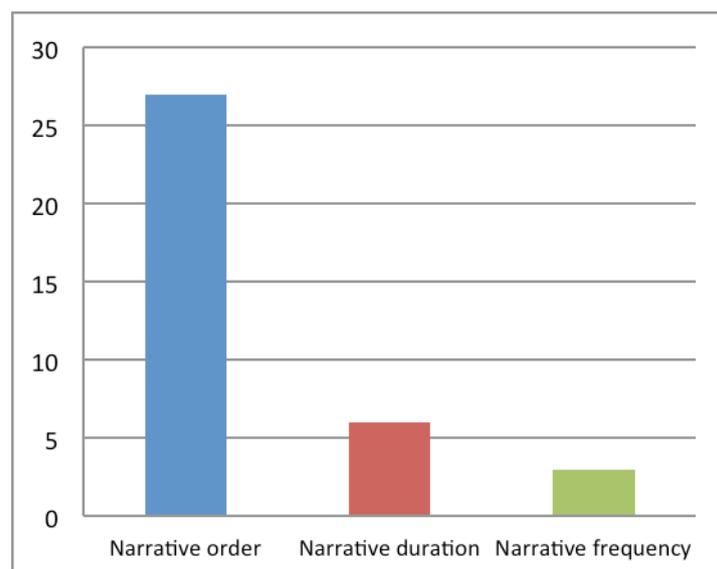


Fig. 7: The prevalence of temporal occurrence in *All we have left unsaid*

The narrative past is structured under headings referring to climate seasons. This information is related by the homodiegetic narrator Danny. Furthermore the text is organised in such a manner that sections concerned with the narrative present and past alternate. The last two sections, formulated in the analysis of the novel as Chapters 31 and 32, depart from this formula as they are both present-day events.

The concept of narrative order contributes to narrative representation by bringing together and separating events. One of the most informative examples involves Danny's recollections of childhood events in general and specifically those involving her sister Lili. Danny reassesses her childhood by recalling events which are important in the plot of the story.

Elements which arise out of the interpretation of order include characters facing adversity leading to the mother and daughters achieving collective spiritual regeneration and becoming empowered as women. The novel may also be interpreted to illustrate that patriarchy manifests through the representation of both men (through the character Trevor) and women (through the character Ma Matthews). Another significant sub-theme refers to how apartheid legislation targeted immigrants as a strategy to limit allocation of resources to white South Africans and to exclude citizens classified as coloured.

Typically, important events are made prominent through being brought together within present circumstances. One of the most prominent events involves the recollection of Danny's mother May's first hospital stay (pp. 250-254), which the narrator obliquely refers to several times in the novel.

These recollections culminate in the narrative representations of the past, which give meaning to them as sub-themes of apartheid. Broadly these sub-themes amount to aspects of inequality expressed most forcefully through unequal gender relations and as a form of patriarchy which

prescribes socially limiting roles for women and girls. Analysis of the interaction of retroversions in conjunction with the events of the narrative present also brings to the fore a sub-theme in which there are positive and discriminatory constructions of racial and class differences.

Interestingly, analysis of the sub-theme of food reveals how in the novel the description of social relations informs the novel's feminist ideological orientation. Other aspects of narrative order include the distortion of the *récit* to anticipate the narration of May's attempted suicide as well as a prolepsis relating Lili's move away from home. However, as an aspect of narrative order, retroversions offer substantial opportunities to gauge the structure of the novel as well as the organisation of thematic material.

As in all the novels discussed in this study, the narrator's construction of the past assumes the form of the protagonist's memory. This is a structuring device which assists in the elucidation of the sub-themes of apartheid. One of the interesting aspects of the novel is the narrative representation of one character's memory by another character, for instance when Danny recalls her mother May's memory of an event when she, before Danny was born, had been invited to supper with her then prospective husband Trevor's family. The narrative here not only represents Danny's past but regresses to a period even further back from the narrative present, thereby "doubling" the narrative past in one narrated instance.

When the past is interpreted in the Bergsonian manner, it becomes evident that family folklore is transmitted across generations. Bergson (1950:321) emphasises that memory is not material that is located in the brain and that can be extracted from the brain but comes about via a combination of perception and recollections. Thus May's story about her experiences at Ma Matthews's house becomes a source for Danny to explain her father Trevor's habits. She explains that he was brought up to consider "supper time" and other "mealtimes like Sunday lunch" as a rigid unchangeable ritual

(p. 20). Danny tells the story to bring together the narrative present with mealtimes occurring at different times and on different days. This points to the numerous options an author has when applying temporal relations. The structuring of these mealtimes may be interpreted to mean that they initiate forthcoming memories for Danny.

Also significant is an interpretation that takes into account that the oppression of women continued from apartheid into the post-apartheid era. Danny's mother is seen as having suffered oppression during both periods. Therefore Danny's childhood is structured in the novel in a manner that defines the apartheid past and so that the events of the narrative present represent the post-apartheid era.

#### **5.4.2 Research Question 2**

A content analysis of *All we have left unsaid* reveals that narrative duration is the second most utilised form in which the narrator manages temporal relations. The most important function of duration in the novel is to highlight the significance of certain events by applying extended narrative duration. The iterations and extended narration of May's attempted suicide elevate the status of this event as a seminal component of the novel's plot. Abstracting information from the *récit* suggests, as an aspect of the *histoire*, that May's suicide appears to be quick, in contrast to the telling of it as an aspect of the *récit*. The narration of this event over four pages gives credence to the narrator's observations when she says, "[F]or the longest time, I had few memories of childhood. Then suddenly I did. They came at once. Not in slow drips and nuances, but a deluge" (p. 17).

The novel is brimming with scenic representations of dialogue between characters. Danny partakes in dialogue with her family, mostly in one-to-one verbal exchanges. Yet, despite the high volume of scenic representation of events, these interactions do not, on their own, contribute substantively to

the representation of the past. Similarly, the synopsis of events is also not applied in a manner that contributes substantively to the interpretation of the narrative text. Thematic material applied to represent the past is most effectively deployed via narrative order.

### 5.4.3 Research Question 3

The prevalence of instances of narrative frequency rank in third place when compared to narrative order and narrative duration. As in the other novels in this study, narrative frequency functions best in combination with other elements of temporal relations. For example, if the narrator had simply repeated the narration of May's attempted suicide without describing the event in detail via extended permutation, the event would have had less impact on the organisation of structure or the meaning of apartheid sub-themes.

As an aspect of narrative frequency this event is related five times by the narrator, on pages 11, 12, 248, 249 and 252-257. The narrator gives a full exposition of the unfolding event in her last narration of it. Also implemented here is narrative duration, where more narrative time, specifically four pages, is spent on the event in the *récit* than on the same event as an aspect of the *histoire*. Narrative order is also involved in that the narration of the event is a reversal of the chronological ordering of events.

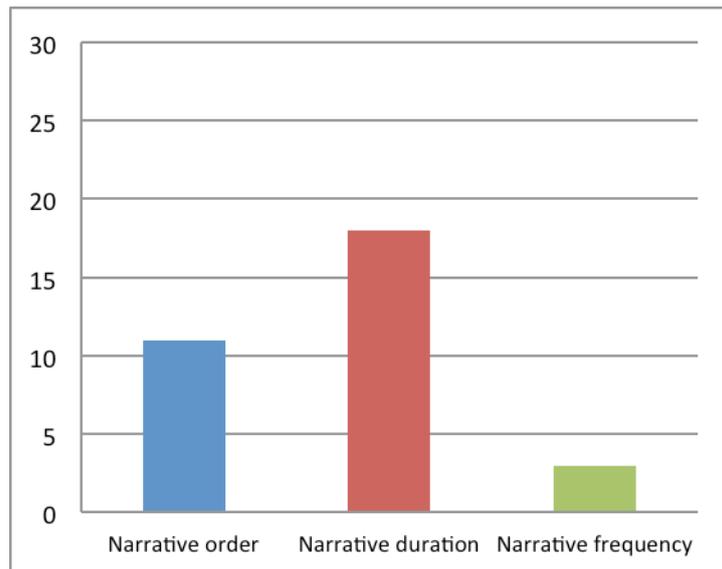
In another example, the narrator relates once that Danny's father returns home twice a month. Mentioning this action repeatedly would have been cumbersome, hence the narrator mentions it only once. Analysing this event in conjunction with narrative order and narrative duration explains the structure and interpretation of the novel's representation of the apartheid past. It is for this reason that narrative frequency as an isolated element is applied marginally in this study.

## 5.5 Findings: K. Sello Duiker's *Thirteen cents*

### 5.5.1 Research Question 1

A content analysis of *Thirteen cents*, as an aspect of the *récit*, reveals that the chronological order of a number of the events is altered as part of a portfolio of temporal relations that contributes to the representation of the apartheid past. It is from the narrative present, namely the early years of post-apartheid South Africa, that the narrator, Azure, relates events that have occurred in the previous three years. At that time the character was residing in the Mshenguville informal settlement with his parents. After his parents' death, he flees Soweto for Cape Town, where he lives on the streets. Other retroversions refer to a recent narrative past.

For the purposes of this study it is informative to limit discussions to the temporal centres of the post-apartheid present and apartheid past. To this end the extensive discussion in Chapter 4 of this dissertation quotes 11 distortions of narrative order (see Fig. 8 below). The prevalence of retroversions is superseded by narrative duration, meaning that the text is predominantly orientated toward the narrative present. Despite being applied minimally, narrative order, specifically retroversions, is applied so as to render meaning to the apartheid past. Retroversions may be interpreted as highlighting the exploitation of women and children. The narrator inserts the recollection of past events within the *récit* to illustrate the relationship between the narrative present and the apartheid past.



**Fig. 8:** The prevalence of temporal occurrence in *Thirteen cents*

In the description of events the thirteen-year-old narrator relates that Azure's early childhood consisted of violence and extensive sexual activity (p. 147). For example, the narrator relates that Azure is beaten by his father (p. 47) and as a ten-year-old he and his friend Vincent participate in sexual activity (p. 147) rather than being curious about their "changing physical features that are associated with gender" in adolescents (Weiten, 1992:400).

Although Azure is the novel's protagonist and homodiegetic narrator, in the narrative text his adventures in Cape Town are represented in such a way that they involve a number of characters. In one significant example, the narrator halts relation of the narrative present to relate an event in which Vincent protected Azure against a playground bully named Sibü (p. 149). At this point, the narrative present, Azure is contemplating his sexual history with men. By using a language of negation, Azure's narration separates sex into categories of transactional sex, sex for purposes of gratification and recreational sex. The narrator relates that Azure does not "like ... doing it with men". At the same he "never dreams of doing it with a woman" (p. 147).

Transactional sex refers to Azure's activities as a child prostitute. An American singer, Toni Braxton, who had a high profile in 1994 in South Africa (*Star Tonight*, 1994:3), fuels Azure's fantasy within the

realm comprising sex for gratification. The narrator's conceptualisation of recreational sex is represented via a description where Azure is an observer in childhood play. Participating are Azure, Vincent and unnamed "neighbourhood girls" (p. 147). In this description, play consists of sex between Vincent and the girls. At the same time sexual play provides an avenue for the two boys to form a fraternal bond. The narrator's bringing together the events of Mshenguville and transactional sex in Cape Town serves to emphasise a sub-theme of fellowship and racial solidarity.

The text uses a similar strategy to create other sub-themes that reinforce the main theme, therefore the apartheid past is represented as being redolent with racism, violence and other forms of inequality. The representation of Azure's early sexualisation and exposure to violence adds to the interpretation of other events that occur in the narrative present of Cape Town. Interpreting temporal relations renders meaning to *Thirteen cents*.

The meaning attributable to temporal relations is through a representation of how apartheid-era social engineering relegated impoverished children to informal settlements and exposed them to other forms of exploitation. The representation of Azure and Vincent's experiences may be interpreted to mean that children were robbed of their innocence during apartheid.

Furthermore the distortion of the chronology of events allows the narrator to extend the book's temporal time zone to the pre-colonial era in South Africa. For example, incorporated in the narrative are San religious practices. The representation of a historical figure, Saartjie Baartman, also impacts on the novel's sub-themes. While hallucinating Azure imagines that he is conducting a conversation with Saartjie Baartman in metaphorical language.

The factors below assist in the interpretation of this aspect of the novel. Firstly, as an aspect of the *histoire*, mentioning the San evokes the pre-colonial era in South Africa in which the San hunter-

gatherer communities suffered dispossession of their land and “decimation” of the people (Worden, 2012:19). Secondly, the narrator’s mentioning Saartjie Baartman (see South African History Online (SAHO), 2014i) evokes her memory as victim of sexual exploitation and the transatlantic trafficking of slaves. Thirdly, the novel represents the physical and sexual assault of Azure. Similar to Saartjie Baartman, Azure is represented as a prostitute. As an aspect of the *récit*, these events intersect and encompass an interpretation where the exploitation and trafficking of vulnerable people emerge as a sub-theme.

This analysis is informed by Bergsonian theory which facilitates explaining how events of the narrative past may be seen to converge with those of the narrative present. In the novel, the narrator narrates events as occurring in the narrative present through extensive quotations of dialogue between Azure, and apparently, the imaginary characters, Saartjie Baartman, Mantis and T-Rex (p. 129).

Additionally, Azure’s family as well as Mshenguville, the place where he spent his early childhood, become Azure’s remembrances in the *récit*. One significant example involves an indirect reference to the past. This memory is triggered when Azure, in attempting to procure food, is castigated by fruit sellers who try to prevent him from getting at merchandise they have discarded. As his memory is triggered by a perception in the narrative present, it may be interpreted that past injustices of apartheid are ever-present in the narrative present of post-apartheid South Africa.

Using Bergson’s theory of memory to analyse temporal relations in the novel supports Genettean temporal relations where by reverting to the past from a narrative present the character recalls past events. This means that descriptions of past apartheid injustice and post-apartheid oppression exist side by side as an aspect of the novel’s *récit*. These theories then provide a unanimous meaning. Notably, it is via employing a structuralist methodology that temporal relations are identified, analysed and interpreted.

Lastly, anticipation, as an aspect of narrative order offers negligible structural and thematic data that has an impact within the confines of this study.

### **5.5.2 Research Question 2**

The novel represents seminal and seemingly non-seminal events of the narrative past as well as the narrative present. Most of the narrative text is orientated towards the narrative present as is evidenced by the prolific use of dialogue. An analysis of narrative duration finds that, for the most part, Azure's role as narrator often recedes, giving rise to a scenic representation of events. As a trend, Azure also engages in extended telling of interactions with almost all characters that are part of the narrative present. For example, as a child sex worker he engages in verbal exchanges with clients. As a child negotiating an unfamiliar adult world he refers to and converses with Gerald, Sealy and Joyce. And, as precocious child he challenges Oscar. Azure also participates in conversations with his peers Vincent and Bafana.

The narrator lingers in describing events involving sex and violence. The most informative for the interpretation of the plot involves an altercation between Azure and the characters Gerald and Sealy. An analysis of the dialogue between Azure and Gerald is informative as it outlines a number of sub-themes including the expression of masculinity by enforcing domination through rape, racially motivated violence and child abuse. Initially, Azure's mistaking Gerald's identity appears to be a non-seminal event (p. 35), yet it has grave consequences for Azure in that he is violated sexually (p. 54) and assaulted (p. 38).

Emphasising the narrative present differentiates between the apartheid and the post-apartheid periods, but it is to be noted that this differentiation represents events to illustrate parallels and continuation of oppression and discrimination rather than differences or the eradication of oppression. Furthermore, the narration of Azure's interaction with adults functions as a structural device that generates meanings. For example, an event representing transactional sexual exchange between Azure and a character named Mr Lebowitz extends the sub-theme of sexual exploitation of children. The narrator relates events showing Azure as being gratified during sex with an old white man. Suggested here also is the notion that prostitution provides Azure with an opportunity to learn about and be edified by classical music. An impression may be inferred that prostitution is beneficial to the child protagonist.

In total, 18 instances of narrative duration, as opposed to 11 instances referring to narrative order, are discussed in Chapter 4 as narrative time is orientated to the present in the novel under discussion. Furthermore, Azure's narration is captured over 164 pages. Accordingly, taking into account that an average page of the 2011 edition of the novel consists of 30 sentences, an estimation may be made that the narrative past of Mshenguville occurs within five pages. Other interesting data may be inferred to contextualise the extent of narrative scenic duration and narrative retroversion:

By contrast Azure's dialogue with Saartjie Baartman may be estimated to occur within 9 pages and his descriptions (as opposed to dialogue) invoking the San trance dance occur within one page. In both descriptions of events the narrator incorporates narrative duration in terms of scenic representation of dialogue as well as employs extended duration in relating events involving the San and Saartjie Baartman. Additionally, analysis reveals that the synoptic nature of duration is considerably less prevalent in the novel although synopsis is applied significantly in that the

narrator's relation of the period encompassing Azure's birth to ten years of age is achieved in five pages. By contrast three years of Azure's narrative existence are narrated within 158 pages.

### 5.5.3 Research Question 3

In the discussion above, as contained within Chapter 4 of this dissertation, narrative frequency is mentioned in three instances. The application of narrative frequency has the greatest impact when the narrator repeats the death of Azure's parents in a number of instances. According to the *histoire*, this event may only occur once. The narrator's iterations begin as explanatory passages providing background to Azure's impoverished existence as a street child in Cape Town. The 9 iterations of Azure's parents' death appear on pages 2, 71, 90, twice on page 154, and on pages 161, 162, 163 and 164. Later on they serve as leitmotifs communicating Azure's resilience, since he states that he is "getting stronger" (p. 90).

Aspects of narrative frequency have been found to play a marginal role in the temporal organisation of *Thirteen cents*.

## CHAPTER 6

### 6 CONCLUSIONS

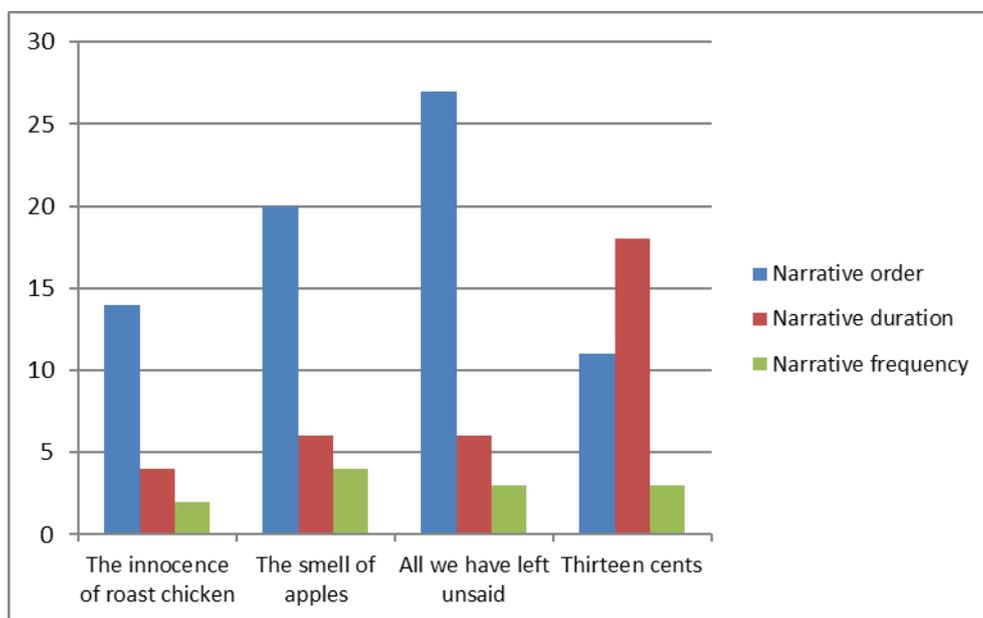
#### 6.1 THE RESEARCH HYPOTHESES FOR ALL THE NOVELS HAVE BEEN FOUND TO BE VALID

##### 6.1.1 Hypothesis 1

Genette's narrative concept of *order* can be applied to a selection of post-apartheid South African novels in English to describe, analyse and interpret how events are ordered in the *récit* or narrative text and the *histoire* or story to establish how this contributes to the narrative representation of the past and how this renders the meanings specific texts confer on the past.

The findings confirm Hypothesis 1. This result is applicable to all the novels constituting the sample of this study. In three of the novels, narrative order, specifically retroversions, shows the highest prevalence. This result was proved by qualitative and quantitative data. However, in principle caution is appropriate with regards to quantitative data discussed in this study because all the novels discussed are unique entities with different story (*histoire*) and narrative (*récit*) lengths, sets of characters and approaches to themes and their structuring. However, despite the lack of uniformity, it is justifiable to use quantitative data as it corroborates qualitative findings. Additionally, because Genettean temporal relations provided a stable theoretical basis on which to investigate temporality, it was a useful instrument to investigate how the recollections of the past are manifest and may be interpreted in the novels.

*The innocence of roast chicken*, *The smell of apples* and *All we have left unsaid* had a definitive orientation towards the telling of the story of the apartheid past (see Fig. 9 below). *Thirteen cents*, on the other hand, displayed a steadfast orientation to the narrative representation of the post-apartheid era, so that narrative order is not the most prevalent method for organising temporality in this novel. It is notable that where the narrator, Azure, recollects past events, analysis revealed that narrative order was applied. Furthermore, despite differences in the way the novels emphasise either the apartheid past or the apartheid present, Hypothesis 1 was proved correct.



**Fig. 9:** Comparison of the prevalence of temporal occurrence

Thus, through conducting an analysis of temporal relations within *The innocence of roast chicken*, *The smell of apples*, *All we have left unsaid* and *Thirteen cents* it has been observed that the Genettean narrative theory is applicable to the study of all these novels.

A generalisation regarding the novels in this study may therefore be drawn that recollections of apartheid in South African novels in English are narrated primarily by departing from the chronology

of events in the story (*histoire*) and distorting these as recollections or memories in the narrative text (*récit*).

It may be declared that Genette's concept of narrative *order* can be applied to a selection of post-apartheid South African novels in English to describe, analyse and interpret how events are ordered in the *récit* or narrative text and the *histoire* or story to establish how this contributes to the narrative representation of the past and how this renders the meanings specific texts confer on the past.

### 6.1.2 Hypothesis 2

Genette's narrative concept of *duration* can be applied to a selection of post-apartheid South African novels in English to describe, analyse and interpret how the representation of seminal and seemingly non-seminal events function in the representation of aspects of the apartheid past and the meanings assigned to these.

The findings confirm Hypothesis 2. In *The innocence of roast chicken*, *The smell of apples* and *All we have left unsaid*, the prevalence of duration in the narration of events of the past takes a secondary position when compared to narrative order. This does not mean that duration is not an informative aspect of temporal relations applied in the novels. This merely means that, as far as the representations of the past are concerned, they by a wide margin employ retroversions as a narrative technique of choice.

In contrast to the three novels mentioned above, *Thirteen cents* displayed a majority prevalence of narrative duration. There are numerous quotations of dialogue in the novel, and the most effective representation of events is through scenic duration which emphasises the narrative present. This emphasis of the post-apartheid era is an informative variable, as it enables the narrator to show how

apartheid did not end with the legislative demise of this ideology. According to the narration of events in *Thirteen cents*, apartheid continued and thrived in the post-apartheid era.

In all three novels, not all aspects of narrative duration are applied in a uniform fashion. The most informative aspect is scenic duration in *Thirteen cents*. In *The innocence of roast chicken*, *The smell of apples* and *All we have left unsaid*, duration is applied to structure these novels. However, it is noteworthy that narrative order, duration and frequency contribute jointly to representing the narrative past. This representation informs the interpretation of the novels in this study. It is to be noted that this study does not elaborate on those aspects of narrative duration that do not register significantly, or are less informative.

It may be concluded that Genette's concept of duration is the second most prevalent method applied in the recollections of the apartheid past in selected South African novels in English.

### **6.1.3 Hypothesis 3**

Genette's narrative concept *frequency* can be applied to a selection of post-apartheid South African novels in English to describe, analyse and interpret how the frequency of events presented in narratives relate the meanings specific narratives convey with regard to the past.

The findings confirm Hypothesis 3. In the analysis of all the novels in this study, narrative frequency emerged as the least informative aspect of temporal relations. This statement should be qualified because narrative frequency is not an unnecessary aspect in the analysis of temporal relations of South African novels. The concept functions most informatively as an element when analysed in combination with narrative order and narrative duration. In terms of Chapters 3 and 4 of this dissertation, there is on average a low prevalence of instances where this study analysed aspects of frequency.

Therefore a generalisation may be formulated that Genette's concept of narrative frequency is the third most prevalent method applied in the recollections of the apartheid past in selected South African novels in English.

## **6.2 CONCLUSIONS OF ALL NOVELS: A BRIEF COMPARATIVE DISCUSSION**

This study has established that temporal relations are most informative when analysed as functioning in conjunction with each other, namely as combinations of narrative order, duration and frequency.

All the novels are concerned with the 1980s in different ways: In *The Innocence of roast chicken*, the adult narrator Kate is resident in a Johannesburg suburb in the narrative period of 1989. For this temporal period, Kate relates events taking place in suburbia and refers to political uprising in an unnamed township/unnamed townships surrounding Johannesburg. In *The Smell of apples*, the adult narrator Marnus relates his story while an army lieutenant stationed in northern Angola during 1988. In *All we have left unsaid*, while telling the story from the vantage point of the post-apartheid era, the adult narrator Danny recalls her childhood growing up during the years 1984 to 1986. Lastly, in *Thirteen cents*, Azure's recollections focus on events occurring after 1994, including retroversions to events which occurred three years hence, namely, in 1991. However, even though there are no explicit references to dates or specifically to the 1980s, that period is within the horizon of expectations that are applicable in the analysis of this novel.

Among other narrative eras, the novels offer multi-generational perspectives on the nature of apartheid during the decade of the 1980s. The importance of the 1980s as reference point in the novels allows for a brief comparative discussion taking into account how the structuring of the theme of apartheid results in particular representations of events and characters within each novel. The narrators and protagonists of the novels classify and represent the children (and adults) racially in their fictional lives according to apartheid racial categories. During the 1980s, the character of Kate is constructed as a cynical white person, a beneficiary of social privilege as a white woman but at the same time critical of both apartheid and the opposition to apartheid. For Kate, the events of 1966 have an impact in 1989.

In 1988, Marnus is an accomplished young white lieutenant in the South African Defence Force, a vast machine which operates to subjugate black people. Yet he is detached in his present role. The construction of events suggests that his childhood experiences have bequeathed him a burden to maintain white privilege. Hence the events of 1974 shape those of 1988.

In the years following democracy in 1994, Danny, a prosperous young woman, is also saddened and aggrieved by the recent surfacing memories of her childhood. The recollections of the past are structured as memories in various narrative segments where each addresses a specific period of the past. In this novel too the placing of the past side by side with the narrative present suggests that the events of 1984 to 1986 determine the events of the post-apartheid era.

The structuring of the text narratively represents Azure's impoverished circumstances in post-apartheid South Africa. The description of events emphasises that there is no improvement in the fictional lives of those dispossessed during the apartheid era.

Since temporal relations structure themes, another factor is that all the novels comment on the perpetrators of oppression. In *The innocence of roast chicken*, the perpetrators of violence, and the oppressors of black people, and the subjugators of white women, are mainly white males. Yet a character of a white woman, Ouma/Grieta also wields considerable coercive power, and a black male character, Johannes, is a rapist who has the power to inflict retribution on weaker members of society although he has no political or social standing.

In *The smell of apples*, the oppressors of coloureds and white women are white males as represented by Erasmus senior and Leonore. As in *The innocence of roast chicken*, there is a minor character of a black male, in this instance a black soldier who fights in the South African army and thereby participates in the oppression of black people.

In *All we have left unsaid*, the patriarch is constructed primarily through the character of a coloured male, Trevor. However, it is notable that a coloured woman, Ma Matthews, is represented as embracing patriarchy. Patriarchy is also portrayed via racial interactions. For example, Danny also talks about armed white soldiers who enforce compliance to repressive apartheid laws as a means of suppressing anti-apartheid protest to the state of emergency in a coloured township.

In *Thirteen cents*, the coloured men Gerald, Sealy and Allen torment Azure because he is black and because he is a child. On the other hand, the character of Joyce (a coloured woman) is, as much as is Erasmus senior, predatory as she takes advantage of shortcomings in society to exploit a child. In a secondary role there are coloured women who for the most part serve the interests of men. Black men, as represented through the character of Azure's father, also mete out violence on women and children. An applicable generalisation on this research sample is that South African novels in English represent black women as victims.

Another informative aspect is to consider the outcomes of this study's analysis of novels in Chapters 3 and 4 of this dissertation. Taking these discussions into consideration it is evident that the past is represented prolifically in terms of narrative order. Narrators specifically prioritise retroversions and a smaller number of anticipatory events to relate the past. Regarding narrative duration, there is a marked preference for scenic representations of events. This is coupled with extended duration at the expense of synoptic representations of events. Regarding narrative frequency, analysis reveals that there is a tendency to narrate a number of times in the *recit* an event that occurs once as an aspect of the *histoire*, and also, albeit to a lesser degree, to narrate once an event that occurs a number of times as an aspect of the *histoire*.

Additionally, in all the novels the narrators construct memory not as a static process or unilateral movement in which the narrative shifts back into history. By carefully selecting specific events that are perceived (by characters) in the narrative present and placing these contiguous with events of the past illustrates that the meanings that the text conveys are not coincidental but function to structure the narrative and to advance specific sub-themes. The representation of the past amounts to messages that illuminate the multifaceted nature of apartheid.

Finally, this analysis of the novels in this study supplies considerable evidence that structuralism in general and narratology in particular as well as Bergson's theory of memory are viable methodologies enabling a description and an analysis and interpretation of South African novels in English. This complementary approach therefore is viable for future studies of South African novels in English.

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