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The campus novel: An intercultural comparison

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Hiermit bestätige ich diese Arbeit nach bestem Wissen und Gewissen selbständig verfasst und die Regeln der wissenschaftlichen Praxis eingehalten zu haben.

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1 Introduction

The topic of this diploma thesis is the cultural comparison of three campus novels from three different continents: David Lodge: *Changing Places – A Tale of two Campuses* (hereafter *CP*), Randall Jarrell: *Pictures from an Institution – A Comedy* (hereafter *Pictures*) and Nicholas Mhlongo: *Dog Eat Dog* (hereafter *Dog*). The main characters in these novels are either professors, or, in the case of *Dog*, students, and the plot is situated around the campus of a university. The analysis will be established on two different levels:

1) A historical and cultural analysis of the development of the campus novel. What kind of historical and cultural factors did influence the foundation and development of this genre? Why are there enormous literary differences within one genre? In what way is the African campus novel different from the English one and why did the author choose this particular genre to discuss the issue of apartheid in South Africa?

2) A detailed analysis of the concept of culture, identity and ethnicity. How does an “outsider” examine cultural peculiarities of another culture and is there a possibility to integrate oneself into a new cultural background? Can racism be regarded to have influence on the concept of culture and what kind of conflicts can emerge from cultural differences?

A theoretical approach to this topic is important and necessary to understand what a campus novel or academic novel is and in what way Lodge, Jarrell and Mhlongo elaborate cultural differences. Chapter 2 provides a definition of the academic novel as well as historical, social and cultural information of the literary genre. The first English novel about university life is said to be John Gibson Lockhart's *Reginald Dalton: A Story of English University Life*, published in 1823.¹ This first campus novel is in many ways different from the campus novels of the late 19th and 20th century. Historical, political, social, and cultural innovations led to a transformation of the university novel as a literary

¹ Cf. Proctor vii.

genre.² The first American novel about university life is Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Fanshawe* with its publication in 1828.³ The formation of this new type of literature in England and in America took place in the same century and even in the same decade, although the reasons for the formation were different ones because of different cultural circumstances. It is also striking that the first African campus novel by Nicholas Mhlongo was not published until 2004. In general, the theoretical and literary background of the campus novels from three different continents and cultures will lead us to a closer analysis of the intercultural conditions of the content of the novels; how do the protagonists experience their own culture and cultural differences. Chapter 3 discusses the vast subject area of cultural studies with the main focus on cultural identity, cultural differences, and intercultural comparison, taking into consideration also ethnicity as an important component in *Dog*. A consolidation of the theoretical chapters 2 and 3 will then lead us to the actual intercultural comparison within the given novels and will be discussed in chapter 5.

Chapter 4 will provide biographical information on the authors, their lives and their writing. It will give us a better understanding of the purpose and the artistic intention they want to express with their writing (as these literary works can be analysed from various literary viewpoints) and answer the question if culture and cultural comparison are intended topics in the novels. This chapter will also be the starting point for the discussion that follows in chapter 5. Beginning with a short summary of the novels, it will then lead us to the actual analysis the content of the novels in the given context. The conclusion in chapter 6 will then summarise and discuss the outcome of this diploma thesis.

² Cf. Rossen, 6.

³ Cf. Lyons, 5.

2 The genre of the campus novel

The campus novel or academic novel is 'a small but recognizable subgenre of contemporary fiction and has a small body of criticism devoted to it' (Showalter, 2). It has developed differently, depending on the cultural background of the corresponding country. This means that the campus novel, as a new genre, emerged from different reasons in Europe (in this case, England), in America or anywhere else in the world. Rossen (6) says that '[...] various influences – whether cultural, political, aesthetic or personal – tangle together within any given novel, and especially within the field of University fiction as a whole.' Therefore, there are a number of definitions of what a campus novel is. The next chapter will provide a general one (derived from already existing ones) and explain the most important characteristics that are valid for this very popular genre, which will then be the basis of the actual interpretative part of this diploma thesis.

2.1 Definition of the campus novel

The English university novels which appeared in such numbers in the nineteenth century offer a problem not common to better known Victorian fiction. Inasmuch as they deal with Oxford and Cambridge they are concerned with the peculiarities of life within two exclusive and inbred communities, and they constitute a narrowly specialized body of literature built around codes of behaviour and thought which at times appear artificial to the outside world. (Proctor, 11)

This definition of the English campus novel of the 19th century shows that the genre was only concerned with university life at the two most important universities of that time, Oxford and Cambridge. Over the years, up to the present, it has undergone several changes, as a result of e.g. educational reform movements, the admission of women to universities, etc.⁴ According to Womack (326), 'During this era, Oxford and Cambridge witnessed a significant decline in the hegemony of their influence upon English society and culture'.

⁴ Cf. Womack, 326.

The influence of “Oxbridge” on the English culture is beyond doubt, but the foundation of new “redbrick” universities and the admission of students from lower social classes to the universities have had a great influence as well. This new kind of campus novel has a specific function:

In short, contemporary academic novels, by postulating a kind of anti-ethos in their narratives, ultimately seek to enhance the culture and sustain the community through a more ethically driven system of higher education. (Womack, 329)

American campus novels have their origin in the 19th century as well, and deal with the same topics (professors and students and their daily lives at the academy); the transformation of the genre took place because the 19th century was ‘an intense era of social change and industrial growth that destabilized the prodigious cultural influences of privileged institutions of higher learning [...]’ (Womack, 327); similar to the development in England. But not only social and educational changes defined the campus novel. Lyons (XVIII) says that

[t]he novel of academic life is not only the product of reasoned convictions or prejudices about educational philosophy, but it is often the product of the spleen of disgruntled professors or students.

The personal experiences of “academic people” that were processed in these novels define(d) the genre as well. Elaine Showalter found a contemporary definition that is valid for every campus novel, no matter if it was written in the 19th, 20th or 21st century:

The best academic novels experiment and play with the genre of fiction itself, comment on contemporary issues, satirize professorial stereotypes and educational trends, and convey the pain of intellectuals called upon to measure themselves against each other and against their internalized expectations of brilliance. (Showalter, 5)

Janice Rossen says that

[a] primary issue which these novels engage is the interplay between fiction and fact: we assume University novels to be realistic because they are based on an actual institution, often enough on a real University in a real place. (Rossen, 1)

This is also one of the main reasons why academic novels are so popular; they describe a realistic institution (=real life) and people, primarily students and professors, can identify with certain characters and find similarities between their own lives and the lives of the fictional characters.

Wolfgang Weiss defines the academic novel as follows:

Da der Universitätsroman sich jeweils explizit auf die Institution Universität in der gesellschaftlichen Wirklichkeit bezieht, ist sein wichtigstes konstitutives Merkmal, daß wesentliche Züge dieser Institution, sei es in realistischer Mimesis, die bis zur exakten Beschreibung einer realen Universität gehen kann, sei es in stilisierender, modellhafter Darstellung einschließlich karikaturistischer Übertreibung oder satirischer Verzerrung in den fiktionalen Gesamtentwurf der Handlungswelt des Romans eingebracht werden. (Weiss, 20)

In general we can say that a campus novel narrates a story that is situated in or around a university, whereas the main characters are professors (academic staff) or students. The plots of such novels can be totally different and have various functions. The criticism of the real world outside the university walls (as in *Dog*), the struggle between the values of the academy and values of industry and business and its usefulness for the society in general (as in *Nice Work* by David Lodge), the description of sexual harassment (as in *Der Campus* by Dietrich Schwanitz), etc.

Apart from all the different plots of university novels, they 'have always had to a large extent the quality of the documentary about them' (Proctor, 187).

2.2 Features of the campus novel

The following sub-chapters will provide further information on the academic novel (apart from a definition) and will explain the most important features that are always valid for this genre.

2.2.1 Satire in the campus novel

One of the main features of the campus novel is its satiric style. The plots are extremely funny and the purpose of the satire as a literary genre is a critique of human follies and the inability of humankind to deal with any kind of problems or dilemmas. It is important to mention, that academic novels do not provide solutions to these problems; they address difficulties without giving advice how to solve them.⁵ The readers of campus novels also play a decisive role in reference to satire:

[...] a work is not a satire – or at least is not a successful satire – if the people being satirised do not feel themselves as the targets of satiric attack. (Bevan, 124)

The campus novel also plays with other comical elements, as for example irony and parody, to “defamiliarise” and ridicule academic and social life⁶, but they can also be very sad and serious and express extreme hopelessness.⁷ One reason could be the fact that inside the university walls, life seems to be uncomplicated and protected from dangers of the outside world; but as soon as the protagonists leave the campus, they find themselves in an unsafe environment.

2.2.2 The campus as a closed society

According to Connor (in Showalter, 4), ‘The university is a closed world, with its own norms and values [...]’. It has its own laws, structures and routines. The campus is an image of the real world, but it is of course smaller and also elementary. Everything that happens inside the campus walls is a metaphor for actual incidents in the real, outside world and there is a relationship between them. This means that criticism of something inside the university stands for criticism of something in the daily lives of the people.

⁵ Cf. Womack, 328.

⁶ Cf. Bevan, 124-127.

⁷ Cf. Showalter, 3.

The university as an institution and a setting for a novel has the power to criticise society because it is seen as higher and reliable source of knowledge.⁸

But the campus novel is not only used as a criticism of humankind. Sometimes authors, ideas, books, trains of thoughts etc. are criticised. David Lodge for example uses the two main characters of his book *Changing Places* to review current ideas of literary criticism (see chapter 4.1.2).

2.2.3 Life inside and outside the campus

In every campus novel that has been written so far, the world outside (the university walls) is compared with the world inside. The campus can be a place of refuge not only for students but also professors who can escape from their problems in the real world/universe. The campus becomes a pastoral place that is separated from the threats outside not only by walls, but also by the fact that it is a world on its own.⁹ Problems that concern the social and psychological life of the academic are not uncommon:

[...] the academic who wants to do something out in the world (in order to refute the charge of escapism, irresponsibility and withdrawal into the Ivory Tower) is faced with the dilemma of having to deny a fundamental aspect of his or her profession order to do this. (Rossen, 5)

By enrolling at the university one officially gets permission and access to a secure microcosm within the real world. This “artificial” world prepares the student for life after university, but there is no defined border between “artificial” and real life; the transitions are seamless and smooth because one world cannot exist without the other and because they are in close contact.

2.2.4 The concept of time in the campus novel

⁸ Cf. Rossen, 11 and Womack, 329.

⁹ Cf. Robbins, 251.

Academic time is an important characteristic of the academic novel. In general, time is divided into seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years, etc. This is also true for the academic novel, although inside the university there is another schedule of time: it is divided into lectures, office hours, research studies, conferences, learning and leisure time, etc. The year is divided into terms, which can be of different length, depending on where the novel's action is set. According to some literary critics, academic life is also said to be divided into four parts, according to the four seasons. Others say that the academic year is divided into three or even into seven-year parts.¹⁰ Apart from the different perspectives of literary critics towards the division of the academic year they all agree on one issue: although time goes by constantly, there are no changes in academic life. Robbins (253) suggests, that 'the university's imperturbable rhythm of terms and seasons suggests that within its walls nothing really changes'.

When one term is over the academic life starts anew. The academic lives of professors and students consist of general repetitions with small changes. The university, the faculty and daily life remain the same. Things that change are lectures, professors, timetables, etc., but although we have this kind of repetitions, life never gets boring and there are new issues and problems to solve. This is the case in Jarrell's novel *Pictures from an Institution*, as we can see at the end of the novel (see chapter 4.2.2).

2.2.5 Hierarchies inside the campus

Inside the university there are certain hierarchical structures that can have a great influence on the plot of a campus novel. The dean of a faculty is in a higher position than the staff members (professors) and they are of course superior to the students. Secretaries are in a position between the professors and the students: they do not necessarily have to have an academic title, but as they are members of the university staff, they have more power than the students. These hierarchies can lead to struggles for power:

¹⁰ Cf. Showalter, 9-16.

Like their counterparts in any other profession, academics delight in reinforcing this view of themselves as comprising circles which are closed to the uninitiated. They tend to compete with each other within that realm for positions of power. Academic fiction almost always takes this competitiveness as part of its basis, showing its character's ambitions to gain more stature within the profession and often dramatizing this in terms of professional rivalry. (Rossen, 4)

The story of a campus novel is normally set up by a problem that the protagonist has to solve. This means that the faculty and the students are in close contact. As a result it is possible to take a closer look at those relations and hierarchies. Problems and tensions between professors and students and struggles for power between members of staff are often described in academic novels, etc. Dietrich Schwanitz – *Der Campus* or David Lodge – *Changing Places* and *Small World*.

2.2.6 The campus novel as an upward mobility story

Campus novels can also be examined from a political and sociological point of view:

The genre's political and historical vision makes sense, that is, only if we consider (1) the academic novel as a displaced or disguised version of the upward mobility story and (2) the university as a figure for the welfare state in general, which has become the frame in which the ambiguities of upward mobility are played out. (Robbins, 257)

The rise in the career of a student or the promotion of a professor is a metaphor for the general desire of better conditions for the whole society. An interesting field for the analysis of the academic novel is the struggle between the university and industry/business. Is the university (here: the study of the humanities, in contrast to economy or technical studies) in the position to generate outcomes and benefits that are beneficial for everybody? This is one of the main questions that arises when one reads the novel *Nice Work* by David Lodge. What can the university do for the common good of society?

2.2.7 Gender-, class- and race conflicts in the campus novel

With the admission of women to the universities, new plots evolved in the campus novels. Gender and sexuality became topics that can be found in a number of novels. Sexuality is a topic in nearly all of the contemporary academic novels. On the one hand it is used very generously to show the liberation from a prudish society, but on the other hand it is also used to describe the unfair inequality of women to men, depending on the time when the novel was written.

Class and race conflicts are included in these new storylines of campus novels.

By the time we get to the novels of sexual harassment, the conflicts—over sexuality and race—could be said to be central and profound, but the academic novelists satirize the way the university community deals with them as quirky, pedantic, vengeful, legalistic, and inhumane. (Showalter, 146)

2.2.8 The campus novel as a thought-provoking impulse

As we have heard before, a campus novel can also be very serious. The authors of campus novels may address issues directly or indirectly with a certain intention: to provoke and force the reader to think about what is going in the real world (outside the university) and to call attention to certain problems. This is clearly the case in Mhlongo's novel *Dog*, in which the author tries to draw attention to the problems of the population in South Africa.

3 Cultural studies

In the previous chapter we have seen that social, political, educational, economic, individual and aesthetic factors have contributed to a great extent to the formation of the campus novel in English, American and African literature. All these factors can be summed up under the concept of culture. But what exactly is meant when we talk about culture? First of all, we have to find a definition of the term and its meaning to be able to understand how we can compare the aspects of different cultures. All the concepts that are described in the following chapters (3.1-3.4) are then summarised under the term culture.

In this diploma thesis the terms cultural studies or intercultural comparison combine the concepts of culture, identity and ethnicity/race because they are closely connected with each other and should be understood as one concept (= culture in general).

3.1 The concept of culture

It is very difficult to find an explicit definition of the term culture because culture is changing its meaning constantly. It is part of a social background and as societies are in constant change, also the concept of culture is never clearly defined; definitions are changed and refined.¹¹ Raymond Williams describes the concept in these terms:

Culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language. This is so partly because of intricate historical development, in several European languages, but mainly because it has now come to be used for important concepts in several distinct intellectual disciplines and in several distinct and incompatible systems of thought. (Williams 1983, 87)

¹¹ Cf. Giles and Middleton, 9.

To find an approach to the concept of culture and to get an idea how we can understand culture we have to take a look at the development of the term from a historical point of view.

3.1.1 Definition and historical development of the term culture

The English word culture derives from the Latin word “cultura” and originally had a lot of different meanings, one of them being “to cultivate”. It has always been and is still used to refer to something that is in progress and in further development. In the 15th century the term culture entered the English language through French. It still had the meaning of cultivation or basically the bringing up or tending of animals or crops, therefore being a word that was used primarily in the sector of agriculture. From the 16th century onwards, the term was not only used in the special field of agriculture, but its meaning was taken over to refer to the growth and progress of humans seen as individuals and as a society. During the 18th century the word culture became an independent noun that referred to ‘an abstract process or the product of such a process’ (Williams 1983, 88). At that time, the term culture was used having the meaning of the word civilisation, deriving from the word “Kultur” that came into German through French. Still in the 18th century and during the age of enlightenment the term culture was adopted and referred to ‘a description of the secular process of human development’ (Williams 1983, 89). It was then also possible to use the word culture to refer to different nations and periods and also to relate to different cultures within one nation. In general we can say that the meaning of the abstract concept of the word culture entered the English language through the German word “Kultur”. In cultural studies and also in history, the word culture is used not only to refer to the production of material, but also to signifying and symbolic systems.¹²

In the 19th century Matthew Arnold (in Giles and Middleton, 12-13) described culture as ‘the best that has been thought and known’. According to him, culture has two different aspects: ‘high’ culture in contrast to ‘popular’ or ‘mass’

¹² Cf. Williams 1983, 87-93.

culture. He defined 'high' culture as art, theatre, music, paintings, museums, literature, etc. Interpretations of Arnold's point of view on culture can be found on two opposing sides: Giles and Middleton think that 'high' culture is not only made for a certain kind of intellectual group or a higher social class, but that culture should be accessible for everybody. According to them, this is Arnold's idea of culture, whereas other authors see this discussion from a different perspective.¹³

Arnold's thesis on culture and civilisation was the starting point for the discussion about mass culture in the 1920s and 1930s. The new media (television, radio, magazines, etc.) became an important instrument of the diffusion of culture to a wider range of people. Cultural critics of that time suspected that this concept of mass media and mass culture could lead to an 'inferior and debased form of culture' (Leavis in Giles and Middleton, 15). American cultural critics thought that mass culture could be a threat to American ideologies and lead to a degeneration of cultural values and beliefs.¹⁴

In the 1950s the American critic Dwight Macdonald went one step further and made a distinction between the concepts of mass culture and "folk art". According to him folk art is shaped by 'a group of individuals linked to each other by common interest, work, traditions, values and sentiments' (Macdonald, 60). Little Italy in New York, seen as a suburban district in which Italian immigrants live together according to their original way of living and celebrate their cultural background and traditions, is an example for folk art.

Mass culture on the other hand is not created by a community of people, who share the same values and beliefs, but is imposed from a higher authority and is imposed on the population of a country, city, etc. Macdonald defines mass culture as 'a large quantity of people unable to express themselves as human beings because they are related to one another neither as individuals nor as members of communities' (Macdonald, 60). A football match is an example for

¹³ Cf. Giles and Middleton, 12-13.

¹⁴ Cf. Giles and Middleton, 15.

mass culture as its viewers do not belong to one and the same community (difference to folk art), but different folk cultures come together to watch a football match.

When Macdonald's essay on mass culture was published in 1957, Richard Hoggart published an essay on the destruction of the urban working class culture by mass culture.¹⁵ On the basis of Arnold's and Macdonald's assumptions he tried to find a new definition of the term culture in a broader sense. According to him, 'culture is not simply the best that has been thought and known, but all those activities, practises, artistic and intellectual processes and products that go to make up the culture of a specific group at a particular time' (Giles and Middleton, 18). He was the first to add the concept of time in his definition of culture which became an important part in the definitions of culture that followed.

In the 20th century Raymond Williams defined three categories to describe the concept of culture which are still valid in today's cultural studies:

1. [...] a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development, [...]
2. [...] a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period, a group or humanity in general, [...]
3. [...] the works and practises of intellectual and especially artistic activity. (Williams 1983, 90)

In *The Long Revolution*, published in 1961, Williams explains how these three concepts of culture are connected with each other:

[...] a 'social' definition of culture, in which culture is a description of a particular way of life, which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour. The analysis of culture, from such a definition, is the clarification of the meanings and values implicit and explicit in a particular way of life, a particular culture. (Williams 1961, 57)

The signification of each of the three categories refers to different cultural aspects. The first definition refers to fine arts and visual arts, artists,

¹⁵ Cf. Giles and Middleton, 16.

musicians, philosophers, writers, etc. that contributed to a great extent to the cultural heritage of humankind. The second definition describes a particular way of life and refers to daily routines as well as to rituals and traditions: to learn how to behave appropriately in different situations (within the family, at school, in the street, in shops or supermarkets, etc). It also refers to going to church on Sunday or to express one's condolences at a funeral. It simply means to live culture in everyday life. The last definition is very similar to the first one, but it does not only define what high art is, but also signifies to deal with and explore high culture as for example going to the opera, the cinema, or reading cultural texts of any form (novels, poetry, etc.).

According to Williams culture always expresses meanings, beliefs and values which are shared by one community.¹⁶ If different cultural groups want to communicate with, and understand each other, they need certain shared assumptions. Depending on the cultural background, different meanings can be ascribed to abstract cultural concepts and imply misconceptions between members of different cultural groups. These meanings, values and beliefs do not only change from one culture to another, but also from one generation to the next. Older generations behave differently in certain situations and even their speech behaviour is different from the one of younger generations and vice versa.¹⁷ The fact that values and meanings change over time is also an argument that culture is no fixed and stable concept, but that it is flexible.

In order to express meanings, ideas, beliefs and values we need a certain kind of media and this media is language, as language is the basis of any form of communication. Giles and Middleton went one step further and found a more developed interpretation/definition of culture in respect to the one by Williams:

[...] rather than seeing culture (meanings, beliefs, language) as a reflection of economic and social conditions, which Williams tends to do, these have stressed the way in which culture itself creates, constructs and constitutes social relations (such as those between men and women, children and parents) and economic relations (for example, those

¹⁶ Cf. Williams 1961, 57.

¹⁷ Cf. Williams 1961, 42-48.

between business and the arts or between industry and environmentalism). (Giles and Middleton, 24)

Culture is everywhere! It can be found everywhere and is part of our everyday life and influences our behaviour, ideas and beliefs as well as our human behaviour influences culture. As Williams has pointed out 'culture is one of the [...] most complicated words [...]' (Williams, 1983, 87). Culture consists of visible and invisible elements that create meanings and values for a particular cultural group that consist of individuals. These individuals have got multilayered identities. This signifies that within one culture identities can be, for example, the role within the family (father, mother, child, etc.), the role at school (teacher, pupil), the role within society as part of the working class, church, etc. Individuals can be part of one or more of these so called institutions where different identities are consciously or unconsciously adopted by the individual.¹⁸

3.2 The concept of identity

In the previous chapter we have seen how the term culture developed from a historical point of view and what we understand under the concept of culture. Now we are going to analyse the concept of identity.

Culture and society are closely connected with each other because similarities and differences within and between societies always define a certain cultural background. Within this cultural background, individuals adopt identities and define themselves through social and cultural contexts.¹⁹

We can use different categories to describe aspects of identity:

- sex, age, occupation, ethnicity, sexual orientation (social);
- hair colour, skin colour, eye colour, bodyshape, physical disabilities, height, kind of clothes worn (physical appearance);

¹⁸ Cf. Lewis, 30.

¹⁹ Cf. Giles and Middleton, 30.

- lively, quiet, shy, concerned for others, morose, a loner, gregarious (personality);
- Irish, Chinese, American, Nigerian (nationality);
- Catholic, Jewish, Muslim (religion);
- mother, father, daughter, son, niece, grandfather (family relationships);
- barman, waitress, postman, student, teacher, architect (occupation);
- interested in music, a film goer, football-mad, politically committed (cultural). (Giles and Middleton, 31)

These categories are not clear-cut and the transitions are seamless.²⁰ Skin colour as a factor that describes ethnicity can also be a marker of social identity. Sex may not only be a social factor, but may also be important as a marker of cultural identity when we talk about political commitment (feminism).

Individuals can define themselves according to these categories of identity (that are part of a cultural community). Humanism, as the basis of individualism, is everybody's right to be and to express the uniqueness of ones personality. Arnold goes one step further and says that '[...] education and culture were the keys which would unlock individual potential and that such opportunities should be open to all [...]' (in Giles and Middleton, 32). We are not only formed by external factors, but we are individuals with our own feelings, ideas and attitudes.²¹

All of these external and internal factors characterise individuals, and in order to analyse the concept of identification and identity, we have to distinguish between an essentialist and a non-essentialist understanding of the term.

3.2.1 Essentialism – Non-essentialism

“Essentialist” means that identity is fixed and describes a number of stable and unchanging characteristics that can be ascribed to a certain kind of cultural group. This means, for example, that Europeans and Africans each have a set of characteristics that do not change in the course of time. From a non-

²⁰ Cf. Giles and Middleton, 31.

²¹ Cf. Giles and Middleton, 31-32.

essentialist perspective, on the other hand, the question emerges if a stable and fixed identity that is valid for one cultural group is possible at all. Is a fourth-generation South African man who lives in America, South African, or is he American?²² This problem emerges when we talk about identity from an essentialist point of view.

3.2.2 Identification and identity

The concept of identity, like the concept of culture, is very complex and therefore difficult to explain. The development of individuals (e.g. when they grow older or more mature) and the identity of one individual underlies a constant change. To explain the complex term 'identity', a short definition of identification by Stuart Hall, is necessary:

[...] identification is constructed on the back of a recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group, or with an ideal, and with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance established on this foundation. (Hall 1996, 2)

Identification therefore is the process of finding one's identity by integrating oneself into different kind of categories (see: Giles and Middleton, 31). In this sense, identification is never completed. It is a process that constantly changes the identity of an individual and is therefore difficult to explain. Furthermore it is not only a process of defining oneself, but also of defining "the other" or in other words, of defining "difference".²³ Identities are constructed by analysing opposing concepts of different identities; us/them, self/other, familiar/unfamiliar, etc. Difference is created through the comparison of one's own identity and the "other" identity by analysing the different systems of representation that create meaning and an exclusion from a particular cultural group. Woodward defines difference as 'what marks out one identity from another and establishes distinctions, often in the form of oppositions [...] (Woodward, 30). The concept of difference can have positive and negative effects: on the one hand 'it can be elaborated as a source of

²² Cf. Giles and Middleton, 36.

²³ Cf. Hall, 2-3.

diversity, heterogeneity and hybridity' and seen as an enrichment of cultural diversity. On the other hand it 'can be construed negatively as the exclusion and marginalisation of those who are defined as "other" or as outsiders' (Woodward, 35). This lack of understanding of cultural differences may lead to prejudices as far as identity is concerned (religion, nationality, etc). By defining the "self" and the "other", one of those two concepts always lacks one of the features of the other and is said to be weaker.

These power relations become obvious when it comes to the discussion of the self and the other, but also when we talk about the struggle of the multiple identities of an individual.²⁴ In one culture an individual has got a number of certain identities that they can adopt depending on the situation they find themselves in. E.g. in the case of the novel *Dog* the protagonist may identify himself as a student, as the lover of a South African girl, as a native South African, as a human being that has been and still is discriminated against by the "white" population, as a member of a new generation after the fall of apartheid, etc. According to Woodward (23) 'the complexity of modern life requires us to assume different identities – but these different identities may conflict'. In the novel *Dog* social and therefore also cultural changes may lead to a "crisis of identity". In this connection, ethnicity and race also play an important role in the discussion about cultural identity and migration. Migration has

[...] an impact on both the countries of origin and on the country of destination. [...] Migration produces plural identities, but also contested identities, in a process which is characterized by inequalities. (Woodward, 16)

A more detailed discussion of this topic will be given in chapter 3.3.

Besides the number of different identities that an individual might adopt and that may lead to a "confusion" of identity, globalisation is one of the main reasons for the so called crisis of identity.

²⁴ Cf. Woodward, 15.

Globalization [...] produces different outcomes for identity. The cultural homogeneity promoted by global marketing could lead to the detachment of identity from community and place. (Woodward, 16)

On the other hand it could also strengthen the affiliation of members of a certain kind of community.²⁵ In general we can say that globalisation will lead to a blending of cultural situations and cultural identities.

Hall defines identity from a non-essentialist point of view because, like identification, it is influenced by constant change.²⁶ According to Hall (3-4)

the concept of identity does not signal [the] stable core of the self [...] without change; [...] Identities are never unified; [...] never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions. [...] are constantly in the process of change and transformation. [...] identities are about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being [...]. Identities are therefore constituted within, not outside representation.

Identity and culture are two concepts that are closely connected with each other and belong together. The multiple and changing identities construct a framework of representation, self-perception and perception of the other/difference and within this framework or system, meanings and values are produced that define our position as individual subjects and therefore as individuals. The culture or cultural group that we belong to provides sources that establish 'individual and collective identities' (Woodward, 14). Identities are not only constructed via finding similarities and identical factors, but also via 'marking of difference and exclusion' (Hall, 4). Furthermore, cultural identity is not only a description of who/what we are, but also a description of who/what we might become.²⁷

In the case of Niq Mhlongo's novel it is of major importance to mention the concept of "narrating identity" or autobiographical writing. Autobiography is '[...] generally understood as the written account of an individual's life'. (Giles

²⁵ Cf. Woodward, 16.

²⁶ Cf. Hall, 3.

²⁷ Cf. Woodward, 21-22.

and Middleton, 51). It therefore creates cultural identities of one's individual life and analyses these specific identities before a cultural background (see chapters 4.3.2 and 5).

To give a final definition of the concept, identities are always multiple and in a constant change because the individual as well as the social/cultural framework is in transformation as well. They may also contradict each other, as identification always signifies an exclusion of attitudes, beliefs and ideas that are different. Hall describes identity as

[...] the meeting point, the point of *suture*, between on the one hand the discourses and practices which attempt to 'interpellate', speak to us or hail us into place as the social subjects of particular discourses, and on the other hand, the processes which produce subjectivities, which construct us as subjects which can be spoken. Identities are thus points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us. (Hall, 5-6)

3.3 The concept of ethnicity and race

As already mentioned in chapter 3.2.2, one important factor in the formation of identity and the cultural affiliation of an individual is ethnicity. The terms ethnicity and race must first be defined for a more detailed analysis of the two concepts that are closely connected with each other, but it is important to make these distinctions as there are important differences between ethnicity and race.²⁸

The two terms have been used interchangeably although they refer to different basic ideas.²⁹

3.3.1 Race

²⁸ Cf. Fenton, 3.

²⁹ Cf. Fenton, 3.

From the 19th to the middle of the 20th century humankind was defined through different types of races, mainly through physical and biological features.³⁰

Where the discourse of “race” is employed, there are two levels of selection involved. The first is the selection of biological or somatic characteristics in general as a means of human classification. The second is the selection from the available range of somatic characteristics, those that are designated as signifying a supposed difference between human beings. Human beings exhibit a very wide range of phenotypical difference: height, weight, length of arms and legs, ear shape, width of feet, breadth of palm, hair colour, extent of body hair, facial structure, eye colour and so on can all be used to differentiate and categorise. (Miles and Brown, 88)

The negative connotations of the term “race” primarily formed and influenced by the slave trade and the events of World War II, were diminished over the last decades.³¹

3.3.2 Ethnicity

The term “ethnicity” on the other hand is used in a broader sense, describing also cultural differences and peculiarities.³² Barth (in Miles and Brown, 93) defined an ethnic group as a population that

1. is largely biologically self-perpetuating
2. shares fundamental cultural values, realised in overt unity in cultural forms
3. makes up a field of communication and interaction
4. has a membership which identifies itself, and is identified by others, as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order.

Ethnicity, in contrast to race, comprises a broader field of sociological and cultural factors and is also defined in terms of language, social meanings, historical background and ancestry. Individuals see themselves as members of an ethnic group that share these common assumptions. Ancestry establishes a feeling of having a common (cultural) past that lead to the foundation of a

³⁰ Fenton, 4.

³¹ Cf. Mason, 5-6.

³² Fenton, 4.

specific ethnic group.³³ It is important to mention that ethnic identities are not a stable concept, but that they are 'articulated around ancestry, culture and language which are subject to change, redefinition and contestation' (Fenton, 10). This leads to the assumption that ethnicity is a process of socialisation that is defined through the production of culture and of economic and also political relations.³⁴

3.3.3 Racism

The term "racism" is often used in a loose and unreflective way to describe the hostile or negative feelings of one ethnic group or "people" toward another and the actions resulting from such attitudes. But sometimes the antipathy of one group toward another is expressed and acted upon with a single-mindedness and brutality that go far beyond the group-centered prejudice and snobbery that seem to constitute an almost universal human failing. (Fredrickson, 1)

It emerges from prejudice and discrimination. People may have prejudices against other peoples or cultural and ethnical groups and may then lead to discrimination. Healey (83) defines prejudice as

[...] the tendency of individuals to think and feel in negative ways about members of other groups, whereas discrimination is actual, overt individual behaviour.

They do not necessarily have to correlate with each other in terms of causal reasons, but there is a connection between these two concepts.³⁵ Negative ideas of an individual about another ethnic group are the first steps in the formation of discrimination. The demonstration of these negative feelings is what we call discrimination which may then lead to the expression (also through actions) of the negative feelings against someone else (= racism).

Like race and ethnicity, also racism plays an important role in the field of cultural studies and is one of the main topics in Mhlongo's novel *Dog*.

³³ Cf. Fenton, 6-8.

³⁴ Cf. Fenton, 10.

³⁵ Cf. Healey, 83.

3.4 The concept of cultural studies and its problems

In chapter 3.2 we have heard what culture is and what it means. This chapter is concerned with various issues and problems in the study of culture.

The main question is what we study when we talk about cultural studies. Is it 'high' culture, in contrast to mass culture, a specific way of life, or all of these issues together and from which perspective do we examine these issues? Is it the study of individual culture, the study of another culture (that is different from ones own) or is it a comparison of two or more different cultures? The answer seems to be quite easy at first sight and one might say that it is simply the study of all of these concepts together. But the answer is not that easy! Cultures are in constant change³⁶ and therefore also the discipline of cultural studies is constantly changing. How can we then study culture and what exactly are cultural studies dealing with?

When we study culture we do this from a certain perspective because we are all members of a certain cultural group. A European may interpret cultural Asian peculiarities differently from an Asian who is part of that specific culture. We are part of one culture through the process of "socialisation" and enculturation which means that we become (consciously and unconsciously) a member of a culture through contact with other individuals that belong to the same cultural group.³⁷ We are then able to interpret cultural our meanings.

Anthropology and some forms of sociology see meaningful action, the understandings that persons attribute to their behaviour and to their thoughts and feelings, as cultural. This approach to culture refers to the shared understandings of individuals and groupings in society [...]. (Baldwin, 9)

³⁶ Cf. Giles and Middleton, 9.

³⁷ Cf. Baldwin, 7.

It is possible to comprehend the sense of the world and different cultures as each individual is part of a certain culture, but this also implies that we can only do this from a specific point of view.³⁸

Cultural studies are concerned with synchronic and diachronic analyses of culture as well as with “geographical” analyses.³⁹

First of all, a discussion of cultural issues that are given at a certain point of time (history) are as important as an analysis of the development and changes of culture over time. Influences and traditions that have been important hundreds of years ago may, on the one hand still be of major importance, or, on the other hand, may also have lost their significance. An example is the discussion about literary canons and the significance of values of literary texts.⁴⁰

Secondly, a comparison of different cultural conditions, geographically: European – Asian or socio/sociocritical: lower class – higher class, can also be established. The question is if it is possible to understand and interpret ‘the cultures of other peoples in the way they do it themselves, or will our understanding inevitably be mediated via the distorting prism of our own cultural understandings?’ (Baldwin, 12). When we talk about other cultures we always have to think about our own culture and our identities to understand who we are and who the other is. This is one of the main problems in the field of cultural studies.⁴¹ In addition, culture is defined by different factors (age, class, gender and race) that influence our daily lives. Struggles between these four key areas are of a major importance when we talk about cultural identity.⁴²

Culture cannot be defined in geographical terms because cultures are in contact and have influences on each other: a more powerful one may destroy

³⁸ Cf. Baldwin, 10.

³⁹ Cf. Baldwin, 12.

⁴⁰ Cf. Baldwin, 10.

⁴¹ Cf. Baldwin, 14.

⁴² Cf. Baldwin, 17.

a weaker one or a new culture can emerge as an amalgamation of cultural factors of the two cultures that are in contact (new cultural hybrid).⁴³

As a conclusion of this chapter and for a better understanding of the concept of cultural studies read this quote by Baldwin (Baldwin, 42):

[...] cultural studies as an area of activity that grows from interaction and collaboration to produce issues and themes that are new and challenging. Cultural studies is not an island in a sea of disciplines but a current that washes the shores of other disciplines to create new and changing formations.

⁴³ Cf. Baldwin, 15.

4 Biographies and information on the authors

The next chapter will provide important information on the authors to give an understanding why the genre of the campus novel has been chosen as a framework for the storyline of each novel.

4.1 David Lodge

4.1.1 Biography

David Lodge was born into a traditional Catholic family on the 28th of January 1935 in Dulwich, South London. With the beginning of World War II, Lodge and his mother went to Surrey and Cornwall and with the end of the war in 1945 returned to London where Lodge enrolled at St. Joseph's Academy. After that, he went to University College in London, where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in English. He spent two years in the Royal Armoured Corps and then began his postgraduate study at University College. In 1959 he married Mary Frances Jacob and in the same year he received his M.A. degree in English and began to work as a teacher of English and literature for the British Council in London. His first novel *About Catholic Authors* was published in 1958 and in 1960 he became lecturer at the University of Birmingham. In 1967 he received a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Birmingham for his theoretical work *Language and Fiction*. In 1987 he retired from the University of Birmingham and became full time writer. Many of his novels have won prizes and awards; among them are: *Changing Places*, *Small World*, *Nice Work*, etc. David Lodge now lives in Birmingham.⁴⁴

4.1.2 Topics of Lodge's writing

⁴⁴ Cf. Martin, XV-XVII.

David Lodge has become one of the most popular novelists, not only in Britain, but also in America because he writes novels for a variety of different readerships. According to Martin (X) '[...] Lodge writes particular kinds of novels for particular kinds of readers'. Academic readers (professors and students) are mainly interested in his literary criticism, whereas his fictional novels are favoured because they can identify with the characters and storylines of his (campus) novels. His satires have also become very popular with non-academic readers due to the comical style and reviews in literary quarterlies and magazines that are intended for a broader audience. Because of its popularity, *Small World* was adapted as a TV serial in 1988. Some of Lodges novels describe personal and autobiographical developments, whereas others are simply fictional. His satires about academic life are fictional, as we can see in the preface to his most famous campus novels *Changing Places*, *Small World* and *Nice Work*, but it is clear that they describe experiences that Lodge made in his life as a professor of English literature.⁴⁵ This is the reason why his campus novels describe the lives of professors of humanistic studies, in contrast to, for example John Kenneth Galbraith, whose novel *A Tenured Professor* (1990) is about a professor of economics at the University of Harvard.

To a great extent, Lodges writing has also been influenced by the Second World War and his childhood during the post war period and the fact that he grew up in a traditional Catholic family.⁴⁶

It was during this postwar period [...] that Lodge, his family resettled in London, received the sustained schooling and undergraduate education that would lead to an academic career. During this time, too, he began to write fiction. Not surprisingly, his novels have continued to return to this formative period of his life. (Martin, 2)

Satirical comedies concerned with academic life [...] draw on social history after the Second World War, on David Lodge's personal and professional life as it was unfolding, and on certain postwar literary developments. (Martin, 22)

⁴⁵ Cf. Martin, IX-XI.

⁴⁶ Cf. Martin, 1.

Although his first novels achieved a good reputation among critics, his success as a writer of fiction was established with *CP*.⁴⁷ It was also the actual process of writing this novel that shaped his future style and writing techniques that make his way of narrating so unique.

Lodge's interest in the genre of the campus novel began to grow when he read Kingsley Amis' novel *Lucky Jim* (1954) and recognised the Anglo-American interest in this genre during the 1950s and 1960s. This "new" campus fiction described academic life, its problems and developments as a metaphor for the society in general.⁴⁸ Lodge, a professor of English and English literature, then began to write and reflect about these changes and developments using his first-hand experiences at the university.

One remarkable peculiarity of Lodge's novels is the strong connection between fictional elements and his theoretical literary theories and criticism. His academic writing has influenced the reviews which he has published and, of course, also the reviews have had a certain effect on his work of literary criticism. Lodge presents the changes in the study of literature not only in his theoretical works, but these new developments can also be found in his fictional novels (as a thought-provoking impulse for academic readers) and a transformation of his critical and theoretical approach to his own and to fictional writing in general can be observed.

In *Changing Places*, as in *Language of Fiction*, the orientation of everyone – even the trendy Morris Zapp – is still basically New Critical and humanist. *Small World*, like *The Modes of Modern Writing* (and like *Modern Criticism and Theory*), moves into structuralist and poststructuralist concerns and debates. And the affinity, pointed out earlier, between *Nice Work* and the essay "A Kind of Business," extends to many of the other pieces in *After Bakhtin* in their critique of the extremes of poststructuralism [...]. (Martin, 88-89)

Lodge made a very interesting comment about his writing: All his novels refer to a certain stage in his life (being a Catholic, a student at the university, a professor, teaching English literature, etc); but that does not necessarily mean

⁴⁷ Cf. Martin, 22.

⁴⁸ Cf. Martin, 24-25.

that his novels are simply autobiographical. He believes that 'a novel should have a thematic and narrative unity that can be described'.⁴⁹ If a special occasion has a certain influence on Lodge and his life, he asks himself if this could be of value for a more general readership and then tries to make a fictional story out of his experiences. Before he begins to write a novel he creates a certain structure that helps to generate the story. As he is interested in structuralism, binary structures, as we find in *CP*, are of major importance for his writing.⁵⁰ Lodge says:

I am fascinated by the power of narrative, when skilfully managed, to keep the reader turning the pages, but I also aim to write novels that will stand up to being read more than once.⁵¹

CP describes his first-hand experiences of his journeys to the United States in 1964. He spent six months at the Brown University and in 1965 he travelled across America together with his family. The observations of the events on the Berkeley campus became the basis for the storyline of *CP*.⁵² '[...] *Changing Places* demonstrates Lodge's increasing skill at drawing on personal experiences without self-consciousness and at reshaping and deploying them strategically' (Martin, 28). In the first chapter of the novel, the narrator tells us the story of Philip Swallow's life up to the moment when he is on the plane to Euphoric State. He himself spent some time in America, together with his wife Hilary when they were on their honeymoon.

It was also at that time, that David Lodge's interest in American society and culture and the differences to English culture began to grow.⁵³ According to Martin (26), Lodge describes 'a transatlantic faculty exchange featuring a stereotypical English academic from a redbrick university and an American high roller from a thinly fictionalized Berkeley'. The satirical description of the cultural peculiarities and differences from the viewpoints of these two stereotypes and becomes the main plot in *CP*.

⁴⁹ Lodge, <http://www.contemporarywriters.com/authors/?p=auth62> [12.6.2008]

⁵⁰ Cf. <http://www.contemporarywriters.com/authors/?p=auth62> [12.6.2008]

⁵¹ Lodge, <http://www.contemporarywriters.com/authors/?p=auth62> [12.6.2008]

⁵² Cf. Martin, 25-26.

⁵³ Cf. Martin, 25.

Lodge calls the technique of narration in *CP* a “duplex chronicle”, the term duplex taken from the O.E.D, meaning

[...] “systems in which messages are sent simultaneously in opposite directions “ {*CP*,7}), he challenges the reader to consider the ways in which the two principal narrative strands are reciprocally linked in a relationship that can be seen as dialectic, dialogic, symbiotic, and the like. (Martin, 31)

The omniscient narrator tells us the stories of Philip Swallow and Morris Zapp at their host universities. Furthermore these two protagonists communicate with their wives back at home who characterise and describe the visiting professor in forms of letters (epistolary novel). This implies that the reader, like the two characters, has to change places as well.⁵⁴

CP begins like a conventional novel, but with chapter three it changes, and becomes something completely different. This is due to the structure and style of each chapter and the special way of narration of the novel.⁵⁵ The first two chapters are written in an ordinary form of narration, with a great number of flashbacks in the lives of Philip Swallow and Morris Zapp to provide background information of the two main characters. Considering the style of the novel, chapter three is different: Lodge uses the form of the epistolary novel to let the professors and their wives communicate with each other. Chapter four consists of small newspaper articles, flyers and other slips of paper that narrate the story indirectly. The narrative mode in chapter five is the same as in the first two chapters, apart from a letter by Philip Swallow in which he tries to explain to his wife that he has an affair with Zapp’s wife. The sixth and last chapter of the book is written in the form of a film script with stage directions to the four “actors” Philip Swallow, his wife Hilary, Morris Zapp and his wife Désirée.⁵⁶ According to Morace (165), the ‘entire novel may be said to function as a large scale narrative paradox, holding together by breaking apart, a literary e pluribus unum’. Each chapter on its own has a certain literary structure and style and can be said to be a novel on its own. When these

⁵⁴ Cf. Martin, 31.

⁵⁵ Cf. Morace, 158.

⁵⁶ Cf. Morace, 163.

chapters (“Flying”, “Settling”, “Corresponding”, “Reading”, “Changing” and “Ending”) are put into context, they result in a new form of narration. Even the names of the chapters illustrate a kind of progression in the narrative strands.

CP clearly is a campus novel; a satire of British and American academic life. It ‘[...] concentrates [...] on comparing British and American academic styles [...]’ (Martin (58) and is a description of daily life at two universities in two different countries in the world; it is also a description of two different cultures and analyses differences of two individuals, as well as differences between two cultures.

Like Lodge’s other novels, *Changing Places* reflects attentiveness to social and historical detail. Thanks to the premise of academic exchange between the two societies, the potential to inform here is especially rich. Because of Lodge’s close and ongoing contact with the American academic community, *Changing Places* can familiarize British or American readers with what they do not know about each other’s country, mainly through straightforward (if generally sporadic) narrative commentary, and it can defamiliarize what each takes for granted by showing it through the eyes of an observant foreigner. (Martin, 38)

It is therefore interesting and essential to analyse this campus novel under the concept of cultural comparison, as it can be regarded to be a description of intercultural differences with their many-sided facets (beginning with the academic structures of universities in England and America and ending with the late night radio show of Charles Boone).

4.2 Randall Jarrell

4.2.1 Biography

Randall Jarrell was born on the 6th of May 1914 in Nashville, Tennessee. His father came from a poor working class family and his mother from a business family. In 1915 the family moved to California, where their second son Charles was born; Jarrell’s mother lost one daughter in infancy. After his parents got a divorce, when Jarrell was only eleven years old, he lived with his father’s

grandparents in California and visited his father who had a business called “Jarrell-Kramer: Portrait Pictorialists”. Although he did not have the opportunity to see his mother they kept in touch by writing letters (which his mother collected and gave him in 1962). In 1927, when school ended, he went back to live with his mother in Nashville. It was hard for him to live in a family that was torn apart. At Hume-Fogg High School Jarrell took a great interest in drama and journalism, which became important parts in his future career.⁵⁷ After he had finished school, he enrolled at Vanderbilt University for a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1932. Under the influence of John Crowe Ransom and Robert Penn Warren, two poets who discovered his talent for writing, he got interested in poetry and soon received a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree. When he was still a student, he wrote articles for the college magazine “Vanderbilt Masquerader”. Soon his first poems were published in a New York magazine, the “New York Review”. In 1937 he went to Kenyon College, where he taught English.⁵⁸ From then on Jarrell worked as a professor at universities across America, as literary editor and of course as a writer of (mainly) poetry, but also fiction and books of criticism. From 1942 to 1946 he served in the Army Air Force and a great number of his poems are about his time in the army, mainly about pilots and planes.⁵⁹ After travelling around in America and teaching at various colleges (et al. Women’s College of the University of North Carolina) Randall Jarrell married his wife Mary von Schrader in 1952.⁶⁰ In 1954 his satirical academic novel *Pictures from an Institution* was published.

During his whole life, Randall Jarrell travelled through America, where he lived in Tennessee, California, Texas, Illinois, New York, North Carolina, etc., but he also travelled to Europe (e.g. Germany, Austria, Italy and England) which had a great impact on his writing.⁶¹ The character Gottfried Rosenbaum, for example, was influenced by his journeys to Austria and Germany.

Before Randall Jarrell died after he was struck by a car on a highway in Chapel Hill in 1965, he was a patient of a psychological hospital and tried to

⁵⁷ Cf. Pritchard, 11-21.

⁵⁸ Cf. Pritchard, 23-25 and 46.

⁵⁹ Cf. Rosenthal, 6 and 13.

⁶⁰ Cf. Pritchard, 246.

⁶¹ Cf. Pritchard, 11.

commit suicide. It is still not absolutely clear if the car accident was really only an accident.

4.2.2 Topics of Jarrell's writing

As a poet, Randall Jarrell tried to process and describe the personal experiences of his life in his poetry. His childhood and his years at school are topics of his poems, as well as the divorce of his parents and his military service in the army.⁶² He was also interested in European literature, mainly in the German "Märchen" and the writings of Rainer Maria Rilke. We could say that he was a German/European writer, interested in European literature, trapped in the body of an American writer.⁶³

Jarrell's interest in writing started with the correspondence between him and his mother during the time when he lived in California, together with his grandparents. In 1962 when his mother gave him the letters, he used them as the basis for his books of poems "The Lost World".⁶⁴ The relationship with his mother influenced his writing as well:

And out of whatever neglect or disappointment he felt in his mother's inadequacy, he became a man imaginatively fascinated by a number of women, and a poet who made women the center of many of his best poems. (Pritchard, 19)

Randall Jarrell's only novel *Pictures* is also influenced by the personal experiences of his life. Although the first-person narrator, a poet, teaching at the University of Benton, resembles Jarrell to a great extent,⁶⁵ '*Pictures from an Institution* is a work of fiction' (Jarrell, Preface).

Jarrell characterises the protagonists by drawing a picture of the personal and academic life of each person, rather than telling a story.⁶⁶ This is also the

⁶² Cf. Rosenthal, 7 and 12-13.

⁶³ Cf. Rosenthal, 6.

⁶⁴ Cf. Pritchard, 17.

⁶⁵ Cf. Pritchard, 240.

⁶⁶ Cf. Rosenthal, 38 and Pritchard, 235.

reason why the novel has the title *Pictures from an Institution*. As Showalter (37) puts it '[...] the idea behind the rather plotless work seems to be that a small liberal arts college resembles a totalitarian society'. Jarrell himself said that it was difficult to write a book 'in which the main structure isn't a plot or a story [...]' (Jarrell in Pritchard, 243). The main character is Gertrude Johnson, although a long part of the novel deals with the life of Gottfried Rosenbaum, an Austrian composer, teaching music at the university. Jarrell clearly distinguishes between the social and cultural background and life style of the American professors and their families and the one of Rosenbaum and his Russian wife, who may be characterised as "European".⁶⁷ When we take a look at the biography of Jarrell and his interest in European literature we can see that he identifies himself with Rosenbaum in a certain manner.

Furthermore, Jarrell criticises social life inside the academic institution and real life outside.⁶⁸ For him, the university is an artificial environment that does not correspond to reality. Inside the university/campus, life remains the same and the same routine (the succession of the semesters) goes on forever without great changes. He expresses this kind of boredom and absurdity very clearly:

When in the novel's closing chapter Gertrude Johnson and her husband, Sidney, prepare to leave Benton, she says to the narrator and his wife (the latter a shadowy, nameless presence) that there is something attractive about "living in a quiet dull place like this where nothing happens." (Pritchard, 239)

These social and cultural conditions between the inside and outside world of the campus and the differences between the lives of the characters, primarily Dr. Rosenbaum and the rest of the academic personnel, will be the focus of the cultural comparison of Jarrell's novel.

4.3 Murhandziwa Nicholas Mhlongo

⁶⁷ Cf. Rosenthal, 38-39.

⁶⁸ Cf. Pritchard, 236.

4.3.1 Biography^{69 70}

The South African writer Niq Mhlongo was born on the 10th of June 1973 in Midway Chiawelo Soweto. He is one of ten children and grew up under poor conditions. He was born under apartheid and witnessed the changes after the fall of apartheid in 1994. Political and cultural changes influenced his life inside the township. He was later sent to Limpopo province where he did his primary and secondary schooling. In 1990, political turmoil in connection with the release of the later president Nelson Mandela led to problems also in the educational sector, and Niq Mhlongo failed to graduate from high school. In 1991 he finally graduated. Mhlongo faced typical problems and challenges of young South African people in Soweto: apartheid, racism, unemployment, etc. But he was fortunate to find a job as a dispatch agent in a company – the Republic Umbrella in Johannesburg. Three years later in 1994 he went to university and registered for a Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. His interest in South African literature and politics began to grow. Two years later he graduated in those two subjects and then enrolled for a Law degree in 1997. He then changed to the University of Cape Town where he wanted to finish his studies, but abandoned his Law degree studies in 2000 to write his first novel *Dog Eat Dog* which was published in 2004. Nicholas Mhlongo now lives and works in Johannesburg.

4.3.2 Topics of Mhlongo's novel

In his first novel, Mhlongo describes the life of a young South African student and his struggle for existence, freedom and life. By means of describing the daily life of the protagonist he addresses the problems of people in South Africa and introduces them to a broad audience.

According to Niq Mhlongo, there have been big and significant changes going on in South Africa in the last two decades. The main reasons for these

⁶⁹ Cf. <http://www.nu.ac.za/ccca/images/tow/TOW2005/bios/Mhlongo.htm> [12.3.2008]

⁷⁰ Cf. <http://adamash.blogspot.com/2006/12/bookplanet-south-african-writing-after.html> [12.3.2008]

changes were the fall of apartheid and the first democratic elections in 1994. Equal rights for white and black people concluded in a restructuring of the social order. The South African population, primarily the younger Kwaito generation, began to reflect about the past and what the future was going to bring. The Kwaito generation is concerned with the expression of their cultural heritage and the formation of a new prospective culture. Their media is mainly African rap and pop music.⁷¹ Mhlongo does not only concentrate on political struggles, but also faces new issues that have become of major importance in the last decade:

The end of apartheid and our ten years of democracy have posed new challenges, and given us the opportunity as new generation of writers to explore new things. Our contributions to literature today should be to write about issues that are directly facing the youth. We have the responsibility to explore topics such as, HIV/AIDS virus, unemployment, poverty, xenophobia, homosexuality, etc. These are the present issues that most South Africans will identify with, and our writings can help strengthen our democracy and to build a better future. (Mhlongo, Niq Mhlongo – South Africa)⁷²

Dog is an autobiographical book, in which Niq Mhlongo reflects on his experiences as a South African student. This becomes obvious when we compare the lives of the author with the life of the protagonist in the novel and also when we take a look at the cover of the book; the image of the young man on the cover resembles Niq Mhlongo to a large extent. Furthermore, Dingamanzi tells us the story from a first person perspective.

The novel is not only a campus novel, but also a black campus novel; it does not only narrate a comical story, but because of the serious topics that are described within the novel the author calls attention to problems that a whole country has to deal with. He gives an understanding of South African life in general and problems of the people who live there. His main aim is not to be pathetic or trying to commiserate with the South African population, but to draw an image of South Africa and the way of life there.

⁷¹ http://www.oulitnet.co.za/youngwriters/niq_mhlongo.asp [14.3.2008]

⁷² <http://www.nu.ac.za/cca/images/tow/TOW2005/bios/Mhlongo.htm> [14.3.2008]

Taking into consideration all the topics that are mentioned in the citation above, they can be summarised under the concept of culture, as they are part of the daily lives of the South African population. *Dog* is therefore not only a campus novel analysing problems and issues, but it is also a survey of cultural peculiarities and cultural changes that a whole population group has been going through. We can therefore analyse the novel under viewpoint of cultural comparison and find out more about a culture that is different from the western ones.

5 Intercultural comparison of the campus novels

5.1 Summaries of the novels

The summaries of the novels will describe the plots along general lines and will provide a basis for those who have not read all, or only parts of the novels that will be analysed in this diploma thesis.

5.1.1 Changing Places – A Tale of two Campuses

CP is the story of two professors of English Literature who change their lectureship for one semester. Philip Swallow, from the University of Rummidge in England, goes to the State University of Euphoria (Euphoric State) in America and professor Morris J. Zapp from Euphoric State goes to the University of Rummidge. The novel depicts the (cultural) differences between the English and the American academic/educational system and life in England and America in general.

The storyline starts on January, 1st 1969 with the description of the journey of the two professors to their host countries. Right from the start the reader sees that the two characters are typical stereotypes of their home countries and that they are, characteristically, completely different from each other. In a flashback the reader gets to know why the professors go on such a journey: Philip Swallow does not only need a change from his everyday life in Rummidge, but also needs the money that he gets for the exchange programme and leaves his wife Hilary and the children back in England. Morris Zapp on the other hand uses his trip to think over his life and the marriage with his wife Désirée who wants to get a divorce. When they arrive in England/America they recognise that life back at home is completely different from their host country. They get accustomed to daily lives quite quickly and they get used to - and involved in - university life. On parties they get to know each others wives and families and after some time Morris Zapp moves into Philip Swallow's house,

together with Swallow's wife Hilary and Swallow moves into Zapp's house together with Zapp's wife Désirée and also have affairs with each other's wives. The whole storyline is embellished with small subplots about relationships with other professors, students and friends they know from their home universities. Philip Swallow, for example, gets involved in student activities and Morris Zapp becomes mediator between the University Administration and the Student's Union Executive. In the course of the plot of the novel the protagonists get to know about their affairs and, although it has an open ending, the novel ends with the professors and their wives in a hotel room, discussing what has happened and what their future might look like.

The cultural differences and the lifestyles of the two countries are presented in a very humorous and witty style and might be described as a farce of two cultures.

5.1.2 Pictures from an Institution – A Comedy

The novel by Randall Jarrell is different from the ones by David Lodge and Niq Mhlongo. We do not really find a development of the plot in contrast to *CP* and *Dog*; this means that the novel can be specified as a description or characterisation of professors of an American university and the typical lifestyles of academic staff.

The novel tells the story of a typical American women's college and the social network of its professors and students. The central character is the novelist Gertrude Johnson who teaches creative writing at Benton College. She is the link of the lives of all the teachers of the college: her husband Sydney, the first person narrator of the novel (a poet and teacher at the university), the president of the university, Dwight Robbins and his wife Pamela, his secretary Constance Morgan, Dr Gottfried Rosenbaum and his wife Irene and the sociologist Dr Whittaker and his wife Flo.

Gertrude Johnson comes to the University of Benton to replace Camille Turner Batterson, the former teacher of the creative writing course. After some time

she decides to write a book about Benton, portraying all the peculiarities of the institution, the people who work there and the social life in general. At the end of the semester (which is also the end of novel) Gertrude leaves Benton to start a new period of life together with her husband. She is the only one who has the courage to change her life, in contrast to all the other professors of the college who go on holiday, but come back afterwards and get back to the boring daily routines. The ending of the novel describes this hopeless and viewless feeling of unhappiness that the characters carry deep in themselves.

5.1.3 Dog Eat Dog

‘You think it’s easy out there in the real world, don’t you? But that’s because we are protected by these varsity walls. Once we are let loose in the real world you’ realise that life is a matter of dog eat dog.’ (*Dog*, 218)

“Dog Eat Dog” is an informal expression which means to be ruthless, to look out for oneself or to be egoistic. It means that one can only survive in an unfair and ruthless world by trying to make the most of a situation and bring out the best for oneself. This ruthlessness is also described in the book. You have to take care of yourself and be self-seeking to stand a chance in an egoistic world.

More commuters pushed onto the train as others forced their way onto the platform to board trains to Vereeniging. The big-bodied shouldered and elbowed the weaker ones out of the doorways; to be the first ones to board the train, [...]. (*Dog*, 178)

As regards the storyline of the book, Niq Mhlongo found the perfect title for his first novel.

The story of the novel is about Dingamanzi Makhedama Njomane, an average black South African student who studies African Literature and Political Studies at the University of Witwatersrand. The book describes his extraordinary life and the problems that are connected with it from the 13th of March 1994 to the 16th of December of the same year. This is the time after

the fall of apartheid and the beginning of democracy in South Africa with the first democratic elections.

Dingamanzi or Dingz, as he calls himself, comes from a very poor family. His father died when he was only a small boy. He and his brothers and sisters have to live on the very small pension of his mother in Soweto, a township not far from the centre of Johannesburg. Dingz himself lives at the YMCA and shares a room with his friend Dworkin. Dingamanzi needs financial aid to support his family and to be able to go to university. Unfortunately he receives a letter from the University Bursary Committee that rejects his application for a grant. This letter is the starting point of the storyline of the book. After receiving this letter he decides to talk to Dr Jane Winterburn, the registrar of the Financial Aid Office, to get his financial support by playing the race card and accusing the staff of the office of being racist. At a party after the first democratic elections he meets a girl, Nkanyi, with whom he falls in love and who becomes his girlfriend in the end. She is also the girl from which he catches a sexually transmitted disease which makes him aware of the problems of AIDS. Later he is dismissed from the YMCA because of his rude and incorrect behaviour, which gets him into troubles, as he has to go back to his family's house and live there under bad circumstances. Furthermore he has to get a death certificate to persuade the dean of the faculty to grant him a deferred examination. By playing the race card again he finally succeeds and is allowed to re-sit the exam at the beginning of the next term. The novel ends with Dingz and his friends sitting in a bar, talking about their hopes and discussing the future of South Africa.

The general strand of the plot is interrupted by short stories and descriptions of his past and events that play/ed an important role in his life (e.g. his problems with the police). The novel is not only about Dingamanzi's life at the university, having fun with his friends and enjoying student life, but also about his problems as a young South African facing racism, about the poor conditions under which his family has to live and the political changes in South Africa (see chapter 4.3.2). Although the book is written in a very witty and cynical

style, and describes extraordinary and hilarious situations, it also deals with serious problems in the life of the South African people in general.⁷³

5.2 Cultural and intercultural comparison

The following chapters are the main part of this diploma thesis and analyse the concepts of culture, identity and ethnicity in connection with the three campus novels. The main issue will depend on the content of each novel; cultural differences will be of a major importance in *CP*, whereas the concept of identity in *Pictures* and ethnicity and race in *Dog* play important roles. Only a small number of examples of the concepts will be given because it is impossible (or would take hundreds of pages) to make a list with all the intercultural features (see chapter 3) that can be found and analysed in the novels. Every aspect of life that is described in the novels can be regarded to be culture (or of a certain cultural value), according to the definition of culture by Raymond Williams in *The Long Revolution*.⁷⁴

5.2.1 Similarities between the campus novels

Although the three campus novels are from three different continents, there are a number of characteristics that they have in common.

As we have seen in chapter 4, Lodge, Jarrell and Mhlongo process personal experiences in their writing: Lodge's travels to the United States and his interest in cultural differences, Jarrell's interest in European culture and literature and Mhlongo's writing about apartheid and social changes in South Africa; this is one reason, why their novels seem to be so realistic.

Jarrell and Mhlongo both decided to use a first person narrator to tell the stories of their protagonists. Like the use of a third person narrator, this gives the reader the opportunity to get insight into the thoughts and feelings of the

⁷³ http://www.oulitnet.co.za/youngwriters/niq_mhlongo.asp [5.6.2008]

⁷⁴ Cf. Williams 1961, 57 and chapter 3.1.1

two narrators; but it also means that we have a very limited perspective of what is going on in the “fictional worlds”, created by the authors. Lodge on the other hand uses an omniscient narrative perspective in his novel (in the chapters “Flying”, “Settling” and “Changing”).

But the fact that the narrator is omniscient and the use of the genre of the epistolary novel in the chapter “Corresponding” and the letter from Philip to his wife Hilary in chapter 5 (169-170) gives the reader the opportunity to experience the plot of the novel from the viewpoint of the protagonists.

Other features that the novels have in common are of course, satire and comical elements (as an important characteristic of the academic novel). Lodge is an expert in the specific field of satiric story narration, as it is shown in the scene when Gordon Masters, after having escaped from a private psychiatric clinic, haunts Morris Zapp through the faculty, going up and down the floors in the paternoster (*CP* 195-197), or the conversation between Philip Swallow and Désirée Zapp at the Hogan’s cocktail party:

‘Do you have children yourself?’ he concluded desperately.

‘Two. Twins. Boy and girl. Aged nine.’

‘Ah, then you understand the problems.’

‘I doubt if we have the same problems, Mr Sparrow.’

‘Swallow.’

‘Mr Swallow. Sorry. A much nicer bird.’

She turned back to contemplate the sun, now sinking into the sea behind the Silver Span, and took a reflective draught from her glass. (*CP*, 67)

‘I’m afraid I can’t agree,’ said Philip stiffly. ‘I could never get tired of it.’

‘But you haven’t lived with it for ten years. Wait a while. You can’t rush nausea, you know.’

‘Well I’m afraid that after Rummidge...’

‘What’s that?’

‘Where I come from. Where your husband’s gone.’

‘Oh yeah... What’s it called, Rubbish?’

‘Rummidge.’

‘I thought you said Rubbish.’ She laughed immoderately, and spilled some vodka on her rock. ‘Shit. What’s it like, then, Rummidge? Morris tried to make out it was the greatest, but everybody else says it’s the asshole of England.’ (*CP* 68)

Jarrell, for example, satirises the Austrian composer and music professor Rosenbaum, by making fun of his European accent:

Constance Morgan's beloved Dr. Rosenbaum once murmured, like the Spartan boy: "I do nodd like de tune she says zings to." Gottfried Rosenbaum, that kindly—or as some people said, that crazy—composer, could as easily have pronounced the Hottentot click sounds Mrs Robbins had grown up among (though to hear her, she seemed to have been born in an airliner over the cape of Good Hope, and to have arrived in Susses on the second day) as he could have pronounced *th*. He said *d* a third of the time, *t* a third of the time, and *z* a third of the time, and explained, smiling, that after a few years, ass zhure ass Fadt, these would merge into the correct sound. It is true that his *d* and *t* and *z* were changing, but not in the direction of any already existing sound: his speech was a pilgrimage toward some *lingua franca* of the far future—"vot ve all speak ven de Shtate hass videredt away," as he would have put it. (*Pics*, 13)

Although Mhlongo's novel is different from the other two because it is also a black campus novel that addresses a lot of serious issues and problems in South Africa, we also find satirical and also sarcastic parts in *Dog* as well, for example stickers, graffiti and notices.

Though I drive in the valley of the shadow of death I fear no hijackers, but another fuel increase. (*Dog*, 92)

To be considered for credit, you must be 96 years of age or older, with a complete dental formula and must be accompanied by both parents, all carrying your id's. (*Dog*, 122)

Please help save water by drinking beer. (*Dog*, 123)

Academic time is also a feature that can be found in each of the novels and it comprises one term/semester, apart from the division of the day into office hours, lectures and leisure time. The plot in *CP* starts on January, 1st 1969 (apart from back flashes to the time before the actual exchange program) and closes with the meeting of Swallow, Zapp and their wives at the end of the term. *Pictures* also describes one term in an American university and ends, with all the characters going on holiday and Gertrude Johnson leaving the campus (*Pictures*, 265-270). Mhlongo writes about one semester in the life of

Dingz, starting with March, 13th 1994 to December, 16th 1994 and like Lodge and Jarrell uses back flashes to refer to past events.

The fact that *CP*, *Pictures* and *Dog* are academic novels is obvious, but there is more to say about them; they also analyse differences, similarities and peculiarities of cultural groups: English vs. American in *CP*, European vs. American in *Pictures* and African culture vs. globalisation/"MacDonaldisation" in *Dog*. They are furthermore very much concerned with identity, e.g. finding ones own identity/identities, for example Philip Swallows search for the meaning of (his) life:

Because I've changed, Hilary, changed more than I should have thought possible. [...] I should be very sorry, naturally, to cause you any pain, but when I ask myself what injury I have done to you, what I have taken away from you that you had before, I come up with the answer: nothing. [...] I see I've slipped unconsciously into the past tense, I suppose because I can't conceive of returning to that kind of relationship. [...] Life, after all, should go forwards, not backwards. (CP, 169-170)

The novels are also about finding out, why someone is different from another, as we can see in *Pictures* (175):

As you talk about your own qualities you are always rather a comic figure, and I must have been one as I talked about the qualities of Americans. There was an *I did not know what* about American qualities: as you heard me talk about them, trying to say what it was, you did not think as usual, *He's a true American*, but were impressed with how subtle I could be—you could see that, with all our faults, we Americans were still, in some sense, *better*.

The novels are also concerned with cultural and ethnic prejudice (racism), primarily in the case of *Dog*, where different kinds of racism are described: white against black, black against white and also black against black:

'Where did you buy your driver's license, you moron? Don't you know to indicate when you have to change lanes? You think this is your road?' shouted the white bearded man inside the BMW.

'I bought it from your mother's arse,' retorted the minibus driver.

'Your mind is as short as your hair, you piece of shit.'

'Go fuck yourself, you white bastard.'

'Who do you think you are? You think democracy means running around driving the way you like without thinking? You uncivilised black shit!' (*Dog*, 78)

These three concepts (culture, identity and ethnicity) are the most important issues of the next chapters.

5.2.2 Culture

5.2.2.1 Changing Places

The concept of culture can be analysed from different viewpoints in *CP*: a general analysis of culture and intercultural comparison, the differences between English and American culture and also how the two main characters see the culture of their host country (Swallow in America and Zapp in England). The last issue is the most interesting one because you can see how peculiarities of one culture are interpreted by someone who comes from a different cultural background and also, how prejudices can emerge.

David Lodge uses the general concept of culture throughout the whole novel, giving the impression of defining the term culture through the description of English/American society, its cultural differences, the impressions of Swallow and Zapp and the historical facts that he processes in the novel.

On the first page he gives a definition that is very similar to the social definition by Raymond Williams, published in *The Long Revolution* in 1961 (see chapter 3.1.1).

Imagine, if you will, that each of these two professors of English Literature (both, as it happens, aged forty) is connected to his native land, place of employment and domestic hearth by an infinitely elastic umbilical cord of emotions, attitudes and values – a cord which stretches and stretches almost to the point of invisibility, but never quite to breaking-point, as he hurtles through the air at 600 miles per hour. (*CP*, 5-6)

Morris Zapp's problems with his wife Désirée and the fact that she might get divorced are the reasons for his travel to Europe. During the conversation between the dean of the faculty and Zapp, he says that he needs a change:

'Great, Bill, I won't forget it.'

Bill's voice dropped to a lower, more confidential pitch. 'Why the sudden yearning for Europe, Morris? Students getting you down?'

'You must be joking, Bill. No, I think I need a change. A new perspective. The challenge of a different culture. (CP, 36)

Philip Swallow is also satisfied with his journey to America, not only because he gets a lot of money but he sees his journey as a kind of crusade with the purpose of bringing culture from the old to the new world.

The glory of his adventure needs, after all, a reflector, someone capable of registering the transformation of the dim Rummidge lecturer into Visiting Professor Philip Swallow, member of the academic jet-set, ready to carry English culture to the far side of the globe at the drop of an airline ticket. (CP, 31)

The novel is full of such examples of what culture is, e.g. students and their relationship with the university, not only as an institution but seen as a cultural and social framework. The "clever young men" to which Lodge refers here could be a link to the Angry Young Men in the history of the English universities.

These were clever young men of plebeian origin who, unlike the traditional scholarship boy (such as Philip himself) showed no deference to the social and cultural values of the institution to which they had been admitted, but maintained until the day they graduated a style of ostentatious uncouthness in dress, behaviour and speech. (CP, 29-30)

But the exchange of the two professors does not only have positive effects on their lives.

That seemed to be the underlying principle. Such coherent thoughts were not yet forming in Morris Zapp's mind, however, as he first cast his eyes round Philip Swallow's room. He was still in a state of culture shock, and it gave him a giddy feeling when he looked out of the window and saw the familiar campanile of Euphoric State flushed an angry red and shrunk to half its normal size, like a detumescent penis. (CP, 51-52)

Exchanging their posts also means that they will have a certain influence on each others lives, and that their personality will also be shaped by the cultural influences of their host countries. The connections between the influences that one culture (may) have on an individual from a different cultural background and vice versa, are described by the narrator.

It would not be surprising, in other words, if two men changing places for six months should exert a reciprocal influence on each others destinies, and actually mirror each other's experience in certain respects, notwithstanding all the differences that exist between the two environments, and between the characters of the two men and their respective attitudes towards the whole enterprise. (*CP*, 6)

This is Lodge's explanation of the main theme of his novel; comparing two different cultures and individuals and the influences of one upon the other, using the satirical elements of the genre of the campus novel to criticise human follies.

As it was mentioned before, these (cultural) influences do have negative influences on the life of Philip Swallow, Morris Zapp and also on the lives of their wives. Primarily the first chapter, which explains why the two professors exchange posts for half a year, is very much concerned with their feelings, attitudes and also with their fears of going to another country and leaving their regular lives behind.

Philip Swallow is looking forward to his trip to America. He had already been there some years before, together with his wife Hilary and he had liked the idea of 'the American way of life' (*CP*, 16), but he is also the one who is afraid of leaving his save regular life back in England. For him, going to the USA, a country, much larger than England, also means that he has to leave his social framework (=family, friends, colleagues from university, etc.), in general his daily life behind; a daily life full of routines and rituals that make life easy for a man who is already forty years old. Furthermore he has a sense of guilt because he leaves his wife and children behind, although he does it for the general good of his family.

'Oh, no, I couldn't leave Hilary behind to cope on her own. Not for six months.' (CP, 19)

Philip couldn't deny it. 'What about the children, though? What about Robert's eleven-plus?' he said, holding a dripping pate like hope in his hands.

Hilary took a longer pause for thought. 'You go on your own,' she said at last. 'I'll stay here with the children.'

'No, it wouldn't be fair,' he protested. 'I wouldn't dream of it.' (CP, 20)

These conversations and discussions between Philip and Hilary go on for some pages until he finally agrees to travel to the United States, but even on the plane he has his doubts.

He hugs the thought to himself with guilty glee. Guilty, because he cannot entirely absolve himself of the charge of having deserted Hilary, perhaps even at this moment presiding grimly over the rugged table-manners of the three young Swallows. (CP, 19)

The main problem is that Swallow has a feeling of uncertainty: will he be able to integrate himself into a completely different society and culture? On the plane Swallow talks with Charles Boone, who has been living in America for a longer period of time and whom Swallow knows from the University of Rummidge. Boone tells him everything about life on Euphoric State campus as a metaphor for the cultural changes in the United States in general.

All about the political situation in Euphoria in general and on the Euphoric State campus in particular. The factions, the issues, the confrontations; Governor Duck, Chancellor Binde, Mayor Holmes, Sheriff O'Keene, the Third World, the Hippies, the Black Panthers, the Faculty Liberals; pot, Black Studies, sexual freedom, ecology, free speech, police violence, ghettos, fair housing, school busing, VietNam; strikes, arson, marches, sit-ins, teach-ins, love-ins, happenings. (CP, 41)

What he hears from Charles Boone and what he already knows about America frighten him.

Though he has followed the recent history of the United States in the newspapers, though he is well aware, cognitively, that it has become more than ever a violent and melodramatic land, riven by deep divisions

of race and ideology, traumatized by political assassinations, the campus in revolt, the cities seizing up, the countryside poisoned and devastated – emotionally it is still for him a kind of Paradise. (*CP*, 17)

The 1960s and 1970s were an epoch of turmoil and demonstrations in America. All these issues were of great importance at that time and shaped the structures within the society as well as the cultural development of the country.

Morris Zapp on the other hand seems to be more relaxed and is not afraid of the actual flight to England and he is also looking forward to his stay in Europe.

It is obvious, from his stiff, upright posture, and fulsome gratitude to the stewardess serving him a glass of orange juice, that Philip Swallow, flying westward, is unaccustomed to air travel; while to Morris Zapp, [...] the experience of long-distance air travel is tediously familiar. (*CP*, 6)

Philip Swallow has, in fact, flown before; but so seldom, and at such long intervals, that on each occasion he suffers the same trauma, an alternating current of fear and reassurance [...]. (*CP*, 6)

Zapp's journey can be described as an escape from the problems with his wife Désirée and the fear of a divorce. He thinks that the six months in England will help their relationship and will be a new beginning and a kind of revival for them. But he knows that there are problems that he has to solve and that life in another country (with a different cultural background) can be difficult. In contrast to Philip Swallow, the character of Zapp gives the reader the impression of being more optimistic and open-minded (Cf. *CP*, 8-10).

But when Zapp finally settles into daily life at Rummidge, he realises that something is missing. He finds those missing amenities during his trip to London.

The Hilton was a damned expensive hotel, but Morris reckoned that he owed himself some indulgence after three weeks in Rummidge [...]. He had already showered twice since checking in, and walked about naked on the fitted carpet, bathed in fluent waves of heated air, had climbed back into bed to watch TV and ordered his lunch from Room Service – a

club sandwich with French fries on the side preceded by a large Manhattan and followed by apple pie *à la mode*. All simple everyday amenities of the American way of life – but what rare pleasures they seemed in exile. (CP, 94)

Philip Swallow also discovers the American way of life when he decides to buy a fast, expensive sports car, not only to have a vehicle to drive to the university, but also to show that he is willing to integrate himself into a different culture.

The journey to other countries and what the two main characters know about them, also leads to the development/formation of certain cultural prejudices (that may not necessarily have to be negative, but serve as satirical comments on the two different cultures) that are described by the author not only during the flight in the plane, but also in chapter two and in the rest of the novel.

By way of a honeymoon, and to escape the severity of the New England winter, [...] they headed south to Florida, [...]. (CP, 16)

Bliss! No need to get up for the family breakfast, wash the car, mow the lawn and perform the other duties of the secular British Sabbath. No need, above all, to go for a walk on Sunday afternoon. No need to rouse himself, heavy with Sunday lunch, from his armchair, to help Hilary collect and dress their querulous children, to try and find some new, pointless destination for a drive [...]. (CP, 23)

Morris had been born and brought up in New York, but he had no intention of returning there, in fact he would not repine if he never saw the city again: on the evidence of his last visit it was only a matter of time before the garbage in the streets reached penthouse level and the whole population suffocated. (CP, 33)

'I guess we must be over England, now,' says Mary Makepeace, staring out of the window.

'Is it raining?' Zapp asks.

'No, it's very clear. You can see all the little fields, like a patchwork quilt.'

'It can't be England if it's not raining. We must be off course.'

'There's a great dark smudge over there. That must be a big city.'

'It's probably Rummidge. A great dark smudge sounds like Rummidge.'
(CP, 44)

He [Philip Swallow] tries to read a courtesy copy of *Time*, but can't concentrate. What he really needs is a nice cup of tea – it is mid-afternoon by his watch – but when he plucks up courage to ask a passing stewardess she replies curtly that they will be serving breakfast in an hour's time. (*CP*, 28)

The beginning of one of the subchapters (pages 10-13) in chapter 1 is a comparison of the British and the American academic and educational system. By giving historical facts and facts about the development of the university and describing the academic career of Philip Swallow and Morris Zapp, the two systems are compared with each other.

The landscape and the two universities are completely different, although they combine the same architectural characteristics. The replica of the leaning Tower of Pisa is the most striking feature of the two campuses⁷⁵, but the atmosphere that Lodge describes is typical British/American. Euphoric State seems to be more modern and also bigger with green parks, new faculty buildings, etc. and also has more prestige and reputation. The University of Rummidge on the other hand can be characterised as a typical small, old, civic redbrick university that is not able to compete with the famous, important universities in England (Oxford and Cambridge), much less in the world.

Euphoria, that small but populous state on the Western seaboard of America, situated between Northern and Southern California, with its mountains, lakes and rivers, its redwood forests, its blond beaches and its incomparable Bay, across which the State University at Plotinus faces the glittering, glamorous city of Esseph – Euphoria is considered by many cosmopolitan experts to be one of the most agreeable environments in the world. Not even its City Fathers would claim as much for Rummidge, a large, graceless industrial city sprawled over the English Midlands at the intersection of three motorways, twenty-six railway lines and half-a-dozen stagnant canals. (*CP*, 10)

According to the salaries that each university pays its visitors, Euphoric State and its professors are much wealthier than its British counterparts⁷⁶ and it has therefore become one of America's major universities. The University of Rummidge

⁷⁵ Cf. *CP*, 10.

⁷⁶ Cf. *CP*, 10-11.

'[...] had never been an institution of more than middling size and reputation, and it had lately suffered the mortifying fate of most English universities of its type (civic redbrick): having competed strenuously for fifty years with two universities chiefly valued for being old, it was, at the moment of drawing level, rudely overtaken in popularity and prestige by a batch of universities chiefly valued for being new. (*CP*, 11)

These are the main reasons why so many English professors try to get a stipend at the State University of Euphoria, whereas American scholars are not interested in going to The University of Rummidge.

The educational systems are also different. Whereas in Euphoric State '[...] it is not too difficult to obtain a bachelor's degree, [...] cheating is easy [...] and [the students are] free to give full attention to the normal interests of late adolescence – sport, alcohol, entertainment and the opposite sex [and that] it is at the postgraduate level that the pressure really begins' (*CP*, 12), things seem to be stricter and more difficult in Britain:

Under the British system, competition begins and ends much earlier. Four times, under our educational rules, the human pack is shuffled and cut – at eleven plus [...]. The British postgraduate student is a lonely, forlorn soul, uncertain of what he is doing or whom he is trying to please – you may recognize him in the tea-shops around the Bodleian and the British Museum by the glazed look in his eyes [...]. As long as he manages to land his first job, this is no great handicap in the short run, since tenure is virtually automatic in British universities, and everyone is paid on the same scale. But at a certain age, the age at which promotions and Chairs begin to occupy a man's thoughts, he may look back with wistful nostalgia to the days when his wits ran fresh and clear, directed to a single, positive goal. (*CP*, 12-13)

Philip Swallow describes the differences between university life in England and America and the peculiarities of the students in one of his letters to his wife.

I confess I had something of the raw-recruit feeling when I went to meet my classes for the first time this week. The system is so different, and the students are so much more heterogeneous than they are at home. They've read the most outlandish things and not read the most obvious ones. (*CP*, 106)

What is also striking about *CP* is the fact that Lodge gives examples of famous authors and literary works that have taken an important place in (English/American) literature. These authors and books can be regarded to be what Matthew Arnold defines as high culture (see chapter 3.1.1) or what Raymond Williams defined as '[...] the works and practises of intellectual and especially artistic activity' (Williams 1983, 90)⁷⁷ and are therefore part of one or more cultures.

Some novels are mentioned when Swallow's game "Humiliation" is played.

[...] he taught us a game he claims to have invented, called 'Humiliation'. [...] The essence of the matter is that each person names a book which he hasn't read but assumes that the others have read, and scores a point for every person who has read it. Get it? Well, Howard Ringbaum didn't. You know Howard, he has a pathologic urge to succeed and a pathological fear of being thought uncultured, and this game set his two obsessions at war with each other, because he could succeed in the game only by exposing a gap in his culture. (*CP*, 116)

In this specific case, a person who hasn't read certain classic works of great literature is regarded to be uncultured.

Examples of writers and pieces of literature can be found throughout the whole novel.

The Confederate Soldier and Carol were joint winners, scoring four points out of a possible five with *Steppenwolf* and *The Story of O* respectively, Philip in each case accounting for the odd point. His own nomination, *Oliver Twist* – usually a certain winner – was nowhere. (*CP*, 82)

Philip Swallow was a man with genuine love of literature in all its diverse forms. He was happy with Beowulf as with Virginia Wolf, with *Waiting for Godot* as with *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, [...] (*CP*, 13)

'What has Stratford-upon-Avon got to do with it for Chrissake?'
'It's supposed to give you a lift afterwards. You get to see a play.'
'*All's Well That Ends Well*?' he snaps back, quick as a flash. But the jest conceals a deep unease. (*CP*, 25)

⁷⁷ Cf. chapter 3.1.1.

Literature was never about what it appeared to be about, though in the case of the novel considerable ingenuity and perception were needed to crack the code of realistic illusion, which was why he had been professionally attracted to the genre (even the dumbest critic understood that *Hamlet* wasn't about how the guy could kill his uncle, or the *Ancient Mariner* about cruelty to animals, but it was surprising how many people thought that Jane Austen's novels were about finding Mr Right). (*CP*, 40)

Besides the concept of high culture, also popular or mass culture (two terms coined by Matthew Arnold⁷⁸) is mentioned in Lodge's novel. Television, radio, newspapers, magazines, etc. are on the one hand important media that help to introduce culture to a wider range of people and on the other hand, these new media themselves become part of "daily" culture, in other words lived culture that is always present.

The reading of a newspaper or a magazine, watching TV, going to the cinema, etc. is also part of culture! In *CP*, links to this, as some people might call it "inferior" kind of culture, can be found very easily.

Also Youth culture plays a decisive role in *CP*.

That was something he *did* envy the young – their style of dancing, though he never betrayed the fact to a soul. Under the pretence of indulging his children, and with an expression carefully adjusted to express amused contempt, he watched *Top of the Pops* and similar TV programmes with a painful mingling of pleasure and regret. How enchanting, those flashing thighs and twitching buttocks, lolling heads and bouncing breasts; how deliciously mindless, liberating, it all was! And how infinitely sad the dancing of his own youth appeared in retrospect, [...]. (*CP*, 22)

Student newspapers also contribute to a great extent to this new form of culture for young people, mainly students.

Invariably they caused disciplinary problems. In his memorable undergraduate career Charles Boon had involved the student newspaper *Rumble*, of which he was editor, in an expensive libel suit brought by he mayoress of Rummidge; caused the Lodgings warden to retire

⁷⁸ Cf. Giles and Middleton, 15 and chapter 3.1.1.

prematurely with a nervous disorder from which she still suffered; appeared on 'University Challenge' drunk [...] (CP, 30)

Language is not only important as a medium for the transfer of ideas, values, etc. (= culture), but it can also be a way of an expression of culture. Primarily younger generations develop new kinds of jargon/slang. After having lived some time in America, Charles Boon has taken over this sort of new language from the younger American generations.

'Dontcha remember writing a reference for me?'

'A great many references, Boon.'

'Yeah, well, it's like a fruit machine, y'know, you got to keep pulling the old lever. Never say die. Then, Bingo! Anybody sitting next to you? No? I'll join you in a sec. Got to have a slash. Don't run away.' (CP, 29)

Swallow and Zapp on the other hand, because of their age and their job as university teachers, use a more elaborate register of language that gives them a good and also higher reputation within the society.

Also lapel buttons, like (student) newspapers and magazines, can express the ideas of a revolution and changing and defining culture new from a completely different viewpoint that might shock older generations with a more conservative attitude. The lapel buttons of Charles Boon that Swallow reads on the flight from Europe to America have become an important media in the diffusion of "political" statements.

LEGALIZE POT
NORMAN O. BROWN FOR PRESIDENT
SAVE THE BAY: MAKE WATER NOT WAR
KEEP THE DRAFT CARDS BURNING
THERE IS A FAULT IN REALITY – NORMAL SERVICE WILL RETURN
SHORTLY
HAPPINESS IS (just IS)
KEEP GOD OUT OF AMERICA
BOYCOTT GRAPES
KEEP KROOP
SWINGING SAVES
BOYCOTT TRUFFLES
FUCK D*CK
(CP, 41)

But, as it was mentioned before, the media in general have become a part of culture as well.

He was at the best of times a radio and TV addict: he kept a radio in his office at Euphoric State tuned permanently to his favourite FM station, specializing in rock-soul ballads; and he had a colour TV in his study at home as well as in the living-room because he found it easier to work while watching sports broadcasts at the same time. (Baseball was most conducive to a ready flow of words, but football, hockey and basketball would also serve.) (*CP*, 59)

Lodge uses this new media of newspaper articles, leaflets, and manifestos in chapter 4 "Reading", which only consists of small types of texts and are part of a new form of culture, like graffiti in Mhlongo's novel *Dog*.

As we have seen in chapter 4.1.2, Lodge uses his novels also to discuss theoretical aspects/issues of literary criticism. His character Morris Zapp for example, has the idea of analysing all Jane Austen novels from different literary perspectives.

[...] a series of commentaries on Jane Austen which would work through the whole canon, one novel at a time, saying absolutely everything that could possibly be said about them. The idea was to be utterly exhaustive, to examine the novels from every conceivable angle, historical, biographical, rhetorical, mythical, Freudian, Jungian, existentialist, Marxist, structuralist, Christian-allegorical, ethical, exponential, linguistic, phenomenological, archetypal, you name it; so that when each commentary was written there would be simply *nothing further to say* about the novel in question. (*CP*, 37)

The books did no more than confirm Swallow's confession that he had no particular scholarly field, being a miscellaneous collection of English literature, with a thin reputation of modern criticism, Morris's own not included. (*CP*, 53)

It becomes obvious that it is impossible to discuss every literary work (as Zapp recognises on page 38) because the study of literature and literature itself are changing constantly (like culture or identity) and new perspectives of and on literary criticism may develop. There will always be something to say about works of literature because every individual may have a different opinion and ascribe different meanings to e.g. the message of a novel and there is never

only one true answer in the field of literary studies because it is always a question of interpretation.

When we talk about culture, we even have to regard Swallow's and Zapp's visits of the 'topless and bottomless ping-pong, roulette, shoeshine, barbecue, all-in wrestling and go-go dancing' (*CP*, 95) nightclubs to be and contribute to the changing of culture. This form of entertainment, as it is described on pages 94-101, is a part of culture, even it might be seen to be inappropriate to refer to it in that way.

It is very interesting to analyse how British/American culture is described from an insider perspective (of someone who is part of that cultural background) and for whom cultural peculiarities are normal and part of every day's life, and to see, how an outsider examines cultural aspects that are different from one's own given cultural characteristics. *CP* is a perfect example for such an intercultural comparison because we have two individuals that describe, in a satirical way, how they experience cultural differences and what they think about it. Swallow and Zapp comment on the characteristics of American/British culture from an outsider perspective, whereas in chapter 3 "Corresponding", their wives comment on the behaviour of each other's husband from an insider perspective. These different viewpoints describe a particular way of life and therefore a particular culture. Philip, Morris, Hilary and Désirée characterise their husbands or wives in their letters and also describe the cultural peculiarities of them.

[...] because Mr Zapp is already occupying your room. I can't say I took on him. I asked Bob Busby how he was settling in, and he said that very few people had seen much of him – he seems to be a rather silent and standoffish person, who spends most of the time in his room. [...] Americans *are* rather gullible, aren't they? (*CP*, 102)

Oh yes, I nearly forgot, and I met your opposite number, Philip Swallow. I was somewhat slewed by this time and kept calling him Sparrow, but he took it straight on the stiff upper lip. Jesus, if all the British are like him I don't know how you're going to survive. (*CP*, 103)

The fact that Morris Zapp invites himself to dinner in the Swallow's house is a gesture of rudeness for Hilary. She thinks that it might be all right to do this in America, but in England the owner of the house is the one to invite you to have dinner with you.

I asked him if he would mind finishing his drink while I served the children their meal, hoping this would be a hint to him to leave promptly, but he said no, he didn't mind and I should eat too, and he took off his hat and coat and sat down to watch us. [...] By this time I was beginning to panic a bit, wondering if I was ever going to get him out of the house. (*CP*, 111)

Philip is also not happy with what he hears about his counterpart, who tries to keep in touch with his wife Hilary.

What an extraordinary fellow Zapp seems to be. I hope he won't bother you any more. Frankly, the more I hear about him, the less I like him. [...] The fact is that the man is entirely unprincipled where women are concerned [...] and I feel he might have an insidiously corrupting influence on an impressionable girl of Amanda's age. (*CP*, 112)

Also Morris Zapp is not happy about what he gets to know about Swallow, primarily because he thinks that Philip Swallow has written a negative review about one of the articles that Zapp has published some years before.

What does he look like, Desiree, for Christ's sake? What manner of man is he? Swallow, I mean. Do his canines hang out over his lower lip? Is his handshake cold and clammy? Do his eyes have a murderous glint? (*CP*, 115)

In chapter 5, the whole situation changes and Hilary and Morris and also Désirée and Philip are on the starting point of an affair. After having had the opportunity of getting to know each other, they find out that they are attracted by each other and that there are many things that they do no longer like about their actual husband or wife.

Chapter 2 "Setting" begins with a description of the cities and how the two main characters see them (pages 46-48). Swallow is very happy and satisfied with his live at Euphoric State, whereas Zapp hates the British way of life. Swallow finds all the conveniences of daily life: a nice apartment, friendly

colleagues at the university, a beautiful campus and modern inventory, etc. Zapp on the other hand lives in a “torn down” apartment with a heating system that ‘turned out to be one of electric radiators perversely and unalterably programmed to come on at full blast when you were asleep and to turn themselves off as soon as you got up [...]’ (CP, 48), a nerve-racking owner of the apartment with a very catholic attitude, reserved colleagues that, at the beginning, seem to not want to have anything to do with him, etc. In a very satiric and sometimes sarcastic way, this chapter describes how Swallow and Zapp experience a different culture. On the way to the campus, Swallow meets a group of students standing outside the faculty because of a bomb warning (page 49). This is the first time that he comes in contact with a new generation of people/students who are protesting and revolting against American politics, the war in Vietnam, etc. and through their behaviour build up anew form of culture. This is something completely new to him and different from his conservative attitude and correct British way of life. Zapp’s first day at the university is a bit different and calmer. Nearly all of the professors are still on their vacation and the English department seems to be a deserted place with empty corridors and no students waiting for lectures or office hours to begin. But he is quite impressed by Swallow’s office ‘it was a large, comfortable room, well-furnished with desk, table, chairs and bookshelves of matching polished wood, an armchair and a rather handsome rug’ (CP, 51) that he is allowed to use during his stay at Rummidge University. Things are not well organised and complicated at Rummidge, whereas everything seems to be perfectly organised for Swallow’s stay at Euphoric State:

With this ambiguous reassurance Mabel Lee proceeded to hand over the keys to his room, together with a wad of forms and leaflets which she briskly explained to him, dealing them out on the counter that divided the room: ‘Identity Card, don’t forget to sign it, application for car parking, medical insurance brochures – choose any one plan, typewriter rental application – you can have electric or manual, course handbook, income tax immunity form, key to the elevator in this building, key to the Xerox room, just sign your name in the book each time you use the machine ... (CP, 54)

As we have heard so far, *CP* describes the differences of English and American culture from an insider and an outsider position, depending on the viewpoint of the protagonists and their wives.

Pictures by Randall Jarrell takes a different position when it comes to the analysis of culture: it draws a picture of life within a university campus (as the title of the novel already suggests) and American culture from one perspective only. The narrator of the plot tells us the stories of various characters that all come from the same cultural background, apart from Gottfried Rosenbaum, who is of European origin. It is very interesting to see, how an American experiences his own culture and establishes connections and finds differences between his and another (European) culture. Primarily the experiences of the American characters play an important role in the analysis of cultural differences.

5.2.2.2 Pictures from an Institution – A Comedy

The first person narrator, an American poet, teaching at the University of Benton describes one term in his life as a professor, taking his own cultural background for granted and analysing the peculiarities of European culture. It is interesting to see, how Jarrell describes American/European culture from a different viewpoint, if we compare it with Lodge's novel. Lodge gives the reader the impression of taking over the role of the protagonists and experiencing the daily life and struggles from Swallow's and Zapp's viewpoint. Jarrell does it by using the experiences and observations of the first person narrator. This means that he does not take over the role of Gottfried Rosenbaum or his wife to analyse American culture (as we find it in *CP*), but assumes how they might see America through the narrator of the story, although we do not know if the descriptions are always valid because we do not get them from the first hand experiences of the European characters. Citations from the novel will explain more clearly what is meant here.

Dr. Rosenbaum's saying about Benton was not unjust. It went: The Patagonians have two poets, the better named Gomez; the Patagonians call Shakespeare the English Gomez. (*Pictures*, 83)

Their surroundings were old and interesting, but Gottfried was used to rather older and rather more interesting surroundings than theirs. He did not want things to be European, to be at all like Europe: it was a New World, wasn't it? (*Pictures*, 121)

People said about Dr. Rosenbaum's wife that she had married beneath her, and was really a princess of the house of— the houses varied: Hapsburg, Hohenzollern, and Saxe-Coburg-Gotha were the commonest. (*Pictures*, 141)

We do not know if what we find in those descriptions of the Rosenbaum's or their thoughts and feelings, is really what they think about certain topics, primarily cultural differences, because we do not get the information from first-hand. We just hear what the narrator assumes that they think of it. It may be described as a blending of two viewpoints on cultural differences or a "distortion of culture" because of the assumptions that are made by the narrator.

Although there are a lot of similarities between the three academic novels, there is one main difference between *Pictures* and *CP* or *Dog*; the college that is described by Jarrell is a women's college. The fact that no men are admitted in Benton College constructs a social network and therefore also a different kind of cultural background. One might say that inside the campus walls an artificial society, consisting only of female students, apart from the male professors that are teaching there, is creating a small microcosm with 'its own norms and values'.⁷⁹ We have the same concept in all academic novels, but in the case of *Pictures* this fact contributes to a great extent to the formation of a special kind of cultural characteristic.

Most of the people of Benton would have swallowed a porcupine, if you had dyed its quills and called it Modern Art; they longed for men to be discovered on the moon, so that they could show that *they* weren't prejudiced towards moon men; and they were so liberal and selfless,

⁷⁹ Cf. Connor in Showalter, 4 and chapter 2.2.2

politically, that—but what words of men, or tongue of man or angel, can I find adequate to this great theme? In the world outside one met many people who were negatives of the people of Benton: exact duplications, but with the whites and blacks reversed. (*Pictures*, 104)

Nature did her best for Benton. ... And Nature, and nurture too, had done their best for the girls of Benton. When the freshmen arrived in September it was as if Benton had been transported to the wondering Antipodes to have, alone among earthly places, a second Spring [...] (*Pictures*, 219)

The previous citations show very clearly that the world inside the campus is a beautiful and pastoral place that is protected against the threats and problems of everyday life by its walls and the fact that the campus has its own rules that establish an image or a replica of the real world. But there is more to say about that: the cultivation of arts, which is what we (may) call culture, is very important in Benton College.

Benton decided, with naked logic: why not let that reading and conversation *be* college, and let students do the ordinary classwork on the outside?—if they felt that they needed to; [...] So the students conversation and reading and “extra-curricular cultural activities” and decisions about Life were made, as much as possible, the curriculum through which the teachers of Benton shepherded the students of Benton, biting at their heels and putting attractive haystacks before their even more attractive noses: they called this “allowing the student to use his own individual initiative.” (*Pictures*, 84)

This cultivation of arts is seen to be a general knowledge about society and a necessity to survive in the real outside world, that college prepares you for. It helps you to find your way around, to solve any kind of problem and to become a useful member of society. According to Womack academic novels ‘ultimately seek to enhance the culture and sustain the community [...]’.⁸⁰ In his novel, Jarrell expresses very explicitly what, according to him, the duty of the teachers and the university is:

The teachers of Benton were very grown-up. To work as hard as they worked, they had to be. They had a half-hour conference once a week with each of their students—they conducted them over the *pons asinorum*

⁸⁰ Womack, 329.

one by one; they taught a couple of long classes; each was the adviser—they had a stranger name for it—of a number of girls, and the girls were encouraged to have problems [...]; instead of writing down grades for the students they wrote out, for the work of each girl in each class, analyses, protocols, brochures; they were expected to enter into the political and social and cultural life of the community [...]. (*Pictures*, 86)

Jarrell also refers to the cultural differences and problems that may occur in one given society and the fact that university can prepare you for your life after your education at a college, but that you will have to make your own personal experiences. In his novel, the sociologists are the media of discussing the sociological and cultural problems of society. One example can be found on page 101.

It was a mark of the caste to which they belonged not to believe in caste, and I did not like them any the worse of that; I was amused at the divergence between practice and theory, though, when their sociologists talked gravely about *upper upper* and *lower upper* and *lower lower* classes in the world outside. (*Pictures*, 101)

The same campus that prepares students for real life does not only have positive merits and student life at the university also has its negative and non-romantic sides as well. Dr Rosenbaum, for example, is of the opinion that also men should be admitted to Benton College. Not only because they should be educated (in the beautiful arts) as well, but because they are part of society and culture and life inside the university is boring and has got nothing to do with real life.

Dr. Rosenbaum had said, about Benton, to Camille Batterson: "It is not fair, not to let in boys; boys, too, they must be educated. Oh if I only could have been a little girl, and go to Benton! [...]" (*Pictures*, 84)

Furthermore, the repetition of daily routines and the unstoppable rhythm of summer and winter terms make the life of the students, as well as those of the professors, an unbearable boring and monotonous circle that starts anew with every semester.

Gertrude waited, as an astronomer waits for a good nova; but it was no use, she had to make up her own. And Benton was not only loveless, it was plotless; there too she had to make up her own. Life at Benton was a

routine affair—and if you had told life that, it would have replied indifferently, “It’s life, isn’t it?” (*Pictures*, 63)

As we have seen so far, Jarrell has very clear and straightforward ideas of what culture is and how the university, seen as an institution and as a small microcosm with its own society, influences professors and primarily the students in their ways of thinking and therefore also their behaviour.

Like in *CP*, there are a lot of descriptions of daily life that can also be summed up under the concept of culture that we do not notice anymore because they are taken for granted by us. These routines and rituals may seem normal to us, but could be something obscure for someone from a different cultural background. Examples are the interpersonal relationships and the way we behave in different situations. The way we act and speak, our facial play and our gestures depend on many social factors: the person we are interacting with (age, class, gender, etc.), the situation we find ourselves in (at home, at work, etc.), the topic about which we are talking, etc. All these factors are part of what Giles and Middleton describe as ‘the way in which culture itself creates, constructs and constitutes social relations (such as those between men and women, children and parents)’⁸¹ and what Williams defines as ‘the meanings and values implicit and explicit in a particular way of life, a particular culture’.⁸²

The situation that is described on pages 4-7 shows the relation between the president of Benton, Dwight Robbins and the novelist Gertrude Johnson, who decides to work as a teacher at Benton. The hierarchical structures that define the social network are part of a certain kind of behaviour and can be summed up under the concept of lived culture as we also see on page 105.

The ranks of the teachers of Benton were fairly anomalous, their salaries were fairly similar, and most of what power there was was distributed; being the head of a department, even was a rotated chore. What mattered at Benton was the Approval of Your Colleagues, the respect of the community of Benton. (*Pictures*, 105)

⁸¹ Giles and Middleton, 24.

⁸² Williams 1961, 57.

Another example of social interaction is the dinner party at Gertrude Johnson's house to which Constance Morgan, Flo and Jerrold Whittaker, Dwight Robbins and his wife and the narrator and his wife are invited (pages 35-63). The invitation itself can be regarded to be a cultural gesture and the whole course of the evening is planned according to cultural norms: from the welcoming of the guests at the door and putting away their clothes, making small talk when drinking the aperitif, talking about family matters and the children to the actual dinner and the ritual of saying goodbye and what a pleasant evening it was (although this does not necessarily have to be true).

All three campus novels are full of such rituals that do not seem to be part of culture because, as was said before, they are taken for granted by the members of a specific cultural group.

Throughout the novel, but primarily in parts of chapter 2 (pages 35-63, the dinner party at the house of the Johnson's), the characters are talking about all kinds of cultural aspects, without recognising their own cultural roots. As in *CP* we find discussions about and references to high art or high culture as well as classical and contemporary art.

I answered Constance's question; I said, "It's Puck—What fools these mortals be!" (*Pictures*, 37)

Gertrude and Sidney had, instead of pictures, two reproductions from the Museum of Non-Objective Art, in frames or containers half of plastic, half of mirror. One was romantic, and showed a kidney being married to the issue of a sterile womb, amid trailing clouds of mustard—or Lewisite, I am not sure; the other was classical, and showed two lines on a plain—or plane, perhaps.

"Is that a Mondrian?" Constance asked politely. (*Pictures*, 39)

The previous and the following citation shows, that having read or knowing a particular work of high art puts you on a level of higher prestige and makes you (feel) superior to others. In the novel, Constance Morgan, the secretary of the president, is the one who is regarded to be less cultured, as she is "only" a secretary and does not have a title like all the other characters in the novel.

“To have read a certain proportion of Molière’s works is indispensable to a valid understanding of the cultural background of the French,” Dr. Whittaker said. [...] He went on: I *have* read *Le Misanthrope*, I am happy to say. It is a work of true sociological insight.” (*Pictures*, 49)

The walls of his room were covered with these coiling visions, except where some fairy-tale character, or little boy sitting in the sun with a sand-pail, survived from earlier matriarchal cultures. (*Pictures*, 56)

Although the characters have studied at a university and know that culture is not just ‘the works and practises of intellectual and especially artistic activity’ (Williams 1983, 90), they compete for and enjoy considerable prestige because of their knowledge of high art. But sometimes, Jarrell also describes a mixture of high and mass culture (what might be called kitsch) that allows the reader to develop an idea of what the term culture means in general.

You went into a warm dark cozy morass or labyrinth or limbo of fire-dogs, dough-chests (full of old numbers of the *Journal of Social Psychology*), Delft pepper-mills, needle-point footstools, barometers, chesstables, candle-molds, Holbeins (their motto was, *If it isn’t a Holbein it isn’t a picture*—and Dr. Whittaker himself looked like a Holbein of the aged Èmile), quilts, counterpanes, throws, Afghans, stoles (that had got in among the others by mistake), hooked, knitted, quilted, tied, crocheted, and appliquéd rugs—my favourite was a Pennsylvania Dutch one with some sort of animal on it and underneath, in German *Don’t Tread on Me*. [...] (*Pictures*, 53)

Most of the chapters of *Pictures* describe the cultural peculiarities and differences of American and European culture. Some of the descriptions of Americans or American culture seem to have a negative, but ironic undertone.

We were given drinks, and drank them, and talked while we drank them. But *talked*, here, is a euphemism: we had that conversation about how you make a Martini. The people in Hell, Dr. Rosenbaum had told me once, say nothing but *What?* Americans in Hell tell each other how to make Martinis. (*Pictures*, 40)

Gertrude said about Benton, in the voice of a digital computer nagging at cash-registers: “Americans are so conformist that even their dissident groups exhibit the most abject conformity.” (*Pictures*, 104)

The American way of life (and living) is described indirectly, by the description of the house of the Rosenbaums and how their lifestyle is different from the typical American one. Although they try to integrate themselves and try to become typical Americans, by adopting habits, they cannot hide or deny their cultural European roots.

The Rosenbaums sat by their fireplace like Baucis and Philemon, and spoke in mourning for this American acquaintance of theirs. [...] For their house—spears, stucco, enamel, and all—never seemed to you an American house; the air in it was not American air, but was heated differently, moved differently, so that even the curtains hung with a darker and staid and stiller stiffness, [...]. (*Pictures*, 125)

[...] and there were printed scores, photostats of scores, scores in manuscript, scores in Esperanto, almost. In the living room, over the fireplace, there was a copy of a Cro-Magnon painting of a buffalo: Gottfried said that it showed how American they had become. (*Pictures*, 143)

If we think about American culture, we think about cowboys, Indians, New York, Hollywood, etc, but in the novel also non-stereotypical images of American culture are also described, that seem unfamiliar to somebody from another cultural background.

The pictures were pictures of cowboys, soldiers, factory workers, fathers and mothers and their children—of things as they are now, and as they used to be thirty or forty years ago. They were drawn by someone who, Constance said, knew *everything* about Americans. She even converted the Rosenbaums to her J. R. Williams, to such an extent that Convert Gottfried came back coughing from the newspaper-files of the public library. “This is the other America.” he said. “In Europe they know nothing of this.” (*Pictures*, 155)

According to the narrator of the novel, the Americans think of themselves as being superior to other countries and also to other cultures in the world. If this is really true, is doubtful. What is true is that Irene, Dr. Rosenbaums wife, has problems with the mentality and the attitude of Americans.

As you talk about your own qualities you are always rather a comic figure, and I must have been one as I talked about the qualities of Americans. There was an *I did not know what* about American qualities:

as you heard me talk about them, trying to say what it was, you did not think as usual, *He's a true American*, but were impressed with how subtle I could be—you could see that, with all our faults, we Americans were still, in some sense, *better*. (*Pictures*, 175)

But sometimes, to Irene, America hardly seemed the world at all. She believed in (though she didn't usually bother to say them) some of the most familiar clichés of European settlers in America: that American vegetables look better than they taste; that we have a disproportionate admiration for Youth, [...]; that we believe in Education and distrust anybody who is educated and so on and so on and so on [...]. (*Pictures*, 180)

But although she sometimes has difficulties with settling down in a new country with its own culture, she is happy with her life in the United States.

And yet Irene liked America too: as she said to Constance, parodying a line of poetry that had attracted her, "In the United States, there one feels free." But she spoiled it by continuing, "Except from the Americans—but every pearl has its oyster." (*Pictures*, 181)

Jarrell of course also describes European culture from an American perspective.

The idea that Americans see themselves as superior to others is described in the following citation. According to Gertrude Johnson, European culture is old-fashioned and out of date and she also thinks that Europeans care too much about themselves.

Gertrude thought Europe overrated, too; she voyaged there, voyaged back, and told her friends; they listened, awed, uneasy somehow. She had a wonderful theory that Europeans are mere children to us Americans, who are the oldest of men—why I once knew: because our political institutions are older, or because Europeans skipped some stage of their development, or because Gertrude was an American—I forget. (*Pictures*, 9)

Constance could not help feeling that the Russian-ness and Austrian-ness and Past-ness of the Rosenbaums were of the same use to them that they were to her, just as we look at an old photograph and feel that the people in it must surely have had some intimation of how old-fashioned they were [...]. (*Pictures*, 177)

Mrs. Rosenbaum on the other hand sees herself as a kind of pioneer and thinks that European culture is superior to the American and that she brings culture (in any kind of form) from Europe to the United States, like Philip Swallow does in *CP*.

Mrs. Rosenbaum had brought with her, from the Old World, the remains of beauty; [...]. (*Pictures*, 139)

It is very interesting to see, how Americans see a typical European (German/Austrian). This stereotype is described by Jarrell primarily in the characterisation of Dr. Gottfried Rosenbaum on pages 69-70, but also in the rest of the novel. Furthermore, the ideas of what European culture is, draw a picture of the somehow narrow-minded and prejudiced way of thinking of Americans.

They made some polite remarks about Strauss and Puccini, but soon strayed off to Schumann-Heink and Galli-Curci and Pavlova. Gottfried's German-ness—they made no distinction between Austria and Germany—was more difficult to do anything with; they kept away from Hitler and the Kaiser, and stuck for as long as they could to German literature. (*Pictures*, 121)

The differences between the rituals of greeting are also very important; according to the situations that are described in the novel, it seems that Americans are more welcoming because they give you a kiss, when they see you. Europeans seem to be more reserved, although this is not true for all the different cultures in Europe (German ≠ Italian).

Constance kissed me, Irene and Gottfried shook my hand; like most Europeans, they gave the impression of wanting to shake hands with the cat whenever it came into the room—to shake hands and utter a short formal sentence that would express their genuine pleasure at getting to see Frau Katze again. (*Pictures*, 149)

He was beginning on it, in loving tones, when Constance said equally lovingly: "Do you know what I think, Dr. Rosenbaum?"

"No, what?"

"I think that you are a child."

"That is what you Americans think of all of us," Dr. Rosenbaum said soberly.

"All of us? You mean Austrians or Europeans?"

“Zulus” cried Dr. Rosenbaum. “Zulus” He was happy in his jungle.
(*Pictures*, 158-159)

Throughout the whole novel, the characters talk about American and European culture and their differences, although these two terms are very ample. Each of them consists of a vast number of subcultures that are mentioned in some parts of the novel.

The Russian Irene, the Austrian Gottfried, the Bavarian Else, the Persian Tanya—the cat was named Tanya—these and the Simca, a French car manufactured under Italian parents, often made me think of Europe and America, the Old World and the New. (*Pictures*, 171)

When Gottfried cut his cantaloupe into squares with a knife and put sugar on the squares, it was as if I had seen Europe buckling into the Alps: I would feel, *How very European!* and then try to recall whether it was European or just Gottfried; [...](*Pictures*, 172)

In the previous paragraphs, we have seen that *Pictures* is full of descriptions and comparisons of American and European (Austrian, German, Russian, etc.) culture. This may be on account of Jarrell’s interest in German/Austrian literature and could be the reason, why he does not, or only superficially mention African or Native American culture. Like Lodge, he refuses to discuss cultural matters of these specific groups.

Mrs. Robbins, the president’s wife, is South African and her cultural roots are only sparsely described in the novel and seem to have a kind of negative connotation. In the first place it is Gertrude Johnson and the narrator’s wife who have a kind of racist attitude.

People did not like Mrs. Robbins, Mrs Robbins did not like people; and neither was sorry. She was a South African—not a native, not a Boer, a colonial. [...] To judge from her speech, she was compiling a Dictionary of Un-American English [...]. For Mrs. Robbins understanding anybody, having a fellow-feeling for anybody, admitting anybody else exists, were incomprehensible vices of Americans, Negroes, continentals, cats, dogs, carrots. She was “half British phlegm and half perfidious Albion,” according to Gertrude Johnson [...] (*Pictures*, 11-12)

She reminded Constance that Mrs. Robbins wasn't an Englishwoman at all, but a South African. "All that sunlight," she said. "And cosmic rays—I'm sure there're more cosmic rays down there. Mrs. Robbins is a *mutation*." (*Pictures*, 51)

Native American culture has had a great and important influence on American culture in general and is mentioned only once in *Pictures*. As African culture, it seems that the characters have racist attitude towards this kind of culture. The use of the term "Indians" instead of "Native Americans" is a clear evidence for this observation.

[...] but what is one saying! Of the War Between the States. In its courthouse Patrick Henry had had, with somebody of whom, alas, Dr. Rosenbaum knew nothing, a debate on—but this too Dr. Rosenbaum knew nothing of. He was in another world, but a world that went some distance back: the churchyard held women killed by Indians [...] in the seventeenth century, and it held too, the dead of the wars of four centuries. Four centuries are yesterday, but the church itself was called Buffalo Church. (*Pictures*, 119)

As we have already seen in the cultural analysis of *CP*, besides meanings and beliefs, language is an important part of culture.⁸³ Jarrell also uses language to emphasise the cultural differences between American and European (German and Austrian) culture by using German words and phrases and letting his Character Dr. Rosenbaum quote from famous the literary works of European writers. This again, reflects Jarrell's passion for the fine arts of Germanic literature of Middle Europe, primarily Rainer Maria Rilke and the German Märchen by Grimm.

I repeated, "Here's the Rilke," and we got to work. After a while Gottfried said in a wondering voice: "But this is extremely strange. It is not arranged correctly, but—Irene, whom is *this* like that we have talked about tonight?" He read: *Braucht nicht der mond, damit sich sein Abbild im Dorfteich fände, des Fremden Gestirns grosse Erscheinung?* (*Pictures*, 159)

[...] in the open air its black had turned ink-green and horseback-brown, but here it was, pipes and tailors and matchlocks and geese and all. Inside one found, in modified Gothic type, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*

⁸³ Cf. Giles and Middleton, 24.

gesammelt durch die Brüder Grimm, Gesamtausgabe mit 447 Zeichnungen von Otto Ubbelohde. (*Pictures*, 262-263)

Their cook, a Bavarian, was the Witch from *Hansel and Gretel*. [...] She had a leather-bound *Hermann und Dorothea* that she had received as a confirmation present. (*Pictures*, 141)

(*Der Rosenkavalier* was one of her favourite operas; she had played, in Prague and Dresden and Vienna, Octavian, and had pulled skirts on over her riding trousers and pretended to be the chambermaid Mariandel.) All at once, her face changed, she held her whole body differently, and she sang *Nein, nein, nein, nein! I trink' kein Wein* in the voice of a soiled dumpling with dreams: Constance and Dr. Rosenbaum almost said *Gesundheit!* to make sure her wandering spirit got safely back into her breast. (*Pictures*, 145)

"He would like Schönberg better if Schönberg had also composed *Giselle*," Dr. Rosenbaum said to Constance, looking at me with an indulgent smile. (*Pictures*, 150)

The differences between American and European culture that are mentioned in *Pictures* are immense. The South African novel *Dog* by Niq Mhlongo also deals with cultural aspects, but in this case, the author found a different approach to describe culture.

5.2.2.3 Dog Eat Dog

Dog is not only a campus novel, but a black campus novel. This means that its main issue is not to tell a comical story about a student at the university, but it furthermore describes the problems of this young student as a metaphor for the situation of the whole population of South Africa. The purpose of Mhlongo's novel is to inform people all over the world about what has been and what is still going on in South Africa. This is the reason why he concentrates mainly on the description of South African culture, instead of comparing it with Western (American and European) cultures, although the influence of Western cultures is without doubt.

The time before and also after 1994 can be said to be the climax of political, social and cultural changes. The fall of apartheid led to a restructuring of the lives of a whole population, not only black, but also white people and these changes also redefined the cultural life of the population. Within the novel, there are many examples of cultural comparison, but they are established on a different level: Mhlongo compares South African cultures. He describes the cultural differences of various peoples and also of different generations. Old traditions, like music, dancing, religion, family structures etc., and new forms of culture, like the music of the Kwaito generation, languages, graffiti, MacDonaldisation, etc. are compared and the new form of culture that emerges from these two is described by the author.

Mhlongo does not attach great importance to the description of cultural differences, but draws a picture of how South African culture(s) is/are influenced by Western ones and what the outcome of this intercultural relation is.

Throughout the whole novel, we observe that Niq Mhlongo's main interest is the way of living in South Africa in general. This way of living is what he understands by the concept of culture: the totality of all factors that define the social life of one individual (Dingz) as well as of different cultural groups (Dingz' friends, his family, students at the university, etc.) and also of the whole population of South Africa.

As it is very difficult to examine this cultural complexity, the analysis is established on different levels: the situation in South Africa in general is the starting point for this discussion which then leads to a more specific and detailed description of family life and life in the township compared to campus life. One of the main arguments is of course the description of the "traditional" cultures (religion, dancing, music, language, etc) of older generations and the new cultures (art, music, language, homosexuality, etc) of the younger Kwaito generation and the interaction between those two. It also analyses how the transformation of culture can influence one individual, as well as a whole group of people.

As we have heard so far (from the title of the book) and what we get to know from newspapers, magazines, TV broadcasts, etc, we can assume that life in South Africa is very hard in general and in particular for people from lower social classes (to which also Dingamanzi belongs). The egoistic attitude (described in chapter 5.1.3 that explains why Mhlongo decided to name his novel *Dog Eat Dog*) helps the people to handle these difficult situations and survive in an unfair world.

‘It’s really difficult. Our electricity and water have been cut off because the bills have not been paid for the past two years,’ I lied. I was not ashamed that I lied. Living in this South Africa of ours you have to master the art of lying in order to survive. (*Dog*, 21)

On the one hand we have the egoistic attitude of individuals, and on the other hand we have a very strong social cohesion within the family or between friends; furthermore there is the general solidarity of the black population against the white people and their social superiority. As it was mentioned before, the description of social life (inside the township, in the family and in Dingamanzi’s case also life at the university) play an important part in the analysis of the aspect of culture.

The conditions inside Soweto are hardly imaginable for someone from a Western background. Dingz and the eleven members of his family live in a four-roomed “house”, which should rather be described as hut or shelter without or rather poor sanitary arrangements and electrical supply.

Dr Winterburn took the documents and a pause followed as she pretended to be studying them closely. ‘The affidavit shows that twelve family members live crammed into a four-roomed matchbox house in Soweto.’ (*Dog*, 20)

Because of this our small bedroom, where three of my brothers and my uncle slept, had no door as we had used it to replace the sitting-dining-room door. A sheet had been hung across the doorway as a substitute for the broken door. (*Dog*, 41)

The township can be regarded to be a small world of its own, like the campus of the university, with its own laws, but in contrast to the campus it is a horrible, degenerate and dangerous place. One can easily get lost in all the small streets that seem to be a labyrinth between shabby huts and garbage dumps.

We ignored the men and walked over to the wall to piss. The ground was still wet with urine from the men playing dice. The smell of shit and urine was almost unbearable, although it was diluted by the noxious smell of burning tires somewhere behind the shacks. (*Dog*, 190)

Although you find everything that you need in the township (markets, butcheries, surgeries, traditional healers, pubs, etc), you should try to avoid causing a sensation. Chapter 23 describes the tense atmosphere in the township where self-administered justice is part of daily life and the police try to keep away from any kind of problems.

Next to the victims were all sorts of weapons that had been used by the angry crowd of men, women and children. I saw pangas, spades, pick handles, axes and garden forks. [...] 'By the way, this is the township,' Dunga said, as if to remind himself. 'Life is cheap and death is absolutely free of charge.' (*Dog*, 184)

As it is described on pages 40-43, when Dingz remembers the time when he still lived together with his family, the residents of the township have no rights and the police can do whatever they want. This is part of the legal framework of the township.

As a consequence of the bad and unjust conditions under which the poor, (black) population of South Africa has to live, the family plays a very important role. It gives the feeling of social security and support and its cultural value is unquestionable.

The major difference between Western and Third World Countries is the social network of/within the family. The smallest social unit is the family; the most common form of the family in Europe, for example, is the nuclear family, with two parents and one or two children. Teenagers who are on the edge of

become adults, leave their parent's house to emancipate themselves from their parent's authority and establish their own lives. In general, this is possible because the financial situation and the economic circumstances allow each individual to carry one's life in one's hands. There is of course still a close connection between the members of the family, but the areal distance also leads to an emotional separation between children and parents. The situation in Third World Countries is completely different. The form of the extended family for example is widespread in Africa. This type of family consists of a father and a mother, living in one house together with their children, grandparents and other relatives like uncles and aunts, and a number of ten or more family members, is not uncommon. The reason for this is the fact that the social governmental network does not provide any, or only insufficient, financial support for older people. This means that the children start to work much earlier to support their families and contribute to the budget of the family. Furthermore, the insufficient financial support also does not allow the children to leave their family and move into a flat or house of their own. The consequence is that all the members of a family live under one and the same roof and establish a very close social relationship that has a great influence on the cultural conditions, or culture in general, of the family and society.

My father used this as an opportunity to compose a song about white people. The song ran as follows and was in English:

You white man leave my family alone
This is the last warning
I worked hard and paid lobola for my wife
Unlike you who just give them a ring to put on their finger
I have eight children with her not just two (*Dog*, 39)

In the case of *Dog*, the family bonds play a decisive role, particularly the relationship between Dingz and his father. Although he is a drinker and his wife gets angry if he spends his money on alcohol, what leads to arguments within the family, Dingamanzi is very proud of his father and idolises him.⁸⁴ He treats his son like a man and shows him that he is no child anymore and that he will take a new position within the family and society.

⁸⁴ Cf. *Dog*, 37-40.

My mother was threatening to leave the house because my father didn't spend enough time at home. But soon he apologized and everything was back to normal again. [...] We went to the local bottlestore, and that was the day he gave me my first beer. The first ever glass of beer in my life. When we came back home I was his backing vocalist. (*Dog*, 40)

This special relation and the death of his father, when Dingz was only a young man, influence his personality and his life to a great extent; he becomes a strong and self-confident young man. After his father's death, the bond between the family members gets even closer. When Dingz punches the "Big Punisher" in his face⁸⁵ and his teachers come to visit him at home (pages 26-29), he is protected by his brother and family. This bond is a very important feature of African culture; to show respect for your parents and to take responsibility for your actions.

As we have already seen in the cultural analysis of *CP*⁸⁶ and *Pics*⁸⁷, the university is a place of cultural nurture. This is also the case in *Dog*, although here the university has an influence on the cultural identity of a South African student and the end of apartheid influences the social and cultural structures of the institution.

In the case of *Dog*, the university is a place of refuge for Dingamanzi. When he is on the campus, he doesn't think about poverty and the bad conditions of his family, but he still has to face racism and apartheid, which is a big problem for him. In this case, on the one hand the campus can be regarded to be a pastoral and secure place, but on the other hand the protagonist cannot escape from all of his problems. One of the main differences between *Dog* and *CP* or *Pictures* is the fact that university life is not or only marginally described. The reader gets some overall information about Dingamanzi's study, but campus life, as it is described in the other two campus novels, is only mentioned on some pages of the book:

⁸⁵ Cf. *Dog*, 25.

⁸⁶ Cf. Chapter 5.2.2.1

⁸⁷ Cf. Chapter 5.2.2.2

On Monday morning I stormed into the Financial Aid Office at the East Campus Senate House. I just couldn't understand why I could not be granted some kind of financial assistance. (*Dog*, 11)

He leaned forward and shook his large head slowly as if he was feeling sorry for me.

'What is your name?'

'Dingz.'

'Are you a student?'

'Yep.'

'Where?'

'Wits.' (*Dog*, 45)

The only descriptions of life inside the university can be found on pages 140-144, where Dingz describes a typical lecture at the university,

At quarter past nine my political studies lecture started in number three lecture theatre in the Central Block. I was the first one to arrive; I was ten minutes early. It was the last lecture of the semester before the mid-year exams. [...] (*Dog*, 140)

and on page 156 ff, when he is sitting in the campus park, thinking about what he is going to do next after he has failed his examination,

On a Friday afternoon in the last week of June I sat on the grey steps outside the Great Hall. The weak winter sun had failed to break through the scattered cloud. I had been basking in the patchy sunlight for about forty minutes contemplating what my next step should be. [...] (*Dog*, 156)

This example gives a romantic and pastoral impression of the campus and campus life, although reality brings him down to earth, when he thinks about his problem of how to get an aegrotat.

In chapter 26 (pages 208-211), Dingz is in the dean's office to get the deferred examination granted, what he finally manages to do. The conversation between him and the dean of the faculty shows, how the hierarchical structure of the university influences the behaviour of the two characters and how Dingz finally turns the hierarchy upside down, by calling the dean a racist.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ Cf. *Dog*, 210.

In the last chapter of the novel we get to know that the semester is over; that Dingz has failed two courses and that they are all looking forward to become second year students.⁸⁹ This chapter is the most important and interesting one, as regards the cultural influence of the university. Dingamanzi and his friends are sitting in the Dropout bar in Braamfontein, where they discuss their future and the future of South Africa in general. They express their pessimistic opinion of their future career and what they think about the university as an institution that stands for a better life of black students.

‘I think you’re forgetting one thing, comrade,’ I said, as I started pouring Redds cider into Nkanyi’s glass, ‘and that’s the fact that an institution like this is one is run like a corporation, where vice-chancellors are like CEOs, academics are like managers and students like me and you are the customers.’ Themba handed me a beer and I poured it into my glass. ‘Students from foreign soil are seen as reliable customers because they pay hard cash towards their academic fees.’ [...] That is why institutions like this one remain ivory towers to black South Africans.’ (*Dog*, 220)

Of course these characters are part of a new generation of South Africans that are influenced by the political turmoil of the previous years, but still, the cultural influences of the university is obvious.

In connection with the university, the YMCA and the Dropout bar in Braamfontein play an important role in the cultural lives of the characters in the novel.

When he is not at home at his family’s house, Dingz lives at the YMCA together with his friend Dworkin. When he takes his girlfriend Nkanyi to his room he gets into serious problems, and as a consequence has to leave the YMCA. Inside he has to abide by the rule of the priests (no alcohol, no women, etc)⁹⁰ a fact that Dingz does not like. Young men at his age revolt against older generations and their beliefs and values to express their own cultural identity.

The implications of the Priest’s words left my blood boiling.
‘Go to hell! Do you think this place is heaven?’

⁸⁹ Cf. *Dog*, 212.

⁹⁰ Cf. *Dog*, 135.

[...]

'Fuck that! I don't give a shit.'

'Fine. Go where you think they'll tolerate your unruly behaviour.'

'Arsehole,' I cursed them under my breath as I raised myself from the chair. (*Dog*, 136)

The Dropout bar is the only place, in which Dingz and his friends have a feeling of security. They sit together and talk about all kinds of issues and have a feeling of companionship. This is due to the fact that they are all about the same age, they are students, they share the same values and beliefs, they like the same kind of music, they all face the same problems, etc. This means that they are all part of one cultural background that gives them the feeling of not being alone.

The novel does not only draw a picture of the social and cultural relations that define the daily life of the people. It also describes the conditions of the people or their unfair treatment and problems; it also turns one's attention to the political and social, and as a consequence, to the cultural changes with the birth of democracy and the hope for a better future with equal rights for everybody.

Everybody was excited by the news that Prime Minister B.J. Vorster had resigned as the Prime Minister of the country and P.W. Botha had taken over as the new Prime Minister. (*Dog*, 41)

Different political parties had mumbled their big lies to rally people to vote for them. I had not made up my mind as to which party to vote for, but I definitely wanted to see a black party in government. (*Dog*, 61)

We partied until the wee hours. Around four in the morning we retired, having spent nearly all our money on alcohol, but we were satisfied that we had done our best to celebrate the birth of democracy. (*Dog*, 103)

Although we clearly see that there are important transformations going on within the country, the novel has an open ending. In the last chapter, Dingz and his friends are sitting in a bar, discussing the future of South Africa and they realise that the birth of democracy will not only have positive effects and

that the war for freedom and equal rights will go on (a detailed analysis of the question of ethnicity and racial injustice will be given in chapter 5.2.4.3).

Earlier that day I had meant to go to the rally at the FNB Stadium where President Mandela was going to speak. I was very disappointed to learn that it was cancelled due to the heavy rain. 'Shit, today's weather has disturbed so many important things,' I grumbled. (*Dog*, 213)

'On that day we used to commemorate the ruthless massacre of sixty-nine unarmed black men and women who protested against the notorious pass laws of apartheid on the 21st of March, 1961. The coming generations will have no idea why that day is a holiday, because it is now called Human Rights Day. That is like undermining the struggle of the black people in this country. And for what?' Themba asked. 'So that we can please the white people?' (*Dog*, 214)

The first step into the right direction was made and Nelson Mandela should be the man to lead South Africa into a better future.

The use of language is a very important feature of Mhlongo's novel. The author uses various different South African languages like Afrikaans, Sesotho, Tsonga, the Shangaan language, etc. to call attention to the fact, that South African culture consist of a large number of cultures that coexist and influence each other.

For your information, the Shangaan language is one of the eleven official languages in South Africa, it is also an official language in Mozambique, and although there are some Shangaan people in Zimbabwe, T-Man is definitely not one of them [...] (*Dog*, 129)

Although a great number of readers are not familiar with these languages, and they sometime make it hard to read the novel (although the English translations are included in the text) Mhlongo uses them to preserve the authentic atmosphere.

'Wola kawu. Hi, my friend;' shouted the driver of the Toyota Sprinter to the microbus driver.

'Wola.'

'Zishaphi vandag? Where is the gig today?'

'Ziyawa kahijampas. Its happening here in the evening.'

'Khona kahi? Around here?'

'Yebo,' confirmed the microbus driver.
'Uzozwakala nawesbali? Will you also come?'
'Ngizobona. Ngisahlanganisa amasente. I'll see. I'm still trying to get a few cents together,' answered the microbus driver. (*Dog*, 90)

But Mhlongo does not only use languages to describe cultural aspects. In his novel there is one hint to a famous citation that had a great influence on the life and the culture of black people all over the world.

'They are not even black, they're navy blue,' corrected Themba.
'Black is beautiful, don't you know that by know,' interrupted Babes. (*Dog*, 128)

"Black is beautiful" refers to a cultural movement that had its origin in America in the 1960ies and was very important for the anti-apartheid movement. In South Africa, Steve Biko was the founder of the Black Conscious Movement and his idea of black solidarity was to 'break the chains of oppression'⁹¹. The general idea behind this concept is that black culture is as beautiful as any other culture in the world and that nobody should be ashamed of his/her origin.

The description of old and new South African cultures and their influences on each other is one of the main arguments in Niq Mhlongo's novel. On the one hand we have the old traditions that have been passed on from one generation to the next and that have shaped the cultural heritage of South Africa, and on the other hand we have the formation of a new kind of culture of the younger Kwaito generation. As they are in constant contact, these two concepts influence each other and (might) form a new kind of cultural hybrid.

Primarily the older generations attach great importance to their cultural roots. They pass them on to their children and grandchildren and hope that they will not forget what they are taught, as they are influenced by globalisation and other cultural factors. Mhlongo gives a number of such examples in his novel that might sometimes seem absurd to someone from a different cultural background.

⁹¹ <http://zar.co.za/biko.htm>

‘It’s a beautiful thing to know that the straight and narrow can still be traced among the youth of today,’ my aunt began in a dispirited voice. ‘In our days life was communal. When one family cut its finger, the rest of us bled. When a neighbour’s house was on fire we would bring water. Today is different because folkways have been sidelined with all this so-called modernity. When a person dies a friend will come and demand payment of his unpaid bills. It is very rare and a pleasant surprise to see you young people still upholding the spirit of ubuntu by coming to pay your last respect to the deceased. (*Dog*, 27)

‘Yerrrrrr! Who told you that nonsense? For your information the circumcision school doctors use a different razor for each person; the family of the initiate has to supply their own blade. Do you think that our traditional rites of passage should be forsaken in favour of those whites? [...] (*Dog*, 120)

‘It’s because according to our culture I’m not supposed to touch anything connected with the deceased. And since it is taboo, I had to get permission from the elders.’ (*Dog*, 209)

Religion, sermons, traditional ceremonies, rituals and dancing are all part of this ancient cultural traditions and customs. The younger generations establish their own kind of culture that is, nevertheless, also influenced by what their ancestors have taught them.

Dingz is very proud of the songs that he has learned from his father⁹² and also knows typical songs of his ancestors⁹³. What is striking is that the old tradition of singing is taken over and new lyrics are introduced to the songs. This means that the practise of culture is not simply carried on, but that it is also influenced by new cultural conditions, e.g. political statements that are used in combination with a Zulu song (cf. page 54-55). A similar concept can be found in the music of the Kwaito generation.

The bass was pounding my eardrums, but the driver and the two teenagers in front of us were nodding along to Joe Nina.
Maria Podesta maan. Ding-dong
Yeah, yeah, yeah baby.
Ungishaya ding, ding ding ding-dong. (*Dog*, 77)

⁹² Cf. *Dog*, 38-39.

⁹³ Cf. *Dog*, 179-180.

As we can see on the basis of the English words of the lyrics, this kind of music is a mixture of American hip-hop music and traditional South African beats and rhythms.

It's about time. Listen to Boom Shaka!
Shaka Boom Boom Boom!
Woo! Wee! (*Dog*, 100)

My brother's hi-fi speakers were pumping out some fat kwaito beats outside on the lawn.

[...]

Themba sang along with Woza Africa's *iStokvel*. (*Dog*, 83)

Another way of expressing their cultural beliefs are graffiti. It can be regarded to be a form of written culture, like a poem. It can express ideas or anger, whereas in contrast to a poem, it reaches a larger audience because it can be found in public places (e.g. on walls of buildings, etc). *Dog* is full of such graffiti that describe the cultural beliefs of the younger black people.⁹⁴

The population and the culture of South Africa are of course also influenced by outer, Western cultures, "MacDonaldisation".

The sweet kwaito music blaring from a white CITI Golf passing along De Korte Street helped to bring me back from my reminiscence. [...] I searched the pockets of my jeans and took out the packet of Peter Stuyvesant that I had just bought at the supermarket and unsealed it. I lit a cigarette and inhaled the stress-relieving smoke. When I had finished I threw the butt into the road and took out my Walkman. (*Dog*, 44)

On his left foot he was wearing an old worn-out soccer boot with flattened studs. Only the three white diagonal stripes on it told me that it was a soccer boot. (*Dog*, 59)

Themba looked very interested in the items: a Rotel amplifier, a Sony video recorder and a Sansui CD player. (*Dog*, 95)

⁹⁴ See, e.g. pages 32, 77, 79, 92, etc.

As we crossed over the railway bridge that links the East and West sections of Orlando we passed a large red and white billboard on the side of the road: PEPSI WELCOMES YOU TO ORLANDO EAST (*Dog*, 183)

These forms of other cultures as well as homosexuality, Aids, poverty, democracy, etc. influence the process of finding and defining one's own culture or cultural identity and will be discussed in the next chapters.

As we have seen so far, the three campus novels are full of references to culture. As an important issue of culture, the next chapters will analyse the concept and aspects of identity.

5.2.3 Identity

Identity is as complex as the concept of culture. Every individual has a number of identities that he/she may adopt, depending on the social/cultural background. Identity can be regarded to be a comparison between one's individuality and the individuality of other groups that may, or may not, share common assumptions. Furthermore, it is no fixed concept and it is changing its meaning constantly.⁹⁵

In *CP*, *Pictures* and *Dog* we find a number of identities that define the characteristics of the protagonists. But, as identity is no stable concept, we can observe obvious transformations of the identities in each novel and in *CP* a description of the identity/midlife crises of Philipp Swallow and Morris Zapp. Each novel tells a story of individuals and the struggle for their own cultural identity. This means that the concept of identity is analysed from a non-essentialist perspective.⁹⁶

5.2.3.1 Changing Places

⁹⁵ Cf. Hall, 3-4.

⁹⁶ Cf. Giles and Middleton, 36 and chapter 3.2.1.

The cultural identity of the two characters, Philip Swallow and Morris Zapp, is defined by the cultural differences (as identity is always defined by the “self” and the “other”) that exist between European and American culture as we can see at the beginning of the novel.

[...] notwithstanding all the differences that exist between the two environments, and between the characters of the two men and their respective attitudes towards the whole enterprise. (*CP*, 6)

Their characters and attitudes that are part of the definition of one’s identity will be influenced by the new cultural background. The outcome of this influence on the identities of the protagonists contributes to the analysis of different cultures. In this connection it is important to point out again that an individual, at any time, is always defined by a number of identities and that these multiple identities influence each other, and that one/some of them, might become more important than others, depending on the situation that the individual finds himself/herself in. The meeting point of these plural identities is then what defines every individual.⁹⁷

According to Giles and Middleton, we can categorise the two professors.⁹⁸ At the beginning of the novel we do not have a lot of information about Swallow and Zapp. We only know that one of them is English, that the other is American and that they are both professors of English Literature, teaching at different universities.

High, high above the North Pole, on the first day of 1969, two professors of English Literature approached each other at a combined velocity of 1200 miles per hour. (*CP*, 5)

It seems that these are the most important features of their identities. When we read on, we get further information about them, primarily in the first two chapters that explain the background and reasons for the exchange programme. We then get to know that they are both married and they have children. This means that their sexual orientation is heterosexual and that they

⁹⁷ Cf. Hall, 5-6.

⁹⁸ Cf. Giles and Middleton, 31 and chapter 3.2.

adopt the roles of breadwinners, husbands and fathers and we get insight into their familiar background/atmosphere.

And as for Hilary, well, he found it difficult after all these years to think of her as ontologically distinct from her offspring. She existed, in his field of vision, mainly as a transmitter of information, warnings, requests and obligations with regard to Amanda, Robert and Matthew. (*CP*, 21)

Just another divorce. Actually, it was more complicated than that. Désirée, Morris's second wife, wanted a divorce, but Morris didn't. It was not Désirée that he was loth to part from, but their children, Elizabeth and Darcy, the darlings of Morris Zapp's otherwise unsentimental heart. (*CP*, 33)

Also their character traits (physical appearance, psychological attitudes and behaviour) are described, which also contribute to the formation of cultural identity.⁹⁹

When they finally arrive in the respective host countries, other identities become more important. They are still husbands and fathers, but these identities become subordinate to the fact that they are now foreigners in countries with big cultural differences. The beginning of chapter 2 "Settling" describes the feeling of uncertainty, foreignness and maybe also homesickness that the protagonists have to face in a country where they do not know anybody.¹⁰⁰

When the semester finally starts with the opening of the faculties, the run of students, the meeting of all professors of the faculty and the introduction of the visiting professors to the university staff, etc. their superior identities are the ones of professors of English literature, which give them a feeling of routine and security.

'You've been allocated room number 426,' said Mabel Lee, the petite Asian secretary. 'That's Professor Zapp's office.'
'Yes,' said Philip. 'He'll be using my room at Rummidge.'

⁹⁹ Cf. *CP*, 5-45.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. *CP*, 46-62.

[...] The Departmental Office was full of people just admitted to the building, loudly discussing the bomb which had exploded in the fourth-floor mensroom. (CP, 54)

‘What are you working on?’ he asked Philip.
‘Oh, I’m just trying to sort out my teaching at the moment.’
Ringbaum nodded impatiently. ‘What’s your field?’
‘Yours is Augustan pastoral, I believe,’ Philip returned evasively.
Ringbaum looked pleased. ‘Right. How did you know? You’ve seen my article in *College English*?’ (CP, 64)

Evidently the return of Professor Masters was the signal for which the rest of the faculty had been waiting. It was as if some obscure taboo had restrained them from introducing themselves before their chief had formally received him into the tribe. Now, in the Senior Common Room, they hurried forward and clustered around Morris’s chair, smiling and chattering, pressing upon him cups of tea and chocolate cookies, asking him about his journey, [...].(CP, 75)

After some time they settle in to daily life and begin to understand and take over certain cultural characteristics of their host countries.

After starting the affair with Désirée, Philip realises that, for the first time, he does not “feel British” anymore.

‘But I don’t feel British anymore. Not as much as I used to, anyway. Nor American for that matter. “Wandering between two worlds, one lost, the other powerless to be born.” ‘(CP, 150)

They also become friends with students from university and get involved in student activities. They feel young again and take part in demonstrations and think that they can make this world a better place. The point in time when Philip realises that he has been assimilated by American society and culture is described in the following citation.

Philip produced his Faculty Identity Card and British driver’s licence. The former provoked a curt homily against professors encouraging their students to violate property, the latter provoked deep but silent suspicion. Both documents were confiscated. (CP, 165)

He realises that he has not only lost his driving license, but also his cultural roots. Soon after this scene, he writes the letter to his wife Hilary in which he confesses his love affair with Désirée.

During this process of integration, they unconsciously adopt new identities and other ones become secondary. When Swallow and Zapp start affairs with each others wives, they become lovers and do no longer wonder about their families back at home or what consequences their affair might have.¹⁰¹

But after some time, Philip becomes aware of the fact that he has to tell his wife Hilary what has happened. He decides to write a letter (pages 169-170) in which he explains his situation and what his future plans are. It very clearly describes the identity crisis of Philip Swallow, who finds himself in a situation that he has never been in before. His life has changed completely and in that moment he is trying to find his new identity.

Because I've changed, Hilary, changed more than I should have thought possible. [...] I can't seem to work up any guilt or regret about it. I should be very sorry, naturally, to cause you any pain, but when I ask myself what injury I have done to you, [...], I come up with the answer: nothing. Our marriage – the home, the children – was like a machine which we served, and serviced, with the silent economy of two technicians who [...] are bored out of their minds by the job. [...] I'm sure it would be a good idea if you could come out here for a couple of weeks so that you could understand what I'm trying to say in context, [...]. (CP, 169-170)

Also Morris Zapp is trying to figure out what and why his life has changed completely. Before he goes to England, he is trying to compensate his midlife crisis with the purchase of a new sports car.

A propos of that, isn't the Lotus Europa you've ordered a somewhat young car for you? I saw one in downtown Esseph yesterday and, well, frankly, it's just a penis on wheels, isn't it? (CP, 103)

At the end of the novel, Swallow and Zapp can even imagine staying at their host university/country, although they were so unsatisfied with their situation at the beginning. In the last chapter he tries to find (in a way sarcastic) solutions

¹⁰¹ Cf. CP, 146-153.

for the problematic situation that the two professors and their wives find themselves in.

Morris: Let's consider the options. Coolly. (*prepares to light cigar*) First: we could return to our respective homes with our respective spouses.

[...]

Désirée: Next option.

Morris: We could all get divorced and remarry each other. If you follow me.

Philip: Where would we live?

Morris: I could take the Chair at Rummidge, settle down there. I guess you could get a job in Euphoria...

[...]

Morris: Hilary, honey! There are choices to be made. We must be aware of all the possibilities.

[...]

Morris: (*thoughtfully*) True. Another possibility is group marriage. You know? Two couples live together in one house and pool their resources. Everything is common property. [...]

(CP, 213)

But not only Philip and Morris review their lives. Also Désirée has doubts if she is satisfied with her life, and that is the reason why she wants to get divorced.

Désirée, Morris's second wife, wanted a divorce, [...] (CP, 33)

I'm not going to change my mind about the divorce, so please don't waste typewriter ribbon trying to make me. And for that matter, don't abstain from sexual intercourse on my account either. (CP, 103)

This mean, but truthful letter shows Morris that his marriage with Désirée is over and that he should try to find someone else and live a happy life. The fact that Hilary and Philip have been separated for such a long time also influences Hilary's life. That is why she has an affair with Morris and has no bad conscience about it.

All kinds of social/cultural influences affect the identity of the characters and even lead to an identity or midlife crisis. They (primarily Swallow) suddenly realise that something is missing in their lives and that they have to change certain things to become happy and satisfied. The exchange programme and

the new cultural background have finally redefined their attitudes and ideas about their lives and what/who they have become.

The open ending of the novel is in accordance with the definition of identity as a concept that is never clearly defined and in constant change¹⁰² and that is not only a definition of who/what we are, but it is also a description of who/what we might become.¹⁰³

5.2.3.2 Pictures from an Institution – A Comedy

In the case of *Pictures*, the concept of identity is analysed from a different perspective. It describes the multiple identities of all the characters of the novel and their further development, but it is mainly interested in the struggle of the cultural identity of Gottfried and Irene Rosenbaum, who find themselves in a grey area between their European roots and American culture and the identity crisis of Gertrude Johnson. Jarrell analyses the formation of a new identity and the influence on the social and cultural network of those two characters.

As we have already seen in chapter 4.2.2, Jarrell draws a picture of the social and cultural conditions of Benton and characterises the protagonists in his novel¹⁰⁴, rather than telling a story.¹⁰⁵ These characterisations also give insight into the (formation of) their multiple identities. In general we can divide them into to three different groups: Americans (Gertrude Johnson and her husband Sidney, President Robbins, Constance Morgan, Flo Whittaker and her husband, etc) and Europeans (Dr. Rosenbaum and his wife Irene) and Africans (Pamela Robbins, the wife of the president).

They talked a little (Gertrude in her anomalous Southern Speech, President Robbins in Standard American) about the job he was offering her. (*Pictures*, 5)

¹⁰² Cf. Hall, 3-4.

¹⁰³ Cf. Woodward, 21-22.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. *Pictures*, 5, 6, 11, 22, etc.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Rosenthal, 38 and Pritchard, 235.

“We Americans don’t believe in things like that any more, dearest,” Flo answered in a worried voice; she was relieved when things explained themselves. (*Pictures*, 56)

Gottfried’s German-ness—they made no distinction between Austria and Germany—was more difficult to do anything with; [...] (*Pictures*, 121)

And they could buy records of her [Irene], some of them even *had* records of her, though her name was not Rosenbaum on the records but her own real unsayable Russian name; [...] (*Pictures*, 140)

People did not like Mrs Robbins, Mrs Robbins did not like people; and neither was she sorry. She was a South African—not a native, not a Boer, a colonial. (*Pictures*, 11)

Such examples of defining people by their national and cultural origin can be found throughout the whole novel, but we can also make further distinctions relating to their social identities. All of the characters, apart from Constance Morgan, are married and some of them even have children and these relations bond them together. At Gertrude Johnson’s dinner party President Robbins and his wife identify themselves with Jerrold and Flo Whittaker because they also have a son and they start to talk about family matters.

“Not to *eat!*” Flo cried, laughing. “To *collect!* John has I don’t know how many. And seventeen grown ones. [...] If Derek would like one I’m *sure* John would—but I suppose Derek isn’t old enough to take an interest in such things, yet.”

The President said, “Derek is— “

Flo said swiftly: “But John was interested in them at Derek’s age. We couldn’t let him have snakes then, though. (*Pictures*, 47)

In this sense, Constance Morgan is a kind of outsider; she is not married and does not have a lot of friends and that is the reason why she tries to make friends with the Rosenbaums. She wants to find her (European) identity through the social contact with Gottfried and Irene.

She made friends with a couple of the girls who worked in the offices of the college, and went on dates with them, sometimes, but they and the dates didn’t know much about music—didn’t know much about anything. They were hardly better than students, Constance felt. Now that she was

through being a student, was through with students. She had—had always—a taste for older people, for men and women. (*Pictures*, 142)

Although the characters of the novel have various different identities, they have one in common: they are all professors of Benton, or work at the university, like Constance Morgan who is the assistant to the secretary of Dwight Robbins. This ‘shared characteristic[s] with another person or group’¹⁰⁶ marks their social identity. It is not only a relationship that is defined by their common job, but also a private/personal relationship.

One night that winter Constance Morgan, President Robbins, Flo and Jerrold Whittaker, and my wife and I had dinner at the Johnson’s. The Robbins and the Whittakers were there because they were going to be in Gertrude’s book about Benton. (*Pictures*, 35)

The University of Benton and its provincial and intimate atmosphere is what helps them to define their social and cultural identity.

The people of Benton [Gertrude would have sung *Men of Benton!* to the tune of *Men of Harlech!* if she had only known the tune] had not all been provincial to begin with, but they made provincials of themselves, and called their province, now, the World. [...] The people of Benton, like the rest of us, were born, fell in love, married and died, lay sleepless all night, saw the first star of evening and wished upon it, won lotteries and wept for joy. But not at Benton. (*Pictures*, 221-222)

In chapter 5.2.2.2 the cultural differences between America and Europe have already been analysed through the characters of Gottfried and Irene Rosenbaum. The analysis of the process of finding their cultural identity is very similar to this concept. They find themselves between two cultures and now try to find out, which one they belong to or if they become a product of the cultural influences of both. This of course affects their identity.

The Rosenbaums are very proud of their European roots and also show that European culture has had a great influence on American culture as well.

¹⁰⁶ Hall 1996, 2.

You could not come up the walk to the Rosenbaums' house without giving an astonished smile. It looked like the child Cecil B. de Mille's notion of the House That Saladin Built, and the snows lay strangely on it, like sherbet. Inside, bronze spears stuck from the beams overshadowing an arch, and the dark beams were hand-hewn—hand-bitten, one almost felt—from California redwood. Within this idea of Europe and the Past the Rosenbaums had settled themselves. (*Pictures*, 124)

Whenever possible, Gottfried refers to the famous works of art of European artists and quotes well-known pieces of European literature. This gives him the impression that all kind of high art and culture has its origin in Europe, and as he is part of that cultural background, he feels superior to his American colleagues.

“Because I am born in Salzburg! You mean you don't know I am another Mozart? Oh but I am, I am! When people come to my door and say, ‘Unless you write us a song that says I love you, I love you, I love you—’ “ [...](*Pictures*, 157)

Dr. Rosenbaum one year, in one of the experiments characteristic of Benton, taught a class of freshmen. The girls were so pretty that they always made him blink his eyes: he said, sentimental Austrian, that all they needed was Salzburg behind them and you wouldn't even know Salzburg was there. (*Pictures*, 219)

One man was plainly cleverer than the rest, and said things about Faust that Gottfried would willingly have understood; [...] (*Pictures*, 122)

His wife has the same impression and according to her she ‘had brought with her, from the Old World, the remains of beauty’¹⁰⁷ that have influenced and shaped American culture. Without Europe, America would not be what it is nowadays.

But as they live in America and are in constant contact, not only with high art/culture, but also with what can be described as ‘a particular way of life’¹⁰⁸ their identity is shaped by America(n culture) as well. In this connection it is important to mention language as an important factor that influences the cultural identity of an individual.

¹⁰⁷ *Pictures*, 139.

¹⁰⁸ Williams 1983, 90.

The witch had left on the train; the summer's books and clothes and scores and records and phonograph were packed away in a canvas covered one-wheel trailer that, looking very incongruous, stood hitched to the rear of the Simca; [...](*Pictures*, 267-268)

In the living room, over the fireplace, there was a copy of a Cro-Magnon painting of a buffalo: Gottfried said that it showed how American they had become. (*Pictures*, 143)

What is really important about the cultural identity of the Rosenbaums is that, although they become a sort of hybrid of two cultures, they never forget where their roots are. Jarrell uses the description of their house as a metaphor for their cultural heritage.

For their house—spears, stucco, enamel, and all – never seemed to you an American house; the air in it was not American air, [...] The essence of the Rosenbaums looked above their accident obviously: as they walked back and forth among the rooms, [...] you saw that they walked among, called upon to witness, no cities and mountains and rivers of yours, but had brought along with them, when they had had to cross the Atlantic, Europe. (*Pictures*, 125-126)

The last quotation of this chapter shows precisely that they still have not found their cultural identity, but that it does not matter if they are regarded to be European or American.

The identity crisis of Gertrude Johnson is another important issue in *Pictures* that describes the quest for one's cultural identity. After some time at Benton College she realises that she has to change her life to become satisfied and find her own meaning of life.

Benton was a progressive college, so you would have supposed that this state would be a steady progression. So it had been for a couple of decades; but later it had become a steady retrogression. (*Pictures*, 221-222)

[...] Gertrude looked contentedly at the row of books she had written (she would sometimes say to herself, almost as though she were the President: *I've written seven books*); then she said to Sidney, turning to him with the freshness and lightness of a girl: "I'll be so glad to leave this

——ing place.” [...] So, away from their laughter, their held breath, their widening repudiating eyes, Gertrude felt: *Am I—was she what? She felt: Am I? Am I? (Pictures, 254-255)*

The words of this song came to her now; and as the words *The FUTURE! the FUTURE!* danced themselves out in hope, in Hope, there in Gertrude's blissful head, a strange thing happened to Gertrude Johnson: she heard, for the first time in her life, a tune. (*Pictures, 255*)

At the end of the novel she decides to take a timeout to review her life and leaves Benton together with her husband Sidney, but we do not get to know if she is able to find her (cultural) identity.

The last chapter “They All Go” describes the last weeks at the end of the semester, with Gertrude Johnson and her husband Sidney leaving Benton, Gottfried, Irene and Constance Morgan going on holiday and the narrator waiting for the next semester to begin. The open ending of the novel again refers to the everlasting process of finding one's cultural identity, which will never be completed.

It had been silly of us to see them off (they were going only as far as Cape Cod, and we would be visiting them in August) but we had wanted to, somehow, and we had enjoyed ourselves. I said about them, remembering Gottfried's remark about his Bremen Town Musicians: “Vot a bunch!”

“Which does the cat count as?” asked my wife. “European or American?”
“Just human.”

[...]

Her voice trailed off, and she gave a queer smile. And my smile must have been the same smile: as you had looked at them you had wished for them simply to be left as they were. (*Pictures, 268-269*)

5.2.3.3 Dog Eat Dog

Dog is clearly about the struggle for the cultural identity of Dingamanzi. At a time of political turmoil (the end of apartheid), social (justice and racial equality for all the people in South Africa, no matter what colour of the skin) and cultural changes (the influence of globalisation) he tries to figure out where his

cultural roots are, who he is and who he might become, as a result of the transformations and confusions in his home country.

In the novel, Mhlongo refers to different identities by describing various cultural groups: black and white people, poor and rich people, students and professors, racists and people with an unprejudiced/liberal attitude, honest labourers and criminals, heterosexuals and homosexuals, older generations and the Kwaito generation, different South African tribes, etc. Dingz identifies himself by integrating himself into these different kinds of categories and by defining his, but also “other” cultural groups.

The government was pumping large sums of money into the Universities for needy black students like myself. (*Dog*, 11)

‘Mmm, so how does your family survive on your mother’s three hundred and fifty rand pension?’ she asked, pushing my documents away. (*Dog*, 20)

They should have told me plainly, ‘We regret to inform you that you are black, stupid and poor; therefore we cannot waste our money on your thick Bantu skull.’ (*Dog*, 8)

[...] Give me your wallets,’ ordered scarface.
With my cold sweating hands I hesitantly gave my wallet to scarface. It contained my last fifty rand. Themba, who had nerves of steel, refused to hand his over. (*Dog*, 91)

Those at the front were waving flashing dildos and blowing up condoms like balloons. I saw them approach the corner of Bree and Rissik Street, chanting loudly and waving banners.

RECOGNIZE GAY AND LESBIAN RIGHTS NOW

GAY AND LESBIANS BY NATURE
NOT BY CHOICE

STOP TREATING US LIKE EVIL PEOPLE;
WE ARE AS HUMAN AS YOU ARE
(*Dog*, 165)

I had originally thought that he wouldn't understand us because he and the woman had been talking Venda when they arrived and we were using a Jo'burg subculture lingo that was a mixture of different languages. (*Dog*, 62)

The mixture of different languages also refers to the mixture of different cultural identities that make up individuals. Woodward says that 'the complexity of modern life requires us to assume different identities – but these different identities may conflict'.¹⁰⁹ This complexity and globalisation are the main reasons for a crisis of identity in *Dog*.

As it is the case in *CP* and *Pictures*, also *Dog* has an open ending which implies that Dingamanzhi (and also Niq Mhlongo¹¹⁰) as well as the whole population of South Africa still have not found and defined their cultural identity.

The analysis of Dingamanzhi's cultural identity is rather short in contrast to the identity of the characters in *CP* and *Pictures*. The reason is that *Dog* is different as far as the topic of the novel is concerned. A more detailed explanation relating to the special features and character of each novel will be given in the conclusion (chapter 6).

5.2.4 Ethnicity and race

Race and primarily ethnicity (as defined by Barth) 'shares fundamental cultural values, realised in overt unity in cultural forms'¹¹¹ and therefore contributes to the formation of cultural identity. Also racism plays an important role in reference to culture, as it establishes a relationship between two different ethnic (but not necessarily racial) groups that are also defined by cultural features. It influences the social network and 'constructs and constitutes social relations (such as those between men and women, children and parents)'

¹⁰⁹ Woodward, 23.

¹¹⁰ Cf. Chapter 4.3.2: *Dog* is an autobiographical book.

¹¹¹ Barth in Miles and Brown, 93.

(Giles and Middleton, 24) of different social groups (labourers ≠ academics, lower class ≠ higher class, etc.) and therefore also affects ethnic groups.

In *CP* and *Pictures* we find such references to ethnicity and also race, but they are of a minor importance compared with the concept of culture and identity (as we have seen in the previous chapters). In *Dog* on the other hand ethnicity, race and particularly racism play a decisive role, as the main topic of the novel is (the end of) apartheid and the consequences for the South African population.

5.2.4.1 Changing Places

David Lodge marginally mentions the concept of ethnicity and race, but there are only a few examples that deal with this topic and give insight into the thoughts and attitudes of the two protagonists.

Lodge describes all kinds of (American) ethnic groups through one of the main characters, Philip Swallow. In chapter 5, Swallow is sitting in a small café, watching a parade of people that pass by. In this example, the term ethnicity in contrast to race is clearly defined by the listing of persons that do not only belong to one group because of their 'biological or somatic characteristics' (Miles and Brown, 88), but mainly because they are part of 'a [group] which identifies itself, and is identified by others, as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order'.¹¹² Negroes of course refers to black people that share biological features, but what unites the other individuals is the sharing of the same cultural ideas, values, beliefs and interests.

Philip snapped up a tiny vacant table at the open window of Pierre's café, ordered himself an ice-cream and Irish coffee, and sat back to observe the passing parade: the young bearded Jesus and their barefoot Magdalenes in cotton maxis, Negroes with Afro haircuts like mushroom clouds and metallic-lensed sunglasses flashing heliographed messages of revolution to their brothers across the street, junkies and potheads

¹¹² Barth in Miles and Brown, 93.

stoned out of their minds [...], ghetto kids and huckleberry runaways, [...] hippies in scarred and tattered leather jackets toting guitars [...]. (CP, 167-168)

It also describes the formation of a new form of culture (a cultural hybrid or a multilayered culture) that is influenced by several cultural backgrounds. On the one hand, this means that certain cultural features and characteristics of a specific group may be extinguished by more powerful ones, but on the other hand it can also be an enrichment for the cultures that are in contact and the cultural outcome of these power relationships. The character of Wily Smith, one of Swallow's students at Euphoric State, is an example for such a mixture of cultural identities. Although he is white, he pretends to be Afro-American and wants to write a novel about his life in the ghetto.

'I have this novel I want to write. It's about this black kid growing up in the ghetto...'

'Isn't that going to be rather difficult?' said Philip. 'I mean, unless you actually *are*...'

[...]

'Sure. Like the story is autobiographical. All I need is technique.'

'Autobiographical?' Philip scrutinized the young man, narrowing his eyes and cocking his head to one side. Wily Smith's complexion was about the shade of Philip's own a week after his summer holiday, [...]. (CP, 56-57)

The people from all kinds of different social and cultural backgrounds and the friendly atmosphere that they bring along (pages 167-168), awake a feeling of belonging to this multicultural meeting of people and Philip finally notices that he has become part of the American society and culture that seemed so strange when he first entered the campus.

[...], Philip felt himself finally converted to expatriation; and he saw himself, too, as part of a great historical process – a reversal of that cultural Gulf Stream which had in the past swept so many Americans to Europe, in search of Experience. Now it was not Europe but the West Coast of America that was the furthest rim of experiment in life and art, [...]. (CP, 168)

Lodge also calls attention to the fact that the storyline of the novel takes place at a time, when racial prejudice against black people and also people from

lower social classes was part of everyday life and the liberation of the Afro-American population had a great influence on American culture.

The view. Don't you think this is a great view? We have a view, too, you know. The same view. Everybody in Plotinus has the same view, except for the blacks and the poor whites on the flats down there. (*CP*, 68)

With the term "view" Mrs. Zapp does not only mean the nice panorama, but also the future prospects of the people who live in Plotinus and the superior role of the white society.

At that moment he became aware that the throng had fallen eerily silent. Alarmed he hurried through the French windows and found that the living-room was quite deserted, except for a coloured, or rather black, woman emptying ashtrays. (*CP*, 70)

The restructuring of society and the fight for equal rights and prestige is mentioned through the political organisation "Black Panthers" that promoted racial pride and fought for social equality and against racial oppression.

I said you were fine as far as I knew, and he said, 'Jolly good, so he's out of hospital, then?' and poured out a horrifying story he'd got from some student about how you had been taken hostage by a gang of desperate Black Panthers [...]. (*CP*, 118)

Although the situation of black people was improving at that time, we still get this feeling of emotional and cultural bond of people from the same ethnical/racial backgrounds.

In this connection it is interesting to see that the situation of Native Americans is not, or only sparsely, discussed in the novel. On page 133, we find one, if only small, reference to the history and the social conditions of Native Americans. It describes the unfair treatment of the native population that started hundreds of years ago and is still going on.

A spokesman for the Gardeners said: 'This land does not belong to the University. If it belongs to anyone, it's the Costanoan Indians, from whom it was stolen by force two hundred years ago. (*CP*, 133)

Although we find references to racial prejudices (in England and in America), this topic plays a minor role in *CP*. The novel's main interest is the comparison of cultures, rather than the description of racial or ethnic injustice, but examples can be found.

The Black Pantheress was explaining to a caller the application of Marxist-Leninist revolutionary theory to the situation of oppressed racial minorities in a late stage of industrial capitalism. (*CP*, 87-88)

He shook his head dolefully and said it was no good, they'd already tried several addresses and nobody would have the girl. People were prejudiced against her, he said. Was she coloured, I asked compassionately. No, he said, she was pregnant. (*CP*, 119)

On the one hand we can see the prejudice against other races, but on the other hand we find descriptions of the interest in the cultural heritage of these ethnic groups.

'Well I have to admit Phil ...' Luke Hogan sighed. 'To make you an offer appropriate to your age and experience, we should expect a book or two. Now if you were *black*, of course, it would be different. Or better still, Indian. What I wouldn't give for an indigenous Indian with a PhD,' he murmured wistfully, [...]. (*CP*, 157)

The situation of ethnicity and race in *Pictures* is very similar to the one described in *CP*, although there are some subtle distinctions.

5.2.4.2 Pictures from an Institution – A Comedy

In *Pictures*, Randall Jarrell analyses the concepts of ethnicity, race and racism from an American point of view, through the eyes of the protagonist and the behaviour and language of the other characters of the novel. Some important issues towards this topic have already been mentioned in chapter 5.2.2.2 with the description of the cultural peculiarities of European ethnic groups (mainly the characters of Dr. Rosenbaum and his wife), but there are also references to race and racism, although not as explicit as in Mhlongo's novel *Dog*.

Various ethnic groups are mentioned throughout the whole novel; primarily in connection with European culture(s) as we can see for example on pages 171-172. Although the characters do not distinguish between Austrian and German culture (the reason might be the fact that both countries have the same language)¹¹³, they do differentiate between ethnic groups and cultures from Central (Austria and Germany) and Eastern Europe (Russia) by the use of Gottfried and Irene Rosenbaum. Other (outer-American) ethnic groups do not play a decisive role and although the black population has contributed greatly to the formation of American culture, the cultural influence is only marginally described. An explanation for this might be the feeling of superiority of Americans that is described in the novel.¹¹⁴

In the novel, the black population of America is always mentioned in connection with clichés, racial prejudice, discrimination and to a certain extent also racism. The perspectives and the attitudes of the characters (no matter, if American or European) cannot really be described as being racist, but the undertone of certain statements seems to be full of prejudices.

If I tell you that Mrs. Robbins had bad teeth and looked like a horse, you will laugh at me as a cliché-monger; yet it is the truth. I can do nothing with the teeth; but let me tell you that she looked like a French horse, a dark, Mediterranean, market-type horse that has all its life begrudged to the poor the adhesive-tape on a torn five-franc note [...]. (*Pictures*, 14-15)

For Mrs. Robbins understanding anybody, having a fellow-feeling for anybody, admitting anybody else exists, were incomprehensible vices of Americans, Negroes, continentals, cats, dogs, carrots. She was "half British phlegm and half perfidious Albion," according to Gertrude Johnson [...] (*Pictures*, 11-12)

Even the president of Benton, Mr. Robbins, has certain prejudices against the black and also the Southern population, and the poorer social classes in general.

¹¹³ Cf. *Pictures*, 121.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Chapter 5.2.2.2 and *Pictures*, 174, 181, etc).

Once, making a money-raising tour among Southern alumnae, he had said one of these little things while being served breakfast on a tray in his room. It made the houseboy go back and tell the cook that President Robbins was not—and here he sounded embarrassingly like Uncle Tom or Aunt Jemima—was not quality folks. The cook replied, forgivingly, that he was only a Northerner, and beat her biscuit-dough with steady strokes. (*Pictures*, 17)

He said *gre-ut* and *bo-ut* and *highvey* and *lyědy* in magical gobbling tones, like a Negro from the Bahamas imitating a baseball-player from Brooklyn, a cultivated one. (*Pictures*, 122)

This citation could signify on the one hand, that people from lower social classes or baseball-players are less intelligent and inferior to people from higher social classes; on the other hand it could also refer to the racial attitude that black people are uncultivated.

The conversation between Gertrude and Constance (pages 51-52) shows, in a very straightforward way, the attitude of the two women towards Mrs Robbins and their ethnic roots. She is describes as being ‘a mutation’¹¹⁵ and denigrated by the white women, although the reason for this behaviour is not clearly expressed in the novel.

The history of the black population is described by referring to the novel “Uncle Tom’s Cabin”¹¹⁶, written by Harriet Beecher Stowe, who writes about the life of a black slave and his horrible experiences, and also by the stories, told by Camille Turner Batterson.

She had heard her grandfather’s stories of Miss Batterson’s great-great-grandfather—the one his slaves killed—had heard Ellen Glasgow refer to Miss Batterson as “a woman of the finest sensibility.” (*Pictures*, 112)

Jarrell also refers to the crimes that were committed by the Nazis during World War II and the attitude of the American population towards this issue.

She was even sorry that Dr. Rosenbaum was a Jew (he had got his fair hair and the name *Gottfried Knosperl* from his mother, a braided Austrian

¹¹⁵ *Pictures*, 51.

¹¹⁶ Cf. *Pictures*, 17.

type, all *himmelblau* und *zuckerl-rosa*), since this made it impossible for her to say what she felt was somehow really true: that he was a Nazi, *the* Nazi. (*Pictures*, 69)

About the killing of six million European Jews, even, he [Dr. Rosenbaum] spoke with detachment. He said to my wife and me: "I can understand killing them. We have our faults. Six million Jews are, after all, six million people." [...] (*Pictures*, 170)

The outcome of the analysis of the concept of ethnicity and race in *CP* and *Pictures* is very marginal, but nevertheless influences and contributes to the formation of culture and cultural identity.

5.2.4.3 Dog Eat Dog

The ladies reduced their gait. He slid his tongue around his lips and curled it around the corners of his mouth. The ladies threw back inviting smiles.

'Wow! The blacker the berry, the sweeter the juice,' I muttered.

With his drunken gaze still following the ladies, Themba continued. 'The darker the skin, the deeper the roots.' (*Dog*, 84)

In the case of Niq Mhlongo's novel it is important to distinguish between the terms ethnicity and race before we can analyse this complex topic. When the narrator of the story, Dingamanzi, uses the term "black", he refers to the ethnic South African population/culture, describing not only the somatic and phenotypical characteristics, but primarily the shared cultural values, the historical background and ancestry that define this specific cultural group.¹¹⁷ When he talks about the "white" people, he refers to them in the sense of a racial classification, leaving the cultural aspect aside. When white people in the novel talk about the blacks, it is the other way around; white people think of themselves as being cultivated and superior to the black population. This idea/attitude leads to a lack of understanding for each other's ethnic/racial background and for this reason also to the further formation of prejudices and discrimination that emerged from the establishment of apartheid. It is therefore important to make a clear distinction between the terms ethnicity and race and

¹¹⁷ Barth, in Miles and Brown, 93.

these relations, of course, influence the social and cultural identity of the individuals and the ethnic/cultural groups that they belong to.

‘Not really, there are a lot of ethnic groups, just like here in South Africa. There are the Lozis from Zambia, Kalangas, Shangaans, Afrikaners, English and Chewas. It’s just that Shona and Ndebele are the official languages.’ (*Dog*, 130)

Mhlongo analyses the differences between the black and white populations in South Africa to describe the social and cultural situation of both population groups, whereas the native South Africans are in an inferior position because of the long history of apartheid.

As we have already heard in chapter 5.2.2.3, Dingamanzi’s family is very poor and they live in a small hut in Soweto.¹¹⁸ He is very fortunate to live at the YMCA, where he has amenities that do not exist in the township.

I had my own room, and although I was sharing it with my newly acquired friend Dworkin at least I enjoyed some privacy, unlike at home in our four-roomed Soweto house. At home I still slept in the dining-sitting room although I was twenty years old. Yes, at home I was woken up at four o’clock in the morning by the footsteps of my two brothers on their way to the kitchen to boil water before they went to work. I was happy at the Y. I had almost forgotten the smell of sewage that filled the air at home each time the chain jammed in the cistern of our small toilet, which was outside on the right-hand corner of our 25-square-metre yard. I was enjoying the luxury of using the soft and freely supplied toilet paper; the skill of softening pages from a telephone directory when answering the call of nature in the township was no longer necessary. At the Y I could differentiate between my meals. I didn’t have to queue in our local shop to buy those oily, constipating fatcakes every morning. I was fed with cornflakes, bacon and eggs and Jungle Oats. (*Dog*, 9)

Alcoholism and sexually transmissible diseases like Aids, as well as poverty and unemployment also influence the social life, mainly of the black and poor population.

Theks was the fifth of her mother’s eight children. All of her siblings were still living at their parent’s house except for her older sister, who was living in sin with her lover in another neighbourhood. Her two brothers

¹¹⁸ Cf. *Dog*, 20 and 41.

were both unemployed. The eldest brother lived with his 'vat en sit' lover and two children in one of their back rooms. He made a living for himself by mowing other people's lawn for cash. (*Dog*, 65)

Dingamanzi's father was a heavy drinker and tried to escape from his daily problems; Dingz gets gonorrhoea after he has sex with his girlfriend Nkanyi.

Corruption is also part of the life of the poor social classes. You can only assert your rights if you have enough money. Before (and to a certain extent also after) the fall of apartheid in South Africa, justice was a question of money.

'Listen! Here is a deal, pal.' He lowered his tone to a confidential whisper. 'Either you come with us now to spend three months in a prison cell, or face a one thousand rand fine...' He paused and looked at my reaction. I kept my cool. (*Dog*, 47)

Violence and fear are other factors that influence the daily life of the black population.

I thought they were going to negotiate a deal with me, but that was not the case. Suddenly Naicker's big hand was around my balls and I was standing on my toes with pain. Viljoen grabbed the walkman from my pocket. I tried to resist, but Viljoen's fist struck me across my mouth. I tasted blood. Naicker let go of my balls and I staggered and fell down. I lay still on the pavement pretending I had lost consciousness, but Viljoen's boot struck me in the ribs. A few minutes later I was handcuffed and bundled inside the car. (*Dog*, 50)

'Where are your papers?' asked another police officer. Before my uncle could respond, the police officer's fat hand was on the scruff of his neck. I was hoping that they wouldn't beat him up; Brixton police were notorious for their violence. There had even been rumours in the township of the appearance of a feared whites-only police squad. (*Dog*, 42-43)

In general we can say that daily life for black South Africans is a struggle for survival. Money and food are the most important things for those people to survive, but not only the physical good is essential; a general feeling of security, justice and equality is the basis of a healthy society.

The desperate situation of the black population is the basis for a very strong bond between the oppressed people. Although the characters of the novel do not necessarily know each other, they help each other against their true enemy – the upper class, white people in South Africa. Dingz even calls the two security officers of the Financial Aid Office his “brothers”.

None of the security officers came to rescue her. Maybe they were siding with their black brother. Rachel was breathing hard and her eyes were beginning to mist over with tears. Dr Winterburn turned and faced the two officers who were leaning on the counter, listening to everything that was being said. (*Dog*, 17)

Dingz and his friends always share their drinks and food in the Dropout bar in Braamfontein and also when they go to parties (for example when they celebrate the birth of democracy after the election), but they also help the poor and homeless, black people.

‘I don’t have money. You know I’m just a student. But I’ve got you a parcel,’ said Babes, handing the two plastic bags to Stomachache. With a smile Stomachache thanked her and immediately went to the toilet to change. (*Dog*, 215)

‘Please majita nabo sisi, please, please, please, please. Buy me packet chips please?’ pleaded Stomachache earnestly. Mohammed groped inside his pocket and gave Stomachache a five rand coin. ‘You can finish these chips and the roll there,’ offered Nkanyi. (*Dog*, 216)

They support each other whenever it is possible.

Themba, one of my township friends, had finally got a job as a cashier at the Moosa Supermarket. From the shelves I took as many goodies as I wanted without even bothering to check their price. At the till Themba would either pass my goodies through without ringing them up, or he would ring up a lesser price. As he was doing this he would say, ‘The rand is weak my friend, we must save money when we have a chance’. (*Dog*, 36)

Many of the black people in the novel do not have a job and do not know anybody who can organize cheap food for them. They have to find another way to make money.

As I came out of the house I found two guys standing with my friends on the lawn. They were carrying a big travelling bag with some stolen goods inside. (*Dog*, 95)

'Izithola va? Where do you get them?' asked Vusi.
'Sitabalaze khona kada emakhishini. We stole them there at the suburb.'
'Manjenifuna ukuthisibaye nizophinda nisispinele zona vele? So you want us to buy them so that you can come and steal them from us again?' asked Themba. (*Dog*, 96)

The situation of the white population of South Africa is much better because they have/get the better jobs.

'My Gawd! What is going on here?' she exclaimed. 'I'm Dr Winterburn, the registrar in this office.' She paused. 'Is there some problem in this office I should know about?' (*Dog*, 15)

Within ten minutes a white female doctor in her late forties called me into the consultation room. She was wearing a white coat and had thick-lensed glasses. I put the magazine down and followed her to a room that had 'Dr Hewson' written on the door. (*Dog*, 151)

I looked at the dean with disbelief as the silence simmered between us. He examined the death certificate that I had submitted for a few seconds, as with his short, thick fingers he repeatedly stroke his bushy beard and drooping mustache. (*Dog*, 208)

'Indeed, how many black lecturers or professors do we have here in this varsity?' he asked. [...] 'I think you are right,' said Theks, 'I think of all the black lecturers in the law faculty only two or three are South African. The rest are from outside.' (*Dog*, 220-221)

Furthermore, the white people belong to higher social classes and are wealthier what makes life very easy for them.

Nikki was the tall strawberry blonde who had spilt coffee down my back during the political studies lecture. You only had to look at her to conclude that she was born with a silver spoon in her mouth. [...] Nikki paid for all of us, including Paul Rutherford, her tall white friend. As she bought the jam doughnuts, muffins, Chelsea buns, cooldrinks and juices, I enviously glanced at the banknotes in her purse. (*Dog*, 158-159)

A white 3-series BMW Dolphin came speeding up from behind. Its driver was forced to make an emergency stop, the tires screeching on the road to avoid an accident. In a sudden flash the two drivers were swearing at each other.

'Where did you buy your driver's licence, you moron? Don't you know to indicate when you have to change lanes? You think this is your road?' shouted the white bearded man inside the BMW. (*Dog*, 78)

As we have already heard, the main topic in *Dog* is apartheid and racism. In his novel, Mhlongo describes three different forms of racism:

- white against black
- black against white
- black against black.

With the beginning of apartheid it was the white population who had a racist attitude towards the poor, black social classes, but in the course of time a reversed form of racism developed, which had its climax with the end of apartheid in 1994 and the following years up to the present. These important political changes lead to a restructuring of the social structures, which then lead to a new form of racism; black against black. These very complicated structures and relations between the ethnic groups are analysed in the novel.

The term racism does not only refer to 'the antipathy of one group toward another' (Fredrickson, 1), but also implies acted out violence.

She and her friends had been bitten by the dogs at a farm near Pimville. A white farmer had set the dogs on them as they were trying to collect cow dung to smear on the floor of our house. Only one of her friends managed to escape, by jumping the fence. My mother was caught by the arm by one of the dogs, while her other friend was caught by the leg. After enjoying their plight the farmer instructed his dog to leave the 'kaffirs' alone, but the scar is still vivid even today. (*Dog*, 39)

The still visible scar of Dingamanzi's mother is a metaphor for the racial and violent history of the black population and their sufferings. Although apartheid ended in 1994, the social and racial injustices will never be forgotten and influence the future of the country and the culture.

‘What are you natives still doing there? Do you think we have the whole night for you? We will break this scrap door now!’

We all froze with horror inside the house. We were aware that the police was capable of doing what they said – they had broken two of our doors the year before because we had not responded in time. (*Dog*, 41)

‘You suppose to have been gone to the country by now. You go with us today, boy.’

‘Please sir, don’t...’ pleaded my mother.

‘Shut the fuck up! You kaffir bitch!’

Silence fell. We watched in horror as my uncle hobbled helplessly out into the street with the police. They all disappeared inside the police van and I only saw him again ten years later. (*Dog*, 43)

The white people see affirmative action, which helps the black population to get better jobs and improve the educational situation, as a form of reversed racism.

‘It won’t work, unless you apply some black shoe polish to your face and shave your head. If you can do that and rename yourself Shaka Zulu, then you can demand affirmative action.’

‘Imagine that!’

‘Yeah. This affirmative action is killing us white people, it’s just racism in reverse.’ (*Dog*, 170)

As a consequence of this (white against black) discrimination, a feeling of (black against white) racism among the black South Africans developed.

‘You fucken white bastard Verwoerd boy! I warned you not to accept money here because this is not your fucken workplace. Come on; bring that money you have unlawfully collected before I shave that dirt hair of yours with a warm klap. Hurry up before I take the whole tin, you motherfucker!’ (*Dog*, 69)

The tense situation of hatred between the black and white people is described on pages 78-79.

‘Where did you buy your driver’s licence, you moron? Don’t you know to indicate when you have to change lanes? You think this is your road?’ shouted the white bearded man inside the BMW.

‘I bought it from your mother’s arse,’ retorted the minibus driver.

‘Your mind is as short as your hair, you piece of shit.’

'Go fuck yourself, you white bastard.'
'Who do you think you are? You think democracy means running around driving the way you like without thinking? You uncivilised black shit!'
'You can suck my dick. I don't give a shit about you, you racist bastard.'
'Neither your skorokoro taxi nor your kaffir dick can even buy a mirror on this car. I wonder if you have insurance or if you even know what the word means.' [...] (*Dog*, 78-79)

The white man in the BMW is proud of his skin colour, that he is rich and the fact that he drives an expensive car. This social difference makes the black bus driver angry and raises the hatred between them.

The conditions of the black people at the university are also described, mainly through racism and discrimination of black against white people. The reason is the fact that the white population is wealthier and the black students get envious.

[...] That is why institutions like this one remain ivory towers to black South Africans.' Babes nodded her approval. 'Absolutely. You're right. These guys from outside South Africa are sponsored by their governments while studying here. That is why their studies go so smoothly.' She stretched her long arm to emphasise the word smooth. 'Because they have nothing to worry about. Look at the so-called traditional black campuses.' She flung both her hands out and opened her eyes wide. 'The reason they are threatening to close down is that they cater for the impoverished black masses; they cannot maintain themselves without financial help from the government.'

As it was already analysed in chapter 5.2.2.3, this citation shows that the future situation of the black people is desperate. Students and professors who come from outside South Africa are welcomed because they can afford to study and finance the university by bringing money to South Africa. The poor black people in South Africa need financial help to pay for fees, books and teaching material, but the government prefers to admit students from rich families to save money, instead of sponsoring their own population.

Without answering me she turned to Dworkin. 'Oh jeez, what happened to your T-shirt?'
'That racist white lady spilled her coffee on us.'
'It was just a mistake, man,' I corrected him.
'You don't know white people, man. It was on purpose,' he insisted. (*Dog*, 145-146)

The rest of the students put their hand down and waited for the lady to speak. I was thinking about what I'd heard from some of my second-year friends, who had told me of a subtle form of racism practised by some white lecturers. My sources had explained that these white lecturers did not know their black students by name, and that was why they often said 'yes' when asking them to respond to a question. As for the white students, the white professors always addressed them politely by their full names. (*Dog*, 142)

In connection with the university it is important to refer to the idea of playing the race card. Dingamanzu uses the fact that he is black and the racist attitude of the white population as an excuse and pretence to put himself into a better position and to take advantage.

Anyway, I had been told that playing the race card is a good strategy for silencing those whites who still think they are more intelligent than black people. Even in parliament it was often used. When the white political parties questioned the black parties they would be reminded of their past atrocities even if their questions were legitimate. Then the white political parties would have to divert from their original question and apologize for their past deeds. (*Dog*, 35)

'But Prof, I know for sure that there is something you can do if you want to. I mean ...' I paused and shrugged my shoulders. 'You are the dean of the faculty, with the powers to make an exception in a case like this.'

'I'm sorry to say this, but, as I said to you before, we would be opening the floodgates for people to approach us with all kinds of stories after absconding from their exams.'

With mock anger, I snapped, 'Are you implying that I'm lying about my family bereavement?'

'No-no-no. Don't get me wrong. All I'm saying is that it is unbelievable that someone might die today and be buried three months later.'

'Meaning that blacks always lie about their situation?' 'I beg you not to put your words in my mouth.' (*Dog*, 210)

'I think you are prejudiced against me and there is no cure for that prejudice. I will have to contact the SRC to come and give you some lessons about our diverse cultures. (*Dog*, 211)

This accusations and menace finally get him granted the deferred examination.

I left the dean's office on that cold Monday afternoon with some hope, happy that I had at least pressurised him as far as I could. The following Thursday I received a letter from the faculty saying that I had been granted a deferred examination. The letter said that I would sit the exam in the first week of the third quarter when the university reopened from the mid-year recess. I was happy that I had succeeded and thanked Dunga for all his effort. (*Dog*, 211)

A similar situation is described at the beginning of chapter five (pages 34-36) when Dingz is waiting to use the ATM of the Standard Bank. A white woman asks Dingz to help a black person to use the ATM and he accuses her of being racist because she does not do it herself.

'My gosh! Why on earth do you think I'm racist? I was just...'
'Because you are white,' I answered.
'So that qualifies...'
'Yes. I know the likes of you and I'm sick and tired of pretending. When you see a black man like me I know you don't see a black man, but a black boy.' (*Dog*, 36)

Discrimination can also be found in songs and graffiti, which express the opinion of the people.

Viva ANC Viva!
Phansi ngamabunu phansi! (Down with the whites down)
Amandla! (Power!)
Awethu! (To the people!)
(*Dog*, 55)

ONE SETTLER ONE BULLET – VIVA AZANIA (*Dog*, 146)

THIS COUNTRY BELONGS TO BLACKS; FUCK ALL THE WHITES
(*Dog*, 147)

WHITES MUST START TO LIVE IN THE CONDITIONS STIPULATED
BY BLACKS OR MUST LEAVE THE COUNTRY PEACEFULLY (*Dog*,
147)

The third form of racism is black against black. Although the black populations try to support and help each other, some are envious of the better situation of their "brothers" and this leads to prejudices and discrimination. The hatred

between black people is not as strong as between the white and the black population, but it has an influence on the social life.

When the police takes Dingz along in their car, after having him caught when he was drinking alcohol in public, the two police officers try to blackmail him. One of the officers is black and although he and Dingz have the same racial and ethnic roots, he sides with his with colleague.¹¹⁹

‘But it’s a cruel thing to end another man’s life in this painful way,’ I said, as if I knew of a better way of dying.

‘What have they done?’ Dunga asked one of the vigilantes.

‘They are thieves,’ she answered with one brief uninterested look at Dunga.

‘But where were the police?’

‘Don’t tell me about those bastards – all they know about is taking bribes and buying stolen goods themselves,’ said the vigilante angrily. (*Dog*, 184)

When Theks gives some money to a white homeless, a black man comes over to talk to her. He cannot understand why she gives her money to someone who is white, instead of supporting the black people. The tension between the black homeless man and Theks, who sides with the white man, describes this kind of discrimination.

‘Are you giving preference to this man who has been exploiting us all at the expense of those who have been fighting for your rights?’ asked the man, wagging his forefinger at Theks. [...] That’s why I became an MK soldier, to fight for you and me. Fighting so that you could get a chance of better education,’ said the homeless man, looking at the books we were carrying. ‘Are you now telling me that our sacrifices are worth nothing?’ (*Dog*, 69-70)

Apartheid is defined by racism and is the main topic in *Dog*; the whole novel describes the racial segregation of the black and the white population, but the author also directly addresses this concept that has influenced South African politics and society.

¹¹⁹ Cf. *Dog*, 44-52.

Although, unfortunately, my family did not own any immovable property as the house in Soweto that we had been living in since 1963 was leased to us by the apartheid government for a period of 99 years. (*Dog*, 8)

I was convinced that God was white, and either English or Afrikaans, simply because it had taken Him so many years to get an interpreter to translate exactly what the blacks and the poor wanted in their endless prayers. It took God almost a century to bring about the end of apartheid and its package of injustice and to usher in the long-awaited freedom. It also seemed to me that English and Afrikaans are God's languages. Mastering those two languages in our country had since become the only way to avoid the poverty of twilight zones like Soweto. (*Dog*, 182)

The author very clearly expresses the thoughts and feelings of many people in South Africa. According to him, god has to be white and share the same racist attitudes as the white population in South Africa does; otherwise he would not have looked away from all the injustices that the blacks had to suffer from. But his opinion changes with the fall of apartheid and there is a spark of hope that the future will bring (social) recovery for Africans in general.

Mhlongo is aware of the fact that a lot of work still has to be done to gain equality for everyone from every social and ethnic class. This means that the white people have to realise that all humans are created equal and that one should not distinguish between the colour of skin or any other biological or somatic characteristic, but that people should be judged by the content of their character. But also the black people have to make a contribution to change the situation: they have to try and forgive what has been done to them and not satisfy their desire for revenge. They all (black and white) have to work together for a better future for the country and everybody who lives in it.

'No, no, no, no,' Dworkin shook his head slowly, 'this renaming is totally blotting out our history. Instead of thinking about King Dingane fighting the British, we now think of reconciliation with the same enemy who killed him.'

'But isn't that what we need in the present South African context?' asked Babes. 'We cannot afford another war of hatred. We are tired and need peace and unity.' (*Dog*, 213)

This last citation expresses the main message of the novel: try to forget the negative past (if this is possible at all) and look forward to a better future!

6 Conclusion

Although we all know what culture is, it is very difficult to find a definition of this concept. The complicated interactions and influences of culture, identity and ethnicity/race that describe the general term “culture” are endless and constantly redefined as these concepts underlie a constant transformation.

Culture does not only mean “high art” or what Williams defines as ‘the works and practises of intellectual and especially artistic activity’, but it also describes ‘a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period, a group or humanity in general’.¹²⁰ As we have seen on the basis of the comparison of the three campus novels, culture combines a lot of features (rituals, traditions, etc) of daily life that are taken for granted and are unveiled through the confrontation of different cultures that can then be analysed.

The intercultural comparison of *Changing Places*, *Pictures from an Institution* and *Dog Eat Dog*, three novels from different continents and cultural backgrounds, has shown that it is possible to describe this vast field of cultural differences and similarities. It is important to note that, as we are individuals with our own cultural identity (that is consciously and unconsciously influenced by certain factors), everyone of us has a certain, subjective, perspective towards our own culture and other cultures. It was therefore very difficult to come forward with an objective analysis of this concept.

Each of the novels also has its own specific features that define its character and make it so unique.

According to the definitions in chapter 2, *CP* by David Lodge is a typical campus novel; it combines all the features of this particular genre, primarily its satirical style and the exact description of life inside (and also outside) the university. The author ‘comment[s] on contemporary issues, satirize[s] professorial stereotypes and educational trends, and convey[s] the pain of

¹²⁰ Williams 1983, 90.

intellectuals called upon to measure themselves against each other and against their internalized expectations of brilliance' (Showalter, 5). The exchange programme in which Philip Swallow and Morris Zapp take part, can be described as a "cultural crusade to an uncharted land" and forces the two protagonists to redefine their cultural identities. These personal struggles, embedded into the genre of the (satirical) campus novel and the description of the cultural peculiarities and prejudices, are what make up the style of this specific work of literature.

Randall Jarrell's novel, on the other hand, draws a picture (as the title of the novel suggests) of the social and cultural conditions at the University of Benton. *Pictures* 'satirize[s] professorial stereotypes' (Showalter, 5), but it lacks the plot that is typical for a campus novel that we might find in *Der Campus* by Dietrich Schwanitz or *Eating People is Wrong* by Malcolm Bradbury. This might also be due to the fact that *Pictures* is not a European, but an American campus novel, thus having been written in a tradition that has had a different literary development. It describes various characters and their social network in- and outside the campus, but primarily the attempt of Dr. Rosenbaum and his wife to integrate themselves into American culture and the personal struggle of Gertrude Johnson to inner happiness and satisfaction. The satirical style of the novel results from the illustration of the completely different types of characters.

Dog is in many respects different from *CP* and *Pictures*. It is of course a campus novel that comprises the features that define this specific genre, but the main focus is not on the description of life inside the campus. It is a description of the social, cultural and political issues of (the population of) South Africa. Niq Mhlongo has chosen this particular genre to analyse the (daily) problems in South Africa: apartheid, racism, social injustice, poverty, AIDS, etc. The reason for the decision to use the genre of the campus novel to refer to these issues is that the novel is autobiographical (as already mentioned in chapter 4.3.2). Niq Mhlongo describes the first-hand experiences that he made when he was a student at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. This means that the intention of his novel is not the telling of a

funny, satirical story, but to call attention to the problems that the whole population of South Africa has to face every day. The “by-product” (if we might call it so) of this narration is the description of South African culture and the struggle of the white and mainly the black people for their cultural identity.

Although the main focus of attention depended on the content and the storyline of each novel (the intercultural comparison of European and American culture in *CP*, the influence, primarily, of American on European culture and also vice versa in *Pictures* and the end of apartheid that redefines South African culture in *Dog*), they all have one common feature: the ongoing personal struggles for the cultural identities of the protagonists with the outcome that this struggle for identity will never be completed.

7 Appendix

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7.3 Abstract

Das Thema dieser Diplomarbeit ist der kulturelle bzw. interkulturelle Vergleich der drei Universitätsromane *Changing Places – A Tale of two Campuses* (England) von David Lodge, *Pictures from an Institution – A Comedy* (Amerika) von Randall Jarrell und *Dog Eat Dog* (Südafrika) von Nicholas Mhlongo. Die kulturellen Unterschiede sind sehr groß und deutlich erkennbar.

Der Universitätsroman an sich eignet sich sehr gut für eine solche Analyse, da er verschiedene kulturelle Hintergründe beschreibt: das soziale und kulturelle Leben innerhalb der Universität bzw. des Campus und das Leben, das sich außerhalb der Universitätsmauern vollzieht. Weiters eignen sich die oben erwähnten Romane besonders gut, da sie auch die kulturellen Unterschiede verschiedener Länder bzw. ethnischer Gruppen beschreiben. In diesem Zusammenhang ist vor allem interessant zu sehen, wie jemand seinen eigenen kulturellen Hintergrund als selbstverständlich ansieht, jedoch den Charakteristika bzw. Merkmalen einer anderen Kultur voreingenommen gegenübersteht und wie in weiterer Folge Vorurteile entstehen können.

Weiters beschäftigt sich die Diplomarbeit mit der Frage, was wir unter dem Begriff Kultur verstehen und inwieweit unterschiedliche Kulturen einander beeinflussen. Diese Einflüsse bestimmen nicht nur die gesamte Kultur eines Landes, einer Bevölkerungsschicht oder einer Gruppe (wie zum Beispiel Studenten oder Professoren an der Universität), sondern auch die kulturelle Identität eines jeden Individuums.

Da es für den Begriff „Kultur“ eine Vielzahl von verschiedenen Definitionen gibt und seine Bedeutung einer ständigen Veränderung und Neudefinierung unterliegt, ist es sehr schwer eine Analyse der interkulturellen Unterschiede und Gemeinsamkeiten durchzuführen und/um alle kulturellen Facetten miteinander zu verbinden. Das Ergebnis dieser Arbeit ist zugleich eine Beschreibung, eine Analyse und ein Vergleich von europäischer, amerikanischer und afrikanischer Kulturen.

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