Half 'n Half: Mytho-Historical and Spatial Entanglements in Charlie Human's *Apocalypse Now Now* and *Kill Baxter*

Olivier Moreillon and Alan Muller

Summary

Since 2011, the genre of South African speculative fiction has seen a significant surfacing of new writers working within the genre. One of them is Charlie Human, the author of *Apocalypse Now Now* (2013) and *Kill Baxter* (2014). Our article analyses Human's two novels in terms of overlapping mythological and historical lineages as well as spatial confluences and their influence on the conception and (re-)definition of South African whiteness. Using Sarah Nuttall's concept of entanglement (a state of being intertwined or engaged with) in connection with Melissa Steyn's observations of South African whiteness and its idiosyncratic position in relation to other postcolonial countries, we illustrate how Human's novels (re-)negotiate South African whiteness by endowing it with a distinctly (Southern) African inflection. By way of conclusion, the paper proposes that speculative fiction gives an easier way to envisage possible solutions to the socio-political complexities at play in present South Africa, which are less difficult to swallow than what realist fiction might be (plausibly) able to offer.

Opsomming

Sedert 2011 het 'n beduidende aantal nuwe skrywers hul verskyning in die genre, Suid-Afrikaanse spekulatiewe fiksie, gemaak. Een van hulle is Charlie Human, die outeur van *Apocalypse Now Now* (2013) en *Kill Baxter* (2014). Ons artikel ontleed Human se twee romans in terme van die oorvleueling van mitologiese en historiese afstamming so wel as die samevloeiing van leefruimtes en hul invloed op die begrip en (her-)definiëring van Suid-Afrikaanse witheid. Met die gebruik van Sarah Nuttall se konsep van verstrengeldheid ('n toestand van vervlegdheid) in samehang met Melissa Steyn se observasies van Suid-Afrikaanse witheid se eienaardigheid met betrekking tot ander postkoloniale lande, illustreer ons hoe Human se romans Suid-Afrikaanse witheid (her-)onderhandel deur dit te stempel met 'n definitiewe (Suider) Afrika infleksie. Ten slotte suggereer die artikel dat spekulatiewe fiksie 'n toeganklike metode is om moontlike oplossings te vind vir die sosio-politieke ingewikkeldhede wat in die huidige Suid-Afrika afspeel. Hierdie metode is meer geloofwaardig as wat realistiese fiksie dalk sal kan bied.

UNISA

Introduction

Since 2011, when Lauren Beukes won the Arthur C. Clarke Award, the genre of speculative fiction has become more popular amongst the South African reading demographic. Following Beukes' success, there has been a significant surfacing of new writers working within the genre. One of them is Charlie Human, author of the Baxter Saga, which so far consists of *Apocalypse Now Now* (2013) and *Kill Baxter* (2014). According to the *Mail & Guardian*, Human is "a standout voice in South African speculative fiction since the release […] of his debut title" (Charlie Human 2014). His works have been translated into several languages (Demir, Moreillon & Muller 2015a) and were also published both in the US and the UK (Zeno Agency). That Terry Tatchell, the Oscar-nominated screenwriter of *District 9* (2009) and *Chappie* (2015), optioned the film rights to *Apocalypse Now* (McNary 2015) further speaks to Human's success.

By way of introduction, it might be prudent to offer readers who are unfamiliar with Human's novels a brief summary of both texts. *Apocalypse Now Now* introduces Baxter and has readers follow him coming to grips with the idea that his grandfather's raving stories about murderous Crows and other mythological creatures are not as farfetched as one might like to believe. His girlfriend's sudden disappearance leads him into Cape Town's magical underworld and to weapon chemist Basson,[1] for whose evil plan Baxter is the missing piece. Their encounter leads to an apocalyptic show down that tests Baxter's moral compass. *Kill Baxter*, on the other hand, picks up from Baxter's expulsion from Westridge High and subsequent transfer to Hexpoort in order to avoid criminal charges being laid against him. Hexpoort is a magical school, much like J.K. Rowling's Hogwarts (*Harry Potter*) – "except with sex, drugs, and much better internet access", as advertised in the blurb. When Hexpoort comes under attack, the students' education is "fast-forwarded" in order for them to become agents for MK6, a kind of agency of gatekeepers who protect the world from evildoers both magical and non-magical. The "Muti Man" is striking terror in Cape Town and MK6 is the city's only hope of survival.

These novels, like much of South Africa's speculative fiction, can be classified (although tentatively) as dystopian. Other texts that come to mind are Lauren Beukes' *Moxyland* (2008), probably the most prominent example, but also Lily Herne's the Mall Rats series, i.e. *Deadlands* (2011), *Death of a Saint* (2012), and *The Army of the Lost* (2013), David Horscroft's *Fletcher* (2014), Andrew Miller's *Dub Steps* (2015), and Fred Strydom's

---

1.   Dr. Kobus Basson, Baxter's psychiatrist who later turns out to be the Mountain Killer and Baxter's great-great-grandfather, here seems to be a reference to Dr. Wouter Basson who was head of Project Coast, a secret chemical and biological weapons programme run by the South African government during the apartheid era (see e.g. Burger & Gould 2002).

The Raft (2015). Michael Titlestad, in a recent article, argues that dystopian literature "stages itself as presenting a sobering rejoinder, if not an outright pessimistic counterpoint, to the story of the transfiguration of [South Africa] from international pariah to moral beacon, now shining its light into the racist recesses of the world" (2015: 31). Titlestad further posits that the predominance (or even singularity) of white writers within the genre of South African dystopian (and/or speculative) fiction can be seen "both as symptomatic of historically constituted political antinomies and as contributions to a public conversation about racialized fear" (31). In view of the genre's racial imbalance, Christopher Thurman considers it "a fair claim that much speculative or future-oriented fiction does indeed foreground, presuppose or underscore (implicitly or explicitly) whiteness" (2015: 60).

Our interest in Human's novels then is two-fold. Firstly, we see the Baxter Saga as levelling a self-critique with regard to narrow definitions of South African whiteness. Such a reading of Human's novels can be seen as a continuation of Thurman's discussion of Henrietta Rose-Innes' "Poison" (2010) and its critique of white apathy and disengagedness in the face of impending catastrophe (2015: 56). Secondly, we read the Baxter Saga as a contribution to a body of narratives that serves as "mediation[s] on the vexed question of how to achieve healing within a fabric of interwoven life-trajectories in post-apartheid South Africa" (West-Pavlov 2015: 42). West-Pavlov considers Eben Venter's *Trecherman* (2008) and David Medalie's *The Shadow Follows* (2006) in accordance with this label. While, for him, the former is a "shrilly hyperbolic nightmare [and] remains largely an exercise in critique", the latter can be seen as a "low-key and nuanced proposal of ways of living on" (2015: 52). Although hyperbolic and (at times) nightmarish, Human's novels propose ways of "living on" in a South Africa with shifting political and racial identities. We argue that, in Human's Baxter Saga, the interwovenness of these "life-trajectories" manifests itself in a series of mythological, historical, and spatial entanglements and that they critically (re-)negotiate South African whiteness by drawing on and implicating both Afrikaner and English microhistories as well as various Western and African mythologies.

In what follows, we examine Charlie Human's Baxter Saga in relation to Sarah Nuttall's notion of entanglement and how he is able to (re-)negotiate South African whiteness in a way that both undermines ideas of hegemonic whiteness and incorporates autochthonous histories and mythologies in order to create identities that are at once fiercely local but also look beyond the borders of South Africa.

Post-Apartheid Social Realities

In comparison to the country's literary output of the 1990s, there has been both a quantitative and qualitative shift in the South African literary scene since 2000 (Chapman 2011). These changes have been accompanied by the emergence of numerous new authors whose work has broadened the understanding of "South Africanness" by addressing formerly tabooed topics such as same-sex relationships or the marginalisation of women (Lenta 2011). Correspondingly, there have been several attempts within literary and cultural studies to theoretically account for the country's increasing social and political complexities as represented in these literary (and other cultural) texts. While Leon De Kock (2001) uses the "seam" as a metaphor to explicate the union of disparate South African subjectivities in South African literature, Mark Sanders (2002) utilises the notion of "complicity" to shed light on modern South African political culture. Isabel Hofmeyr (2004, 2010, 2011) takes recourse to the concept of "transnationalism" in investigating "travelling" texts and shifting subjectivities and Michael Titlestad (2004) uses "jazz" as a metaphor to explain fluidity in the creation of meaning. David Attwell (2005) suggests "transculturation" to account for the multi-directional cultural influences and processes which black South African modernity comprises while Sarah Nuttall (2009) suggests the notion of "entanglement" to account for South Africa's present-day socio-political complexities.

Of these, we identify Nuttall's concept of entanglement as the most suitable to our purposes due to its distinctly spatio-temporal component,[2] which lies at the centre of our intended analysis of Human's Baxter Saga. Nuttall defines entanglement as:

> a condition of being twisted or entwined, involved with; it speaks of an intimacy gained, even if it was resisted, or ignored or uninvited. It is a term which may gesture towards a relationship or a set of social relationships that is complicated, ensnaring, in a tangle, but which also implies a human foldedness.
>
> (2009: 1)

---

2. It should be noted that entanglement, as conceived by Nuttall, seems to have an underlying open conception of space and time that reminds of the theoretical conceptions of these two notions by neo-Marxist social geographers such as Doreen Massey (e.g. 2005), David Harvey (e.g. 1989) and Edward Soja (e.g. 1989). An in-depth discussion of their respective works in relation to Nuttall goes beyond the scope of the present article. However, we would like to highlight that while Nuttall foregrounds the (multi-)temporality of her notion of entanglement, she does not take explicit recourse to theories of space and place. Suffice it to say here that we understand entanglement as a distinctly spatio-temporal concept that sees time and space as inextricably linked.

There are two crucial aspects worth highlighting here: firstly, entanglement has a palimpsestic character in that it emphasises multiple overlaps or intersections of social spheres. Secondly, and this is directly linked to the previous characteristic, entanglement is always relational on both abstract social and more material and physical levels. Despite Nuttall's use of the concept in a specifically post-apartheid context, its theoretical underpinnings find their geneses in times that predate the post-apartheid present or even the apartheid past. Nuttall identifies six different forms of entanglement (2009: 2-11): (i) historical entanglement, (ii) the time of entanglement, (iii) ideas of the seam, and of complicity, (iv) entanglement of people and things, (v) implications of the DNA signature, and (vi) racial entanglement.

Considering the confluence of several historical moments in Human's novels and the significance of time travel in *Apocalypse Now Now* in particular, the entanglements of history and time are particularly relevant to our endeavour. The former expresses the interdependence and interrelation of whites and non-whites since (South) Africa's colonisation (2-3). The latter, in an attempt to overcome the idea of a singular and one-directional perception of time, designates the plurality of temporal trajectories in order to highlight the continent's multiple pasts, presents, and futures as well as their (potential) intersection (4). Despite this somewhat crude recapitulation, the (spatio-)temporal circuitousness of, and interconnectedness between, the different forms of entanglement become apparent. Entanglement is a particular way of "reading" (South) Africa, "a means by which to draw into our analyses those sites in which what was once thought of as separate – identities, spaces, histories – come together or find points of intersection in unexpected ways" (11). Methodologically, Nuttall argues, such an "entangled reading" of South Africa's (post-apartheid) condition(s) either makes use of apartheid's segregationist dialectics in its analysis or it consciously breaks away from hegemonial interpretive approaches in favour of an exclusive focus on the present (20). In a combination of both approaches, Nuttall establishes three analytical "lenses": (i) creolisation, (ii) regional variations, and (iii) race and class. Creolisation, on the one hand, accounts for the violence, inequality, and socio-cultural implications of entanglements (22). Regional variations, on the other hand, take account of differentiations among entanglements due to geographical, topographical, and socio-historical conditions. Race and class, lastly, are central socio-economic and socio-cultural factors whose (entangled) post-apartheid complexities, Nuttall argues, are yet to be fully discovered and thus need particular (analytical) attention (28-30).

Of Nuttall's suggested reading "lenses", the idea of creolisation as well as the aspects of race and class are of interest to us. There are several reasons for this: we see processes of creolisation, as described by Nuttall, playing out in Baxter's coming to terms with his own (socio-historical and genetic) hybridity – he is half Siener, half Crow; half English, half Afrikaner –

through violent and often painful experiences. Human's novels are, furthermore, constructed around various binaries – such as Crow and Siener, magical and non-magical – which can be read as proxies for ethnic and socio-economic disparities. Overall, we consider Nuttall's entanglement as a particularly appropriate metaphor through which to read Human's novels since her theoretical underpinnings come from various social realities across the (post-)colonial world. Even though the Baxter Saga is set in post-apartheid South Africa, it does not restrict itself to a single spatio-temporal location but simultaneously looks back to South Africa's colonial past and then ahead by suggesting alternative ways of being within South Africa's post-apartheid present and future.

Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea

Seemingly irreconcilable spatial divisions, reminiscent of apartheid's spatial policies, characterise Baxter's school environment which is dominated by two factions: the drug dealing "Nice Time Kids" (the NTK) under the leadership of Anwar Davis, and the document forging "Form" under the leadership of Denton de Jaager (Human 2013: 19). According to Baxter, the public arena of Westridge High is "an ecosystem; a microcosm of the political, economic and military forces that shape the world" (16). It is within this field of tension that the porn-dealing "Spider" – the school's third "organisation" under the leadership of Baxter – has to find its place. Not too surprisingly, Baxter declares that the Spider "survives not through strength but through agility" (18) and confidently describes himself as being "a bishop, a vizier. I'm always behind the scenes pulling the strings. If I use my full potential, I'm the most powerful piece on the board" (24). This speaks to the Spider's somewhat rootless and displaced position or their slightly delicate in-between position in their attempts at preventing a gang war.

   When Baxter's girlfriend, Esmé, is suddenly reported missing – she has supposedly been abducted by the Mountain Killer, a serial killer raging in Cape Town – his world starts to unravel. Ronin's and Baxter's joint investigation into Esmé's disappearance leads them to a human-trafficking corporation called the Octogram, whose headquarters are at the Flesh Palace. The place is not entirely unknown to Baxter. Besides a strip and sex club, it also accommodates the studios for so-called creature porn, one of the best-selling products of the Spider (132). The place's multifunctionality introduces the Flesh Palace as a place of entanglement(s). In addition to being an economic entanglement, the Flesh Palace is also a place of entanglement between the magical and non-magical worlds. On the one hand, the Flesh Palace functions as a site of entanglement where elements from "above" and "below" come not only into contact but engage with one another. On the other hand, the journey into Cape Town's magical (under)

world represents a distinctly psycho-social development on the part of Baxter. While he begins here to confront his two conflicting colonial heritages, he also (forcibly) begins to integrate himself into a magical world that seems less unfamiliar to him than it should. The journey's gruesome and violent character reflects the "creolised" character of this place of encounter where seemingly dissimilar subjects are entangled.

As Baxter and Ronin venture deeper into "the bowels of the club" (142), Baxter observes that: "[t]he stink of the place is unbearable. The smell you get when a rat dies under the floorboard? Distil that into its purest form. Eau de decay" (142). The horrible smell comes from zombified bodies that are infested by so-called Anansi, spider-like parasites that feed from human bodies, which slowly decay as a result. However, the Flesh Palace is not only repugnant on an olfactory level, but also acoustically and visually:

> [t]he bass rumbles through my chest and strobe lights pulsate, high-lighting naked zombies hanging in cages from the ceiling. They sway back and forth and peel flesh from their bones to throw to human punters watching them from below.
>
> (142)

It is worth noting that the Flesh Palace implies another spatial division. The magical world is placed below the surface as something that is hidden in Cape Town's underbelly. The division into a non-magical surface world and a magical (under)world reflects racial and/or socio-economic (vertical) stratifications of (post-)apartheid realities that are (loosely) woven into Human's fictional(ised) world. The play on aspects of light and darkness that this vertical division implies is reminiscent of apartheid's racial categorisations and is mirrored in yet another split of the magical world into two warring factions: the Hidden Ones and the Feared Ones. We will return to this latter division in more detail later on. Furthermore, the setting's extreme conditions as well as its location below the surface parallel the experience's significance as catalyst with regard to Baxter's personal development and the acceptance of his magical and cultural inheritance. The Flesh Palace is where Baxter encounters and fights his first giant Crow, an incident where his grandfather's stories not only turn out to be true but where Baxter can cash in on his grandfather's advice on how to defeat the creature.

In addition, the Flesh Palace is also the place where Baxter's dreams or visions are imbued with meaning. In the vision Baxter has while he and Ronin are fighting the Crow, Baxter is not only observing the girl who keeps reappearing in his dreams and visions, but there is an interaction between the two. The girl – who turns out to be Baxter's great-great-grandmother Ester, a survivor of the Second Boer War, later in the book (218) – shows Baxter an escape route which allows him and Ronin to flee the place shortly

thereafter (150-151). This vision is at the same time Baxter's first meaningful connection to his magical abilities, to his "Wyrrd".

Oh, Baby, Baby, It's a "Wyrrd" World!

According to Ronin, who sheds light on the importance of what happens to Baxter at the Flesh Palace, magic is:

> connected to genetics. While anybody can theoretically do any kind of magic, every genetic pool has a specific connection to their heritage, a Wyrrd, which gives them a predilection for a specific kind of hoodoo.
>
> (169)

Ronin's explanation calls to mind Sarah Nuttall's reference to people's DNA signature as a form of entanglement, or what we would call genetic entanglement. Technical advances in genetic analysis have made it possible to trace African genes in white people. From that point of view, the simplistic racial distinction between black and white is severely challenged. According to Nuttall (2009: 8), this entails both a chance and a danger: while it can be seen as the basis for racial equality, it bears the risk of simply overwriting apartheid's atrocities in favour of a non-racial South Africa. Human's Baxter Saga, we argue, engages with this issue in Baxter's (re-) negotiation of his own position within the (non-)magical world. While the opposition of English and Afrikaner microhistories within the context of the South African War (1899-1902) suggests a nuanced approach to (re-) defining South African whiteness, the issue is further complicated by the addition of "non-white" elements to this (magical) genealogy such as implied in the "blackness" of the Crow which defy a simple black/white-rhetoric.

  The issue of South African whiteness has received scholarly attention within (critical) whiteness studies (see e.g. Steyn 2001; De Kock 2006; West & Schmidt 2010; Vice 2010). The challenge in South Africa's post-apartheid present, according to Melissa Steyn, is to (re-)negotiate whiteness since political dominance has shifted while social and economic powers have not been transferred in the same way (2001: xxiii). The task at hand, in her opinion, is "to redefine and complicate identities for those interpellated by discourses of whiteness, by bringing them into dialogue with 'other' identities" (xxviii). Steyn's approach stands in stark contrast to the one proposed by Samantha Vice in her controversial essay "How Do I Live in This Strange Place?" (2010). Vice suggests that the white subject position be silenced and withdrawn from public discourse, thus eliminating Steyn's proposed dialogue between whites and other South Africans. Vice's essay has sparked a public debate in the South African media. Despite being acknowledged for her willingness to "speak out" on the topic, the majority

of social commentators side with Steyn and her call for dialogic engagement (see e.g. McKaiser 2011; Swart 2011). Others have (heavily) criticised Vice for her standpoint (see e.g. De Kock 2011; Mnqxitama 2011).

We see Human's Baxter Saga contributing to this contentious issue of South African whiteness by working against its "blank homogeneity without internal diversity" (De Kock 2011; see also De Kock 2006) in Baxter's complicated white/magical genealogy. Considering the magical world's marginality, it does so, however, without "continu[ing] to privilege the privileged and to pathologise their honestly minor issues in the bigger scheme of things" (Haffajee 2013). An example of negotiating a "hybrid" South African whiteness can be found in the names of the rival gang leaders at Westridge High: Anwar Davis, leader of the NTK, and Denton de Jaager, leader of the Form (Human 2013: 19). The opposition of an English family name of Welsh origin (*Dictionary of Surnames* 1988) and an Afrikaans family name of Dutch origin (*Dictionary of Surnames* 1988) indirectly reifies the extreme antagonism of the school's power structures against the background of the South African War, also known as the Second Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902). The military vocabulary in Baxter's description of Westridge High is significant and corroborates such a reading. Anwar, for example, is referred to as the "Warlord" (Human 2013: 19), the NTK's second in command is called "General" (24), the Form is compared to "al-Qaida" and said to be a "guerrilla-style militia" (19). The combination of Denton, a first name of British origin (*Dictionary of First Names* 1990), and De Jaager, an Afrikaans family name of Dutch origin, suggests a socio-cultural portmanteau of sorts that (re-)unites two previously antagonistic colonial powers. If both the first and last names of Anwar Davis are, however, taken into consideration, the matter is no longer simply a question of Englishness in opposition to Afrikanerdom. The introduction of a non-white component in the form of Anwar's first name, which is of Arabic origin (Schimmel 1989: 48), makes available further expressions of (hybrid) whiteness. Its combination with a surname of Welsh origin further challenges over-simplified notions of racial "exclusivity" by its indirect reference to coloured history, which necessarily comes to mind within the Cape context in which the novel is set. This challenge is not only at the core of the postcolonial (re-)negotiation of whiteness, but also takes centre stage in Baxter's personal quest as becomes evident in his imminent discovery of his entangled family history.

This kind of social complexity is also part of "Wyrrd", the concept of magic in the Baxter Saga, and it is worth having a closer look at both its etymology and significance in the novels. "Wyrrd" is a slight spelling variation of the Old English *wyrd* that is translated to "fate, chance, fortune; destiny; the Fates" or "that which comes". It is the etymon of the Modern English word *weird*. Its adjectival meaning (i.e. "odd, strange, different") is believed to have developed from the Middle English perception of the *weird*

85

sisters, the three goddesses of fate (the Norns in Germanic mythology), who were depicted as strange and fearsome figures in plays such as Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (Online Etymology Dictionary 2015). *Wyrd* itself is thus already a culturally and linguistically entangled concept. According to Sean Pollack, "it is a mixture of not only traditional Anglo-Saxon culture, but Latin Patristics, classical culture, Norse and Celtic themes" (2006: 645). It is against this background that one has to see the concept which serves as overarching metaphysical principle for Human's novels and finds its way into the Baxter Saga in several ways. Note for example the "rewriting" of the three *weird sisters* as two "weird brothers". While Baxter and his brother, Rafe, initially seem to form yet another irrevocable schism, the concept of "Wyrrd" is what will reconcile their brotherhood. The metaphysical principle of "Wyrrd" put to use in the Baxter Saga suggests an inversion of meaning from weird as negatively connotated to a positively valued gift. The fact that the whole timeframe of the concept's development carries weight in the Baxter Saga suggests an entanglement of the past and the present in Baxter's person. The concept's original meaning (i.e. "fate", "fortune", "destiny") bears a particular importance in the Baxter Saga and proposes a movement back in time, back to the "roots".

Regarding the pronunciation of the term, Gary Stanfield explains: "the 'y' is pronounced as the Modern German umlaut-u or the 'u' in Modern French 'tu'" and adds that "[t]he 'r' is pronounced like the modern American 'r', or like a modern British upper class 'r'" (2000: 31). Stanfield's reliance on German and French phonemes highlights the fact that Modern English pronunciation lacks the phoneme to "correctly" pronounce the Old English term. If the word is then pronounced with a Modern English inflection, it is quite conceivable that the term might come out sounding like "word". Considering both the term's semantic and phonetic properties, the concept of "Wyrrd" itself turns into a way of (re-)negotiating Baxter's whiteness through the (weird) world full of "Wyrrd", i.e. magic, Human creates with words. Triggered by Esmé's disappearance and fuelled by the disturbing environment at the Flesh Palace, Baxter is able to meaningfully connect to his "Wyrrd" even if unknowingly. Baxter's katabasis into both the figurative and physical underworlds of the Flesh Palace serves as an epiphanic moment where he is forced to confront his hybridity for the first time.

The ultimate confrontation of Baxter's hybridity and his (magical) abilities happens in the apocalyptic showdown between himself and Basson in an alternate-reality Cape Town at the end of *Apocalypse Now Now*:

> I've done all I can. I've been swallowed by Cape Town's supernatural underworld, digested and excreted. I've given it my best and it just wasn't good enough. […] I let go completely. And then I see.
>   I see what I can do. I reach out my mind to the reactor next to me and with a single thought I ignite it. At the same time I focus every inch of concentration left available to me to create a bubble of force around me. The reactor

ignites and an immense blast wave spreads around me. […]
 The city is aflame. Buildings collapse into themselves. The water of the bay is alight which sends massive plumes of steam into the air. It's the South African Armageddon, Apocalypse Now Now. And I caused it.

(Human 2013: 270-271)

It is Baxter's "letting go", even if from exhaustion, that (unknowingly) lends him the decisive advantage over his opponent. Despite the happenstance character of Baxter's victory over Basson, the (mental/alternate-reality) apocalypse forms the turning point in Baxter's "metamorphoses from troubled anti-hero to powerful hero" (Demir et al 2015b: 33). While the fierce encounter can be seen as a confrontation of the hybrid magical genealogy on Baxter's part, there is, however, no reconciliation of his opposing Crow and Siener halves. Baxter relinquishes ("lets go") the power that comes along with controlling the magical exoskeleton of the Mantis shortly after his victory (Human 2013: 273). This (more conscious) decision might be seen as Baxter merely acknowledging the magical wyrr(l)d and his position in it, as opposed to embracing the role in which he finds himself and consciously working out/with his "Wyrrd".

On a more abstract level, this (apocalyptic) plot twist constitutes the most genuine innovation in comparison with other apocalyptic/dystopian texts. While the apocalypse, together with the gruesomeness of the magical (under)world, in *Apocalypse Now Now* and the raging war between different factions of the magical world in *Kill Baxter* speak to the Saga's general apocalyptic/dystopian nature, Human does not subscribe to the genre's "pitfall" of taking the one-way road leading to unavoidable and irrevocable destruction that Titlestad identifies (2015: 39). On the one hand, Titlestad argues that apocalypticism "conceive[s] of time as linear and repress[es] psychological dynamics of recovery, re-articulation and re-organization of the past in the present in order to (re)imagine a future" (39). On the other hand, Titlestad opines that apocalypticism "ignore[s] [...] the muddled time and reality we inhabit. In its assumption of (linear) deterioration, dystopian fiction attests to a refusal to countenance the contingencies of the quotidian in which (pre)apartheid, apartheid and (post)apartheid are simultaneously present and exist in ever-shifting relation" (39). We suggest here that, due to the dynamic of time travel, the "linearity" of time as suggested by Titlestad is complicated. Additionally, the Baxter Saga focuses largely on Baxter's psychological processes. The apocalyptic element of *Apocalypse Now Now*, but also the Saga's dystopian elements more generally, become catalysts for (re-)negotiating Baxter's (white/hybrid) subjectivity, even if in a somewhat idealistic way. It is worth noting (again) that the apocalypse in the Saga's first instalment is a mental one and happens in an alternate-reality Cape Town. While it has a direct impact on Baxter's "real" life – he takes the blame for the Spider's porn dealing activities on school premises as well as the stabbing of Anwar Davis and is expelled from Westridge High with

pending criminal charges (Human 2013: 276-278) – the (un/sur)real nature of the apocalypse bespeaks the preventability of South Africa's "end times" as yet. The South Africanism "now now" in the title of Human's first novel – an adverb relating to "the amount of time to elapse before an event occurs" meaning "in the near future; not happening presently but to happen shortly" (12) – suggests that the apocalypse is yet to occur, leaving some, although not much, time for (white) South Africans "to engage with their selves" (Vice 2010: 334) in order to "recover", "re-articulate", and "re-organise" their positions within South Africa's new dispensation and in relation to fellow South Africans.

A Parley Between Myth and History

Baxter's psychological development, which takes centre stage in *Kill Baxter* where he has to master the art of "dreamwalking", is inextricably linked to Baxter's aptitude for using his magical abilities. According to the Red Witch, Baxter's magical mentor at Hexpoort:

> [d]reamwalking allows you free access into your own psyche. It allows you access to other people's dreams, and in certain cases into the depths of someone else's mind. It may not sound like much, but properly utilised, it can be an incredibly powerful tool. Or weapon. There are tales of great dream battles between sangomas, like psychic games of chess, with the winner capturing the loser's True Will and being able to control him completely. Those beads are the key to the White Ways, the world of the dream. The White Ways are the strands of the web of being, and each bead represents an axis within your own psyche.
>
> (Human 2014: 89)

Dreamwalking, for Baxter, ultimately is the journey to find his "True Self" (242) in a continuation of the first book's resolution where Baxter sees the need to reconcile his conflicting halves. It is then not surprising that Norris, Baxter's True Self, is an imagined "physical" incarnation of Baxter's condition of being "half 'n half". He is described as having "one green eye and one blue" (242), a genetic condition known as heterochromia (*Oxford English Dictionary* 1989). It is through dreamwalking that Baxter's "web of being" reaches its full potential with him accepting his "half 'n half" status. During his encounter with Norris, Baxter realises that: "[l]ike pieces of a yin-yang [his] two sides fit together, and like a key in a lock it opens [his] mind" (Human 2014: 245). It is this realisation that lays the foundation for the inclusion of further mythical, magical, and historical entanglements of which he is part. The incorporation of beads into the practise of dream-walking, in the above excerpt, and their connection to both the (magical) craft and traditional regalia of sangomas can be seen as an example and acknowledgement of indigenous mythologies that give Baxter's whiteness a

recognisably (Southern) African inflection. In fact, both of Human's novels are replete with entanglements of mythologies, histories and "wyrrd"/ (magical)/(weird?) figures that create a field on which Human is able to freely and creatively (re-)mediate whiteness, forging a new kind of "(South) African" form thereof.

We see these mytho-historical entanglements in the Baxter Saga as another of Human's innovations. McNeill rightly argues that:

> [m]yth and history are close kin inasmuch as both explain how things got to be the way they are by telling some sort of story. But our common parlance reckons myth to be false while history is, or reprises to be, true. Accordingly, a historian who rejects someone else's conclusion calls them mythical, while claiming that his own views are true. But what seems true to one historian will seem false to another, so one historian's truth becomes another's myth, even at the moment of utterance
>
> (1986: 1)

It is due to the two concepts' close kinship that McNeill coins the portmanteau "mythistory" rather than conceiving of myth and history as two separate concepts (8). According to him, mythistories are "achieve[d] when [historians] bend their minds as critically and carefully as they can to the task of making their account of public affairs credible as well as intelligible to an audience that shares enough of their particular outlook and assumptions to accept what they say" (8). Surely, although in a more playful way than what McNeill intends, Human can be seen as a kind of "historian" who takes advantage of mythistory's "usefulness" by "piloting human [and magical] groups in their encounters with one another and with the natural [and magical] environment[s]" (10). It is by means of mytho-historical entanglements that Human is able to engage with what Nuttall calls "unexplored terrains of mutuality, wrought from common, though often coercive and confrontational, experience" (2009: 11). This is particularly pertinent in Baxter's connection to both Crow and Siener lineages.

Baxter, whose character comprises the incorporation of this particular mytho-historical entanglement, is linked to the Crow and Siener mythistories via his great-great-grandmother, Ester, niece of the historical Afrikaner prophet, Niklaas van Rensburg, and his great-great-grandfather Dr. Kobus Basson. It is worth noting that the microhistory of Niklaas van Rensburg, who served as advisor to General Koos de la Rey during the South African War is not often acknowledged as part of the country's national history. According to Titlestad, however, there are a great number of privately published and circulated books as well as a number of academic articles on Niklaas van Rensburg (2014: 62). In Human's Baxter Saga, it is through a number of dream sequences spanning the length of *Apocalypse Now Now* that Baxter comes into contact with this Afrikaner microhistory by observing (re-)imagined events of the South African War through the

eyes of his young "hot great-great-grandmother" (Human 2013: 223). By incorporating this lesser-told history, Human spins a thread that will later be integrated into an at times overwhelmingly complex entanglement of national histories and their associated mythologies.

Additionally, it is striking that the etiological myth that Human constructs is based on two conflicting deities: the Mantis god and the Octopus god. The conflict is extended to their creations: the shining ones, also known as the Hidden Ones, and the Feared Ones, also known as the Crows, with the latter hunting down the former (69-70).[3] This dichotomy reiterates racial issues within a mythological framework opposing elements of light and darkness as well as visibility and invisibility. Human adds another twist by reversing the readers' expectations regarding bright equalling visibility and dark equalling invisibility. Considering that the etiological myth is connected to Afrikaner and British history respectively in the Baxter Saga, this reversal can be seen as a means of bringing white identities into question by deconstructing them.

Overall, mytho-historical entanglement is more prevalent in Human's *Apocalypse Now Now* and is particularly striking in the forms of the endearing faun, Klipspringer, the glowing Obambo, Tomas, and the mysterious Singer of Souls. Both Klipspringer and Tomas are able to link Baxter's present to his great-great-grandmother's past by being present at both historical moments. Klipspringer gives both Ester and her great-great-grandson a mantis pendant that grants the power of metamorphosis (120, 201). Despite his role in the lives of both, he does not seem to age and retains a childlike naiveté throughout the generations. Likewise, Tomas lends a helping hand to both Siener offspring as he is the father of Luamita, a young Obambo girl who befriends Ester (159-160), and the owner of the tooth found in Esmé's bedroom after her disappearance (66). Tomas subsequently helps Baxter by giving him his blood in order to enhance his gift of sight later in the novel (227-228). The bioluminescent blood of the Obambo plays a similar role in the life of Ester (160-161). In addition to the ability of these two figures to stitch together various historical events, Human's choice of mythical creatures adds another layer to these spatiotemporal entanglements. While the Obambo stems from African mythology (Spence 2003: 299), the faun or "bokboy" finds its origin in Greek mythology in the form of the satyr (*Oxford Classical Dictionary* 1996). Human crafts a mythological universe by drawing from a number of global myths and applying local frames of reference – as in the case of the springbok legs of Klipspringer. Of greater relevance here, however, is the figure of the Singer of Souls. Although he appears to both Baxter and Ester,

---

3.   For further information on the Mantis in Southern African mythology see e.g. Miller (1979). For more information on the Octopus, which stems from Caribbean mythology, see e.g. Beckwith (1970).

he does so in different contexts and does not seem to have any direct impact on the lives of either. Baxter first encounters him next to a stream near his house one night, in the form of a one-eyed homeless man who plays on a three-stringer guitar (Human 2013: 67-70). During this encounter the blind bard tells Baxter of the war between the Mantis god of Africa and the Octopus god. The figure of the unseeing seer, although not exclusive to Greek mythology, bears an obvious likeness to Tiresias of *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles. The Singer, by mentioning that he sings souls across the river and into the afterlife, loosely resembles the ferryman, Charon, who carries souls across the river Styx. Later in the novel, once Baxter begins to embrace his gift of sight, he encounters the Singer of Souls again but this time in his "real" form:

> "Are you the Devil?" I [i.e. Baxter] ask in awe.
> At that he laughs, a deep rumbling boom that shakes my bones. "I am Van Hunks who still smokes with the Devil. I am Hoerikwaggo, the mountain in the sea. I am Adamastor and I am the spirit of the Mother City. I am the Singer of Souls. I believe we have met before, although perhaps not in this form." He smiles and lights his pipe.
>
> (220)

The Singer of Souls is revealed to be a complex entanglement of place, history, and mythology as he describes himself as Van Hunks, Hoerikwaggo (the mountain in the sea), Adamastor, the spirit of the Mother City, and the Singer of Souls. These various mytho-historical and spatial threads weave together to create an entanglement that consists of Dutch, KhoeKhoe, Portuguese, British, and Ndebele elements. By acknowledging this significant spatio-temporal entanglement, the spirit perhaps suggests that it must be known by all culturally specific monikers rather than one which fits a more homogenous national identity. Myth here is employed by Human in a way that brings together histories (mythistories?) that are often thought of as separate in order to simultaneously reveal a number of (past) socio-cultural influences whose entanglement produces South Africa's present(s) and (potential) future(s). This is in the "spirit" of Nuttall's "complex temporality" that underlies her conception of entanglement (2009: 11).

This culturally climactic scene is paralleled in *Kill Baxter* where Baxter and the band of warriors from Hexpoort, in order to defeat a sludge-dragon made from fat and grease beneath the city, must employ their culturally specific sorcery in unison: "[t]hey begin a droning call-and-response song, chanting in Xhosa, Zulu and Afrikaans. Their voices complement each other, not exactly harmonious, but strong and commanding" (Human 2014: 264). Socio-cultural entanglements are thus not restricted to Human's characters only, but they are also applied to the concept of "Wyrrd" as seen above. While the idiosyncratic powers of this hereditary brand of magic is introduced in *Apocalypse Now Now*, *Kill Baxter* sees Human exploring it to

a fuller, albeit perhaps somewhat idealistic, potential since the sludge-dragon can be defeated only once Baxter and his team join forces to create a "wyrrd"/(magical)/(weird?) "rainbow nation", which further (re-)context-ualises Baxter's whiteness.

Speculative Fiction and Allegory

In addition to our reading of Human's novels as sites of cultural, genetic, mytho-historical, and spatio-temporal entanglements, we suggest that the novels function well as *bildungsromane* that detail Baxter's formative years, subsequent education about, and final assimilation into a magical (under) world and his acceptance of a reconceptualised South African whiteness. By virtue of his status as "half 'n half", he is a unique thread that adds to an already eclectic socio-cultural fabric that undergoes constant change according to diverse characters that constantly enter and exit it. Titlestad suggests that: "it is worth recalling that transacting with apocalyptic texts is the domain of allegory" (2015: 33). Thurman similarly argues that: "[s]cience fiction (or futuristic writing) and allegory are closely associated" (2010: 99). While both assertions are certainly valid, we refrain from a reading of Human's Baxter Saga as allegories of the development of the still uncertain and self-conscious South African democratic system. We suggest that an allegorical (overall-)reading, based on the novels' possible function-ing as *bildungsromane*, seems too obvious an option and that it is likely to detract from more pressing social critiques to be found in the novels. Thurman's distinction of a utilitarian, i.e. "a 'political' or 'politicized' read-ing" (95), as opposed to an allegorical reading is helpful here. Thurman's notion of "allegorical realism", which unites these two fundamental ways of reading, suggests, according to him, the possibility of "hold[ing] the auto-nomous 'world' of the text and the 'real world' outside the text in balance" (97). Opting for a more realist/utilitarian reading thus allows us to focus on the specificities of Human's novels that would go unnoticed through a more allegorical reading and its preoccupation with more extended narrative arcs and developments. Such a focus, however, does by no means dismiss the analytical and scholarly values associated with allegorical readings.

Although *Apocalypse Now Now* is centred on Baxter as a person, there is an aspect of critique discernible at its most overt in the Flesh Palace scene we have already discussed. As Baxter and Ronin descend further into its rotten bowels, they encounter another grotesque scene:

> [p]oliticians are delicately sucking the marrow out of dismembered pinkie fingers, and several members of the national cricket team sip congealed blood from Martini glasses. The Cape Town elite, it seems, are into zombie chic gourmet cannibalism. Fucking poseurs.
>
> (Human 2013: 147)

Alluded to here is the decadence of an elite comprising politicians and sports celebrities. South African cricket, with its distinctly imperial/British history, used to be a sport dominated by whites. Considering the strict racial segregation in place within the domain of sports during apartheid and the introduction of a quota system to redress racial inequalities within the national team after the demise of apartheid draws attention to the racial (self-)critique of the scenario.[4] The spatial entanglement of magical and non-magical (human) beings at the Flesh Palace is, in fact, characterised by a dynamic of bilateral predation. The surface world – a world free from magic and zombies, and where the tokoloshes in the Spider's pornography are dismissed as fake – frequents the Flesh Palace precisely because of its inhumane and violent character that becomes its prime drawcard. By immersing themselves in the "exotic" delights of the underworld and then retreating to their "normal" lives above the surface, these elites (of the surface world) indulge in a culture of appearance that opposes the idea(l) of entanglement.

The Anansi, the spider-like magical creatures also present at the Flesh Palace (see above), similarly prey on humans by "sucking them dry", effectively turning them into zombies. In view of the Anansi's origin in West African mythology, as a trickster figure commonly known for its arrogance and boastfulness (Parrinder 1967: 136-139), the critique here could thus be levelled at not just social elites, but people in general. Both magical and non-magical beings are equally guilty of the senseless consumption and commodification at play at the Flesh Palace. The problem at hand seems to be a general affluenza on both sides where the mutual "exoticising" does not allow a meaningful interaction between the parties and prevents an enrichment of the subjectivities in question.

Human's sequel offers an even more overtly political critique in the form of MK6 and its function to keep the worlds of the surface and below separate. Ronin explains that MK6 initially started as an organisation to protect the magical world and its creatures from interference from the surface world (Human 2014: 127). MK6 interestingly, bears striking resemblance to the MK, the contracted title of Umkhonto weSizwe, which was the armed wing of the ANC during apartheid and whose training and prison camps outside of South Africa belong to the darker chapters of its history. MK6, however, despite starting off as a protective faction, becomes the dominant power in the world of magic and violently enforces divisive measures that keep the two worlds apart. Human's pocketed critiques of both social and political situations, if one were to read the Baxter Saga as a post-apartheid allegory, would go largely unnoticed due to such an analysis placing too much focus on Baxter and his education and emotional development. Although we by no means suggest that texts should not be given

---

4.   For further information on the history of South African cricket see e.g. Odendaal (2003) or Desai, Padayachee, Reddy & Vahed (2002).

allegorical readings, we argue that it is the twisting and reshaping of both political and social arenas to the extent where they do not resemble real socio-political climates too closely that allow Human to exercise (self-) criticism. It is through the genre of speculative fiction that Human engages with the controversial topic of (re-)negotiating South African whiteness in particular as well as an expression of disillusionment with South Africa's new elite more generally.

Conclusion

Baxter's introduction to, and assimilation into, a wyrrld of magic and the complexities of his own mytho-historical heritage can be read as a process of (re-)negotiation and (re-)definition of Baxter's whiteness. The reading of the Baxter Saga as more than purely an allegory of South Africa's democratic development allows us to tie Baxter's personal journey to the larger issue of South African whites having to (re-)locate themselves within the country's new dispensation, a process, as the novels' contemporaneity suggest, that is still ongoing twenty-one years into South Africa's democracy. Furthermore, Human, in his novels, uses the genre of speculative fiction and the non-realist potential that it offers to create worlds where spaces, histories, and mythologies that were once thought of as separate are (re-)considered and (re-)written in a way that entangles them in a world where they must work together in order to reach their full "wyrrd"/(magical)/(weird?) potential.

Acknowledgments

References

Attwell, D.
  2005   *Reviewing Modernity: Studies in Black South African Literary History*. Scottsville: UKZN Press.
Beckwith, M.
  1970   *Hawaiian Mythology*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
Burger, M. & Gould, C.
  2002   *Secret and Lies: Wouter Basson and South Africa's Chemical and Biological Warfare Programme*. Cape Town: Zebra Press.

Chapman, M.
  2011   Introduction: SA Lit beyond 2000? In: Michael Chapman & Margaret
              Lenta (eds) *SA Lit Beyond 2000*. Scottsville: UKZN Press, pp. 1-18.
Charlie Human.
  2014   Charlie Human. Online: <http://ysa.mg.co.za/2014/charlie-human>. 7
              September 2015.
De Kock, L.
  2001   South Africa in the Global Imaginary: An Introduction. *Poetics Today*
              22(2): 263-298.
  2006   Blanc de Blanc: Whiteness Studies – A South African Connection?
              Journal of Literary Studies 22(1): 175-189.
  2011   Capitalism Is Not a White Thing. *Mail & Guardian*. 16 September.
              Online: <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-09-16-capitalisms-not-a-white-
              thing>. 4 November 2015.
Demir, D, Moreillon, O. & Muller, A.
  2015a   Interview with Charlie Human. 23 March.
  2015b   In Search of a "Rock Star": Commemorating Kabelo Sello Duiker's
              Life and Work Ten Years on. *Current Writing: Text and Reception in
              Southern Africa* 27(1): 26-37.
Desai, A, Padayachee, V., Reddy, K. & Vahed, G.
  2002   *Blacks in Whites: A Century of Cricket Struggles in KwaZulu-Natal*.
              Scottsville: UKZN Press.
Haffajee, F.
  2013   The Problem with Whiteness. *City Press*. 31 March. Online:
              <http://www.news24.com/Archives/City-Press/The-problem-with-
              whiteness-Ferial-Haffajee-20150430>. 4 November 2015.
Hanks, P. & Hodges, F.
  1988   *A Dictionary of Surnames*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University
              Press.
  1990   *A Dictionary of First Names*. Oxford and New York: Oxford
              University Press.
Harper, D.
  2015   *Online Etymology Dictionary*. Online:
              <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=weird&allowed_in_fra
              me=0>. 7 September 2015.
Harvey, D.
  1989   *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of
              Cultural Change*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Inc.
Hofmeyr, I.
  2004   *The Portable Bunyan: A Transnational History of "The Pilgrim's
              Progress"*. Princeton: Princeton University Press; Johannesburg: Wits
              University Press.
Hofmeyr, I., Gupta, P. & Pearson, M. (eds)
  2010   *Eyes Across the Water: Navigating the Indian Ocean*. Pretoria: Unisa
              Press; Delhi: Penguin India.
Hofmeyr, I. & Williams, M. (eds)
  1996   *Oxford Classical Dictionary*. New York: Oxford University Press.

2011   *South Africa and India: Shaping the Global South*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press. Hornblower, S. & Spawforth, A. (eds).

Human, C.
  2013   *Apocalypse Now Now*. Cape Town: Umuzi.
  2014   *Kill Baxter*. Cape Town: Umuzi.
Lenta, M.
  2011   Expanding "South Africanness": Debut Novels. In: Michael Chapman and Margaret Lenta (eds) *SA Lit Beyond 2000*. Scottsville: UKZN Press, pp. 48-65.
Massey, D.
  2005   *For Space*. London: SAGE Publications.
McKaiser, E.
  2011   Confronting Whiteness. *Mail & Guardian*. 1 July. Online: <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-07-01-confronting-whiteness>. 4 November 2015.
McNary, D.
  2015   *Apocalypse Now Now* Movie Adaptation in the Works. Online: <http://variety.com/2015/film/news/apocalypse-now-now-movie-charlie-human-1201542332/>. 7 September 2015.
McNeill, W.H.
  1986   Mythistory, or Truth, Myth, History, and Historians. *The American Historical Review* 91(1): 1-10.
Miller, P.
  1979   *Myths and Legends of Southern Africa*. Cape Town: T.V. Bulpin Publications.
Mnxgitama, A.
  2011   End to Whiteness a Black Issue. *Mail & Guardian*. 24 October. Online:<http://mg.co.za/article/2011-10-24-end-to-whiteness-a-black-issue>. 4 November 2015.
Nuttall, S.
  2009   *Entanglement: Literary and Cultural Reflections on Post-Apartheid*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
Odendaal, A.
  2003   The Story of an African Game: Black Cricketers and the Unmasking of South Africa's Greatest Myths, 1850-2003. Cape Town: David Philipp.
Parrinder, G.
  1967   *African Mythology*. London: Hamlyn Publishing.
Pollack, S.
  2006   Engendering *Wyrd*: Notional Gender Encoded in the Old English Poetic and Philosophical Vocabulary. *Neophilologus* 90: 643-661.
Sanders, M.
  2002   *Complicities: The Intellectual and Apartheid*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
Schimmel, A.
  1989   *Islamic Names*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
Simpson, J. A. & Weiner, Edmund, S.C. (eds)
  1989   *The Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford: Claredon Press.

Soja, E.
  1989   *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*. London: Verso Press.
Spence, L.
  2003   *An Encyclopaedia of Occultism*. Miniola, New York: Dover Press.
Stanfield, G.G.
  2000   Excerpts from the OERP Book: Appendix E on Wyrd. *The Rune* 11(4): 31-40.
Steyn, M.
  2001   *"White Just Isn't What It Used To Be": White Identity in a Changing South Africa*. New York: State University of New York Press.
Swart, M.
  2011   Let's Talk about Collective Guilt. *Mail & Guardian*. 15 September. Online: <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-09-15-lets-talk-about-collective-guilt>. 4 November 2015.
Thurman, C.
  2010   Places Elsewhere, then and now: Allegory "before" and "after" South Africa's Transition. *English Studies in Africa* 53(1): 91-103.
  2015   Apocalypse Whenever: Catastrophe, Privilege and Indifference (or, Whiteness and the End Times). *English Studies in Africa* 58(1): 56-67.
Titlestad, M.
  2004   *Making the Changes: Jazz in South African Literature and Reportage*. Pretoria: Unisa Press; Leiden: Koninklijke Brill.
  2014   South African End Times: Conceiving an Apocalyptic Imaginary. *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde* 51(2): 52-69.
  2015   Future Tense: The Problem of South African Apocalyptic Fiction. *English Studies in Africa* 58(1): 30-41.
West, M. & Schmidt, Jennifer, M. (eds)
  2010   *English in Africa* [Special issue: Whiteness Studies: A South African Perspective] 37(1).
West-Pavlov, R.
  2015   Apocalypse Now, Never … or Forever: Venter and Medalie on the Everyday Politics of Post-Apartheid South Africa. *English Studies in Africa* 58(1): 42-55.
Vice, S.
  2010   How Do I Live in This Strange Place? *Journal of Social Philosophy* 41(3): 323-342.
Zeno Agency Limited
  n.d.   Human Charlie. Online: <http://zenoagency.com/clients-list/h/human-charlie/>. 7 September 2015.

Olivier Moreillon
University of Basel
olivier.moreillon@unibas.ch

Alan Muller
University of KwaZulu-Natal
mulleralan@yahoo.com