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My war, your war: understanding conflict in Africa and the Middle East through fiction film: Hotel Rwanda and The Kingdom

Sakota-Kokot, Tanja

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FICTIONAL NARRATIVES AND GLOBAL ISSUES

> We speak in favour of peace because our people prefer peace to war. They yearn for peace because they know from experience that without peace there can be no development. Without peace we will not be able to realise the goal of a better life for all.[1]
>
> Thabo Mbeki

Looking back at the last century, one sees a world with a common goal towards peace. Somehow, this ideal failed, when one looks back at the last 100 years, one is confronted by a century riddled with conflict on every continent right from the Russian Revolution at the beginning of the century to the Gulf, Rwandan and Chechnyan wars at the end of the century. Conflict continued with the September 11 attacks initiating the new millennium. One institution in particular, the media, has thrived as a result, because as we all know 'bad news sells'. Fiction film, one of the segments that form part of the media has been particularly successful in its representation of conflict. This chapter will first focus on the characteristics of the Classical Hollywood formula and how it supports the principles of the Action, Crime and Drama genre, followed by an analysis of the two films, focusing on the script and Three-Act structure of each film. The chapter then draws on specific scenes in *The Kingdom* and *Hotel Rwanda* in order to depict the theory of fiction film, starting with the history of narrative theory, commencing with Structuralism and moving towards a cultural interpretation, falling under Post-Structuralism.

[1] Mbeki, Thabo. 2003. State of the Union Address 14 February 2003 http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/mbeki/2003/tm0214.html, 2008-05-24.

CLASSICAL HOLLYWOOD FORMULA

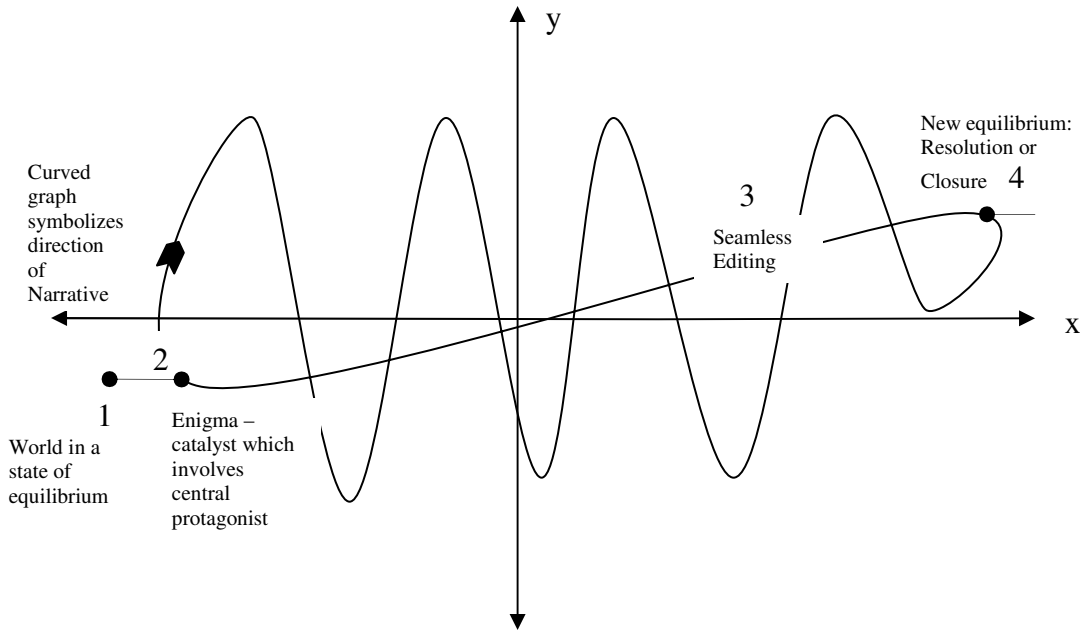
In order to understand how fiction assumes a claim to the truth, I shall analyse how the narrative functions (principles of story-telling and genre characteristics). Firstly, it is necessary to outline the characteristics of the Classical Hollywood narrative, initiated by Noël Burch's "Institutional mode of representation"[2] and his writings on early cinema. By the 1930s "a particular set of cinematic codes through which film narratives were constructed and articulated was already quite firmly in place"[3]. Noël Burch, called these sets of codes the "Institutional mode of representation" which consisted of outlining the conventions of *mise-en-scene*, framing and editing where fictional characters engaged in a coherent narrative of space and time[4]. These films focused on continuity editing, where the viewer "is swept along with the story, unaware of the artifice of the means of representation"[5].

The Institutional mode of representation evolved into the Classical Hollywood formula (also known as Classic Realist narrative/text). David Bordwell identified this type of narrative as a linear construction (see also Bordwell[6], Turner[7] and Monaco[8]) – a trait different to Soviet montage film (which did not demarcate scenes clearly) or of art cinema narration (which ambiguously interplayed subjectivity and objectivity)[9]. Classic Hollywood cinema, therefore, allows for a simple, linear structure where the initial

[2] Burch, N. 1990. *Life to those Shadows (translation by Ben Brewster).* USA: California Press.
[3] Cook, P (ed.) 1985. *The Cinema Book*. London: British Film Institute, pg 208.
[4] Ibid
[5] Ibid
[6] Bordwell, D, Staiger, J & Thompson, K. 1985. *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style & Mode of Production to 1960*. Columbia University Press: New York.
[7] Turner, G. 1998. *Film as Social Practice*. London and New York: Routledge.
[8] Monaco, J. 1981. *How to Read a Film*. UK: Oxford University Press.
[9] Bordwell, D. 1985. *Narration in the Fiction Film*. London: Routledge, pg 158.

catalyst of the narrative propels the narrative forward towards its closure. The Classical Hollywood formula (*fig.1*), according to Pam Cook[10], identifies four specific characteristics relating to the narrative.

Figure 1: Classical Hollywood formula



Firstly, the agency of fictional individuals or characters propel the narrative forward (1), which proposes that the characters who initiate the sequence of events are believable because they have feelings, emotions and flaws. The audience will embark on an emotional journey (as shown by direction of arrow) alongside the central protagonist and engage with the narrative on an emotional level[11]. Secondly, the events are organised

[10] Cook, P (ed.) 1985. *The Cinema Book*. London: British Film Institute, pg 208.

[11] Although the "Institutional Mode of Representation" as well as the Classical Hollywood formula were both historically constructed with the post Second World War economic factors, (the USA was economically stronger than Europe and could engage in more studio based productions because Europe at

around the structure of enigma and resolution (2 and 4)[12]. This implies that the narrative has a clear starting and ending point. Thirdly, verisimilitude[13] governs the world of classic narrative where the events follow a cause-effect sequence. Here, the editing within the narrative will encourage a logical sequence of events (3), which leads to the fourth element, namely, a high degree of closure or resolution[14] (4). Closure implies that the film has a sense of an ending but some of the questions remain unanswered, resolution involves a narrative where all the questions and all the enigmas that occurred at the beginning of the film have been solved/resolved.

The film *Hotel Rwanda* follows the principles of the Classical Hollywood formula or narrative. The first characteristic dictates that the narrative is organised along the structure of enigma and resolution[15]. The film starts with the introduction of our central protagonist (1), Paul Rusesabagina, a black male in his late 30's who is always dressed in a suit and tie. He has an honest and open smile[16] and the way the airport officials greet him in the opening sequence implies that he is well liked. In the next scene[17], George Rutagunda reinstates his reputation with the comment: "I am always glad to see you Paul," whilst smoking one of the Cuban cigars Paul has bribed him with in order to purchase supplies for the *Milles Collines* Hotel. Although Paul is aware of the tension in Rwanda, (this is evident through his comment to the Tutsi hotel porter, Dube, when they

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that time was bombed and poverty-stricken). Throughout history though, alternative approaches to cinematic representation have co-existed alongside the dominant streams.

[12] Cook, P (ed.) 1985. *The Cinema Book*. London: British Film Institute, pg 212.

[13] Ibid

[14] Ibid

[15] Ibid

[16] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:01:14

[17] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:03:35

drive through the *Interahamwe* Parade[18], "Sit up, smile Dube, don't attract attention to yourself"), Paul does not want to accept the inevitable. He tells his frightened Tutsi wife Tatiana and neighbours[19]:

> Today I talked to my friend the American Ambassador and Colonel Oliver of the United Nations (UN). They are preparing a banquet for the peace signing. The world is watching. There will be peace …

However, the assassination of the Rwandan President, Juvénal Habyarimana, acts as the enigma/catalyst (2) which initiates the narrative. This incident launches the film (1 and 2) and the events thereof to the final sequence, which is governed by closure/resolution (4) as according to the principles of the Classical Hollywood formula.

In the final sequence of the film[20], the UN trucks and buses drive towards Tanzania, the screen fades to black and the titles provide us with the actual fate of each of the characters. This sequence provides the film with resolution because the plot is resolved and a new equilibrium is restored (4). According to Hayward "whatever form the closure takes, almost without exception it will offer or enunciate a message that is central to dominant ideology: the law successfully apprehending criminals"[21]. This emerges in the film when the film declares on a black screen,

> George Rutagunda was convicted of crimes against humanity. He is now serving a life sentence in a Tanzanian jail. General Augustin Bizimungu escaped with the Hutu militia to the Congo. In August 2002 he was captured in Angola. A UN war crimes tribunal has charged him with crimes against humanity. Paul Rusesabagina saved the lives of all one thousand two hundred Rwandan refugees who took shelter at the *Milles Collines* Hotel. Paul lives with Tatiana, the twins and their family now live in Belgium. Thomas and Fedens' bodies were never found.

[18] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:04:46
[19] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:16:00
[20] Sequence starts at Time Code 01:50:22
[21] Hayward, S. 1996. *Key Concepts in Cinema Studies*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 46.

The final message of the film is clear that disorder has been resolved and order is once again in place[22]. This message fits quite clearly into the dominant ideology that a new equilibrium is restored and the perpetrators have been brought to justice. The film claims a certain stature because of its portrayal of historical events, but it does not outline the events which occurred after the Rwandan genocide, namely, the backlash by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) which forced approximately two million Hutus away from Rwanda into Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zaire (now known as the Democratic Republic of the Congo)[23]. Thousands died as a result of cholera and dysentery due to the poor conditions of the refugee camps[24]. The film does not deal with this issue because this part of Rwanda's history does not fit within the parameters of the narrative and the formula that dictates it. As a result, although the ideological message of the film promotes the reading that order and equilibrium was restored in Rwanda, which is true for the central characters of the film, it does not relate to the general events within the country.

The Kingdom also follows the characteristics that govern the Classical Hollywood formula. The film introduces the central protagonist (1), Agent Kevin Fleury, to the audience via a talk with his son's classmates[25]. His son, Kevin comments that his birthday is the happiest day of Agent Fleury's life. This confirms for the audience that the hero is compassionate and loving. Agent Fleury also addresses the children

[22] Ibid, pg 45
[23] Answers.com. 2009. "Rwandan Genocide" http://www.answers.com/topic/rwandan-genocide.htm, accessed 2009-06-09.
[24] Ibid
[25] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:04:51

in mid close-up in a manner that they can identify with, he uses jargon that the children can relate to and implies that even the birth process is a place of combat.

> That was December 4th and that was the day that we spent the whole day in the hospital waiting for this guy to come out of Kevin's mom's tummy. And we waited and waited but he wouldn't come out and we kept waiting and finally the doctor said 'OK … he's not gonna come out on his own so we've got to go right in and get him.

What makes *The Kingdom* different to *Hotel Rwanda* is that the narrative is not as linear. In *The Kingdom*, the enigma (2), which is the attack on the American housing compound, occurs prior to the scene introducing the central protagonist (1). Thus, whilst the protagonist, Agent Fleury is with the children, he receives the call from Agent Fran, which establishes the link between the two characters and acts as the catalyst for the protagonist to get involved and embark on the narrative that moves towards closure/resolution (4).

The resolution of *The Kingdom* is not as clear-cut as *Hotel Rwanda*. Although the Americans solve the crime and they kill Abu Hamza, the Mastermind behind the attack, the central message is more cynical. The film offers two closures, one in the USA and one in Saudi Arabia[26]. In the USA, the team are sitting together in a mid shot. Adam Leavitt asks Fleury: "In the briefing … to get Janet to stop crying about Fran … before any of this … before we even got Airborne? What did you say?". At this point, the film cuts to Saudi Arabia, an exterior shot, the grandchild staring into the distance. His aunt looks at him and says: "Will you tell me what Grandfather whispered to you before they took him?" The film cuts back to FBI Headquarters, Leavitt still waiting: "Do you remember what you said?". Fleury looks at him in a

[26] Sequence starts at Time Code 01:38:51

head and shoulder shot and says: "Yeah ... We'll kill them all". The film cuts back to Saudi Arabia, external shot and the child nods and says: "Don't worry: we'll kill them all". This double ending does not offer resolution but closure in the classic sense, it merely re-instates the ideology that the crisis in The Middle East and the War on Terror is ongoing and the representation of the Arab world is legitimate because there will be more suicide bombers and attacks as the one depicted in the film. This ending confirms the authenticity of the narrative because it has such a resemblance to the 'real' world and events that have occurred over the last 25 years.

The ending of *The Kingdom* links back to the historical background given during the initial animated title sequence. The ending (sense of closure) draws on the truth claim established in the beginning that this film is not merely fiction but that the images presented have a strong disposition towards events in the 'real' world. The film wants its audience to believe that the depiction of how suicide bombers function in the 'real' world is similar to the representations thereof in the fiction film.

The final characteristic of the Classical Hollywood formula, verisimilitude (3) dictates that the style of the film and links the shots together in a 'seamless' manner. Verisimilitude or seamless editing:

> Is subordinate to narrative: shots, lighting, colour must not draw attention to themselves anymore than the editing, the *mise-en-scene* or sound… the spectator must know where she or he is in time and space and in relation to the logic and chronology of the narrative[27].

[27] Hayward, S. 1996. *Key Concepts in Cinema Studies*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 47.

Throughout both films, the audience understands the event according to the cause-effect principle; each scene follows a chronological order of events within the film. The audience is not aware of the editing, which remains seamless and the events portrayed follow a logical sequence in terms of how they happened historically in the real conflict. The narrative weaves each historical fact into the story to construct a chronological cause-effect scenario. Within the framework of the story, the codes and conventions of the genre of each film also dictate the narrative.

Genre

The narrative is driven by genres that not only identify the nature of the film, but also spectator/audience expectations and speculation/hypothesis as to how a film may end[28] (see also Creeber[29], Neale[30] and Feuer[31]). The term 'genre' is "appropriated from literary studies and is used to describe the way in which groups of narrative conventions (involving plot, character, and even locations or set design) become organised into recognisable types of narrative entertainment"[32]. With reference to film theory, the concept of genre goes back to early cinema and was seen as a way of organising film texts according to their type[33], for example Western, Musical, Comedy and Drama. Graeme Turner[34] defines genre as "a system of codes, conventions, and visual styles which enables an audience to determine rapidly and with some complexity the kind of narrative they are viewing". André Bazin was one of the first film critics to discuss genre

[28] Ibid, pg 160
[29] Creeber, G (ed.) 2001. *The Television Genre Book*. UK: British Film Institute.
[30] Neale, S. 1980. *Genre*. London: British Film Institute Publishing.
[31] Feuer, J. 1987. "Genre Study in Television" in Allen, R, C (ed.) *Channels of Discourse: Television and Contemporary Criticism*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, pg 113-133.
[32] Turner, G. 1998. *Film as Social Practice*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 37.
[33] Hayward, S. 1996. *Key Concepts in Cinema Studies*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 159.
[34] Turner, G. 1998. *Film as Social Practice*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 85.

with reference to the Western as a means of displacing the debates around Auteur theory. Critics initially discussed the two theories separately because the principles of genre limited the artistic decisions a director may or may not use. More recently, however, the discussion of genre and Auteur theory have become more accommodating[35], where a director's vision and the genre characteristics work together or against one another within a narrative as opposed to two separate entities. Genre also assists the role of specific institutional discourses that feed into and form generic structures, "it is a tripartite process of production, marketing (including distribution and exhibition) and consumption"[36]. This process implies that genre does not only affect the nature of production and reception of a film, but it also plays a crucial role in terms of marketing and distribution. This would involve the distribution of advertising campaigns and messages via various media with the anticipation that more spectators will be drawn in to view the film[37]. The audience not only has an assumption of the type of film they are going to watch, but through genre, there is an expectation towards the outcome of the film as well.

Because of social and political change, genres are never static, they evolve with the times, they are paradoxically placed; they are conservative and innovative in so far as they respond to the industry and audience demands[38]. This can be seen with the huge amount of Spy Dramas that were released during the Cold War. As the Berlin Wall and Iron Curtain came down, so did the audience demand and interest for the Spy genre. In

[35] Hayward, S. 1996. *Key Concepts in Cinema Studies*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 159.
[36] Ibid, pg 160
[37] A typical example of this type of marketing would be children films that are released. Products such as dolls, T-shirts and games reminiscent of the central characters of the films can usually be bought at toy shops as well as distributed by market conglomerates such as McDonalds. This raises audience attention and increases profits not only through the consumption of the film but also through the profits gained through the audience buying into the toy products.
[38] Hayward, S. 1996. *Key Concepts in Cinema Studies*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 160.

addition, traditional genres evolve with the current and political situation. One could say that the Classical Western has almost disappeared but I would argue that the characteristics of the Western are prevalent in today's Detective, Crime, Thriller genre. *The Kingdom* is an Action film that is based on the Classical Western.

According to Will Wright[39], the characteristics of the Western are as follows; the hero enters a social group, the narrative reveals that the hero has an exceptional ability, society recognises a difference between themselves and the hero. Initially, society does not fully accept the hero but it is evident that there is some form of history between the villain and the hero. The villain, who is stronger than society, threatens society. The hero, who initially avoids involvement in the conflict, becomes involved because the villain endangers the hero, or someone close to him/her. At the climax of the film, the hero fights and defeats the villain. Society is safe once again, society accepts the hero and as a result, the hero loses the initial special status and is incorporated into society.

One could argue that *The Kingdom* follows a very similar pattern. In this case, the hero is not an individual but a group of people who are lead by the central protagonist. The group enters Saudi Arabia and it is evident through their forensic knowledge that they have an exceptional ability. This is evident when Grant Sykes picks up the military detonator and discretely hands it over to Fleury who places it in his pocket[40]. The detonator is a key piece of evidence, which Fleury uses to win over Al-Ghazi's trust and respect. Until Fleury gets the permission from the Prince, he and his team exist outside

[39] Wright, W. 1975. *Six Guns and Society: A Structural Study of the Western*. Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, pg 41-49.
[40] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:43:38

of society; there is clearly a difference between the two cultures. For example, this is evident by the American use of bad language throughout[41]. The history between the Americans and the villain is not some personal vendetta as in the Classical Western, in this instance it is linked to the threat that the villain has placed on the hero's own society. This history binds them and forces them into a confrontation at the end of the film[42]. The villain, Abu Hamza, directly threatens the Americans during the freeway hijacking and gun battle. This incident forces the Americans directly into conflict with the villain, which eventually ends in the villain's death. For the moment, society is safe once again and the Arab society, which initially rejected the Americans, accepts them. This is evident initially when Fleury tells Prince Bin Khaled that General Al-Ghazi was the one who found the detonator, this gesture results in the two men bonding and starting to work together. Fleury is also accepted by the Arab society towards the end of the film when he visits and pays his respects to Al-Ghazi's family.

Although there are parallels in the narrative (namely the similarity of the age of the central characters sons as well as the ending of the same comments in the USA and Saudi Arabia), the narrative is very precise in creating with whom the audience should empathise. One can then agree that *The Kingdom*, a modern Detective, Action Drama does evolve from the principles of the Classical Western and the genre clearly works ideologically.

[41] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:38:31 and Time Code 00:50:37
[42] Sequence starts at Time Code 01:16:35

Hotel Rwanda is a War Drama. The Drama genre is one of the most difficult to define because although its roots stem from literature and theatre works[43], a Drama can evolve around other sub-genres, such as; Comedy, Tragedy and Thriller. One consistency with this genre is its dependence on the Classical Hollywood narrative formula and its hybridist relationship with other genres.

Hotel Rwanda, a War Drama, acts as an example of one of these hybrids. The War Drama (or as it is also sometimes referred to 'anti-war Drama' because this genre is usually critical of war), generally "acknowledge the horror and heartbreak of war, letting the actual combat fighting or conflict (against nations or human kind) provide the primary plot or background for the action of the film"[44]. *Hotel Rwanda* is unique in that the structure focuses more on the drama element than the combat element. The viewer is completely aware of the conflict going on outside of the hotel walls (through the images of houses burning taken from the roof of the hotel and the continuous sounds of gunshots) although these images are not part of the primary narrative. Through the drama and the relationships and dilemmas of the characters, the audience receives the film's message regarding the war, which is characteristic of the genre, namely, "the effects of war on society and explorations of the moral and human issues"[45]. This is evident throughout the film, but one obtains a real sense of the character's desperation and vulnerability when Gregoire informs the Hutu militia of the UN convoy that should

[43] Creeber, G (ed.) 2001. *The Television Genre Book*. UK: British Film Institute, pg 8.
[44] Author unknown, "Characteristics of The Western"
http://www.1z95. Org/Izhs/english/jgira/genres%202.doc, accessed 2008-03-06.
[45] Ibid

take Paul's family and the VIP Tutsi's to safety[46]. Instead of finding safety, the characters move into an ambush. Paul is not on the truck because he heroically jumps off the truck at the last minute and leaves his family in order to stay with the rest of the people at the hotel. The visual shows the neighbours huddled in the UN truck, on their knees, pleading for their lives as swarms of militia fill the road. Inside the truck a machete slashes through the canvas, people scream as hands grab at the people. One of the militia grabs Benedict, a Rwandan journalist, hauls him off the truck and beats him in front of the others. The scene immediately establishes "the futility and inhumanity of human battle … while criticising the villainy of the enemy"[47], a typical characteristic of the War Drama. The montage and use of low and high camera angles identify the victims, who are at the mercy of the *Interahamwe*, Paul is the Hutu hero and the militia are the senseless mercenaries who have caused the chaos. The scene serves to position the heroes, villains and innocent victims and move the narrative towards resolution.

According to O'Sullivan et al[48] "genres are agents of ideological closure – they limit the meaning-potential of a given text, and they limit the commercial risk of the producer corporations". Thus although genre characteristics limit the possibilities of the outcome of a film, genres serve in terms of audience expectations and therefore guarantee a certain amount of viewership which almost acts as a guarantee for audience numbers which contributes to box office success. In expecting a specific outcome of a genre, the dominant ideology prevails. For example, the likelihood of a heterosexual couple uniting

[46] Sequence starts at Time Code 01:25:45
[47] Author unknown, "Characteristics of The Western" http://www.1z95. Org/Izhs/english/jgira/genres%202.doc, accessed 2008-03-06.
[48] O'Sullivan, T, Hartley, J et al. 1992. *Key Concepts in Communication*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 99.

at the end of a romantic comedy is inevitable (as dictated by the Classical Hollywood formula) as well as by the characteristics set out by its genre principles (see Hayward[49]). Both the narrative formula and the characteristics of the genre dictate the outcome of the story and the audience buy into specific genres due to the expectations promoted by the genre.

Jane Feuer[50] identifies three approaches to genre theory: the aesthetic, the ritual and the ideological approaches. Although she argues that the approaches are not distinct, it is evident that different texts will focus on different approaches. The aesthetic approach defines genre in terms of the system of conventions that permits artistic expression[51]. This would involve a text where Auteur theory and the evidence of the director's personal style are evident. In this instance, a work will be analysed with reference to how it fulfils or transcends a genre[52]. The second approach, ritual, sees genre as an exchange between industry and culture and allows for cultural expression[53]. The audience may not identify fully with the scenario portrayed in a film but through an understanding of the cultural position presented in the narrative, the audience understands and empathises with the cultural position, and is negotiated into agreeing with the central message of the film. According to this approach, the film negotiates the audience into adapting to change or understanding a cultural group 'other' than that of the audience. Finally, the ideological approach, views the term as an instrument of control, which merely reproduces the

[49] Hayward, S. 1996. *Key Concepts in Cinema Studies*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 161.
[50] Feuer, J. 1987. "Genre Study and Television" in Allen, R,C (ed.) *Channels of Discourse: Television and Contemporary Criticism.* Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, pg 119.
[51] Ibid
[52] Ibid
[53] Ibid

dominant beliefs of the capitalist system[54]. Within this approach, the film hegemonically incorporates the audience into the dominant belief system and there is no room for negotiation.

Hotel Rwanda makes use of both of Feuer's ritual as well as ideological approaches because on the one hand the film serves as an American representation of an African scenario/conflict. The audience is not necessarily familiar with the situation in the film, its geological position or the historic events depicted. Don Cheadle, the main actor of *Hotel Rwanda*, in an interview with Rebecca Murray comments,

> I don't like movies that are trying to preach and trying to tell you how to feel. I don't think this one does. I think this one is just chronicling certain events that happened during this time and you take from it what you will[55].

The film does depict certain historical events that occurred during the Rwandan genocide; for example, it has already been established that the Hutu radio station distributed hate messages and the audience is introduced to some of the perpetrators such as George Rutaganda and General Bizimungu. Without openly taking a political position regarding the war, the message of the film is clearly from the Tutsi point of view. This is evident because although the film introduces some of the Hutu militia, the film does not allow them a voice regarding their position within the conflict. With reference to Feuer's ritual and ideological approaches to genre theory, it is evident that the film negotiates the audience into understanding a specific cultural expression by superficially mentioning the Colonial history of Rwanda. This is evident in the scene when Jake, the journalist, tries

[54] Ibid
[55] Murray, R. "Don Cheadle Talks about *Hotel Rwanda*" http://www.movies.about.com/od/hotelrwanda/a/rwanda121704.htm, accessed 2008-05-30.

to differentiate between a Hutu and a Tutsi[56]; he comments, "they (both the Hutu and Tutsi women) could be sisters". The film merely slides into a dominant ideological reading of Rwanda and its people (they are primitive and savage and need the West to rescue them). The film negotiates the audience into understanding the film's interpretation of the conflict by watching the central characters interact and reading the messages of the film, the film reinstates its truth claim that the film is a depiction of the 'real' events.

The two protagonists in both films differ quite drastically in terms of their character development. Ronald Fleury does not grow psychologically as much as Paul Rusesabagina. The reason for this is due to the conformities of the Action genre as opposed to the Drama genre. Because the Action genre focuses on action, the hero does not have the space within the script to grow as the hero in a Drama. The satisfaction the Action audience receives is through the adrenalin rush one obtains from viewing the high budget car chases and explosions. The Drama audience on the other hand, excels in the emotional roller-coaster ride one experiences with the central protagonist. Both films draw on events from the 'real' historical world and because of this; they both establish truth claims with reference to their subject matter.

Story and Plot

David Bordwell discusses narrative film with the terms "fabula" (story) and "syuzhet" (plot) which were originally presented by the Russian formalists[57] (see also Brooks[58]).

[56] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:12:20
[57] Bordwell, D. 1985. *Narration in Fiction Film*. London: Routledge, pg 157.

The two concepts work hand in hand because the story represents the chronological order and is constructed by the viewer, whereas the plot follows the recounting of the events and is constructed by the writer[59]. In order to understand the fabula or narrative, one has to understand the syuzhet or plot of the film. The first part of this chapter focuses more specifically on the syuzhet or plot of the film, which emerges through a closer analysis of the script. Thereafter, the discussion focuses on the fabula or narrative which examines the progression of narrative theory, considering how the narrative, characters and events have historical referents, yet assume certain claims to the 'truth' of the conflict/genocide of Rwanda and the Middle East crisis.

SCRIPT

It is necessary to understand the principles of screenwriting, as the script is the 'blueprint' from which directors and actors work. The Restorative Three-Act Structure (see also Mckee[60], Cannell[61], Tierno[62] and Vogler[63]), is the basis of most mainstream American screenplays[64]. The Three-Act form is derived from Aristotle's notion that all dramas have a beginning, middle and end[65]. Although this is a generalised formula, French

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[58] Brooks, P. 1984. *Reading for the Plot*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
[59] Author unknown, "Fabula vs Syuzhet" http://www.courses.psu.edu/cmlit/cmlit100_tob/syuzhet.htm, accessed 2008-05-29.
[60] Mckee, R. 1997. *Story: Substance, Structure, Style, and the Principles of Screenwriting*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers.
[61] Cannell, S, J. "What is the Three-Act Structure" http://www.writerwrite.com/screenwriting/lecture4/htm, accessed 2009-06-02.
[62] Tierno, M. 2002. *Aristotles Poetics for Screenwriters: Storytelling Secrets from the Greatest Mind in Western Civilisation*. USA: Hyperion.
[63] Vogler, C. 1998. *The Writers Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers.* USA: Prima Publishing.
[64] Dancyger, K & Rush, J. 2002. *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules*. Boston, Oxford, Johannesburg, Melbourne, New Delhi: Focal Press, pg 18.
[65] Aristotle. 1967. *Poetics*. Chicago: Henrey Regnery, pg 15.

playwright Eugene Scribe developed a more specific adaptation in the 1820s[66]. The conventions of the Three-Act structure (see also Field[67]) are founded on a 120 page feature script which consists of three acts (30 pages, 60 pages and 30 pages)[68]. Each act rises to a point of crisis with the resolution of this plot driving the story into the following act[69].

The first act focuses on setup, the second on confrontation and the third on resolution, with each act building to a greater intensity than the previous one[70]. Three-Act stories are character-driven where the "working out of the action is a simultaneous working out of the structure"[71]. These principles will be analysed in relation to how the plot points in each of the films not only feed the action but also direct character development. It is thus necessary to analyse the film according to structure and counter-structure, main and secondary characters, subtext, action and narrative voice. This research does not focus on the different approaches to script theory. One has to understand the two film scripts in order to understand the central question of how fiction assumes an authority to comment on 'real' events and appropriate specific readings to certain groups or cultures. Although there are numerous positions towards scriptwriting, I shall focus solely on Ken Dancyger and Jeff Rush's account of mainstream scriptwriting because it serves the purpose of this research, which does not include the different theories towards scriptwriting. Dancyger

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[66] Dancyger, K & Rush, J. 2002. *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules*. Boston, Oxford, Johannesburg, Melbourne, New Delhi: Focal Press, pg 19.
[67] Field, S. 1982. *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting*. New York: Dell, pg 9.
[68] Dancyger, K & Rush, J. 2002. *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules*. Boston, Oxford, Johannesburg, Melbourne, New Delhi: Focal Press, pg 19.
[69] Ibid
[70] Field, S. "Three Act Structure" http://www.cod.edo/people/faculty/pruter/film/threeact.htm, accessed 2009-03-18.
[71] Howard, D & Mabley, E. 1993. *The Tools of Screenwriting: A Writer's Guide to the Craft and Elements of a Screenplay*. New York: St Martins Griffin, pg 24.

and Rush[72] are relevant because their account links directly into the Hollywood mainstream approach to scriptwriting, which incorporates the Classical Hollywood formula.

Hotel Rwanda and *The Kingdom* follow the Classical Hollywood formula, but they are also characterised by the Three-Act structure. According to Dancyger and Rush[73] within this structure, there are four main elements: conflict, discovery, reversal and turning point, as the base of all stories. These function as the technical devices to involve the reader in a story. The Three-Act story weaves these devices into the structure and emerges at the turning point of each act.

Three-Act Structure of *Hotel Rwanda*

The first Act establishes the enigma and serves to introduce the character and premise. The film introduces Paul Rusesabagina at the beginning as the central protagonist who is likeable, efficient and central to the narrative. Secondly, premise, (which Dancyger and Rush[74] recognise as the central idea) is presented in terms of the central character's dilemma at that particular stage of his/her life.

The opening scenes of *Hotel Rwanda* introduce the audience to the atmosphere in Rwanda; the narrative demonstrates that Paul is crafty and good with people[75]; he smoothly bribes the airport official by slipping some notes into his hand when he greets

[72] Dancyger, K & Rush, J. 2002. *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules*. Boston, Oxford, Johannesburg, Melbourne, New Delhi: Focal Press.
[73] Ibid, pg 2
[74] Ibid, pg 2-3
[75] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:01:14

him at the airport gate. He also tells Dube, the hotel porter, that if you hand a businessperson some money, it means nothing but "if you hand him a cigar, freshly imported from Habana, Cuba, you're giving him an experience he will not forget". The script verifies Paul's comment in the following scene with the introduction of George Rutagunda. He is a huge man in his late thirties, dressed in an *Interahamwe*[76] shirt and decorated with gold chains and a huge Rolex watch on his wrist. He slowly inhales the Cuban cigar. Both of these scenes function to inform the audience that the protagonist is clever and capable, that George on the other hand, is corrupt, and cunning, the audience knows this because Paul has obviously bribed him with the cigars.

The next scene further reinforces Paul and George's character when there is uneasiness after the crate filled with machetes collapses[77], spilling hundreds of machetes on the floor. George tries to ease the obvious tension by upgrading the beer to Heinken "at no extra charge". This scene informs the audience that tension is brewing and that George and his men are planning something violent 'beneath the surface'. George's uneasy tone and reaction confirms this. The opening scenes of the film, therefore, introduce Paul, the central character and establish the premise that the political tension in Rwanda is evident and conflict is inevitable; this information will initiate the enigma and catapult the narrative.

[76] The term '*Interahamwe*' means 'those who fight together'. The term is relevant to the Rwandan genocide because the group of civilian men who were trained to massacre were called the *Interahamwe* (see Peacepledge Union. "Rwanda 1994: The Genocide" http://www.ppu.org.uk/genocide/g_rwanda.html, accessed 2008-11-11). They were recognized by the multi-colour shirts they used to wear.
[77] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:03:40

After the peace treaty is signed Paul's brother and sister in law, Thomas and Fedens, arrive at the hotel[78]. Whilst they sit down next to the pool, Thomas explains in mid close-up that a friend in the Hutu Power militia has told him to get out of Rwanda, "that soon it will be very bad". Paul dismisses the comment and asks for the man's name, Thomas replies:

> His name is Naramaranga, but please, Paul, even though he is Hutu Power, he is a friend, he likes me. He told me there is a signal. It is "Cut the tall trees'. When they hear the signal, the militia are to go to war.

Within script theory, "planting" is a device or technique that "serves to increase the audience's feeling of involvement in the story … by requiring the audience to grasp and retain information for later use"[79]. The signal "We must cut the tall trees" is part of the enigma of the film that will launch the narrative. The device prepares the audience for information that they will use later on. The script "plants" the signal in this case the message to go to war, so that when Paul is eventually confronted with the signal or "payoff"[80], the audience understands what it means and identifies it as the premise which contributes to the enigma (the assassination of the President) of the first Act. By planting the signal, the audience is more involved with the narrative and as a result engages more actively with the protagonist.

[78] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:15:08
[79] Howard, D & Mabley, E. 1993. *The Tools of Screenwriting: A Writer's Guide to the Craft and Elements of a Screenplay*. New York: St Martins Griffin, pg 72-73.
[80] Ibid

The enigma of the narrative occurs just after Paul has spoken to Thomas and Fedens[81]. He is driving home at night[82]. The road is empty, someone breaks a window and there are houses burning. An *Interahamwe* jeep passes with someone commenting over the loudspeaker "Stay in your house". When Paul arrives home, there is no power and he finds all his Tutsi neighbours seeking refuge in his living room. The following day, one of the neighbours quickly brings in the radio:[83]

> Terrible news, horrible news … Our great President is murdered, by the Tutsi cockroaches. They tricked him, then they killed him. We must cleanse this country, Good Hutus of Rwanda. We must cut the tall trees! We must clear the brush. We must cut the tall trees! Cut the tall trees now!

According to Dancyger and Rush, by the end of the first Act, two key points are established, *the point of no return* and *false solution*[84]. The first, *the point of no return* functions as a one-way gate where the central character has "entered a unique situation and can never return to the way things were before this moment"[85]. The film establishes this fully in the first Act when Paul is desperate to try to save his family and neighbours from the *Interahamwe* and to get them to the safety of the *Milles Collines* Hotel.

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[81] The "planting" device is usually followed by a "payoff", which is the point when the audience understands why they were initially given the information. It is when the initial "planting" device is understood. This usually happens towards the end of the film, but in this instance the audience understands the signal soon after it is planted. Here it is used to heighten suspense, so that the script does not need to explain the signal "We must cut the tall trees" and emotionally, the audience can empathise more with the confusion, fear and panic of the protagonist.
[82] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:16:43
[83] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:21:46
[84] Dancyger, K & Rush, J. 2002. *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules*. Boston, Oxford, Johannesburg, Melbourne, New Delhi: Focal Press, pg 24.
[85] Ibid

The second point, *false solution*, implies that although the central protagonist appears to have solved the initial crisis, it opens up a complete new set of problems[86]. This is evident at the turning point, which happens at the end of the first Act[87]. Paul is lying next to Tatiana; she comments "the neighbours thank you for your kindness…" Paul replies,

> I shouldn't have brought them here … The first thing they told me when I received my appointment was 'Never, never lower the tone of the hotel, maintain the dignity at all times Paul' … Soon this will be over … what if I lose my job Tatiana?

At this point in the film, the narrative distances the audience from the central protagonist, because the audience understands that the protagonist has created a false solution for him/herself because war is inevitable and the protagonist does not want to accept this. Secondly, the enigma has occurred which has upset the equilibrium and established that the temporal world will never be the same again. Paul is still under the impression that the conflict will be over quickly and that peace and unity is quickly inevitable. The film then moves into the second Act based on Paul's false premise established in the first.

The second Act focuses on the conflict and is characterised by three main elements *moving ahead of character*, *act of consequence* and *character assertion*[88]. The audience seems to be *ahead of the character*, who is running away from his/her history, his/her background and his/her circumstances[89]. This continues from the first Act, it is inevitable

[86] Ibid
[87] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:35:00
[88] Eickhoff, G, R, B. "The Three Act Structure" http://jujuscript.com/spipnew/spip.php?article199, accessed 2009-03-22.
[89] Dancyger, K & Rush, J. 2002. *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules*. Boston, Oxford, Johannesburg, Melbourne, New Delhi: Focal Press, pg 25.

that the violence and hatred will escalate and that Paul and his family are not secure behind the walls of the *Milles Collines*.

The second element, *the act of consequence*

> … reaches its climax when the character finally has to face the implications of the false solution at the end of the first Act. The more extreme the circumstances, the truer the revelation of the character and this recognition provides the opportunity for insight, which moves towards resolution in the third Act[90].

At this moment, the audience is in harmony with the character[91]. The film establishes this at the turning point of the second Act[92]. Paul is once again buying supplies at George Rutagunda's warehouse, George comments,

> No whiskey, no spirits. Your rich cockroaches at the hotel, will have to do without their scotch. Anyway, I have bled that cow enough Paul … Their money is no good to them. Soon all the *Ineysi* will be dead.

Paul comments, "You cannot kill them all" to which George replies,

> Why not? We're halfway there already … Let me give you a tip my friend, our generals in the army say 'do not go near the *Milles Collines* or they will send the Belgian soldiers back here'. But the generals are about to leave, and we will be in charge. It is time to butcher that fat cow for the meat. You can help us Paul. You have some very important traitors staying at your hotel. If we were to get them, then maybe we could let one or two cockroaches of your own get away. You understand, Paul.

George then tells Paul to take the road along the river because it is clear. This journey introduces the most evocative scene in the film[93]. It is clearly early morning with the first light appearing. All of a sudden, the road is very bumpy and Paul

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[90] The Clapperboard.com. "Film Structure" http://www.theclapperboard.com/view_posting.php?posting_id=47, accessed 2009-03-22.
[91] Dancyger, K & Rush, J. 2002. *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules*. Boston, Oxford, Johannesburg, Melbourne, New Delhi: Focal Press, pg 25.
[92] Sequence starts at Time Code 01:09:03
[93] Sequence starts at Time Code 01:11:35

thinks that Gregoire has driven off the road. He tells him to stop and gets out of the car. Paul stumbles and falls out of the car and discovers he is looking at the face of a dead child, a young Tutsi girl, her hands clasped on her ears as though to block the sound of her own death (an African Munz's scream). Paul clambers to his feet, sees that the van is on a road littered with dead bodies, men, women and children. He realises that the bumps were bodies and the van has driven over them. A breeze from the lake blows, the fog clears a little, revealing a carpet of bodies, hundreds of them sprawled all along the road as far as Paul can see. Finally, Paul climbs shell-shocked back into the van, telling Gregoire to "Go back, Go Back!"

These two scenes confirm that the genocide is taking place but at this point, the tables are turned, George now bribes Paul when he tells him that he will spare one or two of his family if he gives over some of the important Tutsi politicians staying at the hotel. Paul maintains his character when he does not accept the bribe and comments very vaguely "George, it is nearly light, we really must be going". The audience and Paul now know that his family and the people at the hotel are no longer safe, the narrative reaffirms this with the visuals of the carpet of dead bodies on the road.

These two scenes highlight the act of consequence as described by Dancyger and Rush[94]. The central protagonist, Paul, realises the false solution of the first Act; this will not end

[94] Dancyger, K & Rush, J. 2002. *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules*. Boston, Oxford, Johannesburg, Melbourne, New Delhi: Focal Press, pg 25.

easily, this is not a matter of merely losing his work but that both he and all the characters close to him are in danger and have to fight for their lives.

At the turning point of the second Act, the film achieves the third element, *character assertion*. Here, Paul breaks down in the locker room of the hotel[95]. He is trying to tie his tie, it is not correct and he comments to himself "Oh dear!" As he is trying to fix the tie, the same sound of the African Munz's scream that he heard when he witnessed the dead bodies fades up on the audio track. Paul rips off the tie and shirt and crumbles on the floor sobbing. Dube tries to come in "Are you alright", Paul slams the door, crying "Don't come in, Don't come in ... I'll be right out" as he crumbles onto the floor, sobbing with the African Munz's scream reaching a crescendo. At this point, Paul asserts his fate, he accepts the consequences and has to plan for the moment when the *Interahamwe* are going to come and kill them. After this scene, Paul no longer wears a tie, he has shed his image as the hotel manager as he knows the safety of that role is over, their time is limited and he has to prepare for the inevitable. The third characteristic, assertion, is achieved at the end of the second act when the momentum of the audience is exhausted because one has witnessed the character defeated by the events one knew would defeat him/her[96]. The audience is now in complete harmony with the central character as the narrative moves towards closure or resolution.

[95] Sequence starts at Time Code 01:13:55
[96] Dancyger, K & Rush, J. 2002. *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules*. Boston, Oxford, Johannesburg, Melbourne, New Delhi: Focal Press, pg 26.

The third Act is characterised by *recognition* and *restoration*[97]. This act moves towards a more positive climax and restoration after the character recognises his/her failure and is able to rise and overcome internal tension and story conflict[98]. Paul initiates this process by preparing Tatiana for the inevitable[99]. He comments "We have to have a plan … Our children cannot see us die first. If the militia comes, you must hurry up to the roof. I will meet you there", Tatiana replies "Please do not talk like this" to which Paul answers "We have to. If I do not come, you must take them all by the hands and jump. The machete is no way to die. Promise me you will do it". At this point Paul realises his fate and prepares for his worst nightmare. A little later[100], whilst looking at Tatiana's gold cross around her neck whilst she is sleeping, Paul remembers that there was scotch whiskey and gold in the safe of the *Diplomat* Hotel. Once again, there is a glimmer of hope, "having recognised his failure, the character is able to rise and overcome internal tension and story conflict"[101], at this point; the narrative provides the protagonist a chance to triumph over the odds[102]. After giving Captain Bizimungu the liquor and jewellery Paul tells him that he is wanted for war crimes and that no one else can save him:

> You need me to tell how you helped the hotel. The others who have gone, they blame you for all their misfortune. They say you led the massacres.

Paul is once again in control and drives the narrative towards redemption. As according to the Classical Hollywood formula (see relevant section in this chapter), the narrative

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[97] Field, S. "Three Act Structure" http://www.cod.edo/people/faculty/pruter/film/threeact.htm, accessed 2009-03-18.
[98] Dancyger, K & Rush, J. 2002. *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules*. Boston, Oxford, Johannesburg, Melbourne, New Delhi: Focal Press, pg 26.
[99] Sequence starts at Time Code 01:18:55
[100] Sequence starts at Time Code 01:34:16
[101] Dancyger, K & Rush, J. 2002. *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules*. Boston, Oxford, Johannesburg, Melbourne, New Delhi: Focal Press, pg 26.
[102] Ibid

reaches resolution at the end of the third Act. The UN escorts them to Tanzania and the fate of each of the central characters is expressed in the closing comments of the film.

The Restorative Three-Act structure is centred around character development. The primary, central protagonist drives the narrative and is the primary means for the audience to experience the story[103]. The primary character also undergoes a metamorphosis during the course of the story whereas the secondary characters, although have distinct functions in the story, do not change and serve as a source of contrast to the main character[104]. This is evident in *Hotel Rwanda* as Paul is the only character who develops emotionally and psychologically, all the other secondary characters remain static.

Tatiana, Paul's wife has an interesting role in the script. She is a Tutsi and should be quite aware of the situation, we see this in the beginning of the film when she senses the tension and hides the neighbours in their house. As the narrative progresses, she becomes more naïve. Tatiana's role in the narrative is quite specific and may have no reference to the real character in the historical world at all. Her role is to inform the audience of the events pertaining to the war; she becomes a buffer for the audience. Paul cannot explain the situation to the audience directly, he therefore explains the events to Tatiana, who in reality is most probably aware of what is happening, but she is essential in the narrative

[103] Cannell, S, J. "What is the Three Act Structure?" http://www.writerswrite.com/screenwriting/lecture4.htm, accessed 2009-06-02.
[104] Dancyger, K & Rush, J. 2002. *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules*. Boston, Oxford, Johannesburg, Melbourne, New Delhi: Focal Press, pg 4.

to allow Paul a chance to inform the audience of crucial events by explaining them through her.

Although the film claims to present the Rwandan genocide in chronological order, it has a very specific message regarding war as well as the events that happened during that time. Documentary theory refers to this position as "voice" and is discussed in more detail towards the end of this chapter.

Three-Act Structure of *The Kingdom*

The first Act of *The Kingdom* establishes the enigma that clearly contrasts the protagonist Fleury from the villain Abu Hamza[105]. Both are interacting with children, Fleury is at school, celebrating his son's Birthday and chatting to the children. The film contrasts this nurturing, family scene with another family scene but of a different nature. Here, Abu Hamza is with his three grandsons who are co-ordinating an attack on the American housing compound. In the latter scene, the landscape is foreign with a desert background. In the distance, there is a compound with high walls and a very strong security presence. Abu Hamza's face is down, his face obscured by his *shumagh.*

Notably, the character Abu Hamza is not only the villain within *The Kingdom*, but refers to the actual person in the 'real' world. The actual Abu Hamza is the leader of the "Supporters of Shariah" (SOS), a group which has been linked to the kidnapping of 16

[105] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:04:16

Western tourists in Abyan on 28 December 1998[106]. He is also said to have fought in the Afghan War and was involved in numerous terrorist campaigns where it is believed that he lost both his hands and an eye in an accident. This information further emphasizes to what extent the fiction world draws on actual events. The fact that the actual Abu Hamza has been involved in similar activities to the fictional character merely validates to what extent the fiction film draws on the 'real' to confirm its central message.

Within the sequence, the eight year old leans his weight into his grandfather (the fictional Abu Hamza), who gently rubs the boy's head with a wrinkled left hand. The boy finger-paints in Arabic, "There is no God but Allah". The images immediately informs the audience of the difference between these two men when the grandson looks away when the two police officers are shot. Instead of protecting the boy from witnessing the violence, Abu Hamza directs the boy's head towards the baseball game and comments in mid close-up "I said keep watching the game" because this is where the main attack will take place. Both of these scenes serve to identify and contrast the protagonist from the villain. The implied reading shows the protagonist interacting in a 'nurturing' way with children whereas the scene with the villain, Abu Hamza, depicts a man who is teaching children how to die for a cause.

A few moments later, the attack on the housing compound takes place and the film establishes the enigma (the catalyst which will propel the narrative forward). As already mentioned, Agent Fran's phone call links the two stories together, establishes the link

[106] Al-bab.com. 1999. "Abu Hamza and the Supporters of Shariah" http://www.al-bab.com/yemen/hamza/hamza1.htm, accessed 2009-08-24.

between the hero and the villain and serves to catapult the protagonist into the narrative. It is clear that the two men know each other; the script confirms this when Agent Fleury tells his son that he was talking to Uncle Fran[107], Kevin says "Uncle Fran? What happened?".

The *false solution* that opens up a completely new set of problems[108] is the climax of the first Act. This happens when Agent Fleury is able to bribe Prince Thamer in order to get into Saudi Arabia immediately[109]. He threatens the Prince:

> This goes one of two ways. First: The FBI with the White House go on the kind of aggressive PR 'Saudi Royal Family Decaying Monarchy' bender that just can't help but hurt. Really hurt. And I don't care how many Chinese are lined up to buy the oil. You know it's gonna hurt … two wives donating ten million to three Arab-American cultural centres in Boston. Then what gets kind of not funny is how some of that cash found its way to Jakarta and some Mosques that have these training camps built right next to them. It's kinda funny … you got little kids playing over here, and some not so little kids playing with guns over here. That's kinda odd.

Fleury's confrontation clearly defies American Diplomatic circles, this is evident when he asks the Prince to have the meeting in his car because[110] "too many people [inside the hotel] know both you and me". Fleury bribes the Saudi Prince by threatening to expose certain questionable training camps if he does not get immediate access into Saudi Arabia. Although this bribe allows the protagonist and his team entry into the country, it is the beginning of many more problems. Firstly, on their return, the group will have to deal with the manner in which they treated the Prince without the consent of the

[107] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:10:05
[108] Dancyger, K & Rush, J. 2002. *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules*. Boston, Oxford, Johannesburg, Melbourne, New Delhi: Focal Press, pg 24.
[109] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:21:27
[110] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:22:00

American government and secondly, once they arrive in Saudi Arabia, the group learns that the Saudi authorities will only allow the group to observe and not participate in the investigation. This is frustrating because they can see that the Saudi National Guard is not familiar with forensic investigations. By the end of the first Act, two key points are established: *the point of no return*,[111] Fleury has to return to the USA with some answers to accommodate his behaviour towards the Saudi Royal family and his dismissal of FBI Instructions; and the *false solution*,[112] because the team thinks that once they arrive in Saudi Arabia, they will be involved in the investigation and solve the crime.

Agent Mayes, a female character, also functions to inform the audience about the current situation in Saudi Arabia and acts as a buffer for the audience in the same way as the Tatiana functioned in *Hotel Rwanda.* During the initial briefing with the Attorney General Gideon Young[113], Agent Mayes comments,

> Al Qaeda lost the first phase of this war, so a new, zero-sum phase has begun: if you won't join us, we'll let loose the truly talented Murderers … Abu Hamza. He will kill so many of you that the resulting humiliation of the Saudi Royal Family will cause an exodus, a rebellion, both. Because the Royal Family simply cannot protect you or yours any longer.

The sequence functions to inform the audience about the historical background as well as to expose the villain – Abu Hamza. Through her testimony, the audience is aware that this is a very dangerous and calculating man who needs to be stopped. The film then moves into the second Act, which focuses on *moving ahead of character*, *act of*

[111] Dancyger, K & Rush, J. 2002. *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules*. Boston, Oxford, Johannesburg, Melbourne, New Delhi: Focal Press, pg 24.
[112] Ibid
[113] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:17:40

consequence and *character assertion* in order to keep the story interesting[114]. Once again, the audience is ahead of the characters in that the audience has already witnessed the Saudi National Guard in the interrogation sequence[115] and through the meta-narrative, knows in advance how the National Guard will treat the Americans.

The *act of consequence* occurs towards the climax of the second Act. The authorities allow the group access onto the roof of the high rise they believe was the place where the video of the massacre was shot[116]. One should note that the Saudi investigators, who initially did not think this point of access to the massacre was important, did not pick up this vital information. By allowing the Americans the knowledge to find this crucial part of the investigation, the script aligns the audience with the main characters, thereby, distancing the audience from the Arab soldiers/investigators. This positioning continues when the head of the investigation, General Abdul Malik, allows the Americans only five minutes on the rooftop.

Miraculously, the group only need five minutes to find the information they need to move forward with the investigation. Fleury looks into a video camera, studying the housing compound comparing the images on his camera with what he saw posted on the internet. General Al-Ghazi and Fleury start working together, Al-Ghazi pointing out that the culprit must be Saudi otherwise someone would have spoken and that the rooftop was the cell's planning point. Fleury hands Al-Ghazi the military detonator that was found in the

[114] Seger, L. 1994. *Making a Good Script Great. Second Edition*. New York, London & Toronto: Samuel French, pg 28.
[115] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:14:05
[116] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:46:18

first Act, this is the bait that Fleury knows he can use to get permission to investigate more actively. As they head towards the palace, the audience starts to bond with Al-Ghazi as his attitude changes towards the Americans. As the characters become more assertive and the audience is in harmony with the character[117], the script moves towards the climax of the second Act.

This occurs at the dinner with Prince Bin Khalid[118]. Engaging in small talk, the Prince comments "what have you seen so far of our Kingdom?". Fleury replies,

> I've seen that the man who planned the worst crime in your Kingdom's history is without a doubt Saudi … and that if you walk 300 metres from the compound, you will find a rooftop where the attacks were planned. I've seen that the person in this room 'born with it' is right there … (points at a wide-eyed Al-Ghazi) Everything I just said came from Colonel Al-Ghazi: his observations of the scene while he was protecting us. And I think you're absolutely right Sir: that kind of instinct can't be taught … I'm not saying America is perfect, but we're good at this. You want the murder to stop as much as I do. Let us help.

This is the *act of consequence*[119], the turning point of the second Act. Because of this exchange, the Americans now have full authority to move forward and lead the investigation. In *The Kingdom*, the audience does not feel as emotionally exhausted as they may have at the end of the second Act of *Hotel Rwanda*. Here, after two Acts of no way forward, the audience is finally in-sync with the characters, all have a glimpse of hope and the momentum to move forward and find the answers. This revived atmosphere sets the tone for the third Act.

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[117] Dancyger, K & Rush, J. 2002. *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules*. Boston, Oxford, Johannesburg, Melbourne, New Delhi: Focal Press, pg 25.
[118] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:55:50
[119] Dancyger, K & Rush, J. 2002. *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules*. Boston, Oxford, Johannesburg, Melbourne, New Delhi: Focal Press, pg 25.

According to Dancyger and Rush[120], *recognition* and *restoration* characterises Act three. Agent Fleury recognises his failure thus far but rises above this internal tension as the four agents move forward. *The Kingdom* is unique in the sense that there are two narratives around the same resolution. The first occurs when the Fleury and Al-Ghazi find Muaath Hazmi, the person who stole the ambulance[121]. Once Fleury and Al-Ghazi destroy the cell, Prince Bin Khaled arrives. Although the diplomats assume that the group have solved the crime, Fleury and Al-Ghazi both know that they have not found the planners of the attack. Al-Ghazi frantically examines the hands of the victims, in order to find a hand with any fingers missing. We know this from the previous scene[122] when the bomb expert, Talal tells Al-Ghazi and Fleury that they will recognise Abu Hamza by handshakes because "Every Amir at some point gets bitten by his work", implying that he will have a finger missing from making homemade bombs. When they destroy the cell who stole the ambulance[123], Fleury and Al-Ghazi see that there is no one with fingers missing. Fleury comments "There's no leader here. These are kids. That's it". Once the team leave for the airport and the terrorists pursue them, the second narrative steps in, which moves towards resolution in the real sense.

As the team are being escorted back to the airport[124], they are shot at by suspects in a Mercedes (the audience has previously witnessed the car being filled with explosives[125] - see "planting" in previous section). After an explosive collision[126], the terrorist cell, once

[120] Ibid, pg 26
[121] Sequence starts at Time Code 01:11:29
[122] Sequence starts at Time Code 01:07:02
[123] Sequence starts at Time Code 01:11:29
[124] Sequence starts at Time Code 01:15:27
[125] Sequence starts at Time Code 01:11:17
[126] Sequence starts at Time Code 01:16:35

again dressed in police uniform, approach the car and capture one of the Americans, Adam Leavitt. The remaining three, get their bearings after their 4x4 Suburban has flipped, barrel rolled and pounded into another vehicle. (Leavitt's capture represents and symbolises all foreigners who have been captured and decapitated on camera since the War in Iraq, thereby associating 'real', historical events with the fiction narrative). Fleury, Mayes, Sykes and Al-Ghazi find a Land Rover and a thrilling car chase pursues as they attempt to get Leavitt back. This pursuit leads them straight to Abu Hamza's headquarters.

Adam Leavitt, face already swollen, bruised and bleeding is pulled into a room and forced on his knees in front of a video camera on a tripod. A man dressed in paramilitary black, face wrapped in his *shumagh* starts to read a speech. Another Officer takes a dirty knife, eleven-inch blade from his waistband and places it near Leavitt's neck. The fear and terrified fury is evident in Leavitt's eyes. Although this scene is purely fictional, it resembles most of the kidnappings and executions by extremists that have occurred in the Middle East since the war in Iraq. The victims in the 'real' world have been foreign engineers, journalists and Westerners who have nationalities from the coalition countries. The film draws on that intertextuality with the 'real' world in order to advocate a 'preferred' reading that the events in the film resemble the actual historical world.

After Fleury and his team recover Leavitt, Mayes hears a child crying[127]. She wants to apologise and hands her a Chupa Chups lollipop, a minor gesture but a crucial element for the plot because when the girl hands her a marble as a token of appreciation, Mayes

[127] Sequence starts at Time Code 01:31:05

recognises the same blue colour she found in the dead bodies at the housing complex (see "planting" device in previous section). This simple gesture leads the group to Abu Hamza, the core of the terrorist cell. He is killed by Al-Ghazi, who himself falls victim to a fanatical teenager and is killed in the crossfire. Fleury and his team have solved the crime and have avenged the attack on the housing compound.

Thus far, this research has examined the syuzhet or plot of each film (see previous section). In order to understand how one analyses the fabula or narrative structure, it is necessary to examine the way fiction narrative has evolved starting from a Structuralist and then moving towards a Post-Structuralist perspective.

FICTION NARRATIVE AND DISCOURSE

The term 'narrative', "involves such processes as creating a scene of action, defining a temporal progression, and dramatizing an observer of events"[128]. In addition, narrative is different to its adversary, *non*-narrative, which may be identified as inventories, diagrams, legal contracts and job descriptions[129]. Narrative and story telling has existed since pre-historic times from the beginning of human history with cave dweller paintings right through to the modern day. The assumption that today we understand pre-historic art through narrative, merely re-inforces that in order to create meaning, we are imposing a trans-historical understanding to a situation. There is no evidence that pre-historic art represents a narrative. We have imposed this interpretation for our own purposes and

[128] Branigan, E. 1992. *Narrative Comprehension and Film*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 192.
[129] Ibid

understanding. This act emphasizes to what extent we have lapsed into storytelling as a medium to penetrate events/circumstances in order to create meaning.

A number of positions have evolved regarding narrative theory, from a Structuralist (Barthes[130], de Saussure[131], Levi-Strauss[132] and Metz[133]), right through to a Post-Structuralist position which demanded multiple theories rather than a reliance of a total theory principle [psychoanalysis (Lacan[134]), feminism (Mulvey[135]) and deconstruction (Derrida[136])]. Although this research will not examine all of these positions, it is necessary to contextualise the emergence and debate around narrative theory in order to understand how the film medium initiates its readings.

According to Susan Hayward, narrative "involves the recounting of real or fictitious events … [it] refers to the strategies, codes and conventions (including *mise-en-scene* and lighting) employed to organise a story"[137]. Narrative thus involves the strategies as a means of creating a believable world that will be viewed by an audience. In mainstream Hollywood, the central character (who is usually male) is the prime motivator of the narrative[138].

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[130] Barthes, R. 1957. *Mythologies*. Paris: Editions du Seuil (Also available in English translation: Lavers, A. 1989. London: Paladin).
[131] De Saussure, F. 1974. *Course in General Linguistics*. Glasgow: Fontana.
[132] Levi-Strauss. 1968. *Structural Anthropology*. London: Allen Lane.
[133] Metz, C. 1974. *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema (Translated by M. Taylor)*. New York: University of Oxford Press.
[134] Lacan, J. 1977. *A Selection (translation A. Sheridan)*. London: Tavistock Publications.
[135] Mulvey, L. 1975. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" in *Screen*, Vol 16 (3). Reprinted in Mulvey, L. 1989. *Visual and Other Pleasures*. London: Macmillan.
[136] Derrida, J. 1992. *Acts of Literature*. London, Routledge.
[137] Hayward, S. 1996. *Key Concepts in Cinema Studies*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 249.
[138] Ibid

Structuralism

Narrative theory first became an area of theoretical debate with Vladimir Propp[139] (1920s) who focused on fairy tales, and then by Levi-Straus[140] (1950s) who discussed folk narratives and how these systems could be applied to film narrative (see Metz[141]). Thereafter, Structuralist narratology sought for a common structure amongst the diversity of narratives[142] and thus encouraged an establishment of minimal units and laws governing the selection and combination to produce meaning[143]. The Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure[144] initiated the notion of Structuralism although his work stemmed from the earlier writings of the American philosopher C S Pierce. Other prominent writers who fall under the Structuralist debate include Claude Levi-Strauss (anthropology), Louis Althusser (Marxist theory), Jacques Lacan (psychoanalysis) and Michel Foucault (theories of power, discourse and knowledge)[145]. According to Hayward, de Saussure's writings on Semiotics (as opposed to Pierce) have had a greater impact on film theory since Roland Barthes drew attention to de Saussure's ideas in the late 1950s[146], in his book *Mythologies*[147].

De Saussurean linguistics formed part of a general shift away from Nineteenth Century fixation with the temporal and the historical as was evident with "Hegel's historical

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[139] Propp, V. 1973. *The Morphology of the Fairytale*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
[140] Levi-Strauss, C. 1968. *Structural Anthropology*. London: Allen Lane.
[141] Metz, C. 1974. *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema (Translated by M. Taylor)*. New York: University of Oxford Press
[142] Lapsley, R & Westlake, M. 1988. *Film Theory: An Introduction*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pg 129.
[143] Ibid
[144] See de Saussure, F. 1974. *Course in General Linguistics*. London: Fontana.
[145] See Sturrock, J (ed.) 1979. *Structuralism and Since*. Oxford: Opus.
[146] Hayward, S. 1996. *Key Concepts in Cinema Studies*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 308.
[147] Barthes, R. 1957. *Mythologies*. Paris: Editions du Seuil (also available in English translation: Lavers, A. 1989. London: Paladin).

dialectic, Marx's dialectical materialism and Darwin's evolution of the species to the contemporary concern with the spatial, the systematic and the structural"[148]. The focus was the shift in emphasis from a historical approach to a structural emphasis on language as a functional system (see Belsey[149], Coward and Ellis[150]). Although de Saussure focused on linguistics, two key elements filtered into cultural studies, firstly the division of language into *langue* and *parole*. *Langue* refers to the system of language: the rules and conventions that organise it or the universal structures of language[151], whereas *Parole* refers to the individual utterance[152] or the manifestation of the structures of language in different cultures[153]. The second basic concern that derived from de Saussure's writings was the view that "meaning is always the result of an interplay of relationships of opposition and combination made possible by the underlying structure"[154]. One needs the tools of language to access or experience an event, which becomes culturally specific within different cultures. For example, the Eskimos have approximately fifty different words for the term "snow", because the term has great significance within their physical and social worlds[155].

De Saussure argues that language consists of signs which can be divided into two components, the signifier and the signified, and the relationship between the two is arbitrary, therefore implying that there is no correlation between the word (the signifier)

[148] Stam, R. 2000. *Film Theory: An Introduction*. UK: Blackwell Publishing, pg 105.
[149] Belsey, C. 1980. *Critical Practice*. New York and London: Methuen.
[150] Coward, R & Ellis, J. 1977. *Language and Materialism*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
[151] Hayward, S. 1996. *Key Concepts in Cinema Studies*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 308.
[152] Storey, J (ed.) 1994. *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader*. New York, London & Toronto: Harvester Wheatsheaf, pg 101.
[153] Hayward, S. 1996. *Key Concepts in Cinema Studies*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 308.
[154] Storey, J (ed.) 1994. *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader*. New York, London & Toronto: Harvester Wheatsheaf, pg 101.
[155] Turner, G. 1991. *Film as Social Practice*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 43.

and the object that is being selected (the signified)[156]. The convention of language within communities permits one mentally to associate the correct signified to a specific signifier. For example, the word 'house' or 'home' will articulate very different images in North/South America, Africa, Asia or Iceland. It is the cultural understanding amongst a specific community that will advocate the correct image or historical referent to the word 'house' or 'home'. According to John Storey's interpretation of de Saussure, "language does not reflect an already existing reality. On the contrary, language constructs and organises our sense of reality"[157]. Barthes[158] develops this into what he identifies as "myth" which functions in the second order of signification, where the sign (signifier and signified) or denotation in the first order of signification, becomes the signifier in the second order of signification. Here, the secondary signifier is combined with the signified or connotation: "all the associative and evaluative meanings attributed to the sign either by the culture or the person involved in using it"[159]. At this second order, signs operate as connotative agents and as myth-makers, namely, where the first order meets the values and discourses of culture[160]. Language, therefore, does not acquire meaning by referring to things, it does not reflect reality but in contrast, language functions as a signifying system that mediates reality, which communicates an ideological function,[161] and according to Roland Barthes, this ideological function is associated with myth.

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[156] Hayward, S. 1996. *Key Concepts in Cinema Studies*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 308.
[157] Storey, J (ed.) 1994. *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader*. New York, London & Toronto: Harvester Wheatsheaf, pg 102.
[158] Ibid
[159] Ibid, pg 311
[160] Ibid
[161] Hayward, S. 1996. *Key Concepts in Cinema Studies*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 309.

Roland Barthes' *Mythologies* relates Semiology (the Structuralist study of the sign) to popular culture[162]. In his chapter "Myth Today", Barthes argues, "myth' is a system of communication, a message and a mode of signification, namely a form[163] which is limited to the historical world, its conditions of use, and the specific society[164]. What this essentially implies is that the notion of signs and how they read are specific to a society, its political and historical ideologies. The outcome shows firstly, that texts produce meaning through procedures that are historically and culturally specific and secondly, that these procedures and structures are ideologically constructed[165] and naturalise meanings.

Barthes discusses the use of signs operating within the myth of a greater sign system in his deconstruction of the cover of the French magazine *Paris Match*. The cover consists of a young black soldier in a French uniform giving a military salute to the French flag. Barthes analyses this image using Semiotics, "there is the signifier, itself already formed with a previous system (a black soldier is giving a French salute); there is the signified (with a purposeful mixture of Frenchness and militariness); finally there is the presence of the signified through the signifier"[166]. The signifier in myth "can be looked at from two points of view: as the final term of the linguistic system, or as the first term of the mythical system"[167]. Thus within the first system (the language plane) the final term for

[162] Storey, J (ed.) 1994. *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader*. New York, London & Toronto: Harvester Wheatsheaf, pg 102.
[163] Ibid, pg 107
[164] Ibid
[165] Lapsley, R & Westlake, M. 1988. *Film Theory: An Introduction*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pg 130.
[166] Barthes, R. 1957. *Mythologies*. Paris: Editions du Seuil (also available in English translation: Lavers, A. 1989. London: Paladin), pg 125.
[167] Ibid, pg 126

the signifier is identified as 'meaning' (a black man is giving a French salute). Within the second system (the mythical plane), the final term is described for the signifier as concept, "since no ambiguity is possible"[168]. The signification, however, exists as a correlation of the first two: "in the linguistic system, it is the sign, but one cannot use this term without ambiguity, since in myth, the signifier is already formed by the signs of language"[169]. Barthes' interpretation is as follows "I see very well what it signifies to me: that France is a great Empire, that all her sons, without colour discrimination, serve faithfully under her flag and that there is no better answer to the detractors of an alleged colonialism than the zeal of this young black in serving his so called aggressors"[170]. This analysis demonstrates how signs operate and initiate a specific reading within an image system.

Hotel Rwanda epitomises Barthes position in its representation of the people of Rwanda. The film draws awareness to how the world failed to report the massive genocide that occurred in Rwanda in a world of instant history and global communication. Although the film is critical of the West, the film simply slides back into representing Africa in the same stereotypical, mythical fashion as is constantly re-instated by mainstream perceptions. This is evident through the representation of the West, via the ICRC (International Community of the Red Cross) and the United Nations (UN) throughout the film. In the move towards resolution, the audience sees Madam Archer, the ICRC nurse, running across the refugee camp in a wide shot[171]. The camera zooms in on her as she

[168] Ibid
[169] Ibid
[170] Culler, J. 1983. *Barthes*. Great Britain: Fontana, pg 38.
[171] Sequence starts at Time Code 01:48:36

tries to get Paul's attention by knocking on the windows of the Red Cross buses. Her function within the narrative is that she has found the lost twins and is able to re-unite the family. The first order of signification symbolises a woman who is trying to get someone's attention. The second order of signification includes the signs of the ICRC, the buses and the mass of refugees. These are typically Western symbols, which represent peace and order. According to Barthes, these symbols function as connotative agents and mythmakers - Africa and the people of Rwanda are not the ones who resolve the crisis but it is the West who restores equilibrium. This functions on an ideological level because it merely re-instates the Western perception of Africa as the dark and chaotic continent. It is necessary to make use of this example at this point in order to discuss Barthes' position that the signification process ideologically constructs and naturalises meanings. I have mentioned the theme and concept of creating an 'other' merely to demonstrate Barthes signification process. Chapter 4 will focus specifically on how the films create an 'other' with reference to the representation of Africa and the Middle East.

Barthes' analysis can be used to show how the media represents The Middle East as an unidentified fundamental 'other' in *The Kingdom*. His interpretation of how the *Paris Match* cover functions ideologically demonstrates how myth functions in any sign system. For example, one can analyse *The Kingdom's* use of myth in its representation of the Arabs during the interrogation sequence after the attack on the Western housing complex[172]. Two Saudi men in military uniform are beating Sergeant Haytham[173]. A

[172] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:14:05
[173] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:14:05

silent tear rolls down his cheek, his left ear starts bleeding as a soldier strikes him. General Abdul Malik who is in charge of the interrogation does not appear sadistic, but more determined to get the truth from Sergeant Haytham by any means necessary. Colonel Al-Ghazi is present, clearly concerned by the General's method of interrogation. The distinction between sadist and truth finder blur as the General questions the Sergeant who attempts to explain his reason for having extra uniforms: "I sweat. I'll say it again because it is true. I need more uniforms because I must change during shifts ... Look at my shirts". Finally, Colonel Al-Ghazi[174] intervenes by bringing in the clean sweat-stained uniforms. He says "It's finished" thereby establishing that Sergeant Haytham is in fact innocent and the interrogation is over. General Malik does not apologise or show remorse. This scene presents the Arabs as militant and aggressive, with the exception of Colonel Al-Ghazi, who functions as the Arab hero in the narrative. In order for the audience to identify and empathise with Al-Ghazi, the script presents him as a positive character in this scene that stands up to the General and proves Haytham's innocence.

In order to understand how myth functions within this interrogation scene, one needs to examine the first and second order of signification. With reference to Barthes and the first order of signification, this scene reads that an army General is determined to obtain information regarding a mass murder. Within the second order of signification, one identifies the army General as a brutal man, who will use extremely violent means to obtain information with no compassion or remorse for his actions. This position is confirmed[175] when Prince Bin Khaled states "General Abdul Malik, Chief of

[174] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:15:07
[175] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:25:23

Investigative Services for the National Guard has been put in charge of solving this crime". Colonel Al-Ghazi tells the Prince,

> I know the General. I attended his interrogation of one of my men. The General does not have investigative experience.

The Prince does not accept Al-Ghazi's opinion and comments,

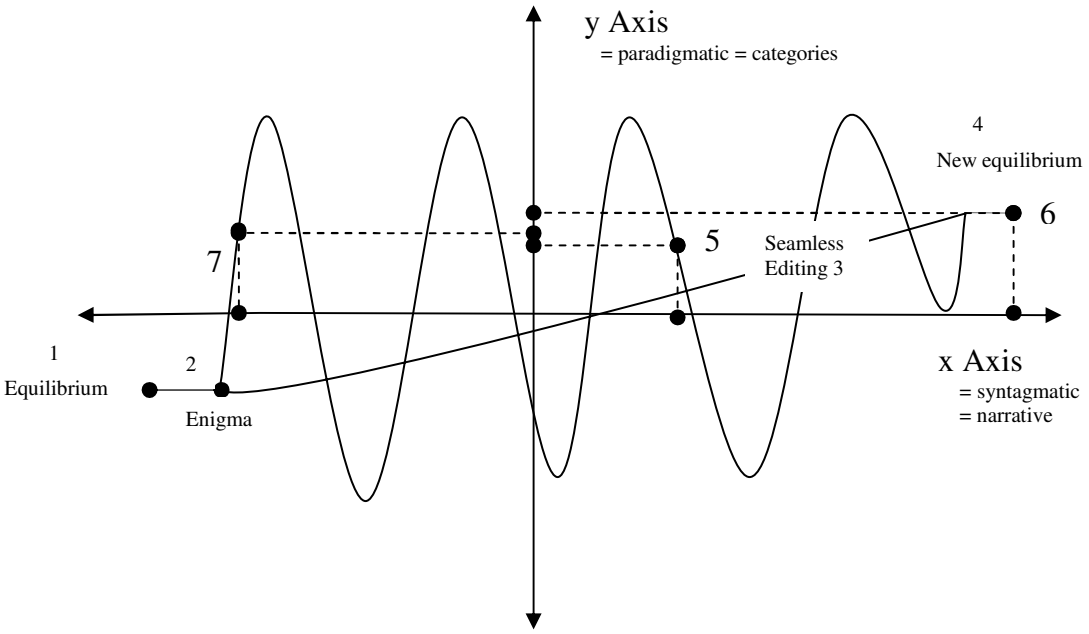
> The Attackers wore YOUR uniform. Police Uniforms. Some of your men may have been involved with this Cell, may still be involved. You're lucky to have a role at all.

From the audience's point of view, the General has been presented as extreme and the fact that this uncompromising man is in charge of the investigation, further distances the audience from the Arabs because there is no evidence in the film that the army General is ever apprehended for his actions. The message of the signs within the narrative simply re-instates the hostile environment of the Arab world.

In order to understand fully how images function within a sign system, one has to examine Semiotics in relation de Saussures' horizontal and vertical axes because one can only read signs in film through the narrative structure. De Saussure[176] developed two axes (*fig* 2), which are positioned at right angles to each other; y, the paradigmatic or vertical axis, represents the units or categories of a story and x, represents the syntagmatic or horizontal axis and combines the units or categories to create a signifying whole, such as a narrative.

[176] O'Sullivan, T, Hartley, J et al. 1992. *Key Concepts in Communication*. London and New York: Routledge.

Figure 2: Paradigmatic and syntagmatic Axis



If one builds on *figure 1*, the narrative still exists according to the Classical Hollywood formula (as shown in *fig 2*, by points 1,2,3,4 on page 55). The wave line still represents the actual story which has high points and low points in terms of emotion. One can understand the Classical Hollywood formula on a more complex level, if one superimposes *fig 1* onto de Saussure's position towards narrative. According to de Saussure, at any point in the narrative (5), there is a direct reference to both the syntagmatic axis (x) and paradigmatic axis (y). What this implies is that, at (5), for example, in the narrative, there is a direct link to the codes and conventions which govern narrative theory on the syntagmatic, x-axis as well as a direct link to the codes and conventions which govern the paradigmatic, y-axis (such as genres and semiotic strategies). In other words, at any point in a narrative (5), the image will have a specific function in terms of editing and in terms of its position in the story. This forms part of

the x-axis. In addition, each of these points relate to greater strategies with reference to the codes and styles dictated by the genre and by the principles of semiotics. When one reads a text from this angle, one is understanding it from the perspective of the y-axis. One has to note that when one reads a film/narrative, one approaches it from both the x and y perspective.

Paradigmatic and Syntagmatic Axes of *Hotel Rwanda* and *The Kingdom*

In the final sequence of the film *Hotel Rwanda* (6), the paradigmatic axis consists of the individual images, namely, the buses, the refugees, the ICRC symbols but when the narrative combines these symbols in a sequence, they function within narrative, namely the syntagmatic axis and create meaning (because the narrative combines the random units so as to communicate a specific reading). Similarly, in *The Kingdom*, during the interrogation sequence (7), the paradigmatic axis consists of the beating of Sergeant Haytham, his hands bleeding from the handcuffs, the silent tear falling down his face against the persistence of General Malik. These signs combine to form the central message that emerges through the narrative (syntagmatic axis), namely, even the upholders of the law in Saudi Arabia are extremists.

Christian Metz[177] was one of the first film theorists to explore the relationship of the cinematic sign to the linguistic sign. Metz[178] utilises the vocabulary from de Saussure's key linguistic concepts (diegesis, paradigm, syntagm) to comprehend the messages within

[177] Dudley Andrew, J. 1976. *The Major Film Theories: An Introduction*. Oxford, London, Glasgow: Oxford Unversity Press, pg 212-216.
[178] Mast, G, H & Cohen, J (ed.) 1985. *Film Theory and Criticism (3rd edition).* Oxford: Oxford University Press, pg 170-172.

a film narrative. Metz[179] draws a distinction between film (individual film text) and cinema (an ideal ensemble, the totality of films and their traits). His early work concludes that film is a language as opposed to a language system with a set of messages whose form of expression consists of five tracks or channels; moving image, recorded sound, recorded noises, recorded music and writing (credits, intertitles and written materials in the shot)[180]. Metz[181] focuses on these arbitrary units (paradigms) and discusses how they initiate meanings within narrative (syntagms). His conclusion is based on the notion that "if film has its own sign system, it can only result from its having unique signifiers whose combinations generate meaningful utterances"[182]. Structuralism focuses primarily on the text and the theory of its structure, this position initiates the debate around the fact that all significations are a product of culture, convention and work[183]. If this is so, then on "what grounds are units exclusively interrelated to each other if they can actually be related to other units that were excluded from the system?"[184]. This position caused radical debate concerning factors outside of structure and language, such as the spectator relations, class position and race debates that could affect the reading of a text.

The presumptions and philosophical positions regarding Structuralism were deconstructed in the 1960s with the eventual emergence of the term Post-Structuralism in

[179] Stam, R. 2000. *Film Theory: An Introduction*. UK: Blackwell Publishing, pg 110.
[180] Ibid
[181] Ben-Shaul. 2007. *Film: The Key Concepts*. Oxford and New York: Berg, pg 35.
[182] Ibid
[183] Dudley Andrew, J. 1976. *The Major Film Theories: An Introduction*. Oxford, London, Glasgow: Oxford Unversity Press, pg 233.
[184] Ben-Shaul. 2007. *Film: The Key Concepts*. Oxford and New York: Berg, pg 53.

the 1980s[185]. The Post-Structural revolution in cultural theory (was similar in its logic to the shift from Modernist to the postmodernist position in cultural production), moved away from looking at texts as closed autonomous structures to a more open exchange with spectators and authors[186]. The new position encouraged a shift away from the study of film in itself to the study of the interaction of film with spectators[187] (see Foucault[188], Kristeva[189]). Post-Structuralism is concerned with external structures such as class, gender and social processes that contribute to the reading of a text. Post-Structuralism "shifted its focus from text to reader, but this should not be taken as a radical break – Post-Structuralism is implicit in Structuralism itself"[190]. This combined point of view is interesting because it engages in a more complex debate regarding narrative, representation and genre.

Gerard Genette[191] has been influential because he creates a distinction amongst narrative, diegesis and narrating. Narrative, refers to the undertaking of an event, thus it would refer to film functioning as a narrative statement[192]. Secondly, diegesis refers to the succession of events, fictional space and time dimensions created by the narrative as well as other elements such as character development and *mise-en-scene*[193]. Finally, narrating

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[185] Ibid
[186] Ibid
[187] Ibid, pg 66
[188] See Foucault, M. 1984. "Truth and Power" in Rabinow, P (ed.) *The Foucault Reader*. New York: Pantheon Books.
[189] Kristeva, J. 1980. *Desire in Language*. New York: Columbia University Press.
[190] O'Sullivan, T, Hartley, J et al. 1992. *Key Concepts in Communication*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 227.
[191] Genette, G. 1980. *Narrative Discourse*. Oxford: Blackwell.
[192] Hayward, S. 1996. *Key Concepts in Cinema Studies*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 250.
[193] Mast, G, H & Cohen, J (ed.) 1985. *Film Theory and Criticism (3rd edition).* Oxford: Oxford University Press, pg 168.

refers to the act of enunciating and draws on spectator-text relations[194]. Through Genette, it becomes evident that the narrative text functions on numerous levels as to how the fictional world portrayed in the narrative comments on audience/spectator relations and ultimately makes statements about the historical world. This raises questions when the fictional narrative relates to actual, historical events because there are political implications with reference to how a narrative portrays conflicting groups. The discussion becomes even more complex when the issues relate to conflict or war because the fiction text that is based on factual events **assumes** the reading that it is a true representation. This is evident in the opening sequence of *Hotel Rwanda,* by relating to the actual events, the film conveys the message that it depicts the events as they actually occurred, thereby, claiming a perception on the war and on who is to blame.

Hotel Rwanda starts with a distant background buzzing, hissing sound of a radio dial trying to tune into a station[195]. This is followed by the comment over the Lions Gate film Logo, "… the ceasefire came too late to save these villages …" The screen then fades to a black screen with the same buzzing and hissing over the United Artists logo. This is followed with the voice-over "President Clinton commented on the deteriorating situation in Sarajevo …" the logo then fades to a black screen with the buzzing and hissing fading as George Rutaganda's voice fades up:

> When people ask me, good listeners, why do I hate all the Tutsi, I say 'Read our history'. The Tutsi were collaborators for the Belgian colonists, they stole our Hutu land, they whipped us. Now they have come back, these Tutsi rebels. They are cockroaches. They are murderers. Rwanda is our Hutu land. We are the majority. They are a minority of traitors and invaders. We will squash the

[194] Hayward, S. 1996. *Key Concepts in Cinema Studies*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 250.
[195] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:00:08

> infestation. We will wipe out the RPF rebels. This is RTLM, Hutu power radio. Stay alert. Watch your neighbours.

The camera then fades from the black screen to an external close-up shot of a basket and bicycle on the floor. A man picks it up as the camera zooms out of the shot to show a crowded street, with a white van weaving its way through the crowd. The image has the title "Kigali, 1994" as the beginning of the soft beats of the opening soundtrack begins.

Historically, the Hutu radio station, RTLM (*Radio Télévision Libre des Milles Collines*) was responsible for distributing hate messages before the genocide[196]. The film starts with this message in order to contextualise the event historically (namely, that this event was happening at the same time as the Bosnian war) but it also serves as an authentic representation because it draws on historical events to claim its historicity. This first message also informs its audience that these types of hate messages were brewing, before the narrative begins. The opening sequence is also important because it re-instates the claim that the events within the film are based on fact. Although this occurs via the soundtrack, its position within the narrative is very specific in terms of Genette's distinction of narrative. Firstly, narrative[197] refers to the fact that this film claims to be truthful as it is based on real events. Diegesis, according to Genette[198], refers to the succession of events, which in this case draws on the historic locality of the hate messages. Finally, narrating draws on spectator-text relations[199] and in this case, it ideologically positions the audience into believing that the Hutus were responsible in

[196] See Mironko, C. "The Effect of RTLM's Rhetoric of Ethnic Hatred in Rural Rwanda" http://www.idrc.ca/fr/ev-108192-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html, accessed 2009-06-19.
[197] Genette, G. 1980. *Narrative Discourse*. Oxford: Blackwell.
[198] Ibid
[199] Ibid

distributing hate messages. Although the radio medium was one of the main instruments to broadcast the hate messages, the film does not bring the socio-political history of the affects of Colonialism into the complexity and roots of the hate messages. In this opening sequence (when the narrative functions to capture its audience), the film makes a clear statement without establishing the heart of the problem. When a film, like *Hotel Rwanda* lays a claim to the truth, complexities arise because on the one hand, the film draws on historic events, but on the other hand, the confinements of the fiction narrative traps the events presented within the film. The audience is not watching a chronological re-telling of the events but in contrast, the historical events are enmeshed within the codes and conventions dictated by the fiction narrative structure.

As in *Hotel Rwanda*, *The Kingdom* also starts with factual background information. *The Kingdom*, however, communicates the events via a sophisticated animated graphic sequence[200]. The film also starts with the audio track, this time of a distinct drumbeat over a black screen that fades into the Universal and Relativity Media logos. The screen then fades to white and sand dunes fade up as the camera pans quickly from left to right. This movement symbolises the timeline of the history of Saudi Arabia.

The film begins with the establishment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by Abdul-Aziz bin Saud in 1932, with the chance discovery of oil in 1933 and the establishment of the first American-Islamic corporation, Aramco in 1938. The timeline then fades to stock footage of the first Western housing compound (the script "plants" this information in order to understand its existence in the film). The images then dissolve back to the

[200] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:00:18

timeline intercut with images of: John F Kennedy; the Arab-Israeli war; and how the 1973 oil embargo resulted in oil becoming a concern of American National Security. The timeline brings in Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait and explains that Osama Bin Laden volunteered to remove Saddam from Kuwait, with the titles[201] "… but the Saudis opted for the 500 million troops from the USA". According to the film, this incident caused Bin Laden to denounce both the US and the Saudi Royal family. The timeline fast-tracks forward – "1990s Terrorist attacks increase" with images of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre, Nairobi, Kenya and *USS Cole*. This fades into a graph depicting Saudi Arabia as the No. 1 oil producer of the world and the USA as the No. 1 oil consumer of the world. The camera zooms out and pans across, mimicking an aeroplane as the graphic becomes the World Trade Centre and the camera (from the point of view of an aeroplane) moves towards the World Trade Centre. As the aeroplane is about to hit, fade up onto black, fade to a birds eye view of Manhattan, sirens and smoke rising up. The following two comments fade up:

> When we learnt that 15 out of the 19 hijackers were Saudi, the Saudi Monarchy immediately condemned the attacks … The FBI are called in whenever US citizens are attacked abroad.

Fade to black and the opening sequence of the images of the housing complex through binoculars face up.

This quick animated sequence is the core message of the film. By introducing the film with the historical background, accompanied with factual footage, this film is removed from the realm of fiction and placed somewhere between fact and fiction. The

[201] Sequence starts at 00:02:10

'preferred' reading is evident that even though this film is fiction, its roots stem from events that have occurred and possibly will occur in the 'real' world. This is the point where the fiction film blurs with events from the historical world and encourages the audience to read the messages of this film as the 'truth'.

Referring back to Gerard Genette[202], this opening sequence demonstrates how the narrative text functions in making statements about the historical world. Through watching the sequence, the narrative presents the audience with a very specific perception concerning the history of Saudi Arabia, a position that sets the tone and perspective for the rest of the film.

The historical animated title sequence is also important because it functions on two levels: firstly, it provides the historical framework of the reasoning behind the narrative. Secondly, by linking the film to the 'real' world, it positions the narrative closer to non-fiction. With reference to Semiotics, this initial sequence communicates signs that imply that the events within the film link to the historical introduction. The fact that the ongoing War on Terror and the Middle East crisis is such a continuous story within current affairs allows this film to act as a representation and comment on terrorism, suicide bombers and fundamentalists. The audience is so familiar with these terms from the mass media that the film becomes representative of those very ideas. The fiction film and the 'real' world merge; this is dangerous because the film then functions ideologically to perpetuate the necessity for the War on Terror. The evidence from the fiction merely re-instates the myths of the Middle East and the type of fundamentalism

[202] Genette, G. 1980. *Narrative Discourse*. Oxford: Blackwell.

that is emerging from the region. However, it is important to note that the film does not represent all the Arabs as extreme, for example, the narrative depicts General Al-Ghazi as a positive force who is not involved in the underground terrorist activities. Al-Ghazi, however, does not survive[203]. The message here, Al-Ghazi empathises with the 'other' and the subtext implies that one cannot befriend Americans and survive in the Arab world.

Although conflicts are very complex, in order to understand their politics and their appeal for mass audiences (as Hollywood films target), the fiction film often resorts to simplified versions within the narrative, the representation becomes an almost mathematical equation - 'a' shot 'b' because of 'c'. Fictional tools such as genre principles and the Classical Hollywood narrative formula[204] where the protagonist has to bring down the villain and restore equilibrium in the 'world' are pertinent and the narrative revolves around a central character as opposed to the 'other'. This position is particularly relevant to the depiction of Africa, as well as other Developing and Periphery states because an example such as *Hotel Rwanda* has an implied truth claim since the events portrayed in the film are based on events that historically did happen. Similarly, the implied reading of *The Kingdom,* although fiction, speaks to any attack involving one or more suicide bombers. This is evident because the image of the damage from the bomb in the fiction film is so similar to the images that were broadcast of the damage to the buildings in the initial 1993 attack on the World Trade Centre and the US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Agent Fleury links the real event of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade

[203] Sequence starts at Time Code 01:32:16
[204] Hayward, S. 1996. *Key Concepts in Cinema Studies*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 45-49.

Centre with the events in the fiction film[205]. Initially, he is not convinced that they have destroyed the cell. He says,

> … This may not be over. These don't feel like anything resembling senior leadership … I'm thinking about New York – February 26, 1993. The first time they tried to hit the Trade Towers.

In this sequence, Fleury implies that 9-11 happened because no one ever caught the masterminds behind the 1993 attack on The World Trade Centre. Through this analogy, Fleury implies that within the fiction, another attack is imminent if they do not catch the perpetrators. The film narrative blurs the fiction with factual events, thereby, implying that the fiction images represent the archival photographs of the attacks on the World Trade Centre, Kenya and Tanzania (depicted in the animated sequence at the beginning of the film[206]). In addition, with reference to Genette, this sequence makes statements about the historical world and positions the spectator quite specifically. This position communicates a very specific message, a term which Bill Nichols identifies as the "voice" of the text.

VOICE

In analysing the film narrative, it is necessary to examine how "voice" and "rhetoric" emerge through the voice of the text as discussed by Nichols[207]. Although Nichols' discussions focus on documentary theory, some of his ideas are relevant to fiction film, especially when those films claim they are based on the 'real' world because they are based on historical events. Documentary theory is relevant because it forms the 'grey

[205] Sequence starts at Time Code 01:13:49
[206] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:00:18
[207] Nichols, B. 1988. "The Voice of Documentary", in Rosenthal, A (ed.) *New Challenges for Documentary*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.

area' between fact and fiction film. *Hotel Rwanda* and *The Kingdom* are both fiction but they both borrow from documentary theory because they examine and comment on events taken from the 'real' world whilst using all the tools from fiction film such as narrative structure, editing, sound and lighting, thus the relevance of looking at essentially documentary concepts.

According to Nichols[208]: "voice is something narrower than style: that which conveys to us a sense of a text's social point of view, of how it is speaking to us and how it is organising the materials it is presenting to us". Thus, by identifying the 'voice' of a text, one discovers the social point of view of the text that functions to re-instate social positions. Nichols' notion of 'voice' also highlights the way in which meaning is created within film because it exposes and draws attention to the central message.

Nichols' position is relevant to *Hotel Rwanda* because it claims to be critical of the West; this is evident[209] when Colonel Oliver says to Paul,

> You're the smartest man here. You have them all eating out of your hand. You'd own this hotel, except for one thing … You're black! You're not even a nigger, you're African! (He downs his drink) They're not staying to stop this thing. They're gonna fly right out of here with their people.

As the film progresses into the third Act, it becomes more obvious that the West has to intervene in order to get the people out of the hotel. This position highlights the voice of the film that Africa is not capable of resolving its own conflicts; it needs the security and help from the Western world (here depicted via the UN soldiers). As already mentioned,

[208] Ibid, pg 48
[209] Sequence starts at Time Code 00:47:22

the film enhances this position through its final title sequence as the buses drive towards Tanzania.

Although *The Kingdom* achieves resolution[210], the closing statements of the two sides, namely, American and Arab: "We'll kill them all" acts on an ideological level. It re-establishes the notion that the War on Terror has not been resolved and in the 'real', historical world, the conflict will continue. This ending merely re-instates the positioning of the film, that the film is very similar to the actual world.

According to Nichols[211], a film may promote its 'voice' directly or indirectly but no matter how a film achieves this; a text will always integrate the "voice" into a specific system of meaning. The text comes to function as a system of signs that may not convey a specific meaning individually, but collectively may contribute to a particular function within the text as a whole[212]. This is evident in the discussion regarding Structuralism, when one analyses the signs and what they convey, one starts entering the message system of a text. One can thus agree that the *mise-en-scene*, the signs, editing and narrative all contribute to the central meaning of the text, but a film constructs meaning at the inner most level of the film, namely its subject matter. *Hotel Rwanda* and *The Kingdom* are interesting because they blatantly state that their subject claims reference to the 'real' or historical.

[210] Sequence starts at Time Code 01:38:51
[211] Nichols, B. 1988. "The Voice of Documentary", in Rosenthal, A (ed.) *New Challenges for Documentary*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, pg 48-52.
[212] Ibid, pg 52

CONCLUSION

Films that are based on actual events are by no means new within the Hollywood system. As ideologies have changed and political opinions have shifted so have the narrative structures altered to accommodate new ideas, such as the adjustment from Structuralism to Post-Structuralism. In addition, films that followed a specific pattern/formula emerged as more successful at the box office. Noël Burch[213] initially identified these characteristics as the "Institutional mode of representation" and they gradually developed into the Classical Hollywood formula. This formula, which follows a linear construction, identifies four specific characteristics: firstly, the central protagonist propels the narrative forward: secondly, the events are organised around the structure of enigma and resolution: thirdly, the events within the narrative follow a sequence of cause and effect: and finally, the film has a strong sense of closure or resolution at the end[214]. These characteristics have dominated films since the 1930s and are still successful to this day. Through a detailed analysis, it is evident that both *Hotel Rwanda* and *The Kingdom* follow this formula and pattern, and are also characterised by the codes and conventions typical to their genres.

According to Graeme Turner[215], 'genre' not only functions as a system which helps producers during the production process, it also informs the audience about what kind of narrative they will watch. This chapter has argued that *Hotel Rwanda* and *The Kingdom* follow the principles of the War Drama and the Detective, Action Drama. Although

[213] Burch, N. 1990. *Life to those Shadows(translation by Ben Brewster)*. USA: California Press.
[214] Cook, P (ed.) 1985. *The Cinema Book*. London: British Film Institute, pg 208-212.
[215] Turner, G. 1998. *Film as Social Practice*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 37.

genre theory has helped structure production, marketing and consumption[216], genres have remained fluid with their format changing according to the social and political environment of the time. *Hotel Rwanda* demonstrates the principles of the War Drama and remains rigid to exposing the horror of war. It does not centre on the combat of war but rather focuses on the emotional human element and the affects thereof. *The Kingdom* functions as a combination of the Detective, Action genre, which according to this research, has emerged from the Classical Western. Each film remains true to its form and the codes which govern its genre and function ideologically in maintaining a predominantly Anglo-American/Western perception of each conflict. Due to the fact that the films attempt to explain events from the historical world, the films fall out of the realm of true fiction and fall into a grey area which fits somewhere between fiction and docu-drama. As a result, one is forced to examine some of the ideas relating to documentary theory. Bill Nichols[217] examines the social messages of documentaries and docu-dramas and identifies the 'preferred' reading as "voice", which refers to a text's social point of view.

In order to understand the "voice" of each film, this chapter has drawn attention to each film according to Aristotle's Three-Act Structure, as it is the basis of most mainstream American screenplays[218]. Both films are character driven, in that it is the central character who moves the narrative towards resolution. The analysis of both films not only presents a detailed outline of the structure of the two films but it also introduces how

[216] Ibid, pg 160
[217] Nichols, B. 1988. "The Voice of Documentary", in Rosenthal, A (ed.) *New Challenges for Documentary*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, pg 48.
[218] Dancyger, K & Rush, J. 2002. *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules*. Boston, Oxford, Johannesburg, Melbourne, New Delhi: Focal Press, pg 18.

the films function in creating their meanings. Each analysis also emphasizes how the representations of conflicts differ when the narratives focus on the Developed states as opposed to those emerging from the Developing and Periphery states. The result is a mode of communication, which airs very specific readings of different cultures. As history, memory and culture incorporate these readings, the positions eventually evolve into stereotypical attitudes towards different groups. For example, the type of imagery used in representing Saudi Arabia communicates notions of extremism and fundamentalism, which is very different to the type of imagery one is witnessing with reference to Africa, which centres on primitivism and corruption.

Each narrative is structured in such a way that it communicates specific messages. The Structuralists lead by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure[219] initiated discussions with reference to how narratives and texts are encoded with signs that promote specific meanings. De Saussure[220] identifies that one understands and associates the correct signified to a specific signifier through the cultural convention of language. Roland Barthes[221] engages in a discussion around how texts produce meaning through procedures that are historically and culturally specific, and how these are ideologically constructed to promote myths[222]. Whilst Christian Metz[223] describes film as a product of culture and utilizes de Saussure's linguistic concepts of diegesis, paradigm and syntagm. The Structuralists sought the meaning of a text primarily through the relationship of codes

[219] Hayward, S. 1996. *Key Concepts in Cinema Studies*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 308.
[220] Ibid
[221] Lapsley, R & Westlake, M. 1988. *Film Theory: An Introduction*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pg 130.
[222] Ibid
[223] Dudley Andrew, J. 1976. *The Major Film Theories: An Introduction*. Oxford, London, Glasgow: Oxford University Press, pg 170-172.

within the text itself. By the 1980s, however, the Post-Structuralists introduced the concept that meaning could not only be sourced through the text on its own but was created at the point where the text, author and spectator converge. This lead to using a pluralism of theories when analysing texts as opposed to a single theory perspective. *Hotel Rwanda* and *The Kingdom* are both complex in how their ideological perspective functions within each text. One, therefore, has to engage in a complex reading of the text, taking into consideration the narrative and how it communicates readings as a result of globalisation and the dominant ideology, minority perspectives and how the films function as cultural artefacts but still claim to provide an understanding of each conflict.

Gerard Genette[224], dissected the difference between narrative (statement of a film), diegesis (the sequence of events) and narrating (draws on spectator-text relations). His argument states that each of these elements combine ideologically to promote a specific reading of a text. Genette's distinction between the three terms functions within both case studies, particularly with reference to how the films construct their representation as either hero or villain through the film statement (narrative), sequence of events (diegesis) and the relationship that results between the spectator and the text (narrating). When analysing *Hotel Rwanda* and *The Kingdom* from this perspective, it becomes evident to what extent an audience can assume they are understanding historical events through the fiction narrative.

Both case studies relate to the 'real' historical world. *Hotel Rwanda* bases its narrative on Paul Rusesabagina, an actual referent and person who survived the genocide. *The*

[224] Genette, G. 1980. Narrative Discourse. Oxford: Blackwell.

Kingdom refers to the 'real' world through its dialogue and its villain Abu Hamza, who is also someone who exists in the historical world and has been involved in terrorist activities. One therefore interprets each film from a very specific point of view, understanding that the events within the fiction pay close resemblance to actual events that have occurred with reference to the actual people Paul Rusasebagina and Abu Hamza.

As is evident, from the focus of this chapter, namely, narrative structure and content, both films integrate the actual events to suit the narrative structure, but in order to understand fully how these work together, one has to look at how one understands and remembers events from the real world. One achieves this interpretation through a combined reading of history, memory and culture.