Old stories and new chapters: A biographical study of white Afrikaans speaking identity in central South Africa

by

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation submitted in completion of the degree Magister Artium at the University of the Free State is my own, original work and has not been submitted previously at another university, faculty or department.

I furthermore concede copyright of this dissertation to the University of the Free State.

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Introduction

O nce upon a time there were a people called the Afrikaners, a people who lived lives and told stories that would shape our country as we know it. Theirs was a story first of resilience and triumph in the face of disaster, of romance and heroism, and later of exploitation and oppression in an age of global freedom, of disenchantment, shame and guilt. The Afrikaners told a grand narrative which left only bits and pieces to those who came after them, and the retelling of which has taken many different forms among their descendants, the particulars of which constitute this study's main area of interest.

Throughout this dissertation I have attempted to present my understanding of those who came after the Afrikaners. Through collecting, interpreting and trying to understand the stories of normal people from all walks of life, new narratives of belonging and identity gradually emerged. These narratives, though they may incorporate bits and pieces of older Afrikaner stories, represent attempts at making sense of a world radically different from the one in which the Afrikaners told theirs throughout the 20th century. During this process, I myself embarked on a journey from being a social scientist to a storyteller, and this dissertation is my story. It is not just a story about some strange and unknown group of people. It is the story of people with which we share our world and with whom many South Africans interact on a daily basis. We may not always agree with these people, but through listening to their stories we may come to better understand them. But before this story is told, I would like to introduce a few important concepts, as well as outline the structure of the rest of the dissertation.

In this dissertation I will be speaking of both stories and narratives, and where I do, they should not be taken to mean the same thing. Some social scientists prefer to speak of narratives as being the end-product of analysed stories, but my own experience regarding the epistemological similarity of the two does not allow me to make this distinction. I may have collected and analysed stories in a more disciplined, scientific manner than do most people in their everyday lives, but the process remains largely the same. I listened to stories, internalised them, and represented them in a way that indicates my epistemologically and methodologically informed understanding of these stories. To me the difference between the two is not a question of refinement, but one of order and scale. A narrative refers to the complete verbal contribution of a given participant, while multiple individual stories, with characteristic plots and contents, are to be found within any given narrative. In chapter 1 I introduce the epistemological and ontological view I embraced during the course of this study, and which greatly influenced my conception of stories as vessels and indeed matrices of social reality. My scientific and philosophical approach, as informed by various interpretivist sociological traditions, is thoroughly explained throughout this chapter, and the importance of especially phenomenology, agency-structure integration and the role of storytelling in the conceptualisation of social reality underlying this project are discussed.

The second chapter is dedicated to identity, a concept rich in opportunities for misinterpretation. Firstly, the ambiguity of the term identity is explored, after which I explain my theoretical approach to understanding the concept, and how exactly identity is defined in the context of this study. The chapter ends, after an overview of three foundational themes of 'traditional' Afrikaner identity, namely race, religion and nationalism, and their relationship to individual and collective identity, with an explanation of how I integrated certain aspects of the Communication Theory of Identity and Dan McAdams' theory of the mythical self, as well as certain emergent factors encountered during the research process, in order to construct an approach to identity that fitted the needs of this study.

In chapter 3, I attempt to present an overview of the Afrikaners' historical development as a collectivity, after briefly defining culture and looking at issues regarding the fallibility of historical knowledge, as I drew from historical sources in constructing the presented chronology, or historical meta-narrative, of Afrikaner identity. Throughout this overview I attempt to emphasise the ways in which Afrikaner identity developed historically, through tracing key developments in the white Afrikaans speaking population's relationship toward and understanding of the critical issues of race, religion and nationalism. This chapter highlights the fluidity of collective identities and the fact that, through the morphing, deconstruction and reconstruction of collective representations and narrative repertoires, the predecessors of the Afrikaners moved through at least two unique identities, the Burghers and the Boers, before storying themselves into the 20th century Afrikaners as we know them today. This chapter also hints at the ways in which the descendants of the Afrikaners, whose collective representations largely fell away after 1994, have reinvented themselves since then. For the sake of this chapter and the rest of the dissertation I make a constant distinction between the historical Afrikaners and contemporary Afrikaners as two chronologically related but conceptually independent collectivities, as the contemporary Afrikaners represent only one of at least three collectivities that have developed out of the remnants of the historical Afrikaners since 1994, something that is explained in greater detail in chapter 5.

The fourth chapter deals with the methodological approach embraced during the course of the study, and introduces the techniques of data collection and analysis used during the investigative process. The importance of intersubjective understanding, as well as the merits of a storytelling approach to unravelling highly subjective mystery, or so-called 'problems of understanding', are discussed. Chapter 5, as the final chapter, presents the most relevant data generated by the investigative process. The data generated during the course of this study are presented in a more or less traditional way, with the insertion of certain techniques from the worlds of fiction writing and journalism, in an experimental attempt at closing the circle of my storytelling approach through presenting the data itself in the form of richly informative, stylised sections. Why would I attempt to use fiction to convey scientific fact? The answer to this question lies in the following five chapters, and I sincerely hope that, once you, as a listener to this story, reach the final

chapter, you will have come to understand the merits of human storytelling when applied as a tool for understanding the construction of individual and collective identities.

PART 1: THEORETICAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL BASIS

Chapter 1: An interpretive sociological foundation

The idea of interpretive sociology originated with Max Weber, who, though later sociologists have pointed out the ambiguous nature of some of his work, continues to be venerated as the founder of a sociology that places emphasis on "*...the importance of meanings and motives in causal explanation of social action*" (Fulbrook, 1978: 71). Throughout his work on the sociologies of religion, law and domination, one finds a conscious effort to emphasise the role of subjectivity in everyday life, and an interest in the typification of human relationships (Weber, 1964: 41), which was in line with the focus of German sociology at the time, being the typification of social epochs by the forms of social relations that comprised them (Dasilva & Pressler, 1996: 14). Since Weber's pioneering work however, interpretive sociology has evolved into a tradition which comprises various theoretical approaches and paradigmatic philosophies, the incorporation of which into this study of white Afrikaans speaking identity will be explained throughout this chapter.

The chapter is divided into two sections, the first dealing with the positioning of this study within the multi-dimensional nexus of interpretive sociology, while the second delves deeper into the interpretive traditions which were drawn upon throughout the conceptualisation of the project. It is important to note that this chapter covers only the main lines of thought that comprised the ontological and epistemological foundation of the study and that certain other ideas, the relevance of which became clearer during the data collection and analysis phases, are dealt with in the appropriate chapters. The aim of the next few pages is to introduce the philosophical foundation out of which the research process was conceptualised and to give the reader an overview of the logical and theoretical framework utilised during all subsequent phases of the study.

1.1. Situating the research study

Any investigative process evolves out of necessity from the starting point of a certain paradigm, or worldview, which implies certain philosophical assumptions on the part of the researcher (Creswell, 2013: 19). These assumptions include choosing not only the theoretical orientation of a proposed research study, but visualising and making explicit the ontological, epistemological, axiological, rhetorical and methodological character of the planned project. Thus, before any study can be launched, the researcher has to consider issues such as the nature of reality, the ways in which knowledge will be generated, the relationship between the researcher and the researched, the methodological approach to be harnessed, and the role of values and language that will be embraced during the course of the planned investigation.

In the case of this project, during the course of which multiple narratives were collected, analysed, compared and reported upon, these concerns proved as relevant as ever. What follows is a concise overview of how this study conceptually stands in relation to the abovementioned considerations, illustrated by means of a paradigmatic 'situating' of the study, which refers to the alignment of the project regarding these aspects of the research process. For the sake of convenience and clarity, a framework adapted from the work of John Creswell (2013: 21) is used.

1.1.1. Ontology

Ontologically, an understanding of the nature of reality as subjective and multi-dimensional is embraced, and the focus of this project thus falls squarely on reality as seen by the individual participants. In this sense my interest was in understanding how each participant individually experiences, and interacts with, what Alfred Schutz called the 'world of daily life', or the life-world (Schutz, 1962: 208). This life-world refers to the world we experience while awake, the intersubjective sphere of existence that we as human beings perceive as entering upon birth and as having existed long before us and apart from our individual, subjectively experienced existences. In the words of Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1967: 33) "*...everyday life presents itself as a reality interpreted by men and subjectively meaningful to them as a coherent world*". Thus, throughout the research process reality was understood to be not merely subjective, but intersubjective, meaning that it is shared by individual actors who all have eminently practical interests in its construction, existence and interpretation (Schutz, 1962: 208).

During the process of interpreting this life-world and the myriad relationships found within it, individual actors actively engage in the social construction of reality, developing subjective meanings directed toward objects, events and other actors that are constantly being informed by experience (Creswell, 2007: 20). As the aim of this study was to explore the multiple and varied meanings that contemporary white Afrikaans speakers create within the life-world, the goal of the data collection process was to gather as complex and rich data as possible. Through avoiding narrowing perceived meanings down to rigid categories and through relying extensively on the participants' beliefs and views of reality, the possibility of obtaining such qualitatively rich data was maximised. It is important to note that the researcher's own interpretations of the life-world also come into play here, and my intention was thus to interpret the meanings that participants in the study attach to their world, while remaining conscious of the implications of my own engagement in this process. Johan Mouton described this approach to observation when he stated that "*...the fact that people are continuously constructing, developing, and changing their worlds, and simultaneously also their commonsense interpretations, should be taken into account in any understanding of what social science research should be*" (Mouton, 2001: 19). My own involvement in the process of data generation, seen thusly, can be understood as an unavoidable element of truly qualitative fieldwork, something to be positively harnessed instead of ignorantly denied.

Embracing the aforementioned understanding of social reality and the individual's role in the formation thereof led to my choice of a phenomenological approach to the research process. Phenomenology discards the view held by positivists that the social and natural sciences are analogous and that similar research methods may be deployed between the two, in favour of an approach that sees the study of human consciousness and subjectivity as unique to the extent that it warrants a completely novel scientific approach (Mouton, 2001: 12). Schutz (1962: 59) clarified the rationale for this differentiation in the following way: "*The world of nature, as explored by the natural scientist, does not 'mean' anything to molecules, atoms and electrons. But the observable field of the social scientist – social reality – has a specific meaning and relevance structure for the human beings living, acting and thinking within it. By a series of common-sense constructs they have pre-selected and pre-interpreted this world in which they experience the reality of their everyday lives ... Thus, the constructs of the social scientist are, so to speak, constructs of the second degree*".

Though recent research in the biological sciences and quantum physics have shed doubt on this simplistic dichotomy between the natural and human sciences, in some cases indicating that subatomic particles and non-human, even non-organic matter is more aware of our burning microscopes than we might be ready to accept[1], acknowledging the readily apparent fact that human beings can't be studied in the same way as rock formations is sufficient for the purposes of this investigation. This study of white Afrikaans speaking identity was thus geared toward understanding the individual stories of participants phenomenologically and from a social constructivist perspective, being the result of an interpretivist ontological stance.

1.1.2. Epistemology

Regarding epistemology, the entire research process was guided by certain precepts of what Max Scheler calls "*Wissenssoziologie",* or the sociology of knowledge (Scheler, 1980: 67). The study is not only positioned according to a specific understanding of the relationship between researcher and researched during the process of knowledge uncovery, but was also conceptualised according to a certain understanding of the sources and nature of knowledge itself, as well as the various definitions and levels thereof. Concerning the former consideration, this study falls firmly within the qualitative research tradition, or paradigm. This orientation implies that, amongst other things, I expected to collaborate closely with participants, spend a considerable amount of time in the field, and eventually become an 'insider' to the individuals whose stories I would be listening to (Creswell, 2013: 20), which proved to be the case. Thus knowledge was gained through a very active data collection process that saw me, the researcher, minimising the distance, or what Creswell calls 'objective seperateness', between the participants and myself.

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[1]Cf. Sheldrake (1998a; 1998b; 2001).

Issues concerning the nature of knowledge are somewhat more intricate. The participants' knowledge stores were my primary sources of data during this study, more specifically the stocks of knowledge that individual selves use to interact with their life-worlds on a daily basis and which, in turn, are shaped by their experiences within this life-world and play a role in shaping the contents of the stories they live by. Schutz referred to this as one's 'stock of knowledge-at-hand' (Schutz, 1962: 41). The processes of knowledge formation and the sources of knowledge employed during the construction of stories are paramount, with Berger and Luckmann (1967: 26) arguing that the sociology of knowledge "... *must concern itself with everything that passes for 'knowledge' in society*". The newcomer to sociology may wonder what is meant by such a statement, are there different kinds of knowledge, and is there a hierarchy of knowledge that spouts out of such a classification? A phenomenological answer to these two questions would be an emphatic yes to the former and a definite no, at least in terms of 'importance', concerning the latter.

Johann Mouton illustrates the three main types of knowledge underlying the conceptualisation of this study when he discusses what he calls the 'three worlds', namely the world of everyday life, the world of science, and the world of metascience (Mouton, 2001: 14). The world of everyday life refers to the social, physical and symbolic worlds inhabited by people, institutions and other entities and which carry a pragmatic interest. Kinds of knowledge used by individuals to cope at this level include common sense, religious convictions, conventional wisdom, business acumen and other forms of practical know-how. The world of science superimposes itself over the world of everyday life by making phenomena in that world the object of systematic investigation. The world of science thus has an epistemic interest at its core and includes all the scientific disciplines, theoretical approaches and methodological schools of thought that have as their aim the systematic understanding of different phenomena (social, physical, psychological, etc.) within the world of everyday life. The world of metascience, in turn, exists to contemplate the nature of the world of science. In this world there exist paradigms and approaches such as the philosophy of science and the various fields dealing with ethics, research methodology and the ordering of the variables of the world of science (Mouton, 2001: 14). The presence of a metascientific dimension in any study is non-negotiable for the researcher seeking epistemic reflexivity and the continuing evolution of scientific methods and approaches into ever more precise and relevant tools for understanding reality, and an ongoing reflexive awareness of the research process and its underlying theories and philosophies thus constituted a fundamental part of this study.

The data collected during the course of this project was analysed in a way that strove to shed light on relevant issues within all three of these conceptual 'worlds' and add to our understanding of how they interact with each other. Due attention was paid to elements within individual stocks of knowledge that are relatively unique, as human beings are not interested in all objects and events in the life-world to the same extent, as well as to those that are shared and serve to inform collectively shared stories (Schutz & Luckmann, 1974: 139). Schutz referred to

these shared symbols as 'typifications', and argued that daily life is "*... above all, although not exclusively, concerned with the mastery of typical, recurrent conditions*" (Schutz & Luckmann, 1974: 139). Thus the study comprised a quest toward greater understanding through simultaneously exploring both individual and collective stocks of knowledge, or the sum total of learning and experiential knowledge brought to the table by each socially situated storyteller. In this way, light was shed on which aspects of a given story are more personal in nature and which might be interpreted as indicating more collectively informed typifications, an approach that greatly aided me in the construction of the typology of white Afrikaans speaking identity presented in chapter 5.

A final influential factor on the collected stories was anticipated to be the historical situation of the individuals interviewed. The unique history and contemporary socio-political position of white Afrikaans speakers was an important source of background knowledge, to various extents setting the scene and acting as a shared background for all of the stories told during this study. I strongly agree that, along with individual and social factors, the stories people live by are heavily informed by the political and socio-historical moment that 'writes' their lives (Andrews, Squire & Tamboukou, 2008: 4). Furthermore, all of these avenues of knowledge were explored by means of an inductive logical process (Creswell, 2013: 22). Emerging factors, as well as my experiences during data collection and analysis, had a definite influence on directing the continuation and conclusion of this study, which was conceptualised as relatively open-ended from the get-go. Thus, as will be seen throughout this dissertation, I strongly emphasise the interrelation of individual stories, not only with others originating from the same social setting, but also with the master narrative of Afrikaner history, presented in the third chapter, thus focusing on the specific but never quite losing sight of the general, which is in line with C. Wright Mills' (1959) conceptualisation of the sociological imagination.

1.1.3.   Axiology

Axiologically, it is admitted that values and biases are bound to influence the sharing and interpretation of any story, a fact that holds true for biographical narratives. Furthermore, I am aware that due to the nature of researcher and participant involvement in this study, my own values definitely came into play during the overlapping processes of data collection, analysis and representation. This is how I understand what Schutz meant by the reciprocal creation of meaning in the life-world and working with 'constructs of the second degree' (Schutz, 1962: 59). It is widely known that the subjective attitudes of both participants and researchers can influence the outcome of experiments, tending to bias findings in the direction of their preconceived expectations (Sheldrake, 1998a: 73).

Rupert Sheldrake, controversial biologist and pioneer in the use of double-blind experimental techniques in the so-called hard sciences, argues that even seemingly 'objective' disciplines like physics and chemistry are subject to experimenter effects, that our current understanding of reality is largely the result of dogmatic thinking and that our contemporary body of scientific

knowledge rests largely on untested assumptions, such as the taken for granted idea that the hard sciences cannot be subject to observer bias (Sheldrake, 1998b: 57). Given this tantalising possibility, that even the findings of the natural sciences may be tainted by the interpretations of the observer, I argue that there can be *no* interpretation-free reporting within truly qualitative social research, at least not writing that has any sociological value.

Collecting personal stories by means of a double-blind experimental procedure however is inadequate, and here we should be especially cautious of throwing all common sense out of the window for the sake of scientific dogma. The onus rests on the researcher to responsibly tread around his or her personal convictions and the effects of these convictions on the research process and the production and reproduction of knowledge. There is evidence that even staring at someone from behind may bring about an awareness of an intruding presence resulting in behavioural changes, with between 70 and 97% of the population of Europe and North America having experienced the sensation of knowing when someone was staring at them, according to various surveys (Sheldrake, 2001: 122). If this is the case, the responsibility inherent to the physically and emotionally involved role of listener is highlighted even more dramatically as one that should be engaged with using extreme caution, if contextually informative results are desired. Walking the line between observer and participant, as I did during the course of this study, is a perilous but rewarding balancing act if carried out with an acute awareness of the self, the other, the collectivity they momentarily create, the environment within which this encounter occurs, and the moment of its generation.

In order to successfully perform this often challenging balancing act, Schutz (1962: 96) advocated the temporary suspension of the social scientist's 'biographically determined situation', a term that will be dealt with in greater detail in section 1.2.1.2. Suffice to say at this stage that each individual operating in the life world possesses a unique position in, and orientation toward, this world, a position influenced by past experiences and learning, present intersubjective conditions and future expectations, his or her unique 'biographically determined situation'. According to Schutz (1962: XXVIII), this foundational structure of any individual's experience acts as the prime mover for action in the social world. In other words, one's pragmatic interest in the world of everyday life is largely informed by one's biographically determined situation. Thus, in order to successfully adopt the role of scientific observer in a life-world in which one *always* has pragmatic interests, one should strive to "... *make up his mind to observe scientifically this life-world...*", a process that entails determining "*...no longer to place himself and his own condition of interest as the center of this world, but to substitute another null point for the orientation of the phenomena of the life-world*" (Schutz, 1962: 137). During the analysis of each individual narrative, I thus attempted to understand the storyteller's perspective as far as possible, through temporarily substituting my own biographically determined situation as the main reference for engaging with the storyteller for an intersubjective mode of attention that was geared towards greater understanding of the other's unique biographically determined situation (Schutz, 1962: XXVIII) .

1.1.4.   Rhetoric and language

As this study dealt with stories and their retelling, it was impossible to ignore the role of language in the construction of social reality. Berger and Luckmann (1967: 49), after thorough consideration of the various ways through which human subjectivity can be objectified, or made manifest through expression as perceivable elements of the life-world, come to the conclusion that language is the most important system of signs employed in human society. Linguistic signification is the primary means through which intersubjective reality is created and maintained, and everyday life is first and foremost "*...life with and by means of the language I share with my fellowmen*" (Berger & Luckmann, 1967: 51).

The significance of language to this study was paramount. All data collection was carried out in Afrikaans, allowing respondents to fully articulate themselves and present their narratives through the very vessel of their stories, and subsequently their realities, namely their mother tongue. The opportunity to participate in involved one-on-one and group conversations using their first language ensured that the often overlooked social characteristics of human narratives, namely patterning, repetition and the influence of learning and the social environment, as opposed to individual memory and intrinsic values, could be given due attention (Tonkin, 1992: 97). This proved to be another indicator of the presence of more than one contemporary collectivity of white Afrikaans speakers, as certain metaphors and ideas tended to be shared by readily identifiable groups of regularly interacting (not necessarily physically) individuals.

This focus on the role of language and intersubjective communication in the formation of personal stories allowed for the possibility of gaining insight into the ways in which the social collective context exercises influence over individual narratives (Atkinson, 2007: 224). The fact that I share a mastery of Afrikaans with the respondents allowed for a greater contextual sensitivity to the issue at hand (Gubrium & Holstein, 1995: 45) as well as an improved emphatic understanding of the personal contexts used by respondents when generating their stories (Morgan, 1988: 54). Had I not conducted the interviews in the participants' first language, or engaged in analysis of a foreign language myself, much of the subtle meaning, inferences and references hidden in their stories would have been lost to me (Bernard & Ryan, 2010: 70).

The rhetorical style of the research, as might have been noticed by now, is quite informal, with the aim of easing the reader into a document that is not only readily understandable, but easily readable. When writing a qualitative research report, I believe that the researcher should strive to write engagingly, often using the first-person pronoun and employing the language of qualitative research (Creswell, 2007: 17). This continuously evolving discourse of qualitative research gives precedence to terms such as 'credibility', 'dependability' and 'confirmability' over traditionally quantitative terms like 'validity' and 'generalisability'. Even a small change, such as replacing the term 'validity' with 'plausibility', may facilitate the development of a more open-minded

approach to social inquiry (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011: 27). The reporting throughout this dissertation is personal and literary, mirroring the conversational nature of the data collection process itself and allowing the reader to immerse him/herself in the stories being told, all with the intent of generating the deeper level of intersubjective understanding necessary to successfully interpret the mysteries carried in human stories, the exact nature of which is explained in chapter 4.

1.1.5.   Methodology

Methodologically, a narrative research approach, informed by different aspects of the various branches of interpretive sociology, was adopted. The investigative process was characterised by an attitude embracing inductive logic, the contextual study of the topic at hand, and an emergent approach to research design (Creswell, 2007: 17). The ontological, epistemological and axiological arguments presented earlier, as well as the theoretical foundation of the study to be introduced in section 1.2., led to my decision to use a combination of in-depth individual and group conversations, combined and interdependently employed as dual primary methods of data collection. An in-depth explanation of my conceptualisation and application of these methods is to be found in the fourth chapter, along with the rationale behind my choice of reconceptualising what are generally known as in-depth interviews and focus groups respectively.

The importance of the shared moment and its fundamental role in shaping social reality (Collins, 2004: 05, Warr, 2007: 152), as well as my understanding of qualitative research as geared toward the solving of highly subjective mystery are likewise discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4, which offers an in-depth methodological account of the study. At this point it is important to note that the methods of data collection chosen, and the ways in which they were implemented, strove to facilitate the in-depth exploration of subjective experience and the way in which participants perceive themselves, the interactions they engage in and the world in which these interactions take place (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2003: 338), all while guarding against the assumption of an unproblematic relationship between the highly subjective collected data and its representation as 'objective findings' (May & Perry, 2011: 1). As mentioned above, a thorough methodological account of the investigative process is presented in chapter 4.

1.2. Theoretical foundation

The theoretical basis of this study comprises concepts and ideas from various streams of sociological thought within the interpretive paradigm. This section includes a concise description of each of these and the ways in which they were incorporated into the project. Over the next few pages the reader will be introduced to relevant concepts from the theoretical schools of phenomenology, reflexive sociology and existential sociology, as well as various theories relating to what sociologists generally refer to as micro-macro, or structure-agency, integration. The epistemological implications that these concepts have on the understanding of white Afrikaans speaking narratives will also be dealt with in some detail, allowing for a thorough familiarity with the theoretical orientation embraced during the research process.

1.2.1. Phenomenology

Being a major ontological influence on the conceptualisation of reality embraced throughout the course of this study, it is hard to overemphasise the impact phenomenology has had, and continues to have, on interpretive sociological thinking. The first and perhaps most famous phenomenologist in sociology was Alfred Schutz. Schutz made it his life's work to bring the ideas of certain German philosophers, most notably those of Edmund Husserl, into the mainstream of sociological thinking. These philosophers were labelled phenomenologists due to their rejection of the monistic conception of the human mind as a self-contained inner realm and reconceptualisation thereof as perpetually directed upon and toward external phenomena (Overgaard & Zahavi, 2009: 94). Concerning phenomenology as a philosophy, it is interesting to note that it has nothing to say about the political dimensions of modernity, but is oriented solely toward epistemology and method, thus primarily engaging modernity in its definition as a new conception of the mind (Sokolowski, 2008: 200). Apart from Husserl, the development of phenomenology was also influenced by the philosophical works of Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, though these thinkers play a somewhat lesser role in its sociological adaptation (Macann, 2005: IX).

Though Schutz's work has spawned various intellectual successors, only the work of Thomas Luckmann, apart from that of Schutz himself, had a major influence on the conceptualisation of this study. Luckmann went on to develop phenomenology, through his interpretation of Schutz's work, into a framework for scientific endeavour, a philosophical approach which holds true irrespective of the researcher's field or discipline (Eberle, 2010: 134). Thus, through Schutz and Luckmann's life-long labours phenomenology was not merely translated into the language of sociology, but evolved and adapted to eventually develop into the spearhead of a movement striving to understand the simultaneous perception of a shared world by a plurality of interdependent and interacting subjectivities. In order to clarify such an approach, certain important phenomenological concepts, such as the life-world, stocks of knowledge, intersubjectivity and the biographically determined situation, as well as the ontological influence of these concepts on this study will be discussed over the following few pages.

1.2.1.1. The life-world and intersubjectivity

The everyday life-world, or *"Lebenswelt",* is defined as that world which comprises "...*the foundational structures of what is prescientific, the reality which seems self-evident to men remaining within the natural attitude"* (Schutz & Luckmann, 1974: 3). This prescientific realm is the world in which you and I participate, act and engage in through our physical bodies. It is thus the scene of humankind's fundamental and paramount reality. The world of everyday life stands in contrast to other realms of reality, such as the world of dreams and the various worlds of fantasy and insanity, due to it being the only world in which individuals are readily able to understand, and be understood by, each other. It is thus the only known world in which true intersubjectivity is possible, and it is in this life-world that the two fundamental human actions take place, namely 'externalisation', or the outward manifestation of subjective reality by means of symbols, language, rituals and rules, and 'internalisation', the process through which individuals integrate aspects of the external world into their consciousness as part of the lifelong process of identity formation (Roberts, 2006: 85).

Peter Berger employs a third term in this scheme, namely 'objectivation', which is seen to refer to the process through which certain externalisations eventually attain a level of reality that lends to them the appearance of 'facts' existing outside of their human producers (Dorrien, 2001: 31). Though this process of objectivation of consciousness supposedly lies at the root of the development of culture (Backhaus, 2006: 180), it is arguable whether any real 'objective' world is ever created through externalisation, as the 'rules' of such a world do not come close to being as unbreakable as those of the truly objective, physical world studied by the empirical sciences (the rules of which likewise break down at the quantum level, a fact that doesn't seem to move most scientists at all). I will argue that to the extent that our 'objective' world is created by us, even if intersubjectively, it is not truly objective at all. Nonetheless it remains 'real' to us in its consequences, and plays an important role in creating an intersubjectively understood holistic conception of social reality. In an effort to avoid one-sidedness I do incorporate the 'objective' world into my understanding of social reality in a way that is akin to Pierre Bourdieu's conception of 'social physics', introduced in section 1.2.2.1.

A phenomenological understanding of this world challenges the view of physical reality advocated by most natural scientists, namely that the subjectively perceived world is but "...*a construct made by our minds responding to the input from other senses, and the senses react biologically to physical stimuli that are transmitted from objects*" (Sokolowski, 2008: 146). According to mathematicians, physicists and chemists the world as experienced by me is nothing more than an illusory glimpse of a theoretically real world that only science can 'see'. There are no rocks, trees, sounds or colours, only atoms and molecules, particles and waves. The exact sciences, which are so highly valued in our contemporary society, have transformed the familiar concrete world of prescientific man into a double-sided phenomenon with little space for dialogical integration of the two: the objective, scientific world standing on one side and the subjective, experienced world on the other.

According to Robert Sokolowski (2008: 148) phenomenology challenges this dichotomy by arguing that, in as far as science remains an institution within the life-world and cannot replace this world with another, it should strive to find its place within the world of everyday life. As we cannot live in the world of science and are bound by the rules and truths of the world of everyday life, or the world as experienced, science should primarily strive to complement these rules, not replace them. The phenomenologist makes plain the fact that even science itself has its roots in prescientific processes, as scientific knowledge, just like any other kind of knowledge, is intersubjectively constructed by scientists, who are in turn merely human beings operating within the life-world. The principles of science are constructed by individual subjectivities before being shared and intersubjectively built upon, thus making science, for all its transcendental properties, a typical product of the very world it questions.

Phenomenology aims to situate at least the social sciences squarely within a movement toward the unassuming understanding of readily perceived reality, as opposed to an abstract grasping toward idealised objects and states (Sokolowski, 2008: 150). Thus, a key undertaking during this study was to "...*accept the world as experienced*" (Schutz, 1982: 126), taking care not to lose sight of the participants' subjective perceptions of the life-world in favour of overtly theoretical schemata of explanation. True intersubjectivity can only exist in the experiential world we all hold in common, and makes no sense in the scientific world of idealised objects and states (Sokolowski, 2008: 152).

The existence of this concept (intersubjectivity) in Schutz's writing negates the common criticism that phenomenology tends toward solipsism by treating other subjectivities as mere phenomena experienced by the solitary ego. Far from being ego-centred, phenomenologists have given precedence to the question of other minds since the beginning of the 20th century, with two approaches toward the description of the ego's experience of others having been developed (Sokolowski, 2008: 152). The first focuses on realising the existence of other persons through becoming aware of the existence of different relations of various people toward a given object. Sokolowski sums it up: *"I may know Mr. Jones as the post office clerk, but Mrs. Jones knows him as her husband, and I know the post office clerk is also known by others under other forms of description and acquaintance"* (2008: 153). In this way one is able to potentially view an object as actually viewed by others, a possibility that strongly suggests the existence of other perceivers that are similar to, but independent of, the inquisitive self.

This realisation, that an object is or can be viewed differently and independently of my own consciousness, provides a strong case for the existence of other egos and, in fact, is what is suggested by the term intersubjectivity. An object is intersubjectively experienced precisely because it is experienced by different subjectivities at once (Sokolowski, 2008: 153). This realisation lies at the root of any study concerned with the subjective perception of a concept as ambiguous as identity. If my own subjective experience of the concept of white Afrikaans speaking identity was the only one made available to my cognisance of the life-world, I would not be bothering to conduct this research. The very existence of other selves who, as I have

learned through life-long experience, seem to have similar capacities and characteristics to myself, as well as the fact that their subjective understanding of certain objects or symbols within the life-world seem to differ from my own, as made clear through various avenues of communication, was the primary driving force behind an attempt to gain a greater understanding of the perception of these other selves regarding the object or symbol of interest, being in this case the notion of white Afrikaans speaking identity.

The second argument for the existence of multiple subjectivities is more direct. It involves realising other egos as being like myself, a conclusion that is arrived at after making certain observations, which include witnessing the existence of other bodies like my own and the apparent existence of consciousness within these bodies. The existence of consciousness outside of the self is experienced through communication with others, and through witnessing their seemingly spontaneous actions and their subjective expressions of a world experienced through mechanisms similar to the ones I use to make sense of the world around me (Sokolowski, 2008: 154).

Thus, proof of the existence of intersubjectivity is made manifest through firstly acknowledging a world held in common and secondly knowing others through comparison. Phenomenology's focus on the ego does not rule out the existence of multiple egos, it merely facilitates the establishing of a null point from which the world is observed. Any one of the billions of people on this planet is their own null point at any given time. Seen from the perspective of any given individual, others certainly exist as being alike to the self, but varying in distance from the observer. When carrying out a study like this, intersubjectivity really comes to the fore. To what extent does the concept serve to help us gain understanding of the way in which individual white Afrikaans speakers, and members of any collectivity for that matter, experience their world as shared and make sense of others, both 'near' and 'far'? This is one of the most important mysteries that this study was intended to explore.

1.2.1.2.   Stocks of knowledge and the biographically determined situation

Building further on Husserl's philosophy, Schutz (1970: 116) pointed out that all human thinking stands under the two basic assumptions of 'and so forth' and 'I can do it again'. These postulations are made possible by drawing on what phenomenologists call one's 'stock of knowledge'. An individual's stock of knowledge is built upon through the continuous accumulation of experiences and the navigation of various situational events that occur throughout his or her life, and is thus genetically and functionally related to his or her biographically determined situation, a term introduced in section 1.1.3. (Schutz & Luckmann, 1974: 100). The main importance of one's stock of knowledge rests in the fact that it allows for the mastery of one's present situation, which, like the stock of knowledge itself, is the cumulative product of all one's previous situations and, in turn, sets in motion concurrent situations, which is a process very much akin to the way in which a plotted story unfolds, an important peculiarity that I shall return to throughout this dissertation. The stock of knowledge is

thus one of the subjective self's primary means of interacting with the life-world and its constituent objects and actors.

It is important to note that successful interaction in this sense does not necessarily call for scientific or formal knowledge, but rather draws on pragmatic knowledge built up through lived experience and consisting for the most part of "*... skills, useful knowledge* [and] *knowledge of recipes*" (Schutz & Luckmann, 1974: 105). Thus the main role of the stock of knowledge in everyday life is the mastering of routine or habitual situations, with the occasional resolving of novel, atypical scenarios. Here it becomes obvious that one's upbringing and the various processes of socialisation that this process encompasses, including the early years of childhood and various cultural and religious processes of orientation, heavily influence the contents of one's stock of knowledge. Indeed, until the first problematic situation which may require spontaneous individual thinking is reached, one's stock of knowledge essentially consists of that knowledge handed to one by predecessors and peers, including various generalisations and typifications that tend to be specific to a given collectivity. Likewise, as discussed in greater detail in chapter 4, the stories we tell about ourselves tend to be heavily influenced by the shared 'narrative repertoire', or stock of genres, plots, character's, etc., readily available to members of the collectivities within which we exist.

This realisation has profound implications for the way in which members of a given collectivity perceive and engage with the life-world, as Schutz and Luckmann conclude that "... *the lifeworldly stock of knowledge is not the result of rational cognitive events in the theoretical attitude* [but] *of the sedimentation of subjective experiences of the life-world*" (1974: 123). Once this interplay between individual and collective stocks of knowledge was uncovered, the enquiry was steered into asking the question, what do white Afrikaans speakers 'know', and why or how do they know this? How is knowledge dispersed among these people and who, or what, are its sources? The same questions were applied to the stories (as vessels of knowledge) told by the individual participants. To the phenomenologically informed sociologist, knowledge is socially produced and circulated (Schutz, 1962: 14), a fact that went a long way in attempting to shed light on the origins of recurrent and collectively shared character types, themes and plots within the stories told by individual participants.

Tying in closely with the stock of knowledge is the biographically determined situation; a temporary, ever fluctuating internal status quo derived from and influenced by the same experiential and situational factors that give rise to, and maintain or remodel, the stock of knowledge. As outlined earlier, the biographically determined situation is defined as "*...not only my position in space, time, and society but also my experience that some of the elements of the world taken for granted are imposed upon me, while others are either within my control or capable of being brought within my control and, thus principally modifiable*" (Schutz, 1962: 76). The essence of one's biographically determined situation thus lies in the fact that it determines to a large degree one's expectations of the consequences of acting out in the life-world at any given time. It serves to mould an individual's ideas of what routes of action are possible and/or

desirable and, through doing so at the hand of one's prevailing interests, serves to determine which aspects of the life-world one is more or less concerned with from one moment to the next.

This is where the biographically determined situation and the stock of knowledge dialectically interact, as stocks of knowledge, being influenced by and in turn influencing individual biographically determined situations, are highly variable in content from person to person, while still being informed by collective knowledge repositories. One respondent may be more preoccupied with politics, while a second possesses specialised agricultural knowledge or knows little more than what he or she sees on the television or reads from the Bible every day. At any given time, any human being's stock of knowledge, and the stories generated from it, consists of zones of varying degrees of clarity, distinctness and precision, all of which are biographically determined (Schutz, 1962: 15). The concepts stocks of knowledge and biographically determined situation, as well as the intricate relationship between the two, served to shed light on the situational construction of stories by participants, while simultaneously lending insight into the various processes through which personal experiences are internalised and, in turn, externalised by means of verbal communication within and between collectivities and through drawing from and adding to collectively shared narrative repertoires, or stocks of knowledge. An awareness of this process made it possible to gain a better understanding of participants' knowledge of themselves and their place in the life-world, as well as the way in which this knowledge is produced, shared, interpreted and acted upon through a continuous cycle of storytelling within and between various collectivities.

1.2.2.   Reflexive sociology

In the context of this study, the term reflexive sociology refers primarily to the work of Pierre Bourdieu, who is of special interest to the interpretive sociologist due to his characteristic attempt to bridge the gap between subjectivist and objectivist modes of knowledge, as well as reconcile theory and practice within social research (Wacquant, 1992: 3; Lane, 2000: 94). In doing so Bourdieu advocated a novel approach to sociology, which he called 'Total Social Science'. In this section this concept, as well as other aspects of Bourdieu's work that were found to be relevant to the project, will be introduced and briefly discussed. It is important to note that though Bourdieu also analysed subjectivity in depth, employing terms such as 'habitus' and 'field', a sufficient foundation for such a phenomenological approach is found in the work of Schutz. For the sake of this study, I am more concerned with Bourdieu's efforts to reconcile the objectivist and subjectivist approaches to the study of social reality, though his more subjective work is touched upon in section 1.2.2.2.

1.2.2.1.   Total Social Science and the double reading

When asked to label his work, which is something he actively despised, Pierre Bourdieu settled for 'constructivist structuralism' or 'structural constructivism' (Bourdieu, 1989: 14). He was of the opinion that the structures of the physical universe, or life-world, lead what he called a 'double life', existing simultaneously as objects of the first order, independent of subjective consciousness, and as objects of the second order, as interpreted, symbolised and classified by subjective individuals and collectivities (Wacquant, 1992: 7). This double life gives rise to a 'double reading', or the existence of two highly contrasting ways in which social reality can be, and has been, analysed. These two approaches, as made manifest in sociology, he termed 'social physics' and 'social phenomenology' (Bourdieu, 1990: 135). Social physics entails an approach to social analysis which emphasises quantitative and statistical analysis (often in the economic sense, focusing on the distribution of goods and resources), while social phenomenology focuses on the created meanings and perceptions of agents involved in the various processes of distribution and appropriation of said resources.

Bourdieu saw weakness in both approaches. Social physics, or the objectivist point of view, often falls prey to the fallacy of taking its models for reality, lacking in sensitivity toward the micro-level generation of macro-regularities, while a strictly phenomenological approach can't account for the relative resilience of social structures, nor explain the origin of the classificatory systems its adherents use when explaining reality as a social construct (Wacquant, 1992: 10). To overcome this antinomy and reach a state of 'Total Social Science', it is necessary to move away from any social theory which places undue emphasis on either structural necessity or individual agency and ignores the other side of the coin. Bourdieu thus advocated an approach to sociology that embraces both objectivist and subjectivist viewpoints, and argued that unless this is done one is guilty of "...*obfuscating the anthropological truth of human practice*" (Wacquant, 1992: 10).

To counter such a mistake, Bourdieu developed the idea of 'social praxeology', a two pronged method of analysis that caters to both paradigms through engaging with the social subject matter at two *moments*, one while looking through an objectivist lens and the second while embracing the phenomenological view (Wacquant, 1992: 11). In this way the social situation is grasped both objectively, taking note of external structures and constraints, and subjectively, drawing on the lived experience of the individuals involved in constructing and interpreting it. This approach was followed during the course of this study, though my subjective focus was stronger, in contrast to Bourdieu who placed a slight emphasis on objectivist understanding, in line with the principles of Durkheim's sociological method (Wacquant, 1992: 11). These considerations strengthened the case for contemplating not only the individual narratives themselves, but also paying attention to certain external realities which may have affected their construction in some way, such as those presented by history and politics.

1.2.2.2.   Methodological relationalism and epistemic reflexivity

Before methodological relationalism is defined, let us look at its antithesis, methodological monism. We are all familiar with methodological monists and we find them everywhere. The hardcore phenomenologist who rejects structure for agency, or the unyielding functionalist who favours systems above actors, all such one-sided approaches to social analysis constitute examples of methodological monism. In contrast to these approaches, Bourdieu chose to focus on "...*the primacy of relations*" (Wacquant, 1992: 15). According to him all human beings are inclined, by the very nature of our languages, to emphasise structures and states above relationships and processes, a faux pas which results in a perpetual failure to see the true underlying mover of all social reality, namely relations. Both methodological individualism and collectivism are cast aside, as Bourdieu visualised individuals and social structures as existing first and foremost within bundles of relations. Existing within these bundles of relations, individuals act in accordance with certain restraints produced by social structures, while social structures in turn live and breathe the actions and reactions of the agents that comprise them. The usefulness of such a conception of the social world when striving to interpret individual narratives and fit them into the larger meta-narratives presented by society and history is obvious.

To illustrate this approach briefly, Bourdieu conceptually divided these bundles of relations into two types, represented by the terms 'habitus' and 'field'. The concept habitus was intended to bring about a bridge between individual action and external social structures as mutually exclusive alternate explanations for social behaviour, and refers, in very basic terms, to a subjective apparatus consisting of an individual's physical, psychological and mental orientation to the outside world, and can be seen as an idea that is analogous to the concepts of biographically determined situation and stock of knowledge discussed earlier (Jenkins, 2002: 74). The field, on the other hand, signifies the ever changing situation an actor finds him/herself immersed in at any given moment. Human action is thus seen as being the result of ongoing

individual "*...adjustment of habitus to the necessities and to the probabilities inscribed in the field*" (Wacquant, 1989: 43).

Regarding reflexivity, it is important to note that Bourdieu did not use the term only in the sense of reflexive research, or the process through which the researcher maintains an awareness of his or her own involvement in the research process. Rather, it is used here to indicate a reflection of science back upon itself, or the presence of a metascientific aspect to the investigative process, as discussed in section 1.1.2. The brand of reflexivity which Bourdieu championed is a collective enterprise that seeks to "*...buttress the epistemological security of sociology...*" through critically weighing the unconscious motives underlying sociological theory and practice (Wacquant, 1992: 36). Thus, instead of focusing solely on personal bias, true reflexivity entails an awareness of possible intellectual and scientific bias, in other words an awareness of the fact that the very conception of reality underlying a certain paradigm may lead to a distorted view of social phenomena. It is for this reason that a strong element of meta-analysis was acknowledged throughout this project. Even as science observes the world of everyday life, science itself should be the focus of continuous reflection and criticism, so as to aid its evolution into an ever more relevant and precise tool for, among other things, the study of social reality.

1.2.3. Existential sociology and the sociology of emotion

A third important influence on the conceptualisation of this study came from the field of existential sociology. Joseph Kotarba (2009: 141) notes that existentialism is not a singular paradigm or philosophy, but rather a way of seeing, feeling, and thinking about life that is heavily influenced by the works of certain French philosophers, most notably Jean-Paul Sartre. Existentialism as a discipline focuses on the irrational aspects of life, the role of emotions and passion in social action, and the concept of human freedom and the consequences and responsibilities attached thereto.

Existentialists reject the arguments of structuralists, or those that view social structures and society as existing and perpetuating themselves independently of individual intervention. They focus on 'brute being', or the ways in which our innermost selves, the feelings and perceptions we experience, lie at the foundation of manifest social reality (Kotarba, 2009: 143). This approach counters the popular argument that reason dominates feeling, and that it should always do so. Early existentialists, like Jack Douglas and Michel Foucault, focused on the 'darker side' of human existence and the various ways in which certain human urges are actually more potent and important than the social conventions that serve to stifle them (Kotarba, 2009: 144).

More recent works have focused on the lighter side of emotions and how they serve to perpetuate human society and bond individuals together into meaningful collectivities. There has also been a revived interest in the self as the seat of these emotions and the various ways in which the self engages with society. Within the context of this study the role of emotions could not be overlooked, neither could the various processes of becoming that the self undergoes throughout

the life cycle. These two concepts influence identity formation and the ways in which individuals perceive, and are likely to act toward, objects in the life-world, which in turn has an important effect on the stories they tell, the elements that comprise said stories, the ways in which these tales are told, and to whom they are told. We will return to the similarities between lived human life and told stories in chapter 4.

1.2.4. Micro-macro and agency-structure integration

Another relatively recent development in contemporary sociology, and one that definitely made its influence felt during the course of this study, is the simultaneous rise of a concern with micro-macro integration in US sociology and a growing interest in the relationship between agency and structure in European sociology (Ritzer, 2010: 499). These movements can be seen as analogous to the concepts of methodological relatonalism and Total Social Science developed by Bourdieu and discussed in section 1.2.2.1.

Both these approaches entail moving away from a one-sided emphasis on either micro or macro-sociology, paradigmatically most clearly represented by symbolic interactionism and structural functionalism respectively, toward what George Ritzer (2010: 502) calls the 'integrated paradigm', an approach to sociology that covers all aspects of social reality, from individual thought and action to global systems. In his work, as illustrated in Figure 1, Ritzer focuses on both micro-macro considerations and levels of subjectivity and objectivity and emphasises the dialectical relationship between the four resulting 'major levels of social analysis'.

Figure 1: Major levels of social analysis (adapted from Ritzer, 1981: 152)

Macroscopic

I. Macro-objective. Examples include society, law, bureaucracy, architecture, technology and language.

II. Macro-subjective. Examples include culture, norms and values.

Objective — Subjective

III. Micro-objective. Examples include patterns of behaviour, action, and interaction.

IV. Micro-subjective. Examples include the various facets of the social construction of reality.

Microscopic

During the course of this study on the subjective experience of white Afrikaans speaking identity, the role played by the interrelationship between these levels was continuously acknowledged. It might mistakenly be thought that this approach advocates an in-depth inquiry into all the levels of social analysis, but that is not the case. Ritzer identified three existing paradigms, namely the social facts paradigm, the social definition paradigm and the social behaviour paradigm, each one dealing with its respective level of analysis in great depth (Ritzer, 1975: 158).

The integrated paradigm provides more of a general framework for the researcher's awareness while he or she operates within a specific paradigm. Thus, this study still focused primarily on the micro-subjective level, comprising the various aspects of the social construction of reality, while remaining open to the influence of the other levels. In the context of this study this simply means that, while the participants' individual narratives were at the core of the research process, due attention was also given to influential factors originating in the macro and objective spheres, ranging from issues of group interaction and the narrative repertoire of the collectivities within which individual stories are situated, to various broader historical, social and political considerations.

1.3.   Conclusion

This chapter introduced the theories and philosophies underlying the epistemological, ontological and methodological approach embraced during the various stages of this study. The importance of phenomenology, existential sociology and agency-structure integration to the conceptualisation, implementation and successful conclusion of the study was highlighted, alongside an ontological and epistemological conceptualisation of the study as conforming to certain views regarding the intersubjective nature of the construction and interpretation of social reality. Now that the philosophical foundation has been laid, and I have outlined my approach toward understanding the data encountered during the investigative process, it is time to look at what exactly I intended to investigate. The next chapter will introduce important concepts, like identity, race, religion and nationalism. When reading through Chapter 2 it is useful to keep in mind the foundation laid in this chapter, as it forms the backbone of the process of interpreting the concepts that are to be defined as relevant over the following few pages.

Chapter 2: Defining identity

Now that we have a clear picture of the philosophical foundation underlying the study, we have reached a point where it is necessary to address two fundamental questions pertaining to any research project, one theoretical and the other methodological (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000: 7). The first, theoretical question is *what* exactly is to be the object of enquiry. This chapter, along with the next, represents an attempt to answer that question in the context of this study, while the second question is introduced and answered in chapter 4. Over the following few pages certain concepts central to the conceptualisation of the research process will be introduced, defined and elaborated upon. This chapter specifically deals with the concept identity and its relationship to race, religion and nationalism, three concepts seen as forming the foundation of most historical conceptions of white Afrikaans speaking identity. As it plays a central role throughout this dissertation, it is important that the use and meaning of identity in the specific context of this study is fully understood. Identity is defined in various, often antagonistic ways by different scholars, making it necessary to provide some background as to my understanding and use of the term throughout this dissertation. After looking at identity and the issues linking it to the three concepts mentioned above, I will turn to the synthesis of the theory of identity embraced as a guideline throughout the research process. Firstly, let us define what exactly is meant by identity in the context of this study.

2.1. Identity as an ambiguous concept

As the title of this section suggests, contemporary sociology finds itself in a problematic situation when it comes to defining identity. One would think that the meaning of such an oft-used term should be quite obvious, but taking a closer look at the concept and its usage paints a different picture altogether. The opening section of this chapter attempts to address this confusion by firstly investigating the ambiguous nature of the concept, and secondly by looking at how identity has historically been and presently continues to be linked to race, religion and nationalism. This section creates a secure foundation for understanding the use of the term identity throughout the rest of this dissertation.

"*The worst thing one can do with words* […] *is to surrender to them*". Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper (2000: 1) used this Orwellian quote to initiate a debate on the concept of identity and how it has been used and abused within the social sciences and humanities, and they had good reason for doing so. In their article, they argue that identity has been hijacked by so-called soft constructivism to the point that, wherever the term is used, it either means too little, too much, or nothing at all. If identities are indeed purely multiple, fluid and constantly under construction, as popularly conceived in many circles of contemporary social science, we are left with an ephemeral concept that could hardly be the subject of fruitful sociological analysis. Such a one-sided understanding of the concept is ill-equipped to acknowledge and interpret the often

singular and coercive ways in which identity manifests itself in the world of everyday life, especially in the realm of politics. The terms 'Afrikaner' and 'Boer', and all that they traditionally imply, are certainly not fluid constructs, at least not for those who sometimes almost fanatically bear their mark. Thus, regarding collective identity, it is necessary to temporarily step into the world of social physics (as Bourdieu [1990; 1992] would suggest). Constructivist ideas might be enough to investigate identity in its role as a highly subjective, individual matrix of beliefs, attitudes and interactional alignments, but once it becomes externalised to the degree that so-called objectivation has taken place, that is, once it has become a concept in and of itself, independent of the subjectivities that created it in the first place, as is undeniably the case with the concepts 'Afrikaner' and 'Boer', it gets a bit trickier.

Historically, the concept of identity has been used in the West since the earliest epochs of ancient Greek philosophy to give a name to the notions of "... *permanence amidst manifest change, and of unity amidst manifest diversity*" (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000: 2). The social sciences co-opted the term in the 1960's, with psychology, through the work of Erik Erikson, being the first discipline to use it as an analytical category. Following the various ethnic and youth movements of this time, the concept quickly spread across various disciplines and national borders, leading to Robert Coles referring to issues of identity and identity crises as "... *the purest of clichés...*" as early as the mid-1970's (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000: 3). This tendency toward the overuse of identity as a category of analysis and its consequent loss of meaning, what Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 2) refer to as the 'identity crisis', continues to this day.

Yet the term identity is used in the title of this dissertation, and in that of the overarching research project, for exactly this reason. Identity's multiplicity of meaning allows for a multidimensional approach toward understanding the issues raised by the various storytellers who participated in the study. White Afrikaans speaking identity is certainly not a concept limited to the subjective sphere. It has strong social, political and historical connotations which, if ignored, would certainly leave this dissertation without much value. Thus the aim of this study was not to extensively explore the term identity and reconceptualise it, but rather to use it as is, albeit as a concept that means different things to different people, even to scientists at different levels of analysis and working from within different paradigms. The foundation of this study lies in its focus on the intersubjective creation of social reality through perceptual meaning-making processes, and this is also the case in its exploration of identity. The work of Brubaker and Cooper does however allow for a greater sensitivity toward the complex nature of the concept, as well as the ways in which it has been used and abused personally, politically and historically.

Concerning the context of this study, an understanding of identity as multi-dimensional and possessing a degree of fluidity is inescapable. It is merely also kept in mind that, apart from the very subjective development of individual identity, there exists other levels of influence which need to be taken into account if a holistic view of the topic at hand, being the various contemporary manifestations of white Afrikaans speaking identity and how these are informed

by various subjective, social, historical and political forces and eventually externalised in the form of stories, is to be achieved.

2.2.   Themes of white Afrikaans speaking identity

As is clear from the previous section, I relied upon the recent work of Rogers Brubaker (2000 [with Cooper]; 2004; 2009; 2011) wherever the concept of identity was engaged with, as he has written extensively about the conceptual difficulties surrounding our understanding of the term and has offered various ways in which we may overcome these. An important point to keep in mind when reading the rest of this chapter is that the three concepts taken to be at the foundation of historical definitions of white Afrikaans speaking identity, or at least the most widely encountered externalisations thereof, namely race, religion and nationalism, are contested terms. They designate large fields of research in their own right and all of them are understood in seemingly antithetical ways by people situated in different collectivities and social settings (Brubaker, 2011: 1).

Given this situation, the aim of this chapter is not to 'objectively' explain how identity relates to race, religion or nationalism, but to endeavour to find a way of successfully investigating existing relations between these concepts and the individuals and collectivities under study. It is important to remember what Bourdieu (1990; 1992) tried to say; that the search for either macro or micro causes should be substituted by a more fruitful investigation into the readily observable bundles of relations that manifest through the synthesis of the two (micro and macro) in everyday life. Why concepts are related is a question that, to the phenomenologist, is not only impossible to answer, but even absurd to ask, as any answer to such a question presupposes a certain unquestionable claim to truth. The only scientifically valid question is *how* these concepts relate to each other within the reality being investigated, and this is the question that facilitated my approach to the contemporary mystery of white Afrikaans speaking identity.

The following guidelines informed this approach and greatly aided me in the conceptualisation of such an intricate network of relations (Brubaker, 2011: 2):

1. Religion, nationalism and race were treated as analogous phenomena, at least in their conceptualisation as analytical categories.

2. Attempts were made to point out ways in which religion and race help us to understand certain characteristics of nationalism. In the case of the historical Afrikaner, issues related to religion and race serve to uncover certain facts concerning the origins, power and distinctive character of the Afrikaner nationalism of the 20th century. As seen in chapter 5, these issues still seem to interact in much the same way among especially conservative and fundamentalist white Afrikaans speakers today.

3. Race and religion, or rejections thereof, were treated as potentially formative components of nationalism in its intersubjective manifestation, and the ways in which these concepts intertwine and interpenetrate each other were investigated.

These guidelines ensured a firm foundation for studying the relationship between nationalism, race and religion in the context of this study and, while they may not be universally applicable, were of paramount importance when it came to the successful conceptualisation and implementation of this project.

"*Once at the centre of South African identity, Afrikaners now find themselves on the scrapheap, and prone to the same old identity crisis that used to haunt them throughout the 19th century under British rule, and which was only resolved by the suffering of the Anglo-Boer war*" (Davies, 2009: 87). These words, uttered by Dan Roodt, one of a plethora of self-appointed custodians of Afrikaans culture, represent the feelings of a significant proportion of white Afrikaans speakers, as evidenced by the narratives collected during the course of this study. This comment, with its gloomy implications and controversial assumptions, is a reflection of what many white Afrikaans speakers see as their phenomenological truth. If in doubt just turn to the letter column of any Afrikaans newspaper or magazine. Note the centrality of the ever-ambiguous term identity, indicating a certain taken-for-granted collection of identifications, memberships and characteristics seen as inclusive of all 'Afrikaners', and the tossing about thereof in the shameless guise of a pseudo-war cry, and the urgency with which this concept needs to be clarified becomes apparent immediately.

The following sections represent an attempt to do just that. Over the following few pages the factors that constitute the foundation of historical Afrikaner identity, at least as envisioned at the moment of critical mass that was the height of apartheid, will be identified and investigated. Before an analysis of the history of Afrikaner self-identification commences, it is necessary to briefly explore race, religion and nationalism, three concepts that seem to pervade the most widespread notions of white Afrikaans speaking identity. These three concepts, certainly some of the most controversial within contemporary sociology, are of critical importance when it comes to contextually understanding the rest of this dissertation. When one studies the existing literature on the history and identity development of the Afrikaner as a collectivity, it becomes obvious that these concepts lie at the core of any mainstream, readily accepted and understood historical definition of that collectivity. After looking at these concepts, an attempt is made at constructing a workable definition of identity that fits the ontological and epistemological foundation of the study. As mentioned earlier, the jury is still out regarding a definite description of identity, but it would be impossible to investigate identity without at least a general understanding of what is meant by the term where it is used.

2.2.1.   Race

"*Sociologists usually view racial and ethnic groups as deriving from social interactions and social definitions in which physical and cultural characteristics are distinguished and used as identifiers or markers in relationships*" (Wilson, 2007: 237). While this statement mirrors the mainstream definition of race at the moment, as reflected in a contemporary encyclopaedia of sociology[2], the issue is far from settled, with understandings and definitions of this controversial, yet undeniably concrete issue continuing to be hotly debated between representatives of a wide range of scientific, philosophical and political inclinations. This section will attempt to highlight the various current understandings of race and shed some light on the contemporary situation regarding white Afrikaans speakers and their relationship to the continuing race debate.

Before we delve deeper into the concept of race, a short explanation of the differences between race and ethnicity is in order. Social scientists usually use the term race to refer to physical distinctions between populations, most notably biological variables like skin and eye colour, while ethnicity is used to refer to distinctions based on language, religion and other cultural variables (Frable, 1997: 145). Unwittingly confusing these two terms, as too often happens in social research, could easily lead to distorted data, which is outright dangerous in a case as sensitive as this.

A certain preoccupation with race has long defined the historical Afrikaners and their identity in the eyes of the international community, and understanding the origins of this fixation is key to successfully undertaking a study of this kind. According to noted Afrikaner historian Hermann Giliomee, this fascination with racial classification, though present since the earliest stages of European colonisation, really took on a unique flavour among white Afrikaans speakers during the 1700's (Giliomee, 2009b: 28). Though the factors underlying this development and its continued expression and refinement over the next three centuries are to be explained in more detail in the next chapter, suffice to say at this point that average white Afrikaans speakers have historically viewed their whiteness, or European heritage, as representing a fundamental part of their identity and arguably continue to do so in the present.

Ever since the Second World War race has been a controversial topic in the West, and it is hard to find a suitable niche for a productive debate around this concept in a society that strives to replace the very idea of socially significant biological differences between populations with an understanding of race as a purely socially constructed system of typification (MacDonald, 2006: 1). This shift, representing merely the latest development in the Western world's understanding of the concepts 'us' and 'them', has been largely lacking among many white Afrikaans speaking communities. The reasons for this are varied, contentious and often controversial, but always

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[2]Bryant, C.D. & Peck, D.L. (eds.). (2007). *21st century sociology: A reference handbook.* London: Sage.

thought-provoking, and will be explored at the hand of the historical development of the Afrikaner collectivity presented in the next chapter.

Certain arguments might be made in favour of the relatively new idea that there exists "*....cross-regional variation in understandings and configurations of ethnicity, race, and nationhood*" (Brubaker, 2009: 22). Brubaker argues that ideas like race and nationality represent intricate concepts that are more likely to be continuously reconfigured than superseded, and the data presented in chapter 5 seem to corroborate this view. The centrality of the term, along with unique geographic and historical factors that, up until now, have been lacking in the developmental process of most other populations of European origin, may aid us in an explanation of why race remains an important issue in the debate around white Afrikaans speaking identity.

Race is a concept in regard to which it is impossible not to possess a strong personal opinion. There are those who view it as a thoroughly modern invention and are positive that "*...what is culturally created can be culturally deconstructed*" (Hannaford, 1996: XV). Thinkers of this persuasion point out that, before the so-called myths of race existed, people were aware that societies were comprised of free-willed individuals who owed loyalty not to any semi-religious notions of descent and relation, but to worthy civic institutions. Ancient descriptions of seemingly mixed populations have been used to support such claims (Snowden, 1991: 9) and some scholars have gone to great lengths to prove that the word race, as currently understood, did not exist in any European language until the mid-sixteenth century, when it was introduced from Arabic by way of Spain (Hannaford, 1996: 5).

Up until that time similar notions were only used in identifying individual generations or bloodlines, most notably those of royal families. Before the 1500's people were more likely to group themselves in terms of religion or even language, while the advent of the term race saw the rise of the ethnic group as a unit of classification and belonging. Bruce Baum (2006: 22) seconds this notion when he states that "*...there was no notion of a Caucasian race in the years between 1000 and 1648. In fact, the 'race' concept itself was introduced by European elites only near the end of this period, in the seventeenth century, after the rise of the Atlantic slave trade and massive enslavement of 'black' Africans*".

While others argue that race has always been obvious, citing the same ancient records and art as the opposing side, as well as the easily observable fact that "*…superficial differences between races do exist in nature, and these are readily recognized*" (Hacking, 2005: 102), the goal of this study is not to choose sides in this debate or state an opinion on the validity or suitability of race as a classificatory concept. Our concern is solely with how popular *perceptions* of race have developed and transformed over the last few centuries, especially among populations of European extraction in general and Afrikaner descent in particular. Be the ancient situation as it may, by the late middle ages certain factors had coalesced which caused the inhabitants of Europe to adopt an ever more 'race-like' notion of classification, which eventually evolved into

modern racial thought. Cedric Robinson (2000: 67) points out the following three historical developments as paramount:

1. The Dark Ages[3], which he sees as a temporary retardation in European social life due largely to Islamic domination of the Mediterranean at that time. As a result of this isolation the people of Europe, or Christendom as it was alternatively called, turned inward and started to develop a notion of the other, initially defined by religion but later by race, as somehow irreconcilably alien and inherently inferior.

2. The inclusion of people from the Americas, Asia and Africa into the emerging world system that took the place of merchant capitalism and late feudalism. The lines between 'us' and 'them' were drawn largely according to notions of religion and the belief that the slave trade at this time served as evidence for a natural order in which Europeans occupied the very pinnacle of evolution. Contemporary philosophy, religion and early science served to support this view.

3. The dialectic of colonialism and resistance that started in the seventeenth century and continues today. During this time the ideas of inclusion and exclusion first formed by a Christian Europe in direct competition with the Muslim world rapidly developed into a cluster of identity markers that was acted out globally as Europe's international reach increased.

In due course modern racial thought had developed and the idea of superiority or inferiority according to one's racial affiliation had become almost universal among Europeans. The attitude of Christian clergy toward Muslims and Jews after the reconquest of Spain is telling. Even after accepting the Christian faith, the 'others' were socially and legally made aware of the fact that their ancestors' sins against God were carried on in their blood, and soon laws were passed to protect the 'purity' of 'genuine' Christian blood from being tainted by admixture with the "*conversos*" and "*moriscos*" (Baum, 2006: 32). Whatever the factors that influenced its emergence, by the late seventeenth century, when white colonisation of Southern Africa began in earnest, the modern concept of race had developed into a "*...new epistemology of human difference*" (Baum, 2006: 40). By the mid-1800's the races of humanity were 'scientifically' classified and ranked in a hierarchy with blacks at the bottom and whites on top (Elam & Elam, 2012: 188) and the term 'race' had become all-pervading.

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[3] Though some scholars question the use of the term Dark Ages to refer to the Middle Ages, I prefer using the former in this context as it does not simply denote the historical era surrounding the first millennium CE in mere chronological terms, but refers more specifically to the interim of intellectual and philosophical stagnation following the fall of the Western Roman Empire and preceding the Renaissance.

During the 1960's attitudes were changing though, and perceptions of race were starting to be seen as socially informed, eventually leading to an understanding of race as a social construct. The work of black writers such as Frantz Fanon, coupled with the horrific extremes to which European fascist governments had taken the 'science' of eugenics during the Second World War, which rapidly moved from identifying supposedly inferior hereditary traits to the wholesale elimination of groups of people deemed to be undesirable from a racial viewpoint (Bailey & Garland-Thomson, 2010: 411), paved the way toward our current understanding of any form of racism as morally apprehensible and severely punishable by rational law (Elam & Elam, 2010: 189). There are indications that the tide of understanding is turning once again, though.

Since entering the era of the genome in the late 20th century, and discovering that an individual's race may accurately be deducted from specific DNA sequences, there has been a slow tendency toward the re-biologisation of race, at least in some circles (Fausto-Sterling, 2010:165; Elam & Elam, 2010: 186). There are indications that just as the search for a 'gay' gene has been absorbed into the public debate on gay identity[4], the acceptance of certain biological discoveries regarding the genetics of race is currently contributing not only to our factual knowledge regarding the biological aspect of identity, but through our beliefs and internalisations of the implications of such knowledge, to the very ways in which collective identities are constructed through racial and ethnic affiliation (Fausto-Sterling, 2010: 165). The contribution of modern genetics to our understanding of identity is however hampered by the on-going nature versus nurture debate. In other words we are currently limited in our ability to incorporate biological findings as explanatory of certain actions or behaviours related to identity formation, due simply to the fact that the current framework of human science tends to pit nature against culture instead of envisioning a natural symbiosis between the two.

Perhaps the most important lesson to learn from this resurgence of biological arguments for the existence of race, is that attitudes to race tend to be cyclical. Thus, though we may readily be able to see an 'advance' against racism throughout human history, "*...race itself is dynamically usable*" (Elam & Elam, 2010: 187). The role of race in identity formation then is extremely controversial and there is little agreement on the topic, except that it does play a role. For the sake of this study I attempted to reconstruct and understand the perceptions of the participants themselves, who, without exception, noted their status as 'white' to be foundational to their sense of self. Race is real to many white Afrikaans speakers, liberal or conservative, and the next chapter will provide a possible explanation for why this is the case, by looking at the Afrikaners' historical development as a collectivity.

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[4]Cf. Brookey (2002), Copeland & Hamer (1994).

2.2.2.   Religion

Before getting into any detail, it is useful to attempt a definition of the concept religion. The earliest sociological outline thereof was given by Emile Durkheim, who thought religion to represent a "*…unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say things set apart and forbidden – beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them*" (Durkheim, 1965: 62). While this definition has been widely criticised for, among other things, being Eurocentric, it does prove useful in the context of this study. White Afrikaans speakers are indeed of mostly European origin and it can be argued that their traditional religion is even more so. The theologian Paul Tillich broadened the concept when he stated that religion involves issues of ultimate concern (Coleman, 1997: 297). These 'ultimate concerns' boil down to the human fear of death, and religion historically offered a way of dealing with this fear. These strategies weren't always positive, but, as Durkheim would say, they were functional nonetheless.

According to Peter Berger (1967: 22), religious communities objectify their belief systems to protect themselves from meaninglessness and as a shield against the fears inherent to uncertainty, a viewpoint that helps to explain the central role the historical Afrikaners' faith played in the history and development of a unique national character and the infamous policies that served to give meaning and certainty to an emergent nation in a brave new world.

Like race, religion has traditionally been a bastion of white Afrikaans speaking identity. The early European settler forefathers of the historical Afrikaners often referred to themselves primarily as Christians, a self-identification that, at least during the first two centuries of white settlement at the Cape, held more weight than nationality or even skin colour (Giliomee, 2009b: 14). As the earliest European settlers were drawn mainly from Germany and the Netherlands, joined somewhat later by a significant number of French Huguenots fleeing Catholic persecution (Heese, 1971: 21), the result was a settler population with a faith rooted firmly in Protestantism. Furthermore, the dominant expression of this particular faith at the Cape was thoroughly Dutch, with the strongly Calvinist teachings of the Dutch Reformed Church, along with the Dutch language, enjoying official endorsement by the VOC, the Netherlands' powerful East-India Company which, for all intents and purposes, founded the Cape colony in 1652 (Giliomee, 2009b: 33).

It is interesting to note that religion ties the other two concepts of interest, namely race and nationalism, together in a very peculiar way in the historical case of the Afrikaner. It has been argued that the Christian religiosity of the early settlers may have given rise to the earliest forms of crude racism, and it is well-known that the Afrikaner nationalism of the 20th century, which eventually spawned the ideology of apartheid, was a thoroughly Christian nationalism. Regarding this possibility, Winthrop Jordan, contemplating the racial political history of the US, which is useful for purposes of comparison, remarks that, from as early as the 17th century "*… the concept embedded in the term Christian seems to have conveyed much of the idea and feeling*

of we as against they: to be Christian was to be civilized rather than barbarous, English rather than African, white rather than black..." (Jordan, 1974: 51).

This sentiment was prevalent in many contemporary European colonies, including the 17th century Cape. Because the Cape was not colonised by people of a single nationality the emphasis tended to fall even more strongly on Christianity, and indirectly but later more overtly, on whiteness, as the overarching prerequisite for inclusion in the 'civilised' community (Giliomee, 2009b: 32). It was a widely held religious accusation, namely that members of the darker skinned races are descendants of Noah's cursed son Ham and thus perpetually tainted, that eventually led to the Dutch Reformed Church formulating a policy of segregated worship, which was one of the first of many social conventions based on skin colour that South Africa would see throughout its troubled history (Giliomee, 2009b: 84). Christianity thus became synonymous with whiteness and citizenship, and the rights and privileges associated therewith. This idea was to be carried through to its ideological climax during apartheid, when biblical references and comparisons between the Afrikaner and the ancient Israelites were the order of the day, even in the highest social and political circles, and this peculiar pathos continues to influence certain Israelite Boer sects today, in an even more extreme manner[5].

Religion served not only as a foundation for white identity in the early Cape settlement, but also stood in a rather intricate relationship to slavery and the rights of coloured people. Seeing as owning a Christian slave was an inexcusable act of offense against God, many burghers never allowed their slaves to be baptised. This led to the rapid rise and spread of Islam, which still characterises the religious convictions of many coloured South Africans, especially in the Western Cape Province (Worden, 1985: 98). Inevitably there are those who disagree with this interpretation, one of the most notable being the eminent Afrikaner philosopher, André du Toit. Du Toit calls the view that the Afrikaner's peculiar religious development is directly responsible for the atrocities of apartheid the Calvinist paradigm of Afrikaner history, and goes on to state that this "*...cluster of constructs, which has been used to explain and justify racial inequality and repression in latter-day Afrikaner-dominated societies, constitutes a historical myth...*" (Du Toit, 1983: 920). Nonetheless, as emphasised by Gladys Ganiel in a recent study on religion and transformation in South Africa, religious institutions still have the power to effectively 'control' public life and heavily influence the content of collective identities through the mass internalisation of certain ideologies (Ganiel, 2007: 3). It should be pointed out once again that historical systems of social inequality, apartheid being a relevant example in this case, were often reinforced through religious justification.

Regarding this relationship between religion and identity, it should be kept in mind that "*...religious identity* [refers] *to a particular way of approaching difference*" (Werbner, 2010: 233). Through religion individuals and collectivities develop an internalised sense of boundaries regarding otherness and relatedness, and of the perceived powers that struggle to preserve and

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[5] Cf. Davies (2009: 4).

challenge these boundaries. Religious identity, in those that possess it, comes most strongly to the fore in times of turmoil and in times of peace, a strange reflection of religion's dual roles as 'includer' and 'excluder'. This duality may be explained in part by the fact that, even though religion tends to be internalised and made personal to a significant degree, religious emblems, or totems, serve to "...*perpetuate society beyond the life of any specific individual*" (Werbner, 2010: 234). A successfully perpetuating religion, like any successful story, has a life of its own and, as a social power above and beyond that of the individual, tends to both dominate and protect its adherents.

Those who accept the yoke of religion create through this process of subordination not only a major element of identity for themselves, but something that tangibly impacts the lives of those who believe differently and even those who do away with religion altogether. Religious identity is produced largely through power struggles within and between different religious groupings and is so embedded in ritual, mystery and groupthink that I struggle to make sense of it as anything other than an example of anti-identity. Nevertheless, for some it is the be all and end all of existence. The alliance of religiously minded individuals to their belief of choice is an intricate one. At times the roles of master and servant become confused, and religious bigotry has been at the centre of many a violent and inhuman act, as in the case of the various religious justifications offered for racism and slavery throughout the ages. At other times however, we have wondered at the selflessness and wisdom of religious figures. There is thus a broad spectrum of identity politics inherent to contemporary religion, from the fascist and xenophobic to the humanist and liberal, though the rise of a unique kind of religious nationalism, most visible in the Jewish settlers of Palestine and certain extremist Hindus in India but also observable on a smaller scale, as is the case with the pseudo-Boers[6] of South Africa's Northern Cape province, merits our awareness and future investigation.

These religious nationalists draw sharp boundaries between themselves and the 'other', with the inclusion of a strong territorial focus in their claims to self-actualisation (Werbner, 2010: 248). Whatever the case, religion seems to be most commonly enacted momentarily, at least in the case of the average religious person, and there are few who consistently act out their religious beliefs outside the setting of ritual and interaction within their religious communities (Werbner, 2010: 247). At this point I can at most see religion, in the guise of powerful shared myths, as an informing theme and driving force behind the stories of those tellers who incorporate it, thus any value beyond the explanatory is beyond the scope of this study. The historical development of the relationship between the Afrikaner and religion is discussed in greater detail in chapter 4.

A final interesting note on the religious characteristics of the historical Afrikaners is the persistent presence of "*sieners*'" (seers), rogue mystics who are acknowledged in some circles as latter day prophets (De Villiers, 2011: 85). Throughout white Afrikaans speaking history these

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[6] A term I coined for a small subset of contemporary white Afrikaans speakers with extreme, often ahistorical and tribalist religious tendencies. More on that in chapter 5.

medicine men and nomadic preachers are to be found, to many of whom miraculous deeds and oracular powers are ascribed. This is however a good example of the historical Afrikaner's 'hidden' history, which, along with things such as "*daggatee*" (Marijuana tea), a once widespread elixir, the recipe of which was known to any competent Boer "*ouma*", and the widespread historical incidence of high-profile mixed marriages, like that of Coenraad de Buys, who founded a whole mixed race community with his various native wives[7], were strategically neglected by the 20th century scribes of orthodox Afrikaner history, further confounding the mystery of contemporary white Afrikaans speaking identity

2.2.3. Nationalism

Afrikaner nationalism can be seen as being largely informed by the preceding two factors, namely white Afrikaans speakers' membership within the white race, and their traditional loyalty to the Dutch Reformed variety of protestant Christianity. Where and when this nationalism first reared its head constitutes a heated debate in and of itself, and there are various candidates for the position of history's first Afrikaner nationalist. The earliest hopeful, a young man named Hendrik Biebouw, made his appearance sometime in March 1707 when, according to the official records of the then landdrost of Stellenbosch, Johannes Starrenburg, he and a few of his friends engaged in a rather cacophonous drunken ramble down the village's main street. After being admonished by the landdrost, Biebouw reportedly retorted with "*...I shall not leave. I am an Afrikaander, even if the landdrost beats me to death or puts me in jail. I shall not, nor will be silent*" (Giliomee, 2003: 22).

Though he was imprisoned and eventually banished for his behaviour, it is doubtful whether the intentions behind his use of the term "*Afrikaander*" held much in common with the values attached to it later. Hendrik's father, Dietlof, was reportedly extremely poor and even had a daughter with one of his slaves (Du Preez, 2003: 27), and the multicultural environment Hendrik experienced at home surely had an impact on his using those famous words. Indeed, at the early Cape, the term Afrikaner was originally used to refer to natives or the offspring of slaves and free blacks and the literal Afrikaans meaning of the word is, quite simply, 'African' (Giliomee, 2003: 22). Given the circumstances, it simply does not carry much weight to argue that Biebouw implied any sophisticated Euro-African identity when he referred to himself as an African.

Similar instances of identity confusion riddle the past of white Afrikaans speakers, and it becomes necessary to "*...make the category 'nation' the object of analysis, rather than use it as a tool of analysis*" (Brubaker, 2004: 116). Nation is another one of those terms we take for granted in our daily lives. We think the meaning of the term is staring us in the face when, in fact, it becomes apparent that it is rare even for two like-minded individuals to share the same conception thereof. One need only trigger a debate about loyalty and patriotism to see that the

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[7]Buysdorp (Buys Town), with somewhere between 300 and a few thousand autonomous inhabitants, all descendants of these relationships, still exists in the far north of South Africa's Limpopo Province.

idea of a nation, in as far as it informs certain dimensions of individual and collective identity, is not universally shared and understood. Max Weber, the father of interpretivist sociology, bravely stated that "*...when reference is made in a sociological context to a 'state', a 'nation', a 'corporation', a 'family', or an 'army corps', or to similar collectivities, what is meant is* […] *only a certain kind of development of actual or possible social actions of individual persons*" (Weber, 1964: 102). Here Weber was commenting on the major faux pas of confusing the legal concept of the state and the collective behaviours that it exists to govern, with some subjectively desirable visualisation of the end-goal of social existence.

When examining the various nationalist movements of the past, it becomes clear that individual thought processes are almost always at the core of fundamental social changes. Individual action, in this case a drive from nationalists to bring about a revolution in how members of the putative nation identify themselves, lies at the core of nationalism proper (Brubaker, 2004: 116). Only through actively encouraging potential members to redefine themselves and understand themselves as first and foremost belonging to a certain nation, whereas religion or some other factor may have comprised their primary identity affiliation up to that point, is a movement toward a polity *"...of and for the putative nation..."* born (Brubaker, 2004: 116).

The Afrikaners' history has its fair share of these individuals and movements, which are to be explored in greater detail in the next chapter. The very fact that contemporary Afrikaner nationalism, if it exists at all, is not the same as that espoused at the height of apartheid, gives one an indication of the way in which such social movements do not represent manifestations of the collective will of an unchanging "*volk*", but rather the intellectual conquest and super-ordination of the will of the few over the minds of the many. Brubaker aptly sums up the situation when he says that "*...not only are different nations imagined in different ways, but the same nation is imagined in different ways at different times – indeed often at the same time, by different people*" (Brubaker, 2004: 122). The collected narratives and the often conflicting stories told through them strongly support this view, as will be seen in chapter 5.

Furthermore, some nations can be seen as joinable in time, while others are more exclusive. The case of the Afrikaner nation, at least in the mainstream vision thereof, is more of an instance where nation is imagined as "*...an ethnocultural community distinct from the citizenry of the state*" (Brubaker, 2004: 122). This understanding of the Afrikaner nation, even among its most liberal proponents, will become more obvious in the following chapter, but is readily seen in the way many white Afrikaans speakers deliberate on the discrepancies and tensions between their dual identities as both Afrikaners and South Africans, which is a popular and recurring topic of contemporary Afrikaner identity crises. These incoherencies are discernable wherever the term nation is used, with an even more extreme example in the current context being the highly volatile Afrikaner/Boer dichotomy, which came to the fore strongly during the dual processes of data collection and analysis.

Defining collective identity remains problematic, as it has been theorised by various scholars as being anything from a resource to an outcome (Desai, 2010: 421). The collective identity that may sometimes rear its head in the form of nationalistic tendencies nonetheless indicates at least some degree of cognitive, emotional and moral solidarity between a group of individuals and their shared sense of some larger community, and while it may sometimes be defined from the outside, by the state for example, it is nonetheless "*…accepted by people, is expressed in cultural materials, and leads to positive feelings for other members of the group*" (Desai, 2010: 421).

Throughout this study it became clear that contemporary white Afrikaans speakers still tend to group themselves into collectivities revolving around shared ideas regarding race, religion and nationalistic ideals. The ways in which this is happening are, however, numerous and so heterogynous that I would declare the conceptualisation of the Afrikaner as commonly accepted during the latter half of the 20th century as irrelevant to the present day. Chapter 3 presents a detailed summary of the Afrikaner's development as a collectivity and also, along with the data presented in chapter 5, investigates the various collectivities it has spawned since the end of political hegemony in 1994.

Only once the multiplicity of the concepts race, religion and nationalism is grasped, can an attempt at true understanding of contemporary white Afrikaans speaking identity be undertaken. Nationalism is perhaps the most pliable of the three, as the definition of a nation is not a matter informed by hard facts, but rather a historically unique culmination of public narratives (Somers, 1994: 619). It will be argued throughout this dissertation that any manifestation of Afrikaner nationalism is, as I believe any instance of nationalism in general to be, largely informed by ever changing self-understandings which are continuously shaped and reshaped by individual and collective stories.

The definition of any nation thus represents at any given point in time only a brief equilibrium in an on-going collective debate about identity. While past manifestations of this equilibrium as applicable to white Afrikaans speakers are freely available in scholarly articles and historical works, this study attempts to uncover where these people stand today. What then, is a 21st century Afrikaner? Does a 21st century Afrikaner even exist? Through explaining the perceived ingredients of the putative identities under investigation and looking at the historical relationships that have developed between them, as is done in the next chapter, deeper understanding of this mystery is possible.

2.2.4. A workable definition of identity

After taking into consideration the themes discussed in the preceding sections, as well as the ways in which they have historically influenced perceptions of white Afrikaans speaking identity, both from within and without, it is possible to construct a definition of identity that is suitable to the topic at hand. My chosen definition, in keeping with an understanding of identity

as ambiguous and interpretable in various ways, incorporates ideas from both classical and postmodern sociology.

Throughout the course of this study I conceptualised identity as a relatively stable, but principally modifiable, set of perceptions regarding one's place in the life-world and one's relationship to others (Johnson, 2000: 277). These sets of perceptions are found in both individual and collective identities, but where they represent a complex internalisation of knowledge and experience in the individual context, collectivities tend to be geared more toward the attainment and externalisation of a shared *ideal* identity by its members. Thus, any given individual's identity is simultaneously informed both by factors regarding who they 'are' and who they 'ought to be', depending on the collectivities they belong to and the narrative repertoires available to them. Identity is continuously reconstructed through a unique individual balancing act of these often contradictory forces, with individuals differing in the degree to which they actively create new stories of identity for themselves or, conversely, adopt existing collective frameworks of identity.

Regarding postmodernism's contribution, it is argued that any identity can only exist in relation to other identities (Johnson, 2000: 277). As will be seen in the next section, identity is communicated on a daily basis, and is constructed and strengthened through the telling of stories. Identity is thus not merely a psychological variable, but a thoroughly social phenomenon that is constantly communicated to others and adjusted according to the feedback received. Now that we have an idea of what is meant by identity, let us turn toward explaining its formation in the individual and collective sense.

2.3.   Relevant theories of identity

In this section I introduce the two theories I used to conceptualise identity as a subject of analysis, namely the Communication Theory of Identity (CTI) and Dan McAdams's theory of the mythical self. I further go on to illustrate how I merged certain aspects of these two theories to effectively create a hybrid approach to exploring the mystery of intersubjective personal identity through combining an awareness of the various levels at which identity is constructed with an understanding of the lived life as an unfolding story centring around the subjective perceiver, or protagonist, and drawing from a narrative repertoire informed by the social settings and collectivities within which the individual storyteller is situated.

2.3.1.   The Communication Theory of Identity

While accepting that identity is an ambiguous concept, there is a contemporary theory of identity that is useful in conceptualising the term according to the needs of this study. This approach is known as the Communication Theory of Identity, or CTI, and brings a new, multilevel perspective to our definition of identity. CTI views identity as a dynamic concept consisting of

various layers that are constantly created, recreated, sustained and managed through communication and social interaction (Hecht & Hopfer, 2010: 115).

Such a view of identity is compatible with a phenomenological investigation thereof, as the maintenance of identities, both individual and collective, is seen as something that is continuously engaged in through intersubjective social interaction, or communication. Envisioning identity as consisting of various interrelated layers, each with its own corresponding locus, or master variable, helps one to conceptualise the ways in which individual identities are externalised and collective identities internalised in everyday life. Michael Hecht and Suellen Hopfer (2010: 117) propose that identity consists of the following four layers:

1. The personal layer

Here the self-image is the locus. How individuals define and feel about themselves in particular situations, and perceive their place in society and the life-world in general, is of the essence.

2. The enactment layer

The locus of this layer is communication. All communication is seen as involving the enactment, or performance, of identity. Individuals respond uniquely to various conversational contexts, timings, and targets in attempts to define their own identities to their conversational partners. All communication might not necessarily be about identity in an overt sense, but identity enactment is covertly present in all interaction.

3. The relationship layer

The 'other' is the locus of the relationship layer, which simply means that, at this level, identity is moulded by the subjective self's orientation to life-worldly phenomena and other human beings. At this level there arises a jointly negotiated component of identity, as evolving relationships lead to the intersubjective formation of identity markers among individuals involved in them. This happens in two ways:

- Individuals internalise others' ascriptions and views of themselves to a certain degree.
- People identify themselves through the relationship itself, as is the case with family, workplace and spousal relationships. This might even lead to the relationship taking on an identity of its own, i.e. 'we are a couple' or 'Jack and Jill's friendship'.

4. The communal layer

At the communal level, the collectivity is the locus. This layer can be seen as an extended level of the relationship layer and refers to larger groups of individuals with shared collective

representations, or narrative repertoires. It is in this layer that cultural-level views of identity are constructed and maintained.

The relevant importance of this theory does not lie in attempting to isolate any of these layers, but in gaining a greater understanding of the ways in which they dynamically interact with one another during the ongoing process of identity formation (Hecht & Hopfer, 2010: 118). According to CTI, identity is dynamic and constantly under reconstruction at various levels simultaneously, and this is exactly the expectation we have developed throughout the preceding sections. Embracing this theory allowed for a greater sensitivity to the various ways in which respondents might differ or be alike, as the various levels and interfaces touched upon allow for both collective and individual aspects of identity to be explored during an investigation of the temporary equilibrium that is a person's self-concept. What it boils down to is that identity, far from being an independent, abstract product of separate subjectivities, can be seen more productively as being the product of a negotiation of individual, racial, gender, class, sexual and ethnic identities, and is often negotiated at the interface between significant systems of social categorisation and the sometimes irreconcilable experiences of the individuals comprising these collectivities (Frable, 1997: 140).

Though the Communication Theory of Identity did prove useful when analysing the narratives collected during the study, there are some constructivist sociologists who have doubts regarding the seemingly positivistic classification of a concept as rich as identity into a few clearly defined categories. To negate this accusation the theory was not employed on its own, but in conjunction with the narrative-based identity theory of Dan McAdams, which we will turn to now. Although McAdams is a psychologist, with minor modifications the theory fits comfortably into an interpretivist sociological framework aimed at investigating personal narratives.

2.3.2.   The mythical self

"*No one in the world knew what truth was till someone had told a story. It was not there in the moment of lightning or the cry of the beast, but in the story of those things afterwards, making them part of human life. Our distant savage ancestor gloried as he told* […] *the story of the great kill in the dark forest, and that story entered the life of the tribe and by it the tribe came to know itself. On such a day against the beast we fought and won, and here we live to tell the tale. A tale much embellished but truthful even so, for truth is not simply what happened but how we felt about it when it was happening, and how we feel about it now.*" (McAdams, 1993: 28).

Since the beginning of what may be referred to as human society, stories have served to link people and events through time and space, drawing in tellers and listeners and creating history and a shared sense of reality. The told story's impact on human identity is indeed a primeval one. In his 1993 book, *The stories we live by*, McAdams attempts to present a novel theory of human identity that revolves around the idea that every individual, through his or her lifespan, creates a story revolving around the self as protagonist, through which a sense of identity is developed as

this self comes to be known ever more fully. Each person develops a unique 'myth' of the self which in reality boils down to the creation of a unique identity. In his own words: "*Truth is constructed in the midst of our loving and hating; our tasting, smelling, and feeling; our daily appointments and weekend lovemaking; in the conversations we have with those to whom we are closest; and with the stranger we meet on the bus. Stories from antiquity provide some raw materials for personal mythmaking, but not necessarily more than the television sitcoms we watch in prime time. Our sources are wildly varied, and our possibilities, vast*" (McAdams, 1993: 13). As will be seen in chapter 5 however, our actual range of choices is often limited by the collectivities to which we belong.

According to McAdams an understanding of the concept 'story' is universally developed at an early age, and young children are readily able to distinguish between stories and other textual or verbal passages based on their understanding of the constituent elements of a plot, as encountered in stories. This basically means that a sense of 'story grammar' is developed relatively early in the human life cycle. We can all identify a story based on the presence of certain characteristic elements. We accept that a story has a certain 'setting' and includes certain 'characters'. Both of these are usually introduced prior to what McAdams calls an 'initiating event', which drives a character toward an 'attempt' that usually takes the form of some action or novel understanding, after which certain 'consequences' and subsequent 'reactions' follow. This pattern repeats and eventually builds to a climax, after which a 'denouement', or resolution of the plot, takes place (McAdams, 1993: 25).

Where any human story is analysed and reflected upon, this very pattern of unfolding is present to some degree. Stories abound in every known human culture, past and present, whether in the form of folktales, epic legends, myths, history, or television programmes, and represents an essentially *human* way of organising information. It may well be asked why the social sciences do not embrace this most human of meaning-making methods more fully. A possible answer to this question and reflections on rectifying the situation are presented in chapter 4, wherein I outline the storytelling method of investigating mystery that I developed while carrying out this study.

Appreciating stories and their almost magical power over the human mind from a young age, and consciously willing myself to understand this phenomenon and harness its power in the scientific realm, has led me to incorporate the act of storytelling as a fundamental part of my own understanding of the process of identity construction. For all its objective precision, the paradigmatic mindset of science is strangely humble and drab compared to storytelling, as there has traditionally been little room for imagination and creativity, two of our most uniquely human traits. Though science allows us to measure and predict certain forces in our world, it can make little sense of human desires and drives, and the way in which we construct our individual and collective identities.

In fact, a large proportion of human action is irrational and unscientific to such a degree that the very relevance of traditional scientific methods in attempting to understand it may well be questioned. Human social behaviour is almost predictably unpredictable, and seems to resist any and all attempts at paradigmatic, positivist description. To the narrative mind, the collector and interpreter of human stories, however, social behaviour is much more readily understandable. Thus, in order to grasp the relationship between identity and behaviour, I attempt to enter the 'narrative mode' of thought, which entails a rejection of all theoretical presuppositions of cause and effect. The closest to a conception of a driving force that this storytelling approach to interpreting social action allows is the understanding of intersubjective behaviour as being the result of "*...human actors striving to do things over time*" (McAdams, 1993: 30), or an understanding of human social reality as the unfolding of an interactive story, given life by each and every person on earth in their roles as intersubjectively interacting characters. Stories are the result of an attempt by human beings to replicate the lifeworld and, quite apart from their topical, situational and contextual fictionality, structurally and conceptually mimic reality so closely that it is possible to speak of 'losing oneself' in a story. This similarity makes it a powerful tool for understanding the intersubjective construction of social reality, but one that is, unfortunately, largely ignored by most social scientists.

Thus, my interpretation of the told stories presented in the final chapter was rooted in the understanding that individuals construct their identities through methods analogous to fictional storytelling, and that the stories they tell are influenced by their experiences with other actors, events and situations, as well as the narrative repertoires to which they have access, a view which closely mirrors that of CTI. Together these dual approaches offer an enlightening glimpse into the processes of identity construction and meaning making.

2.3.3. Theory integration: The storied self

Both of the abovementioned theories offer interesting ways of engaging the mystery of identity in and of themselves, but once combined they present a perfect fit to the study of identity as we have explored it up to this point. During the course of this study, it became clear that I would be focusing on representations of collective identity, as evidenced through collectively shared stores of stories, or narrative repertoires, as consisting of clusters of closely related individual identities. In this way I would be able to identify existing collectivities of white Afrikaans speakers based on various markers carried in the stories told by individuals ranging across a broad spectrum of political inclinations, religious affiliations and ideologies.

From CTI I gained an understanding of identity as informed and constructed at various levels, ranging from the intrapersonal to the global, while the theory of the mythical self highlighted the role of stories in the formation of identity. Combining these two understandings led to a view of identity as being primarily informed by the telling and internalisation of stories, while the dynamics of this process of storytelling can be seen as tiered and multi-faceted. As seen earlier in this chapter, I focused on discovering certain themes in the stories of individual participants. I

then went about comparing the stories told to me regarding these themes, and found consistent patterns as well as expected breaks from certain patterns. It was along these lines, namely the content and characteristics of the stories I collected, that I could draw a rough outline of the different white Afrikaans speaking collectivities existing today. These collectivities, however, should be seen as representing nodes or concentrations of individual identities along a continuum, and not as constituting structurally independent categories.

To attempt the construction of a new storytelling theory of identity is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but certain outlines of such a theory certainly came to the fore during the data analysis process. At this point in time my understanding of the process of identity formation can be summed up in the following argument:

Individual and collective identities are constantly constructed through the process of storytelling, the following aspects of which serve to inform the individual's perception of self at any given moment in time:

1. The told stories known to the individuals themselves, i.e. their content in terms of genre, plots and characters.

2. The sources of these stories, in other words where individuals hear or get their stories or the underlying elements from. These sources may include individuals, organisations or even impersonal text. The latter source most strongly suggests a certain independent existence of stories as phenomena in the life-world, an idea to which I return in chapter 4.

3. The resources available to an individual in the construction of his or her own story. Apart from the internalised stories mentioned above this includes aspects informed by the individual's stock of knowledge and biographically informed situation, which may range from factual knowledge to experienced emotion, all of which combined are referred to throughout this dissertation as an individual's 'narrative repertoire'.

4. The audience to whom the individual tells his or her story. The active inclusion and exclusion of listeners gives us a glimpse into storytellers' perceptions of community and the 'other', and the reaction of listeners serves to further mould the stories told by individuals.

5. The ways in which stories are used to justify certain actions or the desirability of certain traits, and how stories are used to convey values and norms within and between collectivities, a term that refers to a grouping of people who share certain stories or story elements, regardless of the formality of the grouping or whether its members actively regard themselves as constituting a collectivity.

Though this approach to identity formation does not necessary imply a bias toward either individualism or collectivism, concepts that are central to the phenomenon of multiple white Afrikaans speaking identities and indeed multiple human identities, such an approach does deduce that a broader, thus more individually augmented, narrative repertoire, facilitates a more 'mature' identity. While it is folly to argue that a highly learned individual has a more 'complete' or 'advanced' identity than the contented individual of simple means, whose identity, in as much as it represents a functional interpretation of the life-world and his or her place in it, is certainly not lacking in any sense, there is some truth in the idea that a broad narrative repertoire, individually augmented beyond the limitations of any finalising collectivity, allows the individual a more complete view of the life-world, thus allowing for the construction of a more sophisticated identity constructed from a richer narrative repertoire.

By being aware of the abovementioned when listening to people's stories, their tales are transformed from mere entertaining anecdotes to meaningful windows into the individual's experience of the life-world, and exposes the beliefs and values that underlie that individual's perception of social reality and the behaviours through which they interact with it. Furthermore, through tracing the prevalence and distribution of certain stories or elements thereof, greater insight into the relationships between people and groups of people may emerge. This is the very way in which I came to the conclusion that contemporary white Afrikaans speakers form at least three broad collectivities, each related to and differentiated from the others by virtue of the contents, structure and circulation of the stories told by its members.

2.4.   Conclusion

This chapter laid a foundation for envisioning identity as a multi-faceted concept informed by various levels of social interaction, from the subjective to the societal. These levels inform the formation of identity and lend aspects to thereto that vary in their fluidity, as well as their scale, in the sense of being either more individualistic or collective in their nature and influence. Furthermore, the argument was made that personal and collective identities fluctuate according to the internalisation and retelling of stories.

In summary, personal identity can be seen as stemming from both the individual and the various collectivities within which the individual is situated, and from which he or she borrows stories. Thus, in addition to the stock of knowledge and biographically determined situation introduced in the previous chapter, a person's momentary identity, momentary in the sense that it is always changing as new knowledge and stories are encountered, resolved and internalised based on the foundation laid by previous knowledge and stories, is highly influenced by that person's ever evolving narrative repertoire, which refers to the sum total of stories and story elements available to and informing a person's construction of his or her own story at any given point in time.

PART 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGICAL ACCOUNT

Chapter 3: A history of white Afrikaans speaking identity

I n this chapter, after taking a brief look at culture and historical knowledge, the historical development of white Afrikaans speaking identity, and the collectivities that were constructed and deconstructed throughout this developmental process, will be presented. Taking the form of a chronological overview divided into centuries, the period from 1652, when the Cape colony was founded by the Dutch, to 1994, when the dominantly Afrikaner National Party lost political power to the African National Congress in South Africa's first non-discriminatory democratic elections, this chapter presents the development of white Afrikaans speaking identity up to the end of the 20th century.

This chapter constructs an argument for the historical development of firstly two distinct, somewhat overlapping forms of proto-Afrikaner, the Burghers and the Boers, and later, from these two, the historical Afrikaner. The historical Afrikaner's existence in turn comes to an end around 1994, as the following sections argue in more detail, leaving us with the question of the post-Afrikaner white Afrikaans speakers, the investigation of whom in essence comprised the goal of this study. Before we look at this history though, let us firstly clarify the study's use of the term culture, as well as the challenges posed by working with historical sources.

3.1.　　　On culture

All of the variables discussed in the previous chapter, namely identity, race, religion and nationalism, harmoniously combine at the macro-subjective level to form what is popularly called culture. The term culture is used by scientists and laypeople alike, often designating completely different concepts. According to Christopher Lloyd (1993: 97) the term is commonly used to denote anything from so-called ideal or high culture, meant to represent the ultimate spiritual incarnation of a given collectivity's shared norms and values, to the physical tools, dress and rituals produced and reproduced by a group of individuals. Given this huge opportunity for misinterpretation, it is necessary to briefly outline the meaning of the term embraced during the course of this study.

When mentioning culture, I am referring to a certain understanding thereof, which is also called 'mentality' in the literature. Mentality can be understood as referring to the 'popular' culture of ordinary people, encapsulating the ways in which they understand themselves and interpret their worlds, and express themselves through music, religion, appearance, etc. (Lloyd, 1993: 97). In short, culture, as used throughout this study, indicates the external manifestation of the individual's mental life, tempered by forces springing from intersubjective social networks. It is seen to be a level of collective life which strives to make sense of the world and construct some sense of sameness and inclusion from the foundations laid by individual subjectivities.

This 'culture' may or may not be internalised and projected to various extents by different individuals who nonetheless fall under its influence, i.e. aspects of historical Afrikaner culture by contemporary white Afrikaans speakers. It is also important to note that, as will become clearer in the next section, this imagining of culture does not give it primacy over other aspects of social life. A defining feature of modern and post-modern societies is the abstraction or specialisation of the various spheres of social life (Lloyd, 1993: 98). Social spheres are increasingly separated from one another, causing some of them to even end up in some degree of opposition to each other, which is definitely the case with historical Afrikaner culture and certain other aspects of modern South African social life. Culture interacts, sometimes antagonistically, with economic organisation, political practice, social structure, and other spheres of society at various interfaces to give rise to the bigger picture of social reality. Thus, culture is envisioned more constructivistically than might be the case in other sources, and there is a great emphasis on its relative elasticity according to the social context, and variability in terms of its internalisation and projection by the individuals over whom it exercises influence.

3.2.   Collective representations and historical knowledge

It has long been acknowledged by constructivists that memory, insofar as it is understood to represent an intact and complete recalling of events long past, is extremely fallible. Recognition of this fact was built into this study from the start, but once the importance of an awareness of the historical development of white Afrikaans speaking identity became clear, an even greater problem arose.

While some take history at face value and assume it to represent a completely unbiased, objective account of the past, there are those, like myself, who recognise it to be little more than a collective narrative, susceptible to fallacies similar to those that plague individual memory. To understand this concept, called 'collective memory', it is useful to first look at Emile Durkheim's notion of the 'collective conscience'. The concept is meant to refer to the "…*totality of beliefs and sentiments common to average citizens of the same society*" (Durkheim, 1984: 38). This early definition of the concept, which included all citizens, regardless of race, socio-economic class, etc., was later replaced by the idea of 'collective representations', a concept that referred to a type of localised collective conscience peculiar to specific components of society, most notably minorities (Ryan, 2005: 115). Durkheim (1984: 39) stressed that collective representations form "…*a determinate system which has its own life…*", a view that has led to harsh criticism from later scholars of his perceived preoccupation with social facts, and a supposed understanding of individuals as little more than vessels of society's will (Appelrouth & Edles, 2010: 101). These criticisms miss the mark, as Durkheim, even though he is considered by many to be the archetypal structuralist, clearly stated that collective representations arise out of, and are continuously shaping and in turn being shaped by, individual consciousness (Ryan, 2005: 115).

Now, the importance of understanding the concept of collective representations or collective conscience when looking at history lies in the supposed functions thereof. Ryan (2005: 116)

mentions three major ways in which collective representations become apparent in everyday social reality:

1. Durkheim explicitly used the weakening of collective representations as one of the prerequisites, and results, of societal evolution from mechanical to organic solidarity. This process continues today, as labour division becomes increasingly specialised and individuals no longer feel the need to acknowledge a culturally prescribed sense of shared identity. Post-modern individualism is slowly but surely transforming the collective conscience of most developing societies, while the break is almost complete in most developed societies. The influence of this process on white Afrikaans speaking identity is clear, as the average 'Afrikaner' of today no longer conforms to the rightwing, conservative farmer stereotype of yesteryear, but can present him- or herself in virtually any way imaginable while still self-identifying as part of the grouping. Here it is important to note that, while collective representations change and fluctuate, they rarely cease to exist altogether. As people are social beings and will always find themselves interconnected through social networks, new collective identities continuously emerge. Thus, *The Afrikaner* as the completely coherent social unit experienced during the larger part of the 20th century might not exist anymore, but millions of *Afrikaners* may. Yet others might have incorporated certain aspects of the old identity in constructing new collective identities, or collective identities drawing only in part from those of preceding generations. The data in chapter 5, which highlights a significant diversification concerning collective representations among the descendants of the Afrikaners, corroborate the view that the collective representations of the historical Afrikaners have morphed and developed into at least three different, clearly definable, sets of contemporary representations.

2. The collective conscience further serves as a source of religion. This is seen in the way it manifests itself in a given society's totems. I avoid the use of the terms 'tribe' and 'primitive', as I believe that all self-identifying social groupings, if not societies as a whole, continue to develop shared idols and ideals. To some Afrikaners these might be Boer War heroes or misunderstood politicians, to others it might be the members of Fokofpolisiekar, a groundbreaking Afrikaans rock band, or some other contemporary cultural force. It might even be an object: an ox wagon, the family Bible, the John Deere logo. The fact that these tendencies to collectively revere certain shared totems exist reveals to us the undeniable fact that, whatever their source, collective representations continue to exert some influence, and are ignored at the very real risk of exclusion from the collectivity.

3. Finally, the disproportionate weakening of collective representations is seen to give rise to anomie, a state in which individual freedom has triumphed to the point of total dislocation from any sense of community. Durkheim sees this as dangerous, and I agree

to a certain extent. While it may not always lead to individual suicide (cf. Durkheim, 1979), the decline of collective representations slowly but surely leads to the death of the represented collectivities themselves. As I stated earlier, the Afrikaner that comes to mind when invoking the term is long gone, in the sense of representing a universal archetype of white Afrikaans speaking identity, and in fact ceased to exist as soon as the collective representations underlying the construct started to falter. Collective identities, like individual identities, are ever changing and represent little more than a temporary compromise between the forces of evolution and stagnation.

At this point one might wonder what all of this has to do with history, but the implications, once made clear, are staggering. Whenever the past is being recalled from the perspective of someone positioned within a given collectivity, it is simultaneously embellished and tainted by that group's collective representations. Thus, the historical account of importance to me during the conceptualisation of this study was the history of white Afrikaans speakers, as chronicled by white Afrikaans speakers. At this point, collective representations become collective memories, interpretations of the past coloured as much by collective agendas and interests as they are by those of the individual who does the actual recalling.

This recalling does not have to be congruous with any 'factual' account of history, but is socially created and embellished through the way in which individuals, organisations, and even states "*...interpret, recall and commemorate the past*" (Fine, 2005: 116). Maurice Halbwachs, pioneering theorist in the field of collective memory, noted that memory is constantly organised according to the standards and frameworks of the collectivities in which those who do the remembering are situated (Fine, 2005: 116). As reality, and everything in it, is socially created, so do historical 'facts' reflect the unique nexus of resources and interests possessed by social groupings, a collective stock of knowledge of sorts. Memory is thus constructed to a significant degree, not just individually, but collectively as well. The problem of historical knowledge is further compounded by the fact that it is recorded for posterity by subjective individuals. In this regard Maurice Mandelbaum (1938: 167) reflected that we "*…cannot account for the way in which the historian becomes aware of his material, and thus* [we] *cannot truly distinguish history from a work of creative art*". He goes on to point out that even two historians presented with the same material and using the same categories are not guaranteed to produce compatible results (Mandelbaum: 1938: 168).

Rumours and gossip are two further factors that tend to distort the processes of meaning-making and truth representation within especially small, rural communities, which are the very setting in which many white Afrikaans speakers find themselves. Whether it is a small town, a church congregation, or some other social collectivity, innocent misinformation and malignant disinformation are rife within any grouping, and a thorough familiarity with certain persistent and relevant collective rumours will probably aid in understanding the stories told by any individual. The case of white Afrikaans speakers is no exception, with the rumour of "*uhuru*", or the night of the long knives, an apparently prophesied genocide of South African whites which

will reportedly be ignited upon Nelson Mandela's death, being especially widespread among conservative Afrikaners[8]. Gary Fine and Ralph Rosnow (1976: 12) argue that rumours and gossip represent strategies of group problem solving that aid the social adaptation of the affected collectivity, an argument that is supported by the data generated by this study. Fictional rumours do not necessarily represent pathos, but help collectivities to cope with situations of risk and uncertainty, and may even aid individuals and collectivities to attain functional ends. This dynamic may be seen in the way certain widely publicised interest groups, who are by no means rightly described as 'fringe' or 'underground' movements, continue to preach the "*uhuru*" myth and similar rumours[9]. Though such a construction of reality and rationalisation of the situation of South African whites may be dysfunctional, it must be kept in mind that it represents the result of a normal urge to ascribe meaning to the events of everyday life, which in South Africa is unfortunately marred by disproportionately high rates of violent, senseless crime and a legacy of multifaceted animosity (Fine & Rosnow, 1976: 12).

Keeping in mind that memory and history are continuously and creatively deconstructed and reconstructed on both individual and collective scales, there arises a certain responsibility of the researcher engaging with historical accounts to attempt a sufficient clarification and demythologising of the history he or she is reporting on. This process of questioning the validity of historical accounts should not be pushed too far, however. Fine (2005: 117) sums it up clearly when he states that, while most social scientists accept that historical 'facts' require interpretation, few would argue that they are solely determined by present needs. Thus, the multiplicity of narrative presentation and interpretation is as important a factor in the analysis of history as it is with any story. All of these concerns were taken into account when I set out to present a brief chronology of the historical development of white Afrikaans speaking identity. The following sections present this account, and are complimented by various attempts to interpret and better understand the events recorded in this history, as well as their implications for the development of a collective white Afrikaans speaking identity. The story told over the following few pages does not belong to a certain individual, but to all white Afrikaans speakers. Engaging with this master narrative, as I would call it, greatly aided me in more adeptly navigating the nexus between history and sociology, the past and the present, and the individual and the collective while collecting and analysing data (Lowenthal, 1985: 117).

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[8] As evidenced by the formal interviews conducted during the course of this study, as well as some more informal ethnographic work I engaged in during the data collection process. This ethnographic aspect of the study is explained in greater detail in chapter 4.
[9] Though widespread, the "*uhuru*" myth is most fervently dissipated by the "*Suidlanders*", an 'awareness raising' group of speakers who advocate separatist ideas and the hoarding and mobilisation of resources toward the possible worst-case scenario of an all-out race war, based on the intuitions of their leader, Gustav Müller, a former military intelligence expert. More information can be found at www.suidlanders.co.za/?page_id=94

3.3. A history of white Afrikaans speaking identity

To fully answer the questions raised by the previous sections, it is necessary to gain as holistic as possible a picture of our subject, the white Afrikaans speaker. Though a surprisingly rich array of popular and journalistic books dealing with various issues of white Afrikaans speaking history and culture have seen the light in recent years[10], there has been little academic research and writing on the subject over the last two decades. The following few pages represent an attempt to, with the aid of contemporary theories and sociological understanding, analyse the relatively short but eventful history of white Afrikaans speakers in a way that might equip us to better understand their present situation. While focusing on the three main variables as identified above, namely race, religion and nationalism, the historical development of the Afrikaner as a collectivity will be explored in the following few sections. By the end of this chronology, we are left with the identity informing meta-narratives available to the post-Afrikaners, the very stories built upon by contemporary white Afrikaans speakers to define themselves in a world that is radically different from that of their forbears. The construction and circulation of these stories, and the new collectivities they have molded the descendants of the Afrikaners into, which is the subject matter of chapter 5, starts becoming clearer by the end of this chapter.

3.3.1. Conception: 1652 – 1699

Due to an array of historians who focused on the physical and historical origins of the collectivity we know today as the Afrikaner, there exist various detailed genealogical sources that deal primarily with what is known in Afrikaans as the group's "*stamvaders*", or progenitors. During the period 1652 to 1700 more than 200 documented men arrived at the Cape of Good Hope, primarily to serve the Amsterdam-based VOC as indentured labourers in its venture to establish a refreshment post for the trade routes to the East (Colenbrander, 1964: 12). Of these, roughly half were Dutch, a quarter German and about 15% French. The rest were of unknown European origin (Heese, 1971: 1). Except for a small number of relatively cultured French Huguenots, who fled Catholic persecution after the revocation of the edict of Nantes in 1685, the arrivals were mostly illiterate subsistence farmers and labourers enlisted as sailors or soldiers, with most of the German settlers being tradesmen who were forced to leave their homes after the devastation of the Thirty Years War (Giliomee, 2003: 5). The first of these settlers, "*weak and ignorant people*" in the words of Jan van Riebeeck, founding governor of the Cape, came ashore on the 6th of April 1652 (Giliomee, 2003: 5).

This selection of individuals mirrors the fact that the VOC never intended to found a permanent settlement, but merely sought a way to save money on their profit-driven trade voyages to the Indies. The Hottentots, the aboriginal inhabitants of the Cape, were not an agricultural people and would not sell their cattle cheaply. This was the sole reason for the settlement of nine white farmers in the Liesbeeck valley in 1657 and the consequent genesis of the Afrikaner nation

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[10]Cf. Strydom & Wilkins (2012), Kotzé (2010), Thompson (2010), De Villiers (2011), Du Preez (2003).

(Patterson, 2004: 3). Three decades of subsidised white immigration followed and a steady process of alienation between the Company, which was mainly interested in profit, and the settlers, who somehow had to eke out a living in this strange new land, started to rear its head. This development was to leave a permanent impression on the psyche of white Afrikaans speakers; from this point forward they would see themselves as cornered, outnumbered and standing alone against a force of greater power that ever threatens to engulf the tiny world they call their own.

The effects of this and similar struggles throughout white Afrikaans speaking history on subjective and intersubjective perception must not be underestimated, as phenomenological research in various fields within the humanities have indicated that an individual's experience of his or her environment is primarily dictated by the unique spatial position of that individual observer's lens, in this case his or her physical body, and the immediate stimuli surrounding it (Kusenbach, 2003: 177). The company's fixing of food prices and ban on cattle-bartering with the Hottentots on the one hand, coupled with ongoing hostilities between the pioneers and the natives on the other, ingrained into the early Burghers[11] a feeling of isolation and grim self-reliance which has its vestiges up to the present day (Patterson, 2004: 5).

By the end of the 17th century this small, interdependent community of roughly 2000 European settlers and 1400 slaves, originating mostly from West Africa and the Indies (Giliomee, 2009b: 13), was starting to develop racial and class structural dynamics that, although they were generally in line with what was happening in the rest of the world, started to carry a distinct flavour of segregation. During the earliest years of the colony European women numbered relatively few and many white men had affairs with women of native and slave origin, giving rise to South Africa's substantial population of mixed-race Afrikaans speakers, who are referred to as the coloured Afrikaans speakers throughout the rest of this dissertation. This all changed when the Huguenots, with their large families and well-mannered daughters, arrived on the scene starting in 1688 (Giliomee, 2009b: 11). Marrying a white woman steadily became something of a status indicator and a pattern of intermarriage between Europeans started to become ever more concrete. This can be contrasted to the contemporary situation in Batavia, now Jakarta, where the VOC relied heavily on indigenous and mixed-race women as domestic partners for its servants, at least in this early epoch (Ghosh, 2006: 27).

This discrepancy might be put down to the fact that the women of India, which was home to a relatively advanced culture and society, at least by contemporary European standards, were seen as more compatible substitutes than the local Hottentots or African slaves who, during this period, were first referred to as descendants of Ham, the cursed son of Noah (Giliomee, 2009: 14). Indeed, many marriages between European men and lighter skinned Asian women, as well as women of mixed ancestry, are documented during this period, and it is estimated that the average white Afrikaans speaker's genealogy includes anywhere between less than 1% and as

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[11] From the Dutch word for citizen.

much as 7% non-European admixture (Colenbrander, 1964: 121, Heese, 1971: 54).This historical fact is acknowledged mostly by an alternative and progressive minority of white Afrikaans speakers that includes people like the poet Breyten Breytenbach, who, in 1973, exclaimed in front of a crowd of 800 Capetonian Afrikaners "*...we are a mongrel people with a mongrel language. Hybridism is our nature. It is well and rightly so. We must be compost, decomposing to spring forth again in other forms* [...] *in that part of our blood that comes from Europe was carried the curse of superiority...*" (De Vries, 2012: 6). Nonetheless, irrespective of the contemporary acknowledgement thereof, racial attitudes were remarkably liberal during this early age and the emphasis fell more strongly on social class, which, as will be explained shortly, only later came to be linked overtly with race, giving rise to a society obsessed with racial matters by the end of the 18th century (Lindner, 2010: 18).

Regarding religion, the Bible was the only book in most settler homes, occasionally augmented by protestant songbooks and other ecclesiastical publications. By the end of Dutch rule, in 1803, there wasn't a single theatre, book store, newspaper or high school at the Cape (Giliomee, 2003: 24). The majority of settlers didn't read, and public entertainment was rare. J.A. de Mist, a contemporary visitor to the colony, wrote that "*...the young people are lazy and seem to have an intense contempt for mental effort*" (Giliomee, 2003: 24). Thus, during this first century of European settlement, attitudes toward race and nationalism were very weakly defined and informed largely by religion, which was seen as conferring a master status. This temporary equilibrium would be gradually overturned over the next 200 years in favour of a view of race as being at least as important as religion. During the next two centuries the settlers, or Burghers, with their diverse origins and cultures, slowly amalgamated and gave birth to a unique new collectivity, the Boers[12].

3.3.2. Formation and development: 1700 – 1799

During the 18th century most European arrivals at the Cape were single German men, but the culture in the budding settlement was thoroughly Dutch (Giliomee, 2003: 6). An important side effect of this state of affairs was that, strongly mirroring the relatively flexible class structure in the contemporary Netherlands, which at this point consisted of a loose federation of provinces and free cities, a poor man could, through hard work and determination, improve his social standing far beyond what was possible in most of Europe at the time. Capitalism and Calvinist Protestantism together laid the foundation for a society that put a premium on hard work, along with individual prosperity and upward mobility. The earliest farmers, commissioned by the VOC to cut costs, soon started seeing themselves as 'defenders of the land', an idea that was seen as laughable by the Company, which for all intents and purposes enjoyed sovereign status over the individuals in its employment (Giliomee, 2003: 7).

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[12] From the Dutch word for farmer.

With the arrival of a significant number of protestant French refugees, the Huguenots, during the early 1700's, the Company became ever more involved in the everyday lives of the Burghers. Simon van der Stel, himself of mixed East Indian heritage and the second governor of the Cape Colony, firmly denied a request from the new arrivals to found their own church, warning that they would soon demand their own "…*magistrates, commander and prince*" (Giliomee, 2003: 11). Nonetheless, these exiles speedily integrated into the local community and indeed rose to prominence among the burghers, with their advanced knowledge of horticulture and winemaking having a permanent influence on the eventual character of the Cape settlement (Kannemeyer, 1940: 9). The successful integration of the French newcomers into the Dutch community at the Cape, along with the fateful decision, first in 1716 and repeated in 1750, to discourage further subsidised European immigration in favour of the continuation of slavery, would serve to draw the rough outlines of the developing Boer collectivity and its social environment (Giliomee, 2003: 13).

As hinted at before it is important to note that substantial evidence exists to suggest that the contemporary justification of slavery, in the specific case of the historic enslavement of 'blacks' by 'whites' at this time, should be understood as a result of religious influences rather than racial ideologies. Howard Fredrickson (1981: 70) notes that the dynamics of slavery at the Cape of Good Hope, as in other contemporaneous colonies "*…were conditioned on the crucial assumption that nonwhites were enslavable while Europeans were not. This presumption is sometimes seen as evidence of a conscious racism – a belief that whites were destined by God or nature to rule over peoples whose physical characteristics denoted their innate inferiority. But the actual discourse accompanying the first introduction of slaves into […] South Africa does not provide much support for this hypothesis. The evidence strongly suggests that Africans and other non-Europeans were initially enslaved not so much because of their color and physical type as because of their legal and cultural vulnerability […] The combination of heathenness and de facto captivity was what made people enslavable, not their pigmentation or other physical characteristics*".

It is interesting to recall that, from ancient times through to the seventeenth century, what struck Europeans as the unusual colour of black Africans was popularly attributed to these peoples inhabiting the equatorial regions of the world, an explanation that ceased to satisfy after the discovery of the natives of the equatorial Americas, who were tawny in colour, rather than black (Fredrickson, 2002: 39). This discovery led to "*…speculation that the blackness of Africans was permanent, either from some physiological cause or as a result of the biblical Curse of Ham […] Europeans who wondered why blacks, alone of the 'innocent' pagans encountered in the course of Europe's expansion, could be held in slavery without qualms […] were tempted to see blackness as a curse signifying that Africans were designated by God himself to be a race of slaves*" (Fredrickson, 2002: 39). In short, during this time, a dramatic revolution in the European view of Africans took place. Black people ceased to be seen as a fearful apparition connected to antagonistic and sometimes dominant Eastern civilisations, from the Persian empire of ancient

times to the Muslim world of the Middle Ages. The 'African', 'Moor', and 'Ethiopian' of classical literature devolved into a new race, known as the 'Negro', which was an ideological construct that signified a "...*difference of* [...] *species, an exploitable source of energy* [...] *both mindless to the organizational requirements of production and insensitive to the subhuman conditions of work*" (Robinson, 2000: 82).

Be that as it may, the coloured slaves in the Colony soon outnumbered the free whites, Burghers and Company officials alike, and the need for political coherence became obvious. By this time the slaves were all too aware of the friction between the two classes of settler and Johannes Starrenburg ruefully remarked that certain slaves acted as though they were "...*princes of the blood*" (Giliomee, 2003: 13). The relatively positive relations between the ruling merchant class and their slaves and servants, who sided with their masters during instances of conflict with the common Burghers, drove the small farming community ever further toward distrust of the VOC establishment. Adam Tas, a famous early rebel, united farmers in signing a petition which, amongst other things, stated their loathing of the "...*kaffirs, mulattoes, mestizos and casticos and all the other black brood living amongst us and who have mixed with European and African Christians through marriage and other relationships. To our astonishment their power, numbers and hubris has increased and they are allowed to own weapons and participate in military drills alongside Christians. It is they who are now telling us that they will destroy us. No one can trust people with Ham's blood. The black nation is permanently being advantaged*" (Giliomee, 2003: 14).

Note the emphasis on the term Christian to indicate whiteness and the use of Noah's supposedly cursed son, Ham, in justifying the Burghers' concern. The term 'kaffirs' used in this instance, South Africa's infamous 'k-word', was originally used by Arabian Muslims to refer to the darker peoples of Africa as indicative of their status as heathens or unbelievers, and was first adopted by the Dutch in Batavia. In the East, and later at the Cape, slaves from Mozambique and Angola were used as a rudimentary police corps, to whom the term 'kaffir' was applied. As these individuals often chastised and arrested Burghers and slaves alike in the streets by order of the Company, they were widely despised, and the term rapidly developed the negative connotations associated with it today (Giliomee, 2003: 14). Another interesting development of this time was the paternalistic relationship between white farmers and their coloured workers that was to have a fundamental influence on the developing white Afrikaans speaking collectivity's attitude toward South Africa's non-white population.

Even though van der Stel was eventually demoted, largely due to the efforts of disgruntled Burghers who wrote to the VOC's supreme council in Amsterdam, the farmers remained second class citizens, largely vulnerable to the whims of the Company, with the threat of banishment, as happened in the case of Biebouw, looming ever ominously over their heads (Giliomee, 2004: 21). Though still a budding, indeed extremely vulnerable community at this time, one can clearly see the foundation of a future identity revolving largely around race, the Christian religion and an idealised vision of the farming occupation.

It was during what Giliomee calls the long silences of the eighteenth century, when white settlers started moving ever further from the relative civilisation of the Cape into the interior, that the historical Boer collectivity was formed (Giliomee, 2009a: 27). Most of these proto-Afrikaners lived on the edges of civilisation, with entire generations in certain areas being bereft of any semblance of church or school. Contemporary Europeans were shocked at the sight of these white people of Africa, labelling them as wild or feral. The sufferings of such a life had both its positive and negative effects on the human spirit, and Giliomee quotes the historian Cornelius de Kiewiet thusly: "*Their life gave them a tenacity of purpose, a power of silent endurance, and the keenest self-respect. But this isolation sank into their character, causing their imagination to lie fallow and their intellects to become inert. Their tenacity could degenerate into obstinacy, their power of endurance into resistance to innovation, and their self-respect into suspicion of the foreigner and contempt for their inferiors*" (Giliomee, 2009a: 28).

The Trekboers[13], a group of especially adventurous and independent frontier farmers who were largely responsible for the tenfold increase in the area of white occupation between 1703 and 1780, found their ideologies increasingly rebutted by the ruling elite. In their eyes they were contributing to the victory of civilisation over barbarism, while the VOC, citing the Trekboers' apparently primitive state of nomadic pastoralism, not much different from that of the native Hottentots and showing no signs of developing into a sedentary agriculture, which was seen at the time to be an evolutionary improvement over the former, raised the accusation that the frontiersmen were in fact reverting to barbarism themselves (Fredrickson, 1981: 36). Indeed many European visitors to the colony "*...expressed their fear that the frontier may be encouraging white degeneration rather than the extension of civilization*" (Fredrickson, 1981: 36). These tensions lay at the root of the extraordinary events of the nineteenth century, of which the Great Trek and the two Wars of Freedom against the British were to leave perhaps the most lasting impression on a people ready for conscious nationalism.

3.3.3. Rebellion and the drive to freedom: 1800 - 1899

The dawn of the 19th century brought various new challenges for the fledgling collectivity, the first being the British annexation of the Cape in 1806 and the second a series of social movements, brought about largely by this change in regime, that eventually led to both the abolishment of slavery and the granting of citizenship to the indigenous Khoisan by 1853 (Giliomee, 2009: 85). The burghers tried to reconcile their paternalistic instincts with the ideals of non-racial libertarianism, accepting the principle of equality before the law and the right of all to vote, but stopped short of accepting what they called "*gelykstelling*", or complete social and public equality. This attitude was a remnant of the VOC regime's strong hierarchical character

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[13] The Trekboers moved vast distances with their cattle, according to the seasons. They expanded the border of the colony, often initiating contact with unknown Khoisan tribes and initiating independent trade with these people, much to the annoyance of the Company.

and would come to define white Afrikaans speaking discourse regarding assimilation with other races and ethnicities into the next century and beyond.

Settlers of the old order had become accustomed to believing that there was a deeply ingrained difference between the free Burghers and the Khoisan, who, in the words of Landdrost Alberti, the contemporary magistrate of Uitenhage, "*...is not actually human, but at the same time he cannot really be classed among the animals. He is, therefore, a sort of creature not known elsewhere. His word can in no wise be believed, and only by violent measures can he be brought to do good and shun evil*" (Du Toit & Giliomee, 1983: 84). This ideological conflict with the British government, who immediately put into place processes to abolish slavery, led to the Dutch speaking Burghers distinctively defining themselves further. Thus, where there used to be one white settler community, an ethnic and cultural duality between Boer and Brit soon developed. Indeed, according to Giliomee (1983: 83), by 1850 the predecessors of the Afrikaners had come to regard themselves "*...as a separate group by virtue of intermarriage, language, customs and shared historical memories*".

At this time a series of violent skirmishes, later dubbed the Border Wars, erupted between white farmers and the Xhosa tribes on the Eastern edges of the colony, who often crossed the agreed frontier with assistance from the few remaining Khoi-khoi tribes and groups of disgruntled coloured labourers. This new threat prompted Colonel Richard Collins, then Commissioner for the Eastern Districts, to propose the settlement of two thousand whites along the bank of the Great Fish River, which marked the border between the Cape Colony and Xhosa lands (Morse Jones, 1971: 1). This eventually led to the government of the United Kingdom granting financial aid and setting in motion the immigration of about 1 000 British settlers from various parts of Great Britain to what is today the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa.

As many of these settlers married into Boer families already present in the area, certain English names became common Afrikaans family monikers and vice versa, and a few of these British settlers represented the last great influx of Europeans to join the developing white Afrikaans speaking collectivity. The conflict, however, continued, and the British government's insistence on abstaining from violence in dealing with Xhosa raiders, along with qualms about language rights and the emancipation of slaves, eventually resulted in what is now known as the Great Trek, an event which saw large parties of Boer families leave the Cape for the interior during the 1830's and 1840's, establishing a series of Boer republics that firmly excluded non-whites from citizenship (Beinart & Dubow, 1995: 5). It was during this time that one of the most profound events in white Afrikaans speaking history, and one that is revered among some as almost biblical in its significance, took place. On 17 November 1837 Piet Retief, a renowned leader of the Trek, visited the Zulu king Dingane, who had only recently assassinated his brother Shaka to claim the throne of the most powerful black nation of the interior. After friendly negotiations and much joviality Dingane signed a document granting the Boers all the land between the Mzimbuvu and Tugela rivers, only to renege this agreement two days later (Leach, 1989: 2).

An unarmed delegation of seventy-nine Boers was massacred, after which the Zulus descended on the nearby encampment and slaughtered fifty-six women and 185 children. The Boers regrouped under Andries Pretorius and fortified a position on the Ncome, or Blood River, and entered into a covenant with God, promising that if they were victorious the day would forever be honoured as a Sabbath. The Zulus attacked and 3000 fell, with not a single Boer mortality (Leach, 1989: 2). The battle of Blood River, fought on 16 December 1838, has since become legendary in the hearts of Afrikaners and infamous to those white Afrikaans speakers who would rather look into the future than to the past. Two of the eventual republics resulting from the Trek, the South African Republic, or ZAR, and the Republic of the Orange Free State, survived, each with an elected president and proto-governmental structures. The newfound freedom these Boer republics brought was only temporary though, as following the discovery of the rich gold deposits of the Witwatersrand in the last few decades of the 19th century, foreign profiteers started to swarm the small northern republic in the hopes of striking it rich. Eventually the eyes of the British Empire fell on the gold of the north and, on 27 February 1881, a Boer revolt against an attempted British annexation of the ZAR, the infamous Jameson raid, resulted in a victory for the underdogs at Majuba (Giliomee, 2003: 220). This event fuelled a feeling of unity among white Dutch/Afrikaans speakers from the Cape to the interior and set the stage for the coming struggle.

British propaganda spread, focusing on the perceived arrogance of the Boers who dared mock the might of Imperial Britain and pointing out that the government of Paul Kruger, then president of the ZAR, refused to give voting rights to "*uitlanders*", foreign nationals attracted by the newly discovered gold fields and among whom counted a significant number of British subjects. British resolve was seen as being tested by the Boers and the rationale for what was to eventually become total war can be summed up in the words of Lord Salisbury: "*…we, not the Dutch, are boss*" (Giliomee, 2003: 248). Eventually the conflict involved 50 000 republican farmers assisted by about 5 000 Cape rebels, against a British force of at least a quarter of a million.

The war would cost Great Britain £230 million and, according to some historians, directly lead to the crumbling of the British Empire[14]. During the first two years of the war, 1899 and 1900, the Boers managed to beat the British on all fronts and capture several colonial towns, with genial leaders such as the generals Koos de la Rey and Christiaan de Wet pioneering military tactics such as guerrilla warfare and the digging of trenches to outwit their numerically superior foe. Their victories, however, were soon cut short by one of the most brutal reprisals in history. Humiliated by British losses, Lords Roberts and Kitchener turned to a 'scorched earth policy', burning down farms, killing livestock and ordering the first historically noted use of concentration camps in wartime. A total of 4 177 Boer women and 22 074 Boer children, along with an undisclosed number of black and coloured farm workers and their families, perished in the subhuman conditions of these camps (Giliomee, 2009a: 256). The Boers were powerless against this onslaught and surrender was inevitable. The Treaty of Vereeniging was signed on 31

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[14] Cf. Farwell (1972).

May 1902, when Kitchener shook hands with the Boer generals, declaring "...*we are good friends now*" (Giliomee, 2009a: 263). Thus did the sun set on the Boer, ready to rise anew over his successor, the Afrikaner.

3.3.4.   Loss, assimilation and rise to power: 1900 – 1994

The 20th century proved to be a pivotal epoch for South Africa and white Afrikaans speakers. Following the discovery of gold in the Witwatersrand in 1886, the country was transformed through an attempted coup, one of the bloodiest wars in history, a large-scale rebellion and the tenures of four different regimes, from a republic founded on a humble agriculture-based economy to a colony boasting the world's largest and most technologically advanced mining industry (Van Onselen, 1982: XV). After the tumultuous unification of the Boer republics and British colonies of South Africa, the region made a developmental leap from an inexperienced quasi-state to an advanced industrialised union.

It was also during the early twentieth century, after the final conquest of the African chiefdoms in the latter part of the 1800's and the consolidation of the South African state after the Anglo-Boer War, that a series of policies and social practices were put into place to ever more formally regulate the relationship between black and white (Beinart & Dubow, 1995: 1). These laws of segregation developed in a country where white settlers never managed to displace the native population and in which fears of demographic domination by the African population were rampant. It is important to remember that, even at the height of their power, whites were a minority in South Africa, and that by 1910 only about 20 % of the country's population was classified as European (Beinart & Dubow, 1995: 2). Unlike other European colonies like Australia or those of North America, where the numerical advantage of the settlers managed to relegate maters of race to the periphery until the latter half of the twentieth century, the issue of race relations was seen as a fundamental challenge in South Africa since the earliest times. Attempts to explain the policies of segregation that started to take shape during this time and which would eventually crystallise into apartheid proper have ranged from the ideological to the materialist, through the individualist and structuralist. They all come to the same conclusion.

Whichever view one takes, it becomes clear that the question leading to the implementation of ever more institutionalised policies of segregation was one of social control. Ways were needed to ensure the easy access of white employers to cheap black labour without losing the dominance of European over African (Swanson, 1995: 31). Another variable during this time was a sharpened underlying Afrikaans/English polarity brought about largely by feelings of bitterness about the preceding war, and which served to stimulate a greater national consciousness than ever before among white Afrikaans speakers (Giliomee, 1983: 83). The unification of white South Africa after the war provided a platform for the ideological unification of white Afrikaans speakers in all provinces, and the project of constructing a truly Afrikaner nationalist movement began in all earnestness after 1910. A movement toward Afrikaner hegemony was born, with a

secret society of intellectual elites, in the form of the *"Broederbond"*, or brotherhood, slowly infiltrating every facet of South African society (Van Jaarsveld, 1981).

Indeed some writers, like Edward-John Bottomley in his recent book on Afrikaner poverty, have argued that the Afrikaner, as known today, did not exist at the dawn of the 20th century. In his own words; "*...between the Boer war and now, in the blink of an eye, an entire nation fantasised itself to life, built on heroes and villains, they oppressed and were oppressed, ruled a country, brought shame upon themselves, fell into disfavour and were forgotten*" (Bottomley, 2012: 98). The argument is made that the Boers were a conquered people and, in order to raise their heads high once again, a new national identity of which they could once again be proud, called the Afrikaner, had to be constructed by the surviving white Afrikaans speakers. One may say that the collective representations underlying the Boer collectivity, namely a rural farming existence and avoidance of urban life, started to crumble away as many impoverished white Afrikaans speakers were forced into the budding cities at the beginning of the 20th century. The stories of the Boers lost their significance and those of the Afrikaner were constructed from their remnants, with unique collective representations and a new narrative repertoire, the content of which was unfortunately largely controlled by the propagandists of the Broederbond, who infiltrated all corners of society, from pre-school classrooms to the Prime Minister's office.

However one chooses to look at this period of evolution, it is clear that a significant amount of redefinition and reform was active among white Afrikaans speakers at this time, as there emerged, as if out of nowhere, a vibrant literary and intellectual movement from the stock of grim farmers who, only a generation before, had been described as sullen, simple and narrow-minded. These poets dignified the Boer War and, along with certain social and religious movements, served to instill a self-perception in the Afrikaner of being a unique people on the continent of Africa whose strength lay in isolation, and who had the right to live and thrive separately from both the English and black Africans (Giliomee 1983: 84).

Feelings were not unanimous however, and some Afrikaners, including revered Boer War veterans Louis Botha and Jan Smuts, stressed a united white South African identity which would include all those of European descent who would brave a new future in South Africa (Beinart, 2001: 80). Indeed, during the first half of the 20th century many European craftsmen were drawn to South Africa where, as in other European colonies in Africa, a degree of upward mobility unimaginable in Europe was possible if one was white (O'Brien, 1972: 82). A labourer from Europe, no matter his qualifications, instantly became a foreman or overseer in South Africa. This ensured a steady trickle of immigration, but made many uneasy, and it was the Afrikaner women, drawing on the suffering of the concentration camps, who were most insistent on avoiding compromise. After a short but robust rebellion by the so-called *"Bitter Einders"* in 1914, which was quashed by Afrikaner troops under Smuts, the Afrikaner's long trek into bureaucracy could begin in earnest, with various organisations fighting, non-violently, for

language and cultural rights on a new, political front. The moderate approach of Smuts was however received lukewarmly by most Afrikaners and in 1948 the National Party, under the leadership of D.F. Malan, won a decisive electoral victory which set in motion a series of events which would eventually culminate in the institutionalisation of apartheid (Beinart, 2001: 81). The so-called father of Apartheid, Hendrik Verwoerd, himself born to Dutch immigrant parents, became Prime Minister in 1958, and set in motion the harrowing of the black South African (Giliomee, 2009a: 519).

By the 1960's white domination had become synonymous with Afrikaner domination and the new contest in South Africa was between Afrikaner and African nationalism (Giliomee & Schlemmer, 1989: 24). Driven by the same emotions and issues as the Afrikaner before him, the feet of the black worker rhythmically stomped the African earth and raised the dust of the townships over the streets and onto the televisions and radios of white suburbia, giving birth to a new struggle. By now the Afrikaners had become divided on the issue of apartheid, with a clear split between those in favour of non-racial democracy and those wishing to return to an even more stringent version of the infamous policy becoming visible by the 1980's. This split would become apparent by the time of the 150th commemoration of the battle of Blood River, that holy Thermopylae of the Afrikaner.

On 16 December 1988 President P.W. Botha recalled, in front of a crowd of thousands of Afrikaners, that the Boers did not stand alone that day and that "…*white, brown and black stood together in the laager at Blood River* […] *it was not only a trek of white Afrikaners*" (Leach, 1989: 3). Another commemorative event was held simultaneously on a nearby farm, where the idea of mutual accommodation between black and white was unequivocally shunned in favour of a return to total racial segregation (Leach, 1989: 4). The Afrikaners were bitterly divided as they remembered the past and pondered an uncertain future. By this time there was a widespread agreement on the content and use of the term Afrikaner, a typical member of which was understood to be "...*white, an Afrikaans speaker of West European descent who votes for the NP, belongs to one of the three Dutch Reformed Churches and shares a distinctive history with the rest of the Afrikaner group*" (Louw-Potgieter, 1989: 50). This given definition was not entirely uncontested though, and a 1989 social psychological study by Joha Louw-Potgieter, in which she especially probed the self-concept of so-called 'dissident' Afrikaners, shows a protracted ideological battle between those regarding themselves as "*ware*" (true) Afrikaners and those individuals labelled as dissidents by members of the establishment; individuals who, though they still claimed a right to their Afrikaner heritage, stood in opposition to the prevailing political and ideological currents of the time (Louw-Potgieter, 1989: 55).

It is thus apparent that during this time 'true' Afrikaner identity was largely a social construct, meticulously engineered to suit the aspirations of an elite few, and that individual choice could hardly alter one's identity and designation by other South Africans as an Afrikaner, or by the so-called 'true' Afrikaners as a dissident Afrikaner. This all changed on 27 April 1994, when the African National Congress, headed by former political prisoner Nelson Mandela, won South

Africa's first non-racial democratic election. The structures that made up the foundation of the institutionalised Afrikaner slowly began to crumble, and the door to self-definition slowly opened up to its heirs.

3.3.5.   Reconceptualisation: 1994 – present

"*Over a decade after the end of apartheid, South Africans daily confront the contradictions of living through one of the most remarkable political and social transformations of our era. In 1994, as horrific genocide tore apart Rwanda, as child soldiers in Liberia wreaked havoc, or Somalis massacred one another, as refugees poured across African borders in all directions, South Africa held its very first democratic elections, peacefully bringing to power the former convicted terrorist and world icon Nelson Mandela and his political party, the African National Congress (ANC). The end of apartheid offered a hugely optimistic note in the otherwise dreadful events plaguing the African continent...*" (Besteman, 2008: 1).

This quote, and the thousands in similar vein that exist saved for posterity in the annals of the 20th century, gives an honest indication of the general state of euphoria and hope for the future that lingered in the immediate wake of the implosion of apartheid. White South Africans, including Afrikaans speakers, hoped that Mandela's attitude of reconciliation would allow the past to be buried and a clean slate to be brought forward, while South Africans of colour felt the almost unreal anticipation of a future life lived in vastly improved material circumstances and the opportunities that freedom brought with it. Neither of these hopes materialised, at least not for all. The awkward truth, as Besteman (2008: 2) puts it, was that reconciliation did not mean a complete redistribution of wealth and resources. This left not only the majority of black South Africans with little change in their dire circumstances, indeed their poverty has deepened since 1994, but left the small white, especially Afrikaans speaking, minority as the hated, outnumbered and now largely powerless scapegoat for all the country's social, political and economic ills.

The future was gradually replaced with the past and the press continues to burst at the seams with corrupt politicians dumping the blame for any shortcoming on the legacy of apartheid, while the phenomena of crime, corruption and even justice struggle to free themselves of racial connotations inherited from a bygone age. In this new age the descendants of the Afrikaner face many challenges, some unique and others shared with their fellow South Africans. Regarding contemporary white Afrikaans speaking identity, the breakup of the domineering, top-down definition of the apartheid era left many without a solid sense of identity. Since 1994 some have turned inward and embraced radical right-wing ideologies, while others have attempted to maintain what was left by the end of the Afrikaner era, while rejecting the overt racism and ethnocentric aspects thereof. Still others have broken away from the Afrikaner mould completely and strive to find their place in the emerging post-modern globalised world. The data presented in chapter 5 sheds more light on the intricacies of these developments.

3.4. Conclusion

After considering the chronology just presented, two important aspects emerge. The first is a clear and definite evolution of a people from their initial position as Burghers, or settlers, through an intermediate phase, the Boers of the 19th century, into what we today historically acknowledge as the Afrikaner of the 20th century. A simplified illustration of this development is presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2: White Afrikaans speaking identity up to 1994

1650

1700

Starting in 1652, the first Afrikaans speaking collectivity slowly starts to develop. These 'Burghers', or settlers, actually represent a proto-Afrikaans speaking collectivity, as they officially speak Dutch, which, with the slow passage of time and the incorporation of terms and syntax from various African and Asiatic languages, starts to develop into the language we know as Afrikaans today. The Burghers are formed from mainly Dutch, German and French stock, with a sizeable infusion of non-white genetics, mostly from Indian and Malay slaves. These people start developing their own culture and collective identity, which is sufficiently developed to distinguish themselves from other European populations by the time of the British takeover of the Cape in the first decade of the 1800's.

Along with the Burghers, a parallel collectivity, sharing many of their cultural peculiarities, comes into existence. These are the predecessors of the coloured Afrikaans speakers of South Africa. In many cases the break with the white collectivity was quite arbitrarily based on physical appearance, with children from the same mixed relationship often being absorbed into either one of the two collectivities based on the particular shade of their skin. Other than skin colour little separates the Burghers from the coloured Afrikaans speakers at this early stage.

1750

1800

1850

Within the white collectivity, a differentiation starts to develop between those who practice a trade in the settlement and those who farm on its outskirts and eventually further away. The latter start referring to themselves as 'Boers', from the Dutch word for farmer. After the Great Trek the Boers proclaim two republics in the interior, where they govern themselves and live rural lives until the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War in 1899. The end of this war, in 1902, sees the Boers defeated, impoverished and heading for the cities to rebuild their lives.

1900

In the 20th century the 'Afrikaners' emerge, and slowly but surely establish political and economic hegemony. Their romanticised past is mobilised into a radical nationalism that succeeds in achieving Afrikaner dominance of South Africa, but eventually lead to their downfall by means of apartheid and its rejection by South Africans of colour ,as well as the international community.

1994

The second important development in the history of white Afrikaans speaking collectivities is the diversification of the 21st century descendants of the Afrikaner into three broad categories, which are detailed in chapter 5. Concerning these categories, the successors of the Afrikaner have taken different routes in answering the question of who they are since 1994, as backed up by the data uncovered during the course of this study. After the crumbling of the apartheid state and its hegemony over the contents of the term Afrikaner, new possibilities for self-identification emerged for white Afrikaans speakers. The data generated during the course of this study

indicate the existence of three contemporary Afrikaans speaking collectivities, namely the Afrikaanses[15], Pseudo-Boers and Afrikaners, all of which are discussed in greater detail in chapter 5.

In short, the third grouping is the one that to my mind represents the most direct evolutionary branch of the Afrikaner and which therefore deserves the moniker 'Afrikaner'. Individuals identifying with this contemporary incarnation of white Afrikaans speaking identity commonly prize their heritage and history, while shunning racism and embracing globalised liberalism to varying degrees. The second group, the Afrikaanses, refers quite simply to individuals with Afrikaans as their first language, but who reject the labels 'Boer' and 'Afrikaner'. It is in this collectivity that white Afrikaans speakers are experiencing the highest degree of social integration with other racial and cultural groupings, with certain members of the coloured community and even some black Afrikaans speakers counting among its ranks, though their narratives do not fall under the scope of this study. This grouping could also be called Afrikaans speaking South Africans, for that is exactly what they are and feel themselves to be. The Pseudo-Boers, on the other hand, represent an archaic form of white Afrikaans speaker and, as will be seen in the final chapter, constitute those who, for varying reasons, have failed to adapt to the social, political and economic challenges imposed by a new South Africa in a functional way, and have largely reverted to tribalism and fundamentalist modes of thought.

I refer to this collectivity as Pseudo-Boers, because when one studies their ideology in some detail, it becomes clear that they have very little in common with the historical Boers, as is illustrated in the final chapter. Thus a simultaneous increase and decline in ethnic affiliations has taken place among the descendants of the Afrikaner and "…*the range and even lack of identification among Afrikaans speakers is considerable*" (Davies, 2009: 3). As explored in greater detail in the fifth chapter, white Afrikaans speakers seem to be as divided, but also as resilient, as ever before.

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[15]A neologism first used by Arrie Roussouw, former editor of *Die Burger*, as a more inclusive term for Afrikaans speakers, and which is now in common use in many circles (Davies, 2009: 4).

Chapter 4: Towards understanding through a storytelling methodology

Now that the main interest and focus areas of the study have been introduced, we have reached the point where a detailed account of its methodological framework is necessary, which is what this chapter is designed to provide. The practical side of the study, the what, where and how of the research process and how it was reconciled with the foundation laid by the preceding chapters, is explored throughout this chapter. The first section deals with the framing of a qualitative methodology suitable to the topic under study and the ontological and epistemological way of looking at this topic that has been constructed throughout the preceding chapters. The next section delves into the real nitty-gritty of the qualitative inquiry process, dealing with the strategies of data collection, processing and analysis, as well as other important considerations, such as ethics, that were embraced throughout this study, after my approach to researching mysteries, as opposed to simple causal problems, has been introduced. The main aim of this chapter is to illustrate how I engaged the process of putting the philosophical and theoretical framework laid out in the first two chapters into practice while doing the actual research.

4.1.   Framing a qualitative methodology

In this section certain characteristics of the research process embraced during the course of the study, as informed by my epistemological and ontological orientation, will be introduced. These concepts represent building blocks of the research process, and as such were of importance to me during the dual, often overlapping, processes of data collection and analysis. As this section contains quite a few specialist terms that are used mainly by social scientists operating from within the qualitative research paradigm, a brief outline of qualitative social inquiry will be given as an introductory preface.

Earl Babbie and Johann Mouton (2010: 53) define the qualitative paradigm as a generic approach to social research in which "*…researchers attempt always to study human action from the insider's perspective*". The fundamental difference between qualitative research and quantitative research, the paradigm almost exclusively used by scientists interested in studying natural phenomena and the like, is that practitioners of the former tend to place more emphasis on describing and understanding human behaviour than on predicting and explaining it. Qualitative methods tend to minimise the intersubjective 'distance' between researcher and participant through reconceptualising the epistemological position of both within the setting of social enquiry, while qualitative analysis tends to be inductive in nature, simply meaning that the specific is seen as informing the general. With this in mind, we can now delve deeper into the methodological approach implemented throughout the process of inquiry.

4.1.1   Understanding vs explanation

Historically there has been a tendency for social inquiry to conform to the characteristics of a scientific practice. This science-like approach focuses largely on the validity and generalisability of social research data in order to conform to the standards set by the natural sciences, and any deviation from this recipe was frowned upon for the largest part of sociology's history (Schwandt, 1997: XX). However, the definition of social inquiry embraced during the course of this study challenges this view, and is rooted in an alternative tradition known as hermeneutics.

The hermeneutic tradition, which derives its name from a Greek term meaning "*...to translate and interpret...*" (Brewer, 2003: 138), implies that the practice of social inquiry and the activities that draw from social research, such as caring, teaching and the like, consist of dialogical social encounters, during the analysis of which much of the canon of traditional scientific method loses its relevance. Qualitative social research is not concerned solely with problems in need of objective solutions, but also with 'mysteries' in need of subjective interpretation and intersubjective understanding. Shaun Gallagher (1992: 152) sums it up when he says that "*...a problem is something that can be totally objectified and resolved in objective terms because the person confronting the problem can completely detach himself from it and view it externally* […] *things are relatively clear-cut*". A mystery, on the other hand, "*...is something that involves the person in such a way that the person cannot step outside of it to see it in an objective manner. She is caught within the situation with no possibility of escape, and no possibility of clear-cut solutions. Indeed, ambiguity is the rule within a mystery*" (Gallagher, 1992: 152). Unlike fixed answers to readily solvable problems, our interpretations of myths, stories, memories, etc. continuously evolve along with our understanding of the underlying mysteries themselves. In this context it is important to understand that I use the term mystery not to allude to any degree of 'insolvability' or to introduce some vague metaphysical notion, but merely to illustrate a degree of complexity that is beyond that of a readily quantitatively solvable problem. The main difference between mystery and problem is thus seen to be one of increased complexity, which, in the case of mystery, merits a more sophisticated and involved interpretive approach to, and conceptualisation of, the research problem. Throughout the rest of this dissertation the term mystery can thus be seen as a synonym for what some social scientists refer to as 'problems of understanding'.

Understanding such mysteries, unlike dealing with problems of a purely objective nature, require emphatically dealing with the stories of real people, in specific situations, at a particular time and under unique circumstances. Sound personal judgement is required, as well as continuous deliberation and the presence of a thorough empirical, political, social and ethical awareness (Schwandt, 1997: XXI). Seeking understanding not only sheds new light on intricate mysteries, but propels the researcher into a realm of new insights, self-awareness and growth, as his or her own narrative repertoire grows through the process of listening to the stories of others. It is an inherently risky process which leaves no room for the mere application of a body of

preconceived knowledge to the topic at hand. Hans-Georg Gadamer claims that successful understanding leads to "*...growth in inner awareness, which as a new experience enters into the texture of our own mental experience* […] *it affords unique opportunities* […] *it is capable of contributing in a special way to the broadening of our human experiences, our self-knowledge, and our horizon, for everything understanding mediates is mediated along with ourselves*" (Gadamer, 1990: 110). The more stories we as individuals encounter, the greater the range of characters, themes, plots and genres that we may draw from during the construction of our own narrative repertoire, which in turn provides us with the building blocks of individual identity.

Such an understanding of the goal of social inquiry leads to a radical new way of thinking about what it means to be a social scientist. In line with the tenets of phenomenology and other interpretivist currents I have thus come to view as irrelevant the abstract pseudo-world of the natural sciences when observing human behaviour, and this study stands as an example of what may be achieved when embracing an anti-positivist view of social inquiry (Schwandt, 1997: 5). We are dealing with a different kind of knowledge in need of a different kind of reasoning. There are few explanations to be found in qualitative research, which results in the whole endeavour of purely qualitative social inquiry being less science than it is applied philosophy. In short, this study rests firmly on the conviction that human action can be successfully engaged only through participating in the complex process of human storytelling; interpreting and ever more fully understanding these stories and building on our own narrative repertoires, and not through superficial asking and answering.

4.1.2. Intersubjective understanding

Now that we grasp the importance of understanding in a truly qualitative sense, it is necessary to explain in greater detail exactly what is meant by the term in the context of this study. The *SAGE Dictionary of Social Research Methods* defines understanding as "*...having a sense of, grasping, or comprehending human action*" (Schwandt, 2006: 155). That is all fair enough, but it has little scientific value to say that my personal understanding of a certain human action constitutes universal understanding thereof. No, we have to go one step further and make clear that what we are interested in is *intersubjective* understanding, which only occurs when a certain understanding is "*...accessible to two or more minds*" (Schwandt, 2006: 155). From a phenomenological point of view understanding and knowing are not seen as private affairs conducted within the confines of individual psyches. Understanding of the kind generated by this study and the qualitative social sciences in general is located firmly in the social sphere and has intricate links to activity, dialogue and discourse, being both a process and a result of human social interaction (Schwandt, 2006: 156).

At this point you might be wondering why I'm concerned with being scientific all of a sudden, having just denounced an overtly scientific approach to social research in the previous section. In this regard it is important to keep in mind Pierre Bourdieu's idea of Total Social Science, introduced in the first chapter (Bourdieu, 1990; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Though the

philosophical and epistemological approach of the qualitative inquirer differs dramatically from that of the quantitative observer, we are nonetheless bound by the same rigorous processes of the scientific tradition. Completely denying the outer world and the importance of mutual understanding in the construction of truth would not only render any qualitative social scientific endeavour pointless, but leave us with nothing more than a shared dream-world consisting of incompatible individual fantasies. This is definitely not the aim of the constructivist. Science per se is not the problem, the incompatibility of our subject matter with the relative impersonality of its traditional methods is. To argue that qualitative methodology is somehow superior to a quantitative approach, or vice versa, is completely nonsensical and not the message I intend to purvey at all. The uniqueness of the qualitative social sciences simply needs to be acknowledged through a corresponding degree of epistemological and methodological autonomy.

Understanding is not that unscientific a concept after all, if one is prepared to admit that inter-subjective understanding between scientists in effect constitutes the foundation of the so-called 'objectivity' of scientific research claims (Schwandt, 2006: 155). Thus, the interpretive approaches do not aim to dethrone the empirical sciences. What is being questioned is the existence of any immovable foundation for the possession of uncontested truth. All claims to knowledge and truth are inherently uncertain and the phenomenologist never claims knowledge based on some preconceived, independent reality. I cannot know the way things 'really are' in the same way in which the physicist might be able to do with her slice of the cake. Phenomenological knowledge in particular, the greatest bulk of sociological knowledge in general and, I personally would go as far as to argue, the sum total of human scientific knowledge, when analysed to the point where 'how' and 'why' converge on the borders of truth and illusion, is 'objectified' solely to the extent in which it is intersubjectively understood and agreed upon to be 'true' by a group of individuals deemed to be experts in a given field of inquiry.

Be that as it may, the process of qualitative research is no less disciplined and scientific in its methods than its quantitative counterpart, it is merely conceptualised in a different language. The 'objectivity' of qualitative research lies not in the testing of the 'facts' it produces, but in constantly intersubjectively appraising and evaluating its methods, or process of inquiry (Schwandt, 2006: 155). Qualitative research strives to methodologically attain the meticulous standards of a scientific practice, and its methods of implementation and accepted results are no less the object of public criticism, peer review and intersubjective scrutiny than are those of quantitative research.

In conclusion, understanding mystery, as opposed to the causal explanation of problems, is of value to the social scientist precisely because understanding people and their intersubjective behaviour is different from explaining other natural phenomena in the physical world (recall Schutz's explanation of constructs of the second degree, introduced in the first chapter [Schutz, 1962: 59]). Human action and reaction, unlike the laws of physics (only above the quantum level), is not universally predictable. As my quest toward understanding the stories told to me

during the course of this study involved emphatically reconstructing the assumptions, practices and belief systems of those who shared them (Schwandt, 2006: 156), there was no 'objective' problem solved, but an intersubjective mystery laid bare for me to interpret and understand ever more fully and reflexively.

4.1.3.   Gaining understanding through a storytelling methodology

Achieving the kind of understanding defined in the previous section poses certain challenges to the social scientist hoping to do so. The end is clear, and it is now time we turned our attention to the means. How, then, do I propose reaching a level of intersubjective understanding worthy of the epithet of valid scientific knowledge, while simultaneously acknowledging the fundamental role of the inherently subjective, unscientific nature of the human mind and its meaning-making frameworks in the construction of social reality? My proposal, as argued over the next few pages, is not to veer away from our critical, humanistic view of the social inquiry process at this point, but to make it even more fundamentally *human* through its method.

Some people prefer substituting numbers for words, cold hard digits in black on white emulating the soft warmth of a kaleidoscopic life recalled in all its subtleties of meaning and experience. I am not one of them. To truly understand human life and social reality, I deem it necessary to engage these phenomena in the way humankind has done since time immemorial. Throughout time and geographic space, there is one social pastime universal to all societies, and it is to this primeval ritual of knowledge exchange that I now wish to turn in my quest for understanding. It is of course storytelling. We have all told stories and had them told to us. It is through fanciful tales that we first come to interpret the world around us, and one day, long after our faces have disappeared from the readily summoned memories of those that will surely come after us, little more than our stories, and others' stories about us, will remain. This is more than a metaphor; it is a thought that serves as a reminder that life, our own as well as those of others, usually makes itself known to us in the form of a story of some kind (Taylor, 2001: 4). In fully grasping this revelation lies the key to unlocking the full potential of the qualitative human sciences.

Each and every experience presents itself to us as part of both the continually unfolding personal story that began the day we were born and the mysterious epic we call history, of which the former is but a fleeting, but never quite insignificant chapter. Every object, character or situation we encounter throughout our lives can be conceptualised as part of the plot of a lived story. What is a lived life if not a story, told by anecdotes, photographs, artefacts, memories and legacies? We all tell stories and we all listen to them, yet personal accounts are routinely dismissed by the status quo of modern, positivist science as irredeemably unscientific and unfit to rank alongside the deductions and abstractions of a scientific reality utterly removed from the subjective. Ronald Berger and Richard Quinney (2005: 2) go as far as to argue that "*…sociology has become so dependent on quantitative instrumentation removed from lived experience that its claim of being an empirical science capable of ascertaining social reality seems rather dubious*". Social reality cannot be thoroughly investigated and fully understood if due attention is not paid to its

underlying parts, namely the highly interactive individuals and rich spectrum of relationships and dialogical interactions that constitute it. Throughout this study it was my aim not to lose sight of the micro- or indeed the macro-level of social reality, but to uncover that sphere in which the personal becomes public, and vice versa, the very intersection of history and biography. I am not alone in this endeavour, which is called by some the 'narrative turn' in sociology. It has become clear to many scholars that the old positivist traditions have become thoroughly dated in certain respects, and the entrenchment of its practitioners within academia has led to an unfortunate power struggle between an institutionalised elite of the old guard and a continuously growing collection of up and coming scholars who believe that our conventional ways of interpreting social reality are no longer valid (Berger & Quinney, 2005: 3).

Out of this new big bang of postmodern social theory and method many schools of thought have arisen, most of which rarely engage with each other and often develop haphazardly and independently, probably as a direct result of the denial by the institutionalised positivists of an opportunity for this new paradigm to evolve coherently (Gubrium & Holstein, 1999: 564). One of these developing fields is generally known as narrative research, and this is the field within which my own work is situated at the moment. Narrative researchers are concerned with storytelling and the structure of stories, and, according to Lisa Capps and Elinor Ochs (2001: 2), strive to impose a logical and temporal order on life events and to bring about continuity between past, present and future through meaningfully interpreting lived human experience, which is conceptualised as analogous to a plotted story. In this way individual lives can be better understood; meaningful plots replace mere coincidental chronology and positions the storyteller's unique biographically determined situation (Schutz, 1962: XXVIII), a concept introduced in the first chapter, as growing "*...plausibly out of what has come before and point*[ing] *the way to what might reasonably come next*" (Berger & Quinney, 2005: 4)*.*

There is thus ample evidence to support the argument that truly knowing someone, even myself, is dependent on knowing that someone's story. Even in the postmodern world, which is continuously evolving in various, currently only vaguely understood ways, human beings still rely primarily on their storytelling skills to make sense of the world they perceive, objects they encounter and events they experience on a daily basis. Each one of us is constantly trying to arrange the seemingly unrelated and confusing scatterings of experience which constitute our daily lives into coherent episodes of a story; the story of our lives, in which we play a central role and through which we come to know essential truths about ourselves and the world around us. This constant fantasising is by no means mere self-deception, but constitutes a universally human path to finding meaning in life. According to the psychologist Dan McAdams (1993: 11) "*...enduring human truths still reside primarily in myths, as they have done for centuries*". The work of the social scientist is not to attempt a wholesale replacement of the stories people live by with sober, factual reports of society and history. Instead, sociologists should strive to better understand the mechanisms through which people construct and interpret reality in the world of everyday life, thereby reclaiming the discipline's role as an empirical endeavour geared toward

the unassuming understanding of experienced social reality. But how, you may well ask, do we manage a science concerned primarily with the immeasurable without falling into the trap of obscuring our goal through endless empirical abstraction, as is the danger with the overly rationalised approach of the scientific method?

In attempting to answer this question I have decided to forfeit the role of scientist, at least in the way it is conventionally understood, in favour of becoming a narrator of tales. In order to truly understand stories and reproduce them in a way that facilitates understanding by others, I have come to the conclusion that the dual acts of collecting and reproducing narratives should be naturalistic, conversational and humanist in nature. The responsibility of critically engaging with participants' stories before my retelling thereof, informed by a thorough awareness of the relevant fields, the application of a 'disciplined imagination' if you will (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011: 61), distinguishes the scientific act of narrative research from other, less scientific forms of storytelling. In order to back up this claim it is necessary to outline a methodology for the collection and reproduction of narratives from within the world of science that differentiates the scientific act from the various ways in which ordinary people engage with the same process in the world of everyday life, while not losing sight of the useful techniques that ordinary human beings use to make sense of stories in the latter sphere on a daily basis. The next section represents an attempt to do just that. Building on the preceding sections, we now have the following two main arguments, which provided me with a sound foundation for drawing up a valid strategy for data collection and analysis:

1. Understanding, unlike the explanation of simple causally solvable problems, requires personal involvement, the forfeiting of any unnecessary theoretical baggage and a willingness to continuously learn and reflect as mysteries are revealed.

2. The most productive way of gaining the understanding mentioned above is to dialogically engage participants face to face, on their terms and in their own words, through involving them in naturalistic conversation and exchanging stories.

The challenge now, from the dual realisations that we are interested in unraveling intricate mysteries and that we are going to collect and interpret told stories in order to do this, is to synthesise a workable methodological approach that is scientifically sound. In order to do this all that has been said throughout the first three chapters needs to be taken into account and a holistic framework of what exactly we are interested in searching for, how we are going to go about our search, and why the chosen approach is likely to yield results, needs to be presented.

4.1.4.   **The role of mystery**

While attempting to approach my research topic as a mystery instead of a problem, the lack of a coherent methodology aimed at investigating mystery quickly became apparent. The dominant positivist traditions within contemporary sociology have monopolised the act of social inquiry to the extent that even using the term mystery may lead to some sociologists rejecting any possible sociological value this dissertation may hold. This study, amongst other things, represents an attempt to prove that the inherently human can also be engaged with in a scientific way, and that mysteries can be solved and social reality more fully understood through avenues that need not be overly theory driven and deductive. One of the scholars who take seriously the idea of a methodology of mystery is the Swedish sociologist Johan Asplund. Asplund sees social research as involving two key elements: a perceived breakdown in theoretical understanding (the presentation of a mystery) and a subsequent recovery of understanding (solving the mystery) (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011: 16).

Once again storytelling comes to the fore, as the process of social inquiry is likened to writing a detective story. The researcher encounters a mystery, and then solves it. Instead of a deductive process, theorisation is understood as a process of 'disciplined imagination'. Such an approach is anathema to the empirically-minded, and it should be nothing less. According to Mats Alvesson and Dan Kärreman (2011: 17) the assumptions of the field one wishes to creatively contribute to must be challenged in order to stimulate the development of new and interesting theory from the observation of specific cases. Thus, though the conclusions presented in the final chapter of this dissertation emerge directly from empirically collected data which provided a platform for both discipline and imagination, the ways in which these conclusions were arrived at may be hard to accept for some. For that reason, I will now attempt to outline a methodological approach for dealing with mysteries as opposed to problems, and explain why exactly an approach based on an understanding of the research topic as a mystery is of at least equal scientific value to the approaches used by scientists driven by the generation of deductive, or top-down, logic.

Before we turn to the construction of a methodology of mystery though, let us first look at the various reasons for the necessity of such an approach. Alvesson and Kärreman (2011: 26) highlight the shortcomings of an empirical, theory driven approach toward understanding reality through the following three arguments:

1. Certain areas of social inquiry, narrative research and the study of identity for example, are not suited to hypothesis-testing due to their complicated nature. Data tend to be influenced by deployed theory through the very act of interpretation such a process purportedly avoids.

2. Both laypeople and academics tend to place accepted theories on a pedestal and assign to them a value which is often unrelated to their capacity for verification. In the words of Graham Astley (1985: 503): "*Theories gain favor because of their conceptual appeal,*

their logical structure, or their psychological plausibility. Internal coherence, parsimony, formal elegance, and so on prevail over empirical accuracy in determining a theory's impact. Published theoretical works generally attract greater attention […] because of their ability to excite these essentially aesthetic sensibilities". This state of affairs may well be attributed to human irrationality, once again raising a question mark in the face of objective knowledge claims regarding human behaviour and social reality.

3. Even if it is possible to verify a theory, such verification would only be of value if social scientists were on the brink of fully understanding social reality. We are far from that threshold and indeed expect many of our theories, as is the case in all scientific disciplines, to be proven incorrect or at least questionable in the future.

Social reality is produced in many interesting ways, and we should consider the various equally interesting ways in which it can be understood. We must tread around our convictions carefully, as the researcher, through subjective interpretation, ultimately decides which theories survive. Novel understandings and interpretations of relationships and connections can be explored creatively and fruitfully, rather than sticking to 'validated' theory. These arguments don't necessarily indicate a need for declaring hypothesis-testing obsolete, but serves to illustrate that the time is ripe for developing certain alternative virtues and possibilities within the social sciences. At this point you may well ask what concrete steps a qualitative sociologist can take toward such an open-minded approach, how can we move toward a methodology more suited to the idea of data as mystery? Alvesson and Kärreman (2011: 41-52) offer the following principles for consideration:

-   *(De-)fragmentation:* Many scientists see pattern-seeking to be the point of scientific practice. What is neglected in most empirical research is the impact that individual researchers' vocabularies, stocks of knowledge and biographically determined situations may have on the ordering of encountered phenomena into perceived patterns. Such an approach may benefit from a simultaneous quest for fragmentations, or deviation from patterns, which may turn the researcher onto the potential existence of multiple meanings oriented toward a given phenomenon. Ambiguous and incoherent processes play such a large role in the construction of social reality that their exclusion, for the sake of focusing on repeating patterns, creates the risk of misinterpreting intersubjective reality completely. It often proves rewarding to explore breaks in expected patterns in greater detail, as these, though often indicating deviancy of some sort, are without a doubt the stuff from which societal change springs. Of course patterns are not to be ignored either, the proposed approach encapsulates a dialectic reflection on the interrelation between patterns and fragments and the deeper understanding we may gain from a raised awareness of the interplay between the two.

- *Defamiliarisation:* Through avoiding a perception of social reality as something familiar and self-evident, one may gain new insights into the deeper meanings of subjective and intersubjective behaviour. The researcher should strive, against the constraints of his or her socio-cultural position, to perceive phenomena as exotic and arbitrary in order to gain new insights. An ongoing awareness of and a reflexive attitude toward one's own stock of knowledge and biographically determined situation, and their potential impact on perception, is a good starting point. This drive toward finding the strange or unfamiliar in one's own familiar environment should be one of the precepts of qualitative research in general.

- *Problematisation:* Constantly reconceptualising assumptions, theories and concepts through critical and reflexive engagement with dominant ideas regarding the subject matter of social research and accepted theories may lead to new insights and fresh theory generation. This process can be applied to the micro-level as well, entailing a rethinking of ideas and patterns of reasoning between researcher and participants which may lead to internalised learning and growth.

- *Broad scholarship:* The development of a broad 'interpretive repertoire', the mastering of as eclectic a range of paradigmatic, theoretical and methodological approaches as possible, allows the qualitative researcher to act creatively during the social research process. Continuously exploring new paradigms and remaining open-minded toward the development of novel approaches to social research, theory and philosophy increases the likelihood of the researcher attaining a 'frame-breaking experience', or moving beyond what is currently understood in the face of limiting theoretical and methodological paradigms. When applied to the storytelling sociological approach I embraced throughout the course of this study, broad scholarship can also be seen as entailing a broadening of the researcher's 'narrative repertoire', a term discussed in greater detail later in this chapter, but which basically refers to the store of knowledge, or stories, available to a given researcher's interpretation of the stories of others.

- *Reflexive critique:* The researcher should be cautious of ever embracing a *final* vocabulary. Even if the researcher incorporates all of the above, she must still continuously doubt her chosen approach, as it is always influenced by the approaches of others. This reflection should extend to the knowledge that those doubts cannot be dissolved while working from within her chosen vocabulary. The idea that truth is producible should serve as a lesson in humility, and a realisation of the fact that knowledge can hardly be separated from the knowledge producer is essential for a holistically reflexive approach to social research.

If these principles are embraced during the research process, the success rate of qualitative studies geared toward exploring mystery are set to be improved. This approach does not

represent an attempt at replacing traditional empirical models, but offers the qualitative researcher disillusioned with those models a clean slate. It is merely suggested that resisting the tendency to revert to established lines of reasoning may facilitate learning and discovery, and I, for one, have decided to go with it.

4.1.5.   Identifying and solving mystery

"…*the contribution of social science does not lie in validated knowledge, but rather in the suggestion of relationships* […] *that had not previously been suspected, relationships that change actions and perspectives*" (Weick, 1989: 524).

In order to encounter and subsequently solve a mystery that may lead to new insight, one first has to identify an interesting research problem. A research problem can be seen as interesting if it has the potential to generate "*...novel insights that will add significantly to – or* [go] *against – previous understandings*" (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011: 57). Thus an interesting research problem ideally presents unexpected and challenging developments, as is the case in this study, where much of the data is new and represents developments beyond the scope of earlier investigations. This study is interesting due to the fact that it is clearly socially and practically relevant, while simultaneously having the potential for broader theoretical relevance, as is seen in the research approach developed during its course and which I will undoubtedly continue to develop throughout future research.

In this case the stories of individual white Afrikaans speakers are relevant to our society, while their collection, interpretation and representation drove me toward considering the epistemological and methodological virtues of *storytelling-as-science*, which in turn has repercussions for our understanding of narrative research and qualitative sociological inquiry at large. Interesting research entails a new angle of approach that challenges conventional wisdom and breaks with dominant ideas in the relevant field. It is more than testing and rethinking theory, it is a process of 'disciplined imagination' aimed at developing theory from empirical data which has at its core an understanding of the relationship between researcher and data as a critical dialogue, through which meaning is continuously bargained for.

In order for mysteries to present themselves, a preceding breakdown in understanding is necessary (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011: 63). In most social sciences, where the differences between the researcher and participant's respective stocks of knowledge automatically generate an epistemological discontinuity, or lack of understanding, between the two, such breakdowns often occur spontaneously. The theoretical predictions of the scientist do not fit the cultural expectations of the participant (and often of the researcher himself) and breakdowns will continue to occur until the researcher gains a sufficient mastery or understanding of the research subject (in this case the participant's culture). Once such a level of understanding has evolved out of continuous reflexive dialogical interaction between the researcher and researched, the co-inquirers if you will, rich descriptions and substantive knowledge are produced which, if care is

taken in developing one's grasp of those mysteries hinting at relevance on a larger scale, may lead directly to more generally applicable theoretical knowledge. Thus theory can be born out of little more than the open, reflexive interaction of two or more human beings, at least one of whom has a scientific interest in understanding the other on his or her own terms.
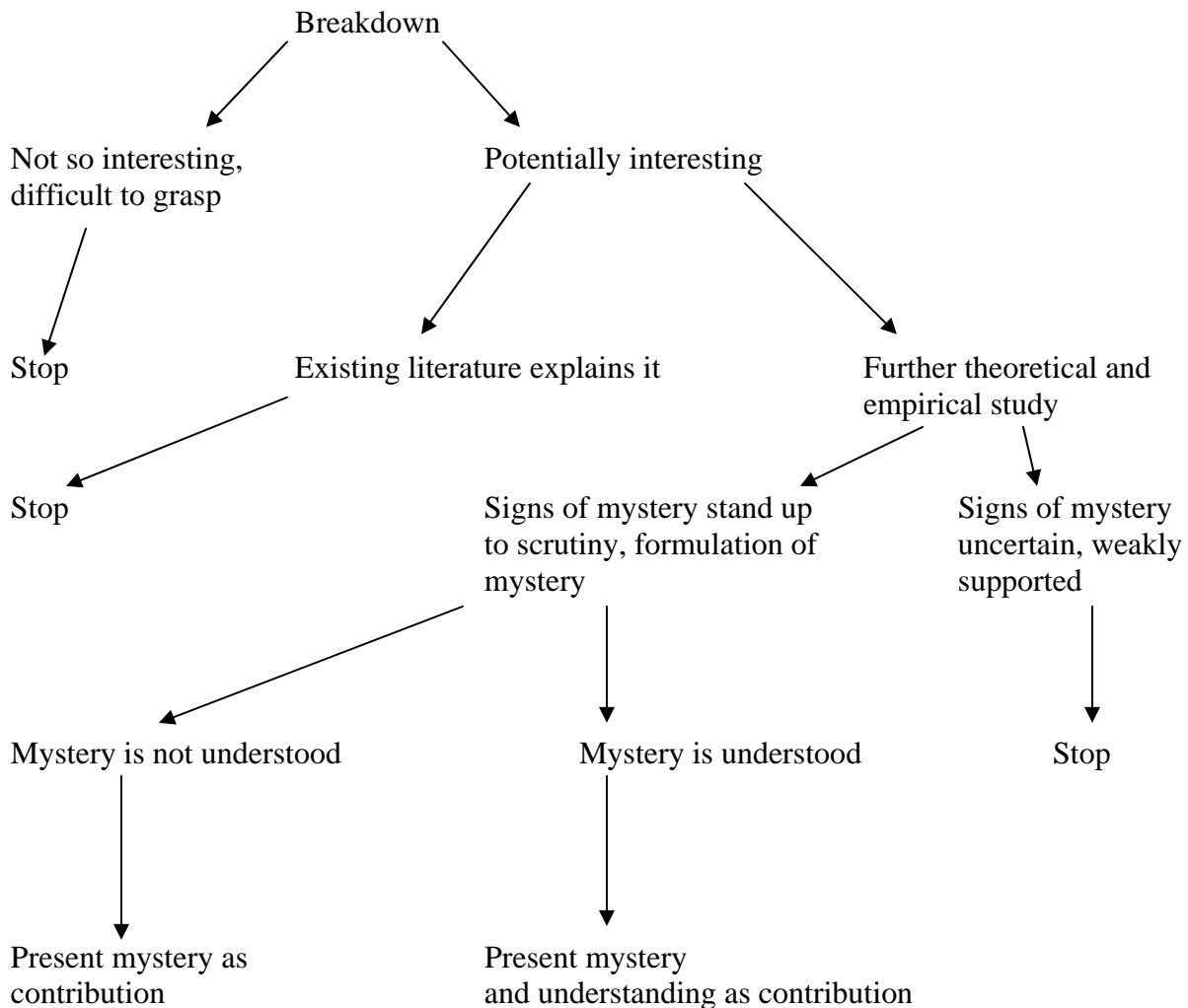
Sometimes though, especially when studying culturally familiar situations and environments, as was the case during this study, it is necessary to *create* breakdowns in understanding in order to facilitate new learning (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011: 64). This 'creation' of breakdowns in understanding does not mean that the researcher 'imagines' a mystery in any unscientific sense, but entails a re-imagining of the familiar in order to facilitate the generation of understanding through deconstructing barriers in perception, which may have arisen out of the researcher's socio-cultural position in society. Concerning the creation of such breakdowns in understanding, there are no clear lines between the exotic and the familiar. Male researchers studying professional women may have more in common with their participants (in terms of socio-economic class, etc.) than they would when studying male prostitutes for instance. Keeping this in mind, one can strive to create breakdowns in various ways, including situating participants and data collection sessions in unfamiliar environments and contexts, including varied and unconventional sources in one's literature review and putting together paradigmatically diverse research teams where appropriate. Employing these or similar strategies represent an internalisation of the principles introduced on pages 74 and 75, and show just how easy it is for the relationship between researcher and participant to be refreshed. The suspension of conventional approaches to generating data through the creation of breakdowns in understanding thus facilitate the most important prerequisite for the development of new theoretical knowledge, namely a deviation from expectancy (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011: 65).

It is important to note that not all breakdowns provide fertile ground for the discovery of mystery. Some are bound to disappear during the research process, being merely the result of a temporary lack of familiarity with the research topic. Those that remain despite further observation and data collection, and require a deeper theoretical consideration on the part of the researcher, are the ones of interest to the social scientist hoping to understand an encountered mystery. This means that mystery is most fruitfully engaged from a solid grounding in existing literature, coupled with an awareness of that same literature's incapacity to justify the conventionally unsolvable breakdown that stands the scrutiny of vigorous scientific observation.

Thus, the fact that 20th century Afrikaner identity historically tended to be defined institutionally, religiously and racially, as is evident from the existing literature, combined with an awareness of the continuing evolution of globalism and the secularisation and multicultural character of the modern state largely undermining such an understanding of Afrikaner identity in our own day and age, leads to the issue of contemporary understandings of white Afrikaans speaking identity, and the consequences of these understandings, as being a solid example of a multi-faceted mystery awaiting understanding, or at least exploration. In this case a familiar, historical incarnation of white Afrikaans speaking identity serves as a guide toward encountering the

unfamiliar, as it "*...provides a point of departure and offers resources for crafting the mystery: something that is unexpected must be seen in relation to what is expected, and having a set of assumptions and truth claims* [...] *is helpful in the articulation of why something could be seen as a mystery*" (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011: 66). Can Afrikaners be atheists? Can Boers vote for the African National Congress? Have a black spouse? Play soccer instead of rugby? How do white Afrikaans speakers perceive their Afrikanerhood today? This is the breakdown in understanding that has confronted me and which, through this dissertation, I attempted to solve. Figure 3 illustrates the way in which a research process concerned with the solving of mystery may be conceptualised, a scheme that was fundamental to my own approach throughout this study.

Figure 3: Researching mystery (adapted from Alvesson & Kärreman, 2007)

Breakdown

Not so interesting, difficult to grasp

Potentially interesting

Stop

Existing literature explains it

Further theoretical and empirical study

Stop

Signs of mystery stand up to scrutiny, formulation of mystery

Signs of mystery uncertain, weakly supported

Mystery is not understood

Mystery is understood

Stop

Present mystery as contribution

Present mystery and understanding as contribution

This approach to social research highlights the ways in which the researcher's understandings, expectations and imagination play a crucial role in the dialogue between data and theory. The most important aspect of this approach is the identification of breakdowns and the subsequent encountering of mysteries. Step by step, the process unfolds more or less in the following way (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011: 67 – 74):

1. *The researcher familiarises himself with the studied setting and makes open enquiries about themes*. This entails having a relatively open focus for the investigation and starting off the research process with broad initial themes of interest. Instead of focusing solely on themes like 'religion', 'race' or 'nationalism', the researcher can ponder questions like 'what do different Afrikaners think their relationship to God is?' or 'can Afrikaners rightly be described as white?'. A useful degree of direction in the inquiry should not be lost, but ample exposure must be given to the possibility of encountering the unexpected through avoiding narrow themes. Openness to all possible levels of relevance regarding the study is just as important at this point. Questions like 'who will benefit from this topic studied in this way?' are of the essence.

2. *The researcher encounters/constructs breakdowns in understanding.* While being theoretically informed, techniques used during fieldwork, in this case the composite interview method introduced in the next section, must be flexible enough to allow for the uncovering and investigation of unexpected breakdowns in understanding. It is not necessary to problematise everything encountered during the research process, just to be especially receptive to data that can't be explained satisfactorily by existing theories. Such surprises must be carefully positioned within a sophisticated account of the research process, so as to negate any accusations of the breakdown resulting from poor scholarship or some other inadequacy on the part of the researcher. This point makes clear that mysteries are best confronted by researchers well versed within the existing theories and paradigms of concern to their chosen field of study. The most important breakdown in understanding that emerged during the course of this study was the existence of a high level of intra-group conflict among contemporary Afrikaans speakers, people who were , not too long ago, the heirs of a relatively monologically constructed collective identity. Exploring this specific breakdown in greater detail led to the realisation that there exists not one, but several[16], highly variable Afrikaans speaking collectivities in South Africa today, and that these groups are drifting ever farther from each other through the adoption of collective representations and narrative repertoires that are, to a large extent, exclusive to each grouping. Resolving this breakdown in understanding greatly aided me in understanding the broader mystery of contemporary white Afrikaans speaking identity, my understanding of which is presented in greater detail in chapter 5.

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[16]For the purpose of my data analysis I distinguish between three such collectivities, namely the Pseudo-Boers, the Afrikaners, and the Afrikaanses.

3. *The researcher moves from breakdown to mystery.* After an unexplained breakdown in understanding is encountered, interpretations can be constructed by indicating the broader relevance of the breakdown, pointing out shortcomings in existing theory regarding the explanation of thereof, and formulating the breakdown in terms of a mystery that may lead to new understanding. As stated earlier, not all breakdowns lead to the formulation of a successfully solvable mystery. Most breakdowns are local in their relevance, meaning they might not be 'generalisable' in the traditional sense of the word. Only once a new theoretical conception is needed, that is to say if the literature and existing approaches fail to explain the breakdown, is a mystery at hand. Reflexivity and critique of one's own approach is important during this phase, as the enthusiasm and excitement surrounding the perceived exposure of true mystery all too often lead to a relaxed attitude toward sobering questions regarding empirical grounding and potential theoretical value. Alvesson and Kärreman (2011: 71) suggest dialogue within the research community as a useful way of 'testing' perceived mysteries.

4. *The mystery is solved through the development of an idea resulting from a new interpretation of the phenomenon in which the mystery is situated.* Metaphorisation, the coining of concepts, re-imaging and synthesising are some of the ways in which mysteries can be demystified. As general relevance as possible is important when formulating mysteries out of breakdowns in understanding.

5. *A resolution of the mystery that gives it broader relevance within the specific field and clearly positions it relative to other theories, is developed.* In this phase other, related terrains are considered, the process leading itself toward developing a firmer grasp of the demystified mystery. Here the researcher may learn when and where the theory constructed to demystify the encountered mystery is relevant, and where that is not the case. The new theory's relevance may fluctuate according to subject, location or even historical time. In considering this aspect the proposed theory is handed over to the researcher's peers and the public, who may dynamically test it just as is the case with any other theory.

This approach to investigating mysteries and constructing theory from empirical data facilitates a dynamic interaction between the data, the subjective researcher and existing theories, in order to generate new, possibly deeper insights into the demystified, intersubjectively understood mystery. I consciously choose the terms 'demystified' and 'understood' over 'solved' as, as we have argued in great depth up to this point, these kinds of dilemma are just not readily 'solvable' in the traditional, positivistic sense of the term. Instead, mysteries are understood subjectively and differently between individuals and members of like-minded collectivities. We may slowly start to shed light on mysteries, but once we 'solve' them they are not solved in the traditional sense of the term, they disappear. We should rather strive toward an intersubjective

understanding of a given mystery, one that is informed not only by a disciplined scientific investigation of the matter at hand, but also by the existing, often unscientific understandings of the mystery under study that are constructed by the individuals and collectivities under investigation. After all, to my mind, sociology should be geared toward the unassuming study of social reality as experienced by those to whom it is real. Mysteries are not solvable as long as they stay mysteries, they are only understandable to us as products of human intersubjectivity, and as such tend not to fall squarely within the realm of purely scientific endeavour. They are irrational, often nonsensical, rarely rational, but always *human*. This approach can be applied to many methodological frameworks, and in the following section I explain the ways in which I took the interview and focus group as methods of data collection and harnessed their potential for formulating and solving mysteries. But before we do that, let us briefly look at the ways in which participants were selected for inclusion and ethically protected during the course of the study.

## 4.2.	Methodological account

Remember the two questions raised in the introduction to the second chapter? The second and third chapters answered the first question by explaining *what* I would be investigating. It is now time for us to answer the second question: *how* the topic of interest was enquired into (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000: 7). In this section the practical aspects of participant sampling and management, as well as the methods of data collection and analysis embraced during the course of the study, will be presented in an attempt to answer this question. The methodological process was designed with all the aspects discussed hitherto in mind, so as to produce a research methodology that suited all of the epistemological, ontological and theoretical requirements laid out up to this point and to put into practice the considerations deliberated upon during the initial phases of the project. I firstly explain the way in which mysteries can be conceived as objects of inquiry, after which the practical aspects of data collection and analysis are discussed. I will explain how participants were chosen, and how certain ethical considerations and measures were put into place to protect participants from any physical, psychological or legal harm that might have resulted from their participation in this study. Following this, the processes of data collection, analysis and representation are discussed, illustrating the ways in which the philosophical and theoretical considerations embraced throughout the investigative process were put into practice during the course of the study.

### 4.2.1.	Sampling

The first task of any social researcher in the field is to decide on the population of interest to a particular study and then go about the process of recruiting a suitable, representative sample of participants. At the outset of this study certain prerequisites were envisioned to reduce undue complexities in the data analysis process and rescale the study so as to suit the requirements of a Master's dissertation. The first of these was that only self-designated white Afrikaans speakers would be considered for inclusion in the study, as the inclusion of coloured Afrikaans speakers

would have added an ethnic and racial aspect to the project which would have merited months of further preparation and analysis. The same went for issues of gender and sexual orientation. Seeing as any sensitive study of female white Afrikaans speakers would have necessitated the consideration of a large body of feminist literature and including members of the LGBT community would have made a study of queer literature necessary, it was just not conceivable to conduct the study so inclusively within the time constraints I had to deal with. Although future studies may delve deeper into the experiences of these often neglected members of South African society, this study focuses exclusively on adult white Afrikaans speaking males of various backgrounds and ages.

As might be imagined in this case, non-probability sampling was used to draw a sample, or group of participants, from the target population. This basically means that participants were chosen intentionally on the merit of their compatibility to the study and due to various constraints on sample size and the duration of the project, and not randomly, as is usually the case in studies where larger samples are used. More specifically, a purposive or judgemental sampling strategy was embraced (Babbie & Mouton, 2010: 166), which was appropriate for this study given my prior knowledge of the target population and the three theoretical types of contemporary white Afrikaans speakers I identified in the previous chapter, all three of which might not have been represented had I randomly selected a sample. Though the concrete existence of these collectivities and their specific characteristics only became clear during the process of data analysis, I nevertheless set out to include individuals of various persuasions regarding race, religion and nationalism from the beginning, as I had previously pondered, by means of disciplined imagination as discussed earlier, the possible existence of these three types based on experiences of social interaction with white Afrikaans speakers from different educational and socio-economic backgrounds and social environments. Even after including participants and informally communicating with white Afrikaans speakers who might be conceived as 'atypical' according to a strict imposition of the typology illustrated by Figure 6 (p. 101), the conceptualisation of contemporary white Afrikaans speaking identity possibilities as existing along a continuum with certain nodes of concentration, but ample room for anomaly, retains its plausibility.

Six participants, two of whom roughly represented each of the three identified collectivities, were eventually included. Their ages ranged from the late teens to early fifties and among their ranks were included students, blue-collar workers and academics. The sample was drawn from Bloemfontein and Kimberley, the two largest cities in central South Africa, and also Orania, a self-sufficient Afrikaner village about halfway between the two. This variable set of participants offered the opportunity to encounter a rich array of data through offering stories with a huge amount of variance regarding their structure, contents and circulation.

4.2.2.   Ethics and participant protection

All participants were thoroughly briefed regarding the potentially sensitive nature of the study before any data collection session was initiated. An informed consent form (Appendix 1) was signed after the participant was made comfortable with the process to follow, and respondents were still allowed to withdraw their data from the study even after this point. Due care was taken to protect all participants from physical, psychological and legal harm, while complete confidentiality was assured. No deception was used and the exact nature and scope of the study was explained thoroughly to each individual participant before data collection commenced.

4.2.3.   Data collection

When it came to collecting data, two related methods were used. The in-depth interview and group interview, throughout this study referred to as involved conversation and group conversation respectively, allowed for the development of a methodological approach that was optimally aligned with the aims of the study as developed up to this point. These methods made it possible to apply the knowledge uncovered in the literature review, which, combined with a continued awareness of the philosophical and theoretical foundations underlying the research process, allowed me to investigate the various areas of interest identified in the previous chapter, as well as the relationship of these factors to the question of individual and collective white Afrikaans speaking identity.

I believe that at least some ethnographical involvement on the part of the researcher is desirable if a qualitative study is to realise its full potential. Researchers collecting narratives can "*...enter into dialogue with people's stories only if* [they have] *sufficient proximate experience of the everyday circumstances in which people learn and tell their stories*" (Frank, 2012: 38). At this stage it is important to note that I chose my research topic not due to some compulsion from my supervisors or as the acceptance of a funded commission of inquiry. I chose white Afrikaans speaking identity as a research topic primarily because I was caught up in this mystery myself. As a storied South African with an Afrikaner heritage, I wanted to get to know the 'other' Afrikaners, those who I vaguely knew to be 'my' people, yet with whom I seemed to be more often at odds with than fully understood. Thus, I got into the field first and foremost as a human being "*...vulnerable to disruption*" (Frank 2012: 39).

Arthur Frank (2012: 39) calls the researcher compelled into doing fieldwork in this way a 'conscripted' researcher, and while there are disadvantages to being a conscript, such as having a lot at stake personally and initially tending to feel and react in accordance with certain preconceptions of meaning, it also provides unique advantages. In the words of Frank (2012: 39), I "*...went places, associated with people whom I would not otherwise have known, learned their ways of thinking and speaking* [and understood] *others' values to the point that action based on those values became plausible to me*". A conscript researcher has an embodied experience of the lives of those for whom the 'field' is reality. Non-conscript researchers often do not have the

experience of *living* their participants' experiences in the way that researchers completely situated in their subject matter, often without any personal choice, have the potential of doing. Though stories in themselves are rich repositories of understanding and can be studied in the absence of the act of human telling with some degree of success, completing the circle of storytelling sociology requires learning 'with our bodies' through the participatory act of dialogical listening from within a position of participation and empathy (Wacquant, 2004: VIII).

While conceptualising the methodological side of the study, I was confronted with certain common assumptions regarding the relationship between the researcher and the researched during the process of social inquiry, which, like many facets of social research itself, are in need of serious revision. Most significant of these are what Wendy Hollway and Tony Jefferson (2000: 3) call the 'transparent self problem', or the taken for granted notion that participants have full cognisance of themselves and know exactly who they are, and the 'transparent account problem', the assumption that they are able and willing to share this with a stranger interviewer, or to tell it like it is, so to speak. Such an approach is incompatible with our commonsense knowledge of everyday human interaction, through which we have come to expect contradictory and often confused relationships between people and their knowledge of and stories about themselves. In our daily lives we often "*...do not take each other's accounts at face value, unless we are totally naïve; we question, disagree, bring in counter-examples, interpret, notice hidden agendas*" (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000: 3).

How can a scientific interview then be accepted as automatically generating uncontaminated knowledge when we expect all day-to-day interactions to be tainted by various undisclosed processes and motivations? Herein lies one of the greatest fallacies of contemporary social research methodology, one which even most qualitative research methods haven't managed to improve upon significantly as of yet. As social research essentially represents a more systematic and formalised way of knowing about society and people, why are the complexities and subtleties of day to day knowing largely ignored and indeed actively excluded? Through embracing the human side of social enquiry, I believe it is possible to generate data that are more relevant to the human condition. Obviously, as argued at length already, interpretation is fundamental to the process of engaging the transparent self problem. In other words, the knowledge and skills gained through experience in the world of everyday life, including the various intuitive ways in which we gauge and react to the perceived degree of 'truthfulness' exhibited by our conversational partners, may indeed prove useful if reflexively deployed in the world of science.

The transparent account problem, which extends to the problematic notion that the researcher is capable of acquiring a 'God's eye view' of the object of enquiry, is also solved through acknowledging the fact that the researcher, during the process of truly qualitative phenomenological investigation, does not possess any special 'objective' status. The researcher may be conceptualised as the same kind of subject as the participant, merely differently positioned in the situation in which the process of data generation unfolds (Hollway & Jefferson,

2000: 3). As argued before, the social researcher is far from a neutral vehicle for 'objective' truth, but is just as involved in generating situational reality, and thus data, as is the participant.

With this in mind, I set about developing the interview method until an approach that seemed best geared toward a highly reflexive dialogical process of data collection was moulded from the clays of various interpretive methods, the details of which are discussed in section 4.2.3.2. The nature of these methods allowed me to gain the kind of understanding defined earlier and scientifically emulate the social process of storytelling as closely as possible, in order to make the process of data collection all the more *human*, that is, rooted in and reflexive of the inherently unscientific processes fundamental to human meaning-making, while retaining its scientific value. After all, narrative research is embedded in the understanding of human stories and should strive to scientifically locate the experiences and understandings hidden in these stories both biographically and historically, in order to draw holistic conclusions regarding the identity-forming role of stocks of knowledge, the biographically determined situation and the experiences that inform these phenomena, along with the ways in which individuals internalise and relate these experiences. Engaging participants in prolonged lively discourse, which flows both ways and allows for the full immersion of all those involved, and allowing them to tell their stories naturalistically allows for greater access to the mystery of identity, greatly aiding the process of understanding this mystery.
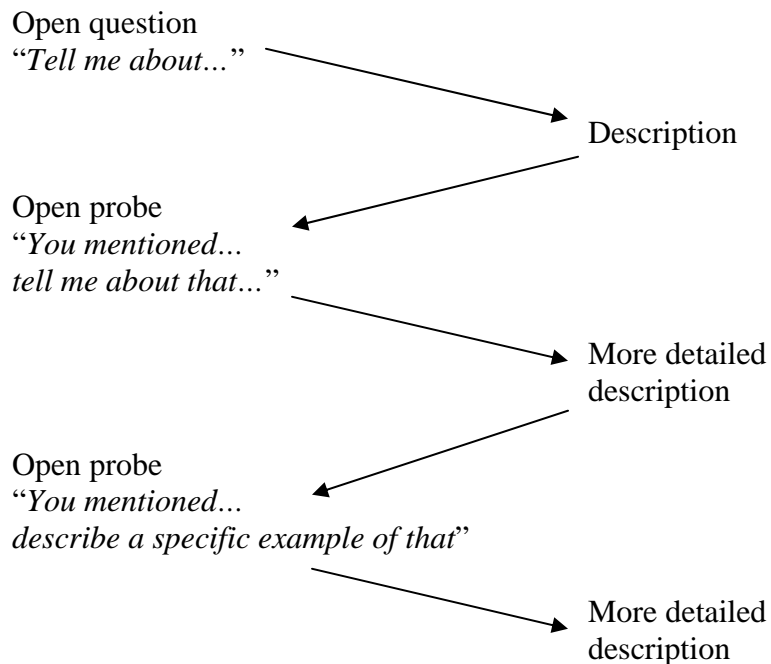
4.2.3.1.   Concerning questions

Before we look at the ways in which data were collected, it is necessary to outline the approach to formulating and asking questions embraced during the course of this study. We all know that questions represent statements intended to produce replies. When a question is asked however, it often does not automatically lead to a relevant reply, or any reply at all (Roulston, 2012: 10). This unwanted shortcoming may be avoided through asking reflexively informed questions, thus maximising the probability of receiving rich, relevant answers. In this section I will attempt to explain how I set about constructing such questions, and how the very process of questioning was epistemologically envisioned and methodologically carried out during data collection.

In social research there are two general kinds of questions that researchers use to elicit responses from participants, namely 'closed' and 'open' questions, and these two differ primarily in the depth of response they elicit in the participant. Closed questions are characterised by queries that tend to result in a simple yes/no response by the participant, after which an explanation may be asked for. Figure 4 represents an illustration of the structure of a closed question.

Figure 4: Closed question with possible responses (adapted from Roulston [2012: 11])

Agree/Yes

Closed question ⟶ Disagree/No

Account or explanation
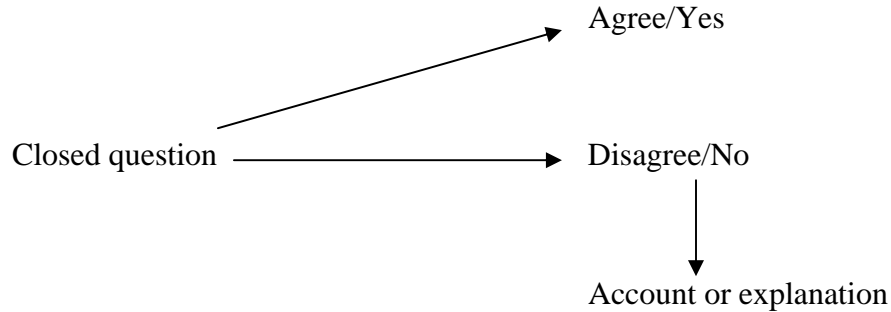
As can be expected, closed questions are pretty much useless in research as reliant on in-depth dialogical interaction and rich data as that carried out during the course of this study. Closed questions, no matter the degree to which they are refined, always restrict the participant's response in some way. For that reason I made use solely of what is commonly referred to as open questions. In contrast to closed questions, open questions "...*provide broad parameters within which interviewees can formulate answers in their own words concerning topics specified by the interviewer*" (Roulston, 2012: 12) and encourage the telling of stories, which is exactly what I was looking for. Figure 5 illustrates the structure of a typical open question (Contrast the potential richness of the participant's response to that made possible by a closed question [Figure 4]).

Figure 5: Open question with possible responses (adapted from Roulston [2012: 14]).

Open question
"*Tell me about...*"

Description

Open probe
"*You mentioned... tell me about that...*"

More detailed description

Open probe
"*You mentioned... describe a specific example of that*"

More detailed description

Open questions provide more room for in-depth dialogical interaction between the co-inquirers (interviewer and interviewee[s]) than is possible when making use of closed questions. Making use of probes, which are basically follow-up questions incorporating the participant's own words, make further description and a subtle control of the conversation on the part of the researcher possible. Here it is important to note that probes should ideally incorporate the participant's own words, as formulating probes using one's own words may 'contaminate' the participant's vocabulary, as he or she may adopt from the researcher words that are rarely used by him/her in everyday life, thus creating a very real risk of obscuring the data (Roulston, 2012: 13).

Whatever the case, to my mind the only real precaution one should be aware of when formulating and asking open questions is to guard against asking questions that are too general. As will be seen in the next section, I discard certain precepts of interviewing that are widely held as the standard, such as not antagonising the participant, sticking to 'relevant' questions, etc. These are all precautions that are rarely heeded in everyday interaction, so why would I incorporate them in an interview designed to be as 'real' as possible? As argued in the following section, it may often be useful to engage the participant antagonistically or steer the conversation into unexpected directions, assuming of course that this is done ethically, as it allows for a much more natural interactional setting and the generation of rich data that are usually missed when one 'sticks to the rules'. While remaining open to interpretation and description, questions should be specific enough for the participant to be able to answer them in a manner that produces viable data. Once this balance has been found, a few well-formulated open questions, asked in an interview in which a good level of rapport has been built up, may easily result in hours of rich and interesting conversation (Roulston, 2012: 13).

4.2.3.2. Involved conversation

In piecing together the composite interview technique I refer to as involved conversation, various interviewing techniques were evaluated and their strong points amalgamated into an approach intended to generate deep understanding through the identification of breakdowns in understanding, the formulation of mysteries from these breakdowns and the subsequent solving of these mysteries. Before we deal with these, it is necessary to introduce a few characteristics of the interviews held during the course of this study.

The structure of my 'involved conversations' fall somewhere between what is generally called 'semi-structured' and 'unstructured' interviews (Roulston, 2012: 14). They have a semi-structured aspect to them due to the fact that a preliminary interview schedule (Appendix B), which includes a few possible questions and probes regarding themes of interest, as exposed by the literature, upon which I creatively elaborated and from which I often deviated, was carried into every interview. This schedule was highly organic, in that it evolved from interview to interview as the need arose and according to the data. Apart from that, the involved conversation is un-structured and open to creativity and intuition. This basically means that the interview,

while revolving around the schedule, is highly influenced by the setting, my notes from previous interviews, and the unique pattern of talk that comprises the specific interview. Ideally both I and the participant ask and answer questions, the participant is able to freely participate in the conversation, and the power asymmetry between the interviewer and interviewee is reduced as far as possible (Roulston, 2012: 14–15). Thus I envision the involved conversation to be grounded in a well-researched interview schedule, but open to intuitive and creative facilitation according to the unique situation presented by various environmental settings and individual participants. The questions are open and the conversational technique designed to promote dialogical conversation between actors with almost equal power over its direction and content. Now let us take a look at the various kinds of interviews that were drawn upon during the conceptualisation of this integrated method.

The first of these was the phenomenological interview, which is specially designed to produce in-depth, highly detailed accounts of human experience (Roulston, 2012: 16). From the phenomenological interview I borrowed the idea of constructing open-ended questions, thus allowing the participant to express him/herself in his or her own words. Questions constructed in such a manner have as their aim not generalising or explaining behaviour, but eliciting rich descriptions of the direct experience of events and situations by the participant (Adams & Van Manen, 2008: 618). Such an approach is compatible with the goal of this study, but requires the selection of individuals who have both experience of the topic under investigation and the ability to share their experience, which further necessitated the sampling approach outlined earlier. From the phenomenological interview I further adopted the idea of the interviewer as interested and involved, learning from the interviewee through sensitive questioning and involved conversation (Roulston, 2012: 17).

This approach was enhanced by embracing the researcher role developed in the tradition of the 'Socratic Hermeneutic Inter-view' (Roulston, 2012: 18). In this tradition the interviewee is conceptualised as co-inquirer and both the researcher and participant are encouraged to engage and reflect together. This kind of interview usually starts by asking a respondent to present a definition of a concept, which really allowed me to explore individual perception as even the concept Afrikaner itself is understood differently by different people. Interpretation takes place throughout the interview and does not constitute a separate phase, which often leads to the generation of more unanswered questions which can then be used in follow-up interviews. The fact that this approach to interviewing explores the participants' perceptions of both 'actual' and 'ideal' experiences of various phenomena makes it especially interesting, as it allows a glimpse into what may be considered shared conceptions of social reality and identity, or at least a collective level ideal imagining of certain aspects thereof.

In a study like this it is impossible to not also take into account certain aspects of ethnographic interviewing. The participants were relating, in their own language, meanings attached to events and actors encountered in their life-worlds, which I, with my situationing within a close cultural context, could understand more readily than the average observer. The development of rapport

between me and the participants, opportunities to observe them outside of the interview setup, as well as the use of field notes and a heightened awareness of background and environmental cues (Spradley, 1980: 123) led to the data collection process having a definite ethnographic character. In fact, this study could be seen as an example of a storytelling ethnographic approach to social research, as, apart from the 'primary' data generated during formal interviews with participants set in the world of science, 'secondary' data was continuously extracted from daily interactions with white Afrikaans speakers in the world of everyday life. I thus maintained a *human* approach to the scientific process, while simultaneously embracing a *scientific* attitude during daily interactions. Another ingredient in the mix was life history interviewing, as an autobiographical account of each participant's life, including detailed explanations of certain relevant events, characters and relationships, made out a significant part of every interview (Roulston, 2012: 25). Very important in this regard is the fact that the participant's life is relayed in his or her own words (Cole & Knowles, 2001: 18).

Finally, my approach to interviewing also incorporated certain features that are sometimes referred to as dialogical or confrontational (Roulston, 2012: 26). Svend Brinkmann and Steinar Kvale (2005: 170) argue that "*...caring interviews* […] *neglect real power relations...*" and call for an approach to interviewing in which the researcher adopts an antagonistic or confrontational attitude toward the participant. Such an approach facilitates the challenging of power structures through allowing the participant to challenge the interviewer and vice versa, thus making possible the generation of data that would never be stumbled upon during an interview in which the researcher continuously faked understanding and agreement (Kvale, 2007: 75; Brinkmann, 2012: 104). Adopting a more confrontational approach to interviewing can be seen as adopting a more 'real' approach to conversation, thus empowering the participant through doing away with much of the often patronising power asymmetry inherent to most modes of interviewing.

Eventually the interview process I adopted, which I prefer calling 'involved conversation', was characterised by the following:

1. A broadly themed semi-structured/unstructured approach, which can be extended into various thematic areas according to the need of the specific situation and characteristics of specific participants.

2. Open-ended questions, including biographical, descriptive and interpretive questions.

3. An understanding of the interviewer and interviewee as epistemologically related 'co-inquirers'.

4. Continued reflexivity on behalf of the researcher and participant, facilitated through a confrontational approach to the interview process.

5. Insights, or mysteries, gained from interviews result in the formulation of follow-up questions for subsequent interviews.

6. A focus on both 'actual' and 'ideal' experience.

7. Awareness of environmental and background cues.

This approach to the data collection process ensured that I was more open to the possibility of encountering breakdowns in understanding and identifying mysteries in need of solving, as is explained in section 4.1.5. I also made use of group interviews, which share these characteristics, but do have some inherently unique characteristics requiring a slightly modified approach.

4.2.3.3.   Group conversation

Collecting data from multiple participants simultaneously opens up exciting new possibilities, including access to "*...data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group*" (Morgan, 1988: 12). Though group interviews, most popularly called focus groups, have been used in social research since the 1920's (Finch & Lewis, 2003: 170), I believe that much of their potential still lies dormant. A study of intergroup relations at the University of the Free State[17] so highlights the epistemological potential of the focus group for the social sciences that I have decided to further the exploration and development of this versatile method of data collection wherever possible.

In addition to offering most of the advantages and possibilities of one-on-one conversation, group conversation lends itself to developing further possibilities for the production of qualitatively rich data. The various processes through which social reality is constructed are brought to light through the exposure of intersubjective conflict, bargaining and synthesis in the group context. The groups were not too large, in order to ensure that I could still readily facilitate the direction of the conversation where needed and minimise the chaos that usually results from mass interaction (Roulston, 2012: 33). The group conversation most vibrantly illustrates the unique position of the researcher as simultaneously being an interviewer, an observer and a participant in the research process, which suggests that, except for a few very specific aspects of each of these methods alone, the group interview allows for most of the merits of the one-on-one interview and participant observation to be harnessed in a single setting.

Though focus groups, like individual interviews, can be seen as representing an unnatural environment for social interaction, the creation of a relaxed conversational setting serves to counter certain inhibiting effects. Successfully facilitating such a group conversation results in participants not only sharing their varied opinions, but in light being shed on the collective contexts informing those opinions (Coetzee & Kotze, 2013). Used together, the one-on-one interview and group conversation allowed me to probe individual participants in depth, while

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[17] Cf. Coetzee, Elliker & Kotze (2013).

also exploring certain shared understandings, as well as the often obscured relationships between individual and collective meaning. In addition to the characteristics of 'involved conversation' present in the previous section, 'group conversation' is further characterised by the following:

1. A semi-directive facilitator role on the part of the researcher, who guides but never dominates the conversation.

2. A focus on intersubjective interaction. In other words, aside from the actual contents of talk, the dynamics underlying what is said or not said, and when, how and by whom it is said, also become the subject of analysis and further inquiry.

Thus the involved conversation may easily be adapted to a group context, all that is required is a heightened awareness of group dynamics on the part of the researcher, as well as the natural conversational skills needed to facilitate and sometimes steer a group conversation. This does not quite extend to the same degree of control as is needed in a true focus group, as the group conversations used throughout this study never included more than two participants. This method might be developed, in future works, toward the specific study of interactions in triads. After data collection and, as was the case in this study, often simultaneously, comes the process of data analysis. The next section covers the ways in which data were organised and analysed during the course of this study.

4.2.4.   Data analysis

It should be clear at this stage that people construct stories to make sense of their lives, that these stories have enough meaning and relevance to be represented as personal narratives, and that the presented narratives may be thematically, functionally and otherwise analysed in order to extract their personal, social and cultural meanings (McAdams, 2012: 15). This section represents an account of the way in which the narratives collected during this study were analysed and categorised in order to gain understanding.

According to McAdams (2012: 16), narrative studies tend to fall under one of two contexts, the so-called 'context of discovery' or the 'context of justification'. As the latter refers to research carried out for the purpose of hypothesis-testing, it is obvious that this study is situated within the former. Within the 'context of discovery', the researcher "…*explores a particular phenomenon in detail in order to develop new ways of describing and understanding the phenomenon*" (McAdams, 2012: 17). This approach has been outlined in section 3.1., and what is of importance at this point is to note that this vision is carried through to the process of data analysis. An approach to data analysis that comfortably fills such an epistemological niche is Dialogical Narrative Analysis (DNA), a technique that takes for granted an understanding of stories as foundational to all aspects of social reality. Stories creatively represent lives, reshape the past while projecting the future, and both revise personal identity and situate the storyteller in his or her social environment (Frank, 2012: 33).

I am interested in DNA because its practitioners realise the tension between dialogue and analysis, in other words, it acknowledges the fact that the researcher engaged in analysis is fundamentally talking *about* his or her participants, while my aim, as was made clear throughout the preceding chapters of this dissertation, was to talk *with* them. According to DNA, statements, even 'truths', about individuals tend to become 'secondhand' and lose integrity "*...in the mouths of others*" (Frank, 2012: 34). In attempting to reconcile this tension, practitioners of DNA embrace the following five 'commitments' (Frank, 2012: 34–37):

1. The recognition that any individual voice is in fact a dialogue between at least two different voices. Individuals internalise various voices throughout their daily lives, which is just another way of acknowledging that meaning is intersubjectively created and built upon. The fact is that no story is isolated from any other, stories are mosaics of previous stories, creatively rearranged and rarely completely original. Originality may emerge in the understanding of stories, but rarely in the patterns of their telling. In DNA, two concepts are used to denote this dialogue within any story, namely 'polyphony' and 'heteroglossia'. The former indicates the resonance of a speaker's story with the voices of *specific* others, while the latter refers to the incorporation of a more *general* other, embodied in codes of language use and genre.

2. A suspicion of 'monologue'. Monologue is seen as the opposite of dialogue, and is a device which limits the possibilities of the protagonist in a given story, as there are no other voices to be drawn upon during the character's development. Most social science is seen as monological, but narrative researchers may avoid this pitfall precisely because they hear many stories from multiple storytellers. This is an important point in light of my chosen method of data reproduction, but we'll get to that in the next section.

3. Stories are seen as externalised to the degree that they become phenomena in their own right, or 'lead independent lives'. The most readily available examples of such stories are religious myths, legends and folktales, though I was surprised to find many recurring plots echoed by various participants in the study. It seems that humans and stories lead a symbiotic existence, stories depending on people to be perpetuated, while people in turn depend largely on stories to shape a coherent sense of individual and collective identity.

4. People, or storytellers, are seen as 'unfinalisable' in nature. This simply refers to the fact that as long as an individual lives, there can be no sense of finality in their story. This creates another tension, the tension between the accepted ongoing change in the identities and stories of participants and the need for a research study to have some kind of 'end'. Analysis traditionally requires that something stays constant. This tension is lightened by the fact that, while storytellers change, their narrative repertoires tend to stay more or less the same. The finite variations of plot, genre and character types ensure that studies may draw conclusions and come to an end.

5. DNA practitioners are not committed to summarising 'findings'. 'Findings' is a monological word, implying that the conversation is over and that the researcher has taken up a position above or over it. Rather, DNA explores different interpretive possibilities for hearing and understanding. DNA merely highlights possible interpretations of or responses to stories and, as such, was quite suited to my needs for this study.

Once the researcher has adopted an approach to data analysis that incorporates the above-mentioned commitments, he or she can start formulating an 'animating interest', a fundamental question that drives the research process and that can be returned to whenever there is a need of re-orientation (Frank, 2012: 37). My general animating interest could be summed up as: *what role do stories and their telling play in the construction of identity and social reality?* Adapted to this specific study, it can be seen as being: *how do contemporary white Afrikaans speakers story their lives when constructing individual and collective identities?* Whenever I felt the project to be veering off course, I returned to this animating interest, as it served as the foundation or null-point out of which my epistemic interest, theoretical attitude and methodological approach developed. Whereas most social scientific research is initiated from a position of seeing people as not organising a certain aspect of their lives optimally, I, along with other practitioners of DNA, rather feel a thorough description of our experienced social world to be the best way toward affecting change in that world. 'Objectively' identifying phenomena in need of change forecloses the possibility of dialogue and true participatory development.

When practicing Dialogical Narrative Analysis, one starts at an initial 'standpoint', which should ideally be situated within C. Wright Mills' (1959) philosophy of acknowledging the relationship between the social and the personal. My standpoint gave prominence to personal accounts, while simultaneously staying aware of certain influences from the realm of social physics (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992), such as those exercised by the race, culture, religious views and socio-economic class of my participants, as well as the shared narrative repertoires of the various collectivities they belong to. In fact, I focused on personal accounts from within three emergent conceptual types of contemporary white Afrikaans speakers, the Afrikaanses, Afrikaners and Pseudo-Boers, not because of an insensitive ignorance of other accounts, which undoubtedly exist, but because of the fact that, as should be understood by this point, my approach to data analysis does not emphasise a claim to have uncovered factual descriptions of actual social reality, but rather an attempt at understanding encountered people's intersubjective *perceptions* thereof (Frank, 2012: 38).

4.2.4.1.   The Dialogical Narrative Analysis (DNA) process

This section is designed to shed further light on the process of data analysis embraced during my engagement with the stories collected during the course of this study, and will illustrate, before we take a look at the data itself, how I went about generating meaning and understanding from the mysteries uncovered during the investigative process. Following the lead of Frank (2012: 44), I began engaging the data by asking questions about the resources available to the tellers, and potential listeners, of the various stories I collected during the data collection process. Resources in this context basically refer to the building blocks individuals use when presenting their experiences in the form of stories, and the primary source of these building blocks are the stories already circulating within the individual respondent's social environment: the shared stock of plots, character types and genres that serve as a blueprint for the stories told by members of a given collectivity.

In the case of this study the most relevant resources were themes in some way connected to the issues of race, religion and nationalism, though certain others, the relevance of which only became clear during fieldwork and analysis, were also included. Once this 'pantry' of resources becomes clearer, it is possible to reflect on which absent resources might be able to widen the identity possibilities of individual storytellers, and which factors may be blocking the inclusion of said resources (Frank, 2012: 45). Though not the goal of this study per se, this is a phase that is rich in opportunities for exploring possible avenues for social change centred on the broadening of individual and collective narrative repertoires.

The second set of questions, those regarding the dynamics underlying the circulation of certain stories, character types, plots, etc., allow a glimpse into the intersubjective processes and power dynamics that govern the generation and sharing of knowledge among socially related individuals (Frank, 2012: 45). These are simply referred to as circulation questions and include investigations into such facets of collective storytelling as who usually does the telling of certain stories, and to whom. Told stories vary between interactional settings; the stories told between members of a given collectivity vary from those told to complete strangers, while the stories that people consider the most important and expressive of their identities are often told in full only between members of one clearly defined collectivity. Thus it is useful to ponder, during the interview process, which groups of people would most easily share a similar understanding of the story being told, and from which persons or groups certain stories are likely to be withheld.

Thirdly, questions of affiliation are asked. These questions are concerned with identifying the 'we' and the 'other' within the context of certain stories, and prove useful in identifying the borrowed elements, usually from meta-narratives situated in certain faith traditions that draw clear lines between the faithful and the unfaithful, underlying a given collectivity's repertoire of stories. All stories draw boundaries, and as such tend to be easily manipulated into political tools that bring about both inclusion and exclusion.

The fourth set of questions, identity questions, assist the researcher in delving deeper into the ways in which stories teach people who they are and who, given their social setting and narrative repertoire, they have the possibility of becoming (Frank, 2012: 45). Here the tension between a life imagined as unfinalisable, and certain forces, often reinforced by collectivities, that would finalise individual identities, become most apparent. Here it is misleading to solely see *storytellers* as actively experimenting with and choosing identities. As hinted at earlier, stories tend to have a degree of autonomous existence that "...*provides an imaginative space in which people can claim identities, reject identities, and experiment with identities*" (Frank, 2012: 45). This will become clearer when we look at the data and the ways in which affiliation to a certain collectivity tends to limit the identity possibilities of the individual, at least as far as continued membership of said collectivity is concerned. Identity finalisations are continuously contested, but always within the boundaries set by the narrative repertoire of stock possibilities available to an individual operating from within a given collectivity.

The final set of questions in the DNA process concerns what is 'at stake' to the collectively situated individual telling a given story, or stories. During this phase I probed the ways in which stories make clear to their tellers and listeners what exactly they should be and do in order to hold their own within their collectively perceived reality. It is interesting to note that there always seems to be a certain degree of vulnerability underlying people's stories, which is then reacted to, either reflexively and strategically or, in some cases, rather spontaneously. The life of stories once again comes to the fore, as they set the parameters of what people perceive to be their own and the ways in which they can go about 'protecting' this identity without breaking character and thus risking expulsion from their collectivities. All these inquisitive phases, or bundles of questions, have at their core a reflexive engagement of various balances, ranging from that between subjectivity and objectivity, to a balance between stories being expressions of the teller's ability to grasp the world he or she exists in while also reflecting a stock of knowledge and biographically determined situation that largely delineates what the teller can know about his/her life-world at any given moment.

The balance that merits the most attention however, and which lies at the core of this study's claim to being scientific, is that between the expertise and knowledge specialisation of the teller, and the broader perspective of the analysing researcher (Frank, 2012: 46). What defines the ontological and epistemological position of the narrative sociologist as conceptually different from that of the storyteller is not a claim of specialised insight into individual subjectivities and their stories, but rather the researcher's access to different storytellers who tell their tales from perspectives not readily available to all other storytellers. This 'narrative cosmopolitanism' constitutes the fundamental difference between the storyteller situated firmly in the world of everyday life and the researcher operating from within the world of science and, as such, is the key to differentiating storytelling sociology from its more pragmatic, less scientific counterparts in the world of everyday life.

The researcher thus goes about collecting stories from diverse sources, deliberates on their existence and meanings across differing social contexts and asks the question: Where and when in life do people hold their own telling what kinds of stories? This is the fundamental question we can answer when we collect and interpret stories and attempt to understand the mysteries they contain in an imaginative but disciplined way, and this is the question that merits the existence of storytelling sociology as a viable scientific practice.

4.2.5. Data representation

"*…there is no clear window into the inner life of an individual. Any gaze is always filtered through the lenses of language, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity. There are no objective observations, only observations socially situated in the worlds of the observer and the observed*" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994: 12).

In chapter 5, in which I present and discuss the data generated by the study, I have decided to experiment with another form of data representation, namely the presentation of data through creatively constructed commentaries incorporating my own experiences of encounters with the various 'types' of participants who shared their stories with me during the course of this study. This approach represents an attempt to present the data itself in a more *human* way, in the form of a story itself, thus coming full circle with our storytelling sociological approach. I will have collected data in the form of stories, theoretically and creatively interpreted these stories, and reproduced the data in the form of stories. This section provides a short explanation of, and argument for such an approach.

Firstly it is acknowledged that what is to be encountered in the fifth and final chapter, which boils down to a creative representation of some of the stories I encountered during the course of the study, should be seen as akin to a photograph, taken from a particular angle and distance and rendered with a magnification and clarity that is unique to my relationship toward the subject matter. In other words there is an extent to which I play the role of artist, embellishing and shading the narratives before offering them to the public.

Contrary to positivist thinking, this confession should not be seen as alarming, but merely as an acknowledgment of my awareness of the fact that the data collected throughout this study is offered to the public only *after* it has been thoroughly interpreted by my own consciousness. In my opinion this is done by all scientists, especially in the social sciences, and the closest we can get to true objectivity is not to deny this fact but to attempt to be ever more aware and watchful of the process, developing our faculties for responsible reflexivity on a personal and collective level and facilitating the evolution of an ever more reflexive, thus more *human*, sociology. I call the process of narrating stories imaginative not because I have distorted any facts, "*…but because* [I have] *presented them in a full instead of a naked manner, brought out the sights, sounds, and feelings surrounding those facts* […] *in an artistic manner that does not diminish but gives greater depth and dimension to the facts*" (Hollowell, 1977: 45).

I have thus decided to narrate the stories I have collected, as will be seen in the final chapter, in a style often referred to as 'literary journalism', which is known for its use of certain devices, borrowed from the world of fiction writing, that serve to achieve the immediacy and enticement of fiction when portraying real people and events[18]. Tom Wolfe identifies the following four literary devices, which I have borrowed from in an attempt to naturalise the way in which I present my findings in the final chapter, and which may aid one in turning sober scientific fact into immersive reading, once again through the power of storytelling (Wolfe, 1973: 32):

1. *Scene-by-scene construction.* Human stories invariably follow episodic plots, and producing information in such a way taps a primordial pattern which engages interest and facilitates deep understanding and insight.

2. *Recording dialogue.* Representing true dialogue aids in character development, and listeners are more engaged when they feel as if they get to know the character personally. This is important when the various storytellers involved in this study become characters in my own narration. Listeners tend to associate with certain characters and, if the process of data collection was inclusive enough, a representative collection of characters will be present in the narration of a given story, resulting in the immersion of as many listening personalities as possible.

3. *Third-person subjective point of view.* Viewing an event through the perspective of its participants is one of this study's main goals, and temporarily leaving one's own biographically determined situation behind for that of another, as explained in the first chapter, allows for emphatic understanding.

4. *Detailing "status-life".* This can roughly be explained as fleshing out a given actor's role within a scene, and includes detailing aspects such as habits, gestures, appearance, clothing etc. in an attempt to give life to a character.

These four considerations form the backbone of my approach to the presentation of the data collected during this study. By presenting my conclusions in this way, I attempt to give the reader an experience of the various participants' narratives that is "*...comparable to what a witness might observe or overhear if he had been present*" (Cassill, 1975: 26).

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[18]Successful usage of a similar technique can be seen in Liao Yiwu's 2002 book *Fräulein Hallo und der Bauernkaiser: Chinas Gesellschaft von unten.* An English translation was published in 2009.

4.3.   Conclusion

This chapter introduced the qualitative paradigm and the narrative researcher's quest for intersubjective understanding through the collection, interpretation and reproduction of stories. The similarities between such an approach and the mechanisms through which people engage with and interpret the world of everyday life led to my argument for the greater acknowledgement of a hermeneutic approach to sociology. A methodological approach suited to the creation and solving of mystery, as opposed to purely empirical, hypothesis-testing approaches to objectively perceived problems, was presented and my rationale for adopting such an approach explained. My situation as a conscripted researcher in this study was explained, as well as the ways in which I approached and involved the participants in the study, from sampling through fieldwork to ethical considerations. I also discussed the involved conversation, a composite approach to the one-on-one interview, as well as its counterpart for use where there are more than one, and ideally two participants, the group conversation. An introduction of Dynamic Narrative Analysis and a literary journalistic approach to data representation provided closure, placing the emphasis on stories and their intersubjective telling as the foundation of not only individual and collective identity, but the construction of social reality itself. The next chapter presents my findings and sheds more light on the process of analysis I embraced through my use of DNA.

PART 3: DATA AND CONCLUSION

Chapter 5: Contemporary white Afrikaans speaking identity

As the title suggests, the most relevant data generated by the study are to be presented in this chapter. After a brief look at the ways in which I decided which data to present and how to present it, the chapter will address the three uncovered types of contemporary Afrikaners, as introduced in chapter 3, and address their relationship toward race, religion and nationalism, the three focus areas identified in that same chapter. Though the data seem generalisable enough to represent a relevant and valid typology, it should be kept in mind that individual identity allows considerable variance regarding attitudes toward the three variables mentioned earlier and that many contemporary white Afrikaans speakers fall somewhere between the three types discussed in this chapter. Nevertheless, the typology offered in the next section represents a sufficient foundation for future research into greater detail.

5.1. Regarding the chosen typology

Before we look at the data, a brief justification of my chosen typology of contemporary white Afrikaans speaking identity is necessary. It should be kept in mind that the way in which I categorise the storytellers encountered throughout this study is the result of the epistemological and methodological approach outlined throughout this dissertation, and the interplay between this approach and my own involvement in the process. Data may have been interpreted differently by other researchers who might even have constructed a different typology altogether. Indeed Frank himself, instead of identifying related collectivities based on the stories circulating within and between these collectivities, as I have done, favours a typology of stories within a given collectivity, based on genre and content (Frank, 2012: 46).

I do however feel the generated data and the resulting typology to be plausible in the light of my experiences in the field and an ongoing reflexive engagement with the data and my chosen presentation thereof. Thus, before we look at the data, allow me to introduce and define the three main white Afrikaans speaking collectivities encountered during this investigation. It is important to note that the three collectivities discussed here represent nodes of concentration on a continuum, and there is ample room for individual identities straddling two or more of the main categories. An example of such a borderline identity was present in the form of Joe Black, a participant who, dependent on the topic being discussed, fluidly traversed the border between the Afrikaners and Afrikaanses. This fluid scale of Afrikaner identity is illustrated in figure 6.

Figure 6: A typology of 21st century white Afrikaans speaking identity
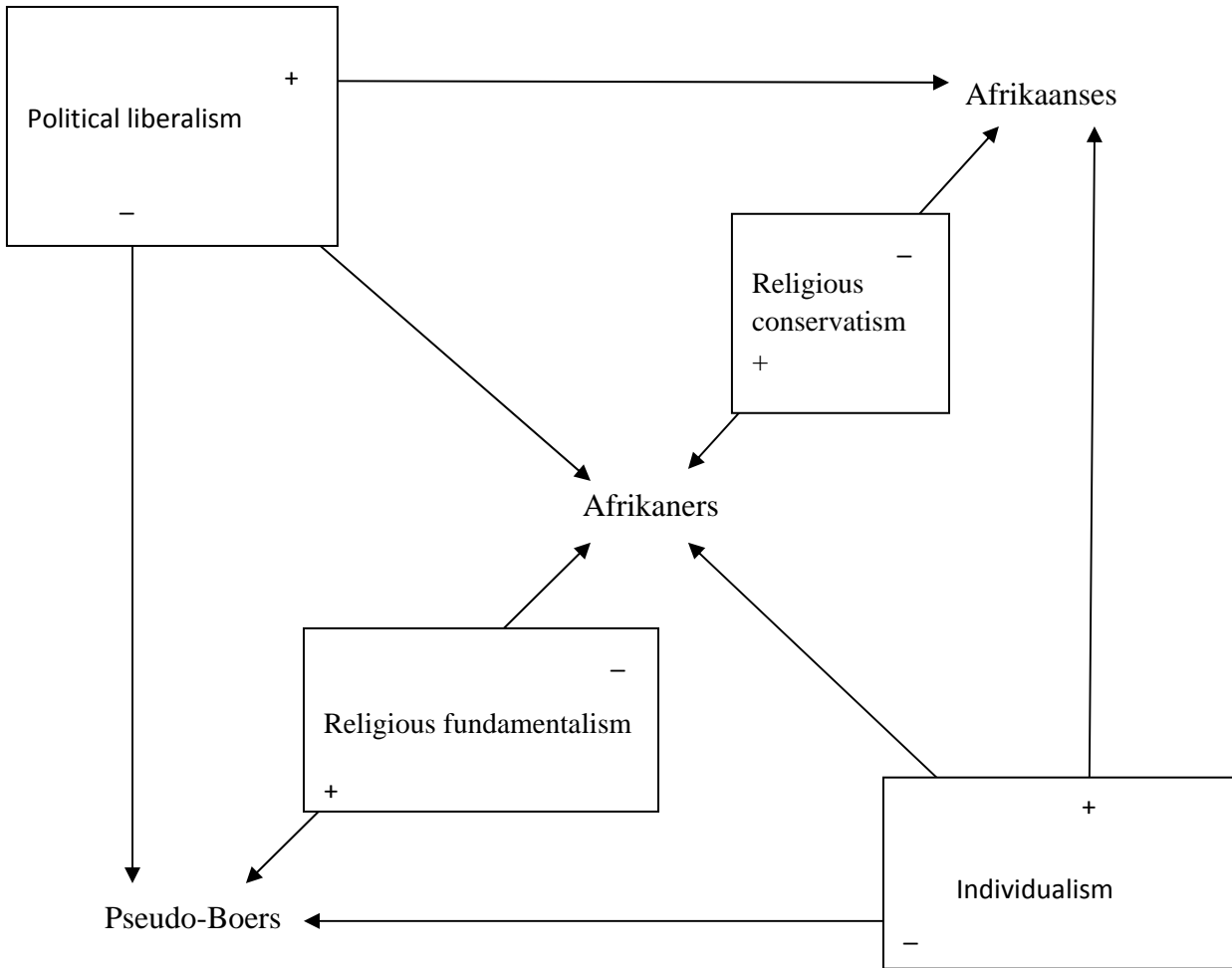
In this figure my conceptualisation of the possibility matrix of contemporary white Afrikaans speaking identity as a continuum, with interspersed nodes of concentration, is made clear. The three identified collectivities, namely the Pseudo-Boers, the Afrikaners and the Afrikaanses, represent nodes of concentration or, in other words, collective frameworks of identity characterised by the clustering of individual white Afrikaans speaking identities within their conceptual boundaries. Movement is possible along this continuum, as are an endless variety of intermediate and super ordinate identities, both individual and collective. Most white Afrikaans speakers however, in terms of the content of the stories told by themselves to explain and justify their identities, as well as the audiences within which these stories tend to circulate, find themselves situated within one of these three collectivities. In this scheme four factors influencing an individual's position along the continuum are identified, namely political liberalism, religious fundamentalism, religious conservatism and individualism. These concepts serve to encapsulate and include the various micro-factors of individual identity underlying a person's inclusion to and exclusion from the collectivities presented in the figure, and which are

informed by an individual's narrative repertoire, stock of knowledge and biographically determined situation at any given time. Specifically, these concepts encapsulate factors relating to an individual's notions of issues pertaining to race, religion, nationalism and individual identity, which impact and in turn are impacted by an individual's religious, political and social affiliations. As these specific terms have not appeared hitherto in this dissertation, I will briefly explain their meanings within the context of this study, as well as their relationship to the data to be presented shortly:

1. *Liberalism*: White Afrikaans speakers tend to exhibit a clear range of attitudes regarding authoritarianism of any kind. This can be seen in the contrast between the tendency of Pseudo-Boers toward political absolutism and that of the most progressive Afrikaanses toward accepting democracy as the worst form of government barring all the rest. This concept is not to be seen as referring purely to politics however, as these attitudes are most often exercised at the micro and local level, that is to say in the family, peer group and immediate community. Thus these attitudes represent both ideal and actual states of organisation, and liberalism in the context of this dissertation is taken to refer to both the ideal perception of society inherent to a given collectivity's worldview, as well as the way in which said collectivity is presently organised in terms of its social and political externalisations.

2. *Religious fundamentalism*: This concept serves to measure an individual or collectivity's tendency toward a literal belief in the primary text of revealed religion, and once again tends to find its highest scorers within the folds of the Pseudo-Boers. This makes sense, as the Pseudo-Boers' religious views are often at odds with those of the historical and contemporary Afrikaners and other white Afrikaans speakers, and the fact that fundamentalist views tend to go hand in hand with radical attempts at social reform and the acquisition of power is present in the revolutionary tenets of their belief system (Marshall & Scott, 2005: 235). As indicated by the data, religious fundamentalism tends to be the turf of the Pseudo-Boers, with the Afrikaners tending toward more traditional conservative religious views, while the Afrikaanses tend to lean toward atheism or highly personalised spiritual views.

3. *Religious conservatism*: Whereas religious fundamentalism is the concept of interest when comparing the Pseudo-Boers to the Afrikaners, religious conservatism is a more suitable term when referring to the difference in religious views between the Afrikaners and the more progressive Afrikaanses. Unlike the Pseudo-Boers, who seek radical social change and justify their quest through the literal interpretation of their religious texts, the Afrikaners largely seek to preserve their religious life by means of continuity with the religious beliefs and institutions developed by the historical Afrikaners. The Afrikaanses on the other hand are, like the Pseudo-Boers, not religiously conservative, though their views tend to be atheistic or agnostic and certainly not fundamentalist.

4. *Individuality:* Individualism is used in the context of this dissertation to indicate the broadest possible definition of the term. That would be the tendency to value individual freedom and choice above the prescriptions of collectivities in all spheres of life. Generally there is a gradual shift in attitudes regarding individuality among white Afrikaans speakers, with the Pseudo-Boers tending to espouse highly collectivist values, while Afrikaanses accept extreme individualism most readily.

Thus, the factors underlying the formation of individual and collective white Afrikaans speaking identities are subtle and myriad, and tend to be locked up in collectively shared stories, both straightforwardly and in varying degrees of metaphor. Some of these are discussed in greater detail starting in the next section, but it would be impossible to include them all into a scheme as simple as that which Figure 6 attempts to convey.

The rest of this chapter is divided into three sections, each dealing in detail with one of the three Afrikaans speaking collectivities identified during the process of data analysis. In turn, each subset is analysed according firstly to the abovementioned questions regarding their narrative repertoires, and thereafter to the three factors identified in chapter 2, namely race, religion and nationalism. The emphasis of my analysis of these groupings falls on characteristics of each group's narrative repertoire, or the shared store of themes, characters, plots and genres readily available to their members when formulating individual stories of identity. These repertoires, standing in a dialogical relationship to individual and collective stocks of knowledge as well as individual biographically determined situations, are kept in mind throughout each section and explored by means of the various kinds of questions introduced earlier, namely resource, circulation, affiliation, identity, and 'what's at stake' questions. At the end of the chapter, I recap the findings in a brief conclusion, and highlight the most important differences and similarities between the Afrikaanses, Pseudo-Boers and Afrikaners.

5.2.   The Afrikaanses

The Afrikaanses represent, in a sense, the most thoroughly postmodern collectivity encountered during the study. The bulk of people falling under this category still have predominantly Afrikaner ancestry, though membership in this group is not limited to those of European descent. The primary criterion for inclusion in this group is the presence of Afrikaans as home language and, in the case of its genealogically Afrikaner members, an active rejection of the labels 'Boer' and 'Afrikaner'. The Afrikaanses represent a kind of anti-category based on the rejection of membership within either of the other groups, and as such is not a collectivity in the traditional sense of the term. Membership to this category does not necessarily assume any shared identity or behaviour and is, in fact, extremely variable.

Afrikaanses generally embrace the secular, scientific and economic values of the modern globalising world and as such are basically world citizens who speak Afrikaans. Once the language is given up, membership is terminated. There is no self-designation inherent to this

grouping and its members tend toward the adoption of highly individual identities that shy away from collective expression, especially through those channels so fundamental to the more traditional Afrikaners, including the church, politics and various cultural organisations. The narrative repertoire out of which the Afrikaanses draw the genres, characters and plots of their stories of identity varies dramatically from one person to the next as, lacking any coherent group identity, individual Afrikaanses exist in various social settings and environments.

The Afrikaanses encountered during this study, which included only white participants, tended to have a broader knowledge base, and thus narrative repertoire, than the average white Afrikaans speaker. Plots, characters and genres are drawn from various epochs, cultures and spheres of interest, according to the stocks of knowledge and biographically determined situation of the individual tellers. In summary, the Afrikaanses represent a bridge between the institutionalised Afrikaner and the complete 21st century individual, though there are of course some Afrikaanses who retain vestiges of the more collective Afrikaner condition. As mentioned earlier, it is useful to view this category as forming a continuum with the other two, with gradual differences in political, racial, cultural and religious alignments and perspectives characterising various positions on the scale from Pseudo-Boer, through Afrikaner, to Afrikaanse.

5.2.1.   'The true Afrikaner is a living fossil': The narrative repertoire

In terms of the variety of resources from which it draws, the narrative repertoire of the average Afrikaanse generally appears to be broader than that of members of either of the other two groupings. As this group does not represent a formal collectivity to the degree of the other two, there are no limits to the resources individuals may utilise in formulating their stories, and in turn their identities. Atropos, a Zoology student in his early twenties, after another shot of Jägermeister in a small tavern just outside Bloemfontein, has the following to say in this regard:

> "*Well, if someone thinks I'm an Afrikaner, let them think that. To me that term doesn't really exist anymore. It's relative. The only way you can stay an African is if you're born in Africa and you die in Africa, but that just doesn't happen nowadays, especially not in the case of white people. Yes, a black guy without a television is an African and stays an African* [...] *He doesn't care about the outside world. We are world citizens, what goes on in my head is not just Afrikaans.*"

As Atropos, with his unkempt red beard, panoply of strange bracelets and pockets full of marijuana suggests, most any resource can shape the telling and comprehension of stories among Afrikaanses, and any constraints are brought about solely by the limits of the individual's fields of interest, biographically determined situation and stock of knowledge, or in short, his or her narrative repertoire. There are no limits as to who has access to certain narrative resources and who is allowed to tell certain stories, an Afrikaanse can believe anything, say anything, and be anything. In terms of the circulation of Afrikaanse stories, or who tells which stories to whom, there are likewise no formal limits, though certain levels of openness tend to be reserved for

people who share the same values, most often secular and humanist, as the individual Afrikaanse telling the story. Similarly, as there are no limitations as to who Afrikaanses may interact with socially, they tend to hear stories that never reach the ears of members of more insular collectivities, and their stories tend to have a greater reach in terms of audience, which in this context refers to the people to whom they tell their stories or with whom they communicate on a regular basis. Atropos, always logical and calculating in his statements, makes science his starting point:

> "*I look at life from an evolutionary point of view. That's my reference and my story, it's what I accept.*"

August Rush, another irreligious Afrikaanse who, after a traumatic and challenging childhood decided to pursue a tertiary education in his early twenties, shows how an 'alternative' sense of humour may aid coping in the absence of the strong religious support networks that are characteristic of other, more formal, white Afrikaans speaking collectivities. The following quip opened a group conversation we had after an introductory sociology class, and would not be the last time he would elicit a mixture of raucous laughter and uncomfortable shuffling:

> "*My father died when I was eight, and my mother met this guy when I was about eleven years old. He was an alcoholic and created a lot of drama in the family, always sold everything and acted like he owned our farm, it was my mother's farm. Sometimes he locked us in and threatened us with guns...an average South African life, hahaha!*"

The biggest difference between the narrative repertoire of the Afrikaanses and that of the Afrikaners and Pseudo-Boers is thus its flexibility, and the freedom of individuals, who in their own minds don't belong to any formal collectivity, to choose their resource base according to their personal and social needs. Concerning affiliation, it is quite clear that, as the Afrikaanses do not form a formal collectivity recognised by its members, there can be no exclusion from the group from 'inside'. Individual Afrikaanse storytellers create individual domains of inclusion and exclusion, informed by their stocks of knowledge and biographically determined situations, which in turn influence the content of their narrative repertoires. Atropos chooses not to affiliate and share stories with religious people, a fact that he is quite unapologetic about:

> "*I never really got along with the religious sheep, that road's just too easy to follow...*"

August Rush, as a lifestyle decision justified without the incorporation of overtly racist ideas, concludes that he would not enter into a mixed-race relationship:

> "*Will I sleep with a black woman? No, I won't, it's just not for me...*"

Concerning identity, the stories Afrikaanses tell tend to reflect a broad narrative repertoire, as indicated earlier, and the ways in which these stories inform individual identities likewise vary from one individual to the next. The learned vagabond, Atropos, with his plans of traversing

Africa in a rundown white Volkswagen Golf, which he regularly uses as a makeshift all-terrain vehicle, cites his European heritage as paramount:

> "*I love Africa, and I would like to spend my life exploring it. But I'm an explorer, not an African. I'm descended from European explorers, and I'm just taking it one step further.*"

Joe Black, on the other hand, disillusioned by his experiences with steadfast, upstanding Afrikaner neighbours, sees himself primarily as South African, regardless of the colour of his skin:

> "*I feel myself to be a South African, it feels as if the lines are getting blurred. There aren't "pure" Afrikaners anymore, and I'm fine with that. Personally I feel that creates a problem. We already have enough problems, to throw race into the mix as well is to create a concoction that's ready to explode. That's what I believe, and I want to stay in this country...*"

Lastly, through analysing the stories of the individual Afrikaanse participants, one can get a sense of what is 'at stake' for them, in other words, how their stories inform their sense of self and of what they need to be and do in order to preserve this sense of self. In the case of the Afrikaanses progress, equality and the health of society and the environment seem to be at stake, values in line with those of reflexive, responsible contemporary world citizens. Joe Black alludes to this when he says, after pondering the possibility of postgraduate unemployment largely due to his sex and race:

> "*I believe I can make a difference, because I believe that everything happens according to a cycle. Everything loops. It might be going bad now, but it won't always be like this. I don't believe you can just jump ship when the going gets tough.*"

Along with a relative liberal and cosmopolitan view of their place in society, individuality is also important to the Afrikaanses, as Atropos acknowledges:

> "*It's too easy to go with the flow, I tend to avoid that kind of thing.*"

In the light of these developments, let us look at the attitudes of Afrikaanses toward race, religion and nationalism, the foundations of the traditional Afrikaner identity which preceded theirs, as uncovered during this study.

5.2.2.   Race

The attitude of those white Afrikaans speakers belonging to the Afrikaanse collectivity toward race varies considerably, though all participants in this study clearly showed an inclination toward using race as a classificatory system. Whether because of the unique history of white Afrikaans speakers, or the status of people of European descent as a minority in South Africa, the ideological break with more conservative Afrikaans speakers is generally not taken to the point

where one's race becomes a non-issue. Regarding race, it is not uncommon for members of the Afrikaanse collectivity to argue in the following matter-of-fact way, as Atropos does:

> "*I was born in Africa, but I'm a European. If I trace myself back, I get to Europe. That's where I find my origins. I only get to Africa in the 17th century.*"

A notable discovery is the usage, by all the collectivities identified and virtually all the individual participants included in the study, of alternate words for 'black' people as opposed to 'whites'. All of the participants who distanced themselves from the labels 'Afrikaner' and 'Boer' used the term "*swartes*" (blacks), while some went as far as speaking of 'kaffirs' and "*meide*"[19], as opposed to men and women, when referring to people of African descent. All of these respondents claimed to be non-racist, and most agreed that the objective 'whiteness' of Afrikaners is historically questionable. These terms seem to be ingrained so deeply into white Afrikaans speaking consciousness that they are not readily experienced as problematic. The casual, and often conflicting way in which these terms are used can be seen in the words of Atropos, which are strangely schizophrenic in their implication:

> "*The white man doesn't own anything in Africa, we don't own anything in Africa. It's like a guest that comes into your house and then drinks all your coffee, or uses all your sugar, and then sleeps in your bed. But they* [black people] *shouldn't turn their backs on the people who gave them all the opportunities. When I talk to guys from Ghana and Cameroon, it all boils down to one thing; our blacks are lazy, they just take, they get everything and they don't give anything back. Then they moan about it.*"

Atropos, who rejected Afrikaner identity due to its seemingly racist undercurrents, after boasting with the number of black friends he has and saying that he doesn't have a problem with 'hugging black girls', goes on to say the following:

> "*Black people respect someone who's strong in his opinion, a leader. They don't want people to act submissively towards them. A boy* [note the terminology once again] *has respect for the farmer that says: "Listen, kaffir, now you do your work". Just don't keep his money from him.*"

At this point, the reasons for this deep-seated racial awareness can only be guessed at, but it most likely has to do with the unique demographic and political situation that white Afrikaans speakers have found themselves in since the founding of the Cape, and which hasn't seen any large scale normalisation even after 1994.

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[19]From the Dutch word for 'girl', stemming from the time when white Afrikaans speakers commonly 'employed' coloured servants.

5.2.3. Religion

While being an Afrikaanse and having religious faith are not necessarily mutually exclusive, there is a tendency toward atheism and agnosticism among members of this group. Their rejection of organised religion is often the main reason many members of this collectivity no longer feel themselves readily able to identify with the label 'Afrikaner'. These participants' strongest qualms with religion include the perceived hypocrisy of many religious Afrikaans speakers, and a perception of such people as generally maintaining certain religious affiliations firstly out of concerns regarding social appearances than honest belief. August Rush, savouring another moment of impending comedy, had the following to say about the seemingly pious Afrikaners of his home town:

> "*In our small town you get the Boers, the Boer-Boers! But go and look for the Boers, no really, it's not even a joke. The Boers aren't at home at night, they're on the other side of the tracks* [in the traditionally black township] *Then, tomorrow morning after church it's:* "*Ja, those damned kaffirs!*", *and tonight it's the same story.*"

Hostility toward religion, or at least its organised expression, is almost universal among Afrikaanses, and where religion does come into play it tends to be in the form of more holistic, eclectic and personalised spiritual philosophies.

5.2.4. Nationalism

As we have seen in chapter 2, nationalism is hard to define, and even harder to measure. In the case of the Afrikaanses, I explored questions of nationalism through probing their attitudes toward Afrikaans speakers who do indeed profess some notion of Afrikaner nationalism or propagate republican or separatist ideas, however farfetched these may be. Concerning Afrikaner nationalism, all Afrikaanse respondents rejected the idea of an ideologically unified "*volk*", with the following comment by Atropos signifying their general attitude toward the idea:

> "*The only Afrikaner in Africa is a breed of cattle. I don't think we live in a time where that line of thinking is relevant. It's relevant to people who force themselves to be Afrikaners according to certain criteria of what an Afrikaner is supposed to be. To me the term Afrikaner has lost its value, because today we live in a world where we have so many other worlds available to us.*"

The perceived petty racism of those who choose to call themselves Afrikaners, and the consequent break in solidarity between those individuals and the more liberal Afrikaanses, as explained by Joe Black, serve to create a perception of Afrikaners and Boers as radicals:

> *"I think the term Afrikaner was hijacked by radicals: "We're Afrikaners, we're going to protect our land, the "swart gevaar"[20] isn't going to take it from us!"- that kind of reasoning."*

Atropos sums up the break between Afrikaner and Afrikaanse self-identification in the following way:

> *"I think for most it's a question of language, faith and race. It's a combination. If you're not of my race you're not an Afrikaner, because I'm white. If you can't speak Afrikaans as good as me, then you're not an Afrikaner. If you don't believe in Jesus Christ, then you're not in that crowd either. The people who feel strongly about Afrikanerdom are those kinds of people. The true Afrikaner is a living fossil. I don't believe it's possible to be an Afrikaner anymore, we're too informed. We grew up in the world."*

There are thus no feelings of nationalism or loyalty to some national cause. Such forms of mobilisation have become irrelevant to the Afrikaanses, and they regard it with a certain degree of disbelief and contempt.

5.3.   The Pseudo-Boers

The Pseudo-Boers are a subset of contemporary white Afrikaans speakers characterised primarily by their self-identification as 'Boers' instead of 'Afrikaners'. I do not refer to this collectivity as Boers simply because the collective representations underlying the existence of the historical Boers, in my mind a developmental precursor of the historical Afrikaner, were eroded by the end of the 19th century. Anyone claiming the identity of Boer today is in fact embracing either one or more extinct cultural atavisms or a combination of newfangled racism and religious fanaticism that has its roots in late 20th century Afrikaner power struggles. Unlike the Afrikaanses, inclusion within the Pseudo-Boer category is entirely dependent on self-designation and, as such, the grouping tends to be more homogenous regarding the political, religious and racial views of the individuals that comprise it. Nevertheless it is still an extremely varied grouping that includes people ranging from right-wing Christian conservatives to ultra radical individuals who have constructed an ahistorical sect based on the teachings of Christian Identity, which in turn has its roots in British Israelism, an ideology founded in the late 19th century and which preaches the direct biological descent of the peoples of Western and Northern Europe from the biblical Israelites[21].

Their narrative repertoire tends to be limited, in the most extreme cases to just one publication, *Die Boek van Herinnering* (The Book of Remembrance)[22], and the preaching of a select few propagandists, including the alleged prophecies of Niklaas van Rensburg, a 19th century Boer

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[20]Literally 'black danger', an Apartheid-era term for the looming threat of African nationalism.
[21]Cf. Wilson (1968), Baron (2010), Barkun (1990).
[22]An independent, purportedly direct translation of the Bible that ignores much of the New Testament, includes selected apocryphal writings and twists certain key tenets of traditional Christian dogma.

mystic. Interestingly, the data indicate this group to be growing, with new members coming mostly from the working classes, but also interestingly, middle class disaffected youth. Keep in mind that the following data examples represent the most extreme instances of Pseudo-Boer identity, those who call themselves the Israelites, and most of the participants belonging to this collectivity would be placed in the extreme left lower corner of our scheme, as illustrated in Figure 6. These participants reject even traditional Christianity as too progressive and shun the label Afrikaner as referring to liberal traitors. They are literally stuck in a warped version of the 19th century.

5.3.1.   'There are traitors among our people, as always': The narrative repertoire

The narrative repertoire of the Pseudo-Boers tends to be the most narrow and repressive of the three collectivities. Regarding resources, it tends to be extremely limited, with value placed only on sources approved by respected authority figures, who tend to be radical racists and religious fundamentalists. This might sound like an extreme statement, but, from my experience this does seem to be the case. Science and progress are actively shunned. In the small apartment that the burly and bearded Judeër and Jisraeliet share with a coloured family, the air is heavy with the essence of dust and doomsday prophecies. The contempt for learning is tangible in the voice of Jisraeliet, a self-proclaimed Boer in his early twenties:

> "*In liberal thinking, or Greek thinking, everything changes. Democracy, evolution, nothing stays the same. In Hebrew thinking, everything works in cycles. Bananas produce bananas, monkeys produce monkeys. I follow the word of Father, and steadily become better at it. We have no need of high doctors, or Pharisees.*"

In this worldview there are only three character types, namely those chosen from the beginning of time to rule the world, the 'Adamites', those created by Satan and damned for all time, the so-called "*addergeslag*" (snake's seed), and the traitors, those Adamites who have betrayed Yahweh/God and the Boer/Israelite nation through their political liberalism. The narrative repertoire of the most extreme Pseudo-Boers is entirely fictional and reactionary at the core. Most members of this collectivity struggle economically, and seek solace in all manner of prophecies and extreme ideas of a coming struggle which will restore the Boer/Israelite people to their rightful place as rulers of the physical world. The circulation of these stories is limited and they hardly reach the ears of outsiders, though they are readily told to people of Afikaner descent who enquire about them, as every opportunity to 'awaken' a member of the "*Boervolk*" is embraced with great enthusiasm.

Concerning affiliation, strictness of exclusion varies, with the most inclusive groups willing to include any Afrikaans speaker of 'pure' European heritage, while the most exclusive groups limit their notion of the "*Boervolk*" to the physical descendants of the few hundred men who made the vow at Blood River in 1838. However, the Israelite nation, of which the Boers are seen to be a latter-day tribe, includes all 'white' people, as their mythology incorporates the idea that the

modern nations of Western and Northern Europe are in fact the lost tribes of Israel, a 'fact' they trace through twisted applications of heraldry and linguistics, such as the idea that the Saxons were in fact 'Isaac's sons', Denmark has its origins in the tribe of Dan, and so forth. Concerning the identity constructed through these stories, it tends to be rigid and impenetrable. Even in the face of historical evidence contrary to their beliefs, the Pseudo-Boers do not budge. Everything, in fact everyone who is not an Adamite/Boer/white, is seen as being merely a trickster or seducer of their faith, at best treated with contempt as long as his or her outright destruction is punishable by law.

To the Pseudo-Boers the very fulfilment of Yahweh/God's master plan for the world is at stake. In the eyes of the most extreme, their land, their birthright, and even their identity has been stolen (purportedly by the Jews, who most claim to be impostors). As mentioned above, any meeting with another race or nation is a test of their faith, which, if they should pass this test, would result in the complete extermination of the opposing people down to the last woman and child. Their dire worldview can be summed up in the words of Jisraeliet, who manages to utter the following statement without exhibiting a hint of sarcasm:

> "*If the last Israelite dies, I believe the world will come to an end. There's no use for the world then.*"

This statement is typical of their highly ethnocentric worldview, and is mirrored in all aspects of their collective organisation and attitudes toward issues of race, religion and nationalism.

5.3.2. Race

> "*It's a matter of a story. It says in Father's word, according to Yahweh's laws, that a bastard may not enter the congregation of Yahweh, not even in the tenth generation. If you've mixed, you're a bastard. That's blasphemy against the spirit of apartheid. I believe, if the spirit of apartheid lives in me, I'm a pure Adamite and my Father told me only to lie with Adamites. If I lay with a kaffir or a beast or an Indian, or whatever, I'm a traitor.*"

This quote, by Judeër, represents the most extreme racist attitudes found amongst white Afrikaans speakers today. There is a widespread idea of the 'Boer' people having entered into two separate covenants with their God, which they refer to by the ancient Hebrew name Yahweh. Interestingly, they also refer to themselves interchangeably as Boers, Hebrews and Israelites and harbour a peculiar anti-Semitism which holds that the ancestors of contemporary Jews only entered Jerusalem upon the dispersal of the original tribes of Israel, who later formed the peoples and nations of Western Europe. Jisraeliet smugly gives me the following history lesson:

> "*The Israelites were banished from Jerusalem and the city was left empty of inhabitants. We believe that during this time the Edomites, descendants of Esau, who mixed with the descendants of Cain in Mongolia, the Kazaks, moved into Jerusalem while the true*

> *Israelites were in banishment. They bought priests from Israel, who taught these mongrel people the religion that is known as Judaism today."*

Interestingly, these same priests are seen to be the people who sold the Israelites into slavery in the first place, the Pharisees, and they are said to have been learned men, but wisdom is seen as a vice. I was treated with some contempt as 'trying to be something I'm not' and as being a "*wetsgeleerde*" (someone who is learned in the ways of the world) as opposed to a "*skrifgeleerde*" (one who knows the Bible). To the Pseudo-Boers I am a Pharisee, a traitor to be distrusted. Another interesting point in the context of race, is that many of these people literally use the names of Biblical nations to refer to contemporary peoples. The Philistines, the Judeans, the Greeks (the latter often used to refer to philosophers, scientists, and other learned adders) are to them actual contemporary nations, still operating in much the same way and relationships to each other as they reputedly did four thousand years ago. If you are not an Adamite, you are literally seen as no more than a beast of burden, an animal in a sense that we don't even use to refer to non-human species anymore. The following two quotes, by Jisraeliet, serve to illustrate the degree of differentiation that is seen to exist between whites and non-whites:

> *"All Adamites can become Israelites. No one of any other race, be it Chinese or whatever, can become an Israelite, only a white Adamite."*

> *"Kaffirs and other unbelievers are animals. One refers to them as animals, because we believe they were created by Satan. Satan made them. I believe that."*

Upon pointing out the fact that many non-white people embrace Christianity, they point out a 'fact' known to them, namely that Christianity was engineered by the Jews in order to sow confusion and strife among the 'true' Israelites. To Judeër religion is not a matter of choice, but one of destiny, it is 'given' to some and not to others:

> *"A black can't live according to the laws because they were not given to him. He dies like a tree. I might just as well cry about my dog dying."*

As if this statement does not shock our contemporary sensibilities enough, Jisraeliet continues:

> *"The law is not for the dog. The dog exists and the dog can live, but I believe that kaffirs exist for one reason, so that we can be tested."*

This test, as mentioned earlier, means either unleashing the "*banvloek*" (curse of banishment) upon these people and winning God's approval, or showing mercy and in turned being punished for it, as they believe the 'Boer' nation to be. What exactly is the curse of banishment? Jisraeliet wastes no time in getting to the point, though his belief in the matter adds an almost stoic feel to his reply, which is as cold as the air outside and as hard as the painted face of Paul Kruger that occupies the space reserved for a television set in most living rooms:

> "*It means exterminating them completely. It means woman, child, everything, you destroy every trace of them. You burn everything. That's the curse of banishment.*"

It is clear that the Pseudo-Boers thus represent the far-right extreme of contemporary Afrikaans speakers, with a worldview that can serve to exemplify racism. They embrace a narrow us/them mentality in which the in-group (the white race) is blindly exalted and all other groups viewed as mere obstacles. It is a grim, hateful and bitter way of life, and as we shall now see, it is all rooted in religion.

5.3.3.   Religion

The religion of the Pseudo-Boers is intricately linked to their views on race, as it is not seen as a way of life followed out of choice, but rather as a blueprint to life commanded by law and imprinted in their genes, the rejection of which will result in their own damnation. Everything is taken to an extreme level. When asked if their anti-Semitism stemmed from the act of Jesus' crucifixion and the supposed role of the Jewish people therein, as it does in many other fundamental Christian sects, Judeër reveals the unique colours of their ideological chimera:

> "*No, not really. It's not about them killing Yashua* (Jesus). *They were created for judgement. They are snake's seed.*"

According to their religious worldview, there are two 'seed lines', that of Adam, and that of the serpent, who by the way is capable of physically inserting his DNA into the wombs of sinful mothers. We have already covered much of their religion, but we would do well to ask ourselves, how does one end up embracing such a negative and simplistic view of life and the human condition? In this sense, it might be relevant that all the participants who adhered to these views find themselves in a situation of at least some degree of financial and social turmoil. Divorced parents, educational and workplace failure, verbal and/or physical abuse as a child, usually by an overly religious parent, as well as a precarious financial situation seem to underlie the stories of most Pseudo-Boers. These facts are of course injected only sparingly and fleetingly into their stories, but they tell a powerful story themselves. One such example can be seen in Jisraeliet's introductory statement, which sounds as if it is uttered by a different voice than the one I would hear during the rest of our conversation. He speaks in a hushed tone, rushed by the need to get it over with. For the only time during our encounter he breaks eye contact and looks down for the briefest of moments:

> "*My parents separated and I started to investigate religion and history for myself. In this way you meet people, you come across people who give you certain historical sources and so forth. You start forming your religion according to your viewpoint. Basically, it flopped at the College, I didn't make it, because their course fell away, or whatever. So that was their problem over there. Now I'm just sitting at home, trying to find a job, because my religious setup isn't compatible with today's government and political system, so.*"

For a few seconds he becomes a young man disillusioned, embittered, and vulnerable to the workings of a world that has been cruel to him more than once. This fleeting moment of vulnerability speaks volumes. From these few sentences one can see that the participant, probably embittered by the separation of his parents, set out to find solace in religion, a religion that would allow him to point the finger to someone else as the source of his failure and the crumbling of his family. It also gives us an insight into the ways through which these extreme religious stories are transmitted, by certain groups of people with access to hidden 'historical' knowledge. I have seen some of these so-called sources, and where they are not prophecies dreamt up by individuals, who live quite comfortably off the revenues and reputation their 'visions' generate, they are pseudo-scientific, outdated and outright misleading. The incompatibility between his religion and the government which the respondent refers to basically boils down to the fact that he refuses to shave his beard, and will not work on the Sabbath (that, according to his 'investigations' falls from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset), which disqualifies him from most jobs for which he might otherwise be suited.

By looking at examples like this, it becomes clear that these people are constantly reinforcing their rigid worldview through misinterpreting minor everyday occurrences and projecting these through a twisted vision of the continuing battle between their God and nation, and those who exist solely to destroy them. In this way a common modern fashion, namely that of being clean shaven, and its perhaps somewhat overenthusiastic enforcement, becomes a sign of the 'enemy' wanting to deform the man of God, etc. The very premises of their religion and the one-sided stories of which it consists creates in the Pseudo-Boers a highly defensive and fatalistic worldview, and were it not for these peculiar religious beliefs, these people might indeed have found other, more positive ways of coping with the challenges they seem to be facing in a multicultural society.

5.3.4. Nationalism

Concerning nationalism, the Pseudo-Boers are once again highly informed by religious precepts and, once again, present an extreme example. They believe even hardcore nationalists who refer to themselves as Afrikaners to be missing the point. As Jisraeliet points out, most so-called Afrikaners are not aware of their ancient history and roots in biblical Israel:

> "*We believe our people have lost their identity. They don't know who they really are or where they're really from.*"

To them, to be called an Afrikaner is analogous to being called an African, which is, of course, anathema. To Judeër the Afrikaners are little more than liberal traitors:

> "*Especially with politics, and how they brought the blacks into everything. That wasn't right.*"

Jisraeliet wraps up the argument:

> "*I don't see myself as an Afrikaner at all. I mean, the blacks in this country are Africans too. Anyone who lives in Africa is an African. A Boer is more "regsdenkend"* (right-thinking, in terms of political inclination)*, a steadfast republican.*"

So, firstly there is a break from the Afrikaner in general, which according to the Pseudo-Boers goes back to the Anglo-Boer War. Those who fought the English are the true Boers, while those who sat idly by are the Afrikaner traitors. Here another interesting aspect of the collective identity of the Pseudo-Boer comes to the fore. Once again the learned and intellectual are ridiculed, with the perceived liberalism of the average Afrikaner supposedly being a result of their 'forgetting their roots'. Judeër, himself a working class man of humble means, articulates the following ideal image of the Boer people:

> "*A Boer is simple, he has a simple way of life, as we are shown in the Word. In Europe and everywhere we were simple people; farmers, miners, fishers, that kind of thing. We have to go back to being a simple nation, as we've always been.*"

This kind of statement, which is widespread in the data, can be interpreted in many ways. Biblically the Israelites were a nomadic people for a large part of the era with which the Old Testament deals, eventually settling in small agricultural communities before being 'corrupted' by the rise of the learned priestly classes. Historically it is also true that the Boers of the 19th century lived a very simple rural life, and a certain naive romanticism quite possibly underlies some of this longing for a bygone age. In the case of the truly fanatic Pseudo-Boers, however, I am of the opinion that their notion of a simple life as the right way of living is, just like their peculiar religion, an idealistic story constructed to suit their own contemporary situation. None of the most extreme Pseudo-Boers encountered during this study were farmers, hardly any were property owners. It might be a sense of insecurity or a lingering inferiority complex that drives certain groups toward expounding a 'simple' life as virtuous. The problem thus does not lie in the socio-economic position of these people per se, but in the way in which it affects their worldview and has very real consequences for South African society. It is from the ranks of the Pseudo-Boers that virtually all right-wing threats emanate, including the highly publicised Boeremag debacle[23] and the recently uncovered plot to bomb an ANC conference in Bloemfontein[24]. Pseudo-Boer nationalism is a dangerous cocktail of extreme racism and religious fundamentalism and, if the collectivity ever reaches a size at which these ideals can be put into practice, it would pose a very real threat to peace in our society. As Jisraeliet sums up the situation:

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[23] Various members of this right-wing group with white separatist aims have been charged with high treason since a 2002 string of bomb attacks in Soweto, the cases of whom have developed into one of the country's longest lasting trials.

[24] Four men were arrested after a right-wing plot to bomb the ANC's 53rd National Congress, held on the Bloemfontein campus of the University of the Free State from 16 to 20 December 2012, was uncovered.

> *"This land is ours, and not just this land. There was an old man during the Great Trek, I can't remember his name, but when asked how far they were willing to go after freedom, he said: "Until we reach the other side"."*

The 'other side' in this context refers to the northern coast of Africa, and when probed further, the participant admits, without a hint of sarcasm, that annexing the whole continent would be a prerequisite to ensuring the safety of the Boer republic's borders after the successful conquest of Southern Africa. Their nationalism does not have a local scope, but a global one, and it is interesting to note that religious groups of this 'Israelite' persuasion also exist outside of South Africa, the largest of which can be found in the US (Cf. Quarles, 2004).

5.4.   The Afrikaners

The Afrikaners represent the most direct evolutionary branch of their 20th century predecessors, in terms of the degree of continuity between the narrative repertoires of the historical Afrikaners and those of members of each of the three contemporary collectivities. This basically means that the contents of contemporary Afrikaners' narrative repertoires exhibit a larger degree of similarity to those of the historical Afrikaners than do those of contemporary Pseudo-Boers and Afrikaanses. As members of this grouping still actively refer to themselves as Afrikaners, they are the only ones to which this moniker unreservedly applies today. Within its ranks one tends to find the more intellectual members of the white Afrikaans speaking community, or at least those interested in the establishment of a clear collective identity rooted in traditional Afrikanerdom. The Afrikaners, apart from actively participating in traditionally Afrikaner cultural practices, operate through various formal institutions with the aim of achieving the status of a globally recognised ethnic minority, and the legal protection brought about by such a status[25].

In many aspects the Afrikaners represent a more liberal version of the Pseudo-Boers, and though membership is not limited to individuals of any specific political or religious persuasion, the chances of any non-white South African claiming the title Afrikaner are statistically insignificant and there are thus certain unspoken prerequisites for inclusion into the Afrikaner grouping. Though whiteness is not an overt prerequisite, the active practice and preservation of traditional Afrikaner culture is one, a fact which almost necessitates genealogically Afrikaner ancestry, and thus genetically European descent, as most of Afrikaner cultural activities historically excluded non-whites from participation.

The Afrikaners tend to shy away from the more extreme race-based arguments for their right to exist that are often used by the Pseudo-Boers, instead focusing on a certain *historical* right to sovereignty which they believe to have been deserved through centuries of struggle and

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[25] Most influential of these is the "*Pro-Afrikaanse Aksiegroep*" (PRAAG), which was founded in 2000 "*…to keep the ideal of Afrikaner freedom alive at all times by celebrating the Afrikaans language, culture and identity, as well as defending and strengthening it…*" in order to ultimately "*…attain freedom in a Fourth Afrikaans Republic*" ('Who are we?', http://praag.org/?page_id=2).

indigenisation (Adam & Giliomee, 1979: 119). This claim is also based on a much less arrogant and more respectful foundation of identity preservation than was the case with the similar notion invoked as justification during the construction of Apartheid. Where, in the 20th century, the Afrikaners saw themselves as the only true South African nation and as having the right to sole ownership of the entire country (Giliomee, 1975: 25), as the Pseudo-Boers still do today, the Afrikaners of today merely seek formal acknowledgement of their right to existence as one of the many cultural groups comprising modern South African society.

5.4.1.   'The Afrikaners are more defined than that': The narrative repertoire

The narrative repertoires of members of the Afrikaner collectivity tend to fall between that of the Afrikaanses and Pseudo-Boers in terms of its depth and range of resources. It is generally far broader than that of the Pseudo-Boers, yet characteristically retains certain, especially cultural and religious, reference points that make it much more uniform and predictable than that of the average Afrikaanse. There is some space for personal freedom, but most Afrikaners are defined as such because of their reliance on a certain shared narrative repertoire, or at least a common cultural area in which the narrative repertoires of most members of the collectivity overlap. This is necessary and obvious, as inclusion within the Afrikaner grouping is largely a matter of choice, which boils down to the acceptance of a certain collective identity which, though far from being as rigid as that of the 20th century Afrikaners, still draws a few clear lines between the in-group and those seen as the 'other', as will be seen in the sections dealing with race, religion and nationalism.

Concerning the circulation of Afrikaner stories, it tends to be somewhat wider than that of the Pseudo-Boers, as the various public figures who are quite outspoken about the topic, as well as the widespread presence of themes and narratives of Afrikaner identity in the national and even international media attests to. The Afrikaners, it seems, are the true heirs of their eponymous predecessors, and carry the stories of the 17th century Burghers, the Boers of the 1800's, and the Afrikaner of the previous century with a sense of pride informed by a measure of awareness and reflexivity. They tend to be quite vocal in sharing these stories, stories whose uniquely South African nature they are especially concerned about, and which they highlight in their plight to be accepted as an integral part of contemporary South African society.

Unlike the Pseudo-Boers, the Afrikaners, who generally have a more factual understanding of their history and the dynamics of a multicultural society, tend to seek existential acknowledgment through institutional and legal means, and quite a few cooperatives exist between Afrikaner cultural organisations and their counterparts in the rest of the Dutch speaking world. Afrikaner stories, however, are uniquely South African stories, in the sense that their constituent plots and characters were constructed against the backdrop of a uniquely South African physical and social environment, and apart from their inclusion in educational curricula alongside those of other indigenous groups, are shared, contested and understood by South Africans well beyond the fold of the collectivity itself. In other words, Afrikaner stories are more

widely known, or told and listened to, than those of either the Pseudo-Boers or the Afrikaanses, probably because they have been in circulation far longer than those of the other collectivities. It is the interpretation of some of these stories that prove to be a watershed, and according to one's understanding and internalisation of these stories are questions of affiliation addressed, as will be seen in the next section. To be included into the Afrikaner collectivity, one theoretically only needs to accept the stories of the Afrikaner, that is to say actively live out the Afrikaner culture. There is no overt emphasis on whiteness as a prerequisite for inclusion, though, as will be seen in the section dealing with race. An Afrikaner of colour is, however, not a concrete possibility, a state of affairs that is discussed in detail in the same section.

Identity is constructed out of Afrikaner stories in the same way as it is out of those of the other two collectivities, except that, out of the three collectivities, the stories of Afrikaners have the most historical continuity with those of their predecessors. Added to the stories of adventure, challenge and triumph that were widely told by the Afrikaners of the 20th century, are unique post-Apartheid stories of reconciliation and reflexivity regarding the faults of these same forbears. Regarding individual identity, there is more space for personal development than exists within the fold of the Pseudo-Boers. Indeed it is possible for a contemporary Afrikaner to be every bit as individualistically developed as an Afrikaanse, merely being differentiated from the latter on the grounds of his or her active perception of Afrikaner history as being a living narrative that continues to be added to today.

Apart from certain complexities regarding race and culture (discussed in greater detail in the next section), the only thing that makes an Afrikaner is his or her self-identification as an Afrikaner. There can be no denial of the general 'Afrikanerness' of one individual by another, as was widespread during the previous century, though the presence or absence of certain fundamentally Afrikaner stories within an individual's narrative repertoire will determine whether said individual is in fact an Afrikaner, or whether the identity constructed represents one that is more akin to that of the Pseudo-Boers, as determined both by the degree of factuality of its content, and the way in which said content is interpreted. It is once again useful to remember the visualisation of contemporary Afrikaans speaking identity as a continuum, as illustrated in Figure 6. The lines between Pseudo-Boer, Afrikaner, and Afrikaanse, though readily visible through involved scrutiny, are not readily identifiable in each and every individual case.

Regarding that which is at stake to the Afrikaners, it is nothing more and nothing less than the continued cultural existence of the Afrikaner. The emphasis is removed from biological race, which is what the Pseudo-Boers actively strive to protect, to the cultural and linguistic heritage developed by the Afrikaners and their predecessors over the past 360 odd years. One is an Afrikaner by actively acting out this culture, as well as becoming an activist, on whatever scale, for the continued existence of Afrikaans and other aspects of Afrikaner culture. To the Afrikaners, both the Afrikaanses and the Pseudo-Boers present a threat to the continued existence of the Afrikaner, the collectivity that presents the most direct cultural heir of the 20th

century Afrikaner. Regarding the former, Carel Boshoff, a grandson of Hendrik Verwoerd, has the following to say:

> "*He has become a middle class Westerner, devoid of culture, that's all.*"

Whereas the latter is regarded with an informed suspicion, regarding the nature of their claimed conservatism. In Carel's words:

> "*The interesting thing about right-wing Afrikaners, or Boers, is that all of them are revolutionary, in the sense that they have fuck all respect for what is. Revolutionary is the opposite of conservative.*"

Having established the typological position of the Afrikaner as somewhere in the middle ground between that of the Pseudo-Boer and the Afrikaanse, let us look at the peculiarities of this collectivity regarding its general orientation toward race, religion and nationalism.

5.4.2.   Race

Though there is an unspoken sense of whiteness, or at least a generally agreed upon definition thereof, as being a necessary precondition for one to be an Afrikaner, the issue, when explored in greater depth, seems not to be so clear-cut. Carel Boshoff, putting down the beer he ordered to quell the depressing heat of a typical Northern Cape summer afternoon, seems to gaze into the distance at something only he can see. Slowly, he begins to speak:

> "*How white are we anyway, you know? We vary in that respect. My impression on the street is that we are not uniformly white. As far as that goes, I make a simple distinction between "afkoms"* [pedigree] *and "herkoms"* [heritage]. *"Afkoms" means: "Well, are you white enough?", while "herkoms" is where you come from, do you come from an Afrikaner world? If you do, then your chances of being an Afrikaner in the future as well are pretty good, regardless of your pedigree, regardless of your language use or religious practices. There's always flow between cultural communities*".

This was an unexpected utterance coming from a grandson of the man widely known as the father of apartheid. Though he is a leading activist in the struggle for Afrikaner self-sufficiency and independence, he approaches the issue of race in the informed but cautious manner of the thinking man:

> "*It's a fact that most of us are of Western, European descent, but it's also a fact that not all of us are. That difference between almost and completely should quantify the whole concept to the degree that you know better than to run amok with racist ideas. The same goes for religion and the same goes for language.*"

Though it seems that most Afrikaners accept the fact that the collectivity's roots do not necessarily lie in a mono-racial origin, the fact remains that the Afrikaner, as most readily

recognised today, both from within and without, consists of a group of people whose white racial homogeneity are taken to be self-evident and even defining. But the question of whether whiteness is an inherent prerequisite to being an Afrikaner is one that is not unheard of, considering South Africa's large population of coloured Afrikaans speakers. Opinion seems to be split regarding the possibility of coloured Afrikaners, though there is an unspoken agreement regarding the unlikelihood of coloured Afrikaans speakers claiming to be Afrikaners anytime soon, which for the most part relegates this problem to the fringes of Afrikaner consciousness. Practically all participants acknowledge the existence of Afrikaner-like people of colour, as does Carel:

> "*I don't come across many, but conceptually they do exist. Conceptually in the sense of being Afrikaans speaking, reformed Christian, you know, you can go and define it as narrow as you want. Then, on top of that, they have typical Afrikaans surnames, ancestors, and so forth.*"

Some line is, however, eventually drawn between these coloured Afrikaans speakers and white Afrikaners, even by Afrikaners as open-minded as Carel Boshoff:

> "*Yes, but the self-definition remains absent in any practical sense. Even guys that attempt to trump you with the idea of: "Listen, I'm van Wyk* [a common Afrikaans surname]*, I belong to the NG-Kerk* [Largest of the three traditional Afrikaans churches[26]]*, I speak Afrikaans, so why am I not an Afrikaner, but you are?" In the first place you don't have an answer for that guy, in the second place there are very few aspects according to which he'll still feel himself to be an Afrikaner a week later, when he's finished the debate with you. So in that sense I don't know many brown Afrikaans speakers who really see themselves as Afrikaners...the Afrikaner is more defined than that.*"

An unspoken sigh of relief can be sensed. Although respondents are reluctant to name race as the deciding factor in the debate on Afrikaner identity, culture is often used as a euphemism. This example comes from Joe Black's response to a question regarding the recent racial tensions at the University of the Free State, where he is currently a first year student:

> "*There's just a culture clash, you know. People do things differently.*"

This does not however automatically make racists out of all Afrikaners. All the Afrikaner participants I came across engage the question of race and identity in ways that indicate high levels of reflexivity, awareness, empathy and social responsibility. It is actually an ongoing topic of debate, whereas it is a finalised topic to the Pseudo-Boers and a matter of outright personal opinion to the Afrikaanses. This emergent attitude of Afrikaners toward the issue of race, is mirrored in their relationship to religion.

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[26]The so-called sister churches: The "*Nederduits Gereformeerde*", "*Hervormde*" and "*Gereformeerde*" churches.

5.4.3.   Religion

The Afrikaners also tend to have a reflexive, dialogical relationship with their belief structures and religious organisation, not so commonly falling into the pattern of forced homogeneity and fundamentalism that is the hallmark of the average Pseudo-Boer. Unlike the Afrikaanses however, among whom metaphysical beliefs of the traditionally religious kind are extremely rare, organised religion, especially protestant Christianity, still has a place within the narrative repertoire and interpretive framework of many Afrikaners. But, once again, openness and individual choice are paramount, and intellectual Afrikaners are aware of the fact that a viable collectivity cannot exist where certain values or ways of life are authoritatively enforced. Carel Boshoff sums it up eloquently, crossing his legs and leaning back in his chair:

> "*Some things shouldn't be over defined, some things shouldn't be too clear. An overexposed photo is an ugly thing, there has to be some shade and certainly grey areas within the thing. A people, any group of people who start to experience themselves as a collectivity, as a community, have a certain amount of variance, that is a given. So I don't wrack my brain over these things"* *"You know, this guy is that, this one became catholic, that guy took a brown wife or that guy speaks English...Integrate them, you know, do they participate in Afrikaner culture?*"

As is seen from this statement, there is, as with race, very little overt concern regarding an individual's personal beliefs when it comes to Afrikaner identity. This might of course vary between subsets of the collectivity, but most have realised that any vibrant community needs the presence of various opinions and perspectives for growth and positive survival. The unique culture developed by the predecessors of the Afrikaners over the past 360 years is given precedence over an individual's skin colour, religious affiliation or vocabulary.

5.4.4.   Nationalism

Afrikaner nationalism exists, though it tends to be much better thought through and more intelligently articulated than the crude forms of racial and religious nationalism that the Pseudo-Boers cling to. Issues of contemporary Afrikaner nationalism primarily revolve around the preservation of Afrikaner culture and the Afrikaans language, and the right, historically deserved by merit of their status as a people indigenous to South Africa, to self-determination and a continued autonomous existence within a multicultural South Africa. These issues are pretty commonsensical, but the way in which they are pursued presents two interesting characteristics which serve to differentiate the collective consciousness of the Afrikaners from the idealistically ruthless drive behind the nationalism of the Pseudo-Boers. Firstly, Afrikaners acknowledge their historical roots as economic immigrants into the country, rather than divinely ordained

conquerors, along with the necessarily cautiously negotiated sense of belonging and entitlement that such an awareness brings, as exemplified by Joe Black's argument about the futility of debates regarding land ownership:

> "*We are aliens, just like most of the black nations. The only people who were here originally are the Khoisan, and where are they now? They have a little piece of land in the middle of the Kalahari. They've been westernised and rejected to such an extent...We have to guard against that. Who actually belongs here? How far back do you have to go to know who belongs here?*"

This tentative, cautious sense of belonging is further augmented by a degree of appreciation of the individuality of Afrikaners that is absent among the Pseudo-Boers, though not as all-pervading as that of the Afrikaanses. Carel Boshoff, who, as mentioned earlier, is a grandson of Hendrik Verwoerd and president of the Orania movement[27], which is widely perceived to be a conservative movement by many white Afrikaans speakers, argues for inclusion. By now the sky has begun to darken and we have switched over from beer to coffee:

> "*We are not what we were. Over the last few decades the emphasis has definitely shifted to self-definition rather than an external definition. Orania is an interesting example of this diversity, as one might conceptualise it as being an Afrikaner conservation project. Precisely because of this fact you do get people who are extremely narrow-minded about the concept: "Is F.W. de Klerk an Afrikaner?", you know. You do get that and you can expect to find that among people who are relatively conservative about their identity, but the other potential structural power of a project like this is that it, regarding the intentions underlying it, strives to be as inclusive as possible. A project like this can't succeed if it's going to be as exclusive as possible, you'll end up with twenty guys on a sand dune. If you want this thing to work, you have to say to people: "Come, you are included".*

This multi-faceted dialogue of belonging replaces the narrow faith and race based claims of some Pseudo-Boers that South Africa belongs to the 'Boers' alone as a God given right. The second characteristic of Afrikaner nationalism is that it is situationally and historically reflexive and well informed. Where the Pseudo-Boers tend to hold on to prophecies and cling to ideas of some divine intervention that will eventually reinstate them as the rightful rulers of the country, the Afrikaners know that their viable existence as a nation, in any truly relevant sense of the term, depends not on a monological collective identity wherein everyone shares the same narrow perceptions of race, religion, etc., but on the existence of cultural institutions that promote intra-group debate and growth. Afrikaners are aware of the fact that positive activism is necessary to

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[27] Orania is a small exclusively Afrikaner community striving toward the goal of Afrikaner self-sufficiency, while the Orania Movement is a cultural-political institution established to garner support for this ideal ('Welkom by Orania!', http://www.orania.co.za/).

safeguard the existence of Afrikaans culture as something more than a curiosity or subject of a museum exhibit. In Carel's words:

> "*For a small nation that doesn't have its future survival as a given in this modern world, nationalism means the construction of a scientific language, a lively literature, and institutions that offer education to the highest levels in our own language, a language that can generate dictionaries, that can produce newspapers, from magazines and relaxation literature up to the most sophisticated literary works. All these things demand institutions, and if these institutions cease to exist, a huge gap is created, and impoverishment on all levels will set in.*"

The Afrikaners are all too aware of the fact that their institutions are slowly melting away, as more and more traditionally Afrikaans universities turn to English, and more Afrikaans students study and work in English due to the demands of globalisation. Carel Boshoff puts it this way:

> "*The cause of our current identity crisis is the fact that we don't have access to these institutional prerequisites to existence anymore. We have as much confusion at the moment as we did after the Boer War. I don't see the future Afrikaner as a given, I see it as a possibility at this point, depending largely on the survival of our institutions.*"

This emphasis on education and Afrikaner culture as a creative and intellectual force is one of the biggest differences between the Afrikaners and the Pseudo-Boers, who, as we saw earlier, generally wish 'their' people to remain simple and not to be confused by earthly proclamations of truth as opposed to the unquestionable truth they feel themselves already to possess. This difference also seems to be one of the underlying factors of an emerging class conflict between Afrikaans workers and the middle class, who strangely seem to be roughly divided according to their self-designation as 'Boers' and 'Afrikaners' respectively. Carel goes on to explain how, whereas the Pseudo-Boers fear the physical elimination of their people, to the Afrikaners, a cultural death would be just as bad, or worse:

> "*Today we see the Afrikaner entering a new world as it were, and the fact is that he can either sustain himself, or he can lose himself. As Van Wyk Louw said, he has to sustain and carry himself by adding irreplaceable value to the world, through which the Afrikaners will be acknowledged by all the nations of the world, and through which their right to existence as an independent people will be secured. According to him nations that can do this actually deserve to exist, deserve a place in the world. Remember, this was at a time when the Afrikaner was redefining himself in the face of the losses incurred during the Boer War. I believe we are in a similar position today. Yes, it's a thoroughly modern idea to say that a people will self-destruct if no one does these things anymore. Of course, in a sense, the Afrikaners won't cease to exist unless they are completely exterminated physically, literally, biologically, but they would disappear from the scene of the modern world.*"

This statement pretty much sums up the conceptual battle facing contemporary Afrikaner nationalists, and gives us a glimpse into what the Afrikaners of the 21st century perceive as being at stake. The case of the Afrikaner is thus distinguishable from that of the of the Pseudo-Boer by one important summarising point: while the Pseudo-Boers actively seek to finalise their stories, and indeed see most of their stories as finalised hundreds, and in some cases thousands of years ago, the Afrikaners seek not only to sustain their stories, but to build upon and renew them along with the ever evolving human world. The Pseudo-Boers then, as an ideal-type, are locked up in the past, while the Afrikaners gaze hopefully into a future that, depending on the ways in which they presently mobilise the stories of their past, may offer new life sustaining stories and possible identities to those who might come after them.

5.5. Conclusion

The data generated by this study thus indicates the existence of three distinct, but related contemporary collectivities of white Afrikaans speakers, namely the Pseudo-Boers, the Afrikaners, and the Afrikaanses. These three groups can be seen as forming nodes, or points of concentration, along a continuum of white Afrikaans speaking identity ranging from the most insular, narrow, and finalised to the most cosmopolitan, open and unfinalisable in terms of the stories they generate and that circulate between their members. The nature of their narrative repertoires, or the existing stories out of which their members construct their own narratives, can be seen as differentiated around issues regarding race, religion and nationalism specifically, and it is the individual white Afrikaans speaker's attitude toward these three factors that is the deciding factor when it comes to embracing either one of the three collective identities, which of course can be further differentiated according to more in-depth analysis of these and other factors.

The Pseudo-Boers are the most extreme group of contemporary white Afrikaans speakers, based on their racial and religious convictions and the strong finalising forces they exert on the stories of their fellow group members. They can be seen as representing a revolutionary subgrouping, as very little of their narrative repertoire actually represents orthodox or conservative Afrikaner elements. The Afrikaners represent the true conservatives, in the sense that members of this collectivity actively embrace the label Afrikaner and seek to position Afrikaner culture and the Afrikaans language so as to secure its future, while preserving certain 'traditional' life-wordly routines and ideals developed by the 20th century Afrikaners. They are open to change, but emphasise continuity with the stories and identities of their historical predecessors, the Burghers, the Boers and, most importantly, the Afrikaners of the 20th century. The Afrikaanses comprise those Afrikaans speaking individuals who reject the labels 'Boer' and 'Afrikaner' and who seek other means of expression, in terms of individual and collective identity.

I believe this dissertation to be an example of the way in which the study of stories and the act of their construction and telling can be harnessed to generate informative scientific knowledge and understanding on subjects not easily accessible by other means of investigation. By focusing on

storytelling, which is a uniquely human act, and seeing it for what it truly is, namely the vessel of collective social realities that are more real to the individuals involved in their construction as any 'objective' scientific reality could ever be, we might be able to reclaim lived experience and perceived social reality as the true focus areas of sociology, which has too long been misdirected into the realm of measurement and prediction by the methodological positivists. Instead of superimposing a single abstract world over lived experience, the apparent existence of multiple intersubjectively interpreted realities should be taken as the starting point for a sociological analysis of meaning.

The data generated through the analysis of the stories collected during this study could hardly have been replicated by positivist means, and it is still challenging to reconcile our traditional understanding of scientific practice with some of the methods and arguments presented in this dissertation. I do however believe that, as we continue to listen to and learn from the stories of others and share our own stories with an ever larger audience, we will continue to broaden our understanding of human nature and the mechanisms underlying the social construction of reality. Furthermore, by broadening our own narrative repertoires and being open to the stories of others and to alternate interpretations of our own stories, we will not only be able to better understand ourselves as storied beings, but to construct a story that those who come after us will be able to tell with pride, and to learn from in wisdom.

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SUMMARY/OPSOMMING

Since the fall of apartheid and the emergence of a wholly democratic South Africa in 1994, little research has been done on the topic of white identity in this rapidly transforming multicultural society. Indeed, apart from an array of popular books on the subject, there has been virtually no academic interest in the question of how white South Africans have reconstructed their individual and collective identities since the fall of apartheid, and the resulting erosion of the ready answers previously provided to them regarding questions of belonging and identification. This study set out to remedy this situation through exploring the identities that white South Africans, and white Afrikaans speakers in particular, have constructed out of the wreckage of the 20th century.

Embracing a qualitative approach, this study focused on exploring stories of contemporary white Afrikaans speaking identity as told in the participants' own words. Six individuals, ranging from students in their late teens to a grandson of Hendrik Verwoerd, shared their stories, which were reflexively engaged through an interpretive sociological approach that incorporated elements of phenomenology, existentialism and reflexive sociology. The dissertation starts off with an introduction to the epistemological and ontological foundation upon which the investigative process was built, before investigating the concept identity as conceptualised during the research process, namely as constituting a relatively stable but malleable set of understandings regarding the self and its place within society in general and specific racial, religious and cultural collectivities in particular. A history of white Afrikaans speaking identity is then presented, which makes clear the prior existence of at least three historical white Afrikaans speaking collectivities, namely the Burghers of the 17th and 18th centuries, the Boers of the 1800's, and the Afrikaners of the 20th century. The stage is then set for the examination of the new collectivities that have developed since the demise of a coherent Afrikaner identity in the late 20th century.

The data, collected by means of reflexive individual and group interviews, and analysed using 'Dialogical Narrative Analysis' (DNA), a process that focuses on the contents and circulation of individual and collectively shared stories, or 'narrative repertoires', indicate the existence of at least three relatively coherent contemporary white Afrikaans speaking collectivities. These are the 'Pseudo-Boers', the 'Afrikaners', and the 'Afrikaanses'. These three collectivities, developing simultaneously and largely parallel to each other out of the once coherent Afrikaner collectivity of the previous century, exhibit significant variance regarding the content, structure and circulation of their narrative repertoires. This means that Afrikaners, Pseudo-Boers and Afrikaanses, on both the individual and collective levels, differ from each other in terms of the stories they tell and dynamics pertaining to the circulation of these stories, as well as the genres, plots and character types prevalent in them. These shared stories in turn represent, according to this study, the matrix out of which identity is constructed, be it individual or collective. The uncovered data are further represented in a manner borrowing from certain techniques used in the fields of semi-fiction writing and journalism, with the aim to aid understanding through presenting the data themselves in a storied form. This choice was made in line with the hypothesis, developed throughout this dissertation, that the uniquely *human* phenomenon of

storytelling in fact underlies much of the social construction of reality, and serves to inform individual and collectively shared meaning frameworks and understandings regarding the world of everyday life.

S edert die einde van apartheid en die ontluiking van 'n volwaardig demokratiese Suid-Afrika in 1994, is merkwaardig min navorsing gedoen rondom die kwessie van blanke identiteit in hierdie drasties veranderde, multikulturele samelewing. Inteendeel, behalwe vir 'n handvol semi-fiksionele en joernalistieke publikasies skyn daar feitlik geen akademiese belangstelling te bestaan in die maniere waarop wit Suid-Afrikaners te werk gegaan het om hul individuele en kollektiewe identiteite te heroorweeg sedert die val van apartheid en die gepaardgaande verlies aan 'n voorgeskrewe 'volksidentiteit'. Hierdie studie is bedoel om dié gaping te vul deur die identiteite wat wit Suid-Afrikaners, en spesifiek wit Afrikaanssprekendes, vir hulself uit die wrakstukke van die 20ste eeu gekonstrueer het, onder die vergrootglas te plaas.

Deur gebruik te maak van 'n kwalitatiewe sosiologiese benadering fokus die studie op die verhale van wit Afrikaanssprekendes soos vertel in hul eie woorde. Ses individue, van studente in hul laat tienerjare tot 'n kleinseun van Hendrik Verwoerd, het deur die loop van die studie hul persoonlike stories vertel, stories wat interpreteer is deur gebruik te maak van 'n konstruktiwistiese benadering wat elemente van fenomenologie, eksistensialisme en refleksiewe sosiologie verweef het. Die dissertasie begin met die bekendstelling van die epistemologiese en ontologiese fondasie waarop die navorsingsproses berus, en ontwikkel hierna 'n werkende definisie van die konsep identiteit soos gekonsepsualiseer deur die loop van die studie, naamlik as 'n relatief stabiele, tog vloeibare stel verstandhoudinge aangaande die self en dié se plek in die breër samelewing, sowel as binne spesifieke ras, godsdienstige en kulturele kollektiwiteite. Die argument dat individuele en kollektiewe identiteit die gevolg is van die internalisering en oorvertelling van gedeelde stories, en dat die lewenslange ontwikkeling van die menslike selfkonsep interessante ooreenstemminge toon met 'n ontvouende verhaal waarin die subjektiewe self die rol van protagonis vertolk, word hieruit ontwikkel. 'n Geskiedkundige oorsig van die ontwikkeling van wit Afrikaanssprekende identiteit word hierna weergegee, waaruit die bestaan van ten minste drie geskiedkundige wit Afrikaansprekende kollektiwiteite blyk, naamlik dié van die Burghers van die 17de en 18de eeu, die Boere van die 1800's, en die 20ste eeuse Afrikaners. Die verhoog is dan gereed vir die ondersoek en bekendstelling van die hedendaagse kollektiwiteite wat opgebou is uit die nalatenskap van die 20ste eeuse Afrikaners, wie se koherente kollektiewe identiteit grootliks in duie gestort het teen die einde van die vorige eeu.

Die data, versamel deur gebruik te maak van refleksiewe in-diepte onderhoude en fokusgroep sessies, en ge-analiseer volgens die *"Dialogical Narrative Analysis"* (DNA) metode, wat fokus op die inhoud en sirkulasie van kollektief gedeelde stories, of *"narrative repertoires",* dui op die bestaan van ten minste drie hedendaagse wit Afrikaanssprekende kollektiwiteite, naamlik die 'Pseudo-Boere', die 'Afrikaners', en die 'Afrikaanses'. Dié drie kollektiwiteite, wat gelyktydig en in 'n mate parallel uit die nalatenskap van die meer koherente Afrikaner kollektiwiteit van die vorige eeu ontwikkel het, verskil merkwaardig wat die inhoud, omvang en aard van hul *"narrative repertoires"* aanbetref. Dit beteken dat Afrikaners, Pseudo-Boere en Afrikaanses, op individuele sowel as kollektiewe vlak, van mekaar verskil in terme van die stories wat lede van

die kollektiwiteite aan mekaar en ander oorvertel, die sirkulasie van hierdie verhale, sowel as die genres, storielyne en karaktertipes wat daarin voorkom. Volgens die argumente ontwikkel in hierdie verhandeling verteenwoordig dié gedeelde stories op hul beurt die matriks waaruit identiteit, in beide die indiwiduele en kollektiewe sin, gekonstrueer word. Die verkrygde data is verder weergegee op 'n manier wat gebruik maak van sekere semi-fiksionele en joernalistieke tegnieke, met die doel om dit, self verwerk tot die vorm van 'n vertelde storie, meer geredelik verstaanbaar te maak. Dié keuse is geneem voortspruitend uit die begrip, ontwikkel deur die loop van dié verhandeling, dat die uniek *menslike* fenomeen van storievertelling, wat onder alle volke en in alle gedokumenteerde tye aanwesig is, die konstruksie van sosiale werklikheid, en die verskeie groepspesifieke verstandhoudings en gedeelde betekenis-raamwerke aangaande die wêreld waarvolgens die mens se alledaagse lewe afspeel, onderlê.

KEY TERMS

Afrikaner

Afrikaanse

Pseudo-Boer

Phenomenology

Dialogical Narrative Analysis

Narrative repertoire

Mystery

White Afrikaans speaker

Identity

APPENDIX A: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Name	Atropos
Age	23
Religion	Atheist
Education	B.Sc (Zoology)
Occupation	Unemployed
Hometown	Vereeniging, Gauteng Province

Name	August Rush
Age	22
Religion	Atheist
Education	Matric
Occupation	Graduate student
Hometown	Farm

Name	Carel Boshoff IV (chose not to use a pseudonym)
Age	49
Religion	Othodox Christian in NG Church
Education	M.A. (Cultural history)
Occupation	President of the Orania Movement, Mayor of Orania
Hometown	Orania, Northern Cape

Name	Jisraeliet
Age	22
Religion	Boer-Israelite
Education	Grade 9 (partial high school)
Occupation	Unemployed
Hometown	Kimberley, Northern Cape

Name	Joe Black
Age	19
Religion	Reformed Christian
Education	Matric
Occupation	Graduate student
Hometown	Bloemfontein, Free State

Name	Judeër
Age	41
Religion	Boer-Israelite
Education	Matric
Occupation	Correctional Officer
Hometown	Kimberley, Northern Cape

APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Old stories and new chapters: A biographic study of white Afrikaans speaking identity in central South Africa

Department of Sociology, University of the Free State
Research participant: Informed consent

I…………………………………….………………………………… (Full Name), do hereby declare:

I am over the age of 18 and a white, Afrikaans-speaking male.

I agree to participate in a Masters study in the Narrative Study of Lives entitled 'Old stories and new chapters: A biographic study of white Afrikaans speaking identity in central South Africa' and that data may be collected from me in an interview or focus group session with the researcher, Conrad Kotze, and/or other participants.

Conrad Kotze has recruited me for the research. He has informed me that the research explores how the question of Afrikaner identity is perceived by contemporary white Afrikaans speaking males.

I understand that:
I do not have to divulge information of a personal nature.
The research topic is potentially provocative and I may be exposed to insights, information or viewpoints that could make me feel uncomfortable.
My participation is voluntary and I am free to withdraw personally, or to withdraw my data, from the research at any time.
The researcher pledges to protect my privacy to as great a degree as possible and to conduct the research sensitively, responsibly and ethically.
I also undertake to act ethically and will not name any person in the group whose perceptions or behaviours I speak about outside of the group.
I am free to approach the researcher, Conrad Kotze, or the project supervisor, Professor Jan K Coetzee, with any questions or issues related to this research and to have these addressed to my satisfaction.
I am satisfied that adequate steps will be taken to protect my privacy:

- The interview/focus group session will be audio-recorded, but I will choose a pseudonym before data is recorded so my real name will not be on the recording, nor will it appear on transcriptions.

- This consent form will be kept in a safe place by the researcher until completion of the study in late 2012. This will also apply to audio-recordings - once data has been transcribed, the researcher will erase any copies of audio recordings.

- After the research is completed, data may be used for presentations or journal articles. However, information or data will not be traceable to me personally.

Signed
(Participant)……………………………………………………………………………………........

Date……………………………………Place…………………………………………………………

Signed Witness 1………………………………… Signed Witness2………………………………………..

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Old stories and new chapters: A biographical study of white Afrikaans speaking identity in central South Africa

Interview schedule

(These questions represent general angles of inquiry into various themes. They have been simplified for the purpose of quantifying them on paper, but their true value lies not in what is literally typed, but in how the order, wording and thematic content of these and related questions may facilitate the generation of rich data. My aim is to engage the participant in involved conversation, not to conduct an interview.)

Firstly, a personal introduction revolving around the theme of Afrikaner identity and the individual respondent's unique perception of and relationship to the concept. History and perceptions of an uncertain future are to be dealt with here:

- Would you please give a short history of your life? Where are you from, when were you born, etc.
- How would you describe what an Afrikaner is?
- Would you describe yourself as an Afrikaner? Why/why not...
- What role do you think white Afrikaans speakers have played in South Africa's history and will play in its future? How do you feel about farm murders, emigration, Anglicisation, etc.?
- Is the Afrikaner as a collective identity in danger of extinction? If so, should there be an effort to preserve it and should such an effort be primarily racially, linguistically or culturally focused?

The next phase entails asking questions relating to the themes of identity, race, religion and nationalism:

- Which one of the following is the most important constituent of Afrikaner/white Afrikaans speaking identity: race, religion or language?
- Do you believe white Afrikaans speakers to have sole rights to this country/certain parts of it?
- Using various points of reference, the recipient will also be facilitated in comparing himself to the 'ideal type' Afrikaner traditionally espoused by the state and church during the 20th century.
- The perceptions of the participant regarding dissimilar persons who identify themselves as Afrikaners/white Afrikaans speakers will be explored.

This is probably as far as rigid blueprints for questioning are currently conceptualised. I find it more suitable to think of the issues in terms of 'what we are going to talk about' instead of 'what I'm going to ask'.