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Deon Opperman's *Donkerland*: the rise and fall of Afrikaner nationalism

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In his epic play on Afrikaner history (from the Great Trek in 1838 to the birth of the new South Africa in 1994) Deon Opperman (award-winning South African playwright) presents the parallel and interlinked histories of two families – represented by a white patriarch and a black matriarch and their various descendants – against the background of important historical developments in South Africa. The article focuses on the depiction of the birth and demise of Afrikaner nationalism by identifying the “self” in Opperman’s *Donkerland*, and by discussing the relationship of the self *versus* the “other” in this play.

Deon Opperman se *Donkerland*: die opkoms en verval van Afrikaner-nasionalisme

Deon Opperman (bekroonde Suid-Afrikaanse dramaturg) gee in sy epiese drama oor Afrikaner-geskiedenis (vanaf die Groot Trek in 1838 tot die geboorte van die nuwe Suid-Afrika in 1994) ’n parallele en ineengestremde uitbeelding van twee families – voorgestel deur ’n blanke patriarg en ’n swart matriarg, sowel as hulle onderskeie afstammeling – teen die agtergrond van belangrike historiese ontwikkelinge in Suid-Afrika. Hierdie artikel fokus op die uitbeelding van die opkoms en verval van Afrikaner-nasionalisme deur die “self” in Opperman se *Donkerland* te identifiseer, sowel as om die verhouding tussen die self *versus* die “ander” in die drama te bespreek.

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Deon Opperman's *Donkerland* (1996) is a play that is unique in Afrikaans theatre – and probably in South African theatre as a whole – because of its sheer scope and epic proportions: it is 160 pages long and performance time is approximately five hours. The play covers 158 years of Afrikaner history (from the Great Trek in 1838 to 1996 – two years after the first democratic elections were held in South Africa). The ten episodes/scenes in this play highlight various important historical events that took place during this period (for instance, various wars with the Xhosa and Zulu, the Anglo-Boer War, the discovery of gold, the urbanisation of the Afrikaner, the rise of African nationalism, the new democratic dispensation in South Africa and the diaspora of the Afrikaner). Many of the more than 40 characters in *Donkerland*, are played by the same actors, where feasible. Opperman's use of many references (short stanzas from well-known Afrikaans poems, the Bible, a political speech by Jan Smuts, a literary essay by N P van Wyk Louw, as well as Afrikaans, English and African songs) creates a rich cultural texture of the period depicted.

The play has been performed at the Klein-Karoo Kunstefees (KKNK) in 1996, the Grahamstown National Arts Festival (1996) and at the Pretoria State Theatre. In 2006 Deon Opperman received the prestigious Hertzog prize for drama for five of his plays (including *Donkerland*). Most reviewers and commentators¹ have regarded the play as a *tour de force* – and an ambitious endeavour to comment on six generations of Afrikaner history. It has generally been interpreted as depicting the rise and fall of Afrikaner nationalism (Graver 1997: 56) and of conveying a rather pessimistic outlook for the Afrikaner's future in the “new” South Africa (Giliomee 2004: 25).

This article delineates the “self” and the “other” in the light of the above comments and interpretations of the play. This discussion is closely linked to Praeg's work (1992) – in particular, his focus on the construction of identity. According to him, the search for such

1 Johann Burger (1996: 15): “unikum in Afrikaans” (“a unique work in Afrikaans”); Marius Crous (1997: 4) “'n belangrike bydrae [...] tot ons beperkte dramakanon” (“an important contribution [...] to our limited drama canon”); Louw Odendaal (1998: 166): “magistrale werk” (“magisterial work”).

a construct comprises both the inclusion and exclusion of elements, while the process is always historical. This means that our interpretations of identity can never be complete or final, but that we learn from our “voorstellings, voorstellingswyses en die negatiewe uitwerking wat dit kan hê op die kwaliteit van menslike interaksie” (Praeg 1992: 4).² It is hoped that the following discussion of the “self” and “other” will illustrate what Praeg means with these words.

1. Identifying the ‘self’ in Opperman’s *Donkerland*

The play consists of two sections: section 1 (1838-1901) and section 2 (1929-1996). In the first scene one is introduced to Pieter de Witt, the patriarch of the De Witt family, whose wish to possess his own farm leads him to trek in 1838 from the Cape to Zululand to acquire his “own piece of land” – *Donkerland*. The close bond between Pieter de Witt, his descendants and the farm *Donkerland* is only broken in 1996 when the farm is repossessed by the state as part of a land restitution deal with the Zulus in that area.

The focus throughout the play is on either Pieter de Witt (section 1), or his male descendants, in particular his grandson and namesake, Klein-Piet (section 2). These men can be considered to represent the white Afrikaner male. The surname De Witt can be translated as “the white one”. The farm *Donkerland* can, of course, also be regarded as referring to the country at large. *Donker* can refer to the colour – “dark”. The farm’s name can thus be translated as the “dark country” and thus also ironically, in the context of the play, as the country of the blacks/Africans. *Donker* (darkness) could also carry the meaning of “uncertainty” or “gloominess” – playing on the uncertain position of the whites in this country.

The “self” in this play is thus the Afrikaner male represented first by the family’s patriarch, Pieter de Witt, and later by his male descendants.

2 “representations, ways of representing and the negative effect which these can have on the quality of human interaction” (own translation, MK).

How can one define the Afrikaner male of the period between 1838 and 1996 – a period which included both the rise of Afrikaner nationalism and its demise?

In a study entitled *Die selfen die ander*³ Praeg (1992) investigated Afrikaner identity by studying various texts produced between 1877 and 1948 in order to determine how this identity came into being and evolved during that period. He highlighted an important aspect which determines the identification of the “self”, namely the discovery of an “own” history, one with which the self can identify and in which the self can believe. Like most South African historians, Praeg believes that the Great Trek and the events at Slagtersnek (where six young Boers were hanged by the British), which preceded the Great Trek, for the first time mobilised a group of settlers to regard themselves as Afrikaners. The incident at Slagtersnek⁴ received special attention in the first Afrikaans/Afrikaner history book entitled *Die geskiedenis van ons land in die taal van ons volk*,⁵ written by S J du Toit in 1877. Praeg (1992: 51) quotes various well-known historians who regard this book and others written during this period as the birth of

... nie net van hierdie nasiebewustheid nie, maar ook van die Afrikaner se konsep van self – 'n self wat aan die hand van die konstruering van 'n 'eie' geskiedenis vir die eerste maal ontdek is.⁶

According to Praeg (1992: 55), Afrikaners traditionally regard the Great Trek as the defining moment in their history. A general feeling arose in Afrikaner minds that English historians rendered a biased version of this and other events such as the British annexation of the ZAR in 1877, and the First Boer War in 1881. Initially the Afrikaners had simply formed an ethnic group (mainly determined by a shared white identity) which was affirmed through their common involvement and experience of conflict with the Africans in the

3 “The self and the other”.

4 Also mentioned in the play by its historically correct name of Van Aardtspos (Opperman 1996: 12).

5 “The history of our country in the language of our nation”.

6 “... not only of an awareness of one’s own nation, but also of the Afrikaner’s concept of the self – a self which has for the first time been discovered through the means of construing an ‘own’ history” (own translation, MK).

interior. It is only with the establishment of the independence of the two republics (ZAR and Orange Free State) that they also developed a political identity and that one can speak of an Afrikaner “nationalism”. When the British annexations threatened their rights and freedoms as a nation, the Afrikaners united as a *volk* to fight the enemy in their midst. Some publications, such as *Di Patriot* – as mentioned in *Donkerland* (Opperman 1996: 46) – encouraged this feeling of unity and solidarity among the Afrikaners.

An important belief embedded in writings on the Great Trek was the idea of the Afrikaner *volk* as a “chosen people”. According to Praeg (1992: 63-4), the historical claim underlying this “myth” was an attempt by the Voortrekkers to answer their God-given instruction as a chosen nation to take the message of faith and civilisation into dark Africa. In the first scene of the play, Exodus 6: 7 is quoted, referring to the journey of the Israelites to Canaan (the promised land). The Afrikaners’ identification with this biblical event is obvious in the play (for instance, directly by this quote and the title of Scene 1 – “The road to Canaan” and more indirectly by Opperman’s use of poetry from S J du Toit/Totius – one of the exponents of this myth).

The idea that a message of faith and civilisation must be carried into dark Africa is also illustrated in Opperman’s play (for instance, the importance of the old High Dutch Bible within the De Witt family is a recurring motive in the play). The British ironically propagated the same belief: in the first scene Pieter de Witt meets an English missionary, who wants to bring the “Word of God” to the Zulus and who believes “that civilisation can be brought to all men, including the savages of this country” (Opperman 1996: 9). His granddaughter Anna’s English boyfriend, John Walsh, also defends British colonialism (prior to the start of the Anglo-Boer War), saying to Anna:

You speak as if the English are a band of marauding Vikings. Yes, England has colonised many countries, but in the process it has brought high culture and industry and railroads and dams and schools and [...] and [...] civilisation! (Opperman 1996: 56-7).

In his overview of four centuries of colonial and settler occupation in Africa (with a focus on the “scramble for Africa” which took place in the nineteenth century and the “white Africans” of Kenya, Rhodesia/

Zimbabwe and, in particular, South Africa) Gerald L'Ange (2005: 173) states that

for much of the 19th century European attitudes had been shaped largely by the 'three Cs' concept – the exporting to Africa of Christianity, commerce and civilisation in the interests of uplifting the indigenous population from barbarity. But when Europeans began to settle in Africa, upliftment became awkwardly entangled with exploitation, separatism and supremacy.

A certain moral philosophy was grounded both in the historical texts written by Afrikaner historians, and in the early Afrikaans literary works produced in the period during and after the Anglo-Boer War, namely the belief that “light should triumph over darkness, civilisation should overcome barbarity, and justice should prevail over injustice” (Praeg 1992: 75). In most of the ten scenes/episodes of Opperman's play direct references are given to the historical context of that scene. These scenes are not only clearly dated, but also often linked directly to some of the main events of the day – for example, the scenes which take place during the Anglo-Boer War: Scene 3 refers to the Battle at Majuba; Scene 4 (Opperman 1996: 63) to the battles at Talana, Elandsplaagte, Colenso, Spioenkop, Paardeberg, Magersfontein, and Scene 5 to the concentration camps and to how some Boers were sent into exile to St Helena. Opperman precedes each scene in the play with a short quote, mainly from well-known literary figures of that period, a technique which also evokes many associations within Afrikaner ranks. One of the literary figures who played a key role in the reconstruction of the Afrikaner volk after the Anglo-Boer War was S J du Toit (Totius). As a national poet (*volksdigter*) he not only expressed through his poetry the suffering and humiliation experienced by the Afrikaners during the Anglo-Boer War, but also tried to inspire them to rebuild their lives and the country after the war. Opperman uses an image from a well-known poem *Vergeewe en vergeet* by Du Toit, namely that of a little thorn tree being trampled by the wheel of a big *ossewa* (wagon) to illustrate the British power during the Anglo-Boer War. The little thorn tree eventually recovers (albeit slowly and with scars). In other words, the Afrikaner nation survived the onslaught of British imperialism. The “wheel of Africa” (title of the last scene) is, according to Opperman's

use of this image, too big – and the little thorn tree will finally be destroyed. In other words, Afrikaner nationalism will not survive the growing force of African nationalism.

Historians and many Afrikaans poets and writers continually mention the Afrikaners' deep bond with the land they occupy and believe is theirs. A recurring theme in the play (Opperman 1996: 57) is that this land has come with a price – the price of Afrikaner blood. This phrase is often uttered by the main male characters either to express their own deeply felt bond with the farm, *Donkerland*, or to impress upon those descendants who want to exchange the farm for the city the fact that their forefathers fought hard for this “little piece of land” (Opperman 1996: 93). According to Praeg (1992: 149), the farm is the space where every good Afrikaner feels “at home” – it is the space where a “real Afrikaner” can make contact with his ancestral tradition. The farm's main meaning is thus that of an epistemological source of truth regarding the self. Gerald L'Ange mentions in his closing remarks about the Afrikaners that they fought against all odds to retain “their” land, but that the numbers (black majority) were simply against them. In the conclusion of his book he summarises the Afrikaner's current position as follows:

The Afrikaner's search for own land and identity was essentially no different from that of many other ethnic groups in Africa who had done the same. The main differences were that they were white and that they made their effort relatively recently, which meant it was overtaken by events before it could be entrenched in territorial sovereignty (L'Ange 2005: 501).

The fear of “losing” their land to the black majority of the country is echoed in many of the literary references in the play – from the first quotation in the play from N P van Wyk Louw's *Lojale verset* (Die hele wording van 'n klein volk is 'n waagspel),⁷ through D J Opperman's *Negester en stedelig* (... maar onthou altyd / aan jou dade grens 'n ewigheid// ...) ⁸ and a quotation from *Klipwerk* by N P van Wyk Louw in Scene 9 (... hierdie grond was nie gekoop nie / sommer

7 “The whole coming into being of a small nation is a game of chance.” (own translation, MK).

8 “... but remember always / your actions are framed by eternity” (own translation, MK).

maar geleen),⁹ culminating in Deon Opperman's (1996: 3-7) use of a quotation from his own play in the final scene:

Die wiele van Afrika draai stadig ... stadig / maar so seker soos die
dood, en eendag ... / ééndag sal daar net 'n verbrokkelde stapeltjie
klippe oorbly / getuienis van 'n klein strepie mensdom, verlore in
die gras van Donkerland.¹⁰

Another important aspect that defines the Afrikaner self is the Afrikaans language (discussed by Giliomee 2003: 52-3, 372-9 & 2004: 25-58). This issue is directly highlighted in the play by the use of 14 references (mainly quotations from various well-known literary works as noted earlier) which often precede and thus introduce each of the ten scenes, as well as in the dialogue in which many references are made by various characters to the use and status of Afrikaans within the Afrikaner community.¹¹

It is impossible within the confines of this article to discuss extensively and exhaustively what Afrikaner nationalism entails and how it developed through subsequent generations. In her detailed reporting and analysis of the history of the National Party, Christi van der Westhuizen (2007: 12) regards the founding of the National Party in 1914 as representing “the beginning of the political organisation of Afrikaner nationalism”. She also highlights the role played by language (“Afrikaans was standardised and became a powerful ethnic and cultural mobiliser”), religion (“a deeply conservative variant of Calvinist religion formed an essential part of the ideology”), as well as history (“as did a mythologised history that turned the Afrikaners into ‘God’s chosen people’ and the Great Trek into the equivalent of the biblical exodus from Egypt to the ‘Promised Land’”). Her book also attests to the changing nature of this definition – of how subsequent generations interpreted and defined Afrikaner Nationalism: from the era of apartheid to that of democratic rule.

9 “... this land was not bought / merely borrowed” (own translation, MK).

10 “The wheels of Africa turn slowly ... slowly / but as certain as death, and one day ... / some day only a little pile of stones will remain / testimony of a small trail of humanity / lost in the grass of Donkerland” (own translation, MK).

11 This aspect is discussed in more detail in a paper read at the International Conference on the Humanities in Southern Africa, held at the University of Pretoria, 22-25 June 2008, entitled “Tale en lettere in Deon Opperman se *Donkerland*”.

2. The self versus the other in *Donkerland*

Between 1838 and 1996 the other can be said to be mainly defined as being the enemy of the Afrikaner. Depending on which historical period or event is being highlighted – either one of the African tribes or the British can be considered the Afrikaners' main antagonist during a particular period (for instance, the wars with the Xhosa/Zulus or the Anglo-Boer War).

Although the relationship between the British and the Boers in South Africa was often extremely antagonistic (culminating in the Anglo-Boer War), this relationship is not only characterised by opposition and differences, but also comprises certain shared beliefs and notions regarding the “racially other” (namely the indigenous blacks of South Africa). Melissa Steyn (2001: 26-7) describes these opposing, as well as shared beliefs as follows:

... while English and Afrikaans white South Africans have historically maintained ethnic distinctiveness (although this is now less pronounced), both groups have defined themselves primarily and more fundamentally in disassociation from the 'non white' racial groups. For example, similar epithets, such as the notion of perpetual child, have been applied historically by Boers and British alike to the indigenous population [...] Although the manner in which this paternalism played itself out in relation to the 'other' differed, the ideology of the patriarch bound them to Europe. On the other hand, the whole construction of 'home' was fundamentally different for these two groups and integral to their respective identifications with Africa.

In Scene 4 (“Vuur en bloed”) the respective attitudes of Anna (Pieter de Witt's granddaughter) and John Walsh, her English lover, regarding their allegiance to either South Africa or Britain is clearly conveyed. Walsh states openly that he is a “British subject first and foremost” (Opperman 1996: 58), although his family has been in South Africa for two generations, while Anna differs passionately from him: “Ons is lankal nie meer Hollanders of Duitsers of Franse nie. Ons is hier gebore, uit die stof van Afrika [...] As julle ons land vat, waar sal ons gaan?” (Opperman 1996: 57).¹²

The threat posed by the racially other in terms of racial purity was another important notion shared by both Afrikaans and English

white South Africans – and one which summons up a whole range of issues (“going native”, miscegenation, Immorality Act, and so on). According to Steyn (2001: 25):

the fear of being overrun, the fear of domination, the fear of losing the purity that was supposed to guarantee their superior position, the fear of cultural genocide through intermingling – these anxieties were always present [...] Whiteness in South Africa has always, at least in some part, been constellated around discourses of resistance against a constant threat; it was a bulwark against what at some level was sensed to be the inevitable.

The Afrikaner’s other can also be someone in his own midst, namely those Afrikaners who betray the so-called real Afrikaners. Pieter de Witt’s grandson, Klein-Piet, states bitterly that the Afrikaners could have won the war against the British if they had not been betrayed by the enemy within, namely the “hênsoppers en joiners” (Opperman 1996: 72). He also warns his two younger sons when they criticise his racist beliefs that one is either a “real” Afrikaner or an enemy of the Afrikaner (Opperman 1996: 93).

Throughout the history of the Afrikaner, opposing factions have existed within this group – often in bitter opposition to each other. These divisions are clearly mirrored in Pieter de Witt’s descendants. The Afrikaner male protagonist in section 2 of the play is Klein-Piet (Pieter de Witt’s grandson). Klein-Piet is portrayed as an extremely racist person – both in what he says (he refers throughout in this section to Africans as kaffirs, even once describing them as baboons [Opperman 1996: 104]) and in what he does (beating the black man). Although it is clear that Klein-Piet inherited his grandfather’s love for Donkerland, it is also apparent that he is much more racist in his beliefs and actions than his grandfather. Although Pieter de Witt determinedly pursued his dream of having his “own piece of land” where he could be the “baas” in his interactions with the black workers on his farm, he always respected their cultural beliefs and customs, even to the chagrin of his daughter-in-law and

12 “We have for some time now not been Dutch, or German or French. We have been born here, from the dust of Africa [...] If you take our country where will we go?” (own translation, MK).

son (Opperman 1996: 41). Klein-Piet's eldest son Ouboet is just as racist as his father, while the two younger brothers (Henk, who has left the farm for the city and Dirk, who also eventually leaves the farm after the death of a black man) are different and try to debate the issue with them. Anyone who disagrees with Klein-Piet and Ouboet is, however, immediately labelled a traitor – not only against the family, but more importantly against the Afrikaner *volk*. According to Klein-Piet, there are only two types of Afrikaners (“patriotte en joiners”, Opperman 1996: 93). Although some criticism (Botha 1996: 15) has been levelled against Opperman that his portrayal of the Afrikaner (male) is too critical and biased, it is clear from the play that he did try to portray various “types” of Afrikaners (from the politically conservative to the extreme racist and chauvinistic, as well as the more liberal and open-minded ones).

The dominance of the Afrikaner male in Afrikaner society is, however, depicted in no uncertain terms in this play. The Afrikaner woman/wife or daughter can thus also be regarded as an other. The Afrikaner male is considered to be the head of the Afrikaner family – the one making the decisions and the one who has to be obeyed. The chauvinism of the Afrikaner male defines him to a larger or lesser extent. Although Pieter de Witt, for example, is more sensitive to socio-cultural issues than some of his descendants, he is still the one giving the orders on his farm and in the homestead, and the one who makes all the decisions. After the death of his first wife, it is simply stated that he married again (“took a wife”, Opperman 1996: 34). Her name is, however, not given – only the fact that she bore him three children – of whom only one, a son, survived. His grandson Klein-Piet is much more explicitly chauvinistic. For example, he orders his wife to go inside the house when a constable arrives on the farm wanting to interrogate Klein-Piet's sons for the murder of a black man. When his wife wants to stay and listen to the charge, he sends her away with the words: “Dis nie ’n vrou se ding hierdie nie” (Opperman 1996: 106).¹³

13 “These are not women matters” (own translation, MK).

During the period portrayed, the black woman, in particular, is also regarded as an other by the Afrikaner male. Although the play focuses mainly on the Afrikaners and their history, it also portrays the fact that their lives are deeply intertwined with those of the Africans of this country. In the first scene one is introduced quite dramatically to another main character (a black girl, later named Meidjie by Pieter). Her presence in Pieter's life till his death, as well as the presence of her descendants in the lives of his descendants, continuously forms part of and is interlinked with the lives of the white family on this piece of land. While Pieter de Witt is portrayed as the patriarch of the white De Witt family, Meidjie is depicted as the matriarch of the black family who lives and works on *Donkerland*. Her descendants also take part in the historical events that occur during these 158 years – sometimes fighting together with the Afrikaners (in the Anglo-Boer War, for instance), but, with the rise of African nationalism, increasingly opposing Afrikaner *baasskap*.

It is clear that a certain ambiguity surrounds the relationship between Pieter and Meidjie. He saves her life in a dramatic manner in the first scene by shooting the young Xhosa man who wants to kill her, and afterwards having sex with her. When John Walsh expresses his shock at this deed, Pieter defends his action by declaring to John Walsh that he has certain “needs” that must be fulfilled (Opperman 1996: 19). Meidjie accompanies him on his journey to find the farm that he has wanted for so long and is always part of his life until the Anglo-Boer War, when Pieter is caught by the British and sent away in exile. At the end of Scene 1 the narrator declares that, although Pieter took a wife (Magriet – his first wife), Meidjie “was always there – in the shadows” (Opperman 1996: 20). A certain intimacy characterises their relationship throughout the years – like those of an old married couple. Pieter, for example, often complains that he should have left Meidjie at Umzimkulu when she does not react quickly enough to his demands (Opperman 1996: 39). Even his son and daughter-in-law complain that he seems to have a special regard for her (Opperman 1996: 41). After the news of his death in exile reaches Meidjie, she dies three weeks later – with Pieter gone it was “as if life had also left her” (Opperman 1996: 84).

Two other incidents occur in the play where sexual activities take place between the white Afrikaner male and a black indigenous woman – the last one with very dramatic consequences for the De Witt family. Klein-Piet's son, Ouboet, kills the baby born from the sexual relations between his brother Arnold and Nomthandazo, one of Meidjie's descendants, and is himself killed after this incident. These actions lead directly to the end of the De Witt bloodline. Arnold never marries and when *Donkerland* is repossessed by the state he is unable to fight the decision and will thus have to leave the farm. Cecily Lockett's (1988: 21) description of how the black woman is portrayed in South African English literature can also be applied to Opperman's play:

... black women, together with black men, are the 'other', yet their sex alienates them still further from those who write of them. As a result the black woman emerges as a being with two separate identities: like her white sisters she is either an angel or a demon, but the added racial complexities of miscegenation produce sexual taboos, and the stereotype evolves further into what may be termed either an untouchable or an unattainable.

3. Conclusion

The life of an Afrikaner patriarch, Pieter de Witt, and those of his descendants are depicted on the farm *Donkerland* for six generations – the period during which Afrikaner nationalism rose and declined in South Africa. The first person to be part of Pieter de Witt's life on *Donkerland* is a black woman – named Meidjie by Pieter – who is the matriarch of the black family whose descendants' lives are also interlinked with those of their white counterparts during this period. In a parallel movement, the decline of Afrikaner nationalism in South Africa is juxtaposed by a concurrent rise of African nationalism in this country – a movement mirrored in the micro-cosmos of the inhabitants of *Donkerland*. Although Meidjie has stood in "the shadows" after meeting Pieter and remained there until his death, her descendants have moved out of the shadows and as from 1996 will be the new owners of this farm.

Although Opperman's *Donkerland* seems to end on a pessimistic note for the Afrikaner – or more specifically for the Afrikaner nationalist – Opperman is still interested in the future destiny of the Afrikaner nation. He produced a new play, *Kaburu* for Aardklop (2007), wrote a new television series, *Kruispad/Crossroad* (2008) and a musical, *Ons vir jou/We for you*, performed in September 2008 in the Pretoria State Theatre, in which he again focuses on the Afrikaner – but this time from a perspective which investigates how the Afrikaner is experiencing the “new” South Africa and how Afrikaner identity can be retained or reinterpreted within a different dispensation.

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