

EXPLORING TIME-TRAVEL IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE: THE CASE
STUDY OF *WHEN YOU DANCE WITH THE CROCODILE*

BY ERNA MULLER AND *CRUSADE IN JEANS* BY THEA BECKMAN

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ABSTRACT

This thesis provides a comparative analysis of the novels *When you Dance with the Crocodile* (2012) by Erna Muller and *Crusade in Jeans* (1973) by Thea Beckman. The two novels were purposefully selected because they primarily characterise children or young people as protagonists. Additionally, the novels were selected because of the recurring themes of historical time travel. The major objectives of the study were to analyse the presentation of historical time travel elements in the selected novels and to explore the different methods of time travel used in both novels. This was done through the theory of narratology and mythology. The study then employed a qualitative desktop analysis, and data was analysed using a thematic content analysis, which was systemised into different themes to ease the data analysis and presentation process. The study observed that although the themes in both novels are similar, each novel presents the themes in a unique manner. In *Crusade in Jeans* (1973), it was found that historical time travel embarked on by the protagonists was a result of a scientific experiment with the hope of providing results and answers to scientific questions pertaining to time travel beyond human comprehension. On the other hand, historical time travel in *When you Dance with the Crocodile* (2012), accidentally happens with the main characters not knowing they would be going back in time, but just playing a computer game, and this consequently provides an opportunity for a nuanced scientific discovery from video game experiments. Among the themes that emerged in the study are child endangerment, credulity in religion and tradition, and magic and heresy. Further research recommendations are to employ a rhetorical theory analysis to futuristic time travel in children's literary narratives.

Keywords: *Time-Travel, Children, Literature, Narratology*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Dr	Doctor
VR	Virtual Reality
CAI	Computer Assisted Interaction
GPS	Global Positioning System

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my family; immediate and extended, and the people who have made a significant impact in my life.

DECLARATION

I, Rebecca N. Sikuvi, hereby declare that this study is a true reflection of my own research, and that this work, or part thereof has not been submitted for a degree in any institution of higher education.

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April 2024

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Date

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

The introductory chapter of this study provides the background of the study, statement of the problem and the objectives of the study. The significance of the study is also highlighted. The chapter further explains the limitations of the study as well as the delimitations and concludes with the organisation of the study.

1.2. Background of the study

Micklethwait (2012) acknowledges that the genre of time travel fiction has been an important area of interest in fictional narratives, which includes children's fantasy literature. Time travel is a temporal phenomenon which includes rewinding time, fast-forwarding time and splitting a timeline into two or more parallel versions, amongst others. According to Micklethwait (2012), neither physicists nor philosophers can agree on the nature of time. The unresolved issues between the two are further magnified by the introduction of time travel, where there is much uncertainty about whether time travel is possible and what would happen if it were. In addition, with no universally accepted understanding of what constitutes time travel, various models or notions of time travel currently exist to further research this phenomenon. Royston (2018) defines time travel narratives as the kind in which one or more characters travel or communicate across temporal boundaries by means of a device or some kind of power. Royston further explains

that time travel narratives that feature time machines and other such devices are “clearly time travel narratives” (p. 7)

Closely related to the time travel phenomenon is historical time travel. According to Imdieke and Madaus (1992), historical time travel fiction, later renamed as past-time travel fantasy, has unique qualities. The character(s) act as the reader’s guide in the past, when they decide to time travel, this way. Although the main character travels in time sometimes along the narrative, the story usually begins with him or her living in the present. The historical times and places are brought to life by the characters who visit them rather than the general descriptions of isolated facts and events as found in content area textbooks. Imdieke and Madaus (1992) contend that the view of historic time through the eyes of a character adds an in-depth understanding and insight into the day to day routine of the period or era not typically available in more traditional textbooks and historical materials. Tezi (2020) provides an emerging challenge when defining fantasy literature, which is its ingrained relationship with childhood and children. Fantasy literature has actually been associated with children and childhood since its emergence in the nineteenth century, hence, it overlaps with other genres such as fairy tales and adventure stories. Even though the history of children’s literature started with writers adopting a realistic mode, it has also come to be associated with the fantasy genre. Tezi (2020) further asserts that even though fantasy literature deals with agents, actions as well as events that are not likely to exist in our known reality, it does not distort or even insult the perception of reality.

Additionally, Erlandson and Bainbridge (2001) introduce a synonymous concept of the time travel genre, which is time-slip fantasy. It is referred to as a distinct genre which takes readers to a time that is quite different from their current time. It further enables the reader to step back from contemporary life and see the struggles of human existence from a more distanced, reflective perspective. The concept is what the characters in the present study's selected novels, *When you Dance with the Crocodile* (2012) and *Crusade in Jeans* (1973), experience.

1.3. Statement of the problem

Past research conducted on children's fiction novels mostly focuses on the western context. Emphasis was placed on such works as Pullman's 1995 *His Dark Materials* and Rowling's 1997 *Harry Potter*. On the contrary, there was limited study conducted on the African context which pertains to historical time travel in children's fantasy genre. According to Pavlik (2011), fantasy fiction for children is a type of narrative that presents worlds in theory outside the realm of possible worlds. Although different from the represented world reality, they still connect to reality in some way. Pavlik (2011) further asserts that to a large degree, the spatial nature of such fantasy texts remains largely unexplored. For this reason, historical time travel in children's literature remains under-researched, creating a gap in literature. The current study thus aims to narrow this gap in literature by critiquing the children's novels *When you Dance with the Crocodile* and *Crusade in Jeans*. According to Tezi (2020) children's fantasy literature and fantasy literature have been exposed to layered literary exclusions, and despite their popularity amongst

fantasists and readers, they have been dismissed as an escapist occupation. This research brings an awareness that a comparative analysis of historical time travel fiction from varying contexts has not been an area of focus for past studies, particularly in the genre of children's literature. As such, this study intends to critically analyse how time travel is presented in the selected children's novels; *When you Dance with the Crocodile* (2012) and *Crusade in Jeans* (1973) from the narratological as well as mythological perspective, providing a nuance insight in the field.

1.4. Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are to:

- analyse the presentation of elements of historical time travel in the selected novels;
- explore the different modes of time travel in the selected novels;
- compare the presentation of historical time travel in the selected novels.

1.5. Significance of the study

One insight of the study of children's fantasy literature is that it not only requires exploration of the reasons behind the relationship with other genres, but it necessitates an examination of its key functions as well as its relationship with the real world (Tezi, 2020). It is for this reason that the researcher hopes the study will be utilised as a reference point by other literary scholars and researchers. Thus, the study contributes to the pre-existing literary body of knowledge concerning historical time travel in children's literature. The study might further benefit those

who enjoy the genre of fictional children's literature to further appreciate its significance in the place of world literature and gain a different perspective of looking at the world.

1.6. Limitations

Since the study was limited to comparing only two novels by two different authors, the research findings cannot be generalised to cater for other writers with a differing approach to children's literature genre which concerns historical time travel. Moreover, the analysis is confined to historical time travel elements in the selected novels.

1.7. Delimitations

The study focused on two novels, one from a Namibian author, and the other from the Netherlands.

1.8. Organisation of the study

The following is how the study is organised. In chapter 1, the background of the study and the objectives of the study are outlined. The significance of the study is also highlighted. Furthermore, the limitations and delimitations of the study are presented, followed by a conclusion of the chapter. Chapter 2 reviews the literature and also specifies the theories that frame this study, namely, the Narratology and Mythological theories. Chapter 3 expresses the methodology of how this study was carried out starting from the beginning of the design and

literary approach to including the population and sampling method, as well as the research ethics. Chapter 4 focuses on the critical reading, analysis and discussion of the selected historical time travel novels, *When you Dance with the Crocodile* (2012) and *Crusade in Jeans* (1973), as shaped by the Narratology and Mythological theories. Finally, Chapter 5 presents the study's conclusion and recommendations.

1.9. Conclusion

This chapter introduced the study, listed the objectives of the study, and highlighted the significance of the study as well as the limitations and delimitations of the study. The statement of the problem was provided and the organisation of the study laid down. The next chapter provides a literature review and describes the theoretical framework.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

The purpose of this literature review is to highlight research work that is relevant to this study. It also discusses the theoretical framework and explains why it best informs the study. The literature review is divided into subheadings which aid in the review of the existing related literature and in identifying a literary gap in this research.

2.2. Literature review

Literature review, according to Creswell and Creswell (2018) “relates a study to the larger, ongoing dialogues in the literature, filling in gaps and extending prior studies”. This chapter critiques literature related to time travel and identifies the gap filled by this study.

According to Micklethwait (2012), fiction involving time travel first became popular during the nineteenth century, with narratives like *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens in 1843, and Mark Twain’s 1889 *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court*. The novels depict characters going back in time, to their pasts. In 1895, Harrison Wells wrote the novel; *The Time Machine* which Micklethwait considers a science fiction novel involving time travel using a time machine. Micklethwait’s study presents both futuristic and historical time travel, of which

the latter is the focus of the current study. Given this background, this research presents a shortcoming in previous studies.

2.2.1. Objects traveling through time

Howe (2015) expresses that scholars of time travel literature tend to focus almost exclusively on the nature of time and the consideration of the strangeness that time travel introduces to human narrative. Howe's study addresses the lack of an object-oriented consideration of time travel literature by examining some of these objects to explore what they reveal about the nature of humanity or the role presented by those in possession of the objects.

Howe (2015) focuses on another aspect of objects traveling through time, which is the body, involved in time travel. In other words, the time traveller's body that moves from one time to another. Howe (2015) argues that:

The body is what roots someone in the world, and it is through the body that the consciousness is able to affect and be affected. The body must be fed, provided nourishment to satisfy physical needs. Because consciousness cannot exist without the body, it also has to be fed and provided a steady stream of information through sensory stimuli-sound, smells, tastes, sensations and insights of which the mind can understand the surrounding world. Without this input from the physical world, the mind cannot process as part of the search, therefore, consciousness requires the physical form, which is the body, in order to function in the world (Howe, 2015, pp.54-55).

With that said, Howe posits that science fiction loves to explore the imbalanced interconnection of the body and the mind, by inventing ways to enhance or upset that balance. Furthermore, Howe explains that time travel disrupts the natural progression of Being-toward-Death in several different ways, and this is exemplified in narratives such as Irving's (1819) *Rip Van Winkle* and Bradbury's (1952) *A Sound of Thunder*. In the aforementioned narratives, the bodies of the travellers encounter themselves from different periods of their own lifetime. Time travel offers a unique method of comparing and contrasting a multiplicity of dialects such as; old and young, male and female, innocent and evil, violent and peaceful. The body as a site allows for consideration of the said dialects, made possible by time travel stories. Howe (2015) concludes that the process of questioning what it means to be human includes focusing upon the things which surround and affect humans. More specifically, however, this means examining the spaces humans inhabit and the objects with which humans interact over the course of lived time. This is more so in relation to the time travel novels and those who read them.

Following the same logic, Royston (2020) points out that time travel narratives allow us to explore that relationship between body and consciousness. This is done by using previously familiar objects from a new perspective or examining unfamiliar objects in an otherwise familiar setting, which allows for a changed perception of those objects. In other words, time travel is a way of allowing objects to become alien or other

and therefore, opens interpretations previously not found in the phenomenology of those objects.

2.2.2. Science fiction and temporal narratives

Dillon (2011) provides a definition of science fiction as that fiction that creates an entire universe, an entire ontology, another world all together, a world that is completely different from that of the reader, and this concept runs parallel to that of the possible world. While there are recognisably science fictional icons in what is understood as science fiction's 'mega-text', each of these icons is highly mutable. Aliens, technology, space-travel, futuristic worlds and alternate realities are all considered as discursive elements, insofar as they provide recognisable links to what is commonly understood as science fiction. The overriding plot in a text may be a detective story, a romance or a general adventure tale, despite the text's genre, and these elements may also be taken up and used by other genres. The concept is the mainstream pieces of fiction like Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* (2005) and Niffenegger's *The Time-Traveler's Wife* (2004) which use the identifiably science fiction tropes of human cloning and time travel, respectively; neither novel is generally marked as science fiction. Generally, while a genre may create such scientific texts, it still cannot be transplanted and necessarily result in science fiction text.

Dillon (2011) further states that science fiction's narrative worlds are book-ended with an implied 'what if' question regarding some change in the unknown world, and are implicitly nested within the reader and author's reality. Moreover, the world proposed by the science fiction narrative is no less experimental than that of

the metafictional intrusion; it is simply more prolonged. Thus, it can be concluded that both science fiction and metafiction depend structurally upon the understanding of their presented narratives as possible worlds and the implicit layering of the text within a reader's reality.

Dillon's (2011) study dismantles the fictional construct of the narrative world in various ways in order to critique them, their mode and fiction in general. In order to understand the dismantling process, it is necessary to incorporate possible world theory and related text-world theory into metafiction and science fiction readings. Both metafiction and science fiction operate through the creation and emphasis of a fictional world and its relationship to the actual world is a defining feature. Metafiction also foregrounds the fictionality of the portrayed world.

Pavlik (2011) exemplifies Paterson's narrative; *Bridge to Terabithia* (1977) as a novel that is not itself a fantasy text, but which can provide an illustration regarding the influence of spatial representation on reader's real-world special activities. Pavlik observes that there is hardly any reference to young readers and different ways from which they might perceive fantasy works. Perhaps this lack of reference to the worlds of child readers and how they perceive the spaces of fantasy other world texts is significant of the general lack of appreciation of the value and input of fantasy literature for children.

2.2.3. Time travel in novels

Rahman (2019) regards time travel as not just an empirical quest but a human interest that has a global fascination from both scientific and spiritual perspectives. In addition, with the progress of time and technology, the interest in

time travel will most likely continue to rise just as academic research and development in space exploration has over the years.

In addition, Isobe (2019) introduces time-slip fantasy as a synonymous term to time-travel. The novels focused on in Isobe's study belong to a subgenre called time-slip fantasy. In such novels, a contemporary protagonist encounters people and places from the past or from much earlier times, often related to a specific place such as old houses or gardens. Examples of novels include Pierce's (1958) *Tom's Midnight Garden* and Boston's (1954) *The Children of Green Knowe*.

In both narratives, the main character is a child whose loneliness is alleviated by forming friendships with people from the past. In addition, time-slip fantasies share recurring themes such as the relationships between children and adults, isolated protagonists and the change of landscape from the world they know, to the unknown.

Another scholar, Segal (2016) stipulates that the incorporation of time travel into novels provides a flexible set of mimetic motivations for the various temporal movements in the telling of the narratives. In addition, it is believed that narratives involving time travel are particularly distinctive in the way they problematize the concept of past and future in that realm. One of the studies cited in the current research is Royston (2018) who asserts that the narrative itself can be seen as a time machine, even the most elementary narratives, whether fictional or non-fictional, set out to modify or manipulate the order, duration and significance of events in time.

Royston (2018) further established that while in most narratives the power to manipulate time is in the possession of the narrator, time travel narratives often grant that power to their characters. Thus, a narrator or character may move forward or backwards in the timeline of the story, revealing details in the past in flashbacks and visions of the future for his or her characters through foreshadowing.

As is the case of the two selected novels in the present study, the characters possess the power or choice to travel back in time, either by choice or influenced by other factors. Arguably, time travel literature offers a great opportunity for examining: “human relationships with objects; space and time are complexly connected human lived experience is the aggregation of perceptions of object images of time; phenomenological time begins in the earliest stages of childhood and persists throughout cosmological time” (Royston, 2020, p 11).

Royston (2020) concurs that time travel literature is a unique genre in that it deliberately disrupts the linear progression of cosmological time in its narrative. Other genres such as historical fiction and science fiction, merely incorporate a shift in the cosmological placement of its narrative to either a portion of cosmological time which has already passed, or which is imagined to be in future. Time travel fiction, on the other hand, has a narrative that includes unnatural movement between two or more disconnected portions of cosmological time. Doing so immediately affects phenomenological time:

One can easily get lost in the nature of time and the variety of terms used to discuss it in time travel literature and associated scholarly works, in

which it is said not only to flow but to fold, bend, warp, loop, branch out or take on other shapes entirely. To explore the shape of the non-physical concept of time is enticing and has led to much work on time travel related issues such as paradox or the butterfly effect (Royston, 2020, p. 12).

The notion that all fiction is presumably removed from reality, as explained by (Pavlik 2011) implies that fantasy fiction is twice removed, in that it is a presentation of something which does not actually exist in the real world.

This in turn is a separation that pushes fantasy fiction rather further and firmly away from the real world, or from reality. Furthermore, all novels provide settings that are ultimately imaginary; they all present a story world which the world evoked implicitly as well as explicitly by a narrative. Buttressing this view, Tuan (as cited in Pavlik, 2011), notes that “although realism and fantasy have clear and opposite meaning conceptually, their application to real-life situations is often ambiguous and problematical” (p. 15). Additionally, readers would do well to hesitate before placing people or a cultural manifestation in the realm of realism or of fantasy.

2.2.4. Children and time travel narratives

Asma (2016) regards childhood as the shaping phase in the journey of life. A child may read a book that contains fairy tales with excitement and even though the child knows the story’s events, they may still learn the story by heart, word for word, but they keep anticipating the story with complete passion.

The point is that children often prefer the familiar and popular narratives, which may be easy to follow and form new conclusions from it.

Using this line of thought, Tezi (2020) observes that children's first literary experiences help expand their imagination, contribute to their reading habits, and also introduce them to their cultural heritage. More important, however, is that children's stories become children's first teachers along with their parents, playing a significant role in their academic, psychological and societal development on the path of becoming responsible, sensitive and moral individuals. Tezi further contends that the prototypes of children's fantasy literature such as fairy tales, fables and folkloric stories, despite the geographical differences or different plot lines, all revolve around the battle between evil and good forces.

According to Tezi (2020), the need for children to experience opposition in the story lines, "polarized ideas and distinctions to grasp a definite message or a certain moral a narrative is structured on" (pp. 2-3). Modern children's fantasy literature also inherits its dualistic nature from earliest sources. In fact, even the most complicated plot structures in children's literature books still draw on oppositions and comparisons between dualistic concepts and the ideas related to these dualities. In this context, "dualistic representations, that is to say comparisons and contrasts between different characters, spaces and objects lead to inferences regarding good and bad, moral and immoral, appropriate and inappropriate" (Tezi, 2020, p. 5). In modern children's fantasy books, such inferences might not be rigid and easy to detect by the child reader.

Nevertheless, this subtlety actually makes children's fantasy books powerful apparatuses in transmitting ideological messages and value systems without spoiling the entertaining quality, naivety and the simplicity of the text. Pavlik

(2011) further observes that this somewhat dismissive narratological approach to the spatiality of fiction is no less true in children's literature, where a common perspective is that, while children's stories contain description of character and setting, they concentrate on action – on what happens next. Their main focus is always on the events of the plot and the places and spaces where those plot events take place are of minimal concern.

Although not pertaining to children's literary fiction, Thanki's (2011) study examines fictional time travel texts and how such fantasy novels are based on real life and in return effect real life. The study attempts a theoretical understanding of how these three authors; H.G. Wells (1895), C. Clark (2001) and J. K. Rowling (1997), incorporate their social concerns and ideas and moral values in a fantasy format to understand why fantasy operates, how it operates and to what end it operates by focusing on the genre and how successful they are in achieving it. Advancing the same thought, Pavlik (2011) observes that the degree of child protagonists' involvement in the construction of space and time within such fantasy novels can reveal a number of things. These include the extent to which the texts manifest shifting and various views of adult-child power relationships on a spatial level, what is made available to the protagonist as well as the reader, and how they operate both for and against the child protagonist, and for or against the readers, both child and adult.

Pavlik (2011) further contends that the other worlds in fantasy fiction do seem to offer ready-made locations wherein the child protagonist(s) can develop or mature in a space away from their home, with the real of consensus reality temporarily

left behind but always returned to in the end. This argument widely suggests that traveling from one world to another mirrors the child protagonist's path from childhood or adolescence to adulthood or at least a greater degree of knowledge or experience.

Dillon's (2011) study clarifies that science fiction's fictionality in children's narratives suggests something similar to metafiction. Metafiction can be defined as a moment of self-consciousness in a fiction narrative. It thus appears as if the text is speaking directly to the reader, typically about the action of the text, the process of which writing the text itself or the narrator's opinion of the text. From a narratological point of view, metafiction can be seen as mimesis of process which is the presentation of the process of a text's creation. This breaks down the boundary of the 'hermetical sealed' text world, and foregrounds the fictionality of narrative, which systematically draws attention to the text's status as an artefact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality.

2.2.5. Children's fantasy narratives

Pucko (2016) investigates archetypes in children's fantasy. In fantasy narratives, Pucko explains that fairy tales, fantasy literature and science fiction literature show strong similarities to myths and religious texts. It is observed that *The Harry Potter* series, *Lord of the Rings* and *Chronicles of Narnia* are no different. Some scholars further argue that great fairy tales begin with an untried young character with humble beginnings, going out into the world to seek great fortune, experience a great adventure and fulfil a quest. Moreover, myths, science fiction,

fairy tales and fantasy literature share common imageries, signs, symbols and signs that are perhaps the oblivious to observe in children's literature and other literature alike.

Pucko (2016) states that since mythological and religious texts, fairy tales, and fantasy narratives are built around archetypes, then archetypes are defined as factors and motifs that arrange the physical elements into certain images, characterised as archetypal. This is done in such a way that they can be recognised only from the effects they produce. In addition, archetypes are said to be concepts, themes, and ideas that are inborn and should be manifested in one form or the other.

Pucko (2016) further states that with every other genre in literature, the poetic value and literary merit differ from one fantasy story to another. Fantasy works will not always equally address the reader and connect consciously and unconsciously. There are however works in the fantasy genre where works of fantasy are worth including in the literary cannon. Pucko contends that besides offering examples of archetypes, there are other positive characteristics of fairy tales and fantasy fiction. Such fantasies offer escape not necessarily from life or reality, but escape from our present time and self-made misery. They further help the reader to experience "different worlds and live through their imaginations" (pp. 8-12).

On a different note, Asma (2016) postulates that the combination of how the author's mind works and how it is presented in a text is what brings that text to life in various ways. Children's fantasy texts such as Lewis' *The Chronicles of*

Narnia and *The Lion*, and *The Witch and the Wardrobe*, used elements of the author's personal life. This implies that in order to achieve a purpose, a text has to answer what it reveals about the author's psyche and what elements express the biographical data of the author's life.

Gilete (2022) posits that in children's fantasies, European mythologies use Greek, Roman and Nordic mythologies as a reference. As a starting point, they use epic and heroic legends in which humans were featured protagonists, more so children characters. Heroic characters are also depicted in narratives such as *The Fellowship of the Ring* (1954), which is the first book in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* (1955) trilogy, Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia* (1956) and Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949).

In the narratives, models are divided into: departure, initiation and return as different stages of a plot. These stages are important parts of any hero's adventure and can also be readily found in the legends, traditions and rituals of people in reality. According to Gilete (2022), these symbolic systems represent natural creations of the human mind and further point out the disturbing situation in which western society seems to have immersed itself in recent times. Moreover, these symbolic systems could also be traced to the progressive discredit into which mythologies have fallen and how mythology itself has been damaged by a world where 'the rational' is worshiped. Severely crippled, the mythological and divine, accompanied by the symbols that they embrace, find themselves fleeing for shelter in the only space left to hide, which is their "birthplace-the-unconscious" (Gilete, 2022, p. 154).

Gilete (2022) further states that classic mythology gives rise to a classic hero. A classic hero is defined as “someone who tends to be a tragic figure, divided by a combination of human and divine” (Gilete, 2022, p.160). The young heroes in the aforementioned narratives have no divine part that affects their creation; they are heroes of flesh and blood, with real mothers and fathers; they are not children of deities, although it is true that there is always an aura of mystery about their parents, who are always presented in the vaguest of terms. The hero can obey a call to embark on an adventure or attempt to avoid it. The latter is usually instant, and such a refusal turns the adventure into a negative. In mythological narratives, in the end, the hero must cross the first threshold that takes them from their world to the world of the unknown. They must move on through their adventure until they reach a place where a hero comes to the threshold guardian at the “entrance of the magnified power” (Gilete, 2022, p.163)

2.2.6. Gaps identified in the literature

Micklethwait’s (2012) study focuses on the comparison of time travel films which contrasts with the present study, and further presents a gap in research. The present study provides a comparative analysis of novels that involve young (child protagonists) characters in vulnerable and unsafe environments who travel to the past willingly, and/or are forced to by other circumstances. What makes the present study different from previous ones is that it focuses on time travel elements in two selected novels in children’s literature.

Micklethwait, however, claims that by 1960 several films had been released, which helped increase the popularity of the time travel genre. The number of films

released involving time travel and other temporal phenomena continued to grow until the end of the nineteenth century, a claim benchmarked upon Grenby's (2009) study, which also clarifies that among the first British printed books were *Books of Curtesye* in 1477 and his translation of *The Book of the Knight of the Tower* in 1484. These narratives provide boys and girls with instructions on how to behave in a noble household. While Micklethwait focuses on time travel films, Grenby's focus is on time travel literary narratives, therefore creating a gap for the study.

Another scholar, Carpenter (2015) uses an approach which contrasts the present study in the genre of children's literature. Carpenter examines how the female character is depicted in novels, specifically in C. S Lewis's *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950). In the novel, Father Christmas gifts each child with useful defensive weapons, then suggests it would be best if the girls refrain from using them or avoid entering battle. In much the same way, critics of children's fantasy literature have delineated a set of guidelines that help them to critique female child characters by devaluing, neglecting or bewailing the girl's lack of agency or effective traits (p.1).

Feminist and children's literature criticism blinds itself from noticing the less obvious but equally effective significance of young girl characters in fictional narratives. Chunga's (2015) study is also a contrast to the present study as it focuses on the portrayal of the girl-child in a patriarchal society, in the genre of children's literature. These studies add on to the general criticism of children's

fantasy literature which has a tendency to pigeonhole female child characters into a category of lesser social and literary value.

Isobe (2019) presents a somewhat parallel view to the present study, in the form of an analysis of the novels *Tom's Midnight Garden* by Pearce and *The Children of Green Knowe* by Boston. These time-slipping stories, present deep relationships between places and children, which are extensively described by their sense of place. It is accentuated that protagonists in time-slip stories move to places which are new to them, and the more they spend time there, the more experience they have. In time slip fantasy:

Child protagonists encounter the past through their sense of place which makes themselves understand the history accompanying the place in each narrative. That place affects the protagonist's physical sense, and each of them deepens and develops a sense of place there. Places are described through children's perspectives and sensation which are keen and sensitive; the characters perceive places through diverse senses such as smell, hearing and touch (Isobe, 2019, p. 92).

Dwyer (1973) presents a study that seemingly debunks the notion of H G Well's time travel theory. Dwyer contends that although time travel science fiction contains an abundance of stories where the plot revolves around certain individuals who find themselves transported back to the past by some kind of mechanical device. It does not however involve changing the past.

Thomas (2016) furthermore observes a disparity or lack of diversity in children's literature, which the author believes is brought about by the lack of diversity in childhood and teen life depicted in children's books and media. Thomas stresses that when children grow up without seeing diverse images in the mirrors, windows and doors of children's literature, it limits them to single stories about the world around them and ultimately affects the development of their imagination.

2.3. Theoretical framework

A study conducted by Royston (2018) explains that as one of the lenses to look at historical time-travel in children's fantasy literature, time travel can be employed allegorically and metaphorically, and this can be done with a notion of rhetoric presented through narratology. Bal (2009) defines narratology as the ensemble of theories of narratives, narrative texts, images, events; cultural artefacts that 'tell a story' (Introduction, para. 1). Such a theory helps to understand, analyse and evaluate narratives. With narratology, readers are offered an instrument with which they can describe, and at the same time interpret narrative texts.

However, this does not imply that the theory is some kind of machine into which one inserts a text at one end and expects an adequate description to roll out at the other. The concepts that are presented must be regarded as intellectual tools for interpretation. These tools are useful in that they enable their users to formulate an interpretative description in such a way that it is accessible to others. Furthermore, identifying the characteristics of a text can also be facilitated by insight into the abstract narrative system. Above all, the concepts enhance one's comprehension

through encouraging readers to articulate what they understand, or think they understand, when reading or otherwise ‘processing’ a narrative artefact (Bal, 2009, Introduction, para. 4-5).

According to Raven and Elahi (2015) the projected results which encompass science fiction studies, allow for a comparative assessment of narratives based on their form and style, in terms of their rhetorical effect. The Narratology theory is further elaborated by Amerian and Jofi (2015) as the theory that informs the study of form and function of narrative, a concept which examines what narratives have in common as well as what allows them to be different. In light of this, the present study presents a comparative analysis of the selected novels using the narratology lens.

The emergence of the theory of narratology stemmed from the cultural theory and constructivist approaches to social science. Kennan (2006) is credited for participation in the development of narratology from the word narrative.

A narrative is defined by Kennan as the narration or telling of succession of fictional events. This definition can be attributed to the two main characteristics of narratives, the first one; events governed by temporality or a double temporality, which is the chronology of the events and their presentation in the text. The second characteristic involves telling or narration as an act of mediation or transmission which in literature is verbal. Readers should however keep in mind that not all narratives involve words written on paper, some can be verbal.

Pavlik (2011) states that the narrative theory traditionally argued that a work of fiction need not only be analysed in terms of its plot events and characterisation, but the setting sets the character off in the usual figurative sense of the expression; it is the place and collection of objects against which his actions and passions appropriately emerge. In essence, the predominant narratological perspective involves what happens to characters in time which is the 'figure' we pay attention to; where the plot happens in space is the 'ground' which we can ignore at will. The present study, in line with the research objectives, further employed the Mythological approach in conjunction with the Narratology theory. The Mythological approach is best suited for the proposed study because it encompasses "the underlying structure discernible in stories." (Dobson, 2005, p.2)

According to MacCarron (2014), Mythology is a collection of myths and although there is no single definition of a myth, they are commonly described as religious narratives. A number of scholars make specific distinctions between different types of myths. One type of myth to be discussed is the Heroic which Nilsson (as cited in MacCarron, 2014) refers to as that which often begins with folklores and ends with incidents that have a historic appearance. Additionally, a common approach to the study of mythology involves searching for meaning in myths to explain phenomena (p. 45).

2.4. Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the literature on studies conducted by different scholars, and also noted the relevance of conducting a literature review. The theoretical framework of the study was explained as well. The next chapter presents the research methodology employed in the study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, the researcher dealt with the literature review and theoretical framework of this study. The current chapter focuses on the methodology of the study, which presents the research design, population, sample, procedure, data analysis as well as the ethics of this study.

3.2. Approach and design

Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that the qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p.3).

The present study employed a qualitative desktop approach. Qualitative research is referred to by Andima (2021) as a type of research in which the researcher studies a problem that calls for an exploration of a phenomenon. According to Andima, it also relies on the views of participants; asks broad, general questions; collects data consisting largely of words (or texts) from participants; describes and analyses these words for themes and conducts the inquiry in a subjective and

reflexive manner. As such, this research approach was suitable for this study because of its flexible methods such as narrative and exploratory research design. The narrative literary approach was also used in this study. According to Burck (2005) the approach is used to make sense of our lived experiences that we draw on the forms and genres of narrative available to us. Furthermore, the type of narrative chosen depends on what the researcher wants to examine and why, which in turn influences the way a text is selected. This design was used in the present study to draw informed interpretations and conclusions with regards to historical time travel in the two selected novels.

An exploratory research approach on the other hand, seeks new insights into phenomena and sheds light on ambiguous situations. The aim is not to derive definite evidence but rather to serve as a basis for further research (Mayer, 2015, p. 53). The present study thus did not require field work and was restricted to a desktop design due to the fact that it used a qualitative desktop literary analysis approach. The primary data used were the selected novels, and these were critically analysed by the researcher.

Chunga (2015) appraises qualitative research design as interpretative, meaning the design is concerned with understanding, experience and interpretation of the social world. Further, Chunga also emphasises that the qualitative data analysis methods are based on arguments and explanations aimed at understanding the complex and detailed nature of the social world within a given context. In light of this, the present study sought a literary understanding of the presentation of historical time travel in the selected novels.

3.3. Population

Burns and Grove (as cited in Andima, 2021) define research population as all the components which best suit to be included in the study. The population for the current study was all the historical time travel novels by African authors as well as Western authors in the genre of children's literature, written in English. According to Andima (2021) a study on an entire population is quite demanding because of reasons such as feasibility, duration process among others. As such, the texts studied are the time travel novels in the genre of children's literature stemming from the 1970s to the twenty-first century.

3.4. Sample

Omona (2013) contends that sampling design considerations usually are made with the goal of making statistical generalisations of findings and inferences from the respective statistical sample to the population from which the sample was drawn. The researcher then purposefully selected two novels, namely, *When you Dance with the Crocodile* by Muller (2012) and *Crusade in Jeans* by Beckman (1973). The two novels were purposefully sampled because they contain common features such as the elements of historical time travel and they both fall under the genre of children's fictional literature. Chunga (2015) further justifies that sampling is necessary because a researcher may not have access to the entire population as it may be too wide or there may not be time to do so. In addition, it is also necessary to sample the population in order to give the study a focus. It is

in view of this that two novels depicting child protagonists traveling through time to history were selected to explore the phenomenon of time travel in children's literature in this study. The novels were further studied because of the methods or modes of which they utilised to travel through time.

3.5. Procedure

Because the study is qualitative in nature, it employed a desktop study, and thus data was gathered through a rigorous close reading and analysis of the selected novels, *When you Dance with the Crocodile* (2012) and *Crusade in Jeans* (1973). The researcher further made notes of the relevant characteristics to link the theories employed in this study, and for a well-informed conclusion. The researcher considered relevant secondary sources including but not limited to works by literary critics, book reviews, journals, scholarly articles, scholarly research papers on children's literature containing historical time travel or some kind of time travel. The narratology theory in conjunction with the mythology theory were used to supplement the critical analysis of the novels.

3.6. Data analysis

The study employed content analysis as a 'form' of data analysis. Mayer (2015) postulates that within qualitative approaches there is no clear distinction between the phrases of data collection and analysis, which might proceed in a parallel and reflexive interaction with the content to be analysed. One advantage of content

analysis, according to Mayer (2015) is that it turns sampling procedures and coding schemes into transparent methods within research.

The study further employed a thematic content analysis of the two novels. Data was gathered and systemised into different themes to ease the data analysis process. Eventually the data was then interpreted in line with the research objectives. The data was subsequently then interpreted under the theories of narratology and mythology, then interpreted narratively. Finally, the findings were examined from the interpretation to formulate conclusions and recommendations for future research.

3.7. Research ethics

This study is a desktop hence; it does not involve any human participants. The research was limited to the study of secondary data which does not include confidential, private or sensitive records, or records not in the public domain. Proper citing practices were observed and all sources duly acknowledged. Scholarly objectivity in line with the requirements of the discipline were also observed. The researcher sought ethical clearance from the University of Namibia's Research and Ethics committee before conducting the study.

3.8. Conclusion

The chapter mainly focused on the research design and approach used to compile the study. The population as well as sampling methods were specified. The next chapter focuses on the comparative analysis of the selected novels; *When you Dance with the Crocodile* (2012) and *Crusade in Jeans* (1973) bound by narratology as well as mythology theories, and informed by the objectives of the study and the reviewed literature.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses and analyses the selected novels for the study. The analysis is informed by the Narratology and Mythology literary theories. The chapter provides a summary for each novel, it also presents a comparative analysis of the novels based on the study's objectives which are to:

- analyse the presentation of elements of historical time travel;
- explore the different modes of time travel;
- compare the presentation of historical time travel.

4.2. Summary of *When you Dance with the Crocodile*

The novel opens with Helena and her father Dr Amadhila talking about a video game he had brought home, which is labelled *A Dangerous Game*. Dr Amadhila's work involves testing the viability of computer games for children. When Dr Amadhila leaves for the neighbourhood meeting, Helena is left home alone, and decides to play the computer game which her father had warned her against. On the computer screen she sees a picture video of a girl, who she concludes is no older than she is, trapped in a hole and struggling to get out. Playing the game proves to be dangerous indeed, as it sucks her into a wormhole which transports

her back in time. Her brother Sam, is contacted by his father in the meanwhile, to go look after Helena.

Upon discovering that his sister has played the *Dangerous Game*, Sam decides to follow suit to go and rescue her. In his case he sees a picture video of a woman struggling to make an alarm clock work. Irresponsibly, both children do not bother to read the instructions of the game before they click on the levels. Helena clicks on the *very difficult* level, while Sam clicks on the *diabolically difficult* level. The wormhole transports Helena to a place between Angola and Zambia, which is referred to as Dark Africa, more than three hundred years ago, to the year 1889 to be exact.

Before she clicks on her preferred level, Helena grabs a water bottle and the 7H device which she assumes is a present from her father. After being catapulted inside the computer game, she then lands near the place where the girl is trapped. She gives her the water bottle to quench her thirst, then proceeds to try to pull her out. When her attempt fails, she asks for help from a group of men passing by. Unbeknownst to Helena, these are the men who set the trap in the first place. As a result, Helena and Ruth get captured and are put together with a group of other children in chains, headed to be sold as slaves in Angola.

Meanwhile, Sam gets catapulted to the same century, but to a different village called Nalolo village. He asks the 'big woman' he had seen on the computer screen of that village to help him find his sister. The woman is the Mukwai – the queen of that village – and is also paramount chief Lewanika's sister. Before Sam is granted help, he makes the mistake of vomiting on her dress, because he had

been given sour milk. The act is considered an insult to her and he is sentenced to death. His quick thinking saves him from being eaten by the crocodiles, as he appeases the queen by taking a photograph and printing it immediately, with a camera he had brought from his timeline. This makes the Mukwai happy and she sends him to her brother on the other side of the river to help look for his sister.

In the meantime, realising that her purpose in the game is to take Ruth back to her village, to her mother, Helena bribes one of her captors with her wrist watch, to let them escape. This plan works, and the girls escape in the night. They use the 7H for light, and to play music in order to keep the hyenas away. As they make their way back to the Zambezi, they run into Maddy, a young woman, who also is held against her will and abused by a man named Zakes. Zakes is with two Masubia men who act as guards to keep the girls from escaping.

Zakes captures Ruth and Helena as well, and when their first escape attempt fails, they get punished, and Helena loses faith in her mission. Later, when she is alone, a message comes through via email to the 7H from Mark, the programmer of the game informing her that the game's instructions are she has to complete three tasks in order to go back home. This motivates her, and their second escape attempt is successful, and the three girls manage to get away from Zakes.

In the meantime, back in the twenty first century, Dr Amadhila comes home just to realise his children are gone. He then tries to figure out how to get the children out of the game, so he contacts Mark, the programmer to find a way to rescue the children.

Sam is then taken to the other side of the village, where he is faced with yet another challenge. He is tied up by the chief's guards and almost killed by fire ants. He is saved by a man from the missionary who then takes him to the paramount chief. There, he meets the best friend to the chief's son, an eleven-year-old boy named Matsimela who is also the chief's teacher and translator. Matsimela tells Sam that he was the first one to play *The Dangerous Game*, as an experiment by Mark, but then he has not completed his task, which is why he is stuck in the game.

Sam, Matsimela and Dimdimbara– the chief's son and Matsimela's friend – get together to find Helena and eventually they travel to Ruth's village. They agree to take Ruth to her village and unite her with her mother and her people, as this is the third task Helena has to complete before the wormhole is able to take them back to their time. The three children then complete their pending tasks, and receive instructions from Mark on how to go back to their present world. They get into position, for them to be transported out of the game through a wormhole.

Most chapters of the novel are narrated in the third person omniscient narrative, fluctuating to first person narration when characters engage in dialogues, and when highlighting the thoughts of individual characters.

4.3. Summary of Crusade in Jeans

The novel *Crusade in Jeans* is about Rudolf Hefting, otherwise known as Dolf, who could not be more than twelve years old. The novel opens with Dolf exploring and admiring the laboratory of two scientists who were friends with his

father, Dr Simiak and his assistant Dr Frederics. The scientist team invents a time machine and from what Dolf's view it resembles a phone booth. So far, the scientists have only experimented with sending objects and animals back in time, and Dolf's curiosity prompts him to suggest that they send him through the time machine. He argues that animals will not relay if the experiment is a success or describe what they would have seen on the other side.

After a brief consideration and to Dolf's insistence, the scientists send him back to the thirteenth century; 1212 Montgivray, Italy, to be precise. He is given a breadknife, and pens to mark the place where he lands, so the machine can retrieve him from that position. He ends up in Germany, year 1212 instead, between the towns of Spiers and Worms.

Upon his arrival, he stumbles on a fight, and ends up saving a boy from two robbers, hurting his shoulder in the process. The boy introduces himself as Leonardo Fibonacci da Pisa, a traveling student, and the two immediately form a friendship. They engage in a mathematics discussion which causes Dolf to lose track of time, and misses the set time to be retrieved from the landing spot. He realises that he is stuck in that century, at least until the time machine has had time to recharge. Moments later the boys hear voices of children singing and laughing, almost hundreds or thousands of them. The children range from about six years of age to about twelve. Leonardo tells him it is a crusade of the children, 'on their way to the Holy Land, to liberate Jerusalem from the Saracens'.

Just as they pass through where Leonardo and Dolf are standing, Dolf sees a child collapse. He quickly goes down the hill to help the child, but to no avail. The

child dies and Dolf is disheartened. He decides to join the procession to see where the children are headed. The procession sets up camp outside the city of Spiers, near the river, as they are not allowed shelter in the city. Dolf ends up saving a few children from drowning because they cannot swim, and no one is watching over them. The children spend the night in the open even when a thunderstorm passes. Dolf takes care of a young injured girl who introduces herself as Maria. Maria then explains to Dolf that the children are from the city called Cologne, where the young shepherd Nicolas had been preaching in the cathedrals. Nicolas claims to have been chosen by God, that he hears the voices of angels, and sees visions. Nicolas also believes he had been sent by God to gather children to go on a crusade to liberate the kingdom of Jerusalem from the heathens. The children walk to the city of Genoa where God will use the shepherd Nicolas to perform a miracle of parting the sea, just like Moses did in the bible.

Although in disbelief of the children's mission, Dolf travels with them as he is worried about the youngest children. The next night he sees Nicolas in front of the procession, accompanied by two older monks named Dom Anselmus and Dom Augustinus. He notices they have a carriage, and are eating their fill while some of the children have no food at all. Dolf approaches them and explains how the procession is disorganised, and that some children are severely sick, while others die along the way.

Dolf then meets a boy named Carolus, who is about his age, and he is introduced as the future king of Jerusalem, as well as his future bride; Hilda, who travels in the carriage. She is of noble blood, just like some of the children who are dressed

distinguishably compared to the rest. Carolus takes note of Dolf's suggestion to properly organise the procession, and for them to have a group of children with responsibilities, such as hunters, fishermen, and those attending to the sick.

From then on, the procession goes on smoothly until the group experiences its first epidemic; the Scarlet Death. The procession is brought to a halt for the sick to be tended to and the dead children to be buried. A few hundred children die.

However, the disease is contained within a few days before the group decides to move on to the next town. Just a few mountains before Genoa, Carolus falls ill.

Dolf diagnoses the nature of his illness as appendicitis, and the young future king unfortunately succumbs to the disease. With their future leader now dead, the group struggles to keep their faith in the purpose of their crusade, but continues marching on.

Once they reach the beach of Genoa, Dolf discovers from one of the older monks that the crusade's purpose was all a lie. The real reason for the children's crusade was to board them in ships and sell them as slaves in Africa. Nicolas fails to part the sea as promised.

Faced with the disappointment and reality of false promises, the children break off into different directions. Those who still believe in the miracle follow Nicolas to the city of Brindisi, where they hope to still see the miracle fulfilled. Dolf goes with Nicolas as he has to look out for Maria, who remains a believer. Along the way, they encounter more challenges. They are caught in the middle of an ongoing war which results in some of the children being murdered, including their

shepherd Nicolas. They face yet another epidemic; malaria, which kills a few hundred more children.

When they finally reach the city of Brindisi, they discover that they cannot march any further. The archbishop offers a few children shelter, but some are boarded into ships to Venice. Then Leonardo finds an object which has a message from Dr Simiak, containing instructions for Dolf on how he can be retrieved from the past. Dolf bids farewell to his friends, and the Leonardo decides to take Maria with him to his home town. The next day Dolf positions himself on the coordinates from the message, and he is then pulled back into his timeline.

Although the novel is told in the third person limited narrative, the first-person narrative is used in some instances to incorporate the main character's thoughts and dialogue with other characters.

4.4. Methods of time travel

The selected novels: *When you Dance with the Crocodile* (2012) and *Crusade in Jeans* (1973) evince different methods of traveling to the past. In *When you Dance with the Crocodile*, a computer game serves as a time machine or vehicle used to transport the children back in time through a wormhole. The reader is shown how the children are taken back to history, to an unfamiliar era. In the case of Helena and Sam, the act to time travel is driven by a sense of adventure, curiosity and a sense of responsibility coupled with a compassion to help the people seen through the computer screen. In Matsimela's case however, traveling

to the past was a chance for Mark, the programmer of the computer game, to prove the functionality of his invention.

Woodward (2011) explains that it has long been a staple of science fiction to find strategies of instantaneous travel to remote locations for both space and time.

Interestingly, it is through science fiction that Muller shows the readers how Mark finally makes a scientific breakthrough with the use of wormholes.

Woodward (2011) further states that getting around space time quickly has been a dream of some scientists for more than a century, but Mark achieves this after a few years of trials and errors as he narrates, “My wildest dream came true. I discovered how to use a wormhole to visit another time and place...I couldn’t believe it. It worked.” (Muller, 2012, p. 49). All he needed was for someone to serve as a guinea pig in his experiment, which is why he asked Matsimela.

Matsimela is presented to the reader as an intelligent boy and a friend to Mark. This could have been the reason Matsimela entrusted Mark to use him for his experiment. On the other hand, from a scientific perspective, Mark wanted to give Matsimela the chance of a lifetime to be the first person to travel through a wormhole. He was absolutely sure he would return. Everything had been worked out (Muller, 2012, p. 49).

In his findings, Woodward (2011) reports that Einstein’s theory of relativity had forged space and time into space-time, and that traveling in space was thought fundamentally different from traveling through time. For this reason, shortcuts to traveling in space and time require technology; traversable wormholes for

example. One of these wormholes are what Mark used to make time travel possible for the children in the narrative.

However, bringing the children back from the past was a challenge for Mark and Dr Amadhila. The reader is assured that “Mark had found the road. Not the end of the road, but at least the direction. He was getting closer to the wormhole he had used. There were many in the universe, huge ones that could swallow the earth, and he had to be careful to find the right one. But he had identified it” (Muller, 2012, p. 64).

This is in agreement with Woodward (2011) who emphasises that a wide range of wormholes were found to satisfy reasonable space and time travel theory, but most of them produced distortions that seriously disrupted the surrounding space time over large distances. This further proves to be a dangerous one since Mark was dealing with unfamiliar scientific territory, and had to be careful to use the right one.

Moreover, Sam shared the same fears, when he worried that the wormhole might drop him somewhere else on the way home, like some other part of the world or other timeline, to face the third *diabolically difficult* challenge (Muller, 2012, p.99). Sam’s fears emerge because he had not completed the three challenges required of him by the game. Muller uses Sam’s sentiment to highlight the possible dangers involved in using technology which has not been fully perfected.

Davis (2001) describes wormholes as hyperspace tunnels through space-time connecting together either remote regions within our universe or two different universes; they even connect together different dimensions and different times.

Using wormholes “travellers would enter through one side of the tunnel and exit out the other, passing through the throat along the way” (Davis, 2001, pp. 2-3). However, this is based on theory since the method of using wormholes is not a perfected science.

Muller applies Davis’ description with the sensation felt by the children when they were sucked in by the wormhole. The sensation was like one they had never experienced before and this is illustrated below:

Helena heard a strange sound like a strong wind blowing around the corners of the house. The sound came close and close, louder and louder until it was all around her. An invisible energy sucked her into a tunnel as if she were as light as a feather, her body turning around and around, faster and faster into the unknown...everything she saw flew around her as well, at different speeds. Along the sides of the tunnel, images flew by so fast that she could hardly make out whether things were animals or people, trees...and everything travelled at different speed...At last she felt a slowing down as one feels in a plane when the brakes are applied. Invisible energy pulled at her and she was flung out of the tunnel. She fell onto the ground. (Muller, 2012, p. 20)

A similar sensation is illustrated when the children are pulled back from the past as they get transported back by the wormhole. Helena tells the others to “hold hands.” She pushed the 7H deep into her jeans pocket. “Close your eyes. Mark says it is extremely important to close your eyes. You have to cut yourself off from this world visually.” Then the sound of

the wind became louder and louder. It encircled the children and pulled them in. They landed in a tunnel and spun round and round, up and up, deep into the universe and forward through time. (Muller, 2012, p.103)

The wormholes described by Davis (2001) possess a normal or backward time flow which in this case allowed the children to be sucked forward into their timeline. However, Davis affirms that new technology and experiments need to be constructed in order to verify undiscovered facets to the phenomena. In this case, Muller demonstrates how Mark got lucky in successfully pulling the children back.

Muller uses a computer game in the narrative to highlight the advancement in technology in the twenty first century. The invention of video games, especially ones that resemble reality has been on the rise for decades such that one can associate Muller's idea or concept to the rise and popularity of Virtual Reality (VR) gaming. Vogel, Ericksen, Bowers and Bowers (2006) explain the use of VR systems in educational settings or for educational purposes which involves using three-dimensional figures on computers to represent accurate objects. Muller's narrative demonstrates this in a similar way when Helena sees a video picture of a girl in her father's computer. The girl was "caught in a trap, down at the bottom. The girl looked up towards the sky, a tear was trailing down her cheek. She tried to climb up the side of the hole. She fell back. She kept trying over and over, but kept failing" (Muller, 2012, pp. 8-9).

Vogel et al. further stipulate that these types of gaming give the players an opportunity to experience life like scenarios. Unlike players being sucked in the game like the characters in Muller's narrative, VR players have a life-like experience from the comforts of their own homes. This can also serve as a way of traveling, but without interspace travel and the possibility of getting sucked in the videogame.

Moreover, Vogel et al. (2006) clarify that when playing a game, the level of interactivity between the user and program defines the depth of involvement of the former in the activity. Muller's characters, Helena, Sam and Matsimela take this concept in a literal sense when they neglect to read the instructions, and Helena clicks on the "*very difficult*" level (Muller, 2012, p.10) while Sam clicks on the "*diabolically difficult*" level (Muller, 2012, p.15). Vogel et al. (2006) also affirm that Virtual Reality games have a higher level of interactivity compared to the traditional Computer Assisted Interaction (CAI) methods, potentially leading to improved results. The amount of appropriate challenge in the programme also helps to scaffold the learning of the individual. If the challenge is too high, the learner may feel hopeless and quit trying, but if the challenge is too easy, then the learner may become distracted and lose interest.

The explanation given by Vogel et al. (2006) reflects what happens in Muller's narrative. Helena's task proves to be too challenging for her as she was first under the impression that rescuing Ruth from the trap was the only challenge she had to face before the wormhole took her back home.

She loses hope when she is captured for the second time, and wants to give up on her mission. Similarly, Sam's challenge of surviving the crocodiles and killer ants proved to be diabolical indeed, but he was determined to find his sister and take her home, so he kept going. Matsimela on the other hand, was only given one challenge but he got distracted and he lost interest. Consequently, he did not want to go back home.

According to Vogel et al. (2006) the benefits of the VR gaming system is the life-like experience and individual's control over the program. This is demonstrated in *When you Dance with the Crocodile* when the characters interact with the environment as well as other characters in the century to which they travel. Vogel et al. concludes that rewards and scores are the final components of a game. Muller presents these rewards for the time traveling characters in the form of the personal satisfaction they get for helping other characters, the completion of their challenges, and finally, the ultimate reward is when they eventually return to their time line.

According to Dwyer (1993), scientific inventions, especially the concept of inventing time travel machines have been the forefront argument in philosophical literature, constantly seeking to demonstrate the logical impossibility of time travel of any kind. In *Crusade in Jeans* (1973) however, Beckman contests this impossibility by not only depicting two scientists; Dr Simiak and Dr Frederic as the inventors of the time machine, but also proving the possibility of a successful time travel when it is used on the teenager Dolf. Thus, Beckman presents a time machine as the object used for Dolf's visit to the past.

Following this line of thought, Morris and Thorne (as cited in Visser, 1992) maintain that the work on traversable wormholes had led to the realisation that it may be easy to build a time machine from the use of wormholes. Contrary to the tunnel or wormhole pulling Dolf back in time, Beckman details the former's experience with the sensation he feels when the time machine is turned on:

Dolf shut his eyes and heard the door being shut. After that he heard no sound...he stood still like a statue...and suddenly the world seemed to come to an end. Dolf reeled from the impact of a heavy force, which sent pain stabbing through his whole body. He felt as if he were in a midst of ever-changing shades of blue, through which he gradually became aware of familiar sounds: the wind in the trees, the singing of birds. Still he did not move or open his eye. He could feel the warmth of sunshine in his body and the whirling mist cleared from inside his head. He opened his eyes he was there, but where? (Beckman, 1973, p. 5)

The extract above contrasts the notion of special relativity which Al-Khalili (1999) emphasises that the laws of nature forbid anything from going faster than the speed of light. From the moment that Dolf closes his eyes in the lab, and the next he could feel the "warmth on his body" (Beckman, 1973, p. 5); all this seemed to have happened in a flash. However, Al-Khalili (1999) states special relativity tells us that nothing can be accelerated up to a speed greater than that of light.

Physicists like Dr Simiak and Dr Fredericks refer to these hypothetical 'superluminal' particles that can travel faster than light as tachyons. The two

physicists also note that should these particles exist, which they do, in science fiction narratives, they would have some strange properties.

Al-Khalili (1999) further explains that the use of tachyons demonstrates how the time machine operates, allowing for objects to travel backwards in time. Tachyons would not be like normal particles that slow down as they lose energy, instead they speed up, travelling at an infinite speed. Additionally, when light travels through a transparent material such as glass or water, it moves more slowly.

Beckman uses this theory to demonstrate how backwards time travel is possible for Dolf in the time machine which “resembled a telephone booth, but had thickly insulated walls and a transparent door. The door was not made of glass, however, but a synthetic material that Dr Simiak claimed was indestructible” (Beckman, 1973, p.1)

Contrary to Helena and Sam in *When you Dance with the Crocodile*, the inventors of the time machine extensively explain to Dolf how the machine works when an experiment or subject goes through:

If an animal is sent in a cage back into the past, we have to wait three hours before we can retrieve it, because the transmitter expends so much energy that it overheats and we have to wait for it to cool. During that time the cage must remain on exactly the same spot at which it is placed in the past. This is essential because the machine’s coordinates have been set for that precise point. If someone should remove the cage or if it lands on an unstable piece of ground and falls over, then, when we try to get it back,

all we will get is a heap of sand and earth. In other words, the animal will be lost. (Beckman, 1973, p. 2)

This extract highlights how the machine operates and the consequences involved if the subject is not in position when the machine is sent to extract the said subject. Even after such warnings of the consequences, Dolf would eventually end up stuck in the thirteenth century. Beckman uses Dolf's predicament to inform that no matter how the calculations or plans have been carefully set, the machines may work perfectly, but the human factor or the human element will be faulty at times. The two scientists in *Crusade in Jeans* specifically experiment with animals because they had to "make sure that there [was] absolutely no risk" (Beckman, 1973, p. 2) before sending people back to the past. Further, although the machine was in working order, there was no assurance that the machine would safely send humans back in time. Although with animals the time machine yielded results, Beckman still demonstrates that the time travel needed a human element for the results of the experiment to be conclusive, and Dolf was "the ideal guinea pig" (Beckman, 1973). Thus, Beckman uses the scientific error to demonstrate the dangers involved in using technology, whether it has been perfected or not. All in all, both novels explored different methods of historical time travel. In *When you Dance with the Crocodile*, Mark's experimentation with wormholes in his newest videogame exposed the children to the concept of time travel, which was only regarded as "just science fiction" (Muller, 2012, p.4). However, Helena, Sam and Matsimela found out first hand that it was not the case. Contrarily, Dolf in *Crusade in Jeans* voluntarily chose to travel back in time, in the name of

science, using an actual time machine. Although he ended up in the wrong country, the aim of the experiment was successful, which was sending a human subject back in time. Even though both novels use different methods to travel back to history, the narratives successfully portrayed characters experiencing the past, presented through the eyes of children. It is against this backdrop that the next segment explores how time travel is presented in the two novels in this study.

4.5. Presentation of time travel

The elements of historical time travel in the novels are presented in the ways events unfold and the interactions of characters with the environment as well as other humans in the eras they travel to. Both narratives present their historical time travel in distinguished ways.

4.5.1. Time travel presented through objects from the future

Howe's (2015) study highlights the focus of objects brought along through time travel, as these are items that travel with the travellers through time (p. 34). In *When you Dance with the Crocodile*, Muller demonstrates instances where objects from the future, make their way into the past in time travel narratives. Such is the case with Helena and Sam when they both decide to bring with them objects from their present time in the game. Helena wore her wristwatch at the time; in addition, she "ran down the stairs to the kitchen and fetched a thin bottle of water from the fridge" (Muller, 2012, p. 10). Muller also shows that such an object is unfamiliar in that era, and this is evident when Ruth struggles to open the bottle after it is handed to her, as she "caught it deftly and pulled desperately

at the lid. After fumbling with the bottle for a while, the girl managed to figure it out” (Muller, 2012, p. 21). Another futuristic object that Helena brings with her in the game is a device called the 7H, as she “took her phone out of her jeans pocket, and slipped the silver case into its place. One could hardly see she had something in her pocket” (Muller, 2012, p.8). This device would later prove useful and lifesaving throughout her journey.

Similarly, her brother Sam, “ran down and fetched batteries from his father’s tools, cupboard. He also found an old alarm clock in their storeroom. He also fetched his camera, which was small enough to go into his large tennis shorts pockets” (Muller, 2012, p. 15). All the while he had his cell phone in the other pocket. Both Sam and Helena had seen images of people who seemed as if they needed rescuing. Even though they reassured themselves that “*it is just a game*” (Muller, 2012, p.14) that did not deter them from preparing to play the dangerous game, and in both cases, they took with them elements or objects from their present time which did not exist in the past.

Muller further exemplifies how far technical advancements have gone when Helena persuades one of the men guarding the children to let them go by promising to give him her wristwatch. The man remarks, “Amazing,” ... “Two of the men have pocket watches. I’ve never heard of wristwatches” (Muller, 2012, p.38). This is an indication of how far technological inventions as simple as a wristwatch have gone in the twenty first century, and are yet to have advanced in the twelfth century. Thus, time travel affords Helena and other characters to experience the wonders of such objects; from Helena’s perspective, the

wristwatch serves as a life-saving tool, and for the slave trader, as a newest possession.

Similarly, Sam demonstrates how technology has advanced in the twenty first century when he takes a picture of the Mukwai with his camera: “He loosened the safety pin, put his hand in his pocket and took out his compact, lightweight, multi-purpose camera. He focused it on the Mukwai for a full-length photograph. He pressed the button. *Click.*” (Muller, 2012, p.59). The image was printed in a matter of seconds, yet this was considered impossible to do in that century. As a result, the Mukwai’s adviser remarks: “These things take time...the missionary Coillard says it takes six moons for the camera to travel to London. They must develop the photographs there, and it takes six moons for the steamship to bring the photographs back to mouth of Zambezi” (Muller, 2012, p. 43). The process of printing out a simple item such as a photograph in the twelfth century took about a year. With the twentieth century device which Sam came with, photos were printed within minutes, if not seconds.

On the other hand, the technological objects that the children brought with them proved useless as they had not been invented a hundred years ago. Muller demonstrates this when Mark suggests to find the kids using the GPS system in the 7H that Helena took with her, but Dr Amadhila comments that “there were no satellites a hundred years ago” (Muller, 2012, p. 65).

Nevertheless, this does deter the children from relying on the devices to communicate with their father in the modern world. Sam is seen wishing he could send his father a message so that he would not worry about them:

“Automatically, he reached for his cell phone in his pocket. It was still switched on, but showed that there was no reception. He called his father anyway. No response” (Muller, 2012, p. 29). This is an indication of how people in the twenty first century heavily rely on electronic devices for survival.

Similarly, Helena shows a dependability on electronic devices when she woke up early one morning during their captivity because something was hurting her;

“She felt to see what it was, then remembered it was her father’s 7H. She slipped it out and sat up. She clicked it open, and switched it on. It was not quite like anything she had ever seen. She wished she had instructions for it. She tried the internet. Nothing. She expected that. The nearest service provider was billions of light years or a century or two away. Despite this, she tried to send an email to her father. Nothing happened” (Muller, 2012, pp. 36-37)

In *Crusade in Jeans*, however, Dolf only packed “two broad-tipped felt pens, one black and one bright yellow” (Beckman, 1973, p.4) to mark his location. Even so, Beckman indicates that the pens are yet to exist in that century, as Leonardo was confused with them: “He looked in wonder at Dolf and then the two sticks in his hand, which he fingered gingerly” (Beckman, 1973, p. 13).

Although Leonardo was a student, his confusion seems to suggest that in his century, he had a different way or there were different tools used for writing. Noticing the confusion on his friend’s face, Dolf had to demonstrate how the pens worked when “he searched around, picked up a stone, and made a stroke on it with the black felt pen” (Beckman, 1973, p.13). This was such a strange phenomenon

to Leonardo, and thanks to his time traveling friend, he experiences the future, even though it was unknown to him.

Beckman further shows how objects such as a wristwatch, a bread knife and a box of matches, inventions from the future, signify future advancements. Although he realises that people in the thirteenth century tell time by the position of the sun and church bells, Dolf still relies on his wristwatch. This is shown when “almost all day long, Dolf had heard the chiming of church bells, but he had more confidence in his watch which was waterproof, shockproof, accurate and self-winding and which now confirmed that it was nearly eight-thirty” (Beckman, 1973, p.42). How time was told in the medieval era was different from the twentieth century. People relied on the position of the sun as well as the sounds of church bells to determine what time of day it was.

The children bring some objects from the past as proof of their travels. Beckman indicates this when Dolf gave his new friend Leonardo the two pens from the future, and in return Leonardo gifted his new friend with a pendant: “from around his neck he took a thin chain from which hung a pendant, it was an enamelled image of the virgin Mary” (Beckman, 1973, p. 14). When Dolf is pulled back from the past, he is still holding on to the knife he carried with him, and it could also be concluded that he was wearing the necklace his friend had gifted him.

In *When you Dance with the Crocodile*, Muller demonstrates how in science fiction it is possible to bring back objects from the past. This is evident when Dimdimbara gifted Matsimela with “the red handkerchief given as a gift from the

missionary's wife, tied to the snake skin around his waist that held his loincloth in place" (Muller, 2012, p.103).

Furthermore, Matsimela gives Mark a 'whitish ball' which was on the red handkerchief. It was a Makalani nut, beautifully carved; "He looked closely at it and noticed there's a crocodile with its tail going right around it" (Muller, 2012, p.105). Sam also took a souvenir from Ruth, which was "a sage from her hair" (p.103). In addition, he takes photographs of her, not to forget her face.

The children in both novels form attachments to the people or characters they meet in the past. Sam takes a liking to Ruth although he has only known her for a short while. He is devastated to leave her behind, which is also made impossible by the game programming, because leaving Ruth behind was the final challenge Sam had to complete: "Suddenly, he knew. The third and most difficult challenge was to leave Ruth behind! For a long while, he sat dead still" (Muller, 2012, p.100).

The reader is shown that in time travel narratives, the concept or idea of removing an object as significant as a person or human being from the past, to the future is impossible. Similarly, Dolf in *Crusade in Jeans* forms an attachment to Maria, and is hesitant to leave her behind. He demonstrates that he understands the rules of time travel when he says to Leonardo, "if my father finds me, he will take me home. Maria wouldn't be able to come with me. There is nothing I would like more, but it would be impossible." (Beckman, 1973, p. 264)

4.5.2. Time travel presented through currency value

In the thirteenth century, communities were engaged in the old system of exchanging goods for other goods, more so in an area such as the old Zambezi. The concept of money was not yet known, and glass beads were used as a form of payment. This is demonstrated by Muller through Matsimela's compensation for the lesson with chief Letia, "clapping his hands and bowing deeply while he held out his hand to receive his payment, a few glass beads." (Muller, 2012, p.50). Muller continues to show the value of the glass beads, especially given by royalty, when Matsimela walked to his hut after a lesson with the chief's son. He dropped the beads. With that he regarded himself as rich. With the beads, he could buy anything from the traders who visited Sesheke: blankets, copper wire, leather articles and handkerchiefs. Matsimela comes from the twenty first century Windhoek, and the medium of exchange of goods is money, whereas more than a hundred years in the past, thanks to time travel, the payment is in the form of beads. He shares his earnings with Mark when he goes back in his century. He also shows Mark a few glass beads from the handkerchief referring to them as, "Money I earned by teaching the chief English" (Muller, 2012, p. 105). Muller further brings to the fore the realities of how some slave traders made a living, setting human traps and kidnaping children from the villages to be traded at the boarders. Nunn (2008) articulates that the most common manner in which slaves were taken was through villages, often obtained through kidnappings. This is shown by Muller through the trap that Ruth fell into, only to be assisted by Helena. Ruth later explained to Helena that "they trade children for beads, or hats,

or a few scarves with farmers” (Muller, 2012, p.25). The unlucky ones would be taken to ships, and never be seen by their families again. Muller shows that it is only through time travel that Helena gets to experience this old way of medium of exchange.

The notion of currency and medium of exchange differs in every era. Muller educates the reader on the importance of having a medium of exchange such as money, in any century. Howe (2015) explains that for a time traveller, money is essential because it is an economic tool, serving to provide access. Money grants access to engagements with objects, normally by way of exchange for goods and services. This is made evident when Dolf wonders in the market of Rottweil;

“Wondering around, he happened upon a street of jewellers and sword smiths. He gazed fascinated at the displays. The stainless-steel breadknife dangling from his belt had been invaluable for the past two weeks. But it could not compare to the beauty of the ornamented silver daggers in their leather sheaths.... He suddenly remembered the Dutch money in his purse in his trousers, he had forgotten about them and was curious about how Dutch guilders would be received in thirteenth century Rottweil”

(Beckman, 1973, p.69)

4.5.3. Time travel presented through language and wardrobe

In *When you Dance with the Crocodile*, Muller shows that the computer game is programmed in such a way that different languages are installed, which is why when the children are transported to the past, they are able to speak as well as understand the language. When Helena found Ruth in the hole, she looked up at

Helena and her eyes narrowed and asks: “Are you one of them? Are they coming to take me away?” To Helena’s surprise she understood every word the girl said, although she spoke in another language (Muller, 2012, p.2). This is a demonstration of how time travel aids Helena to understand the people she encounters even when she has not had an opportunity to learn the language in her timeline.

Furthermore, Helena can tell that Ruth’s captives speak Portuguese, and she understands what they are saying although she has never learned the language:

They spoke Portuguese; she recognised the language, and although she could not speak it in her world, she could understand it now. The creator of this game was unbelievably cool. He had even built in a language tool. She felt relieved. The programmer would see to it that nothing happened to her, wouldn't he? He would get her back home safely (Muller, 2012, p. 22).

Additionally, the program makes the language child friendly when it beeps out foul language or inappropriate words; “*Beep-beep* boys have long hair too, if they don’t have scissors.... You have clothes of a boy” (Muller, 1973, p. 23). Every now and then she heard the funny *beep-beep* sound. Suddenly she understood what it was, the programmer had built in both a language tool and a parental control tool for swearing.

Moreover, Matsimela is given a respectable status, since he has been in the game longer, and has formed relationships with some characters, and become a teacher and translator to the paramount chief. He also teaches French and other languages, in addition to imparting knowledge to the rest of the village folk, especially to the

chief. His capabilities could be credited to the game's programming. This is known because Matsimela's present or rather in his future, he is a street kid, whom Mark regards as "intelligent and my friend" (Muller, 2012, p.49). Other than that, there is no mention of a formal education, or the fact that he was a street kid, who would sleep on Mark's sofa from time to time. The fact that in the game he has such language capabilities and knowledge of numerous subjects is an astonishing fact for him, which he takes advantage of. He benefits from it and also becomes of value to the village.

In *Crusade in Jeans* however, because of the method of time travel, there is no programming involved. Dolf has to deal with a language barrier which affects his communication with the characters he encounters in his travels. When he rescues Leonardo, he first struggles to comprehend his speech as his language was unfamiliar to him but he could pick up some words and phrases. He knew no French, nor Italian but "Here and there he recognized words; it was old German. Something like old Dutch, he thought" (Beckman, 1973, p. 9). Because of his knowledge of the thirteenth century, he navigates through the other language barriers with the rest of the characters he encounters along the way.

Another example of this is his initial conversations with his friend Maria. At some point, Maria remarked that he has got a "funny way of talking" (Beckman, 1973, p. 34). He further observed that the Cologne dialect spoken by Maria was even more like Dutch than the solemn, medieval German of Leonardo, as "her words are pronounced with a kind of croak which Dolf was yet accustomed to" (Beckman, 1973, p.34)

The moment Dolf meets Leonardo, they share mathematical knowledge, as proof that indeed they are students. Dolf is not very fond of mathematics or arithmetic but to display his futuristic knowledge, and to signify time travel, he engages with Leonard to impress the young traveling student;

“With a dead twig he drew a triangle, and a parallelogram. Dolf laughed, took the twig and drew a truncated cone, a square and a pyramid. Then they warmly shook hands. Two young students had met each other. For the first time in his life, Dolf regretted that he did not know more than a few rudiments of mathematics.” (Beckman, 1973, p.12)

Not only is language presented as changed through speech, but also through numeracy, such as Mathematics. History is shown to have evolved through elements such as mathematics equations as well as mathematics symbols which are demonstrated in Dolf and Leonardo’s exchange:

For fun he wrote down Pythagoras’s theorem $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$. For a moment Leonardo seemed puzzled. Questioningly, he pointed at the symbols. Of course, he must use Roman numerals. Dolf thought in alarm. Quickly he erased the signs and wrote down the Roman numerals from I to X.

Underneath he put the Arabic numerals 1, 2, 3, up to 10. Leonardo at once became enthusiastic. (Beckman, 1973, p.12)

The exchange of knowledge between these two students shows how education has evolved from the mediaeval twelfth century to the twentieth century. Dolf’s extensive knowledge of Mathematics and how it’s transformed into the type of Mathematics that he knows in the twentieth century compared to the mediaeval

symbols that were used for calculations, suggests that the mathematics language had evolved as well. Dolf is impressed at how he teaches primary school mathematics to his traveling student from the middle ages, even though he finds it challenging because of the unfamiliar language.

With practice and quick study, Dolf uses his newly acquainted language to negotiate for the children and protect them. In addition to the language variations of traveling to history, the types of clothing the children wore is also a presentation of time travel. Dr Simiak was quick to warn Dolf that, “For your own protection, show yourself to as few people as possible, because you are wearing the wrong clothes” (Beckman, 1973, p.5). That fear still stayed with him even after the prospects of him being stuck in the past: “It was very hot and he was sniffing inside his coat. But he dared not take it off, even though underneath he was wearing a sweater. In addition, he had on jeans, wool socks and heavy winter shoes. All in all, it was quite the wrong clothing for June weather” (Beckman, 1973, p. 6). This demonstrates how amid the rush to travel back in time, the scientists had neglected to find Dolf the appropriate wardrobe to suit the new environment.

According to Rosenthal (2009) clothing determines social differentiation or social status, and it is not only luxury clothing but also how the cloth is fashioned. When Dolf joined the children’s crusade, he noticed most of the children dressed in rags, for instance, Maria, is only dressed in “a damp dress, and underneath she wore nothing but a torn vest” (Beckman, 1973, p.28). These were considered children of no rank or street children who had no homes. On the other hand, he later on

noticed “one boy emerges from among them. He was dressed in a long white cloak and sturdy boots” (Beckman, 1973, p.30), a type of clothing which distinguished him from the rest of the children, suggesting he was of importance. Moreover, Dolf later on came to a part of the camp where there was a group of boys dressed in white, and eight children, whose fine clothes, polite manners and delicate hands indicated that they were of noble birth. Among them there was a beautiful girl, in a long, finely woven dress. She was adorned with ornaments and wore a cross which glittered with jewels. The boy sitting next to her was wearing a dark red cloak, yellow breeches and a belt inlaid with silver from which hung precious stones. Other children were no less grandly dressed (Beckman, 1973, pp. 43-44). Even when they had the same goal, and joined the crusade for the same reasons, the crusade seems to have been divided in terms of nobility, thus children of high ranking or from noble houses were accorded a different treatment to those from the streets.

In *When you Dance with the Crocodile* on the other hand, the type of clothes the children wore from their century distinguished them from characters in the thirteenth century, which had consequences in Sam’s case. Upon his arrival in chief Lewanika’s village, he is tied up by his guards and left for the black killer ants to kill him. He is shortly rescued by an old man from the missionary who informs him that the red t-shirt he wore is the reason the guards tied him up because the chief “hates the colour red” (Muller, 2012, p. 73). His shorts and tennis shoes are also what made Matsimela recognise that Sam was not of the thirteenth century, because such a wardrobe was of the twenty first century.

Helena, on the other hand, had trousers on and a t-shirt, of which one of her captors commented that she looked like a boy. Her hairstyle as well is regarded as unusual for a girl. One of her captors examined her, he looked at her closely and asked; “Are you a girl or a boy?” “A girl” she said and blushed. “You can see I have long hair” (Muller, 2012, p. 23).

4.5.4. Time travel presented through roads and transport systems

In the twenty first century, transport systems and roads have advanced. With the changes of time and industrialisation, the transport system had also evolved. In *Crusade in Jeans*, Dolf was well acquainted with the map of Europe and was wondering how the children under the guidance of the monks knew the way. He was then shocked when he heard they would have to go through mountains to get to their destination. Then a thought struck Dolf that chilled his blood. He asked:

But that means that we must cross the Alps?” The monks nodded. Dolf wondered what the Alps would look like in the thirteenth century. Would there be any roads? Yes, of course. The Romans had crossed them a thousand years earlier and Hannibal, also, with his elephants. But the idea of taking so many children across Europe’s highest mountain range...Dolf could hardly imagine it. He knew the Alps well. He had been in Switzerland, Austria or Italy many times with his parents. But that was a comfortable car along paved roads, lined with hotels, restaurants and camping sites. There were patrols of police and breakdown services, so there was little danger for the tourists. This time he realised only too well,

it would be quite different, the children were on foot, it would take them at least three times longer to pass the Alps (Beckman, 1973, pp. 51-52).

Because the roads and transport systems had not been developed as in the twentieth century yet, the children travelled for days on end;

“For many days they travelled along the north bank of the lake and through the hills, which gradually became steeper as they grew into mountains. Even now, in the middle of summer, the weather was unpredictable. Bright, sunny days were immediately followed by driving rain, freezing nights and icy fog” (Beckman, 1973, p. 97).

Dolf further uses his historical knowledge which represents historical time travel. The knowledge of landscapes, the roads, which had been travelled before, make him the perfect guide for the children, or perhaps an imperfect one since his knowledge is from the future, where a lot of things are different and made easier, for example, the routes of travel, as well as the modes of transportation. His vast knowledge and quick-thinking skills are elements that he brings as an advantage to the medieval era, which not only aids in his survival, but the survival of most children.

When Helena and Ruth escape from the slave traders, they are faced with the brutal journey back to Ruth’s village. Ruth knew the Bush. For Helena, she did not know that it was easier said than done. They had to go back through the Strip to reach Sesheke. Moreover, they had to “walk through the heart of the lion country without anything to protect them, and cross a bone-dry region without any

water; a region both savage and merciless, in which only the fittest and the luckiest survived” (Muller, 2012, p. 45).

Their journey on foot was gruesome, especially for Helena, as she was not accustomed to such land scape. As they continued on, Muller uses the vegetation as well as the unfamiliar landscape to demonstrate that without traveling through time, Helena would not have experienced of how people in the past lived and the long journeys:

The vegetation began to change colour from green to dusty grey, and the sand became soft. The going became exhausting. The wind came up, sending clouds of dust over the plain. The girls pressed on, fighting the wind. Loose sand blew into their eyes and noses and dry mouths. Ruth pressed Helena to continue going and pushing through the exhaustion, cautioning her of the dangers of the road ahead; “Because there is no water until we reach the Zambezi. I know of travellers and hunters who died of thirst in this region” (Muller, 2012, p. 54).

However, in the twentieth century, Muller exhibits how the landscape was different in terms of ways of travel. For instance, Dr Amadhila travels by plane for his work, “He could never sleep on a plane” (Muller, 2012, p.4). In addition, the landscape had changed because of the construction of streets, and the concept of traffic; “He pedalled like mad, but the light changed to red much too soon and forced him to apply the footbrake. A brand new four-by-four hooted and drove by right in front of his bike” (Muller, 2012, p.11). This demonstrates how in more than a hundred years

the world had advanced and the way of travel made easier and faster. Instead of spending days on end crossing the river or traveling on foot or galloping on horse, transportation has evolved in the twentieth century. When the Mukwai suggests that Sam be escorted in her dugout canoes, as it is the quickest way of travel to reach her brother's village, she remarks: "No, no, don't go overland; it's much faster on the Zambezi, and even on the river it will take one and a half days. My peddlers will take you" (Muller, 2012, p.29). Sam observes The Zambezi was a beautiful river, with isles, rapids and cataracts, and a changing panorama at every turn. Back home however, his method of getting around the streets of Windhoek was making use of his bike, in the heavy traffic.

Upon his arrival in the Paramount Chief's compound, Sam looked around him and notices "African huts stood in a semi-circle inside an enclosure. It was no longer evening; the sun was high up in the sky" (Muller, 2012, p.28.). Furthermore, Sam observed the construction of The Paramount Chief's compound, "It was large, neat and clean. The grass roof of the house was built in such a way that it had no connection with the outer wall, thus preventing ants from coming in. Colourful rushes hung on the walls, and the floor was decorated with beautiful mats. Leopard skins hung over the chairs and some smaller tables" (Muller, 2012, p.75).

Back home in his century, the buildings had evolved, or been industrialised. They had technical advancements as "Near their house he pressed the button on his remote and their gate opened. As he walked

inside the house, the lights turned on. At the corner of the house, he switched off the electronic gadget his father had installed to turn on the sprinklers if an intruder walked over the lawn” (Muller, 2012, p.11).

Traveling through time has made it possible for the children to see these landscapes, and experience first-hand how the locations looked like in the past, which would not be the same if one were to page through the pages of a history book.

Three hundred years into the past that the children travel to, the landscape in the Zambezi is mostly uninhabited. This explains why it took long for Ruth to take the news of her father’s death back to her mother, because of the dis-advancement of the communication systems. Muller also suggests that one could not get news out unless by way of a messenger who had to travel either by foot, by horse or by river (using canoes). The population or people were far spread out that even at the boarder where children are captured to be sold to farmers or as slaves, the police are not close or are too far from people. Ruth confirms this by saying; “There are no police her, it is no man’s land. And the authorities in Angola are hundreds of miles away, in the ports. It is a huge country. They don’t know what is going on in the rest of the country” (Muller, 2012, p.24).

Contrastingly, in the twenty first century, one could get a hold of the police by a simple dial or a single phone call. This is demonstrated when Dr Amadhila discovers his children had disappeared, and his neighbour Meme

Olive suggests; “In that case we have to call the police” (Beckman, 2012, p. 19)

4.5.5. Displacement and a sense of belonging

Children from the twentieth century live a comfortable life. They have a sense of belonging in the century in which they were born. In *Crusade in Jeans*, Beckman demonstrates how displaced Dolf feels when he realised that just 12 hours before, he had still been living in the 20th century, a boy who had been allowed to visit the laboratory because he was lucky enough to have a father who was an old friend of Dr Simiak. Thus,

“He went from the comfort of his bed, to sleeping out in the open with the children, under terrible weather conditions. His first night sleeping out in the open, the campsite was hit with a raging thunderstorm, which startled the children from their sleep, more so Dolf, as he was not used to sleeping out in the open.” (Beckman, 1973, p.24)

The second night the children slept out in the open, Dolf felt even more out of place. He gazed around and was not impressed by the suitability of their chosen campsite. Another storm and they would be up in their ankles in mud. His friend Leonardo noticed his concern and seemed to guess his mind; “You need not worry, Rudolf. There will be no storm tonight the air is clear, which will mean a cold but dry night” (Beckman, 1973, p. 39). Beckman shows the lack of knowledge Dolf has of the weather, more so now that he was in an unfamiliar territory, “at home if he was going camping, he would look in the paper or watch

the television to know what to expect. But he trusted Leonardo and his mind was at rest.” (Beckman, 1973, p.39)

According to Albertsson (2016), children in the medieval ages were exposed to severe discrimination, especially those born out of wedlock, or orphans.

Consequently, they were frequently neglected and exposed to dreadful living conditions. Beckman exhibits how orphaned children like Maria sought refuge in churches under the protection of the priests. In the streets as well as in cathedrals, they felt out of place, thus joining the crusade under the leadership of Nicolaus is where they felt a sense of belonging.

Although Dolf never intended it, with Leonardo’s help he had become the effective leader of the children’s crusade. He had brought from the twentieth century something completely unknown to these children, which was a sense of responsibility, and social awareness among other things. Beckman uses the young time traveler’s exposure to a different life in the twentieth century to display neutrality and how things had evolved in the future:

In his age or century, it was something he had learned almost from that day he had been born. To him all children were equal. He made no distinction between serf and noble, between the free and the enslaved between the citizen and outcast. He judged every child by his or her merits and if one turned out to be particularly adept at a certain task, then that was what he was given to do (Beckman, 1973, pp. 59-60).

By doing this he quickly became a leader of their procession and was respected by the children. They “regarded him more as a leader, stern but righteous and one

whose orders and requests could be executed unquestionably, for they were so sensible. They also trusted him because he made the journey easier” (Beckman, 1973, p .83). Dolf was again a very close friend to the young future king, Carolus. When Carolus dies from his short illness, it was his last wish that Dolf be named his heir, appointing him to be the next king of Jerusalem.

This last act by his dear friend, had placed Dolf in a better position to lead the children’s crusade, thus, giving him a sense of belonging. To his dismay, Dolf hesitates to take on the position. His reasoning; “All right, I will be your king, but not yet. For the time being, I am an ordinary crusader like the rest of you. You can honor me later, when we have liberated Jerusalem, but not before” (Beckman, 1973, p.184). Beckman further justifies that in truth, he had not the least inclination to play monarch to seven thousand children. In all sense of the word, Dolf was still an outsider, and eventually he would have to go back to his century. When accused of heresy by Don Anselmus, Dolf is compelled to defend himself, and once again he is made to feel like an outsider, trying to fit into a place foreign to him. Beckman demonstrates the level of acceptance and loyalty that some of the children had for Dolf;

If only he had understood a little more about the medieval mentality, he would not have been quite so worried. He would have known that he could completely rely on the unshakeable loyalty of his friends; a loyalty that they would not desert, either out of superstition or fear or even under a threat to their own lives. But Dolf was a child of the twentieth century, an age when opportunism and betrayal were life. A time when the word of

honor meant nothing, when friendship or solidarity had little value.

(Beckman, 1973, p.107)

In *When you Dance with the Crocodile* however, Muller demonstrates how the young time travelers are displaced in the past. After they escape from the slave traders, Ruth and Helena are left to weather the harsh conditions of the long road back to Ruth's village. Helena is not used to the landscape and they do not have water and food for the journey. When Ruth left her alone to find water, Helena had never felt such loneliness. She felt as though she was dying and there was no one to hold her hand. Her thoughts wondered: "She was at school one moment, crying because some bigger boys had run around the corner during the break, sending her sandwiches and bottle of juice flying... The next moment Sam came running. He punched one of the boys in the nose, and they ran away. Where was Sam now?" (Muller, 2012, p.55). She is a long way from home, from the comforts she is used to back in the twenty-first century. Sam is further shown to be Helena's protector, giving her that sense of belonging. Now that they are a hundred years apart, she longs for Sam's protection more than ever.

Upon seeing Sam in one of chief Lewanika's canoes, Matsimela notices, while "watching him. Something was familiar about him. He had never seen the guy, but something about his clothes... not the shirt, but those shorts, and the tennis shoes. Oh my *beep-beep*, they were not from here. That guy was not from around here, with those shorts and shoes" (Muller, 2012, p.84).

After seeing Sam from a distance, Matsimela immediately notices that Sam does not belong there. This is an indication that the children from the future need not do much for them to show that they have been displaced.

Although Matsimela learns that he would be going back to Windhoek with Sam and Helena, he could not help but feel as though he did not belong in the twentieth century: “Matsimela felt a sudden surge of longing for the place where he was born, and for Mark’s cozy little flat where he could see the Auas mountains through the window every day” (Muller, 2012, p.96). Muller further shows the fear of a child, even if he had been given a high standard of life in his new-found home, he was still a child, with doubts and fears. After carefully thinking about his life back in the twentieth century, his excitement vanished. He “feels as though there would be no place for him. His heart sank. He had experienced being kicked out as a child, more than once. Before Mark had come into his life, nobody had had a place for him. He would be back on the streets...then perhaps he would be better off here” (Muller, 2012, p.96).

For Matsimela, Sesheke was a paradise. He was “welcomed in Sesheke. Here, one smelt the freshly cut watermelons, tasted fish fresh from the river, saw the ripples of the slow-moving water, and heard the songs of a thousand birds. Here he was the cleverest among the children. And he was the friend of the chief’s son” (Muller, 2012, p. 96). He had surely found a home and feels he belongs in the past, where he is valued and his talents are appreciated. With this sentiment, Muller echoes the assessment of Avisek and Prasanta (2020) aimed at establishing “Africa not as a savage region devoid of civilization, rather to put

forth the unimaginable richness of culture and tradition beyond the capacity of human thinking and judging the way of preparation or controlling human behavior not by people but by nature” (p.167).

4.5.6. Death

Traveling through time exposed the characters in the two novels to death, in a way that they would not have been exposed to it in their original eras. In *When you Dance with the Crocodile*, Sam faces the possibility of death by crocodiles as he also travels through the game to look for his sister. The punishment for insulting the Mukwai was imminent death. Sam had insulted the Mukwai by vomiting on her dress after he was offered sour milk, which upset his stomach. Death by crocodiles is a custom that had always been carried out in the Nalolo village, for those who have offended the queen. He is told:

Because of the severity of your offence, you will entertain the queen... If you resist, the soldiers will injure you with their spears, which will become painful that you will choose to run into the water and end it all.

The crocodiles will smell your blood and go crazy (Muller, 2012, p.32).

This situation would not have been a possibility in Sam’s original time. The possibility and probability to be sentenced to death by crocodiles is highly impossible in the twentieth century, but this was made possible because Sam time travelled, and the location he had travelled to.

At the onset of the narrative, the reader is informed that the children had lost their mother in a car accident. This is the first highlight of death in the novel, although brief. The children had been exposed to death before, with their mother’s sudden

demise, in their time line. They then experience death on a different scale in the game.

Amato and Anthony (2014) state that because parental death involves less self-selection, it can provide more insights into the causal effects of parental absence. In the narrative, because of the absence of Helena's mother due to death, and her father's absence due to work obligations, she lashes out by disobeying him and playing the forbidden game. Amato and Anthony further observe that children who experience parental death are associated with problematic behavior, and in Helena's case, one can conclude that this disobedient behavior is a cry for attention.

When Ruth leaves Helena alone to get water, her mind drifts, she thinks of home while partially aware of the hyena in the distance:

There it was again; a twig had snapped. Menacing eyes were watching her from dry grass, it was waiting, this hyena, because it knew that its prey was weakening and that it was just a question of time. She opened her eyes and looked up at the cloudless sky. Then she saw the vulture, sitting on a branch...she knew it was waiting for the feast to begin. First the hyena would come, and when the hyena had had enough, the vulture would fly down for its share (Muller, 2012, p.55).

The circling of these predators in 'Dark Africa' symbolize the dangers the unfamiliar era and location represents which Helena would not have been exposed to in twenty first century Windhoek, had she not played the game. The notion of 'Dark Africa' however, is one that Avisek and Prasanta (2020) objects to with the

sentiment that the purview of *The Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad where Africa is looked down upon by many readers and where the picture of Africa looked hazy, indistinct, mystery black and dark depicts Africa derogatively (p. 168), contributing to the need of an emancipator in the form of the novelist Chinua Achebe. Kumar further reason that Achebe's novel *Things Fall Apart* provides a ray of hope with a new vista for Africa where it can be viewed as land rich in culture and civilization of its own and primitively original, thus providing an understanding of Africa from within, not from outside.

In *Crusade in Jeans*, the concept of death is not something the people of the medieval ages ponder on. Since they are raised religiously, death is accepted as part of the life cycle; as Dolf observes;

Death was a constant companion to the people in the middle ages. It was feared, but also welcomed, for it meant the passing from an earthly to a spiritual existence. Those who had lived a not so sinful life died calmly, for they knew they were about to enter Heaven. Any child who died, was believed to be transported at once to the kingdom of God, because God loved purity, and children were pure by definition (Beckman, 1973, p. 82). Death personally affected Dolf throughout the journey. The first incident was when a child died in his arms when he first encountered the children's crusade. At the time he had personally been invested in the crusade, and was eager to go back home. Throughout the journey, the procession experienced countless children dying, from diseases such as the Scarlet death, Malaria, children drowning and being caught in the middle of a war

that the children had nothing to do with, with some of their own being murdered. The death which however affected and made the most impact in the crusade was that of their future king Carolus: “The impact of the death of Carolus was so great that discipline returned to the army” (Beckman, 1973, p.184). This effected Dolf severely because he had become very close to the young king. Although he was not supposed to engage with anyone when he arrived in the thirteenth century, here he was, forming bonds, friendships and attachments with children he would eventually leave behind.

4.6. Emerging themes

4.6.1. Child endangerment

Dr Amadhila warns Helena against playing the dangerous game, thus highlighting the dangers associated with video games. Squire’s (2002) research on the motivations behind playing video games, cites a study conducted in 1985 which concluded that most families used the game systems as a shared play activity. Instead of leading to poor school performance, increased family violence, or strained family interactions, video games were a positive force on family interactions (p.2) Muller however, provides a contrary view when Helena and her family are impacted negatively.

For Dr Amadhila, computer games are not a means to bring his family together, but rather a means to generate income. His job involved reviewing dangerous games and he was “paid to go to international markets to identify computer games

that were bad for children in Namibia and the rest of Southern Africa” (Muller, 2012, p.1). His work is a hazard to his family because he exposes these games to his children at home when he is supposed to be protecting them from danger. According to Squire (2002), various games use challenge, fantasy, and player’s control, invoking designs to create intrinsically motivating environments in them. On the contrary, Helena judges the home page of the game, commenting that it represents “Danger. Death. Not that it would scare anyone” (Muller, 2012 p. 1). With logic like that, it did not deter her from playing the game, knowing fully the dangers of the game. Sam is also not deterred by the danger warning instructions when he reads the words; “*Experience real-life adventure. Danger lurks everywhere. Continue if you dare*” (Muller, 2012, p.14). He considers this as childish as he continues clicking. The disregard of warnings on the surface of the games by the children brings to the fore the disobedient nature of children, consequently exposing them to danger. Arguably, Muller paints Dr Amadhila as an irresponsible or negligent parent, when Mark scolds him with the words:

“How could you let your children play the game?” he asked accusingly. Dr Amadhila lowered his eyes, ashamed. “I had to go out and forgot to lock it up nine the safe...I know It was irresponsible, I hadn’t slept for two days. I was not thinking straight.” “You let your children play with the most dangerous game in the world? Mark is seen to further scold the worried father; “Since when do you allow your children to fiddle with your test material?” (Muller, 2012, p.48).

Muller further shows how a momentary lapse in judgement from Dr Amadhila almost cost him the life and safety of his children. This could be occasionally true for some parents, especially when work becomes hectic, and sometimes children are left unattended.

In *Crusade in Jeans*, the reader is informed that most children in the crusade are orphans. Albertsson (2016) explains that a consequence surrounding the orphan system is that it places the child outside the social system with no clear belonging, either to a class or a community. Beckman demonstrates that most of the children are from the streets. For example, Maria “was indeed an orphan, belonging to no one” (Beckman, 1973, p. 35) which evidently explains why the children joined the crusade in the first place, so they can liberate Jerusalem, and consequently have a place where they belong.

On his first night with the crusade, “Dolf wondered around the camp and saw many children shivering with fever, children with unattended, bleeding feet; children with injured knees covered with blood, scabs and flies; children with head wounds, boils, nosebleeds, inflamed eyes and swollen ankles. There seemed to be nobody to care for them” (Beckman, 1973, pp. 39-40) With this scene, Beckman exhibits the negligence of the leaders of the crusade, not caring enough to make sure that the children are in good health and are properly fed.

Furthermore, Beckman demonstrates the magnitude of the children’s danger in the crusade: “At the height of the pandemic, three days after their arrival at the lake, thirty children died on one day and forty-two new cases were discovered” (Beckman, 1973, p. 82) By the time they got the pandemic under control, over a

hundred had died. On a comforting note, Beckman then shows the resilience and the carefree nature of the children, oblivious to the danger they had been facing as they “seemed calm and cheerful, even though death was all around them. Those who were healthy were playing, laughing and generally having fun” (Beckman, 1973, p.82).

Muller demonstrates how children are endangered after they are captured to be traded: “The men took their whips and ordered the children to march. One man lashed out at a boy who had taken a bit longer than others to stand up. The boy ducked” (Muller, 2012, p.25). Their cruelty is further displayed when “The men drank coffee at the fire and gave the children each a piece of dry bread and a sip of water. “This is all we get for breakfast?” Helena asked. “It is all you get the whole day” (Muller, 2012, p. 37). This scenario underscores the cruel and ill-treatment of the captured children. They are given minute food, not even sufficient to last them the whole day, opening up opportunities for them to potentially be malnourished, and this is further exacerbated by the fact that they spend the entire day marching in the scorching sun.

4.6.2. Child trafficking into slavery

Another emerging theme from the two narratives under the current study is the exposure of children to slavery. When Helena gets captured with Ruth, she is quickly informed that the captors, “are slave traders...The trap was theirs, to catch people, not animals. They trade children for beads, or a hat, or a few scarves...or they take you to the ships, and then you never see your people again” (Muller, 2012, p.24). Chunga (2015) posits that slave practices reduce human

beings to animals as snares are set for them and they are trapped for days like animals. This notion is made worse when it is children that are captured and trafficked.

Nunn (2008) states that in early 1514 the kidnappings of local West-Central African citizens for sale to the Portuguese had been rampant. Hence, this study concludes that from this history, Muller uses Portuguese speaking slave traders to highlight the “stagnant evolution of slave trade after the arrival of the Portuguese in the fifteenth century” (Nunn, 2008, p. 99).

Beckman moreover demonstrates in *Crusade in Jeans* how the children are led under false pretenses using the promise to liberate Jerusalem, and making them believe that Nicolas would perform a miracle by parting the seas. In reality, the children were taken to the beach, and “ships were waiting for them to be taken to Africa to be sold as slaves” (Beckman, 1973, p.193). Out of guilt, one of the monks, Dom Augustus, confesses the true plans for the children. He also confessed that the crusade for French children five weeks before their own, was a success because the children had been taken aboard the boats in Marseilles, straight to the slave markets of North Africa. The fake monks would take advantage of the children’s devotion in the word of God and their belief in miracles to lure them in the trap. This is a revelation of how grown men, use their position of power to take advantage of innocent children.

4.6.3. Credulity in religion and tradition

When Dolf mistakenly landed or arrived in the medieval era, he tried to recall what he knew from the Medieval Ages: “he knew everybody was a Roman

Catholic and the German emperors struggled for power with the pope. Awe-inspiring cathedrals were built, like the one below in Spiers” (Beckman, 1973, p.11). Religion was precedence in the Medieval Era, even for some people at present. The entire premise of the children’s crusade was to liberate the city of Jerusalem from nonbelievers, and Beckman further demonstrates this when Maria explained to Dolf that the children were on the crusade because;

Nicolas brought us the call. He was speaking in the new church. Oh, it was so beautiful, we just had to follow him...he has heard the angels of God. They told him of God’s will... God wanted Nicolas to gather as many children as he could, though we all had to be virgins, then God will lead us to the Holy Land. (Beckman, 1973, p.35)

To the children, Nicolas was a Saint; it was believed his eyes had seen visions, thus it encouraged the children to view him as a person worthy of worship.

According to Deane (2011), scholars argue or disagree about the extent of devotion and belief, and the extent at which people or early medieval Europe actually embraced or practiced Christianity.

Significantly, even in the middle of the chaos of the crusade, the procession still made time to show their devotion: “In the distance, church bells could be heard, and the children reacted almost as one. As if instructed by a secret sign, they knelt down then started praying, some on the ground where they stood, others spreading out over the grass along the road” (Beckman,1973, p.34). This strong belief and faith is what holds the crusade together, and one could conclude that their faith is

this strong because it had been instilled in them since birth, growing up in an era where Christianity was at the forefront.

Contrary to the children's undying faith in the church in *Crusade in Jeans*, the people of Sesheke village, the Paramount Chief to be exact, display deeply rooted in his customs and tradition, hence the missionary's remark: "I'm trying to make a Christian out of Lewanika, but it's hard. He doesn't want to give up all his wives" (Muller, 2012, p.74). This is evident that a number of African people in the eighteenth century rejected the conversion to Christianity, such as marrying only one wife, and in church, bound by a priest.

This sentiment is echoed in Wicaksono's (2008) study, which reveals that the arrival of Christianity ultimately caused conflict in characters, who regard Christianity as a foreign faith which contrasts with the faith of the characters' society and family. It is observed by the current researcher that the narrative hints at a subtle presence of churches and missionaries in the era. Some people tried their best to convert to Christianity, however, that meant giving up their traditions and customs, which in a way is regarded as their religion.

4.6.4. Magic and heresy

Muller highlights the concept of black magic encountered when children travel back in time. When Helena and Ruth are captured again, by Zakes this time, their captors are discovered to have a fear of magic; "They fear his rifle. They fear only one thing more than a rifle, and that's magic...The Masubia fear magic more than anything" (Muller, 2012, p. 70). Helena held up the 7H, "If they hear this...black magic...they will be too afraid to follow us" (p.71). When Helena played the

sounds the men had never heard of before, and regarded that as black magic, they were afraid to follow them. This illustrates the concept of magic and dark forces. Arrey-Mbi (2020) posits that in the African society, the use of magic was for good and bad reasons. Judging from the reaction of the men, they associated magic with evil.

In *Crusade in Jeans*, traveling from the future to the past had made Dolf very knowledgeable for his age. Leonardo remarks: “I was surprised that they did not at once accuse you of being a heretic ... I don’t know how you have acquired your knowledge and experience at your age, but you are a heretic, and if I were you I would be warier in the future” (Beckman, 2012, p.56).

According to Deane (2011), heretics are considered hypocritical servants of the devil who will walk about clothed in sanctity and ready to seduce devout Christians. Muller then demonstrates that although the children believed Dolf was a worshiper, it is believed that he had a different agenda or reason for worshiping: “You are a heretic, a devilish heretic, and so long as you are among us we will but pursued by disaster” (Beckman, 1973, p. 104). Dom Anselmus’ accusations had at last unmasked this stranger from the north who had stolen so much of his prestige. Thus, the current researcher concludes that although the people in the Medieval Ages believed in God, they also believed in the devil, and his work to lead God’s people astray from their paths.

4.7. Chapter summary

All in all, the foregoing analysis has demonstrated the different themes which Muller and Beckman's narratives have in common, and how narratives written in different decades and differing settings can incorporate historical time travel, stemming from the methods of traveling through time, to the emerging themes. Moreover, each novel has uniquely depicted how characters responded to the phenomena of traveling through time to experience history.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

Chapter 4 provided an analysis of the two novels *When you Dance with the Crocodile* (2012) and *Crusade in Jeans* (1973). The analysis was carried out using the narratology theory. With that, the chapter presents the conclusion as well as recommendations based on the analysis and discussion enlightened in chapter 4.

5.2. Findings and conclusion

Time travel is a concept considered to only exist in science fiction narrative. Although the selected novels could not be regarded as time science fiction, they are, children's narratives which incorporate the scientific phenomena of historical time travel. Historical time travel in *When you Dance with the Crocodile* is depicted as a phenomena which the young characters embark on, with Helena being the first one to travel through time on impulse. As the reader is taken through the narrative however, it is discovered that Helena was not the first young character to go through the game. The narrative thus uses the wormhole channel through which characters are sucked in to end up in a different time line.

The researcher also found that in times of crisis, the love of siblings is eminent and this is displayed when Sam follows Helena inside the game, with no questions asked, when he discovers she might have played the game. This is also a display of his duty and responsibility to always lookout for his little sister. Muller shows

that even if the siblings were a thousand years apart, Sam would still look out for Helena.

Although it is not clearly stated on the game's cover, the computer game gives players the opportunity to physically appear in the game. The characters somewhat have a feeling that in order to help the images of people they see through the computer screens, they would also have to be involved in the game. In the narrative, the reader is exposed to a computer serving as a time machine, a vehicle used to travel back in time, or a gateway which the children could use and it gives a new insight to the possibility of what is considered impossible for science fiction.

Moreover, the children traveling through time are exposed to history in a differing light, which they would otherwise not be able to with the use of a textbook or pictures.

During the course of their adventure in the game, which becomes their new reality, the children are faced with various adversities, thus enabling the writer to showcase the resilient nature of the children. The characters in *When you Dance with the Crocodile* are tested and although they are still children, the challenges they face force them to think, reason and act as adults. In some instances, though, they are seen longing for the presence of an adult.

Time travel furthermore exposes the children to different landscapes, or rather how landscapes in the past hundred years have changed. With an increase in population as well as industrialization, the past is generally different from their

presence. In addition to the changes, is the advent of modern technology on which the children are heavily reliant on in the twenty first century.

While traveling to the past, the children are exposed to alien cultures, customs, religions and old traditions. Notably, Sam is the most affected as he encounters the exaggerated punishments or end results of what had been considered as an offense to the queen, which is death by crocodiles. It is later narrated that others had been sentenced to death for lesser offences. It was further found that these lessons had to be experienced first-hand in order for history to be understood through the people who had lived it, such as Ruth and Maddy, as well as the village folk, in *When you Dance with the Crocodile* (2012). Similarly, the children characters embark in the crusade in *Crusade in Jeans* (1973), and this is made possible only through time travel.

Additionally, it can be speculated that traveling through time and experiencing the various tribulations and hardships made the children appreciate the lives they lived in the twenty first century. A lesson was also learned by Helena and Sam not to jump into a situation in a haste, and to read instructions before tampering with technology that is unknown. For Dolf however, it can be said that time travel was a platform for growth, as he had to be responsible for a lot of children.

Furthermore, he had to detach himself when a lot of kids died along the way. It was also found that continuous interaction with the environment and its inhabitants made the children in both novels understand it and somewhat adapt to it.

In *Crusade in Jeans*, only one child character travels to the past, with a specific chosen date in history. This past experience is valid to this study as it adds on to the existing body of knowledge acquired by scientific experimentation with time travel. Arguably, the journey is embarked on to make new discoveries and insights on the time travel discourse, thus filling in the missing scientific gaps. The same is true of Dolf's case in *Crusade in Jeans*.

In order for him to experience history and understand that some crusades are led by children and not by soldiers, and experience first-hand the treatment of children as well as the conditions they had to endure during the thirteenth century. He had to literally walk a mile in their shoes, and realize that history is not as history books make it out to be; rather, it depends on the perspective from which it is told.

The young time traveler experienced the full peak of Christianity, and encountered senseless deaths of children which in most instances could have been avoided. Through time travel, the reader is shown how in the medieval ages, the orphaned children embarked on crusades meant for soldiers. Their travels were in harsh conditions because the roads were yet to be developed and most children did not reach their destinations. Through time travel, the reader is shown through the eyes of a child, how resilient children were, and how they were able to survive in a different century.

Both Muller and Beckman present their time travel narratives through the eyes of children. Albertsson (2016) posits that fictional children constitute an important function of literary work as they enable a personal identification between the

reader and the character. Seeing that everyone has been a child, Albertsson (2016) suggests that children have a unique position in the sense that they unify society, thus making it possible for everyone to relate to them. Following this line of thought, the researcher concludes that the employment of children as literary characters was successful in order to enhance and capture the reader's interest.

5.3. Recommendations

The study presented a comparative analysis of historical time travel in two novels by two differing authors, from two different continents, as well as two different decades. The theory of narratology and mythology formed the theoretical framework and provided a model for the analysis. It is against this backdrop that the current study suggests the following recommendations:

- Future researchers may employ a rhetorical theory analysis to futuristic time travel narratives in the genre of children's literature;
- It is important to explore racial diversity and gender diversity in children's fictional narratives;
- Future researchers could also look beyond the fictional aspect and examine how the children's fictional narratives play a role in comprehending human relationships.

5.4. Chapter summary

This chapter provided a conclusion of the study that was carried out to analyze the presentation of historical time travel in *When you Dance with the Crocodile*

(2012) by Erna Muller and *Crusade in Jeans* (1973) by Thea Beckman. This chapter further provided the findings of this study and lastly, provided recommendations for future researchers.

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APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Ethical Clearance Reference Number: SHS 0047 Date: 29 July 2022

This Ethical Clearance Certificate is issued by the University of Namibia Decentralized Ethics Committee (DEC) in accordance with the University of Namibia's Research Ethics Policy and Guidelines. Ethical approval is given in respect of undertakings contained in the Research Project outlined below. This Certificate is issued on the recommendations of the ethical evaluation done by the School of Humanities, Society & Development Decentralized Ethics Committee.

Title of Project: Exploring time travel in children's literature: The case study of when you dance with the crocodile by Erna Muller and crusade in Jeans by Thea Beckman

Researcher: Rebecca Sikuvi

Student Number: 201408792

Supervisor(s): Prof Jairos Kangira

Centre for Research Services

Take note of the following:

1. Any significant changes in the conditions or undertakings outlined in the approved Proposal must be communicated to the ethics committee. An application to make amendments may be necessary.
2. Any breaches of ethical undertakings or practices that have an impact on ethical conduct of the research must be reported to the ethics committee
3. The Principal Researcher must report issues of ethical compliance to the ethics committee (through the Chairperson) at the end of the Project or as may be requested by the ethics committee
4. The ethics committee retains the right to:
 - i) Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance if any unethical practices (as outlined in the Research Ethics Policy) have been detected or suspected,
 - ii) Request for an ethical compliance report at any point during the course of the research.

The ethics committee wishes you the best in your research.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trywell Kalusopa', written over a horizontal line.

Prof. Trywell Kalusopa (Chairperson, Decentralised Ethics Committee)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Davis Mumbengegwi', written over a horizontal line.

Prof. Davis Mumbengegwi (Head, Multidisciplinary Research)

APPENDIX B: RESEARCH PERMISSION LETTER

Student Name: Rebecca N. Sikuvi

Student number: 201408792

Programme: Master of Arts in English Studies

Approved research title: Exploring time travel in children's literature: The case study of when you dance with the crocodile by Erna Muller and crusade in jeans b Thea Beckman

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I hereby confirm that the above mentioned student is registered at the University of Namibia for the programme indicated. The proposed study met all the requirements as stipulated in the University guidelines and has been approved by the relevant committees.

The proposal adheres to ethical principles as per attached Ethical Clearance Certificate. Permission is hereby granted to carry out the research as described in the approved proposal.

Best Regards

Name

Director: Centre for Postgraduate Studies

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