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Antjie / Andries Somers:

Decoding the bodily inscriptions of a South African folklore character

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Prologue: Antjie/Andries Somers:

The following is one of the many variations of the Antjie Somers folklore. This version is used as the foundation for this research project.

> Once upon a time there was a brave and strapping Cape slave who went by the name of Andries Somers. He was the foreman of a team of fishermen and no one could haul in a net with his strength and skill. He was also an excellent swimmer and had saved several people from drowning.
>
> However, the tallest tree catches the most wind and Andries had to put up with crude banter and hurtful remarks from his jealous comrades. They set on him at the beach one day, but he defended himself with his fists and knocked them down one by one.
>
> When the fighting was over, one of the fishermen didn't get up. He'd hit his head on a rock. Andries had to flee to escape the consequences so he stole a silk frock from his sister, bound his head in a *kopdoek* or headscarf, and walked into the country with a basket over his arm. He took off his dress when he felt safe and applied for work on an isolated wine farm on the far side of the mountains. Again, he worked like a Trojan from dawn to dusk, digging the vineyards, spreading manure and pressing grapes.
>
> He was soon put in charge of the other workers, but they didn't appreciate being shown up by their energetic new foreman. They began gossiping about him and slandering him behind his back and some were daring enough to poke fun at him.
>
> "Tell us about the silk frock and the *kopdoek* you have in your hut, Andries Somers," they said mockingly, "or is your name perhaps Antjie?" All the labourers began to chant "Antjie Somers! Antjie Somers!" and Andries hung his head in shame. He

> endured their taunts for three days and then bundled his belongings together and disappeared into the night.
>
> He left no footprints and was never found, but children who were sent to collect wood on the mountains reported seeing an old woman who wore a striped silk dress and a red kopdoek and carried a basket over her arm. She was always angry and threatened to kill them with her long knife and stuff them into the sack she carried over her shoulder. Their parents believed that they had seen the missing foreman and warned them to be good, "otherwise Antjie Somers will come and get you" (Grobbelaar, 1968:24).

Translated freely from *Die Mooiste Afrikaanse Sprokies* by Pieter W. Grobbelaar)

The term "slave" is not included in the version by Grobbelaar, but is included in this translation. The term is taken from two similar versions found on the Internet from the virtual magazine From Khoi Times: About the Griquas. The inclusion of the term "slave" is important for this research project as it assists the researcher in tracing the possible origin of the folklore (Lund, 26 January 2011, From Khoi Times: About the Griquas).

Introduction

As a child I was intrigued by the television series entitled Stories van Bergplaas (Stories from the Mountain Farm) based on a book by Alba Bouwer, that told about the adventures the children (from both the master and his servants) experienced on the farm "Bergplaas." One of the most gripping episodes featured a character called "Antjie Somers", and the image of that particular version of the folklore has haunted me ever since and has consequently, inspired this research project.

Though I came across many different variations, memories and experiences regarding this folklore character, the one concept that remains constant is the notion that somehow this character embodies traces of a real historical world. Through noted changes in society, politics, religion and communication the character has also evolved and has manifested itself in contemporary South Africa as various "bodies." This research project aims to decode these bodies situated in historical, social, political and cultural climates, by using the local Antjie/Andries Somers folklore character as "text."

> We use the body as a physical symbol of our social worlds (Howson, 2004:11).

Alexandra Howson states that a body should be seen as a text that invites different decodings since it has many different inscriptions (2004:8). These proposed inscriptions enable this research project to explore the historical value this folklore character exhibits when compared to changes in historical, social and political climates over the past three hundred years.

The first decoding as set out in Chapter One, investigates the cultures that gave form to the protagonist of this folklore. This symbiotic relationship between culture and character, as well as the continuous restructuring of the character is explored in an attempt to understand the changing fears and anxieties projected onto the Antjie/Andries Somers persona.

It is therefore important to introduce Antjie/Andries Somers as a historical representation from the Afrikaner past. According to my readings, the folklore must have originated during or following the period when the slave trade was abolished. This period also marked raised political tension between farmers and workers (Giliomee, 2009: 69). During this period, ranging from the mid eighteenth century until 1834 (when slavery was abolished), the political, social and economical climate in the area now known as the Western Cape saw the introduction of an extended family structure as a result of the implosion of the slave trade. The controversies surrounding the punishment meted out to slaves who committed crimes and misdemeanours were exacerbated by this extended "family" structure. The extended family structure included the nuclear family, which incorporated the resident slaves as minors.

According to my readings of Giliomee it seems that the Antjie/Andries Somers character first appeared during this period (Giliomee, 2009:1-74). Over time the Antjie/Andries Somers character became an iconic personage in the Afrikaner community. This cultural icon underwent a continuous number of different interpretations and manifestations informed by the political turmoil as experienced by the Afrikaners during the past three centuries. These more recent versions, including Antjie/Andries as a hobgoblin, demon and witch, are discussed in relation to Afrikaner guilt surrounding their past, and their more recent loss of political power, in Chapter Two.

"To live without a past is worse than to live without a future"

Elie Wiesel (as cited in Giliomee, 2009:1)

When South Africa became a democracy in 1994, the Afrikaner lost their position of political power. Despite many fears that the group will lose its cultural heritage, there has been a recent revival in its music and literature (De Klerk, 2000: 52 – 53). My research also looks at how the Antjie/Andries Somers folklore developed over time and examines its relevance for Afrikaans speaking cultural groups in South Africa during the third millennium.

The Antjie/Andries Somers folklore has persisted in the cultural memory of the Afrikaners for more than three hundred years. New manifestations of the story on the Internet, in children's books, as films and in musical performances are examined and compared to what seems to be the original version. This should give insight into how the ever-changing political and social climate affected the bodily inscriptions assigned to the protagonist over this period.

The body with relation to gender is another pivotal point regarding the Antjie/Andries Somers folklore and is examined in Chapter Three. Of interest to the researcher is the question of the physical change from male to female. This relates to the controversy surrounding a woman as an object of "evil" and is investigated through the different mythologies regarding the origin of sin using the character of biblical Eve. These explorations of "evil" as an inscription on women is further examined against the backdrop of the patriarchal society and some of the many dominate religious practices from that time (Silver, 1999: 149).

It seems that the different personas of Antjie / Andries Somers embody issues of race, gender, kidnapping and murder that stood in direct opposition to that which was regarded as sacred, social, civil and acceptable. By examining these issues it will become clear how this folklore

mirrors the society in which it originated, developed and now resides. A reading of the folklore is used to explore how the changing narrative also portrays a possible symbiotic relationship between bodily inscriptions and interpretations as society changed over time (Sanders, 1995:5). This continuous evolution of society is caused by the unceasing changes in political, social and economical climates. Social remodelling brings about supplementary fears and anxieties that reflect in the encodings and manifestations of the contemporary Antjie/Andries Somers folklore character.

According to Howson it is possible to decode a body from a "body." This implies that the many mythological and fantastical bodies assigned to the Antjie/Andries Somers character can be investigated in an attempt to decode social and political "bodies" from that time. The researcher applies this approach to the Antjie / Andries Somers persona and looks at incarnations such as that of a poltergeist, witch, demon and phantasm. In this way I explore and compare each manifestation through the different points of view taken by the various interpretations of the folklore as will be further discussed in Chapter Four (2004:8).

Using anthropological principals, such as the cultural conditions at the time of the emergence of the folklore, I will further explore the Antjie / Andries Somers character through its metamorphoses as a reflection of social development and its accompanying anxieties. During my research I came across a variety of similar examples of change found in folklore, myths and fairytales on the Internet. Also of interest to the researcher is whether the Antjie/Andries Somers character is unique to South Africa or "borrowed" from Europe.

Psychoanalysis according to Bettelheim, "...was created to enable man to accept the problematic nature of life without being defeated by it..." (1991:7-8). Through psychoanalytic principals, examined in Chapter Five, the Antjie/Andries Somers persona is investigated to try and understand the reasoning behind the actions of the protagonist.

Despite a vast archive of information on the various embodiments of Antjie/Andries Somers, the character and the embodiments are still shrouded in mystery and the research project aims to provide information about some of these manifestations.

Chapter 1 Historical Summary: The possible origin of Antjie/Andries Somers

> Aided by the new science [branch] of archeology, [namely] euhemerism (the belief that myths and folk beliefs arise from actual historical persons or events) became a major explanation of fairy origins - raising issues related to....ideas of race and empire (Silver, 1999:7).

Andrew Sanders notes that the problematic nature of folklore lies in its various historical interpretations. He questions popular folklore by asking "who made [the] particular interpretation of events, and when and why?" (1995:3). To answer these questions it is important to trace the potential historical roots of the Antjie/Andries Somers folklore. Emphasis should consequently be placed on the historical prominence of the Afrikaner culture, to answer Sanders' question pertaining to who made the interpretation.

> Once upon a time there was a brave and strapping Cape slave who went by the name of Andries Somers (Grobbelaar, 1968:24).

To fully understand the embodiment of the term "slave" attributed to Andries Somers it is important to explore the arrival of the slaves at the Cape region, (modern day Western Cape). According to Giliomee the importation of slaves started around 1662 from countries such as Angola, Mozambique, Dahomey, Madagascar, Batavia (Java), Ceylon, Malagasy, India and Indonesia (2003:12). Giliomee (2003:15-16) further states that the Cape was at its earliest already seen as a multi-racial society with the Europeans in charge of the labour force that included "slaves" from the above mentioned countries, as well as the members of the local Khoi tribes, who evidently became the "coloured" fishermen found at the Cape (interview Prof I Burman, University of Stellenbosch, 25 June 2010). The Khoi population that is

documented in this research report is also known as the Khoi-Khoi, Khoi-San and Griquas. The term Khoi will be used for the purpose of this research, as it was the term most commonly used at the Cape to describe this particular ethnic group.

> During the [Khoi] Diaspora (starting about the late 1700s), those who remained in or returned to the Cape were eventually absorbed into the gene pool of what was to become known as Coloureds. Cape Coloureds formed the labour force for early white settlers. Many of their legends spring from their slave heritage, one of the best known being the story of Antjie Somers (Lund, 26 January 2011, From Khoi Times: About the Griquas).

The character of the dual protagonist Antjie/Andries Somers is portrayed as that of a "brown, mixed-race or coloured" person. For the aim of this research paper Antjie/Andries Somers is referred to as a "coloured" person as it was the term most commonly used at the Cape to describe this particular ethnic group.

During this time many of the Batavian social practices were incorporated into the Cape through "the power that the officials wielded, the strict Company etiquette, the importance of the church as an institution, the defective education ... [and] the dependence on the "slave" labour" (Giliomee, 2003:15-16). The local Khoi also experienced this cultural shift as "they came more under the influence of early missionaries and European culture, basic beliefs that were once shared amongst Khoi and Bantu tribes gradually fell into disuse" (Lund, 26 January 2011, From Khoi Times: About the Griquas).

> Andries applied for work on an isolated wine farm on the far side of the mountains (Grobbelaar, 1968:24).

This part of the folklore implies that the former Cape Slaves, now part of the servant class, had freedom to apply for work on resident farms opposed to the notion of being sold to

farmers as labourers. This implies that the time when the legend took shape should be considered as during the period that saw the abolishment of the slave trade.

Attributable to the Antjie/Andries Somers folklore, as documented by P. Grobbelaar, in accordance to the chronicles of the Afrikaner group as recorded by Giliomee, it is equitable to place this folklore on an imagined historical time line, approximately around 1834. It was during this period that the Afrikaner community came into historical existence and the slave trade was abolished in the Cape region (Giliomee, 2009:1 - 74). My research exhibits feasible evidence to suggest that the folklore originated during this period.

> When the fighting was over, one of the fishers didn't get up (Grobbelaar, 1968:24).

During the eighteenth century a rigid system of classifying and registering people controlled the political climate in the Cape region. Howson expresses the body as a natural symbol to which societies attribute certain classifications between what they consider to be sacred (civil) and profane (savage) (2004:80). The inclusion in the folklore of the "fighting that led to the death of a fellow fisherman", clearly distinguishes between the "savage" behaviour of the servant class opposed to the more civil members of society's ruling class.

This particular "class" system dictated that no white man could be a slave, moreover that no slave could be placed in a viable social role (Hobsbawn and Ranger, 1993:211). As a result, the social position of the white citizen relied tremendously on the prominence of owning a slave to take on the superior societal position of "master" (Giliomee, 2009:28 - 34). This political climate accentuates the historical milieu in which the legend possibly originated. It validates the racial group of Antjie/Andries Somers as part of the group termed the Cape "coloureds."

> The Griquas are a hybrid nation born of a mixture of the indigenous Khoi and early white settlers (Lund, 26 January 2011, From Khoi Times: About the Griquas).

This labelling as “coloured” also comments on the Afrikaners’ cultural attitude towards this particular ethnic group. The answer might be found in John Gabriel’s theory of “cross-cultural fertilisation” (1998:1). Cross-cultural fertilisation happened when female slaves gave birth to offspring parented by the dominant white patriarch. These children were born strangers to an inherited culture and were stigmatised or branded by the “coloured” appearance of their skin (Howson, 2004:21). Gabriel views this as a radical approach to create new identities or cultures instead of “reproducing old ethnic divisions” (1998:1). This theory viewed from the religious patriarchal society diminishes the political, religious, social and moral ideologies, integral to their communal identity. The stigmatised “coloured” people became an externalisation for the sin of their parents’ infidelity.

European immigrants interbred with the indigenous populations of the historical Cape, which produced descendants of a mixed heritage (Giliomee, 2009: 14 - 15). J.A. Heese (genetic researcher) estimates that at least 7% of twentieth-century Afrikaner families, have non-European maternal ancestry” (as cited in Giliomee, 2009: 14). Hoch’s view on masculinity as well as the instinctive male urge to protect his “pure” heritage, heightens this abhorrence of cross- cultural fertilisation by enforcing acceptance of their direct involvement in the creation of this “coloured” race (1979:10-12). It is plausible that Antjie/Andries Somers is an embodiment of such a hereditary culture that emerged from racial intermixing.

There is a strong possibility that Antjie/Andries could be a direct descendant of Afrikaner predecessors. Even though they weren’t directly involved with Gabriel’s phrasing of an imagined “cross-cultural-fertilisation” (1998:1), the Church and Bible confirm that children will be held accountable for the sins of their fathers up to the third or fourth generation removed (De Klerk, 2000:10). It was seen as sinful for God’s children (Afrikaners) to mix with the race of Gam or Ham (sinners or condemned) (Millin, 1966: 86). This Biblical reference recalls the curse Noah bestowed upon the sinful children of Canaan. Subsequently this became a derogative term for anyone who is nonwhite (Giliomee, 2009: 4 - 27)

Antjie/Andries Somers encodes this misplaced “holy” superiority, by exhibiting a possible shared genetic heritage between the Afrikaner and the slave. The Afrikaner thus parented its own greatest fear that of other cultures, and this still remains a character trait of the Afrikaner community.

Cornelius de Kiewiet further mentions the astuteness of character demonstrated by the early Afrikaners through their tenacity and purpose, endurance and self- respect (as cited in Giliomee, 2009:27-28).

> Their tenacity could degenerate into obstinacy, their power of endurance into resistance to innovation, and their self respect into suspicion of the foreigner and contempt for their inferiors (Giliomee, 2009:27-28).

The latter part of this quote is of particular interest to the researcher. It seems that this could verbatimly be applied to the Afrikaner’s perpetual fears of the “other” throughout history. De Klerk argues that the Afrikaners tend to idealise their stubbornness as well as their suspicious nature towards other cultures (De Klerk, 2000:24). The ethnicity of the Antjie/Andries Somers character already showed the Afrikaners’ primal fear of “other” cultures. While many universal folktales convey their anxiety through archetypical supernatural villainous characters (witches, ghouls and phantasms), the Afrikaners’ position their fear towards the bona fide threat of the slave population, with the latter being interpreted as the “treacherous” other culture that reminds the (superior) Afrikaners of their contribution towards the creation of “coloured” people.

> There are certainly no people in the world who are truly as God-fearing as the Afrikaner (Giliomee, 2009:33).

These unequivocal character traits of suspicion and superiority reoccur through numerous generations of Afrikaners. De Klerk suggests a possible interdependence between the eminent paternal role, the nuclear family as well as the momentous mantle of the church (De Klerk, 2000:24). This contemptuousness felt towards their so-called “inferiors” can be traced back to the fact that they only had access to one particular religious book, the Bible.

Furthermore, they only had access to the Old Testament which led them to believe and envision themselves as the saviours (light) of the African (dark) continent (Schutte as cited in De Klerk, 1975:1-15) and consequently enforced their Christian religion upon their labourers. The Afrikaner community with the aid of the church saw itself as autonomous yet relied on the aid of the slave workers despite racial difference (Giliomee, 2009:45).

> Afrikaners are bullies, prone to violent outbreaks. The reason for this bullying characteristic is because the Godly image imprinted into every God fearing Afrikaner, is also that of a bully (De Klerk, 2000:82).

Despite the slaves’ strong convictions and allegiance to the church, they were not permitted to be baptised or communed (Giliomee, 2009:34). As stated by the Calvinistic doctrine, an unbaptised soul cannot enter heaven. The Afrikaner culture within this distinct political and religious climate of the Cape, accepted the soul of the slave to be inevitably accursed to eternal damnation. This also links with the crime Andries committed when the fisher he fought “hit his head on a rock and his life had ebbed away” (Grobbelaar, 1968:24).

> Andries had to flee to escape the consequences so he stole a silk frock from his sister, bound his head in a kopdoek, and walked into the country with a basket over his arm (Grobbelaar, 1968:24).

Concentrating on this crime (murder) that Andries Somers committed invites the researcher to question the authenticity of the legend regarding Andries's motivation for both fleeing from justice as well as transgendering to disguise his true identity. What was the punishment for slaves (and masters) during the nineteenth century? Does it justify such extreme behaviour as depicted in the Antjie/Andries Somers legend?

According to the laws of that time (Giliomee, 2009:36-38), it appears that masters had control over everyday transgressions of their slaves and had been sanctioned by the ruling authorities to punish their slaves as seen fit. This punishment should have been equivalent to the severity of a father punishing his children. This last mentioned proclamation coincides with the idea of the extended family propagated by the patriarchal society of the time (Spierenburg, 1991:18). This paternal relationship between master and slave seemed like an esteemed utopia and would have assured just treatment for the slave (Hobsbawn and Ranger, 1993: 223).

Research (Giliomee, 2009:36-38) proves contradictory to this imagined "loving" extended family. Giliomee indicates that within this extended family slaves weren't allowed any freedom to institutionalise their own church, send their children to school nor receive fair justice. Serious misdemeanours had to be handed over to the jurisdiction which enforced the ideology of the state with its adopted the Bavarian social codes as mentioned earlier (Hobsbawn and Ranger, 1993: 229). This meant that both slave and master had equal opportunity to lay criminal charges against one another to "dignify the practicalities of collaboration and justify white rule" (Hobsbawn and Ranger, 1993: 229). Even though masters were also punished, especially for the killing of a slave, slaves were cruelly punished for offences ranging from attacking their master to burning his house down. The most extreme deeds were punished by torture followed by death. Torture included breaking their backs on a wheel, extracting flesh with warm pliers, being maimed or slowly strangled. The corpses were then left for a few days hanging on display (Giliomee, 2009:36-38).

> Realising the authorities would put his own head in a noose, Andries feared for his life (Lund, 26 January 2011, From Khoi Times: About the Griquas).

These violent forms of punishment would surely have applied to the crime that Andries Somers supposedly committed. This graphic display of power and punishment might have led to the following variation of the origins of the Antjie / Andries Somers legend:

> The legend of Antjie Somers began in Tuinstraat, now called Queen Victoria Street, in central Cape Town. Near the top of the street was a dark place with many trees. The spot had a sinister reputation, especially after the Dutch colony's last executioner hanged himself there. The colony's executioner doubled as torturer, and his livelihood was ruined when the new British governor banned torture and other cruel punishments. [Historically this occurred during the abolishment of the slave trade in 1834.] The executioner was also paid a fixed amount for hanging the bodies of suicides on the gallows, an irony which could not have escaped him as he put the noose around his own neck.

In the eighteen-forties, the same area became the haunt of a ghostly man in women's clothing. The authorities tried to lay the ghost [to rest] but it appeared in other places. Because of the female attire, the ghost [became] Annetjie ("Little Annette"). As it appeared mostly in warm weather [linking the soul to hell], the surname Somers ("Summers") was added. Eventually, Annetjie was contracted to Antjie (Serene, 1 September 2009, Antjie Somers).

Referring to the Antjie/Andries Somers legend, mentioned above as well as the version cited in the prologue, the dubiousness concerning the cross dressing ensues. The feasibility of eluding suffering (torture and death) by attiring himself as a female, brings to the front a certain amount of understanding towards the character as well as credibility towards the choice of Andries to transgender to evade his potential unjust ordeal from the upper-class, only to suffer at the hands of his own.

> "Tell us about the silk frock and the *kopdoek* you have in your hut, Andries Somers," they said mockingly, "or is your name perhaps Antjie?" (Grobbelaar,1968:24).

Referring to the Antjie/Andries Somers legend mentioned above, other historical alternatives surrounding the act of transgendering should also be considered to assess the various roles Antjie/Andries Somers possibly portrayed through this conscious transition from male to female. Howson claims that "gender represents social conventions, and can be viewed as a kind of performance" (2004:60). The dual protagonist of Antjie/Andries Somers brings to the fore this particular gender role-play, by drawing specific attention to the social roles attributed to each gender.

Conditions at the Cape may also have suggested a better life for female servants than their male counterparts. Paul Hoch suggests that apart from having a three year longer life expectancy than their male counterparts, female servants were bound to work in less dangerous and cleaner environments (1979:5-6). Pieter Spierenburg mentions that while the men were involved in daily physical labour they were moreover subjected to the looming threat of participating in wars. The male gender role varies immensely with the roles the women were forced to display. Women were solely involved in the more secure household tasks as well as the appealing venture of brewing beer (1991:39).

Howson relates this work segregation as "these ideas about the female body and femininity have been used to exclude woman from social and political participation on the grounds of what is perceived as their natural inferiority" (2004:43). Disputing this transformation to the "naturally inferior" gender (Antjie) would imply the male character (Andries) existed solely as a stereotypical version of the slave, as viewed by the dominant social class. Stereotyping the male slave, would envision the character being lethargic, cowardly and prone to drunkenness. These predominantly male characteristics would grant the stereotypical male

slaves ample reason to “transgender” themselves, disregarding the blemish of transforming to the inferior gender, for the primordial reasons of evading physical labour and war while given an opportunity to indulge in alcohol. Howson states that the most blatant differentiation between the civilised and uncivilised (slave) cultures was seen as the ability to implement “discipline and constraint” (2004:69). Discipline and constraint are conspicuously absent from the socially assigned characteristic of the stereotypical male slave.

These stereotypical attributes contradict the character of Andries documented as being a “brave and strapping Cape slave” ... “supervisor of a team of fishermen” ... “his strength and skill” ... “an excellent swimmer and had saved several people from drowning…” (Grobbelaar, 1968:24.) Concluding that said stereotypical urges, wanting solely to satisfy the ego, could not have been the motivation for the alteration of the character from Andries to the female body of Antjie. Alexandra Howson claims that even “If our bodies were to be altered or damaged in some way, our sense of who we are would not disappear” (2004:3). An additional reservation that arises considering the act of transgendering from male servant to female servant, is the ability of the masculine slave to fake the vocation as a midwife, child caretaker, chef and cleaner without being detected.

The responsibility of the slave as midwife played a crucial role in the fertility of the nuclear family. It was with her aid that mothers of the dominant culture could produce more offspring in shorter intervals between each child. As a result the dominant white community could multiply and grow stronger in numbers empowering their nation through ensuring an ongoing future (Giliomee, 2009:38). By implication the midwife had to sacrifice her personal family values for the enforced role of the matriarch in the extended family. This intimate relationship between female slave and her adopted family would have made it impossible for Andries to slip through in his new role undetected. The initial transgendering is evidentially more of an

escape mechanism and disguise as opposed to embodying the role of the female slave nurturing the children of the dominant class.

> Be good, or Antjie Somers will get you (Serene, 1 September 2009, Antjie Somers).

Children were seen as very important national heritage and wealth for both masters and slaves or servants. While the master's children were nurtured by the female slaves, their own offspring were exposed to another ordeal, that of being "checked in" on the master's farm (Giliomee, 2009:48). The "checking in" of children was a mandatory agreement between master and slave. The master endeavours to feed and clothe the children of his slaves or servants. Additionally the master permits these children to attend school (separate from his children) where they are taught the language and culture of the master to advocate a higher ideal, that of the civilised servant class. In return, these children had to remain working on the master's farm until they came of age. This led to violent discrepancies when certain servants relocated away from their masters' farms before their children had reached the consented age. Once relocated these parents were denied access to their children until the contract was honoured. Another frequent irregularity that occurred was that most "checked in" children were kept for longer periods than stipulated in the initial agreement (Giliomee, 2009:48 - 49).

The significance of children is further mirrored in the folklore of Antjie/Andries Somers. Removing a child from society is seen as stealing from the future of both the family and the nation. This also leads to the pertaining question surrounding the motive behind the abduction of children by Antjie/Andries Somers.

> She was always angry and threatened to kill them with her long knife and stuff them into the sack she carried over her shoulder (Grobbelaar, 1968:24).

Speculation surrounding these abductions as a form of revenge for the "checking in" of the residential servant children can be considered as a realistic motive. The assumption that Andries, as a child, fell victim to this corrupt system seems plausible yet there is no

documented evidence to support either of these speculations. Regardless, the importance and recurrence of child abduction also features in earlier times of the Afrikaner history that is worth mentioning.

During the period between 1770 and 1810 a war broke out between the Afrikaners and the San people in the area of Sneeuberg (Snow Mountain). The San tribes attacked and killed the shepherds and stole livestock from the Afrikaners. Many of the Afrikaners left the area, but the ones that decided to remain decided to fight side by side with armed Khoi against the looming threat of the San. During this period many of the children from San tribes were taken and “checked in” at farms belonging to Afrikaners. On numerous occasions these abducted children were sold or traded to other farmers in the neighbourhood. Field commandant JP van der Walt made passionate pleas to stop this early form of child trafficking, but he was ignored and the war and child trade continued. However, journals documenting that “peace” was reached after decades of fighting continue to mention attacks from the San as well as trafficking of their children(Giliomee, 2009: 48 - 50).

The evident abduction of children in the majority of variations of the Antjie/Andries Somers folklore permits debating the possible connection between the abduction threat of the folklore in relation to the Afrikaners’ historical guilt resulting from its own role in child abductions. The metaphysical body of Antjie/Andries Somers can be seen as encoding the guilt of the Afrikaner nation for these callous kidnappings as well as the trading and “checking in” of these innocents. Simultaneously it could also have encoded the emerging fear of retaliation anticipated by the ruling class as a consequence of the atrocities perpetrated against the children from the servant class.

Already as early as 1779 due to all the irregularities regarding their slaves, the Afrikaners feared for the safety of their families. Carole Silver notes that the fear of losing a child through sinister events, shifted from the servant to the more affluent class (1999:71). These fears peaked at the occurrence of the French Revolution (1789-1794), through its widespread

prominence; news surrounding the mutiny also reached the African shores. Fear and panic regarding the expected uprising from their slave class began to seep in (Giliomee, 2009:50).

During this time the male members of families applied for exemption from their civil guard duties as they feared a revolt from their slaves attacking their unguarded women and children. The intrinsic fear was that the joint force of the slaves was capable of murdering numerous "white" families in their sleep. Another fear was the ability of the united slaves to overthrow the government. Anders Sparrman (Giliomee, 2009:37), wrote that the masters were very unsettled about their personal safety, and that everyone in the colony was requested to sleep with a loaded weapon behind locked doors in fear of the revenge from their slaves (Giliomee, 2009:37).

A Dutch Reformed theologian, who wrote:

> Should the non-whites then cruelly murder us and cut us into shreds, then that barbarism will triumph...but this...is for us a matter of faith (De Klerk, 1975:309).

This particular political disruption instilled an impending terror for the Afrikaners. The notion of a slave uprising spelled carnage for them. This unresolved panic also stems from their misconduct towards their extended families which included slaves.

The folklore of Antjie/Andries Somers, documented by Pieter W. Grobbelaar (1968:24), portrays Andries Somers as being intelligent and strong enough to kill or murder. Consequently the Andries character encodes all the impending premonitions of emasculation the Afrikaners envisioned and feared. Hobsbawn and Ranger explain "frequently it [folklore] becomes the actual symbol of struggle..." (1993: 12). Antjie/Andries Somers embodies a definite struggle imprinted mainly on the masculine subconscious of the Afrikaners.

Paul Hoch focuses on the white man's chauvinistic outlook in coming to grips with his masculinity. One of his social roles is seen as that of taming the "black beast" (the dangerous other or the subordinate slave) to protect his wife and children (his heritage) (1979:10-12). These masculine roles, described by Hoch, are all shattered by the politicised figure of Antjie/Andries Somers. Antjie/Andries Somers is the subordinate slave (condemned soul), who abducts the master's children (nation's future) consequently embodying some of the greatest anxieties for the male heading the family in a patriarchal society. Confirming the rationale behind the encoded fear of Antjie as a threat of emasculation for the white male, is the male's inability to protect his children from the lesser gender of the female, exhibited by Antjie, who is in essence part of the "subordinate" gender (the untamed beast) as mentioned by Hoch (1979:10-12). This "coloured" subordinate female also reminds the Afrikaner male of his role in her creation.

The selection of the name "Andries", is viewed as a potentially historic significant factor, and presents two distinct possibilities. Giliomee writes about Adriaan van Jaarsveldt, who during negotiations with the Xhosa tribe threw tobacco on the ground. As the Xhosas crouched to gather the tobacco he instructed his commando to open fire and a massacre ensued. The unnecessary bloodshed earned Adriaan the nickname of the Red Captain (Giliomee, 2009: 50). The possible correlation between Andries and Adriaan as a hereditary namesake is discovered through the established nickname and the red kopdoek or headscarf.

...but children who were sent to collect wood on the mountains reported seeing an old woman who wore a striped silk dress and a red kopdoek and carried a basket over her arm (Grobbelaar, 1968:24).

Red, according to Bettelheim, symbolises violent emotions when found in folklore (1991: 173). Semiotically the significance of murder and the colour red are indicative of society in the retelling of the Antjie/Andries Somers folklore. Bettelheim states "There is general agreement that myths and fairytales speak to us in the language of symbols representing

unconscious content" (1991:36). Folklorists confirm that traces of disappearing facts are found only through symbolic references, this is due to the instability of the oral roots, documenting folklore through different periods. This implies that through its various narrators, historically significant folklore names can be altered through these many interpretations. The symbolic significance consequently remains, though its intended connotation can be altered through the various interpretations of symbols influenced by its constantly changing audiences.

A second possibility for the choice of Andries as a name for the protagonist could be related to Judge Andries Stockenstrom who openly opposed the slave laws, his viewpoint in direct opposition to that of the Afrikaner community. This point of view was a severe threat to their self proclaimed racial superiority and caused anxiety which was felt throughout the community by suggesting change (Giliomee, 2009:67).

Andries Stockenstrom remarked:

> I have never believed that civilisation consisted in one man being forced to serve another who had deprived him of his country, his game, his all, under a severe lash for four shillings and sixpence per annum (Giliomee, 2009: 67).

His words were echoed during English colonial rule at the Cape, when slavery was finally abolished. The impact of this event on the Afrikaners was significant and forced them to unify cultural practices and become an imagined nation (Giliomee, 2009: 72-73).

Historically and politically the origins of the folklore of Antjie/Andries Somers seems to correlate with this time frame. According to Spierenburg most societies at this time (the nineteenth century) were driven by religion and superstition. It seems that the different superstitious beliefs and the social, moral and religious codes and conventions impacted

heavily on the construction of the Antjie/Andries Somers character and established the basis for the different interpretations of the folklore (Spierenburg, 1991:9).

Chapter 2 Folklore Embodiments of Antjie/Andries Somers

Even though there are numerous variations based on the Antjie/Andries Somers character my research focuses on the most relevant and recurring embodiments of this particular legend. I use embodiment as a tool to examine the interdependence between social and biological manifestations of a folklore character as experienced by various audiences of folklore (Howson, 2004: 14 - 15). The first embodiment of Antjie/Andries Somers to be investigated is that of the traditional folklore character.

Folklore in contrast to Fairytales is pessimistic. The resolution in folklore tends to be more tragic as opposed to “happy” endings recorded in traditional fairytales (Bettelheim, 1991:37). Fairytale and folklore share the common “embodied” cumulative experiences of a society as men wished to recall past wisdom for themselves and transmit it to future generations (Bettelheim, 1991:26). Antjie/Andries Somers seems to fit readily as a folklore character as opposed to one from a fairytale, as the legend portrays more pessimistic and tragic elements, especially when viewed against the historical elements discussed in Chapter One.

The crucial role of children experienced through fairytales, myths and folklore prompts the importance of fertility as experienced by the parent (nation) who mourns the loss of an abducted child (future). Carole Silver explores the possibility of the abductors as wanderers attempting to steal a nation’s identity through its youth (1999: 71). Andrew Sanders describes the act of child abduction by an archetypical witch, as punishment towards a parent who induced the witches’ cruel behaviour (1995: 101). The possibility of Antjie/Andries Somers punishing the wickedness of the Afrikaner community for either enslaving indigenous children during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, or for the racial cruelty the apartheid

regime enforced on certain ethnic groups, seems a plausible and possible encoding for the folklore character of Antjie/Andries Somers.

> ...folk tale, as distinct from the more recently developed fairy tales, is the result of a story being shaped and reshaped by being told millions of times, by different adults to all kinds of other adults and children. Each narrator, as he told the story, dropped and added elements to make it more meaningful to himself and to the listeners, whom he knew well (Bettelheim: 1991: 150).

The Antjie/Andries Somers folklore was also subjected to numerous changes throughout the decades, the most eminent and consistent changes pertain to the protagonist Antjie/Andries Somers. These changes can be traced not only through changing political and social climates but also through a shift in the psychological climate of each member of the Afrikaner society. Alexandra Howson notes “society is not separate from the individual but emerges through the forces that people exert over themselves and each other” (2004:68).

The investigation regarding the human body as both a psychological and anatomical object to “accentuate embodiment as a relation between the physical body and the social and moral world” (Howson, 2004:8) form the basis of the anthropological model. The important relationship between the psychological aspects of this anthropological model in comparison to the role of fairytales and folklore as a socially coded “instruction manual” is explored next.

Conventionally, according to Bettelheim, folklore and fairytales communicate through the unconscious, informing the listener of important cultural truths (1991:285). The listeners, usually perceived as being children, are taught the moral solutions to their situations through their socially collective symbols and archetypal characters. These “situations” or obstacles are

usually very specific to the milieu of current social ideologies and anxieties (Bettelheim, 1991:5).

The Antjie/Andries Somers tale conforms to these specifications, as it warns children to be alert of strangers and dangerous areas as the threat of child abductions (past and present), according to Bettelheim, is a continuous anxiety by most parents (1991:162). Silver states that when dealing with supernatural or archetypal characters in folklore, special attention should be paid to parental responsibility as parents exert a large degree of power over their children (1999:8). Folklore can thus aid the parental duty of ensuring the safety of their offspring by frightening their children into obedience by the utilisation of the villainous traits embodied by these folklore characters.

Even today the Cape Mountains are at times home to dangerous wanderers, like the recent example of Johannes "Hansie" Mowers from Hemel-en-Aarde Valley between Hermanus and Caledon who allegedly committed a series of crimes ranging from rape, attempted murder and housebreaking. He was a mountain wanderer known to the locals as "the Phantom" who kidnapped two girls (aged 14 and 4) and held them captive in a pitch dark underground den for 15 months (Van Lill, 20 March 2007, The Monster is Behind Bars Again).

> The fear of abandonment is the first fear we experience as a young child
>
> (Nicholi, 23 September 1997, When Worldviews Collide)

Children also experience a heightened psychological fear of abandonment and neglect (Bettelheim, 1991: 72). Through the Antjie/Andries Somers cautionary tale, children are warned not to venture in these surroundings unsupervised. The parents ensure the child's

safety by tapping into their primordial fear of being separated and abandoned by the parent. The crime rate in South Africa, specifically house break-ins, allows for children to be more aware of this fear of potential separation from their parents. “Some stories say Antjie would break into houses at night while the parents were gone, to steal the children. What Antjie did with the kids none of the stories ever said” (Anonymous, January 2009, AnswerIt).

> The witch, who is a personification of the destructive aspects of orality, is as bent on eating up the children as they are on demolishing her Gingerbread house. When the children give in to untamed ID impulses as symbolised by their uncontrolled voraciousness, they risk being destroyed”(Bettelheim, 1991:162).

Bettelheim suggests this is an instruction to children to control their unquenchable impulses relating to their orality as eating the witches’ house in the fairytale of Hansel and Gretel, to prevent the witch from destroying or eating them (1991:162). This relationship between Antjie/Andries Somers and Hansel and Gretel is echoed through another retelling of the local folklore. “Our parents use to scare us with the story of Antjie Somers - if you stayed out late- she would catch you, put you in her bag and cook you in her oven like the witch in Hansel and Gretel”(Dizzy Lizzy, September 2008, AnswerIt).

Apart from frightening children into obedience and virtuousness, fairytales also instruct children to show respect for members of society that display signs of disability, such as the popular example as found in the tale of Beauty and the Beast. At first when the Beast is still in human form he dismisses a woman in need based on her appearance. She reveals herself to be an enchantress and transforms him into a Beast to teach him the moral lesson; not to judge a

person by their appearance (Bettelheim, 1991: 67). The similarities are evident in the following version of the Antjie / Andries folklore:

> Antjie was a man with a speech impediment who dressed in women's clothing and lived alone in the mountains. The kids would run after him, taunting him about his impediment until he got so mad he'd turn around and chase them. Any kid he caught he stuffed into his bag and the kid was never heard from again
>
> (Minellipienk, 13 March 2007, Pienkzuit).

Bettelheim also argues that the fairytale offers guidance for the inevitable biological and emotional transition from immaturity to maturity (Bettelheim, 1991: 309). The role of the child as an active audience member, awaiting instruction, allows Antjie/Andries Somers to be read as a cautionary fairytale character. Additional knowledge acquired through the fairytale, is the human need to acknowledge fear (Bettelheim, 1991: 280), which is always synonymous with change.

Change in societies as well as in individuals belonging to these societies, is a natural process to adjust its convictions, sentiments and concerns (Silver, 1999: 7). As society's consciousness shifts, so does the consciousness of the individual as well as the nature of the prevailing folklore. Spierenburg identifies these changes in folklore, as the disenchantment with historical societies (1991: 9 - 12). Max Weber (as cited in Spierenburg, 1991:9), expresses his thoughts on "disenchantment" as happening throughout the contemporary world. The "enchanting" ways in which primitive civilisations instructed and entertained their communities (Bettelheim, 1991:53) gave rise and power to folklore, myths and legends. Max Weber (as cited in Spierenburg, 1991:9), describes these earlier civilisations as viewing the

world as an “enchanted” body or magic garden inhabited by fantastical creatures such as fairies, dwarves, gnomes, witches and goblins. This “magical” worldly view saw the earth inhabited by humans, living and deceased, all elements of nature and “...also of magical forces and supernatural beings, god included” (Spierenburg, 1991:9). This global acceptance and interpretation of magical forces and what was perceived as “supernatural beings” gave a platform for the primordial societies for the creation of the many archetypical characters found in international folklore. The concern Max Weber expresses about industrialisation of the twenty-first-century world, relates to the loss of this communal enchantment since “supernatural events are increasingly denied instead of being systemised” (Spierenburg, 1991:9).

Noticeable in the Antjie/Andries Somers folktale, is a complete reversal of Spierenburg and Weber’s hypothesis about disenchantment. The contemporary author and artist Penny Miller does not mention the women’s clothes, and describes Antjie Somers as “a curious gnome-like prankster, more poltergeist than ghost (Serene, 1 September 2009, Antjie Somers). Earliest texts of folklore began through an abundance of magical archetypical personas (witch, fairy, animals that can talk and many more), and century by century these magical personas show a drastic decline in the retellings to more modern audiences. In contrast Antjie/Andries Somers originated as a mundane story, deprived of any supernatural forces or magical characters while most universal folktales started losing their numerous, detailed mystical elements through narration. This decline in magical characters is caused by the fluctuations of the different dominant religious and political climates since “God took the place of magical spirits” (Spierenburg, 1991:9). These climates saw the focus shift from Paganism (nature) to Christianity (state) whereby magical and occult beings were condemned as evil thus forcing a shift in the narrator’s retelling of the folklore. Antjie/Andries Somers contrasts this shift from magical to mundane by a complete reversal of this process. This particular folktale gained a

variety of detailed supernatural characteristics in accordance with the changes in political, social and religious ideologies experienced in South Africa as demonstrated in the following examples of the Antjie/Andries Somers legend. Harold Lorenzo led a Facebook discussion concerning the Antjie Somers folklore:

> In my childhood days in South Africa we were always threatened with ‘be good’ or 'Antjie Somers will get you’ if we didn’t behave ourselves….a sort of bogyman (Lorenzo, 2010, Facebook).

This could pose a possible complication concerning the historical timeframe of Antjie/Andries Somers. According to Professor Burman, an academic at the University of Stellenbosch, who has conducted research on popular Afrikaans folk songs, claims that the origin of the Antjie/Andries Somers legend could have been much more recent. She estimates that the legend originated during the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. However, no documentation can verify nor discredit this assumption (interview Prof I Burman, University of Stellenbosch, 25 June 2010).

The problem that arises with this supposed alternative timeframe is the inclusion of term “slave” that applies to so many of the variations. Historically (after the abolishment of slavery in 1834) this alternative time of origin contradicts the pertinent influence of the class system attributed to the character of Andries Somers as well as numerous variations recalling the torture and gallows that served as punishment for the unlawful slaves of that time. In an article in the Cape Argus, Jackie Loos mentions the Antjie Somers folklore in an article regarding folk tales that were born out of slavery during the historical period mentioned in Chapter One (Loos, 28 February 2010, Cape Slavery Heritage).

Another possible explanation pertaining to the reversal of Weber and Spierenburg’s “disenchantment” theory when examining the Antjie/ Andries Somers folklore can be found

in the Afrikaner history. It is thus important to define the term Afrikaner for the purpose of this research report. According to Davies, Afrikaner Identity can be divided into three groups namely, those who speak Afrikaans as their mother tongue (including all races), the white Afrikaner (excluding other races) and lastly those who choose to belong to the culture (group identification) (Davies:2009:8). Due to the historical importance as well as the patriarchal and religious undertones displayed by the Afrikaner nation, the term Afrikaner will consequently refer to the white Afrikaner (excluding other races) for the purpose of this research report.

The Afrikaner nation is a relatively "young" nation in comparison to the rest of folklore communities. Carole Silver (1999: 10 - 50) mentions traces of documented folklore dating back to as early as the fourteenth century while the term Afrikaner only originated during the nineteenth century (Giliomee: 2009: 39). During these earlier centuries, the preliterate communities (Bettelheim, 1999:25), were much more superstitious and dependant on nature rather than their more recent incarnations. Communities, such as the Afrikaner people, depended more on the church than on nature spirits to shape their view of the world, this is evident in the early versions of the Antjie/Andries Somers folk tale. Spierenburg argues "The magical universe was integrated into the teachings of the church, broadly understood, and into the reality of ecclesiastical institutions" (1991:61).

The early Afrikaners were a God-fearing nation as mentioned in Chapter One. Their Bible provided guidelines for the community to live a good Christian life as well as the demands God bestowed upon men, but neglected to instruct the followers of this dogma, on how to deal with the looming resident evil of the proverbial "dark sides of our personalities" (Bettelheim, 1999: 52). The Bible further mentions the celebration of a reformed sinner opposed to that of an unblemished follower, maintaining the message of living a good life and not as Bettelheim remarks,"...take cruel revenge on those whom we hate" (1999:52). Antjie/Andries Somers is

depicted, especially through contemporary interpretations, as a vengeful spirit as noted in the version depicted on the website of the local rock band Antjie Somers, stating that:

> Antjie Somers was a slave who worked herself to death and came back to avenge her hard life in the guise of a gnome-like spirit with poltergeist tendencies. She tormented those who did her wrong whilst she was alive" (Antjie Somers, 28 September 2009, Woes).

Bettelheim remarks that humans always endeavour to be indistinguishable from their heroes or God, but remains inferior to them (1999:26). This inferiority felt towards their aspiring godliness, could have led the Afrikaner community to create a folklore character that does not repent his or her sins, consequently remaining inferior to the Christian community. The character Antjie/Andries Somers gravitates towards the antagonist of the church and community as opposed to the traditional, pure, protagonist characteristics.

The most antagonising archetype to survive historical disenchantment is the character of the witch. Andrew Sanders argues "witchcraft works through envy and hate" (1995:116). The people who envision themselves as being hated by a community reciprocate by hating back. This darker character trait, evident in folklore characters, appears to be on the increase in the current retelling of the Antjie/Andries Somers legend and was also the inspiration for a 24 minute short film by AFDA students from Cape Town (2007). Here is the synopsis for their film:

> A small surreal Cape community is threatened by brutal child murders who they believe Antjie Somers, a strange ominous character, should be held accountable for. Klara a 12 year old girl is an orphan who lives with her aunt. She was born with psychic abilities, more known in the Afrikaans culture as "die helm", which enables her to envision horrible and frightening things about people when they touch her. The highly Christian community reject Klara as they perceive her as a strange extraordinary person like Antjie with a "gift" that is supernatural and not from God.

Klara wants to be accepted by her society therefore she suppresses her affliction, until she meets Antjie Somers (Schrier, 2008, Antjie Somers).

"...folklore collections provide a set of insights into the ways in which a culture sought to externalize evil" (Silver: 1999: 149). Decoding the externalisation of evil perceived through the Antjie/Andries Somers folklore character, exhibits the archetypical witch in society and is worth examining since the witch persona is absent from the earlier versions of the legend. Sanders defines the witch as "the person whose character is believed to be such that he or she causes personal and social misfortune, often deliberately, and whose life is said to be a perversion of everything that is proper or moral" (Sanders, 1995:1).

He writes that witches must be former Christians (1995: 172-191), since the witch is both the enemy of God and humankind (including the immediate community and its government), but also because of the interdependence and preoccupation that exists between the Christian church and witchcraft. Comparing Antjie/Andries Somers to this statement confirms the continual importance of church dominance embedded in the social consciousness of the Afrikaners. Antjie/Andries Somers became the imaginary product of the antagonistic aspects of this "social and religious interdependence" (Sanders, 1995:41). The character of Antjie/Andries Somers is thereby also an embodiment of this dominant Christian religion.

Needham (as cited in Sanders, 1995:52) claims that the witch is an ancient image that is mostly associated with concerns regarding society. Andrew Sanders notes that an increase in fear and association with witches has a direct connection to social change in developing countries (1995:204). These occurrences have been noted as early as the sixteenth century through religious conflicts, wars and population movements (1995:171).

> As witchcraft associations are associated with tension and social conflict, and because social changes often generate conflicts and anxieties, we may expect periods of rapid and intensive change in small-scale societies to be characterised by heighten concern about witchcraft (Sanders, 1995:200).

Following the 1994 democratic elections De Klerk claims that the Afrikaner community is experiencing a notion of being lost in the current South African society. The Afrikaner community is experiencing the loss of everything from power to security to trustworthiness. They experience themselves as alien to current leaders in politics, religion and education (De Klerk, 2000:52 – 53). “Ons is in `n skoktoestand” loosely translated as: we (Afrikaners) are in shock (De Klerk, 2000: 52). He continues to state that this shock either causes hysteria, silence, panic, anxiety, a victim complex as well as a strong feeling of being lost and homeless in Africa (De Klerk, 2000: 52 - 53). These events possibly influenced the emergence of the witch character in the Antjie/Andries Somers legend.

Alexandra Howson portrays both face and body as essential to social interactions (2004:20). Noteworthy of the earlier Antjie/Andries Somers versions, is the absence of descriptions regarding the facial features of the protagonist in comparison to the numerous indications regarding the protagonist’s body and clothing of both gender representations. Currently more emphasis is placed on the facial features, in accordance with the appearance of the witch persona.

Skoppensvrou (internet pseudonym) writing on the Internet blog describes Antjie Somers as a ragged old woman who walked like a witch who had only one long tooth. She ate naughty and lazy children (Skoppensvrou, 24 September 2009, Woes). Another website user describes Antjie Somers as “an old witchlike woman who caught little children after dark and ate them. She may have been a mythical figure, but to us she was larger than life and ugly and evil as hell” (Alicia, 2008, AnswerIt).

Distinctions made by societies included the hierarchy between different ethnic groups as well as distinctions between what is considered to be normal and natural for members of the different classes of the hierarchy (Howson, 2004: 21). Witches oppose these moral codes and revel in antisocial conduct to exasperate communities (Sanders, 1995:30). Therefore, anthropologists claim that witches are a "force of conformity" (Sanders, 1995:83 – 84). Antjie/Andries Somers as the witch persona allows questioning the motivation for the character to embody the witch persona in the South African milieu. Customarily the witch stems from the inferior ranks of society, mostly as impoverished labourers who aspire to escape these social conditions by entering into a pact with the devil. Witches were always more destitute then their victims (Sanders, 1995: 100). Historically many African slaves were migrant labourers forced to abandon their own roles and adopt a culture defined by Christianity (Hobsbawn and Ranger, 1993:213). Some present day South Africans still recall these historic occurrences including the possibility that the character of Antjie/Andries Somers also "remembers" these past atrocities. Howson states that when dealing with society's prohibitions it is fundamental to examine the power relationships between the different groups established within the boundaries of the specific society (2004:80). The following, contemporary version is reminiscent of these historical social structures:

> She is/was a hag/witch who wore rags/clothes made from old sacks. She only came out at night. She had sharp pointy teeth and carried a bag over her shoulder. She preferred the flesh of young children and if a child was wandering about after dark,
>
> Antjie Somers would catch it, put it in her back and take it back to her place where the poor child would become supper. But only [after] being tortured for hours for being disobedient (Tacita, 2008, AnswerIt).

Witches were also prone to shape-changing (taking on the form of were-animals, mostly wolves) flights, cannibalism and animal familiars (Sanders, 1995:21 - 21). Although

Antjie/Andries does not display the possession of an animal familiar it is of interest to note how the other character prescriptions, noted by Sanders, have been inscribed upon the Antjie/ Andries character throughout the evolution of the character's witch persona. The shape-changing to the wolf corresponds with the archetypical evil male character of the traditional fairytale. Of particular interest is the similarities regarding the character traits of both witch and wolf described as "The wild and destructive wolf stands for all asocial, unconscious, devouring powers against which one must learn to protect oneself, and which one can defeat through the strength of one's ego" (Bettelheim, 1991:42).

The cannibalistic traits are also a modern addition to the legend as in the earlier versions no mention was made concerning the fate of the abducted children. Sanders give numerous examples drawn from popular witch lore as possible reasons for the abduction of children. The most prominent one claims that witches use the corpses of children (with a particular preference for twins) to create a magical powder used to attack adult victims (1995:31). There is however no correlation to the Antjie/Andries witch persona regarding this as a motif for abducting children.

The most commonly known folklore archetype that also abducted children without motivation was the dwarf, "...the reader does not know if he [dwarf] wants the child...to raise, or to keep as his own, to rape or marry, to kill or eat" (Silver, 1999:126). Silver further mentions that John Stuart-Glennie propagated a racist theory that claimed the 'origin' of dwarves as a ...civilisation [that] arose from the clash and later mingling of the "Higher white races" with the "Lower Coloured races" [The] 'Achaean white races' [as he called them], migrated all over the early globe [suspiciously like British colonialists] coming into conflict with brown, black and yellow tribes who were often puny or dwarf-like in appearance and frequently savage in behaviour" (Silver, 1999: 97 - 98).

The similarities regarding these folklore archetypes, in both historically "racial" discrimination and similar acts of violence or vengeance against children (future of their oppressors) allow for concerns to be raised regarding the uniqueness of the Antjie/Andries Somers legend as originally South African.

Myths, legends and folklore "[…]which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented" (Hobsbawn and Ranger, 1993:1). Bettelheim states that folklore is perceived as being exclusive and unique to the society that chronicles it (1997:37). Hobsbawn and Ranger further notes that due to the colonial roots established on the African continent, there is a great distribution of colonial beliefs, customs and values imprinted on the supposedly unique culture and folklore of the Afrikaners (Hobsbawn and Ranger, 1993:212).

Giliomee also mentions that many traditional foods and sports that form the basis of the Afrikaner culture originated in different countries before reaching the African shores (2009:24). Ranelagh writes that civilisation is seen as an amalgamation of cultures and beliefs and that Western folklore will be discovered in other societies as well (1985:5).
One North American folktale, The Corn Spirit, bears similarities as a cautionary character that like Antjie/Andries Somers frightens children to stay away from the corn fields. The male corn spirit, according to the folktale carries children away or eats them (Runeberg, 1947:133). The similarities between the two legends found on different continents can be noted as follows: Both are representations of the archetypical character that unnerves children and prevents them from entering dangerous rural areas. Both characters operate by abducting children as well as displaying the orality principle by consuming their victims. Another correlation between the North American Corn Spirit (known to the indigenous population as the Bilwis) and the local Antjie/Andries Somers legend is their location. Both characters reside in the rural, untamed and wild mountain areas. There are however, also differences

which are informed by cultural specificity. The Corn Spirit resides in trees, where the community offers clothes of children as a sacrifice to the spirit (Runeberg, 1947: 134). This sacrifice to trees is part of ancient Pagan rituals, honouring the spirits of nature (Heselton, 1998:87).

It would seem that the Antjie / Andries Somers legend, borrowed its protagonist from another folklore or culture or tradition, confirming the hypothesis of Hobsbawn and Ranger, who claim that folklore and myths are often borrowed from other cultures. As folklore still exists today one can assume there is a need for culturally determined myths and legends (1993: 102). It follows that the Antjie/Andries Somers folktale is most probably a retelling from an adopted folktale which may have originated in Europe. By comparing a section from the British folklore Spring-Heeled Jack with a section from our own Antjie/Andries Somers folklore, the similarities become obvious.

> In the Western Cape, a child may still be told “Be good, or Antjie Somers will get you.” Antjie Somers is often described as a man in women’s clothes, with a hare lip and teeth like a baboon’s. He has the power to become invisible. His prodigious leaps gave rise to the story that he has steel springs under his heels so that he can fly as long as he is only carrying one child (Serene, 1 September 2009, Antjie Somers).

The version from England reads as follows:

> Victorian England played host to periodic reports of a strange man whose presence was first noted in September 1837, when he assaulted four separate persons, three of them women, at locations in and around London. He was tall, thin, and powerful, wore a cloak, and had pointed ears, glowing eyes, and a mouth that spat blue flames into victims' faces. He also could affect enormous leaps which enabled him to move with such rapidity that it was impossible to escape or catch him (Van Hunks, 2002, Antjie Somers).

The Antjie/Andries Somers section mentioned above is a modern retelling of the local folklore. The primary character traits that is evident in both the local and British version, portrays the protagonists as overtly sinful. Both beings are composed of human traits mixed with immortal capabilities, "implying they were without souls" (Silver, 1999:38).

Andrew Sanders writes that modern societies are competing with other groups (1995:5) to see who can produce the "biggest, best and fastest" national folklore character using the Internet as platform. Internet blogs bear witness to this phenomenon as numerous users enforce alternative character traits unto local legends to keep them competitive. During my research on the Internet I found numerous social networks discussing and adapting folklore to amuse fellow blog users from different parts of the globe. It seems that the oral roots of folklore have been replaced by a computer narrator recounting stories for an international audience. The retellings and adaptations of local folklore accessed by internet enforce drastic changes on local legends to keep them contemporary, commercial, entertaining and competitive (Sanders, 1995:5).

Professor Burman strongly opposes these "forced" changes of folklore as found on the Internet. She describes it as manipulating the natural progress for transformation of folklore. These "unnatural adaptations" reach a wider audience in a much shorter interval. The possibility that people remember these sensational and artificial adaptations as opposed to the natural retelling of a local folklore might lead "to the authenticity of the science of folklore to perish" (interview Prof I Burman, University of Stellenbosch, 25 June 2010).

Examples of these Internet folklore adaptations are found on the website Above Top Secret:

South Africa is rich of culture and has its fair share of stories, myths and beliefs including several ghosts, UFOs and Aliens, and two rivers with "lake monsters" (or river monsters?)…We also have something similar to the bogeyman. It's called "Antjie Somers" and is supposedly a man dressed in woman's clothes that abducts naughty children. Then

there's a creature living in the Waterberg mountain range. Might be close relation to Bigfoot/Yeti . (Gemwolf, 10 August 2005, Above Top Secret).

This statement on ""unnatural folklore adaptations" by Professor Burman (interview Prof I Burman, University of Stellenbosch, 25 June 2010) is also evident in the popular Mystery Ghost Bus Tour that offers "well-researched" tour packages which visit many of historical haunted sites of famous South African folklore. Second on the itinerary is the "artificial adaptation" of the Antjie Somers legend entitled the: Antjie Somers, the Spring Heel Jack of SA landmark where the tour bus stops at Table Mountain (Susann, 2010, Hubpages).

A travel site Paranormal and Travel offers the following folklore, where Antjie Somers is only mentioned briefly, to its members:

Above Verlatenbosch …Malay women washed their families' clothes. And here, one of these women lost a magic ring. The woman was the wife of Abdol Malack, a respected Islamic scholar…who had memorised the entire Koran. He had studied in Mecca, and before he came home, his late teacher had bequeathed to him the ring. Though plain except for a stone the colour of milk, Abdol noticed that when he wore it, no blade could cut him. He even had to remove the ring to allow a barber to cut his hair….When he married he gave the ring to his beloved wife. One day when she was doing the laundry, the soap loosened the ring, and it was lost. Abdol was still living in the middle of the twentieth century, in his house on Dorp Street, on the border of Bo-Kaap. Above the spot where the magic ring was lost, near the confluence of the Platteklip River and Silver Stream, are the ruins of the mansion De Grendel van de Platteklip ("The Bolt of the Platteklip"). The ruins are haunted by the spirit of a slave named Jaftha, and are also a favourite haunt of the demon Antjie Somers.(Netfirms, 2002, The Paranormal and Travel to the Gentleman Adventurer)

Of great interest to the researcher is the similarity between this version and Norse folklore "The Ring" that also influenced the work of J.R.R. Tolkien in his book The Lord of the Rings (Tolkien, 1999) and the opera by Wagner Der Ring des Nibelungen. It is also of interest to

note that the “slave” connotation has been removed from the Afrikaner version and bestowed upon what presumably is that of a Malay character, Jaftha. Antjie Somers is only mentioned briefly as a demon on this website.

The same website also connects the Antjie Somers “in its less malevolent form, comparable to the Heitsi-Eibb [from popular Khoi folklore] …who was a mischievous character comparable with Puck [a character from Shakespeare’s A Midsummer nights’ Dream]’ ” (Netfirms, 2002, The Paranormal and Travel to the Gentleman Adventurer). The folklore of Antjie/Andries Somers seems to be manifesting itself in the different local traditions. One might argue that a different culture, opposed to the Afrikaners, is responsible for the origin of this folklore or even that the Afrikaans speaking community “borrowed” the folklore from local indigenous cultures opposed to European cultures. The scope of this research report, however, only focuses on the folklore of Antjie/Andries Somers as an inscription of the Afrikaans speaking community.

What is also of interest is that in recent Afrikaans artistic expression the Antjie / Andries Somers folktale manifests itself in many different forms such as a short film and a rock band as mentioned earlier. Antjie Somers, performed at the Artscape Theater in 2005, was the first musical based on a local Afrikaans folklore.

> Antjie Somers tells the story of Andries Somers, a slave leader, who hours before the official freeing of the slaves in the Cape Colony in 1834, is wrongfully accused of a murder and forced to flee, disguised as a woman. He is pursued by Duval, a vicious officer of the law who also becomes his rival in a love triangle. (Theron, 2000, Artscape Marketing and Communications).

Antjie Somers is also the title subject of a song by popular Afrikaans singer and songwriter Anton Goosen. The lyrics to this song have since been included in Afrikaans poetry:

Daar kom die spoke van die ou dae, Antjie, Antjie Somers
die koetswiele klap en die jaspante flap
en teen die kranse huil die bome, Antjie, Antjie Somers
gogga maak my bang, Antjie Somers kom my vang
A-hoo, a-hoo omhels die winterwind die bome
a-hoo gesels Antjie Somers in my drome
nou's dit 'n honderd jaar later in dieselle onner-kaap
en die spoke van die ou dae loop nie net as mense slaap;
antjie somers loop vandag nog daar by hanoverstraat langs af
en haar naam is geel bulldozer, en sy graaf die plek se graf -
daar kom die spoke van die ou dae…

(Foster, Viljoen, 1997:262).

The lyrics echo the history of the Antjie Somers character while the tone remains nostalgic. The poem ends with the image of a bulldozer destroying the memories of this folklore character and probably her historical memories as well. This recalls the words of Spierenburg when he speaks about disenchantment where industrialisation also "buried" the magical creatures of folklore and myth as discussed earlier in Chapter Two (Spierenburg, 1991: 9).

If you Google Antjie Somers a remarkable number of Internet users adopt the name as their Internet handle. These pseudonyms are used on many popular websites such as Woes.com as well as Facebook.com. Footage of the Antjie Somers short film was used in the production of a music video by a local band called Crash Car Burn in 2008 and the footage is available on Youtube (Youtube, 2009, Crash Car Burn).

Evidently the folklore of Antjie/Andries Somers continues to manifest and transform itself in the memories of the Afrikaner and other South African communities. The narration that shifts

between the character's dual male and female protagonist, is most noticeable in these re-imaginings of the Antjie/Andries Somers character, and calls for a further investigation.

Chapter 3 Transgendering Embodiments of Antjie/Andries Somers

> Gender was developed as a sociological concept in order to emphasise that not only are traits and characteristics at a psychological level socially shaped and produced, but also the social, economic and political inequalities that can be observed between women and men are an extension not of biological differences but of particular social relations and contexts (Howson, 2004: 42).

Howson's position on defining gender, allows for an inquiry relating to gender inscriptions of the social "body" of the character of Antjie/Andries Somers. My first exploration examines the plausible origins of the different sexes by looking at different approaches to religions and folklore. This reading evaluates both social and political ideologies imprinted on the body of Antjie/Andries Somers.

Galen, an early atomist (cited in Howson, 2004:52), noted that during the early stages of foetal development male and female reproductive organs appear similar. At a later stage during this development, a distinctive differentiation between the sexes becomes evident. Consequently, by using the biological model, the female is interpreted as a continuation from the male as opposed to being a differentiation. Beroalde (as cited in Ranelagh, 1985:52) recalls a Latin myth, where the original human was perceived as being androgynous. Jupiter disunited this human essence to create the contemporaries (known as man and woman). Mercury, instructed to stitch up the abdominal parts of the bodies, made the lacing too long on the male and too short on the female.

Early philosophical and mythological writings regarded both sexes as originating from a homogeneous environment, a reading which did not allow for a biological differentiation

between a superior and inferior sex. It seems that the different roles attributed to each gender, originate from social and religious interpretations.

> Gender was developed as a sociological concept in order to emphasize that not only are traits and characteristics at a psychological level socially shaped and produced, but also the social, economic and political inequalities that can be observed between women and men are an extension not of biological differences but of particular social relations and contexts (Sanders, 1995:42).

During early patriarchal times, men took on the role as “godly deities” since men were solely subordinate to God while women were seen as being subordinate to both God and men, since they were created from the male for the male (Ranelagh, 1985:47). Ranelagh claims that earlier rigid patriarchal societies, with specific reference to Greece and with reference to the following account, envisioned man as incapable of being an agent of evil unless “through weakness [he] became the victim of it” (Ranelagh, 1985:48). Women were seen as the sole instrument that could channel and manifest evil.

Applying this approach to the Antjie/Andries Somers legend, as referenced in Chapter One, similarities become evident. Andries exhibited masculinity through his courage, physical strength and leadership as the esteemed foreman. He falls victim to an act of “evil” by displaying “weakness” by killing an offender. By committing this specific evil deed, he sacrifices his flawless male persona (Andries) to embody the “sinful” female persona (Antjie).

Silver claims that whenever evil was given a face, it would not be related to race, but to gender, as the face of evil usually belongs to that of the female (1999:150).

To fully comprehend the image of woman as the face of evil (Silver, 1999:150), it is important to trace the roots of woman as the object of “evil”. Sanders remarks that while religion, specifically Christianity, became the first political ideology (1995:171); traditional religion substituted the folklore in older societies. Subsequently this merits investigating Eve (as the primal female) through biblical as well as mythological references to attempt a deeper understanding of the role of the fiendish female as opposed to that of the sinless male in different social and historical climates.

Pandora and Eve are perceived as women characters that brought about the downfall of man by opening a prohibited box and eating forbidden fruit respectively; both acts which were forbidden by their respective godly deities. Their failure to adhere to these forewarnings on both accounts released evil into the world (Ranelagh, 1985:61). Punishment for Eve’s sins included the pain of childbirth, the expulsion from paradise while her male counterpart (that fell victim to her “evil” temptress persona) was also condemned to an eternity of physical labour (Ranelagh, 1985:46).

Relating to this synopsis of the offence committed against God as well as His generalisation through gender specific punishment, it seems apparent that the severity of this particular punishment is more acute towards society's “lower ranking” classes. Considering the cultural role of Andries Somers, it is prominent to his persona (before transgendering to take on the role of Antjie Somers), that the only documented characteristics of Andries are that of the labourer.

No other detail surrounding his temperament is given to the audience, apart from his dedication to his vocation that ultimately lead to the destruction of his social identity, first as a disguise to evade the consequences of his deed as set out in Chapter One. Secondly, when he

is rejected from society for a second time, he embodies the disguise and takes on the female gender permanently.

Eve seems responsible for the demise of men through two documented mythological accounts. The first account (as already mentioned) saw men punished as eternal labourers by Eve's sinful deed. She become an object of evil and displayed disobedience towards the male God's instructions. She further displayed her evil disposition by tempting man and by leading him to sin against God. As a result of this act, Eve channelled evil and punishment into the world and on both genders.

Ranelagh documents an alternative myth, regarding the creation of Eve that saw an omission from God, as Eve was created without orifices. God then commanded the Devil to complete the creation of the primordial female, Eve, by providing her with the needed orifices. Assisting the devil was a butcher (causing her to bleed) and a mason to create the anus and vagina allowing all fluids to enter and leave her body (1985:52 53). "Men's disgust with and fear of females are probably more perverse than their identification of women with the devil (Ranelagh, 1985:198). Howson states that the female body is interpreted as being alien and "other" while simultaneously being objectified as the fetishised and fantastical "troubled" body experienced through the male gaze (2004:56). The first account of Eve leading Adam astray was by speaking words of temptation, through her mouth orifice, created by the Devil on God's instruction. The second orifice that signifies fertility also features in an alternative version situated in the Garden of Eden.

Ranelagh (1985:54) traces the social differentiation between classes back to a Christian account, when Eve, ashamed of her many offspring, hid them from God as he visited Eden. These hidden children of Eve failed to gain God's blessing and became the "inferior" classes

bound to social structures throughout history. The second account also saw man condemned to subordinate classes by Eve's portrayal as an object of sexual desire. Through her shameful number of offspring, the anatomy structured by the Devil and his apprentices, the second female orifice, is to blame. This orifice led to Eve's shameful fertility as she became an object of sexual desire by successfully tempting man. Eve's menstrual cycle, another element of the devilish design embodied by her, depicted her as a violent and dangerous sexual object inscribed by what became known as PMS or pre-menstrual syndrome (Howson, 2004:49). Both encodings depict the male as victim and biological outsider to any of these evil inclinations and the female as the moral scapegoat for men (Ranelagh, 1985:52). Howson states the "relationship between the human body, sex and gender is complex and not easily disentangled because of the way in which each is naturalized" (2004:65).

Referring to Chapter One, the hypothesis that Andries naturally transgendered into Antjie to avoid labour could be further elaborated upon. As Andries committed his crime of murder, his "mythological or religious role" shifted from being the acceptable hardworking labourer (male) to becoming the unacceptable object of evil as Antjie, the sinner and the female. This is seen as Andries first used the female gender as disguise while fleeing the authorities. Alternatively, it could be stated that his role shifted from the masculine punishment of labour, to the female punishment of bearing children. Since the biological constraints on his male body, his female persona Antjie Somers abducts children as atonement for the sins of the character. This is seen as Andries embodies the character of Antjie and succumbs to the female gender and the different roles and punishments attributed to it.

During the Mycenaean period, it was customary to slay men and children during the plundering of a village. Women were taken with other valuable objects (gold and silver) and forced into a life of servitude (Ranelagh, 1985:41). In ancient India the laws of Manu, classed

the female as a “foul being” and member of the servant class. Similar viewpoints are found in the Buddhist Jakatas, dictated guidelines prospective wives, “the highest accolade is given not to the one who is like the mother, sister or friend, but to the one like a slave” (Ranelagh, 1985:47). Ranelagh further claims that these women from the servant class were not seen as females, but rather as the extensions of the male (1985:155). Antjie Somers can therefore also be read as an extension of her male ego, Andries.

> When we look at other people we discern their sex from appearance. Hairstyle, body shape and size, clothes, posture, stance, facial characteristics, expression and muscular tone all tell a story about sex, about whether a person is male or female (Howson, 2004:39).

The first time Andries takes on the female role of Antjie, in the form of a disguise, this deliberate physical change from Andries to Antjie, reinforces Howson’s theory that the body is subordinate to the mind, whereby the mind acts as the origin of the thought process in which the human reviews his or her ego as well as his or her individual perceptions of the outside world (2004:3). According to de Beauvoir (as cited in Howson, 2004:58 - 59), it is important to note that women are not born into the feminine gender, but are taught control and containment that allows them to become “feminine. The bodies of both male and female, usher perceptions into the coveted gender distinctions. The social means of nurturing gender, allows for characters similar to Andries Somers to transgender through the incorporation of “props” and “costumes” to allow Antjie to be interpreted as a female body within society.

Incorporating masks and clothes from the opposite gender (Runeberg, 1947:75) to disguise an individual’s features and sex, was considered a form of destructive and ant-social behaviour in earlier Western societies (Silver, 1999:105). Howson claims that social interaction develops

and strengthens masculine and feminine gender roles (2004:60). Through these interactions with society, the transgendered Antjie, strengthened the role of the evil female and verified that the act of transgendering consequently encompasses the same social accusations and inhibitions as that of the archetypical witch.

Sanders states that these accusations of antisocial behaviour that are experienced through the witch archetype, serve as an attempt to envision beings that are morally excluded from society through the values embedded by either church or state on the individual. People, similar to Andries/Antjie who reject these moral conformities, be it enforced by the situation (accidental killing followed by the female disguise) or by choice (transgendering into the Antjie persona) will still find themselves bound to these constraints. Antjie Somers left the boundaries of society behind, yet the community did not leave her alone. The character is used to instruct and teach social values and codes to children to exhibit the correct behaviour as seen through the eyes of society's norms. The result is that society's perception of this antisocial person deprives them of their human characteristics and transforms them into human interpretations of a pure villainous archetype. These archetypes, when viewed from society's moral codes, will exhibit inhumane tendencies with the possibility of conducting barbaric deeds without remorse (1995:42). This antisocial person becomes an embodiment of what the society that condemned him or her, perceives as sacred as well as profane.

The limitations that bound the gender roles of the imitation (Antjie) and the original (Andries) are found in materialistic as well as in gender instinctive boundaries (Howson, 2004:62). This statement implies that Andries in his attempt to transgender will find himself "lacking" instinctive female nuances. Inn contrast to homosexual behaviour, Andries is heterosexual and needs to explore these gender boundaries in his attempt to disguise himself as a female functioning in society. The challenges surrounding the possibility of him successfully

transgendering when considering the political climate at the Cape during the time the folklore took place, is discussed in Chapter One.

His second transformation saw him embodying the female character of Antjie. The portrayal of this character focuses more on the materialistic as shown in his choice of clothing and this stands in opposition to more subtle female instinctive mannerisms. If Andries successfully embodied the female character Antjie, the folktale would have omitted any reference to Andries as he would only be known as Antjie, the embodied female side of his character. Some variations on the folklore do omit the male character; and only portray the "successfully" transgendered Antjie Somers in the guise of the archetypal witch. Readings of many other Antjie/Andries Somers folklore variations, still refer to Antjie Somers as a man dressed in women's clothing, the materialistic attributes still remaining as the main focus for the act of transgendering.

Material cross-gendering usually implies overemphasising feminine features such as clothing, hair, cosmetics and jewellery. Gender preference appears natural through repetitions from an early age. These inclinations include the use of language, gender specific mannerisms, emotions, responses, physical movement and physical abilities as well as instinctive preferences towards certain gender specific objects. Failure to display these inclinations accurately and consistently leads to a "spoilt" identity (Howson, 2004: 60 - 62). The spoilt identity Howson refers to implies that if a person takes on a gender role, without an instinctive understanding of all the attributes assigned to it, the person's identity would be viewed as spoilt or artificial by members of the specific society, since the role-player does not embody the adapted gender but only mimics it.

Antjie / Andries Somers exhibits this spoilt identity, as it was common knowledge that Antjie Somers is not female but that male gender “Andries in disguise”. Andries masquerades as Antjie and conceals his identity by masking himself as a woman to elude social injustice from the ruling class at the first instance. The second time he dresses as a woman he transgenders into the female folklore character. The once spoilt identity now becomes the sole identity as obvious in more recent retellings of the legend, where no mention is made of the male ego, Andries Somers.

This female mask of Antjie Somers took on many different forms as the legend mutated over time. The female mask attributed by the “successful” transgendering during the second transformation, has been assigned the role of the archetypal female witch. This adopted identity of the witch can be read as portraying “evil feelings, jealousy, quarrelling and antisocial behaviour” (Sanders, 1995:83). The Antjie Somers character absorbed nearly all these elements. The jealousy and quarrelling on the beach and farm led to the antisocial behaviour of transgendering that forced Andries on his journey which made him the enrobed female protagonist of this local folklore.

Silver notes that the social mantle of “otherness” encoded on women led to the male as the hero archetype who is burdened by the feat to tame the female beast (1999:8). Noticeable is the gender assigned to the stereotypical “hero” archetype. Men are the heroes (who act) while the women are the “damsels in distress” (who appear) (John Berger as cited in Howson, 2004: 56). Women who wanted to obtain the heroic title had to transgender to that of the male to be allowed to partake in heroic acts, examples such as the character Mulan from the film Mulan (1998) and Eowyn from the film The Lord of the Rings, Return of the King (2003). In both films the female characters transgender by taking on the robes of men and disguising their female characteristics. Their newly clothed male “characters” allow them to slay the enemy

before returning as celebrated heroes documented in history and literature (Spierenburg, 1991:76).

Consequently the assumption can be made that females who transgender to male roles, embody heroes and claim their place in history. Males who transgender to female roles become societal outcasts and are driven into the woods, embody witches or antisocial beasts, as seen in the Antjie / Andries Somers legend. “The man who roams the forest does so out of insanity…” (Spierenburg, 1991:172). Spierenburg claims that these “insane” characters are socially interpreted as similar to witches and heretics. The role of the “insane” character serves either a satirical purpose or functions as a mirror to the active audience (1991: 166 - 171). This will be further discussed in Chapter Four as part of the psychoanalytical analysis.

Chapter 4 Methodology

This report is accompanied by a 15 minute experimental film as a creative expression of the research that was conducted. The film, Antjie, portrays the Antjie/Andries Somers character In contemporary South Africa by drawing inspiration from the German Expressionist film movement. The Expressionist filmmakers were the first who noted the similarities between the canvas and the screen and termed these as "animated paintings" and that extended film expression by also incorporating still images (Mast and Cohen, 1985:53). The widely acclaimed German Expressionist film, The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (1919) ,exhibited this synergy by using expressionist inspired constructed images to form the backdrop for the films' setting.

> Expressionism presents physical reality on the screen as a projection, or expression, of the subjective world, generally of a character in the film (Fourie, 1997:103).

The film Antjie, includes these connotations by using paintings and charcoal drawings to visualise the flashbacks experienced by the protagonist Vicky to relay emotional information regarding her past. Hermann Warm, Production Designer for The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (1919) argued "Films must be drawings brought to life" (as cited in Mast and Cohen, 1985:19). Fourie argues this movement has its roots in emotionalism as well as the desire to experiment with film conventions to construct a more expressive product and experience for the audience (Fourie, 1997:103). These principles are applied to the film, Antjie, by breaking away from the conventional plot and character development, to allow more room for emotional development of the protagonist. Tredell notes that modern expressionism has steered films away from exploding volcanoes to focus on a close-up shot of a tear dripping down a cheek (2002:34). The use of close-ups also allows the film, Antjie, to explore the

fragmented memories of the protagonist, while simultaneously commenting on the fragmented memories that relate to the folklore character that haunts her throughout the film. The memories of the troubled Afrikaner past is portrayed by the glimpses of Antjie Somers, that follows Vicky (present day Afrikaners) like a fragmented shadow from the past.

According to Fourie an Expressionist film should attempt to interpret reality in a specific manner without blatant imitation of real life. He also argues that Expressionist filmmaking should always aim to comment on the environment (social, emotional, political or religious) by introducing a camera that concentrates on individual interpretations and self-expressions as opposed to literal renditions (Fourie, 1997: 103 - 104).

The director uses the character of Vicky, to face her consumed guilt through visual expressions found in the static paintings and drawings to portray her denial of a “dark event” from the past. Vicky becomes the signifier, for a predominantly Afrikaans speaking audience to reliving their fear of the Antjie / Andries Somers character and embedded history, by an individualised interpretation. The threat of human trafficking, stemming from the Afrikaner history as noted in Chapter One, to the more recent rise in awareness surrounding these atrocities, allows the character of Antjie/Andries Somers to become a relevant rendition of modern cautionary characters. The director also uses Antjie as a cautionary tale for this audience to not deny the shadows of their past, as it can also “steal” their future as a cultural group.

Gianetti (1972:186) writes that Expressionist filmmaking concerns are located in the expression of a character's inner psychological truths. These characters are captured by underlying angst in such a manner that the director can revert to distorting the outer surfaces of their natural worlds. Vicky’s angst regarding her past subconscious suppression of guilt,

allows the character of Antjie Somers to manifest in her natural world, distorting it for both the protagonist and the viewers; the line between dream and reality blurs. The dreams and visions incorporated in the film Antjie are Expressionist conventions to aid in creating a specific, Expressionist milieu for the film (Mast and Cohen, 1985:211). Representations of dreaming bring the spectator closer to the reality of the characters and the notion of existence in itself (Tredell, 2002:92).

These dreams and distorted realities may create the illusion that the film Antjie has its roots in the horror genre. However, the conventional horror film portrays the nightmares as viewed and experienced by either the individual audience member or by society, looking to reinforce the moral values and codes relevant for the audience (Mast and Cohen, 1985:468). Even though Antjie is a social and cultural manifestation as argued in this report, the horror element originated from the alternative retellings of this legend and does not attempt to reaffirm particular morals and values neglected by its community.

Gestalt (as cited in Mast and Cohen, 1985:471) claims that any form of dream (fantasy or artwork) involves the projection of features of the self as well as the positioning of these projections in a structure that corresponds to the whole self. In order for the protagonist to reach equilibrium and become stable the protagonist (dreamer) needs to re-own the projections. Gestalt confirms that this imagined destructive element, will be feared until the protagonist faces and claims it. The emotional and psychoanalytical force that haunts Vicky throughout the film is driven by her quest to take ownership of this imagined destructive element. The film portrays a warped projection of the protagonist, enforced by her destructive tendencies, emotions and psychological obstacles.

Horror and Expressionist films can be analysed using the psychoanalytical model as both movements represent a unique juncture of personal, social and mythic structures. In addition both movements have a conscious/official and unconscious/repressed dualism, whose dialectic finds expression in the act of masking (Mast and Cohen, 1985:468). The film Antjie incorporates these social, personal and mythical components throughout in the following ways. Socially the film explores the archetypical roles of the female characters involved, mythically it incorporates an Afrikaans folklore character and the personal framework that overshadows the narrative, is compelled by the Expressionist fears of the protagonist. These Expressionist fears are found in her disillusioned visions of the Antjie Somers character who haunts her existence and her memories throughout the film.

> Psychoanalysis is a therapeutic method of treating mental disorders by investigating the interaction between conscious and unconscious elements in the mind and bringing repressed fears and conflicts into the conscious mind (Fourie, 1997:136)

Bettelheim commented on psychoanalysis by stating that the more insecure a person is, the more that person will withdraw into him or herself because of fear (1991:51). Bettelheim (1991:118-119) further argues that people who withdraw to the realm of their imaginations, find themselves locked into anxious daydreaming. When Vicky is first introduced on screen, her solitude and disparate actions allows the viewers to interpret her as an “outsider”. She may also be perceived as the stereotypical “witch” or “lunatic.” The film further elaborates on her tale, by tracing her individual battle to overcome the outer world (time, space and fatality) by adapting her inner world (contemplation, memory, imagination and emotion) to find a form of resolution (Mast and Cohen, 1985:332).

Psychoanalysis is viewed as enabling people to accept the difficult nature of life without being conquered by it (Bettelheim, 1991:7-8). Through this model, Vicky employs the psychoanalytical model to battle her memories and emotions in an attempt to live a normal guilt free live. Expressionist filmmakers regard psychoanalysis as an aid for the audience to experience and identify with these imagined emotions (Mast and Cohen, 1985:473).

The Expressionist film theorist Hugo Munsterberg (as cited in Fourie, 1997:105) claims that the art of filmmaking is found in captivating various audiences through different experiences of the medium. Since film is distinct and separate from reality and human experiences it can liberate the mind of the audience and the object of the film into a new experience. Rudolf Arnheim proposes that the main function of film is to express emotionally driven as opposed to plot driven human existence (as cited in Fourie, 1997:105). The film Antjie incorporates both these theorists' viewpoints, as the director uses the protagonist Vicky to unlock the emotional memory of the folklore character, Antjie.

Andre Bazin writes "realism is an expression of the mythic spirit not the scientific, spirit" (Mast and Cohen, 1985:3). He argues that the function of realism is not to redeem physical reality (what he summarises as the scientific spirit) but to exempt us from our physical destiny (the mythic spirit). The striving towards the mythic spirit has become arduous since contemporary society has become vastly complex in its political, economical, social and religious ideologies. Breaking from these worldly constraints to a simplified cinematic version or narration has become virtually impossible (Tredell, 2002:94). Although cinema is a form of an autonomous visual language, its signifying processes must be distinguished from the verbal languages (Mast and Cohen, 1985:80) through semiotics.

Semiotics as a discipline is the analysis of signs or the study of the functioning sign systems, while semiology is the science that studies signs within the constraints of society and forms part of the social psychological field (Cobley and Jansz, 2004:4 - 13). Film was first seen as being an iconic resemblance of the real because of narrative techniques required for the development of various codes to denote the structural progression. (Mast and Cohen, 1985:80) Currently film can also be interpreted as a sign, since a sign can never manifest as a real object, it solely represents reality (Fourie, 1997:122). The fact that film is a construction against the background of culture, experience and knowledge of both communicator and subject, places it within a realm of ideology and ideological criticisms. One can argue that each film is an ideological construct (Fourie, 1997:130).

The film, Antjie plays out against the cultural backdrop of the Afrikaans speaking community. Coded within this community, is the character of Antjie Somers (local folklore), the farming community (coded as part of the Afrikaner identity), Afrikaans folk songs as foundation for the soundtrack and Western Cape as setting. The setting was chosen as both the Antjie/Andries Somers folklore and the term Afrikaners originated in this region 200 years ago. The inclusion of the Voortrekkerkappie, as part of Antjie's costume, also symbolises the cultural identity of the protagonists (Antjie and Vicky), and encodes the troubled past of this specific cultural group.

Films act as signifier for society, ideology and psychology, implying that it is not the film itself that is important but rather the anticipated relationship between the film its culture and consumers (Mast and Cohen, 1985:3).

Guzetti (as cited in Mast and Cohen, 1958:81) states that semiotics in film should be divided into two signification systems; cinematic (codes unique to cinema) as well as filmic (codes

found in cinema but also outside of cinema). All signs have been cinematified and have acquired unique cinematic meaning. This implies that the viewer's relation to a sign in cinema is not the same as it would be to the same object outside of the theatre (Mast and Cohen, 1985:81). According to Peirce a sign is something that stands for something else to somebody in some respect or capacity (as cited in Mast and Cohen, 1985:195). The cinematic codes found in the film Antjie, include the location Cape Town, including shots of the beach and Table Mountain that signifyAndries' job as a fisherman in the folklore. Vicky chopping fish further ties her in a relationship with Antjie/Andries Somers. The chopping of fish is also a metaphor for the Afrikaans speaking community to cut off their ties with their countries of origin and to "become" Africans living on this continent. This sentiment is further echoed by the children touching grass, a tangible expression of their wishes to stay in this country and not be chased away by the historical guilt carried by their cultural group. Another cinematic code is expressed via the technical aspects of film. Another cinematic code, that of film editing, is used to enhance the expressionist feel and emotional impact of this film. Vicky's emotional journey and psychological deterioration reach its climax in her on-screen meeting with Antjie. In this way the editing rhythm and stylised shots enhance the expressionist value and emotional impact of the film.

The filmic codes employed in structuring the film and their significance, trapped in the films' visual connotations make Antjie accessible to an Afrikaans speaking audience who will immediately recognise the Antjie/Andries Somers character. Other cultural groups may however struggle to recognise this culturally specific icon.

According to Mast and Cohen a semiotic film reading is possible if one accepts semiotics as neither a responsibility nor a by-product of linguistics. At the same time it is relevant to accept the notion that movie images say something and, since not everybody understands

them, there must be semiotic rules governing this kind of communication (1985:206). Failure to recognise the Antjie/Andries Somers character should not alienate audiences, since the semiotic coding of the film would allow different cultural groups to assign various connotations to its different aspects.

Without semiotic awareness films are viewed as “magic spells” without any fundamental roots signifying its social origin or subjective connotations. In this way the audience believes that things make films, but on the contrary, films make things. The semiotic approach is not only a criticism of illusions of reality; it is also a continuous criticism of ideological shaping of reality by semiotic processes (Mast and Cohen, 1985:208). Prof. Burman noted in Chapter Four that the filming of a folklore character enforces a newly encoded attribute, that will alter the natural progression of the tradition folktale (interview Prof I Burman, University of Stellenbosch, 25 June 2010). Films influence and “make” false realities through creating alternative memories by employing the language of semiotics to communicate cross-culturally with the subconscious. Tredell confirms this statement by writing “Cinema observes, selects, fixes and stylises - it shapes and alters reality” (2002:29).

Phillip Heselton questions whether folklore is merely a collection of anecdotes or a more comprehensive “memory” of actual incidents in a specific historical timeframe. His conclusion to this question is that all types of folklore should be interpreted by its narrator (or director) (1998:23). Alan Watkins (as cited in Heselton, 1998:23), suggests that embedded in folklore, core truths are hidden through coded narratives “if only it were possible to find it through the accumulations that occurred over time.”

The notion that folklore can be interpreted as a dysmorphic memory with traces of universal events and experiences (Heselton, 1998:23) became the inspiration for Antjie. The directors

choice to transfer the main focus from external (plot) to internal (character) narration, allows for an imagined milieu that creates a haunting representation of the folklore character; the sole level of its filmic existence in the distorted memories of individuals who "encountered" him or her.

Since the origin of folklore is associated with "oral roots" (Spierenburg, 1991:72), the researcher travelled to Cape Town in June 2010 and conducted numerous interviews with people from different regions in the Western Cape to assess different versions and recurring trends. Dubbed sections from a selection of these interviews are incorporated in the film to accentuate the importance of the oral roots of this screenplay.

The researcher came across an important variation and consistent trend regarding the costume of Antjie Somers. According to the more traditional versions Antjie Somers wore a red kopdoek (headscarf) and a silk dress (Grobbelaar, 1968:24). Modern retellings of the folklore concur that Antjie Somers wears an apron over tattered clothes and a "voortrekkerkappie" as was worn by women during the Great Trek (interviews, 25 - 30 June 2010). Concurring with Hobsbawn and Ranger's theory: "[...] and folklore are highly relevant to that comparatively recent historical innovation, the nation, with its associated phenomena: nationalism, the nation-state, national symbols, histories and the rest" (1993:13).

By wearing an apron and a voortrekkerkappie the Antjie Somers character now carries symbols of the imagined Afrikaner nation by drawing these symbolic clothing items directly from the traditional and highly iconic Afrikaner uniform. The film pays direct homage to these contemporary incarnations of the Antjie/Andries Somers character, by dressing the actor portraying the role of Antjie in the modern as opposed to the traditional version of the Antjie/Andries outfit.

The human body as pertaining to folklore can be described as existing "outside the language in which it is described or the historical context in which it resides" (Howson, 2004:8). Throughout the history of folklore, men were perceived as the gender responsible for constructing most of the narratives as well as for the creation of the gender stereotypes which form an integral part of folklore (Ranelagh, 1985:39). Bettelheim notes that stereotypes, as depicted in folklore, portrays covetousness between the sexes by focussing on what it lacks, be it status, social role or sexual organs (Bettelheim, 1991:266).

Spierenburg notes that the main archetypes for the female are the mother, the virgin, the witch and the whore while the predominant male archetype is the thief (1991:115). These stereotypes are now discussed to emphasise the choices pertaining to the characters of the film Antjie.

The mother, credited solely as "mother" to underline the folklore stereotype spends her time searching for her abducted child. Silver questions the natural maternal instinct and claims that a mother who deserts or loses her child is seen as an unnatural persona when linked to this archetypical role (1999:105). Universally "mothers" fear abduction of their children since the media usually depicts these mothers as desperate victims striving for the reacquaintance with their children. Another depiction made by the media sees the mother as the aggressor who is responsible for the abduction through her own negligence or delinquency as seen in the recent media hyped disappearance of Madeleine McCann (Crime and Investigation network, 2007, Madeleine McCann).

Bettelheim suggests that the quest for individuation is portrayed differently for the girl than for the boy, as a result of sexual stereotyping (1991: 226). The virgin, portrayed by the female

child, conveys a sense of helplessness and innocence, and embodies the role as the mythological and virginal stereotype of the "damsel in distress." Bettelheim writes that psychoanalytical studies uncovered the violent, anxious, destructive and even sadistic tendencies of a child's imagination (1991:120). Since the child does not yet posses a secure sense of identity (Bettelheim, 1991:56) their curiosity combined with their repressed "darker" subconscious makes them easy targets for adult aggressors.

Women who live alone in rural communities are often labelled as old witches (Spierenburg, 1991:101). Sanders claims that the witch as a social invention becomes the scapegoat for society (1995:205) and displays behaviour that is alien to her gender role or to society's expectations. Vicky is never consciously encoded as a witch yet she seems alien to her gender and social surroundings. This non-conformity stems from the psychological imbalance that she is harbouring from her guilt as a "failed mother."

Spierenburg argues that psychiatric patients are often also scapegoats for society for it seems that these patients are "free from civilisation" and free from "guilt" since "insanity just happens to them" (1991:166-169). Vicky attempts to embrace these "freedoms" but her underlying psychosis and repressed guilt forces her back to society and sanity. Bettelheim writes that the importance derived from folktales are found in the "[…] symbols of psychological happenings or problems…"(1991:155). Vicky portrays the role of the social outcast, embodying one of the greatest fears known to humankind, "separation anxiety", the notion of being deserted as an alien to her biological species (Bettelheim, 1991:145).

Vicky encodes some references to the character of Antjie/Andries Somers mirroring her antisocial connotations. Her name is derived from Victoria Street, the location where the folklore originated according to one of the early versions recalling the executioner who

became Antjie Somers (refer to Chapter Two). Victoria (Queen Victoria) also refers to the possible historical timeline for the origination of the narrative as discussed in Chapter One. To tie in with the vocation of Andries Somers, the fisher, the character Vicky is introduced as she prepares fish for her meal.

The stone walled kraal where the little girl is abducted was chosen to reflect another important archetypal element, that of stones. Universally stones represent solidity and permanence and bear witness as ancient beings that do not pass judgement and provides an “audience” for reinterpretations of folklore and legends at ancient sites (Heselton, 1998:23).

Chapter 5 Conclusion

This research report discusses some of the many different embodiments of the folklore character Antjie/ Andries Somers. Howson summarises it by stating:

> ...the body in sociology is more than a physical and material frame and is largely understood as inseparable from culture and society...the body is not only a material object on which social and political processes operate, but also forms the basis of social experience and action (2004:11).

The various ways in which the body of Antjie/Andries Somers took shape exhibits information surrounding past and present experiences of the Afrikaner community that created the framework for the Antjie/Andries Somers character (Howson, 2004: 65 -77).

The first embodiment of the Antjie/Andries Somers character is that of the slave or member of the servant class. According to the historical framework, set out in Chapter One, the important role of the slave trade in the Cape region sets up a conducive political climate for the origin of this legend. This is also evident in the name Antjie; according to Pumla Gqola "[…] history of slavocratic, colonial and apartheid trajectory which infantilised adult …men and women in the service of white supremacist patriarchy. 'Little' or '-tjie' is also often added to show close personal proximity to an individual" (2010:66).

The dominant white community saw itself as the supreme authority and culture of the time (Sanders, 1995:1) and stigmatised the minority communities as outsiders and "others". Needham (as cited in Sanders, 1995:51) expresses the view that culture is a consequence of the imagination rather than the cognitive and gives form to social status,

morals and values. This imagined status dictated that the misplaced supreme rulers (colonial masters) impose their morals and values (as stipulated by the Christian church) onto their servants. Erasmus and Pieterse claim that these impeding morals and values are still evident today since the "coloured" people are "white-identified, sharing language and religious affiliation with white voters…because they suffer from 'slave mentality' …and [has] yet to free themselves from the stranglehold of psychological enslavement" (as cited in Gqola, 2010:27).

During this time male servants were envisioned as being "dangerous" (Gqola, 2010: 13) and Andries Somers confirms this view, by committing (accidental) murder. This crime opposes the supreme morals and values of the dominant culture and forces him to flee and to evade the torture and execution as discussed in Chapter One. "When the body becomes the site of torture and severe trauma, one of the important channels of experiencing reality becomes distorted" (Prins as cited in Gqola, 2010:206). The trauma experienced by the character Andries resulted in him channelling a female character (the subordinate sex) and distancing himself from his once acclaimed vocation. He now faces both a distorted body and distorted reality as he transgenders into his new persona.

These historical factors gave rise to an imagined narrative that is a reflection of the fears that were present in those communities. The fear of child abductions is possibly encoded guilt stemming from the Afrikaner involvement in the atrocities of child trafficking, kidnappings as well as enslaving of underage slave, "coloured" and San children as discussed in Chapter One. The historical character of Antjie/Andries Somers embodies traces of a xenophobic and chauvinistic society that imagined itself above their own biased morals and values as seen in their acts of child trafficking (Hobsbawn and Ranger, 1993:4-13). These historical events are encoded in the character as constructed by the "oral" historians who dismantled and

restructured societal norms and in this way inscribes subconscious fears onto the body of Antjie/Andries Somers.

> The element of invention is particularly clear here, since the history which became part of the fund of knowledge or the ideology of nation, state or movement is not what has actually been preserved in popular memory, but what has been selected , written, pictured, popularised and institutionalised by those whose function it is to do so (Hobsbawn and Ranger, 1993:13).

"The racialised body often intersects with the gendered body" (Bester as cited in Gqola, 2010:177). The bodies of the slave women were inscribed as "deviant, contagious and shameful" (Gqola, 2010:12) coding stemming from the "racial mixing", as mentioned in Chapter One. By labelling these slave women in a way similar to primordial Eve, the Afrikaner community subconsciously exonerated themselves from their role in the creation of this feared "other" group, the "coloureds".

The name Antjie Somers, is first mentioned in 1866 in the The Friend an English and Dutch newspaper published in the Orange Free State (G.J. 2011, Spreekwoorde). The article stated "[t]his figure was rumoured to steal children, terrorize people and attack travellers at night" (SA history, 2010, The first known reference). This is echoed in some variations that "[…] casts him as a sort of highwayman who terrorised travellers using lonely roads at night and knocked on doors of isolated farmhouses when the women and children were alone at home" (Loos, 28 February 2010,Cape Slavery Heritage).

The Afrikaner community distinguished between what it deemed as sacred and profane as well as civilised (discipline and constrain) as opposed to the grotesque (Howson, 2004: 69-73). Through these differentiations, as discussed in Chapter Two, the Antjie/Andries Somers character further embodies the archetypical villainous folklore character.Bettelheim collapses the boundary between folk and fairytale and argues "[t]he folk fairy tale conveys an important, although unpleasant, truth: poverty and deprivation do not improve man's character, but rather make him more selfish, less sensitive to the suffering of others, and thus prone to embark on evil deeds" (1991:159).

Despite the fact that Antjie/Andries is portrayed as villain, the character further encompasses elements of the cautionary character, to prevent children to act in ways which could be dangerous. According to Bettelheim this also underlines these models for human behaviour that give meaning and value to life (Bettelheim, 1991:35 - 38). In this way the character assists in teaching children valuable safety lessons. Despite the many plot and narrative developments and alterations over time this cautionary element remains constant.

Silver (1999:9) argues that folklore and the science of evolution share constant development and changes and can be compared to aspects of biology since both are subjected to evolutionary processes. However, Ranelagh states that despite the evolution of society, politics and economy, the folklore remains stagnant in its male attitude towards women as outsiders and as objects of evil (1985:6) while concealing their own treacherous personas (1985:70). It is apparent the Antjie/Andries Somers character encompasses male gaze incarnations despite the many variations. To interrogate the male gaze in folklore lies outside the scope of this research report.

Howson mentions that men are rarely reduced to the body but merely represented as physical entities except when disguised by modernity through dressing in the official suit or the militant uniform (2004:50). Clothing and dress are associated with individualism (Howson, 2004:73) while gender is differentiated through hairstyle, body shape and size, posture, stance, facial expression and muscular tone (Howson, 2004:39). To transgender thus implies time, resources and thought (Howson, 2004:59). This detailed transgendering does not apply to the character of Andries Somers (refer to Chapters One and Three). My research shows that Andries, the male character, transgendered to an object of evil, Antjie, as a result of the dominant male patriachical society that flourished at the time when the folktale emerged (Ranelagh, 1985:3).

As argued earlier poverty, insanity, non-conformity and class differentiation imply that the witchcraft doctrine originated in elite social groups. Spierenburg mentions “The Demonologies” were learned works and that elites were more scared of Satan than the servant class, whose main anxiety focused on survival (1991:118).

Sanders claims that although more men were witches, women witches were more dangerous (1995:81). Contemporary cultures reject the traditional concept of the witch but still accept malicious, insane and destructive personalities as outcasts of society (Sanders, 1995:205). “It is not true that industrial man is too sophisticated to believe in witches, but merely that many of us are too sophisticated to believe in witches that fly”(Sanders, 1995:211). Although the original character Andries did not display the witch archetype and although the film character Vicky does not ride on a broom, both characters are societal outcasts by virtue of their behaviour.

The Antjie film accompanying the research report sets out to reconstruct the folktale as a contemporary narrative. Since “Myths may be created but they cannot be lived” (Mast and Cohen, 1985:401) the film employs the above codes as subliminal undertones. The incorporation of the emotional dreamscape encompasses an effect used by filmmaker David Lynch (the Lynchian effect) that "refers to a particular kind of irony where the very macabre and the very mundane combine” (Wallace, 2010, Papers and Essays). This approach portrays “there are no absolute truths, only quick experiences” (Wilson, 2007:163), a view that underlines the ever changing character of folklore. The film also employs Expressionist conventions to accentuate “[...] the cry of solitary men” (Schaeffer, 1968:11). These filmic approaches create the setting to visualise and embody the Antjie/Andries Somers folktale as discussed in Chapter Four.

According to Bettelheim “each folk tale is a magic mirror which reflects some aspects of our inner world and of the steps required by our evolution from immaturity to maturity” (1991:309). By comparing aspects of the Afrikaners’ evolution as a nation and the various transformations of the Antjie/Andries Somers folktale the researcher proposes an informative and provocative approach which could aid this community to transform to a more mature culture through political progress, social acceptance and tolerance since “imagination anticipates the future…” (Mast and Cohen, 1985:332).

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