

This land is your land, this land is my land – or is it

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Introduction

Communicative interactions are limited by time and space in different situations, indicating that every situation has historical and cultural features that guide the agents' verbal and non-verbal behaviour (Nord, 2007: 16). This further implies that the agents' knowledge and expectations of each other, their points of view shaping the way they look at the world, as well as their situations, experiences and different circumstances, are also guided by historical and cultural features (Nord, 2007: 16).

In the USA particularly, freedom songs have referred to protest songs of civil rights and labor movements, etc. In South Africa, however, these kinds of songs take on a different meaning as they refer to the struggle for racial equality during the 20th century, and had often been talked about as a "weapon of struggle" (Vershow, 2010). A musician, Sifiso Ntuli, explains it as follows: "A song is something that we communicate to those people who otherwise would not understand where we are coming from. You could give them a long political speech - they would still not understand..." (Vershow, 2010). The conclusion is that often one can bring across a message with music and a song better than with long political speeches. There is a connection between music and politics, as people's emotions are involved in both. In SA, the term rebel music describes music that functions within a political context (Fischlin, in Vershow, 2010). Fischlin further states that how this music functions politically depends on the situation that the artist is responding to. However, there are consistencies in the ways in which music is practical and effective as a form of political activism in that it inspires community members into individual and collective action (Fischlin, in Vershow, 2010).

1. Jakobson's three types of translation

Jakobson introduced three types of translation, namely intralingual, interlingual and intersemiotic translation. The first two types can be studied within one semiotic mode, namely language, although it may be between different languages (Tyulenev, 2012). The third type, intersemiotic translation, requires a move away from spoken language and involves a different complex system, such as music for instance (Tyulenev, 2012). Jakobson proposes a broader semiotic view of translation by introducing these different types of translation, in other words a movement away from the narrow and most common thought that translation proper is the only way of looking at translation.

1.1 Intralingual translation

Intralingual translation is the "interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language" (Jakobson, 1959/2012: 233), a monadic activity since only one language is involved. The intralingual translation of a word implies the substitution with a synonym in the same language, or by making use of more words if necessary. However, synonymy does not guarantee "complete equivalence" (Jakobson, 1959/2012: 233). Jakobson explains this by using the following example: "every celibate is a bachelor but not every bachelor is a celibate" (Jakobson, 1959/2012: 233). It is

clear that in some cases further explanation is needed in order to reach the correct interpretation. The implication is that all translation is interpretation.

Tyulenev (2012) states that intralingual translation is a re-arrangement of words and phrases in the same language. This includes “re-interpreting, re-editing, amplifying, condensing, parodying, commenting, restyling, rephrasing and retextualising form and contents of original source texts” (Gorlée, 2008: 342). Ramos (1980: 376) claims that time and space can also act as translators and fall in the intralingual category.

If the same words in the same language are spoken at different times, different meanings will be allocated to the words because of the difference in time and space between the respective utterings (Ramos, 1980: 376). Ramos uses the example of the Inaugural Address of Richard Nixon on 20 January 1969. If this speech was to be repeated today, word for word, it would be understood in a different way because the connotations of those words have been changed by the Post-Watergate context. Baker (2011: 249) agrees and states that the contexts in which utterances occur will “determine the range of implicatures that may be sensibly derived from it”.

1.2 Interlingual translation

Jakobson (1959/2012: 233) states that there usually is not complete synonymy between different languages, although “messages may serve as adequate interpretations of alien code-units or messages”. Most of the time, however, when translation between different languages occur it is messages that are substituted and not just code-units (Jakobson, 1959: 233). He names translation of this kind “reported speech” as the translator receives a message in one language and reproduces it in another language, in other words “two equivalent messages in two different codes” (Jakobson, 1959/2012: 233).

Other researchers have also commented on interlingual translation and agreed that it is translation between different languages, in other words it is the general understanding of translation proper (Tyulenev, 2012; Gorlée, 2005: 36). It is also a dyadic activity since two different languages are concerned. Many codes exist in the same language and interlingual translation must “convey the message within the particular conventions of each code” (Ramos, 1980: 376). Gorlée agrees with Toury (in Gorlée, 2008: 343) that interlingual translation is translation between two codes that are two different natural languages, independent of each other. The two languages, or linguistic codes, have to come together and, ideally, interconnect with each other, hereby creating a new meaningful event (Gorlée, 2005: 36).

One reason for interlingual translation is the desire to create more efficient communication by the deliberate changing of a sign with the purpose of creating a new sign in a different language, or code (Gorlée, 2005: 37). Different languages operate in different ways, thereby verbalising and arranging things differently (Gorlée, 2005: 37). This is especially true of semiotic objects such as linguistic and musical objects. Interlingual translation aims to find a contextual form in the target language that refers to an object in more or less the same way as did the source text (Gorlée, 2005: 37). In other words, interlingual translation breaks up familiar sign structures and sign relationships, rearranges them in order to create a meaningful product in the new system (Gorlée, 2005: 37).

Intersemiotic translation leads to the translator having to bring together two different mediums, for example language and music. According to Gorlée (2008: 346) there is a creative side to intersemiotic translation or recoding that depends on “improvised desire and free will (on the part of the receptor) translations” taking the meaning of the written signs in a verbal language and transforming them into a “language in a mixed, metaphorical manner of speaking”.

Intersemiotic translation can be between language and music, or language and paintings, or even without any participating verbal sign system, such as the musical versions of many ballets (Ramos, 1980: 376). In vocal music both verbal and music systems are represented (Tyulenev, 2012).

2. Functionality

A text can be analysed from two points of view, one being the sender’s point of view and the other the receiver’s point of view (Nord, 2007: 49). This implies that the sender has a specific purpose with the text and this determines the strategies used to create the text and to make the intention known to the receiver. The receiver, on the other hand, “completes the communicative action by deciding to receive the text in a particular fashion”. Nord (2007: 92) suggests that the target text should be constructed in such a way that it “fulfils functions in the target situation that are compatible with the sender’s intention”. She furthermore says that a text is functional when it fulfils the purpose or function it is intended for. Text function is determined by the aspects of the situation where the text will serve its communicative purpose (Nord, 2007: 55). The use that the receiver makes of the text depends on individual interpretation of and expectations towards the text (Nord, 2007: 49). This is further determined by the receiver’s background knowledge, needs with regard to communication, the communicative situation the text is to be received in and the signals of the sender’s intention that are placed in the text (Nord, 2007: 49). The function of the source text was intended for the original situation and cannot be left unchanged through the translation process (Nord, 1997: 49). This implies that the function of the target text specifically relates to the target situation and does not necessarily have the same function as the source text (Nord, 1997: 49).

Nord mentions the following functions as the basic text functions: referential, expressive, appellative and phatic functions. The referential function refers to objects and phenomena of the world, and contains sub-functions such as the informative function (e.g. bad weather warning), meta-linguistic function (e.g. specific use of language), instructive function (e.g. instructions on how to use a microwave oven) and teaching function (e.g. such as Mathematics). The expressive function is the “expression of the sender’s attitude or feelings towards the objects and phenomena dealt with in the text” (Nord, 2007: 50). This has sub-functions such as the emotive function (e.g. an expression of feelings), evaluative function (e.g. expression of evaluation in comments on a political issue) (Nord, 2007: 50). Appellative function is appealing to the receiver’s feelings, knowledge, sensibility and experience, to name but a few, in order to guide him to react in the way the sender intended.

Baker (2011: 232) agrees that different societies as well as individuals or groups of individuals in the same society experience the world differently and react differently to their experiences of the world. They also have different interpretations of the world and how the situations and events in the world are organised or related to each other (Baker, 2011: 232). In other words, it is more than just agreeing or disagreeing with specific views of the world, but

being able to make sense of it, as relations that make sense and are valid in one society do not necessarily carry the same value in another society (Baker, 2011: 232).

3. Multi-medial translation

One of the aspects regarding translation and functionality worth mentioning is multi-medial translation. Buhler (in Surugiu, 2010: 117) determined three communicative functions of language, namely informative (referent-oriented), expressive (source-oriented) and operative (audience-oriented). Reiss argues that it is the text type that determines the translation and adds another function to these three written types, namely the multi-medial text type. In the early stages it was called audio-medial and referred to any text that was written with the intention to be either spoken or sung, and thus depends on either a non-linguistic medium or some or other form of expression in order to communicate with the target audience (Surugiu, 2010: 118). Later on Reiss changed it to multi-medial to allow the inclusion of more text types, such as comics, that usually rely on visual communication and do not have acoustic aspects (Surugiu, 2010: 118).

In a sense the multi-medial text type is more than just the mere fourth category of text types, it is a hyper-text as it includes songs, stage plays, film scripts, opera libretti, comics and advertising material that includes audio-visual elements (Surugiu, 2010: 118). In contrast to novels, short stories and poems, the verbal text in a multi-medial text is part of a larger body or parts that together form a complete artistic whole. In other words, the additional information that is different from that of language as supplied by the other sign system must be taken into consideration. This includes aspects such as picture and text, music and text, facial expression and more (Surugiu, 2010: 118). These elements all play an important role in establishing meaning, which confirms that meaning in multi-medial texts, especially where music is involved, cannot be determined by a textual analysis only. To determine meaning in multi-medial texts in music, a textual analysis must be combined with an analysis of other musical aspects such as the melody, tempo, pitch, duration, loudness, timbre, rhythm, harmony, pause, stress, articulation and more. Baker also agrees and states that the “articulation” of narratives is not limited to textual material but can be realised through a wide range of media (Baker, 2006: 19). One example is Kennedy’s photographic exhibition of the articulation of the narrative of the tragic events of 11 September (Baker, 2006: 19).

4. Text and narratives

Gorlée (2004: 29) mentions three characteristics of a text from a semiotic point of view, namely, any “written verbal entity that firstly, is materially recognisable and delimitable as such; secondly, deictically anchored in ‘real’ time and space; thirdly, becomes meaningful by being used in a specific social context” (Gorlée, 2004: 29). The song lyrics that have been chosen for this study can also be seen as text, especially as it has a message that reflects on a specific social situation, making it meaningful in the specific place and time it was written. Even-Zohar (1990/2012: 166) states that a translation does not have a set nature and borders, but is an “activity that depends on the relations within a certain cultural system”. The variety of implicatures that may be derived from a text, according to Baker (1992: 238) is determined by the context in which the text occurs.

Briggs (in Baker, 2006: 3) states that a narrative is an important manner of generating, sustaining, mediating and representing conflict at all levels of social organization. It is furthermore a retelling of the everyday stories that we live by and is not restricted to public representation but can also tell the story of an individual (Baker, 2006: 3). Narratives

are not static but can undergo subtle or extreme changes as people experience different things and daily are exposed to new stories. A narrative thus has “significant subversive or transformative potential” (Baker, 2006: 3). Every time a version of the narrative is either retold or translated into another language, it is infused with various elements from the new setting or from the personal stories of the re-tellers (Baker, 2006: 22). Narratives also both reproduce the existing power structures and provide a means of contesting them (Baker, 2006: 23). For example, in South Africa, during the apartheid era, the stories that sustain the undermining regime are challenged and this challenge is done in the form of alternative stories (Baker, 2006: 3). Narratives furthermore also shape people’s views of, for instance, objectivity, morality and conceptions of themselves and other people (Bennett & Edelman, in Baker 2006: 19).

5. Narrative location

A narrative categorises the world into character types, event types and bounded communities (Baker, 2006: 10). It also systematises the experience by ordering events in temporal, spatial and social relation to each other (Baker 2006: 10). Furthermore, our choice of what and how to categorise depends on our narrative location, for example, different people looking at the same phenomenon will categorise the phenomenon in different ways (Baker, 2006: 16). Another important aspect is that these categories do not merely hang in the air, but are always dependent on the narratives of the time (Baker, 2006: 16).

Gorlée (2004: 29) also considers the role of private meaning, as text includes both private and social meaning, including the reason why the text has been written. Important to note is that language (text for the purpose of this study) is used as communication with humans, carrying a specific message relevant in a specific place and time, under specific social conditions. Baker (2011: 231) states that the acceptability of a text does not so much depend on its relevancy towards a specific “state of affairs” but rather on the reader’s experience of the text, in terms of relevancy, for instance. Important to note is that a person’s behaviour is ultimately guided by the stories he believes regarding his life experiences (Baker, 2006: 3).

5.1 FEATURES OF NARRATIVITY

5.1.1 Causal emplotment

Causal emplotment is, to put it simply, when two people may agree that events took place or that certain facts are true, however, they disagree on the interpretation of the events or facts in relation to each other and what motivated the role players (Baker, 2006: 67). This may very well be the case in South Africa if one looks at the film *Sarafina*.

Causal emplotment thus allows one to take a specific set of events and “weave them into very different ‘moral’ stories (Baker, 2006: 67).

5.1.2 Selective appropriation

Selective appropriation is the process where a person decides what elements of his experience to include in the narrative and what not, and this implies that some elements are privileged and others excluded. The important question is how does one decide which events to include and which to leave? In other words, what influences the person to eventually exclude specific events and give privilege to others? According to Somers (cited in Baker, 2006: 71) themes play an important role in selectively appropriating specific events that take place. However, selective appropriation

entails more than the mere theme of the narrative. One's location in time and space, as well as exposure to a specific set of narratives play an important role in the selective appropriation of events to be recorded or not (Baker, 2006: 71). It has also happened that selecting texts that are used to elaborate on a specific aspect of an "enemy" culture is a practice that has often been taken to by politicians (Baker, 2006: 75). One other important aspect in selective appropriation is value, whether it is the values of an individual or an institution, it still guides a person in terms of whether the elements he chooses to elaborate on support or reject his values (Baker, 2006: 76).

5.1.3 Particularity

In order to provide a definition of particularity the following is important. Particularity includes narratives that, although they refer to specific events and people, the reference is made within a general framework of "story types" giving meaning to the specific events (Bruner in Baker, 2006: 78). Another important aspect is that particularity is embedded in a generic story outline or plot (Baker, 2006: 78), also called a master plot – "skeletal stories that combine a range of raw elements in different ways" (Baker, 2006: 78). In other words, a narrative derived from a specific storyline may differ in specific references such as names, settings, etc. but will still be a variant of the specific skeletal storyline (Baker, 2006: 78). Narratives thus derive from sets of skeletal storylines with motifs that appear again and again. However, these sets may differ either as a whole or in specific details across different cultures (Baker, 2006: 79). In the case of translation, source texts and often even complete genres are adapted to suit a specific culture and evoke culturally popular storylines (Baker, 79). Skeletal storylines further enable us to make sense of individual narratives and fill in any missing detail (Bruner in Baker, 2006: 80). For example, the recurring social theme of unemployment, land and property ownership, and more.

Skeletal storylines also have character types that, because of their motivation and personality, are integral and often fixed elements of the master plot (Abbott in Baker, 2006: 81). These character types are not limited to individual characters but may also portray the characteristics of an entire group, as is the case in colonial narratives. A colonial narrative often portrays the colonized as an underdeveloped group of people who needs protection and guidance from the more developed group or as a bloodthirsty and dangerous group of people, and in some cases even both (Baker, 2006: 82).

Another aspect of particularity worth mentioning is that familiar storylines can be deliberately satirised to deliver a specific political or social message (Baker, 2006: 83).

5.1.4 Parodying

Parodying is a popular way of using genre conventions to undermine popular narratives, either in the same or in a different generic form (Baker, 2006: 89). Parodying has also been used, as an act of activism, to undermine existing power relations or even prestige relations in society (Baker, 2006: 89). In this case, the power of the parody lies in the receiver understanding the generic forms and conventions (Baker, 2006: 88). Often parody has been used to ridicule prominent public figures.

5.1.5 Narrative accrual

According to Baker (2006: 101), narrative accrual is the result of repeatedly being exposed to a set of related narratives that in the end will lead to the shaping of a culture, tradition or history (personal or public history). The collection of stories that we are exposed to from childhood serve as a guideline to help

6. FRAMING

6.1 Selective appropriation of textual material

Selective appropriation of textual material occurs in the addition or omissions of aspects with the purpose of suppressing, elaborating or accentuating specific aspects of a narrative (Baker, 2006: 114). Selective appropriation refers to the inclusion or exclusion of specific texts, authors, languages or cultures (Baker, 2006: 114).

6.2 Temporal and spatial framing

Temporal and spatial framing involve the selecting of a specific text and embedding it in a context that emphasizes the narrative it portrays, and allows us to link it with current narratives that influence us, although the source narrative may be set within a completely different temporal and spatial framework (Baker, 2006: 112). In other words, the meaning and interpretative potential of a text is shaped by its spatial and temporal location, and this projects it onto a new setting (Baker, 2006: 112).

6.3 Framing by labelling

Labelling refers to the process whereby a lexical item, term or phrase is used to identify a person, place or any other important element in a narrative (Baker, 2006: 122). A label used to identify a participant, for instance, provides the receiver with an interpretative frame that guides and constrains his reaction towards the specific narrative (Baker, 2006: 122).

7. Woody Guthrie's background

Woody Guthrie was born in 1912 in the rural parts of Oklahoma. He was the grandchild of migrants who had been offered land parcels by the United States government at the end of the 19th century. His father was in politics but gave that up and made a career out of acquiring real estate. However, the growing recession that eventually turned into the stock market crash in 1929 and led to the Great Depression also impacted on Woody's family. His father lost a lot of money with unsuccessful business deals and eventually was declared bankrupt.

Guthrie had a different view on politics than the frontier conservatism of his family and this also influenced the way he looked at money. He was interested in money but not in the sense of getting as much as he can. Money bothered him in the sense that people either become animals in trying to get as much money as possible or go crazy when losing money. Guthrie believed that a person only needs as much money as is needed for immediate use. Guthrie got to Pampa in Texas where he got married and eventually had 3 children. The Great Depression had already made it difficult for Woody to support his family, but the beginning of the Great Dust Storm period made it nearly impossible. Drought and dust forced thousands of desperate farmers and unemployed workers from Oklahoma and other places to further west to seek jobs. Woody did not go into real estate as his father did, but rather did odd jobs such as drawing cartoons, singing songs and painting signs for cash to get by. Eventually, he decided to leave town and joined thousands of other dust bowl refugees on Route 66 looking for a way to support his family.

He often spent nights in jail on vagrancy charges; in the desert, freezing; in boxcars; on the floor in corners, on sidewalks, in alleys – anywhere he could find a place. These experiences changed Guthrie's political outlook as he went to California with the expectation of seeing the land of milk and honey. However, he was shocked with the reality that was far removed from his idealistic view. Thousands of poor people from the frontier fled to California to seek jobs and try to make a living. Unfortunately, it did not turn out as they had hoped. Children starved to death next to farms filled with food. The people faced pointed guns on their way home and were made fun of for being poor. Large businesses employed many workers to up the productivity but at the lowest wages possible, keeping the people poor. Guthrie was utterly disappointed and disillusioned by what he experienced in his beautiful country.

He came in contact with the Wobblies, a radical labour union that eventually had the aim of overthrowing capitalism. Although the party had its better days by the time Woody became aware of it, there were still a few organisers in California trying to convince people to follow their doctrines. One important element that runs through all their doctrines was the belief that the 'nation's land should be the communitarian possession of all the people' – or better said, this land belongs to all of us. Guthrie also moved in musical circles that included musicians such as Pete Seeger, and his political beliefs were well in line with those of the folk singers. Guthrie often joined Seeger's highly political folk group, The Almanac singers, who later became one of the most influential groups in Folk Music.

Guthrie wrote this song in 1940 and recorded it in 1944. However, it was not released to the public before 1951. This song resembles a melody from the Carter Family tune. He wrote this song for two reasons, firstly, as a parody of Irving Berlin's 'God Bless America', and, secondly, because he realized that America was not treating its people as equitable as it should be. Apparently, he first used the phrase 'God Bless America for me' as the last sentence of each verse, and later on replaced it with the well-known phrase 'This land was made for you and me'. Guthrie intended to use this song to reclaim America for the common worker (Spivy, in Sanders). It later evolved into a protest anthem as many generations of folk singers performed the song. Some regarded it as a Communist anthem and the irony of it being released at a time in America that anti-Communist movements became stronger.

America was now finally recovering from the Depression and the political opinions of the Cold War were gaining momentum. The people began to move towards a new era of conservatism and anti-communist movements were at the order of the day. Even celebrities and performers who were regarded as Communist sympathisers were chased. Although the economic recovery in America had positive outcomes for many people, there was also the other side that never got to taste the new American Dream. New forms of mass media promoted conformity and capitalism, while new artistic movements were against cultural authority from all angles. There were the 'Red Scare' and 'Joseph McCarthy's' who widely promoted anticommunist sentiment, while on the other side, the revival of folk music made Guthrie a hero for many of his fans.

He now became a household name and 'This land is your land, this land is my land' was a popular song that kids learnt at school, although they were only taught non-political verses. This is then how the song quietly became to be one of America's most popular songs. At one stage there was a possibility that 'This land is your land, this land is my land' could become one of America's anthems.

7.1 The song itself

The question remains as to the interpretation of the lyrics – some people find it as an anti-American bias song and others see it as a philosophical response to the BP oil spill. It has even been sung by an anti-gay marriage organization, the National Organization for Marriages (NOM), although they used the version by ‘Peter, Paul and Mary’. The latter eventually issued a notice stating that the NOM has to stop using the song as they promote ideas “contrary to the advocacy position they have held for years”. They even threatened with legal action should NOM continue using the song. Peter, Paul and Mary were actually saying that the land could belong to you and me, but the song definitely does not!

Guthrie begins the song by painting a pleasant picture of life in the USA and of America being the land of milk and honey. However, this is a protest song and towards the end he starts to address real social issues of hunger, unemployment, land ownership, Capitalism etc. how is it possible that in such a beautiful land, rich and fruitful, people are still unemployed and children dying of hunger. He seems to be asking if the government really cared about its citizens if they have to stand in queues for welfare handouts.

The song can be divided into different sections: the first section, which comprises the first three verses, speaks about the beautiful and wonderful America. Verses 4 - 6 speak about the right of property and landownership, and verse 7 refers to the humanitarian struggle of unemployment and hunger.

Chorus

This land is your land, this land is my land
From California, to the New York Island
From the redwood forest, to the Gulf Stream waters,
This land was made for you and me.

Verse 1

As I went walking that ribbon of highway
I saw above me that endless skyway
I saw below me that golden valley
This land was made for you and me

Verse 2

I roamed and I rambled and I followed my footsteps
To the sparkling sands of her diamond deserts
While all around me a voice was sounding
This land was made for you and me

Verse 3

When the sun came shining, and I was strolling
And the wheat fields waving and the dust clouds rolling
A voice was chanting, as the fog was lifting,
This land was made for you and me.

Verse 4

There was a big high wall there – that tried to stop me;
Sign was painted – it said private property
But on the other side – it didn’t say nothing;
That side was made for you and me.

Verse 5

As I was walkin' – I saw a sign there
And that sign said – no tress passin'
But on the other side.... It didn't say nothin!
Now that side was made for you and me.

Verse 6

Nobody living can ever stop me,
As I go walking that freedom highway
Nobody living can ever make me turn back
This land was made for you and me.

Verse 7

In the squares of the city, in the shadow of a steeple
By the relief office, I'd see my people
As they stood there hungry, I stood there asking
Is this land made for you and me.

Chorus

The chorus is actually a bit of a geography lesson as Guthrie does not merely say mountains, islands or forests and waters, as Irving Berlin did in 'God bless America', but refers to specific places. It also reminds one constantly that this land is supposed to be yours and mine – how come do we then not experience the land in the same way? To some people it is the land of milk and honey and others' children are starving?

Verses 1-3

The first three verses paint a pretty picture of America with sunshine, diamond deserts, forests and waters. It speaks of economic welfare and happiness for everybody who lives there.... But.....

Verses 4-6 refer to social justice and no property rights issues. This refers to Americans having to look out for one another and realizing that everybody wants to get ahead and make it in life. Where and how they everyone does it, is the unwritten side of the "No Trespassing" sign. That side was thus referring to the American Dream. How is it possible that America is the "land of opportunity" but citizens stand in welfare lines?

Verse 7 refers to social issues and is an attack on the church and the general situation of Guthrie's people. Line 1 refers to the many people who still could not find jobs and remained unemployed. Guthrie hereby also refers to the injustice to the migrants of that time. They were gathering everywhere, from the city squares to the church steeple, still unable to find employment. Guthrie is criticizing the church in the sense that the church is "forcing" its religion on the people, without offering real help. It is also in contrast to many beliefs that it is not the government but the church that must assist the needy. However, where the church cannot fill the need then it is all of our responsibility.

The relief office is what we would call the welfare office today and Guthrie has in his mind the images of his people, poor and unemployed, lining up for help. Line 3 refers to the unhappiness of the people with their current situation and the thoughts of desperate situations.

This song was mainly used in labor strikes and promoting Marxist ideas. It gives a much more realistic picture of the America of 1930 by presenting both the good and the bad. It is both a patriotic and rebellious song at the same time. Nowadays, this song is mostly used for nationalism. Bruce Springsteen and Bob Dylan brought this song back to life. Ronald Reagan used the song in his re-election campaign. George W Bush also used it as his campaign song in his runs for presidency, which is perhaps an unusual choice for a Republican, considering its socialist origins. This song was also used after the tragedy of 9/11 to bring people together again.

Most often the song was performed without the last verses that criticized Capitalism. In doing so, the meaning of the song completely changed. These two stanzas were reintroduced to the world in 2009 when Pete Seeger, an old friend of Guthrie, Bruce Springsteen and Tao-Rodriguez-Seeger performed the song at Barack Obama's presidential inauguration (Sanders). Generations changed the lyrics of the song to fit their world view. As with other folk songs the lyrics were sung with different words at various times, although the motives for this particular change of the lyrics may involve a possible political interpretation of the verses.

8. South Africa political situation

Many protest and freedom songs were written during the apartheid era in South Africa. These songs have originated in the context of discrimination and apartheid – and it was not limited to black ethnic groups or black musicians, although the message may have been a little disguised, as we will see in a while. The role of music in South Africa's struggle to free itself from white supremacy is evident in the music itself, which responded directly to government actions. Music plays a key function in every struggle against socio-political oppression. Internationally, the apartheid movement drew criticism and cultural bans and economic sanctions were imposed on South Africa.

Land has always been an emotional issue in South Africa after the early 1920's Act that restricted black people from buying or renting land in a "white South Africa".

During the early 1960's, the height of the apartheid era in South Africa, a husband and wife group, Des and Dawn Lindberg, sang protest songs and produced musicals contradictory to the apartheid doctrine. They challenged racial oppression and helped showcase and promote black talent. They were often the targets of bomb threats, pickets, their phones were tapped and their tyres slashed. They opened a coffee bar, The Troubadour, in downtown Johannesburg where the "rebellious" could drink coffee and sing songs. Quite so often one of their songs or musicals was banned. Their first musical that was banned, Godspell, featured a multi-racial cast hence the reason for the banning since it was at the height of the apartheid era in South Africa during the 1970's. However, they won a Supreme Court appeal and the musical continued to run for 2 years. Des and Dawn furthermore opened the Black Mikado at Diepkloof Hall in Soweto and have always fought profoundly for the rights of theatre management countrywide, contesting bans, often facing down the security police.

They felt the cultural boycott was a double-edged sword as it on the one hand, encouraged the growth of indigenous protest theatre and forced South Africans to look within their own borders for their entertainment. On the other hand, however, by not being exposed to works and artists of international caliber meant that locals risked becoming didactic and insular.

Des and Dawn produced both an Afrikaans and English version of this song. In both versions they paint a beautiful picture of South Africa, and let us be honest, South Africa is a beautiful land. However, they never give reference to anything negative that happens in South Africa. Here are also poor people, homeless people and unemployed people, but no mention to any of these or the welfare or religion of any sort. This song is only about nationalism and promoting South Africa as the best country to live in. Where Guthrie dedicated only one verse to the geography of America, Des and Dawn dedicate three verses to the geography of South Africa, although they repeat one of the verses.

Let us first discuss the Afrikaans version. During the time when Des and Dawn released their version of Guthrie's song, PW Botha in trying to maintain apartheid as long as possible, allowed Asians and people of mixed race to be represented in a white-controlled parliament, it continued to exclude the nation's black majority. However, some apartheid laws, such as the prohibition of mixed marriages and a requirement that blacks carry special passes were relaxed. However, instead of making things better, this only fueled the anger of apartheid's opponents. The situation worsened and South Africa became a political melting pot.

In the Afrikaans version, Des and Dawn refer to whites and coloreds but no blacks. They sing of the "wit, blou hemel" and the "bruin Limpopo". However, no reference was made to blacks except the reference to Robben Island, which could have referred to Nelson Mandela in jail on Robben Island. They, however, also wrote a song 'The seagull's name was Nelson'

Temporal and spatial framing are evident in the sense that Guthrie's song was about America and American people, whereas Des and Dawn's version is about South Africans in South Africa, and also quite a number of years after Guthrie's song has been released. The setting thus differs completely as does the circumstances yet the selected narratives or in this case lyrics are embedded in the South African context at that time. In other words, the meaning and interpretative potential of the lyrics are shaped by its spatial and temporal location, and this projects it onto a new setting and produces different interpretations. For instance, a person in favour of apartheid would interpret the lyrics differently than would someone that is against apartheid. Each one's circumstances determine the interpretation of the lyrics.

Afrikaans

Die land is jou land, die land is my land
Van die Bruin Limpopo tot by Robben Eiland
Van Tsitsikama na die Kalahari
Die land is tuis vir ek en jy.

Hier stap ek langs die ope grootpad

English back translation

This land is your land, this land is my land
From the brown Limpopo to Robben Island
From Tsitsikama to the Kalahari
This land is home to you and me.

Here I walk alongside the open big road

En eindloos bo my die wit blou hemel,
En orals om my stemme wemel
Die land is tuis vir ek en jy.

And endless above me the white blue heaven
And all around me voices sounding
This land is home to you and me.

In the English version they never use any words that refer to colour. They speak of the *Great Limpopo* (Afrikaans was 'bruin Limpopo') and they used Guthrie's verse for their English verse referring to the *endless skyway* (Afrikaans 'wit blou hemel').

In the last verse Des and Dawn sings of all the countries our fathers came from. They mention Holland, Greece, France, Germany, Italy, England, Ireland, Sweden, Scotland and the East. But no reference at all to the indigenous people of South Africa, the Xhosa, Sotho, Ndebele, etc. By excluding them from the lyrics, Des and Dawn would receive no political interference and their song would be broadcast without any trouble. However, by excluding any reference to Blacks, they actually accentuated their presence in the country. This is a very good example of selective appropriation. The reasons for choosing to exclude any reference to black people in the song lyrics are definitely politically motivated

THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND / LAND FULL OF POWER AND GLORY

Chorus:

This land is your land
This land is my land
From the great Limpopo
To the Transvaal highlands
From the great Tugela
To the Kalahari
This land was made for you and me

As I went walking
That ribbon of Highway
I saw above me
The endless skyway
And all around me
A voice was singing
This land was made for you and me

Chorus:

This land is your land
This land is my land
From the great Limpopo
To the Transvaal highlands
From the great Tugela
To the Kalahari
This land was made for you and me

Come on and take a walk with me
Through this green and growing land
Walk through the meadows, the mountains and the sand
Walk through the valleys, the rivers and the plain
Walk through the sun and
Walk through the rain

Chorus:

Here is a land full of power and glory

Beauty that words cannot recall
Of her power shall rest on the strength of her peoples
Her glory shall rest on us all
On us all

From the Free State to the Transkei
Through the Dusty Great Karoo
From the Cape to old Southwest
From the old to the new
From the Boland to Limpopo
Kruger Park and Wildcoast shore
Tell me, who could ask for more

Chorus:

Here is a land full of power and glory
Beauty that words cannot recall
Of her power shall rest on the strength of her peoples
Her glory shall rest on us all
On us all

Our fathers came from Holland
Greece and France and Germany
From Italy and England
And Ireland's icy sea
They came here from Sweden
From Scotland and the East
Our Fathers chose our land as the best

Chorus:

Here is a land full of power and glory
Beauty that words cannot recall
Of her power shall rest on the strength of her peoples
Her glory shall rest on us all
On us all

Years later, after the fall of apartheid, Des and Dawn still sing the Afrikaans song as it is, but in a medley with another song. In this second song they refer to *the forefathers of South Africa*, and include reference to Zulu, Sotho, Tswana, Griekwa, Hottentot and more. Now, with the political changes that South Africa has undergone, they were allowed to sing their songs as they wished without any political interference.

Voorvaders van Suid Afrika,
Zoeloe, Sotho, Tswana,
Indier, Griekwa, Hottentot,
Brit en Afrikaner
Nog ander kom uit Swede
Italie, Portugal,
Die uitverkore land vir almal.

Forefathers of South Africa
Zulu, Sotho, Tswana,
Indian, Griqua, Hottentot,
Brit and Afrikaner
Others came from Sweden
Italy, Portugal,
The chosen land for everyone.

Following are different version of Woody Guthrie's song lyrics.

- Canadian Version

The Canadian lyrics by *The Travellers* were written in 1955. The lyrics only differ with regard to the geographical setting. They thus only used verse 1-3 with the chorus. What is interesting though is that they also referred to an island in line 2, namely Vancouver Island, the same as Guthrie referring to New York Island. In line 3 both *The Travellers* and Guthrie

refer to waters, the Great Lake waters and the Gulf Stream waters respectively. It makes one wonder why they took a liking in the song if they only changed the geographical setting.

This land is your land, this land is my land
From Bonavista to Vancouver Island
From the Arctic Circle to the Great Lakes Waters,
This land was made for you and me.

I can see your mailbox, I can see your doorstep
I can feel my wind rock your tip-top treetop
All around your house there my sunbeam whispers
This land was made for you and me.

- A United Kingdom version

As far as the United Kingdom version, more particular Scottish references, by Billy Bragg is concerned the following is of interest. The reference to an island appears at the end of line 3 and not line 2 as Guthrie's. However, Bragg also refers to forests as does Guthrie, in line 3. One difference is that Bragg is not as specific as Guthrie and does not mention a particular island or forest, but islands and forests in general.

Bragg further brings to mind images of the countryside with reference to wild flowers growing, clean rivers flowing, winds that are fresh and not polluted by smoke and trees whispering. The UK version is thus the longing of someone living in the city, tired of hearing the traffic raging by and wishing he could experience the quiet and peacefulness of the countryside. Bragg also mentions the church and more specific church bells, but in this case the reference is not social criticism as in Guthrie's case but just part of the sounds that he longs to hear together with the singing of birds - sounds that he no longer hears in the city. Verse 5, the last verse, describes his escape from the city to the mystic landscape.

This land is your land, this land is my land
From the coast of Cornwall to the Scottish highlands
From the sacred forests to the holy islands
This land was made for you and me.

As I walked out through the homeless counties
The traffic raging, raging all around me.
I closed my eyes and dreamed how it could be
This land was made for you and me.

Cold winter crept on as Scotland slept on
No factory roaring, no oil-rig boring
Just weeded by-ways and deserted highways
Relics of the life that used to be.

Then I awakened to a spring day breaking
To the sons and daughters of Alba's waters
And the flag they're flying is the rampant lion
This land was made for you and me.

So I am going, no-one can stop me
Where the wild flowers growing, clean rivers flowing
Fresh winds are blowing and the tall trees whispering

This land was made for you and me.

As the clouds went rolling and the church bells ringing
I heard the songs that the birds were singing
As night came falling, they went on calling
This land was made for you and me.

From the teeming city I made my escape
To find my place in, the mystic landscape
I'm not the first here, nor am I the last here
This land was made for you and me.

- An Irish version

Another feature of translation, namely particularity, is evident in the Irish version of Guthrie's song. In the Irish version that I found a father is singing about time spent with his daughter. He changed the American geographical setting of the chorus to an Irish setting. He mentions the northern highlands, and the western islands – a similarity with Guthrie's island. In the next line he refers to the hills of Kerry and the streets of Derry.

In verse I he tells the story of the time he went walking hand in hand with his daughter, at the Shannon water. He mentions the ringing church bells and singing children. These images bring to mind a different picture than the one by Guthrie. In this verse one pictures a father walking with his daughter, peacefully and content, hearing church bells and singing children in the background. This is no criticism of the church as in Guthrie's case. In the second verse he and his daughter again climbed a mountain but this time it was at the chrystle fountain. They were sitting watching the waves go by and this time the daughter says that this land was made for them. In the third verse they walk home and passed the village steeple. He then feels proud of his fellow countrymen, men who cried there and men who died there all for the cause and the country – prepared to die for a country that was made for you and me. Patriotism and proudness.

This land is your land, this land is my land
From the northern highlands to the western islands
From the hills of Kerry, to the streets of Derry,
This land was made for you and me.
As I was walking, by the Shannon water,
Hand in hand there, with my little daughter,
Heard the church bells ringing, heard the children singing
This land was made for you and me.
So we climbed the mountain by the chrystle fountain
And we watched the waves roar by the rocky seashore
And the sun was shining and she was crying
Oh daddy, this land was made for you and me
So I walked her home then, by the village steeple,
Proud of my country, proud of my people,
Of the men who cried there and the men who died there
Saying this land was made for you and me.

- A Scottish version

I found a Scottish version of the song also. As can be expected the geographical setting has been changed to Scottish geography by mentioning the English border, North Sea water, Western Islands and Northern Highlands.

The writer uses a different approach in the sense that he refers to a different season in each verse. In the first verse he mentions summer, then winter and in verse three spring. In the first verse he describes typical Scottish scenery, misty skyline, rainbow fountains of Cuillin mountain with the sun's rays mirroring the colours of the rainbow. In verse two he describes how winter creeps in on a sleepy Scotland, no factories working, no oil-rigs working – weeded byways and deserted highways – all memories of a life that has passed on. Could possibly be a reference to a time in Scotland where the economy was in winter because of strikes....?

The last verse refers to a new season dawning – spring. Spring is usually the sign of new life – a new awakening of Scotland.

This land is your land, this land is my land
From the English border to the North Sea water
From the Western Islands to the Northern Highlands
This land was made for you and me.

One summer's morning as the day was dawning
I viewed the islands on the misty skyline
The rainbow fountains of the Cuillin mountains
This land was made for you and me

- Parody

Different parodies of the song have been written.

- Ecology versions (www.folkarchive)

This is quite predictable as the name suggests, all about the ecology and nature.

First version

I've roamed and rambled
And followed the beer cans
From the toxic cities
To the flooded canyons
And all around me
Were the billboards reading
This land was made for you and me.

As I was walking
That ribbon of highway
I heard the buzzing
Of a hundred chain saws
And the redwoods falling
And the loggers calling:
This land was made for you and me.

Second version

I've roamed on cell towers and taken exits
To sprawling cities – paver over deserts
And all around me – neon signs were shouting
This wasteland was made by you and me.

The sun dawns hazy – as I was rolling
Weeds were waving – and dust was falling
As the smog now settles – voices start shouting
This wasteland was made by you and me.

Third version

As I tried walking – no sidewalks for me
As I tried biking – drivers scowl right at me
Few remaining places – of peace and safety
Those are the ones for you and me.

Throughout our cities – empty seas of asphalt
Are cleverly saying – who's really at fault
And some are grumblin' – and some are wonderin'
Why this wasteland was allowed by you and me?

- A Rebel version (www.folkarchive)

This land is their land
It isn't our land
From the Wall Street office
To the Cadillac car-land
From the plush apartments
To the Hollywood star land
This land is not for you and me.

If this is our land
You'd never know it
So take your bullshit
And kindly stow it
Let's get together
And overthrow it
Then this land will be for you and me.

- A Native American version (www.folkarchive)

This land is your land
It once was my land.
Before we sold you, Manhattan Island
You pushed our nations
To the reservations
This land was stole by you from me.

- A parody version popular among peers in elementary school

Apparently this version was quite popular in elementary schools across America and although teachers disapproved the singing thereof they did not actively punish the scholars for singing it.

This land ain't your land, this land is my land
I got a shotgun and you don't got one
If you don't get off, I'll blow your head off

This land is private property.

Line 1 might refer to the strong American tradition of private property.

CONCLUSION

Music is not just for listening – it has a message for whoever understands the message and it thus can be interpreted in more than one meaning.

Music is not neutral – it is not without impact and effect. This is true for all genres of music with the consequence that music thus also has a dark side. Even a genre of music anti-apartheid music was formed to help unify the anti-apartheid movement before the abolishment of apartheid. The anti-apartheid movement used news media and popular culture, such as music, to create more opposition towards apartheid. Music tells something about our deepest identity and at the same time says where we are at a specific moment in life. By attempting to understand the role that music played in the struggle against, and eventual dismantling of the Apartheid government, we can begin to understand the power that music can hold in a political context. A song has the power to communicate across opposing cultural dogmas, pointing directly to the central role that music can play in the context of a political struggle. Music does not create political change, rather it is a conduit for change that stirs a community into action, expresses and calls attention to oppression and bridges the divide between people of different cultures. Music can serve as both an expression and a critique of a culture, and as such has the power to inform, influence and instigate change.