

**REPRESENTATION OF POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA'S SOCIO-
ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CHALLENGES: AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED
DOCUMENTARY FILMS.**

By

TSHEGOFATSO PHASWANE THIPA

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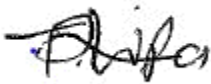
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SUPERVISOR: PROF N.C LESAME

2023

DECLARATION

I declare that **REPRESENTATION OF POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CHALLENGES: AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED DOCUMENTARY FILMS** a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) thesis that I am submitting to the University of Limpopo is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree at any university. I acknowledge that all sources in this thesis have been duly acknowledged.



THIPA T.P

November 2023

DATE

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ABSTRACT

The study analysed the representation of post-apartheid socio-economic and political challenges in the selected South African documentary films; *Miner Shot Down* (2013) and *Dear Mandela* (2011). Its main argument evolves from the view that despite documentary films' growing influence in understanding the relationship between the media and society, its role as an agent of social change is still in its infancy. Little attention has been given to the reality genre as social scientists have overlooked it, as they mainly focus on the traditional media. The films were selected based on their detailed illustrations, which mirror social injustice and challenges faced by societies in post-apartheid South Africa, distinct from the mainstream media that proved their cosy partnership with the state and business. The study adopted a descriptive interpretive design within the qualitative approach to examine the representation of post-colonial challenges faced by South Africans as portrayed in the selected documentary films, which also analysed filmic elements, described socio-economic and political challenges and explored ideological frames used in the documentaries to portray post-apartheid challenges being experienced by South Africans. Data was collected ranging from extensive literature to audio-visual content analysis, which entailed an analysis of the content of films such as language, context, setting and subject themes, and involved slow motions and replays. This instrument was selected based on its appropriateness in the study of documentary films, which consisted of images, conversations, speeches, audio and music and each documentary film was divided into scenes that composed a table of scenes which facilitated thorough analyses of filmic features, visuals and narratives. The analysis revealed that the documentaries are a critical contribution to society's understanding of the unjust practices by corporate companies and government authorities who are expected to jointly work towards uplifting the lives of all citizens in the country. The study also noted that both documentary scripts have succeeded in presenting a critical contemporary reflection of the perpetuation of colonial and apartheid tendencies against human rights, economic equality and social justice among citizens in democratic South Africa. Furthermore, the study appreciates the films' use of symbolism and juxtaposition that highlight Nelson Mandela as a true revolutionary symbol of sacrifice, nation-building, and selfless leadership, which are lacking qualities in today's political space.

Ideologically, this demonstrates a shift of power relations, which both films frame as popular humanistic demands placed on authorities to become responsive to the will of the citizens, particularly the working class and homeless people. Therefore, the study recommends that the producers invest in extensive academic research to delve deeper into understanding how the documentary genre is influenced by multiple-disciplinary contestations and, the application of reconstruction (blended) scripting formats which would help to achieve the composition and cinema verite effectively. Lastly, the critical reflection of contemporary neo-colonial and apartheid tendencies (or ideological) within the current government and corporate sector(s) would benefit from the infusion of some theoretical underpinnings.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

ANC- African National Congress

AMCU- Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union

COSATU- Congress of South African Trade Union

DOP- Director of Photography

eNCA- eNews Channel Africa

HIV/AIDS- Human immunodeficiency virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome.

IMF- International Monetary Fund

KZN- KwaZulu-Natal

NEC- National Executive Council

NUM- National Union of Mineworkers

NW- North-West province

RSA- Republic of South Africa

SABC- South African Broadcasting Corporation

SAFM- South African FM

SAPS- South African Police Service

USA- United States of America

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

Media representations are ways in which everyday events are portrayed to make audiences understand and make sense of the social world around them (Fürsich Harbar, 2018). Essentially, media representations are media constructions of society, influences and persuasions that are reported or portrayed in various forms of media such as print media, television show debates, and different film genres (Nkomo, 2016). Through these constructions, the media expose maladministration, and multiple forms of corruption in governance in order to increase economic efficiency and stability for citizens to prosper (Wasserman, 2013). The Global Shapers Annual Survey (2017) reported highly on issues such as poor quality of education, health, high unemployment rate, refugees, gender gap, inequality, and discrimination, that government officials are failing to address. With such investigative exposures, film as a medium has also featured significantly as a representation system with opportunities to mirror socio-economic and political challenges in different societies.

Traditionally, expressionist genres (fiction-based films) have prominently been known to have the ability to address and mirror social issues (Muswede & Masvopo, 2018). For instance, internationally viewed fiction films such as *Tsotsi* (2005), *Black Panther* (2018) and *Detroit* (2017) have proven their ability to mirror societal issues through their revealing storylines that reflect very strongly on contemporary events. However, over the years, the realist genre (including the documentary film) has become an effective tool for advocacy and lobbying in many contexts. For example, filmmakers use it to frame social problems, broaden awareness and prompt social action from those in authority (Martz-Mayfield & Hallahan, 2009). This is evident where some high-profile international documentary films such as *Fahrenheit 9/11* (2004), *Supersize Me* (2004), *State of Denial* (2003) and *An Inconvenient Truth* (2006) have been used to create awareness, to an extent where in some instances government officials were compelled to enact favourable policies to improve living conditions and social services. Furthermore, to highlight social issues in documentary films, filmmakers often exploit different features that consider film holistic products such as cinematography, sound, aesthetic elements, narratives, and impact factors (Diesner & Rezapour, 2016). As

such, it remains important to examine the relevance of the documentary genre as a medium that mirrors socio-economic and political challenges that affect communities in democratic spaces such as the South African context.

During the apartheid era, politics and the economy were dominated by a minority of white Afrikaners who served as the ruling elite. As a result, the majority of black people received inferior amenities including Bantu education, which limited their economic potential and made them remain within the spheres of the working class (Krantz, 2008). In addition, there was reliance on colonial policies including the use of non-native languages as mediums of instruction, which partly led to serious dropouts and failure to attain meritorious results by the natives at both schooling and university education (Ouane & Glanz, 2010). This was especially evident in high-order subjects such as commerce, law, business, and other important fields of scientific inquiry. Some scholars have argued that even in democratic South Africa, where the constitution stipulates equality including the use of all eleven official languages, there has been no serious effort made to promote equitable access to education or the use of African languages in schools (Ngubane, 2003). This is against the background that a good education and the use of local languages have the potential to reduce levels of illiteracy, the poverty trap that is rooted in most communities, and address the socio-economic inequality prevalent in the country (Mills, Obasanjo, Herbst & Davies, 2017).

The above circumstances and struggles for emancipation have been depicted in films such as *Cry Freedom* (1987), *Mapantsula* (1987), *Sarafina* (1992) and *District-9* (2009), whose cinematic expressions were used to represent national aspirations and reflect on the political confrontations associated with the apartheid era, which society need to be reminded about, lest they forget their illustrious history. These have served as both critical repositories and criticisms of history that invite South Africans of all races to re-think the impact of pre-democratic laws and juridical residues that continue to separate different classes of people to date (Wagner, 2015). Therefore, it is important to examine the cinematic expression in the selected documentary films to examine how they represent the post-apartheid socio-economic and political challenges in South Africa.

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Through preliminary research, the researcher noted that not much has been investigated on how the documentary film can mirror and act as a mediator of social issues affecting South Africans. For instance, some scholars have noted that limited investigation has been conducted in this area of study, mostly focusing on the social impact. Karlina and Johnson (2011) have noted that the documentary film has been studied broadly as entertainment, as narrative, and as a cultural event. However, the study of film as an agent of social change is still in its infancy. Over the years, traditional media have been known for their powerful role as a watchdog that exposes power abuses and that gives voice to the voiceless. However, Schutte (2015) notes a biased manner and manipulation of evidence by mainstream media (ENCA and SABC) on the coverage of the Marikana Massacre, proving their cosy partnership with the state and business. This is supported by Duncan (2013), who states that there is a set of journalistic rituals in commodified newsrooms; ones that do little to give voice and much less agency to the most powerless in society. Hence, it was important to investigate ways in which the documentary film can offer relief from this kind of sloppiness and lack of context, and its ways of representing socioeconomic and political challenges.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to examine the representation of post-apartheid socio-economic and political challenges in post-apartheid South Africa through analyses of selected documentary films. It thrives on the aim as the main goal of the study whereas the objectives and its research questions serve as the practical activities with which the purpose of the study is achieved.

1.3.1 Aim of the study

The aim of this is to analyse the representation of post-apartheid socio-economic and political challenges in the selected South African documentary films.

1.3.2 Objectives of the study

The objectives were to;

- a. assess the filmic elements exploited by producers of selected films to highlight the socio-economic and political challenges in post-apartheid South Africa;
- b. establish themes in the selected documentary films that depict socio-economic and political challenges in democratic South Africa;
- c. interrogate the application of symbolism in the portrayal of socio-economic and political challenges in the selected documentary films; and
- d. recommend scripting formats that benefit filmmakers' critique of post-apartheid problems.

1.3.3 Research questions

- a. What filmic elements do producers exploit in the selected films to highlight the socio-economic and political challenges in post-apartheid South Africa?
- b. What are the themes that exist in the selected documentary films that depict socio-economic and political challenges in democratic South Africa?
- c. How is symbolism applied in the portrayal of socio-economic and political challenges in the selected documentary films?
- d. What are the scripting formats can benefit filmmakers' critique of post-apartheid problems?

1.4 ROLE OF THEORY IN THE STUDY

Theories in film communicate the value of cinema and provide the conceptual framework to understand the relationship between film, reality, and audiences. Many film theories are relevant and applicable to media studies such as realism, semiotics, and auteur theory. However, in this study, the researcher selected two theories namely, ideological film criticism and framing theory based on their conceptual assumptions which are useful to film criticism, particularly in a transitional democracy like South Africa. The theories are deemed appropriate to the study as they assisted

in analysing how post-apartheid challenges are represented or portrayed in the selected documentary films.

1.4.1 Ideological film criticism

While the study of ideology assists in protecting certain individuals, majority goals and ideals sections of society especially the elite, this process is essential in understanding the role of class dynamics. In media studies, this makes every film a political mouthpiece since it incorporates the ideology that produces it. Filmmakers control film production, which means that they control the beliefs and mindsets of film audiences (Fourie, 2007). For decades, South African film production was dominated by the apartheid system and its ideology underlying the practices of apartheid was also prevalent in the film industry. For instance, in South Africa, several studies confirmed the influence of the apartheid regime as an ideology in South African film and how it determined film content (McQuail, 2010). Devereux (2014) stated that film can be viewed as an ideological construction, as it is informed by film text, which invites the audience to present a specific reaction. In the context of democracy, the South African ideology is characterised by its engagement with active citizens, the practice of majority rule, and media freedom as part of the natural order.

The film industry, in South Africa has long been dominated by the themes and ideologies of apartheid. Lemon (1991) suggests that films are created based on the background, experiences and knowledge of both the creators and the subjects within an ideological context. Our culture, experiences and knowledge shape our perspectives on life, reality and humanity which are inevitably influenced by beliefs and orientations. As a result, each film can be seen as a creation. For example, in South Africa, several studies have explored how apartheid impacted cinema and how it shaped the content and style of films. Therefore, analysing films from a standpoint aims to examine the connection, between a film, its society and the dominant ideology of that society to determine whether it aligns with or challenges prevailing beliefs (Stromgren & Norden 1984; Fourie 2007). One common critique of film theory is its bias and subjectivity. Film criticism often diminishes the technical aspects of filmmaking.

In order to analyse ideology, film critics need to start by understanding what ideology means. Generally, an ideology is a collection of beliefs that express the aspirations and objectives of a person, a group, a class, or a culture (Lemon, 1991). The phrase is commonly linked to political parties and their platforms, but it can also refer to a certain set of values that permeate all human endeavours, including the creation of films (Hefner, 2012). To put it another way, ideology especially when applied to film is best understood as presumptions that are thought of as a lens through which to view the world or, more simply put, as a "broad vision.". In order to persuade others to adopt the ideas of the dominant group, abstract thought regulations are used to present a potential transformation in society, which challenges preexisting conformity (Lu, 2020).

Usually, ideology is not something alien to the intended audience; rather, it's a film's style that has an odd ability to force itself on viewers. The shared ideology between the audience and the film facilitates the transfer of particular meanings between the two mediums (a transfer that is not one-way). Ideological beliefs and ideas dissociate themselves from the audiences' own sense of self. They are rarely observed because they are typically found at an unconscious altitude (Stromgren and Norden, 1984). It is important to comprehend how an individual responds and interprets information at the level of unconscious thought, even though it can occasionally be difficult to grasp how the personal riddle of ideological-ness functions. In light of the documentary's portrayal of South Africa's political and socio-economic issues, it is therefore also beneficial to investigate the ideological beliefs and viewpoints of other people. This matters because when society comes across the ideological questions that are brought up by watching films, it sometimes engages in ideological film criticism. Films in this genre of documentaries, for example, are not just watched, thrown away, and forgotten works of art; they also carry moral and ideological significance. Be it racism, violence, or the encouragement of shallow emotional lives, they nevertheless have a psychological and cultural impact. Ethical critique, then, evaluates the moral and ideological lessons the film imparts (Maedza, 2018), which explains the focus of the research.

In the context of this study, ideology goes beyond being a sociology of ideas. It aims to showcase how ideas are connected to material conditions by concealing or

distorting them shifting them into terms falsely resolving conflicts and contradictions and presenting these situations as natural and unchangeable. In essence, ideas are a force rather, than just reflections of the world they exist in (Dalton, 2010). When critiquing the influence of ideology on emotions experienced by spectators it is important to consider not only instances of emotional responses but also the overall trajectory of emotions evoked by a film. A film might intentionally evoke feelings (such, as envy, jealousy and greed) in order to highlight conflicts. Therefore, while ideological criticism may initially focus on individual spectator emotions it must subsequently evaluate those emotions within the context (Solomon, 2018). Subsequently, it is appropriate for a study of this nature, which focuses on the ideological representation of post-apartheid challenges in South Africa to adopt this theoretical proposition in its analysis of the selected documentary films.

1.5.2 Framing theory

Framing refers to the process of selecting and highlighting elements of reality in order to define a problem diagnose its causes suggest judgments and propose suitable solutions and actions (Entman, 2007). This theory helps viewers understand the message by reinforcing the relevance and interconnectedness of the covered topics thereby keeping their attention engaged. Framing allows the media to decide to report about a topic, group or institution in a certain way (Kamalipour, 2010). The media text or visual messages are constructed with the use of their own resources; hence they are produced to suit their own perspectives. Fourie (2007) noted that there have been many complaints by people that media reports have framed them negatively. Moreover, scholars have shown that media framing can have an effect on the way audiences interpret an issue or event (McQuail, 2010). However, framing is important in film studies because film portrayals guide the audience's interpretation and influence the formation of new opinions. Therefore, filmmakers can frame social problems in a particular way to advance preferred solutions and rely on story-telling devices identified in the claim-making literature (Martz-Mayfield & Hallahan, 2009).

The framing theory emphasises how representation is covered by the media, the treatment, construction, and the production of issues. Framing best describes the influence the media has on public opinion when media practitioners report on issues focusing on the interpretive, ideological and contextualisation of news reports and

visual productions (Khan, 2017). For this reason, framing theory suggests how something is presented to the audience which influences people's choice of how to process that information. Thus, frames are abstractions that work to structure the meaning of a message (Arowolo, 2017). Ardèvol-Abreu (2015) considers any communicative text either informative or persuasive to require narrative structures to conduct its discourse because media content and news stories are systematised, regarding the narrative conventions that explain who is doing what and with what purpose.

Therefore, framing is present in the minds of reporters and producers who produce the script and the news reports as well as in the news reports and scripts they compose. These compositions reach the readers and viewers through a decoding process that is necessary to understand the coded products and the reality to which they refer to. Media content is like a window whose frame restricts how different realities can be perceived and how much of each reality can be focused on, according to Rashid (2019). These procedures lead to the perception of reality through media content, where certain aspects typically stand out more than others. According to Ardèvol-Abreu (2015), media messages are thus textual and visual structures constructed from a particular viewpoint, centred around a central axis of thought, and given an interpretive framework by media professionals to the audiences who are exposed to the messages.

The study views framing as a process in which some aspects of reality are selected and given greater emphasis or importance so that a particular reality is defined, for its causes to be diagnosed, moral judgments suggested, and appropriate solutions and actions then proposed (Kamalipour, 2010). Thus, due to the associated characteristics of framing, audiences are presented with an invitation or incentive to read a story in a certain way. This invitation is often overlooked, because framing is part of a particular culture, thereby making the construction process to be hidden. This does not therefore mean that there is only one way to explain reality. On the contrary, some scholars have noted that there are in any given culture more frames than those selected to represent reality in a narrated story (Kamalipour, 2010). Hence in the media in general, people often hear of organisations or groups that complain of negative reporting and how that negative reporting has influenced a particular outcome, for example, a court ruling. The way that a specific court case may have been handled or reported by the

media may have implications on how the ruling may turn out (Khan, 2017). Fundamentally, media content can be conceptualised as a window or frame to limit the perception of reality by obscuring the perception of different realities and focusing on a specific angle. As a result of these unpredictable processes, some aspects of the reality perceived will be more prominent than others (Ardèvol-Abreu, 2015).

These aspects make framing theory to be of important in this study as it does not only include how the visual media represents an issue but also an investigation of those who have access to that media and who use such access to influence that visual media. Therefore, the theory is essential in examining how the selected documentaries use frames in film production to represent the post-apartheid challenges in South Africa.

1.5 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

1.5.1 Media Representation

Generally, representation consists of images, words, and sounds that are used to depict the reality of the world. This representation also includes recurring themes, specific perspectives, stereotypes and categories of ideas, events and people (Talbot, 2007). The representations are constitutive of culture, meaning and knowledge about ourselves and the world around us. Beyond just mirroring reality, representations in the media such as in film, television, photography, and print journalism create reality and normalise specific worldviews or ideologies (Fursich, 2010). As such, representation in documentary films covers recordings of the atrocities and identifying important aspects of the nation-building project. As a vehicle for creative and intellectual expression, documentary film has the potential to advance many of the principles enshrined by nations. Specifically, an acknowledgement of the past injustices, the conviction that the nation belongs to all races and, the importance of healing from the past to establish the foundation for a united nation. Documentary film is also a site for reclaiming and re-visioning history, as well as exploring the challenges of reconciling and rebuilding the nation (Nichols, 2010).

1.5.2 post-apartheid era

The post-apartheid era refers to the time when apartheid came to an end a new democratic government took over and South Africa reengaged with the international community after years of isolation. During this era South Africa aimed to move into the century by focusing on key objectives; fostering a competitive economy that generates enough jobs, for all job seekers reducing income and opportunity disparities in favour of the less fortunate ensuring access to quality healthcare, education and other essential services for everyone and creating a secure environment where both homes and workplaces thrive (Department of Finance 1996;1). In contrast, pre-democratic South Africa faced socio-challenges that were caused by racial segregation, inequality and divisive developmental policies. Apartheid stood out as one of the forms of institutionalized racism ever witnessed and widely condemned (Beresford 2010). Throughout this period South Africa experienced the implementation of a system that continues to evoke strong emotions, among those who lived through the dark days of apartheid (Petersen 2002).

Botha (2012) stated that films made during the apartheid era both challenged and propagandised in favour of apartheid, but films would also play an important role in post-apartheid South Africa as the nation sought to rebuild itself. These were seen in films such as *Sarafina* (1992) and *Mapantsula* (1987) whose narratives exposed the brutalities and harshness that South African natives endured during the pre-democratic era. These anti-apartheid films provided a powerful, creative outlet for the grievances of those frustrated by apartheid's harsh policies (Botha, 2012). However, after the end of apartheid, the South African government introduced a number of policies aimed at redressing the social, racial and economic inequalities that were perpetuated by the previous regime. These policies were intended to address the legacy of apartheid and create a more just and equitable society.

1.5.3 Socio-economic challenges

Socio-economic challenges result from certain aspects of society and the economy, and they have a negative influence on both communities and businesses. In most nations including South Africa, contemporary socio-economic issues include HIV/AIDS, inequality, poverty, crime and unemployment (Pillay, 2001). Moreover, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) describes problems affecting national economies

and citizens' quality of life as the weakest economic growth rate in Africa. For instance, governmental bodies have done little to counter farming product shortages, high pricing practices on agricultural produce, health issues and lack of quality education (World Bank, 2016). The strife over scarce resources has led to secessionist strikes and xenophobic attacks with large numbers of the African population being attacked and decimated (Makhudu, 2017). This has led to increases in unemployment levels, especially amongst the youth, service delivery protests and xenophobic attacks which are considered the government's failure to oversee important issues faced by South Africans (Choane, Shulika & Mthombeni, 2011). In an attempt to cut public spending, South African local governments were forced into financial self-sufficiency and were expected to extend services like water, electricity and sanitation (Makhudu, 2017). These problems make secured consent of the prevailing socio-economic order unsustainable.

1.5.4 Politics

Politics is the existence of rival opinions, different wants, competing needs and opposing interests that guarantee disagreement about the rules under which people live. The heart of politics is often portrayed as a process of conflict resolution, in which rival views or competing interests are reconciled with one another (Leftwich, 2004). Politics is practised in parliament, legislative chambers, and government departments and only engages a limited and specific group of people, mainly politicians, civil servants and activists. During the apartheid era, politics and economy were dominated by a minority of white Afrikaners. This political system created separatist states that kept the black majority divided based on language or ethnicity which included educational inequalities. This saw most black people receiving inferior education that would limit their economic potential, thereby making them to remain within the spheres of the working class (Ocampo, 2004). However, with the 1994 democratic elections, the system saw the transition of political economy that promised better lives and equal opportunities for all.

1.5.5 Documentary genre

Documentary films state actual situations or events and honour known facts and they do not introduce new, unverifiable ones. They speak directly about the historical world rather than allegorically in fictional narratives (Nicholas, 2010). The documentary film

speaks about situations and events involving real people (social actors) who present themselves to us as themselves in stories that convey a plausible proposal about, or perspective on their lives' situations, and events portrayed (ibid). The film educates and explains consequently facilitating a shift of perspective. By challenging the status quo and creating a definitive alteration in perception when circumstances and information prove the former viewpoint or worldview is no longer valid. Documentaries that are related to causes can be part of this process. As cause-related documentaries hold the potential to provoke action and evoke an emotional response (Faulcon, 2012).

In this study, social issue documentary films were found to be relevant as they are rarely among the first tools deployed in discussions of issues: the process begins with interpersonal communication among people directly affected by a problem, and who eventually become the issue's primary advocates (Martz-Mayfield & Hallahan, 2009). Unlike documentary films, group events (meetings, speeches or rallies), social media and traditional media (newspapers, magazines, radio and television) are often the first to push an issue onto the public discussion and public agenda. Social issue documentary films can also have a strong influence as media agenda-setters because films provide dramatic "news pegs" for journalists seeking either to sustain or generate new coverage of an issue (Lindenfeld, 2010). For instance, the media coverage of the HIV /AIDS epidemic in conjunction with the *State of Denial* (2003) documentary film. Furthermore, most documentary filmmakers usually have no direct personal interest in resolving a particular problem but are sympathetic supporters acting as second-order advocates (Martz-Mayfield & Hallahan, 2009). Therefore, social issues documentary filmmakers have become involved because of the range of other concerns starting from artistic satisfaction to professional reputation and awards.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The researcher observed that the documentary film as a representation of social problems lacks scholarly attention. This is supported by Karlina and Johnson (2011), who noted that the study of film as an agent of social change is still in its infancy. Hence, the researcher realised the need to conduct the study to advance knowledge on the documentary film as a representation of post-apartheid challenges faced by communities in South Africa. The study also revealed how documentary films can shed light on issues that might be unknown or are not often thought about concerning the

South African transformation trajectory after 1994. Moreover, the study adds to the existing body of knowledge by analysing the representation of socio-economic and political challenges in post-apartheid South Africa based on the selected documentary films; *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011). It is also envisaged that the study findings will serve as points of reference to future researchers, members of the public, filmmakers, and government officials in their use of the genre in nation-building endeavours.

1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study focused on the representation of post-apartheid socio-economic and political challenges in the selected South African documentary films with specific reference to *Dear Mandela* (2011) and *Miners Shot Down* (2014). The selected documentary films' cinematic production portrays post-apartheid socio-economic and political challenges experienced by a majority of South Africans. Despite the critical context characterised by the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment, and inequality the study is limited to the storylines of *Dear Mandela* (2011) and *Miners Shot Down* (2014) documentary films as artefacts that closely depict South Africans' everyday life struggles in the post-apartheid era.

1.8 STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTERS

This study is divided into six chapters in the following chronological order:

1.8.1 Chapter 1

This chapter introduces the study as it gives a background and motivation for the study. It includes the aim, objectives of the study and the research problem. The chapter highlights the importance of investigating the documentary film genre as a mirror to societal challenges and how it can bring light to societal issues that are often swept under the carpet by some media mainstream. Moreover, this chapter highlights the relevancy of the theoretical framework in this study. The study adopted ideological film criticism and framing theory. The discussion highlights how these theories in film communicate the value of cinema and provide the conceptual framework to understand the relationship between film, reality and audiences and more importantly, their role in the representation of post-apartheid challenges in South Africa. Furthermore, the definition of the key terms in the study is outlined in this chapter, which key terms are fully discussed in chapter two of the study. Lastly, the significance

and scope of the study are presented in the chapter, followed by the summary of the chapter.

1.8.2 Chapter 2

The chapter provides a discussion on the overview of documentary films and their utilities in the representation of societal challenges in different political contexts in Africa and beyond. Subtopics in this chapter briefly provide a global context of the film genre, which narrows down to the African and South African context focusing on social, economic and political issues faced by the populace. In addition, the chapter reviews previous studies by seminary scholars whose works helped the study to identify the academic gaps that this study determined to address.

1.8.3 Chapter 3

The chapter focuses on the theoretical framework of the study, more specifically ideological film theory and framing theory. It provides an understanding of the theories by engaging in scholarly discussions of interpretivism and their contributions to today's society. It highlights the new perspectives on documentary film as a system of representation with opportunities to mirror societal challenges and its cinematic expressions that bring the traumatic memories of apartheid that societies still go through in the democratic era.

1.8.4 Chapter 4

This chapter discusses the methodology used in the study. The study adopted a qualitative research approach and a descriptive interpretive research design. Purposive sampling is discussed in detail with respect to its merits and benefits to this study. The chapter also discusses how references to literature and qualitative audio-visual content analysis were used in data collection and how data was thematically analysed. A brief synopsis of the documentary films being critiqued is given in the chapter. Lastly, quality criteria are outlined to explain how the study ascertained credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability aspects of the trustworthiness of the study findings. The chapter concludes by highlighting how ethical considerations were administered and adhered to throughout this study.

1.8.5 Chapter 5

This chapter focuses on the data analysis and interpretation of the results. The results focused on the analysis of the representation of specific characters, social issues, producer perspectives, use of specific filmic elements, and development of inherent themes and scripting formats in the selected documentary films. Each segment addresses the objectives of the study through the generation of study themes. To generate data, the films were replayed, more areas of significance were written down, sorted into themes, and then relevant themes were constructed and critically analysed. The analysis of the study was performed with reference to ideological film criticism, thereby making the interpretation to be flexible, versatile, and easily adaptable to the existing literature.

1.8.6 Chapter 6

Chapter five presents the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations based on the aim and objectives of the study. The chapter highlights the main findings which culminate towards fulfilling the last objective of the study that serves as the recommendation of the study. The limitations and the significant contributions made by the study are also delineated in this chapter.

1.9 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter presented the Background and motivation of the study, Problem Statement, Objectives and aim of the study, definitions of concepts, the Significance of the study and the scope of the study. The chapter includes the structure of the chapters in the study, which provides an overview of the expectations of each chapter. The following chapter is a literature review that presents an overview of the documentary and representation of socio-economic and political challenges in society in order to gain insight into its utilities, particularly in democratic environments.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW
THE DOCUMENTARY AND REPRESENTATION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND
POLITICAL ISSUES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gave emphasis on reviewing literature from previous and contemporary studies carried out throughout South Africa and the world, which focuses on the representation of socio-economic and political challenges in society. This involves the delineation of the major concepts in the study including proffering a conceptual understanding of the documentary film genre as a unique facet of the broad multimedia fraternity and how it has evolved over the last few decades. To encapsulate the underlying aspects and the role of the documentary in aiding societal discourse in the context of the subject under study, the discussion covers the functions, classifications, forms and major codes as well as conventions of the documentary and its related

subgenres. This is followed by a discussion of scholarly works that address the different production phases involved in documentary films as an important aspect in the analysis and interpretation of their textual composition as popular artefacts. The chapter further discusses symbolism and thematisation as critical components that characterise film criticism in view of their communicative value in society, particularly in post-colonial contexts. The literature reviewed assists the researcher in comparing and contrasting the historical context of the documentary genre as well as how different scholars understand its utilities (Sridhar, 2013). Although the review keeps the researcher from conducting research that has already been done in the specific field of study, it also helps to expand the study's horizons. This supports the assertion made by Fourie (2009) that it guarantees that no duplication of effort occurs and enables the researcher to determine what has already been done in relation to the issue under investigation. Examining the documentary film genre's function as a vehicle that mirrors socio-economic and political challenges affecting South Africans is an imperative call, hence the discussion presented below.

2.2 OVERVIEW OF THE DOCUMENTARY GENRE AND ITS UTILITIES

2.2.1 Conceptual understanding of the documentary

Attempts to understand and precisely define what documentary film is, often pose epistemic challenges to most scholars because of the dynamic and fluid nature of the medium. As some scholars have alluded, there is no single definition for the documentary film, as filmmakers and television producers provide varied perspectives with some maintaining that it is a mere art, a form of education, and/or entertainment (Nichols, 2017). However, some scholars view the documentary film as a transparent window into another world or as a mirror of our own world (Santoso, 2014). Therefore, the point of departure in defining the documentary lies within the realm of non-fiction, and it is easily accepted by the audience because the themes are taken from the problems of their daily life whereby almost everyone has experienced it (Hackley, 2012).

Documentary film is a medium that mostly documents situations of a particular time and place in society. Historically, documentary filmmaking attracted people who were conscious of the wrongdoings happening in societies. Among many other issues, they

shed light on atrocities, epic tales, and horrors, which are crafted in often attractive, sometimes horrifying, and moving ways of cinematography, with images contributing to their ability to entertain (Hackley, 2012). Filmmakers then produce documentaries using elements (framing, voiceovers, music, lighting, and criticism) of dramatic conflict to represent social or political forces in society (Cheng, 2016). These elements assist filmmakers in capturing a version of actuality on screen for the benefit of the audience. Furthermore, like other films, documentaries are important to popular culture because they contain narratives that are capable of rhetorically reframing public attitudes (Schwartz-DuPre, 2007). Therefore, documentary films like fiction films have the ability to address deep-rooted social issues such as unemployment, poverty, discrimination, lack of health and education, HIV/AIDS epidemic, and human rights abuses.

According to Cheng (2016), the documentary film has come to be identifiable as a special kind of picture with a clear social purpose of dealing with people and real events, as opposed to fiction stories of the studio-made picture. As such, the documentary has been accepted as a socially conscious media, sheds light on the struggles and problems that exist today and offers a voice to people who might be silenced (Hackley, 2012). It also offers opinions and specific messages that aim to persuade or influence the audience in various ways inclined to national building. Rabiger (2004) explains that documentary films rely upon observational and participatory evidence using sound and imagery, particularly credible testimonials, witnesses, and action to address societal issues. In so doing, documentary filmmakers go beyond the vital facts and opinions and produce evidence that will make a strong emotional impact on audiences (ibid.). Furthermore, the documentary film was conceived and developed as a systematic instrument of public use in all fields of public instruction and enlightenment to fill the gap left by most fictional films (Lindenfeld, 2010). These films are used in countless ways to mobilise group members, influence government leaders, or mobilise the media to rally around a particular cause.

2.2.2 The historical perspective of the documentary film genre

2.2.2.1 The documentary film genre: An international context

Historically, the word 'documentary' has been attributed to filmmaker John Grierson in the 1920s, who was the founder of the British documentary-film movement and its leader for almost 40 years. He was one of the first to see the potential of motion

pictures to shape people's attitudes toward life and to urge the use of films for educational purposes (Britannica, 2021). In subsequent years, Grierson developed his argument that certain films had documentary value, and that cinema's ultimate potential was in observing life. Grierson's principles of the documentary were that cinema's potential for observing life could be understood as a new art form. For this reason, he defined the documentary for the first time as the 'creative treatment of actuality' (ibid). In their First Principle of the British documentary film movement, Grierson and his colleagues noted that they believed that the cinema's capacity for getting around, for observing and selecting from life itself, can be exploited in a new and vital art form (Stollery, 2017).

Roughly for some two to three decades before Grierson's time, several identifiable genres of documentary film had begun to emerge. These included short reels often lasting only a few minutes, even seconds, including topicals, travelogues, scenic, industrials, sports films, trick films, fantasy films and other films that used fictional reconstruction or staging in a variety of ways (Stollery, 2017). There is no single history of documentary film and non-fiction cinema that existed long before the documentary was coined as a film form in the 1920s (Britannica, 2021). Documentary film history is full of diverse approaches and therefore full of histories. Some histories lie within more mainstream cinematic and televisual traditions or more alternative traditions. While the history of the documentary film comes mostly from Europe or the United States of America (USA), many other countries also have a rich tradition of documentary filmmaking, particularly in recent times (Salazar, 2008). This is important because documentary film history is primarily based on a central principle of films that are extremely limited and conservative.

2.2.2.2 The documentary film genre: An African context

Africa has produced films that both entertain and engage with the realities of the continent at large. Documentary films, as the less-known, less-viewed media content in Africa, are also on the rise, with dedicated film festivals and awards both around the continent and beyond. Global media institutions have equally produced documentaries on the film industries in Africa in an attempt to uncover the nature and dynamics of such popular media and cinematic production (Mano, Knorpp & Agina, 2017). Moreover, in this continent, documentary films were introduced on the shores during

the 1800s by the colonial master in order to support the colonial projects (Bayart, 1993). However, most of the films produced during this era were informed by racism and exotic prejudices associated with colonialism. Jedlowski (2014) further states that the main objectives were to mobilise national support for the colonial enterprises by documenting the successes achieved by the colonial administration. On the other hand, the projects were meant to discipline the colonial subjects by teaching them what position they were allowed to occupy and what behaviour they were supposed to keep within the structure of the colonial state (ibid). Beyond the colonial film archive produced during the same era, the colonial masters also left behind a set of infrastructures (theatre halls, recording studios, mobile cinemas, etc), which successive post-colonial societies inherited. However, the set infrastructures left by colonial masters were internally structured profoundly to influence the emergence of national film industries in some independent countries such as Ghana and Nigeria in the 1960s (Dovey, 2010). Notwithstanding, these facilities were used to impress the natives with the superiority of Western technology and to brainwash them into believing in inferior views of themselves as Africans.

2.2.2.3 The documentary film genre: A South African context

During the apartheid era, the South African film industry mirrored the undemocratic, white supremacist nature of South Africa. Parallel film industries existed in South Africa, one for white South Africans and the other for black South Africans. The films produced for black South Africans reinforced the racist premise upon which apartheid was built and the notion that blacks were inferior and fit only for labour and servitude (Botha, 2012). Meanwhile, a separate film industry existed to produce films that catered solely for white South Africans. Films were produced during the apartheid period that espoused apartheid ideology and the government's policies of separate development for South Africans of different races (Saks, 2010). For instance, a film *Katrina* (1969) portrayed how the apartheid government managed to spread the belief that a person was better off among people of his or her own race, justifying the creation of Bantustans.

Film in general was also an important tool of the anti-apartheid movements and its efforts to protest against apartheid. Before the 1990s, the apartheid government had a strict censorship policy with regard to the South African film industry. Beginning in

the 1970s, however, anti-apartheid filmmakers produced a small number of films that evaded government censorship laws. These provided a powerful, creative outlet for the grievances of those frustrated by apartheid's harsh policies (Botha, 2012). This includes films such as *Last Grave at Dimbaza* (1974), and *Mapantsula* (1987) that provided a strong challenge to the official government. The films portrayed the brutality and harshness of everyday life under the apartheid government for non-white South Africans, thereby inspiring national defiance campaigns countrywide.

Meanwhile, more films were made during the apartheid era which both challenged and propagandised in favour of the apartheid system. However, some of these films would also play an important role in post-apartheid South Africa as the nation sought to rebuild itself (Botha, 2012) and advance the national reconciliation and national development plan. This was within the backdrop of the apartheid government's erstwhile attempts to achieve total control over all aspects of South African society. Subsequent to the determination of the anti-apartheid movement to overthrow the apartheid regime, the political struggle for freedom divided the nation socially, politically, and economically (Saks, 2010). In the mid-1990s, after supporters of apartheid and various facets of the antiapartheid movement had successfully negotiated an end to apartheid and the country's transition to democratic rule, the country embarked on a process of rebuilding and reconciliation (Botha, 2012). As was the case before, the film was one of the most powerful tools to give voice to the voiceless ordinary South Africans in the democratic era and continues to do so to varying levels, hence the study.

2.2.3 Documentary film genres and conventions

Film genres including those of the documentary are distinct forms or recognizable types, categories, classifications, or groups of films that share commonalities, patterns, syntax, filmic techniques, or conventions and are recurrent (Hill, 2008). Genres assist potential viewers in making movie choices by identifying the target audience and highlighting the content of a particular film. Every genre has distinguishing characteristics of its own, such as plot, location, characters, style, leading actors, and inventive devices like stunts or action scenes. The film genre gives directors the ability to appeal to human emotions by utilizing settings and symbols from

other works in the same genre (Pollak, 2008). This subsection covers a discussion on the broad genres within which the selected case of the study has semblance.

2.2.3.1 Broad genres within the documentary

Genres within the documentary have given viewers a way to observe how people's cultures are evolving over time. Certain genres can evolve and change over time as culture changes, reflecting certain aspects of our society's changing nature even though they will still retain the traditions of certain elements. Even though the majority of genres maintain their fundamental conventions, some conventions eventually give way to others (Hill, 2008). There are specific narrative style traits associated with each genre. For instance, the comedy's settings, incidents, and roles result in a scenario where it is customary for no one to be harmed, all genres within the documentary are based on reality. These genres include politics, adventure, sport, health, docu-drama, autobiography etc, which all rely on numerous actuality-based facets that characterise the documentary. This is contrary to the fictitious genre such as comedy, as noted by Hyvarinen (2015), the viewers have to know that no matter how many characters bounce off the walls, scream and writhe under whips of life, life goes on with one really getting hurt.

Like all other film genres, the majority of documentary films consist of a story, plot, setting, and characters that make up the four main components of most documentaries. These divisions group films according to the story components in each one. The audience can basically see blueprints for various film genres provided by the genre categories. But because of the story it tells, every genre is distinct and stands out from the others. Because these elements set an audience's tone expectations, they aid in defining their resolutions, which is crucial for screenwriters and film producers. The following are a few common film genres: science fiction, sports, mystery, romance, action, adventure, comedy, drama, fantasy, horror, musical, and thrillers (Ellis, 2021). Nevertheless, this study focuses on the importance of expository documentary and observational documentary films because of their relevance to the selected entities, namely *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011) documentary films.

a. Expository documentaries

Expository documentary film refers to the basic information that underpins every documentary story: who are the characters, what is the conflict, when is it taking place, why is it worth telling this story, and why are these events happening (Salazar, 2008). Expository documentaries are mostly produced for television and are organised to follow the classic narrative techniques of the exposition. The expository documentary film has a narrator who addresses the viewers in a very direct way, quite often in the form of an authoritative commentary, employing voice-over narration ('the voice of God' technique) (Georgiou (2012). The mode of practice in expository documentaries is mostly to persuade the audience about an opinion or argument and to promote the filmmaker's point of view. There is an emphasis that as a genre, expository documentaries have maintained a high degree of prominence, and it has established itself as a major form in which every filmmaker would dream to produce (Stubbs, 2013). It consistently provokes controversy and widespread public debate about the meaning of our existence, about the limits of dramatic interpretation, and about the power of film to influence popular understanding and to promote national traditions.

Expository documentaries are composed of dramatic feature elements in which the primary plot is based on actual events, or in which an imagined plot unfolds in such a way that the event is central and intrinsic to the story. However, there are still large variations in the types of films that can be considered expository documentary films. Because the genre overlaps with other well-established genres, it is useful to consider the expository documentary film in terms of several subtypes. These include the epic, the biographical film, and the period or topical film that presents conflicting viewpoints to illustrate the complexity of representing the ongoing challenges citizens face (Corrigan & Corrigan, 2014). In view of these aspects, the researcher noted that the study would benefit from making reference to the above elements since most of them equally feature in both documentaries' understudy.

b. Observational documentaries

The main strategies in this mode of representation are to observe life and to reveal it as it is (supposedly); as a kind of window into reality, where the camera and the filmmaker offer a neutral view (unlike the strong argument and point of view in expository modes). Through the adoption of a neutral position or trying to intervene as little as possible in the account or event being filmed, the purposes of the observational

documentary are not to persuade, promote, or express the view of the filmmaker; rather, these films aim to record, observe, preserve, or even reveal a given (often assumed hidden) reality (Nichols, 2017). They assume an objective view where 'actors' do not react to the presence of the camera. The camera angles are usually neutral and set at eye level, and the narrative follows a linear structure.

For observational filmmakers, the camera is a recording device and a kind of peephole into reality. Unlike expository documentaries, observational films do not often rely on a voice-over commentary, and for the most part, they do not include interviews or speaking subjects (Rabiger, 2014). For the purpose of this study, this genre was seen as a complementary feature to the expository documentary, which characterises the two selected films of study.

2.2.3.2 *Common convections of the documentary*

The film aims to comment on the ways in which society is changing, as reflected in the political, economic, and socio-cultural actions of its people, despite its many conventions. Tarancon (2010) suggests that by examining the film's production context and consumption dynamics, as opposed to its technical or filmic expressions, which typically centre on its semiotic composition, this can be accomplished. As certain academics have confirmed, the film has the greatest potential of all the mass media to be the most successful. The documentary film, according to Gledhill's (2003) analysis, centres on recurring themes, codes, conventions, and narratives that address issues that are relevant to both local and global audiences. Below is a discussion of the documentary film conventions that are relevant to this study.

a. Actuality in documentary film

Actuality is raw film footage of real-life events, places and people as opposed to fictional films which use actors, scripted stories, and artificial sets. However, documentaries are not pure actuality films, rather they are actuality with explanation, commentary, and perhaps even dramatisation into what is commonly known as docu-drama (Smith & Rock, 2014). This genre of documentary blends drama and fact, with dramatic stories involving either real persons or actors confronting real issues presented as being true. For some scholars and television producers, the combination

of these two contrasting screen forms, drama and documentary, is a structure in its own right rather than some kind of loose hybrid form (Nichols, 2017).

b. Voice-over

The use of voice-over narration in the documentary has been used in film to help convey greater depth and meaning to the audience. Voice-over narration can be inserted as an active agent that helps to provide greater impact and understanding to the audience in a way that a complex actor's performance or scenery would not. This is the reason behind the film's use of a voice-over to provide the viewer with relevant information through the film's soundtrack. Often this is paired with important visual aids to authenticate the film content. Voice-overs provide film-makers with a range of abilities in storytelling that they otherwise would not have where other genres are involved. According to Nicholas and Price (1998), the real power of a voice-over is its ability to communicate directly with the audience and this is usually the voice of an actor, who plays the invisible controlling role of narrator or storyteller rather than participating in it. In so doing, the voiceover has the role of uncovering or solving the mystery associated with the story unfolding in the documentary. Voiceover is not restricted to one form, but it can also include participants or eyewitnesses in the narrative. In most documentaries, the voice-over often has the role of uncovering or solving a mystery which is often dramatized in the other forms of film genre (Pérez, 2019). Hence, voice-over is also used in the detective fiction film noir genre to record the thoughts of the hero or to recount the story in a flashback. Technically, the voice-over in the selected documentary films is a commentary by the filmmaker, spoken while the camera is filming, or added to the soundtrack during the production. Through this approach, the filmmaker can speak directly to the viewer, offering information, explanations, and opinions about the subject in question. Nonetheless, in most instances, the voice-over does not directly relate to any text that appears on the screen because the narrator does not usually read the text on the screen. Instead, it is the job of the narration to support what is being viewed in the documentary.

c. Interviews

The interview is a common documentary technique. It allows people being filmed to speak directly about events, prompted by the questions asked by the filmmaker. An interview may take place on-screen, or off-screen, on a different set. Interviews in a

documentary give the viewer a sense of realism, that the documentary makers' views are mutually shared by another person or source, and thus make the subject more valid. To achieve this, much detail from what may be a one-hour interview, and clips of only a few minutes are shown in the documentary. In the process of creating a balance in the documentary, interviews on opposing sides of an issue may be shown to give the viewer comprehensive information about the topic (Kalow, 2011).

d. Montage

The montage conveys ideas visually by putting them in a specific order in the film or documentary. Narrative montages involve the planning of a sequence of shots used to indicate changes in time and place within the documentary. Ideational montages link actions with words and are often used in documentaries to convey particular views intended by the producer. Different positioning of shots conveys different ideas to the viewer. For example, a montage containing a negative theme followed by a positive theme may give the viewer the idea that the positive theme is the main theme of the montage. Montages in documentaries are usually linked with words that characters say. This visual representation of the characters' thoughts helps position the viewer in the story and helps the viewer to better understand what the character is saying. This visually presents a progression of ideas on the screen or documentary to assist viewers in following the storyline (Bondebjerg, 2014).

e. Re-enactment

Reconstructions are also often used in most forms of documentaries. They are artificial scenes of an event which has been reconstructed and acted out on film based on information about the event associated with the storyline. Reconstructions generally provide information, and give the viewer a sense of realism, as if the event really happened in front of them live. They often indicate that the footage is not real by using techniques such as blurring, distortion, lighting effects, changes in camera level, and colour enhancement within the footage (Aaltonen & Kortti, 2015). Re-enactment entails an educational activity in which participants attempt to recreate certain aspects of a historical event or period. Nowadays, the re-enactment culture manifests itself within the context of living history, such as through representations with theatrical elements or interactivity in museums, computer and role-playing games, and other historicised performances. Re-enactment is one of the key tropes for contemporary

historical engagement, which demonstrates the complexities of historical empathy and re-inscribes the self in relation to both the past and to a set of tropes associated with a previous event or artefact (de Groot, 2009: 103-145).

2.2.4 Documentary and major utilities in contemporary society

Like any other film, the documentary plays a pivotal role in contributing to the political socialisation of citizens in any society. While most films portray governments negatively, just as public opinion reflects, the reality associated with the documentary makes the coverage be a bit more comprehensive. Just like the relationship most societies have with governments, which could be explained as a love-hate relationship, this complexity extends to film as well, particularly the documentary. Mdege (2018) suggests that film has radically changed the way government institutions operate, political leaders communicate, elections are contested, and how citizen engagement unfolds. This view is supported by Khan (2017) who maintains that films facilitate the dissemination and exchange of political content on platforms and within networks that accommodate interaction and collaboration. Hence, the documentary remains one of the most powerful acceptable tools in democratic systems for representing the voices of the citizenry in the absence of effective formal legislative and judicial provisions.

In the context of the above limitations in some democracies, the film genre, including the documentary holds a strong realistic potential to promote the voices of the poor majority for good democratic governance in service delivery. Khan (2017) emphasises the generally accepted assumption that film has served as a watchdog for democratic principles and ensures that ruling parties deliver on their electioneering promises. The film thus has a greater potential to broaden the understanding of past experiences and foster prospects for nation-building and development in society. For example, the representation of socio-economic and political challenges has the potential to portray the inhumane atrocities that ordinary South Africans experienced in apartheid meanwhile revealing their current daily struggles more than two decades into constitutional democracy.

The documentary was also an important tool of the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa through its efforts to protest against racism. Before the 1990s, the apartheid government had a strict censorship policy with regard to the South African film

industry. Several films were produced during the apartheid period which espoused the apartheid ideology and the government's policies of separate development for South Africans of different races. The apartheid government's attempts to achieve total control over all aspects of South African society and the anti-apartheid movement's determination to overthrow the apartheid regime is evident in most of these films (Sherman, 2015), particularly the documentary genre. There were different types of documentary films during the apartheid era which featured and were characterised by struggle elements including political scenes, plots, objects, use of colour, characters, and music. The focal goal of these documentaries was not merely to provoke a reaction from the audiences but to provide a stimulus to realign their thinking to a new referential place (Nichols, 2001). Hence, their storyline invoked the expectation that the viewers would be transformed in a profound manner and sympathise with the political struggle for freedom in South Africa. These documentaries achieved this by building a consensus around an anti-colonial and ideological framework shaped by audio-visual connections that were intended to influence the target audiences.

2.2.4.1 Documentary film as a crusade for societal revolution

Documentaries occupy an important place in all forms of social contexts as they provide an incentive and platform for change, affirmative action, and meaningful dialogue (Bacha, 2015). For instance, (*Illegal*, 2015) a short Brazilian film by Tarso Araujo and Raphael Erichsen profiles a five-year-old girl (Anny) with a severe form of epilepsy that can only be alleviated by cannabidiol, a derivative of marijuana, which is illegal in Brazil. The film became a powerful tool in the hands of activists and public interest groups who actively canvassed for the use of the drug to treat her. The documentary was made with the intention of influencing policy change, therefore the filmmakers actively sought out the most strategic partners to create the kind of public pressure that would make it legal for families to import cannabidiol. The campaign was a success because of the character-driven documentary film, complemented by a coordinated public education campaign that targeted the right audience (ibid). Hence, the documentary genre inherently qualifies as an agent of change in different parts of the world to address numerous societal challenges.

Documentary films often serve as a critique of the government's policies towards issues like the delivery of social services, the economy, and politics. Therefore, the use of film as a tool for critique reflects the democratic nature of the country and its significant move towards political liberalization (Milstein, 2014). The activism in the films often serves as a call for citizens to mobilize, actively challenge their living conditions, and exercise their democratic right to self-expression and determination. In many instances, this was observed when film producers worked towards identifying and seeking to improve the living conditions of the poor, by documenting the grievances shared by citizens, who resented the country's persistent economic and social inequality. For instance, the *State of Denial* (2003) documentary film highlights how government (especially in the developing world) policies failed to improve the living standards of poor citizens. Therefore, citizens should voice their grievances and organise on their own behalf deriving inspiration from the media (ibid).

Conversely, through television programmes, colonisers made programmes that would promote oppressive values with the aim of demolishing local cultures, traditions, and values of the colonised (Berger, 2012). Their intention was to clandestinely bring about civilization, popular culture, and education to the colonised nations on the basis of the view that there was no culture among those living in the marginalised countries. Hence, in the democratic era and independence in most parts of Africa, filmmakers use different film genres, especially documentaries to set the agenda to positively influence their targeted audiences. To some extent, this has contributed to the development of society, also assisting in the expanded image of social reality. Furthermore, this has seen most socio-political or economic agendas being delivered through film owing to its enormous social interest and buy-in from the audiences (Barrera, 2007). This approach is useful in exposing the maladministration within the government sitting (as in the case of *State of Denial* (2003) and *Dear Mandela* (2011)) as one of the most essential functions of documentary in society.

2.2.4.2 Documentary film as a source of education and information archive

Documentary films have a key role to play in how we see the world, educate, and develop empathy with the lived experiences of others (Marfo, 2007). It is a genre that has significantly developed and grown over the past 100 years. While its position in popular culture is undoubtedly cemented, it is only in the last decade that the

possibilities inherent in documentary filmmaking have been acknowledged as a way to generate and disseminate knowledge in the academic space (Morgan et al., 2019). For this reason, it seems intuitive (particularly in a society drawn in by visual representations) that the documentary would be an attractive way to gather and produce legitimate forms of knowledge (Nichols, 2017).

Documentary films are persuasive in the sense that they provide audiences with access to the stories and lived experiences of other individuals. When trust and rapport are truly established between the filmmaker and the subject, the result can be one that is authentic, genuine, and truly enlightening. This storytelling tradition and the rich insights it provides can be translated into the research sphere, being mindful to ensure that quality in research paradigms is foregrounded (Fitzgerald & Lowe, 2020). *Lioness (2008)*, and *State of Fear (2005)* are some examples of how documentary films not only provide trusted information about thorny societal issues, but they also tell stories that frame and give human meaning to these issues and provide language for debate across boundaries of difference (Abrash, 2009).

Documentary films qualify to be among the most prominent and effective tools employed to preserve historic political and cultural data. The genre has yielded differential effects in shaping perceptions, policies, and socio-cultural dynamics in modern society (Dorland, 2017). For instance, films such as *Everything Must Fall (2018)* look into the unwavering *#FeesMustFall* student protest movement that burst onto the South African political landscape in 2015 over the cost of education and university access. The story is told by four student leaders at Wits University and their Vice-Chancellor, Adam Habib, a former anti-apartheid student activist. As such, political and cultural heritage preservation remains one of the most crucial and yet contentious dynamics in educational, socio-cultural, and political spheres. This postulates that documentation of past realities should be treated with sensitivity without compromising the facts associated with the events as the record has prospective value to inspire generations into a particular political direction. This feature makes the documentary to be a critical aspect of the arts as it complements other forms of non-fiction materials in the human archive.

2.3 PRODUCTION OF THE DOCUMENTARY AND AESTHETICS

2.3.1 Brief description of the stages of production

Traditional films are a combination of images which some scholars call frames, which combine three powerful elements, namely image, story, and sound to give context and meaning to the story being told. Fourie (2009) notes that films are packaged in different ways using a particular approach to present different issues. Despite their multiple variations, these works of art are inspired, imaginative, expressive, formally significant, and creative, but may be defective, technically, morally, and socially (Guerrero, 2012). The production of a documentary film includes three stages which are namely, pre-production, production and post-production as explained below.

2.3.1.1 Pre-production

The making of the documentary as a film begins with the formation of a production team to facilitate an interface between each stage run by a specific division. Each division includes the producer, director, scriptwriter, storyboard, make-up artist, editor, cameraman, actor, and gaffer. Mulyanta and Leong in Ruhyana (2016) explain the steps taken in planning for production including the preparation of concepts and designs, making flow diagrams, directory management, and material collection. Pre-production is the stage of planning and preparation for production. According to Ruhyana (2016), there are several preproduction steps in the production concept including ideation, synopsis, scenarios, time schedules, scripts, budgets, storyboards, casts and crews, locations, properties, and settings. Each work can be carried out by a production team that has been divided into tasks, including the writer as the storyboard maker. In the context of this study and in addition to all the above elements, there is a need for theoretical conceptualisation based on the philosophy behind the film in the pre-production process. Hence, the study has chosen to refer to framing and ideological film criticism.

2.3.1.2 Production

According to Fourie (2002), the production stage follows the pre-production stage, which allows the cast and crew to meet on set as rehearsals (distribution and preparations of the members' duties) commence. After all rehearsals are completed, the actual shooting commences. The documentary film production stage is led by a

director, the person who is in charge of the proceedings during the filming process. The people involved in the shooting include cameramen, makeup and costume organizers, and clappers. Cameramen are in-charge of taking pictures, adjusting the light, and colour. The cameraman must be proficient in camera mastery and lighting, so that the resulting image quality will be satisfying. However, if the camera aids are inadequate, this may cause the results of the recording to be less stable and shoddy because the production is the process that mostly determines the success of the creation of a film product. The shooting process is led by a director, the person who is mostly responsible for the production process. People who take part in this process include the Director of Photography (DOP) who regulates light, colour, and records images. Additional artistic aspects regulate inter alia the set, make-up, wardrobe and sound. Production activities are carried out within the chosen environment as prescribed and in alignment with the chosen theme.

2.3.1.3 Post-production

After the shooting stage is completed, the next stage is the post-production, where video editing of the footage is done. Video editing is done to obtain a complete and interesting video for the audience to enjoy viewing and is done with reference to the script that was submitted during the pre-production stage. Some of the activities carried out in the video processing or editing process include the arrangement of the film content, making of the cinematic look, adding music, editing the narrator's voice, providing transitions, and adding inserts (Ruhjana, 2016). Film editing in terms of its activities can be divided into 3 aspects, namely the technique, skills, and art (Dancyger, 2011). The technique is used to tell a story by introducing film footage, organising shots by scenes and takes and putting together every piece to generate a thought-provoking story. The skill and art are to be able to work with other, time management, have editing knowledge and being able to cut and assemble finished film and complete the director's vision. In terms of material quality, every footage that will be done in the editing process has several requirements that must be met, namely technical, aesthetic, and narrative elements (Ranangsari & Fuquan, 2020). Aesthetic elements also need to be considered by combining the composition of the scene, the player's movement with the camera, lighting, costumes, setting the location of the scene and property (Sugihartono & Wibawa, 2019). Provision of image effects is done to give the impression of a flashback in instances that need this technique. The final

element that needs to be considered is the narrative, where recording a scene requires an understanding of the ability to tell a story through visual storytelling so that it can be conveyed to the audience. After the film editing process is completed, the team then continues to the rendering process. Rendering is the process of changing a project file into a file that can be run on other media. The film produced should be shown at the film festivals and other media outlets.

2.3.2 Scripting for the documentary and associate footholds

Writing the script for a documentary film can be problematic for amateurs, particularly that which carries complex themes such as those related to socio-economic and political challenges in society. However, some filmmakers believe that it is not impossible because one may not know beforehand what the task at hand may come with after the brainstorming exercise. However, most of the work involves the initial attempt to produce a written script, which is often required to obtain financing for the documentary project. A documentary script can be considered to be the hypothesis about the reality that the filmmaker will encounter via the process of filmmaking (Aaltonen, 2017). The documentary filmmaking process itself, including scriptwriting, is a continuous interpretation of reality, not an interpretation of the script.

2.3.2.1 Setting in the script

The setting is a concept that entails the time and place (or when and where) of the story which is the currency of the documentary. It is a literary element of literature used in films and usually introduced during the expository beginning of the story, along with the characters. In Pollak's (2008) view, the setting may also include the environment of the story, which can be made up of the physical location, climate, weather, or social and cultural surroundings. There are various ways in which time and place can indicate the setting of a documentary. Lacey (2005) emphasises that time can cover many areas, such as the character's time of life, the time of day, time of the year and time period such as the past, present, or the future. Place also covers a lot of areas, such as a particular building, room in a building, country, city, beach, mode of transport such as a car, bus, boat or indoors. The setting of a story can change throughout the plot include social, economic or political contexts. The environment includes geographical location such as a beach or mountains, the climate and weather, and the social or cultural aspects such as a school, theatre, meeting or club.

Setting gives context to the characters' actions in a story line. It can also create the mood (how the reader or viewer feels). It is easier to understand why the characters in the story are doing what they are doing when we know where they are in terms of the location or setting. The time of day, time of year, and ages of the characters will also affect how they act and what they say (Lacey, 2005). All forms of documentary scripts have some form of setting including backdrop settings, which come with age range of the characters, and a location either indoors or outside. This is important because without a setting, readers and viewers cannot follow a story plot of any film.

Setting is an important literary device that is often taken for granted or easily misunderstood by most untrained, an element which causes film reading challenges for some audiences. Creating clear depictions of time and place in a story creates mood and moves the story along. Therefore, without a setting, the plot line would be confusing and boring to the viewers (Pollak, 2008). This is highlighted below in three Cs: character, conflict, and change.

2.3.2.2 Character

Characters give a human face to any story in the media fraternity. Therefore, where unlikely characters are put together, or where a character is at odds with his environment is usually a good source of controversy. The depth or superficiality of characters and the exploration, or not, of the character's inner world contribute to the tone of any film (Buckland, 2009) because they experience the story for the audience who are watching the film. Even if the subject of the film does not involve people, most films will show characters within the subject to 'humanise' the film and make it more accessible (Das, 2006). This is also the reason for the scriptwriter to study characterisation and true character carefully and represent both in the character's actions in the film. The more the audience knows about a person in the film, the closer they feel to that person. This empathy is important to create in film production because, through it, the audience can get emotionally involved in the film and be affected by it in the process. With characterisation, viewers begin to 'root' for a character they empathize with because they have unconsciously put themselves in the character's place and are imagining having the same experiences. This audience-character bond will have the audience identifying with the character throughout the film, especially in

a documentary, where they realize that the character is real and so are the events (Plantinga, 2018).

The importance of the antagonist is constant throughout genres, but the nature of the antagonist depends on the level of realism within genres. Where the presentation of the main character exclusive of realism is heroic (the Adventure film of the Western), the antagonist becomes more evil, more powerful, and sometimes more than human. When the genre is nightmarish the antagonist is equally extreme (Forrest & Johnson, 2020). Only in the realistic genres (war films, melodrama, gangster films) does the antagonist take on more human rather than superhuman qualities. In these genres, the goal of the main character is more understandable and more realistic; consequently, the antagonist, although still important, takes on a more human dimension. The use of the protagonist and antagonist highlights the battle between the political elite and the poor black majority in South Africa. The juxtaposition is appreciated for its ability to expose the remnants of the apartheid government, thereby raising complex and difficult issues in the film understudy.

2.3.2.1 Conflict

Conflict is one of the most important aspects of a documentary film. To put it simply, conflict is to film what sound is to music. Without it, all the elements of a film are useless because there is no reason for them to move forward. When the main character/s step into the inciting incident, they enter a world governed by conflict and when the conflict ends, the film ends (Sanders, 2016).

In the documentary film, particularly the political genre, the scriptwriter should study the various conflicts facing the story's real-life characters and portray them in the film. The character must be followed as they try to overcome their 'opponents' in the story. There are generally two types of conflict that characters in a film should face, which are the outer conflict and the inner conflict. In the first instance, the character must face antagonism outside of themselves from the world around them. This could be from other people, objects, organisations, or the environment. In the second instance, the characters face conflict inside of themselves. This may include their psyche, weaknesses, fears, dark sides etc., which involves the inner world of the characters' minds. Many films have a combination of both types of conflict because, as with real life, one rarely occurs with the exclusion of the other (Millard, 2014).

2.3.2.4 Change

Regardless of the type of script, change must occur in a film in order for it to create interest among viewers. In the beginning, the inciting incident introduces a change to the character's life. In the middle, the character must face conflict and, when he does, things change around him, and he changes as well (Aaltonen, 2017). In the end, there has to be evidence of something that must have changed from the beginning of the story and this change should lead to the resolution. The scriptwriter should choose which change to include in the film based on how meaningful the change is, because if it is not meaningful, then it will not generate adequate interest to complete the story (Nicholas & Price, 1998). Naturally, change moves the story forward in all types of films, no matter how small or big it is. Sometimes small changes can happen within the scenes and facilitate a bigger change in the entire storyline. In a documentary, the scriptwriter needs to study all the various changes that take place in a character's journey through conflict and decide how to formulate them into a story that is well-structured and meaningful to the audience (ibid).

2.3.2.5 Visual scripting

Perez (2019) defines visual scripting as the coordination of words with pictures in sequence. There are various aspects of visual scripting, but the common ones involve features of advocacy films that are deliberately designed to address the grievances being advocated against by the film producers (Evans, 2019). The design and execution of scripts determine and are aligned explicitly to the genre or intention of the feature film intended by the scriptwriter or film producers. It is against this background that the production and scripting of films which were aimed at challenging colonialism and segregation required specifically scripted features which targeted education, indoctrinating, and motivating certain groups to confront the injustices of the day (Misek, 2010).

Specifics of verbal and non-verbal scripting features such as language, tone, drama, music, confrontations, vulnerability, boldness, and resistance among other nuances are common in films such as *Come Back to Africa* (1959) and *Witness of Apartheid* (1986). This is not only consistent with their primary objective to advocate, inform and revolt but also with documentation of these events as political and cultural heritage of the period (Botha, 2012). These films and others like them are usually compilation of

realities, exposure of colonial malpractices as well as demonstrations of the power of individual and community heroism to challenge the political circumstances that characterised South Africa before democracy (Misek, 2010).

Fundamentally, visual writing does not merely entail blindly incorporating visual elements into a film, rather the scriptwriter needs to keep in mind that film is a visual medium. Unlike a novel, a film script is never 'read' literally by the audience and therefore the scriptwriter should try and incorporate most of the information he needs to give into a visual format (Nash, 2013). The scriptwriter must always try and start with a visual image as a base for the portrayal of any concept and then use other methods of portrayal only when the visual is not possible. This process should be driven by a show of action and movement; visuals that must be kept moving and characters that must be continually active. This is important because audiences react to movement on the screen with interest and respond to static images with boredom because visual pertinence keeps the visuals relevant to the subject and sustains the flow of action (ibid). Subsequently, the scriptwriter must place the character's actions in the visuals within the story and make every choice of action, location, and image relevant to the story and its subject. This also involves emotional pertinence, where upon watching a sequence, the audience takes different aspects or views. This can be achieved by the scriptwriter by emphasizing emotional details or triggers which will provide the desired emotional response from the audience (Aaltonen, 2017). Complementary to this are the moods and Metaphors, which are the scriptwriter's visual tools to control the visual mood and visual metaphors in order to represent the idea that would be otherwise difficult to portray visually (ibid).

2.3.4.6 Writing sound in the documentary

Both new and experienced filmmakers agree that any soundtrack must have aesthetic relevance to the subject, location, and emotion of a particular point in the film. The scriptwriter should make sure that the soundtrack is always in keeping with the narrative and the audience should hear only a seamless extension of what they see. In a documentary, the scriptwriter should try and keep a continuous presence of ambience or natural sound. The ambience volume may be kept low or high depending on the rest of the soundtrack but keeping it constant reminds the viewer that the visuals are set in the real world (Muller, 2010). This is just one more layer that adds to the

feeling of authenticity and credibility that documentaries try and establish to carry their audience along.

Although most documentaries do not rely largely on music, employing musicals is a cinematic form that emphasises full-scale scores or song and dance. Employing song and dance routines in a significant way is usually integrated as part of the film narrative for films that are centred on combining music, dance, song or choreography. Herget (2021) suggests that music however is normally used in the opening and closure of documentary programmes and films and is usually selected to reflect the tone of the film. For example, sober, dramatic, or revolutionary music may depict the unique mood of an event or serve as a commentary to accompany particular incidents.

However, film infused with song and dance remains part of the resistance dimension that captured the weird events of prejudice traceable back to the historic moments of pre-democratic South Africa. The musical film genre in particular plays an important role in the soundscape of films. Muller (2010) suggests that the success factor in the film depends on how the director and composer know exactly when and where to use music. Thus, the musical genre can be one of the most powerful emotional tools at a director's disposal to mobilise sympathy or support for a particular cause in society.

Musical film is a distinct genre which can guide the emotional queues of the audience in a fictional film as much as it can guide the emotions of a non-fiction audience. The most important aspect of this exercise is largely informed by how one selects the appropriate music for the narrative. Cooke (2008) linked human emotions to music and noted how critical it is for a filmmaker to use music in order to help carry the emotional tone that they may not get from the visuals alone (Herget, 2021). The advantage in this genre is that dance can be found in the fluidity and ambiguity of the art form. It can be a form of self-expression, a vessel to send a message, a way of retelling and reliving history, a ritual for worship, a form of celebration, and anything else that can be interpreted anyhow. In the context of African films, Black dance often takes the shape of many meanings and intentions, but is indispensably inclined to reflect the social, cultural, economic, and political environment of the society they represent (Muller, 2010).

2.3.2.7 Writing narration

Narrations in film production are as important as scripts and therefore the scriptwriter needs to remember that their relevance comes closer to that of the visuals. Narration, therefore, is secondary to visuals as part of the overall narrative but does not lead the narrative itself. The narration should say what the visual does not say and should be in tune with the actions taking place at that point in the film. The narration should be as focused, clear-cut, short and as relevant as possible. Information should be given on a need basis only and when the subject has been sufficiently covered, it should stop short of exposition. Good narration is precise and simple and works in tune with the other elements of the film without trying to be grandiose (Aaltonen, 2017). Every genre has a particular narrative style that the audience expects and enjoys. Westerns, for example, tend to be punctuated by gunfights, deployment of weaponry, expertise in horsemanship, and survival skills in what is essentially a rural, primitive wilderness. Violence and violent resolutions to conflict characterise the genre. However, this is not the case with other genres such as melodrama, where relationships, their evolution and their outcomes are central to the film. Unlike in the documentary and other reality genres, tragic outcomes do occur, but the violence is emotional rather than physical (Corrigan & Corrigan, 2014), an aspect that distinguishes fiction from non-fiction genres.

2.3.3 Film aesthetics in documentary production

Like other categories of film, the documentary is produced and put together through a combination of elements, which include plot, suspense, conflict, characterisation, themes, and language. Furthermore, filmmakers use cinematographic techniques to bring out certain thematic issues and express meaning-making messages to the audiences. These tools involve composition, lighting, and camera movement (Mdege, 2018). However, in this study, the researcher identified the filmic elements such as visuals, the story and sound as the main tools used to assess the depiction of socio-economic and political challenges faced by citizens in post-apartheid South Africa. The elements are explained below in detail:

2.3.3.1 Visual elements adopted in the documentary.

The visual elements of the film, or what the audience 'sees' on the screen are the most integral aspects of writing a script (Sabharwal, 2020). The shot, sequence, montage, talking heads, colours textures and lines, make up the visual aspect of the film. These

categories are explained below for the potential filmmakers to understand their importance during script writing.

a. Shot

A documentary, like any film, has limited time in which to convey a multitude of things and to tell a story (Fraser, 2012). As such, all the components within the film must be specific and meaningful so as not to waste precious screen time. A shot can be defined as a single take on an image, and it starts and finishes at a cut-point, which is an editing break in the image. Shots consist of close-ups, extreme close-ups, medium shots, and wide shots, and each shot has an underlying meaning depending on the nature and arrangement of objects and actions within it. Moreover, each shot tends to evoke something about the truth of the situation at hand. Hence, the visual way of communication has evolved through the years and has three basic elements: icon, index, and symbol, which are encompassed in this documentary film. These elements in documentaries are used to give physical resembles and show evidence of the object or the story it is representing.

b. Sequence

A scriptwriter has many choices to make when deciding about the content, treatment, and nature of sequences. Documentary sequences, for the most part, are observational. This means that events are observed as they take place, further indicating that even if the film did not record the event, it would still take place. A sequence is a collection of shots put together that tell a story continuously and the autonomous piece of the larger story of the film (Sabharwal, 2020). As a result, the entire film is made up of a series of sequences, which can be of varying durations, and are connected to each other in some way. In addition, each sequence has a visual and audio aspect that usually falls into one of two categories: first, continuity sequence which is a unit of continuing action that ends in a break in time. This type of sequence is a collection of shots that show an event or events that happened in the same block of time. The shots within this kind of sequence must be functional, and logical and give the illusion of continuity. Second, a compilation sequence is a unit of information or thought and is sometimes called a 'newsreel sequence' (Mdege, 2018). There may be many breaks in time during this kind of sequence because the scope is broad. Therefore, shots within it could be of events that occurred independently. Furthermore, a montage is a sequence of sorts that combines several small shots and weaves them

together to communicate a large amount of information in a short time. The shots are usually not strictly continuous, nor do they need to be compiled according to subject. A montage can create a whole new meaning out of the two original meanings of adjacent shots just by coupling them together in a flowing, musical way (Figuro, 2019).

c. Talking heads

One of the most common features of a documentary is what is technically called talking heads. This includes either interviews of people on camera or people talking directly to the audience on camera or both. Since the documentary is non-fiction, the idea of people talking to the camera, or a filmmaker seated behind the camera is an acceptable storytelling technique. In the documentary, filmmakers often choose to discard narration completely in favour of talking heads, as they come across as more credible and in keeping with the non-fiction nature of the documentary. The speech element of talking heads, or interviews, is an important element of the soundtrack and an effective way to communicate information to the audience (Rabiger, 2014).

d. Elements of line, texture, and colour

These elements carry their weights in a film, counteracting, reinforcing, counterpointing and balancing each other within frames in a complex system. With the advent of multi-coloured films, a whole new visual world has opened to both the audience, who can now see images as they exist in real life, and filmmakers, who can now experiment that much further with the medium. These elements are used extensively by filmmakers, and they can be applied within real environments by documentary filmmakers as well. However, in documentaries there is sometimes little control over the objects and locations to be shot on camera because the scriptwriter can still incorporate them into the story in many ways by suggesting interesting shots and sequences that are pertinent and relevant to the subject matter. This level of detail needs not be attempted for every shot and every sequence within the script as documentaries naturally tend to involve less image control.

e. Sound elements in the documentary film

Sound is not only omnipresent but also omnidirectional and this pervasiveness leads to it being traditionally discounted as an important medium of film. Although it is given

its due attention by most fiction filmmakers and documentaries alike, sound is often not considered enough at the scriptwriting stage (Rogers, 2014). A soundtrack can strengthen script moments and sequences to help the filmmaker realize both space and time in the production. In the documentary, sound can be a vivid counterpart to the visual, adding to the drama and realism of the overall film. It is for this reason that the scriptwriter must always attempt to incorporate sound into the script. The types of sound that make up documentary film include narration, music, ambience sound, sound effects and silence as discussed below:

Sound is a narrative technique which many filmmakers use in telling their stories (Ngong,2020). Narration is the sound-track commentary that sometimes accompanies a visual image in a documentary. It is also often called a 'voice-over' and it can be spoken by one or more off-screen commentators. Voice-over narration has always been a very popular tool in documentaries because it is an easy and effective way to communicate verbal information in the absence of dialogue between actors. Like feature films, documentaries also use music to enhance moments and create moods and cultural flavour in the storyline or narrative. Background music appeals on an emotional level with the audience and increases the level of empathy with the events on screen. Therefore, music is often used to establish a particular geographical location or identify a particular community or culture (Rogers,2014).

The sound that is naturally present in the atmosphere surrounding the visual image and is recorded simultaneously with it is called the ambience sound. Traditionally, this sound was referred to as noise, therefore speech and music were given more attention. Normally, ambience sound is used continuously, along with other types of sound, throughout most of the documentary. Any sound that is not speech, music or ambience and is artificially injected into the soundtrack to enhance it is called a sound effect. This could be a natural sound like a bird chirping to a digitally created or distorted sound like microphone feedback etc. In the old days of film, sound technicians would have to create thousands of effects to put in a film in the absence of ambience sound (Rogers, 2014).

Despite the value of sound in any film, it may sound odd to experience a lack of sound as a type of sound element. However, in the world of film, where everything is deliberate, even silence within the film means that the filmmaker has chosen to put it

there. In documentaries, the scriptwriter can use this technique when s/he wants the audience to home in on the visual to such an extent that it takes them into a kind of suspended or unnatural reality (Rogers, 2014).

f. Story elements in the documentary

A script is not just a compilation of words, but it is a compilation of conceptual elements that tell a story. These elements are woven together with audio-visual elements to create a documentary film in a manner that tells a story. The story and its structure are often what make the difference between a good script and an average one and it is important for any scriptwriter to study them thoroughly (Millard, 2014). Hence, the film story has three broad structural elements: the beginning, the middle, and the end.

The beginning sets the audience up for all the events about to occur in the film. It sets the tone and mood for the film and hints at surprises that lie ahead by raising the right questions in the minds of the audience. In the documentary, the beginning always addresses the issue at hand and introduces the subject to the audience. A good beginning creates an audio-visual hook, establishes the core assertion, creates curiosity among the audience, shows change or the promise of change, and creates the element of consequence. Subsequently, inciting incidents are often a common feature used in the beginning to start a story as a technique used to upset the balance of forces and impel the audience to react (Aaltonen & Kortti, 2015).

The key to a good middle of a film is the structure or organisation. The scriptwriter must ensure that the middle of the film presents a chain of logic designed to prove its core assertion. Each event and action must be pertinent and in keeping with the subject and tone of the film. The issues at hand must be kept in strict focus and events must be arranged in such a way, which ensures that the film keeps moving along and progressing. A good middle consists of good sequences, which also have their own beginnings, middles, and ends (Das, 2007). Within the sequences, the flow of events determines these parameters, noting that there could be many types of sequences within a film, ranging from the dramatic ones that decide the film's direction, to the sequences that lead up to and follow the dramatic ones. The scriptwriter allots a particular message for each sequence and ensure that each one has an impact on its own.

The intention of filmmakers is to ensure that the ending or take-home message of the film is what the audience takes to remain with. This is the primary factor that determines the audience's opinion about the film they have been watching which culminates when the film concludes, usually a reiteration of the core assertion of the film. Each ending has a decided flavour and a particular mood where a resolution may occur in so many ways. Sometimes 'happy endings' have always been popular in feature films as they leave the audience on a 'happy high'. However, in the documentary, the events are not always in a predictable manner because the flavour or mood of the ending is determined by the events of real life and cannot be controlled by the scriptwriter. This is because as the documentary unfolds, some issues may have been left unresolved, while some may have taken a turn for the worse. Hence, the end of a feature film is often called a 'climax', which refers to a situation when the story builds to a last revolution in values from positive to negative or negative to positive, with or without irony, at a maximum charge that is absolute and irreversible (Kalow, 2011). Therefore, the climax is the last leap of the scriptwriter's imagination and should be clear and self-evident, requiring no explanation and playing out in a dramatic rhythm and tempo to imprint an indelible memory of the viewing experience.

2.4 DOCUMENTARY AND SYMBOLISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

This section is discussed in relation to literature that is relevant to the objectives of the study where symbolism is interrogated to reveal the extent to which it enhances film production, particularly the documentary. It discusses symbolism in film, meaning and place in the context of the film genre and how it depicts the transformation discourse in post-apartheid South Africa.

In the South African context symbolism refers to a restorative 'cleansing' of the South African nation of the ills and injustices of the past, thus laying the groundwork for unification and nation-building (Reyneke, 2011). Restoration is also the foundational mode of ubuntu justice. The 'rainbow nation' metaphor informs and reinforces the nation-building vision (Heese, 1993; Maingard, 2003; Ukadike, 1994). Additionally, in cinema or feature films, many elements can be symbolic, and these include objects, colour, character, plot, sound, special effects, camera angle, transition, and much more. Symbolism is often seen as a literary technique; however, it usually features many different ways in film production as discussed below.

2.4.1 The value of symbolism in a film

Traditionally, symbolism has been defined as the process of creating meaning through symbols. The skill of concealing meaning behind something that seems unrelated to the referent is known as symbolism. Freedom is frequently symbolised by a flying bird (Shultziner, 2010) or a color flag, with each stripe denoting a different historical, sociocultural, or political concept to different societies. People encounter certain symbols frequently, and these symbols have conjured up particular meanings based on past sociological encounters. First, it is asserted that people relate to objects based on the significance they hold for them. Since birds are not "bound" to the earth and are able to fly, they are a symbol of freedom in the scenario above where freedom is limited to humans. Significant symbols are those kinds of symbols that are understood by members of a society as having a common meaning (Cowan, 2015). Therefore, the necessity to investigate symbolism stems from its potential to clarify goals that might have been challenging to explicitly depict in any given cinematic setting, including the documentary.

2.4.2 Meaning of symbolism in film production.

Despite the broad nature of symbols, it is important to understand that for a symbol to be meaningful in a film, its content must be related to the film and be relevant in it (Misek, 2010). A symbol must be something not too obscure that viewers or audiences do not get to relate with, conversely it should not be too obvious that it does not leave anything clue to the viewers. A symbol with meaningful content can make the movie's theme or message more powerful, even if it is ugly (Cowan, 2015). If a symbol is executed with mastery in the exact moment and for the right purpose it can add value to the whole movie. Therefore, symbolism reinforces the theme of what is human, and this includes sound, which can also be used as a symbol mainly through the association effect. The moment viewers hear a particular sound/song in a film, it is likely that most of them will remember the film (Misek, 2010). Hence, filmmakers value the use of symbols in film packaging as this expressly enhances their creativity and degree of innovation in the production.

2.4.3 Where to introduce symbols in a film.

Given their ability to visually convey the ideas of the filmmaker, symbols can be used to further develop the plot, theme, and characters in almost all film genres, including

documentaries. This assists filmmakers in giving their narrative a distinctive metaphorical language. Lubbe (2016) states that cinema is a kind of art that conveys our ideas through audio-visual media; therefore, the manner in which these ideas are conveyed is also very significant. In agreement with Maedza (2018), symbolism is the skill of concealing meaning behind seemingly unrelated objects and can be applied to a wide range of topics, including themes of poverty, conflict, freedom, love, and health.

During the struggle for freedom in South Africa, most townships were symbolic in films that were produced during the apartheid era as sites for anti-apartheid resistance as well as pro-apartheid indoctrination (Shultziner, 2010). The films that are widely perceived as restorative, such as the anticolonial wars, young people who participated in these conflicts are represented as brave and heroic or helpless victims of the “unjust wars.” In the early 1990s, a South African production called *Cry Freedom 1987* (portrays apartheid discrimination, corruption and violence against black people). The movie used a young man as a symbol to express the hate and repressive nature of the apartheid government as an important element of analysis of symbolism in film production.

2.4.4 Symbols and elements of success in film production

Every symbol in a film must have a purpose, and the information must be pertinent to the movie in order for the production process to be successful. Many objects can become symbols if viewers understand them to mean something different from their literal meaning because viewers seek meaning in the films they watch (Plantinga, 2018). On the other hand, some symbols are so deeply embedded in the cultural landscape that their meaning is practically universal (Lubbe, 2016). In a film about slavery, the bird symbol would have far greater significance as a representation of freedom. These symbols are known as significant symbols in society in which they are understood to have a common meaning. As a result, over time, symbols with particular meanings have been created through sociological interactions with friends, family, coworkers, and the media. As a result, these interpretations influence how people use the symbols. However, the constructed meaning of the symbol, which when applied will be deemed as either acceptable or unacceptable in that particular society, causes beliefs surrounding the symbol to change according to different societies (Maedza, 2019).

In some South African films such as *Sarafina* and *Egoli*, symbols have played a big part in carrying deep meanings, many of which are still recognisable today. Nonetheless, the symbol and its meaning are typically impacted by shifts in philosophies and values over time (Shultziner, 2010). Thus, symbolism can be used by visual storytellers to symbolize a variety of social themes, such as death, passing into the afterlife, blurred vision, evil and enigmas of the night, and the darkness of the human soul. Thus, some academics have contended that the appropriate symbol can support convictions, provide courage in the face of adversity, or serve as a reminder to viewers to pursue serenity and tranquillity (Misek, 2010).

2.4.5 film as a symbol of resistance in South African struggle.

For many years, the apartheid-era South African film industry was dominated by racist themes that supported the government of the country's white minority (Saks, 2010). As a result, the film was utilized to construct social and political meaning against the backdrop of a cultural minority whose experiences and viewpoints were central to the concerns of both the film's sponsor and communicator, namely the White community. The cultural and personal experiences of the people portrayed in the films reflected the critical imbalances of a racial society, which led to a tendency that placed the film packaging process within the context of colonial subjugation (Muswede and Masvopo, 2018). Moreover, the suppression of cultural practices that were an integral part of the social fabric of native South Africans also compromised self-expression and ingrained routines (Brown, 2004). Film that was infused with song and dance, like the contemporary press, nevertheless, continued to be a component of the resistance dimensions that captured the peculiar instances of prejudice that could be linked to the significant pre-democratic moments in South Africa's history. When protest artefacts like music, poetry, and fine art were deemed unnecessary by the government of the time and considered to be a violation of apartheid laws, political activists and nationalist leaders faced difficult times (Durraini, 2014). Street theatre or gatherings around bonfires in the evenings, for instance, could be readily perceived as "conspiracies to overthrow the government."

2.5 DOCUMENTARY, THEMATIZATION AND FRAMING OF SOCIETAL ISSUES

2.5.1 Thematisation in the documentary

This segment concentrates on the topics found in the majority of documentaries. The term "themes" describes the narrative elements from various genres that are included in documentaries (Feasey, 2013). Because a theme in a movie evokes a common human experience, it serves as a central, unifying concept. The film's plot, dialogue, photography, and music all serve as examples of the theme, even though it is never stated explicitly. The theme offers viewers a universal means of connecting with the film's particular subject matter, which, in the context of this study, may allude to the political and socioeconomic difficulties facing South Africa in the years following apartheid. Strong themes are another factor that helps a movie stay with viewers long after they've seen it for the first time (Mbokazi, 2016). While the audience sees the theme as a component that offers a universal means of engaging with the film's particular subject matter, filmmakers see it as the central idea and a guide during the creative process. Thus, the film's compelling themes, such as socio-economic and political issues capture viewers' attention because of their importance and the context in which they are presented.

2.5.5 The documentary and framing of social issues.

This aspect of the literature review focuses on the socio-political issue documentary because it addresses the fundamental facets of this study which include social transformation issues in post-apartheid South Africa. Although social issue documentary films are rarely among the first tools deployed in discussions of issues, they are characterised by interpersonal communication among the people who are directly affected by a particular problem, who eventually become the issue's primary advocates (Martz-Mayfield & Hallahan, 2009). As a precursor, group events (meetings, speeches, or rallies), social media and traditional media (newspapers, magazines, radio and television) are often the first platforms to put issues onto public discussion and public space. Following this, social issue documentary films become a strong influence as media agenda-setters because films provide dramatic "news pegs" for journalists seeking either to sustain or generate new coverage of a particular issue (Lindenfeld, 2010). For instance, this was evident during the media coverage of the HIV /AIDS epidemic in conjunction with the State of Denial (2003) documentary film.

For this reason, most documentary filmmakers usually have no direct personal interest in resolving a particular problem but are sympathetic supporters acting as second-order advocates (Martz-Mayfield & Hallahan, 2009). Therefore, social issues documentary filmmakers have become involved in public advocacy because of the range of other concerns including their artistic satisfaction and fulfilling their professional mandate as mediators between society and the elite.

During the apartheid era, the media were strictly controlled in favour of the white minority, with censorship particularly noticeable in the press which served as propaganda tools to maintain the status quo (Lloyd, 2013). In response to this, the film frequently served as an insightful tool to expose the realities of the day, and this played a significant role in triggering emotions and frustrations that motivated mass uprisings against the regime. Having been part of the South African political discourse before the advent of democracy (Shultziner, 2010:140), the film remains a dependable medium for bringing back memories and feelings from the apartheid era that might otherwise be lost to time. Considering that these are some of the most well-known films that chronicle the issues that arose after apartheid, the study selected documentaries is important to interrogate the features of post-apartheid governance that continue to bedevil the socio-economic and political sphere after the attainment of freedom.

The aforementioned viewpoint is significant to this study because, as most academics agree, documentaries are no longer primarily viewed as passive media meant for leisure or informal education. Rather, these films are increasingly seen as a component of a greater endeavour to create controversy, influence public opinion, influence legislation, and establish activist networks (Whiteman, 2015; Terry, 2019). In their modern incarnation, movies tell audiences and viewers stories about universal themes like love, hope, death, good versus evil, violence, and peace. These frames have a significant impact on how audiences perceive the outside world. So, Fourie (2009) contends that these movies are presented in various ways with different approaches to attain a specific viewpoint on issues by packaging the films in various ways. Such kind of works are inspired by sociocultural and political contexts infused in imaginative, expressive, and creative technical production skills (Guerrero, 2012).

2.5.3 The documentary and representation of socio-economic issues

In addition to the political aspects discussed above, post-apartheid South Africa has been filled with too many socio-economic and political challenges which are linked to poor service delivery, inequality and generic unemployment. While the apartheid regime was the most brutal and was a mostly disliked form of racism (Beresford, 2010), it created inherent problems for the new order, which continues to persuade transformation challenges. The dual social system that is still evident in South Africa today evokes strong feelings in the hearts of people who experienced the traumatic days of apartheid (Petersen, 2002). Dlamini (2009) regrets that racism in South Africa's post-apartheid era reinforces the racial tendencies that the white minority government used to suppress Black people. This is evident in her analysis of the racial tendencies that the government employed against Black people. Separatist states established by the apartheid regime kept the black majority split along linguistic or ethnic lines, including disparities in educational opportunities. Due to this, a large number of Black people received subpar education, which would have limited their ability to earn a living and forced them to stay in the working class (Ocampo, 2004). But as democracy has grown, a number of laws have been passed to address racial discrimination, inequality, and other issues related to the apartheid state.

Black people's discontent with the racial elitism that perpetuates their systematic exclusion from access to financial, health, and educational resources can be expressed through the film genre, according to Soudien (2012). This study, however, does not focus on the question of whether or not certain film clips misrepresent political history or historical facts in South Africa. To emphasize societal struggles against anomalies like injustices in society, however, Berger (2012) points out that movies frequently attempt to combine fact and fiction, authenticity and narrative thrill in the standard filmic services. The task of producing compromised documentation and preservation of the political and socio-economic experiences of South African society is thus presented by a focus on filmic aesthetics or expressionism.

Following 1994, films in South Africa continued to show the binary conflicts between black and white people, with race serving as the focal point of the nation's division (Soudien, 2012). Moreover, global culture can be explained through cultural products like song, dance, and poetry that are captured in films like *Roots* and convey the

stories of black communities' socioeconomic struggles today. As a result, one could argue that film clips that depict historically oppressed groups' dissent are relevant to current uprisings and protests.

2.5.4 Depiction of politics in documentary.

In most political documentaries, the representation of politics is addressed. Consequently, a film without a supernatural component is a political drama. Besides that, it is based on some actual social events, mostly related to modern history, global politics, or the political ramifications of other social issues and events. A broad term used to describe a variety of related film genres, political thrillers being the most significant. A sociology-political thriller is going to take many more months to complete, according to Pollak (2008), because it will need additional research, expert opinions, and the need to sort out historical contradictions. Filmmakers should also ensure that the lack of political neutrality in the script does not upset the current political climate or make it too difficult for viewers to swallow.

According to Punnett (2018), political films are primarily intended to portray messages about the realities faced by specific groups of people, with the messages dictating how those realities are portrayed. In addition to possibly presenting historical political events in an engaging way, political films have the power to promote critical thought about worldviews. According to Punnett (2018), this could provide information on real-life experiences and facts aimed at sparking curiosity about a topic the general public may have overlooked. This encompasses movies like *Cry Freedom* (1987) when it comes to South Africa, *Sarafina* (1992) and *#Fees Must Fall* (2018). By watching political films, for instance, students studying political science and history can learn more about world conflicts and how they were resolved through watching political films. This is because a visually recorded film is indisputable proof and can therefore impact people's thoughts more powerfully than written or spoken words quickly and efficiently learn about global conflicts and their resolutions (Muswede & Masvopo, 2018).

Political films also have the power to inform and motivate people to take actions that they otherwise would not have been able to take by highlighting marginalized and invisible social identities (Pollak, 2008). Following this, viewers may gain the

inspirational bravery and resolve to alter history by backing a national cause, which has the power to alter lives. More importantly, because of its innovative approach to portraying politics and delivering the message to its intended audience, this description offers the political film an ideological advantage over other genres of cinema (Nicholas and Price, 1998). Political films portrayed apartheid favourably as a normal way of life in pre-democracy South Africa, which was crucial in maintaining its existence.

2.6 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter reviewed literature by presenting an understanding of the documentary film and its historical overview. The chapter presented the functions of the documentary film in society and its classification in relation to the technical practices associated with its production. The chapter also included the production of documentary films, from the pre-production, production, and post-production stages. It further highlights the use of symbolism and discusses some themes associated with documentary films in the context of socio-economic and political challenges in society. The following chapter outlines the theories adopted in the study.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter identifies and discusses the philosophical perspective grounding the study as well as the theories that form the foundation of the study. Social sciences research is based on the underlying philosophical perspectives about how research can be approached so that it can be valid and credible. The section on an appropriate philosophical perspective for any study assists a researcher in further selecting the appropriate research methodology and research methods to collect data and for the creation of knowledge. To conduct the research, it is, therefore, important for the researcher to know these perspectives so that one can choose the appropriate philosophical perspectives to ground the study and also select the relevant methodology to execute practical research. The purpose of this chapter is to present the philosophical perspective/s which guided the researcher to form the theoretical foundations of the study, and these foundations further guided this researcher to select the methodology, research designs, and methods of research underpinning this research.

3.2 PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVE AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

Understanding the philosophical underpinnings of one's research is of critical importance because it directly impacts how the researcher will develop the research methodology (Jansen, 2023). Research philosophy is often used interchangeably with research paradigm, which means the set of beliefs, assumptions and principles that underlie the way a researcher approaches one's research processes or study (ibid). The research philosophy and paradigm also encapsulate the nature of the knowledge that a researcher seeks to obtain and gather by conducting a study. There are several philosophical perspectives in Media Studies research, and these include epistemology, phenomenology, existentialism, constructivism, positivism, interpretivism and others (Du Plooy, 2009; Sekeleni, 2014; Ryan, 2018; Blackwell, 2018; Alharahsheh, 2020, Alharahsheh & Pius, 2019; Jansen, 2023). Research perspective means how a researcher approaches one's study and describes the

worldview of the researcher. For example, one philosophical assumption could be that there is an external reality that exists independent of one's perceptions (i.e., an objective reality), whereas an alternative assumption could be that reality is constructed by the observer (i.e., a subjective reality) (Jansen, 2023). The former philosophical perspective is known as positivism and the latter is referred to as interpretivism (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Goldkuhl, 2012; Alharahsheh & Pius, 2019; Jansen, 2023).

In this study, the researcher opted to select interpretivism as a philosophical perspective because one believes that the reality that is reflected in documentary films can be interpreted from various perspectives by using different personal views and idiosyncrasies. Interpretivism assumes that reality is subjective, multiple and socially constructed (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Goldkuhl, 2012). Interpretivism is based on the view that reality in research can be understood from someone's reality, through their experience of that reality, which may be different from another historical or social perspective. Thus, this researcher believes that interpretivism is the most suitable philosophical perspective to critically analyse the documentaries selected for research purposes in this study and this analysis is based on one's worldview and one's belief systems. Positivism does not accommodate the researcher to conduct this analysis from a subjective standpoint because positivism is a paradigm that relies on measurement and reason, that knowledge is gained from a neutral and measurable (quantifiable) observation of activity, action or reaction (Jansen, 2023). Importantly, interpretivism takes the view that reality is subjective and is constructed by the researcher or analyst who is analysing a particular social construct or media production (such as a documentary), rather than the analyst being independent of the process of analysis, which is what positivism propagates.

An epistemological orientation refers to the philosophical inquiry of knowledge concerned with what constitutes acceptable knowledge in a field of study in which a researcher may identify positivism, constructivism and interpretivism as a paradigm to guide research and provide justification for the methodology used in the inquiry (Sekeleni, 2014). Thus, this researcher identified interpretivism as the paradigm from which to ground one's study. Although the researcher is mindful not to enter the field with preconceived ideas, acknowledges that entering the field with a "tabular rasa" (Glaser & Strauss, 2008) is impossible, as no potential researcher is an empty vessel,

a person with no history or background (Sekeleni, 2014). Moreover, Creswell and Plano Clark (2017) are of the view that no research is value-free because researchers have assumptions about the world and these assumptions influence how researchers' approach and conduct scientific research. Interpretivism grounds research studies aimed at attempting to understand the meanings and interpretations of people of their experiences. Interpretivism further supports qualitative research which employs data collection methods, e.g., interviews, focus groups, and textual analysis, which promote researcher-to-people interaction to establish the meaning of social phenomena, issues and events.

These types of studies and research methods explore social phenomena from an individual subjective perspective. In this study, the researcher chose to analyse the phenomenon called a documentary, which is a media production, based on one's interpretation of what each documentary presented in a digital broadcasting video as these videos are available to watch online. The videos also contain subjective experiences of the persons who speak in the videos. There is also written text of subtitles of conversations in the videos or documentaries which necessitated that the researcher should conduct textual analysis of the text on the television screen from a personal perspective and subjectively. The underlying assumptions and beliefs revolve around the viewpoint that insight be obtained through engaging with the documentary content (i.e., words and onscreen text), and people's conversations within the selected documentaries, as opposed to mainly focussing on numerical data obtainable from the videos. Therefore, this study is grounded on the philosophical perspective that a researcher can collect data by exploring and analysing media content (i.e., documentary content in this study) that has been generated by exploring people's views, however subjective the views might be.

3.2.1 Interpretivism as a philosophical perspective to grounding this study.

The interpretivism philosophical perspective is a research approach that focuses on understanding the subjective meanings and experiences of individuals within their social context (Carter & Fuller, 2015; Alharahsheh & Pius 2019; Pillay, 2019; Rogers, 2020; Nickerson, 2023, 2024). The three basic assumptions of interpretivism (ibid) are the following:

- (a) The admission that the social world cannot be understood from the standpoint of an individual.
- (b) The belief that realities are multiple and socially constructed.
- (c) The acceptance that there is inevitable interaction between the researcher and her or his research participants.

Liddicoat (2020, Drew (2023) and Nickerson (2024), further state that the following are the key takeaways of interpretivism:

- (a) It is an approach to social science that asserts that understanding the beliefs, motivations, and reasoning of individuals in a social setting is essential to decoding the meaning of the data that can be collected around a phenomenon.
- (b) There are numerous interpretivism approaches to fields of study, for example Media Studies, Sociology, etc., three of the most influential being hermeneutics (i.e., the study of meaning), phenomenology (i.e., an approach that concentrates on the study of consciousness and the objects of direct experience) and ethnomethodology (i.e., the study of how social order is produced through social interaction), and symbolic interactionism (i.e., a theoretical perspective that addresses how people create meaning through the symbols and language or texts that they use when communicating with each other).
- (c) Theorists who adopted an interpretivism approach to the study and analysis of Media Studies include Goffman, Bulmer, Weber, Garfinkle, Mead and Husser. The specific arguments of these theorists are not discussed in detail in this Chapter so as not to elongate the Chapter unnecessarily, but it is sufficient to establish that they promote interpretivism in their arguments and writing. Goffman (1974) is also a leading scholar who contributed to the discussions on the framing theory (which is discussed in the latter part of this Chapter) to explain how media content provides interpretations and reflections about the world in specific framed or selective ways (De Vreese, 2005; Bricca, 2022).
- (d) Interpretivists use both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies but believe that there is no one perfect way of gaining knowledge, thus rejecting the idea that there is one methodology that will get to the absolute “truth of a situation” (Pillay, 2019; Rogers, 2020; Nickerson 2023, 2024).

- (e) Interpretivist approaches to research differ from positivist ones in their emphasis on qualitative data and focus on explaining the context of the situation or context under study (ibid).

The researcher shares the assumptions and beliefs associated with interpretivism, thus adopting this philosophical perspective as the grounding foundation for this study. Having established this foundation, this discussion further focuses on theories that support one's interpretivism philosophical orientation and these theories are the ideological criticism and framing theories.

3.2.2 Ideological Criticism Theory

An ideology refers to systems that help to justify the actions of those in power by distorting and misrepresenting the reality experienced by those in subordinate positions (Devereux, 2014 in Muswede & Masvopo, 2018). This means that those in power can use ideology to misrepresent those in less powerful, or subordinate, positions, whether this misrepresentation happens in media content or not in media content. Furthermore, ideology critique deals with films as ideological symptoms, and the aim is to deconstruct the film text to locate the ideology present within the frame (Flisfeder, 2016). Ideology is a system of ideas, opinions and viewpoints (Pearson & Simpson, 2001, Ye, 2012). Documentary producers consciously and unconsciously impart their ideologies into documentaries when producing the documentaries. Ideological film criticism is an important work of meaning production in the film (ibid.). The latter means that it is important for documentary consumers to analyse ideologies that are conveyed by documentary producers in documentaries that they watch or consume so that they can comprehend and understand if they share those ideologies or not and decide whether they share those ideologies or not and analyse if those ideologies are useful for their livelihoods or not.

The emergence of film and television literature criticism is inextricably linked with the historical development of film (Li, 2018:1). "Cinema is the ventriloquist of ideology, Daniel Dayan proclaimed in 1974 and for him and similarly thinking scholars and critics there are aspects of the very structure of films that are part of the problem and is helping to "maintain the status quo to the benefit of the rulers" (Frederik On Film, 2017). In brief, theories of ideology strive to understand how cultural forms like popular cinema work to maintain dominant power relations, ranging from economic inequality

to norms of race and gender (ibid). The crucial insight of ideology criticism theory is that popular culture works to normalize the status quo and make the dominant systems of power invisible and unquestioned, integrated into a viewer's common sense and outlook on the world, but what happens in the real world is that people and documentaries consumers always question and interrogate any media content that they interpret as not reflecting the true story of what is told in a particular story and will analyse that media or documentary content or misrepresenting the story that the documentary is reporting about. Film scholars have explored how conventions of filmmaking, from industry structure to norms of narrative and style, work to reinforce dominant ideology in both overt and subtle ways (Frederik on Film, 2017).

Frustrated by the concentration on directors in film criticism and theory, Lovell and Sergi (2013) developed a course with a simple aim: to make students of film and documentary studies aware that films are not only made by directors, but by other filmmakers, including producers, writers, production designers, cinematographers, editors, composers, sound designers and engineers, and all these people make significant contributions to the creation or production of a documentary. Against this latter background, it is reasonable to contend that documentaries are creations of many minds or of conversations with different people who discuss the stories and ideas on which documentaries are based. The multiplicity of ideas ultimately produces the final documentary. Cinema's astonishingly homogenous textual analysis production understood cinema as an ideological weapon in the political culturalization of proletarian masses (Arenas, 2016). The latter comment means that cinema, and therefore documentary because the documentary is a film, can be used as an ideological weapon by its creators in processes towards the political centralisation of the masses who watch that documentary. Subjecting film to critical theory has become imperative to liberate the audience from the shackles of conversational ties to enthrone individual pleasure and experience (Nnamele & Nnalue, 2020). The body of ideology reflects the social needs and aspirations of an individual or group, a class, or a culture (Ye, 2012). It is, therefore, important for views of films and documentaries to analyse and criticise the body of ideology that is reflected in documentaries that they consume or watch to evaluate whether the ideologies encapsulated in the documentaries are ideologies that they share or not.

3.2.3 Framing Theory

Framing theory is the study of how rhetorical devices can be used to convince people of the value of any given position (Amis, 2022). Frames select certain aspects of perceived reality to make them more noticeable, often simplifying the message to mobilize people and garner support and importantly, demonising antagonists (ibid.). Framing theory provides Media Studies researchers, scholars and theorists with a helpful lens for understanding how people develop their perception of reality, and the role that journalistic outlets play in shaping those perceptions (Zamith, 2024). Framing is related to the agenda-setting tradition (Entman, 1993; Scheufele & Tewsbury, 2007; Zhuwakinyu & Lesame, 2023), but expands the research by focusing on the essence of the issues at hand rather than on a particular topic (Arowolo, 2017). The basis of framing theory is that the media focuses attention on certain events and then places them within a field of meaning (Arowolo, 2017, Zhuwakinyu & Lesame, 2023; Zamith, 2024). Framing theory explains that the media create this frame by introducing news items with predefined and narrow contextualisation (ibid.). Frames can be designed to enhance understanding or are used as cognitive shortcuts to link stories to the bigger picture (Arowolo, 2017). Framing describes the practice of thinking about news items and story (e.g., in a documentary) content within a familiar context (ibid.). In Communication and Media Studies, framing indicates the way news stories (or stories in films, documentaries, videos and other media content) are constructed to evoke a particular response, interpretation or reaction from the audiences or viewers of the documentary.

According to de Vreese (2005), framing is a process, and one influential way that the media may shape public opinion is by framing events and issues in a particular way. The potential of the framing concept lies in the focus of the communicative process and communication is not static, but rather a dynamic process that involves frame-building (how frames emerge) and frame-setting (the interplay of media frames and audience predispositions) (de Vreese, 2005). Frames (what is also referred to as windows through which media content producers view and reflect the world through media) have several locations, including the communicator, text, receiver and culture (Entman, 1993). These components are integral to a process of framing that consists of distinct stages, which are frame-building and frame-setting (ibid.). Frame-building refers to the factors that influence the structural qualities of news frames and frame-

setting refers to the interaction between media frames and individuals' prior knowledge and predispositions (ibid.). Both frame-building and frame-setting, therefore, are prevalent in documentary making or production as well as in documentary watching by audiences. Erving Goffman (1974, in Entman, 1993) coined the phrase "frame analysis" when studying the organisation of experience in everyday life and media content analysis.

Goffman (1974, in Entman, 1993) was one of the first scholars to have developed the general concept of framing. Frames assist people and media users in organizing what they see in everyday life and media content, including documentary content. Goffman (ibid.) called frames "schemata of interpretation", a framework that helps in making an otherwise meaningless succession of events into something meaningful (ibid.). According to Entman (1993) and Zhuwakinyu and Lesame (2023), framing involves selection and salience (i.e., the quality of being noticeable or prominence), which means that anyone involved in framing, whether it is a documentary producer or maker or news article writer or journalist, or a documentary watcher or viewer, exercises framing while involved with the process of producing or watching a documentary. Gitlin (1980) further contends that frames are devices that facilitate how journalists (or documentary producers in this case or study), organize enormous amounts of information and package the information effectively for their audiences.

Frames in the news and documentaries may affect how media audiences exercise learning, interpretation and evaluation of issues and events that are portrayed and reflected in the news and documentaries. Researchers who conduct research on documentaries can also exercise learning, interpretation and evaluation of the documentaries based on their prior knowledge and predispositions. Another framing theorist, Bricca (2002) introduces the term "presence framing" or the "framing of the presence", when offering a critical analysis of the Media Studies framing theory, as the way in which documentaries arrange their materials for the audience to suggest a particular interpretation of the onscreen relationship. Some documentaries use observational framing, cutting out all references to the act of filming and creating a world in which it appears that the camera was not seen or noticed by the participants (ibid.). Participatory framing, by contrast, acknowledges the presence of the filmmaker to some degree, either by implication (since the interviewees are talking to someone offscreen), or more explicitly by having the participants interact with the filmmaker

onscreen or talking to them offscreen (ibid.). These aspects of framing influence documentary viewers in different ways and at different times of watching documentaries. Framing research draws on literature from cognitive constructionist and critical studies, sociology, economics and other fields of study (Gitlin 1980; D' Angelo, 2002: 870; Borah, 2011). In a nutshell, framing influences how documentaries are created and produced, as well as affects how documentary consumers analyse and interpret the documentaries that they watch and view on television screens and online (films and videos).

3.3 INTERPRETIVISM, IDEOLOGY AND FRAMING IN DOCUMENTARY CREATION

Ideologies are sets of social values, ideas, beliefs, feelings and representations by which people collectively make sense of the world they live in, thus constituting a worldview (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler, 2012). Ideologies are represented in media content, especially when producers of that content inculcate, consciously or not, some of their ideologies in that content. Representation – the media – the press, radio, television, cinema and others – have become arenas through which people receive most of their entertainment and information about the world, so they are primary sources for how they see the world and documentaries reflect the ideas and ideologies of their producers which are then shared with the media users who consume the documentaries (Bricca, 2022). Documentaries have been an important part of film and television. When film was invented at the beginning of the nineteenth century, two distinct strands of filmmaking evolved (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler, 2012). One strand used film to tell spectacular fictional stories about individual characters and these stories developed into Hollywood feature films (ibid.). The other strand used film to record or document reality, as seen in the first short films by the Lumiere brothers (1895) such as *Workers Leaving a Factory* and *Train Arriving at a Station* (ibid.).

The concept “documentary” is used because the film is a kind of document, a record or reality, but also because it derives from the Latin word “doceo”, which means to warn or advise (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler, 2012: 308). Documentaries are usually a kind of warning or advice about important world issues (ibid.). The documentaries selected for this study record South African stories and are reflected in the views and standpoints of their producers, and these documentaries also offer viewers advice

about the people and stories reflected in each documentary. Some advice in the documentaries could be offered by the producers of the documentaries and the other advice is offered to viewers by people speaking in the documentaries who offer viewers advice about situations reflected in the documentaries and other related situations or events.

Documentaries can be simple, unbiased windows on the world, even though visual and sound recording techniques offer the possibility of recording and capturing reality unlike any previous aesthetic techniques, there is always a process of construction (selection and framing of events, editing, point of view, commentary and so on) (Gilbert, 1988; O' Shaughnessy & Stadler, 2012). Documentaries should address the challenge of how to capture reality and it is because of this challenge that documentary producers take it upon themselves to represent the stories that they capture in documentaries using their views, beliefs, and ideological frames of mind. This means that the same story could be told by different documentaries using different words with different meanings because two documentary producers can tell and portray the same story in different ways.

A critical analysis of documentaries raises another major issue about them (Gilbert, 1988; O' Shaughnessy and Stadler, 2012), which is the question of documentary ethics and whether documentary makers exploit and victimise their subjects. Gilbert (1988) argued that documentary producers use human beings, in documentaries, to make a point, that documentary producers exploit people to make their films, and that the fact that the documentary makers' incomes and their careers often depend on their ability to conceal the truth of this exploitation from their subjects. The whole issue of victimisation and exploitation by the media is very important in texts and videos or films (including documentaries) dealing with real people rather than paid actors who act in fictional or other movies. Documentaries that are about real stories of real people must reflect those real stories from the perspective of the people of the stories and not from the perspective of the documentary maker or producer so that the documentary reflects the truth about the concerned story. Some form of "truth is the always receding goal of documentary film" (Williams, 1993: 20).

3.4 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

The focus of this chapter is to offer an overview of the philosophical perspective and theoretical foundation of what the research study is about, which is the explanation of how documentary producers create documentary content and how this researcher aims to explore and analyse the documentaries selected for this study from an interpretivism philosophical standpoint. This researcher is also of the view that documentaries contain and demonstrate their creators' interpretivist views and beliefs about issues and events of the world, thus reflecting those views and beliefs to those audiences who listen to and view those documentaries on online videos or television screens. Documentaries contain the ideological standpoints of their creators which are conveyed to documentary viewers and listeners through cinematography or film. Framing of world events exists as well in documentaries because the creators of documentaries frame ideas and events from their idiosyncratic perspectives which are also based on interpretivism. The following chapter outlines the research methodology adopted in the study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an in-depth description of the research methodology used in the study. It illustrates the practical actions that the researcher took in light of the study's stated goals and objectives, which are listed in section 1.3 of Chapter 1. This study section delineates the research methodology, including the research approach, design, sampling procedures, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques. The researcher elaborates on the selection of South African documentaries, *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011), and how these techniques were judged appropriate for analysing the portrayals of socio-economic and political issues. In addition, the section includes quality criteria, ethical considerations, study limitations and a summary of the chapter.

4.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

This study used an interpretive paradigm-based qualitative research approach. According to Creswell (2013), qualitative research entails the examination and gathering of a wide range of empirical materials, including cultural texts and productions, and visual texts that depict ordinary and troubling events, and meanings in people's lives. Documentary films fall under the category of media texts that can be studied using qualitative methods because they convey messages to viewers who may interpret them in a variety of methods.

The qualitative research approach, according to the researcher, is pertinent to this study because Babbie (2010) defines the film genre as a cultural and visual text. Moreover, this study does not only analyse the films *Miners Shot Miners* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011) but rather examines how they depict the socio-economic and political situations that characterise the situations Africans find themselves in post-apartheid South Africa. This has demanded that the researcher employ the qualitative research approach as an inductive approach that is flexible enough to enable the researcher to examine meanings and insights in the selected documentaries. This was significant since the films under study attempted to reflect on African experiences,

which some scholars suggest their potential meanings can easily be explored through qualitative methods with the potential to bring out new dimensions and nuances to the problem than most methods would ever achieve (Babbie, 2010).

Moreover, Babbie (2010) suggests that rather than numerical data, spoken or written language is the primary medium used to collect qualitative data. By analysing language, sound, and imagery in great detail, spoken or written language helps researchers better understand the social context of the world they live in. Similar to this, the researcher was able to examine the ideological frameworks used in the chosen documentaries to represent societal challenges in post-apartheid South Africa thanks to Corbin and Strauss's (2014) claim about qualitative research (Chisholm, 2018). The research also critically analyses the transformative challenges symbolically present in the selected documentaries and looks at how technical and artistic components such as music, text, and cinematography reveal the social conditions of the eras portrayed in the movies.

Additionally, meanwhile the qualitative research approach can provide a detailed visual and audio-textual description of the documentaries being studied, and the researcher used it in this study. Ensuring research integrity is crucial, and qualitative researchers augment this by employing copious amounts of meticulous notes and evidence descriptions as reference materials. Essentially, this makes sure that the research process is carried out in a way that illustrates how the various pieces of evidence fit together to provide context for the reader (Wimmer & Dominick, 2014). These qualitative aspects with the volumes of notes complemented by the researcher's personal insights enabled the study to provide detailed descriptive evidence to support the thesis.

4.2.1 Research design

The study adopted a descriptive design within the qualitative approach (Cresswell, 2009) to examine the representation of post-colonial challenges faced by South Africans as portrayed in the selected documentary films. The research design, according to Babbie (2010), comprises every facet of the investigation that is integrated to generate a procedure for gathering data and analysing the results. Descriptive research necessitates that the study's findings include a description of the "characteristics of a phenomenon, or relations between a number of variables, as

accurately as possible" Du Plooy (2002:49). Due to the fact that this is a qualitative study, Du Plooy (2002) notes that this takes into consideration the research objectives to determine the type of research design to be adopted. Utilising a qualitative methodology, this study used a descriptive case study research design. In this instance, the research design pertains to how documentary films portray the socio-economic and political challenges of post-apartheid South Africa. This type of design is typically employed when the "how" and "why" questions are investigated in a specific study (Baxter and Jacks, 2008).

Based on the examination of the function of certain documentaries in portraying political and socio-economic issues in South Africa, the researcher concluded that it was appropriate to proceed with the descriptive design at this point. This was prompted by concerns about how the documentary plots develop and the selection of specific cinematic elements to represent the dynamics of transformation South Africans experienced in the years following democracy. In an environment where the researcher has access to a variety of aspects being investigated, the design was judged appropriate for explaining the transformation narrative. This allows the researcher to analyse how the documentary producers chose to portray the socio-economic and political challenges that are reminiscent.

Descriptive case studies were employed as the researcher wanted to investigate an entity that is a component of a whole, like individuals in an organisation or a documentary, as was the case in this study. They provide the richness and depth of information that other research methods typically cannot (Babbie, 2010). Given the foregoing, the researcher felt that a descriptive case study would be necessary in order to give the study enough room to analyse the film's symbolic elements and filmic elements in greater detail in order to comprehend how the films portray the challenges of transformation in South Africa after apartheid.

The researcher was further assisted by the study design to develop themes related to the socio-economic and political issues, as well as to critique the symbols and scripts employed in the selected films to represent dissent and protest action in post-apartheid South Africa. This concurs with scholarly views that maintain that case studies help researchers understand complex processes through a focused study of specific elements in the phenomenon under study (Watson & Hill, 2015). Hence, the descriptive

case study applied to both *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011) documentaries was facilitated by the quest to interrogate the producers' scripting formats and themes which portrayed the socio-economic and political challenges of the South African society in the democratic dispensation.

Additionally, the design enabled the researcher to draw attention to the detailed explanation of the political and socio-economic themes found in the chosen documentaries and explain how the story contributes to the conversation about contemporary transformation. This is clear from Chapter 5, where a critical examination of the documentaries' visual, textual, and thematic content analysis shows how the study methodically uses the descriptive design to analyse challenging situations that the populace in democratic South Africa experiences.

Hence, the selected research design was deemed relevant for this study due to its ability to help the researcher focus on describing the media text in question and how it represented challenges within the democratic system of governance in post-apartheid South Africa. The description had the significance of interpreting the challenges in the context of South Africa's historical challenges, political discourse, and prospects for sustaining the socio-economic gains experienced in contemporary South Africa.

4.2.2 Population and sampling procedure

4.2.2.1 Population

According to Kumar (2014), a research population is the entire collection of cases that meet a specific set of requirements. A researcher chooses a target population from the entire aggregation from which they hope to draw scientific generalisations. However, because sampling every object or person in the population would be costly and time-consuming, researchers are unable to do so due to the size of the population. According to Watson and Hill (2015), in order to perform a scientific study, a representative sample must be chosen because objects within a given population typically share a common, binding trait or characteristic. According to Du Plooy (2009), the population "gives" the sample and then draws conclusions from the data it receives.

The population for this study comprises all film genres that are relevant to the study of the political, and socio-economic challenges represented in the documentary films in democratic South African society. The content of the films is premised around the portrayal of the socio-economic and political situation in more than two decades into democracy that reflects the transformational struggles experienced by black majority South Africans after the apartheid era. This is subsequently because the study focuses on the challenges South Africans face on a daily basis as represented in post 1994 documentary films such as *Chasing Mandela's Rainbow* (2019), *Death of Africa* (2016), *Miners Shot Down* (2014), *Who Controls Africa* (2014), *Growing up in Africa* (2014), *Where do I stand?* (2010), *The Empire in Africa* (2012), *Dear Mandela* (2011), *Apartheid did not die* (1998) et cetera. To minimise the hurdles associated with selecting a sample from a large population and guarantee that the selected sample is easily accessible to the researcher, the population was subdivided into an accessible sample. In order to guarantee that the population is easily accessible and to minimize expenses, time, and manpower, Du Plooy (2002) recommends using an accessible population. After looking through a variety of genres, including drama and feature films, the population has been narrowed down to choose between two documentaries. In order to accurately portray the political and socio-economic struggles that the average South African faces, documentaries must be carefully examined. The documentary films *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011) were chosen for this study because of their cinematic verité and composition, which powerfully depict the contours and challenging life experiences of common South Africans, including mine workers who were shot by the South African Police while on strike for better wages and living conditions.

4.2.2.2 Sampling

Sampling is the process of choosing a particular subset of the population that meets the criteria the researcher is examining (Taherdoost, 2016). In order to draw conclusions from the study that will apply to the entire population, the sample's primary purpose is to enable the researchers to conduct their research on people or items from the population (Watson & Hill, 2015). Only a subset of the population should be chosen for a qualitative research study in order to represent the target population under investigation. In research, there are two primary methods for sampling. Probability sampling techniques are primarily employed in quantitative research methodology,

while non-probability sampling techniques are employed in qualitative research methodology. The researcher chooses the sample using the non-probability sampling technique based on individual preferences and perceptions (Neuman, 2007). The results can be more broadly applied to the study population depending on the sample composition, while the study population composition affects the results' ability to be further applied to the target population. The conclusion that can be drawn from a research study is less confident due to potential biases in the sample selection process (Du Plooy, 2009). The researcher employed non-probability sampling in this study, taking into account the contextual narratives present in the chosen documentaries and how the storylines transpired.

Considering the number of films that have been made about the political and socio-economic issues facing South Africa after apartheid, as mentioned in section 4.2.2.1. In choosing *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011) as case studies, the researcher did so on purpose. Using a technique known as "purposeful sampling," the researcher selects entities or subjects from the population to include in the study by using best judgment. Selecting cases that contribute to addressing the research questions posed for the study or achieving the particular research goals essentially requires the use of human judgment in purposive sampling. According to Du Plooy (2002), as opposed to making empirical generalisations, non-probability-based purposive sampling enables the selection of rich, relevant texts that can be thoroughly examined. In an effort to maximise the benefits of the research process, purposeful sampling focuses on sources or study units that are information-rich and offer the most insights into the study's objectives.

For this study, the purposive sampling technique was adopted because it enables researchers to choose relevant samples or phenomena based on their prior knowledge and experience with the phenomenon. Purposive sampling is typically categorized as judgmental sampling since researchers typically do not have direct contact with the phenomenon or sample being studied, as is the case with this study (Zhao, 2020). Furthermore, Purposive sampling is defined by Creswell (2009) as the deliberate selection of occurrences, phenomena, or locations that will help the researcher unravel the study's goals and solve the research problem. Purposive sampling is most appropriate, according to Denscombe (2010), when the researcher is acquainted with particular passages about the phenomenon that directly relate to

the study at hand, presuming that the phenomenon will yield useful data in the analysis process. Purposive sampling depends on the researcher's creativity and familiarity with related prior research studies, according to Roa and Fuller (2018). Because the researcher is familiar with the pertinent patterns and characteristics of the chosen documentaries that represent the challenges of South African transformation, the purposive sample was derived based on this knowledge.

Purposive sampling offers the primary benefit of enhancing the credibility of study findings as the result of a clear and unambiguous exercise because the researcher specifically chooses study entities that are likely to yield rich information. According to Du Plooy (2002), this made it possible for the researcher to firmly choose texts from the population that fit the study's criteria. The documentary film genre and its sub-genre, political documentary, were selected as a result of this process because both documentaries featured artefacts that depicted the political and socio-economic struggles that South Africans faced in the years following apartheid.

Essentially, the way the subgenre and particular case studies depicted the prejudices and struggles faced by South Africans in post-apartheid South Africa was what made the documentaries significant and worthy of purposeful sampling. The researcher, being an academic in this field, possessed a thorough knowledge of the documentary films and the public's perception of their portrayal of the difficulties faced by South Africans. The researcher used subjective judgment to determine whether the film addressed the research aim and study objectives as mentioned in section 1.3.1 taking into account the knowledge and experiences that were reflected in the films' content (Watson & Hill, 2015).

4.2.3 Data collection methods

4.2.2.1 Qualitative content analysis

A research method in any project must align its analytical methodology with both the study's goals and the researcher's theoretical and substantive interests. Qualitative content analysis, according to Schreier (2012), is an adaptable, methodical technique that enables researchers to gather qualitative data via themes. This is the reason this study uses qualitative content analysis. When a researcher looks over and evaluates textual, audio, and visual data in order to develop codes and themes for data analysis, they can use qualitative content analysis, according to Krippendorff (2018). It looks to

analyse information in a particular context with respect to the significance that an individual, a community, or a culture attaches to it. In order to analyse the unobserved context of data, content analysis depends on symbolic qualities to trace the causes or effects of communication.

Qualitative content analysis aims to analyse a text and offer insight into the phenomenon or topic being examined, thereby facilitating a thorough reading of the text. As a content-sensitive method that works well for analysing films, content analysis has a long history of use in media and communications research (Fourie, 2009). The method of content analysis is characterised by its ability to condense or disentangle information through categorisation, albeit terminology varies based on the specific subtype. Researcher collection within a particular film genre is made possible by the appropriate application of qualitative context analysis in media and communication studies (Bernard and Ryan, 2017). Hence, in order to describe a phenomenon, researchers in these domains make deductions and categorise texts, words, phrases, or other communication units. To address the shortcomings of its quantitative counterpart, the qualitative content analysis approach was created, keeping a foundation of methodical categorisation for the purpose of describing and interpreting empirical data (Du Plooy, 2009).

The rationale behind selecting this particular method was its appropriateness for analysing a documentary film, which includes both words and images taken directly from the script. Hence, in order to accomplish the study's goals, the analytical approach employed was connected to the researcher's theoretical and substantive interests (Hsieh and Shannon, 2007:110). The researcher divided the documentary films into scenes and took important frames from the chosen documentaries' sequences to make this realistic and applicable. These hermeneutic circles employed qualitative methods of analysis, interpreting textual elements like words, phrases, and actions in conjunction with contextual materials. As they appeared in the films, these elements also improved viewers' comprehension of contextual texts.

The researcher went through the scenes consistently and thoroughly analysed them paying close attention to all the fine detail to come out with the evidence of multiple socio-economic and political challenges displayed in the documentaries. The method of analysis was critical in depicting how the post-apartheid administration has arguably

perpetuated the erstwhile unjust system as opposed to maintaining a viable social construct with the citizens. This provided an analysis that revealed the marginalisation of certain social groups that were culturally, socially, and historically constituted by the system such as the working class and the unemployed. This was accompanied by references to film ratings, replays and slow motions, and same-genre film analogies which allow for complementary qualitative content analysis (Fourie, 2009). This was supported by the view that documentary films comprise images of participants, audio text, musicals, and related aesthetics that reveal the intentions of the producers or production team of the artefact. Therefore, this requires researchers to immerse themselves in the data several times to fully comprehend the nature and detailed features of the data. In collecting data from the selected documentary films; *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011), it was important to establish the dominant messages which the producers used to highlight the major transformation challenges, which society faced in the post-apartheid government. This process was useful to generate specific cinematic elements with which to synthesise discursive themes on the content of the sampled entities.

4.2.3.2 Textual analysis

Textual analysis can take many different forms, but this study focuses primarily on meaning construction based on an artefact under study, dealing with audio-visual codes of content and form in terms of the conceptual aspect of production. In this study, the researcher made sure that pictorial codes in the documentary's still images and still frame shots were analysed in accordance with Behura and Tilak's (2020) recommendations. In the chosen documentaries, these elements were utilised to develop themes pertaining to the political and socio-economic difficulties facing South Africa in the years following apartheid. In order to examine how symbolism is applied to depict the context and stories of socio-economic and political challenges, visual text analysis was also carried out. Based on the codes deciphered from the various symbols used in the visual text, informed decisions and interpretations were made. These codes allowed the researcher to pinpoint the ways in which the documentary filmmakers used cinematic devices to draw attention to the political and socio-economic issues facing South Africa in the years following the end of apartheid. Fourie (2009), who contends that visual text analysis is a more practical form of data collection, lends support to this strategy. This perspective led the researcher to

concentrate on the visual codes presented in the filmic scenes and accompanying contexts in the chosen documentaries.

To further highlight the various character roles and reactions of participants, including the miners in the documentary *Miners Shot Down (2014)*, visual and cinematographic techniques were employed as creative tools. The relevant and symbolically significant scenes and sequences from the documentaries were carefully selected for analysis. A range of acceptable focus on a shot or photograph is known as depth of field. The visual treatment given to the sequences was analysed based on cinematographic codes, composition, lighting, tonality, and camera movement. When adjusting the focus to create the right effect in a movie, camera operators and cinematographers need to understand the depth of field. Within the framework of the cinematographic codes, inferences and critical observations were made to correlate the symbolic features denoting the transformation struggle narrative. When filming a single shot, visual elements like lighting, sound objects, movement, shadow, and color were used in combination with cinematic codes.

4.2.4 Data analysis methods

According to Thorne (2008), data analysis is the process of dissecting data into its constructive components in order to expose its elements, features, and structure. Bless et al. (2013) describes data analysis as a process for organizing and condensing data into digestible chunks that can be used to generate conclusions by applying the researcher's interpretation. In contrast to other research methods, data analysis in descriptive research does not rely on pre-existing guidelines derived from the discipline's particular qualitative research approach's philosophical or epistemological stance. Rather, because codes are created from the data during the study, qualitative descriptive research is solely data derived. Thematic analysis was used in this study to examine how the chosen films' content reflected South Africa's post-apartheid socio-economic and political challenges, as will be discussed below.

4.2.4.1 Thematic analysis

Finding themes that emerge in a phenomenon's description is known as thematic analysis. Themes comprise codes that unify concepts related to the topic of study by providing a common point of reference and a high degree of generality. Thematic content analysis is a comprehension process that involves finding cross-references in

the data that indicate how themes might change (Braun and Clarke, 2012). It is regarded as a thread of underlying meaning that participants' subjective understanding and interpretative level elements implicitly uncover. Furthermore, it is less complicated for novice researchers to understand, requiring a less in-depth theoretical and technological understanding of other qualitative approaches (Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen and Snelgrove, 2016). Lastly, it offers the chance to code and group data according to themes (Alhojailan, 2012). Following the guidelines below, the researcher used five steps to help formulate themes.

Step 1: Familiarising with the data

Following the completion of data collection, as described in section 3.5, the researcher began the process of thematic analysis by watching entire film storylines multiple times. The researcher familiarised herself with the data before starting the process of data analysis. The recordings and other materials that might be relevant to the research topic and could offer insight into how the socio-economic and political challenges South African faced had to be listened to again by the researcher. Specific elements that could be used to create discursive themes were extracted through the use of thematic analysis. According to their similarities and differences, the data were categorised and shown (Creswell, 2013). As a result, the researcher developed a thorough comprehension of the content and became acquainted with every facet of the data, laying the groundwork for the thematic analysis.

Step 2: Generating initial codes.

Upon familiarisation with the documentary films initial coding was conducted. Codes were used as building blocks of analysis. The researcher identified and codified economic, political, poverty, societal, power, and related data from the film content linked to the research objectives. The researcher closely followed the plots of the documentary films and analysed the key issues that the producers chose to package. The analysis further delved into how the codes depicted the of post-apartheid socio-economic and political challenges. Visuals and audio excerpts, for example, which are concomitant with other actions and behaviours in the documentaries formed the focus of the study.

Step 3: Search for themes.

The researcher highlighted all descriptions that were pertinent to the research question. All the discrete meaning units were marked from the highlighted area. Comparable units were piled up together. Using keywords or phrases that were copied from the highlighted text, each pile was labelled according to categories (themes). It was determined which categories were absent. Units that were similar and dissimilar were grouped and regrouped, and various categories were renamed during the process. After reading through each category's meaning units, the units were reassigned as needed. As appropriate, categories were collapsed and divided (Creswell and Poth, 2016). Based on the noteworthy scenes chosen according to the analysis's highlighted areas of interest, this process produced recognisable themes. According to Creswell and Poth (2016), themes are more comprehensive than codes. Thus, it was important to combine multiple codes to create themes. Similar codes were used by the researcher and grouped into broad potential themes.

Step 4: Reviewing potential themes.

A quality check was conducted on the entire data set after a few days, during which the researcher examined themes in connection to the coded data. The units and categories were not examined during the second reading of the text. Following a second pass, the researcher went back to the meaning units and categories, carefully reviewing each one. After carefully evaluating whether the units were too small or too large, they were redistributed as necessary. It was carefully considered whether the categories were too small or too large before renaming, collapsing, and dividing them as needed. While certain themes were generated or discarded, others were combined or divided into more focused themes during this phase. In order to determine whether there were enough or not categories to give the highlighted text given context, they were examined (Thompson, 2022). According to what made sense, categories were collapsed, divided, and relabelled. In order to determine whether there were too few or too many categories to adequately explain the study at hand, the researcher reread all of the categories together after a few days.

Step 5: Defining themes.

This is the last step in eliminating superfluous themes. It entails defining and improving the main themes as well as any prospective sub-themes. Up until this point, the researcher explains how the themes and the dataset as a whole relate to one another (Thompson, 2022). The aforementioned process had to be repeated by the researcher until she was satisfied that the categories adequately addressed the research objectives and reflected the study as a whole. The researcher inquired as to what made each theme special and different in order to define the theme. The researcher devised a standard for creating quality themes. Evaluating each theme's significance and importance was the main objective. The researcher gave theme names and precise working definitions that succinctly and effectively convey the core ideas of each theme. At this point, the themes began to tell the data's story as a whole. The researcher was able to quickly arrive at some of the most important conclusions about the films thanks to the flexible and effective nature of the thematic analysis, which was a major factor in this study.

4.2.4.2 Ideological analysis.

To analyse how particular cinematic elements have been infused to give meaning to the political actions of the actors in the film, ideological analysis was employed. Being able to recognise and distinguish between the different ideologies that cultural artefacts convey is one of the primary objectives of ideological analysis (Maynard, 2013). Texts from documentary films can and do express ideologies in a variety of intricate ways. Ideologies are manifested in the ways that narrative design tells stories, how sets are built and lit, how participants play their roles, and how camera work, lighting, sound, and music are used.

According to ideological analysis, the mass population in capitalist countries ruled by the conventional ruling class is duped into believing false things by means of the media and other forms of communication. Therefore, the formal aspects of a film are often the first to be examined in an ideological analysis. However, the analysis may also include an examination of the means of production, including who produced it, why, and in what socio-economic and industrial contexts (Maynard, 2013). Although both films *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011) contain some prejudices and some exaggeration in some respects, they remain a powerful tales of injustice

and lack of transformation in post-apartheid South Africa. The examination of the function of ideological analysis in documentaries as a portrayal of the socio-economic and political obstacles that South Africa faces in democracy.

To find the ideology contained in the frame, the researcher had to dissect the movie's narrative. The analysis was compared to the justification for situating the study entries in the context of the socio-economic and political challenges that South Africans are currently facing in the wake of apartheid. The researcher's analysis of the documentary's ideology aided in identifying the precise ways in which the film either upholds or challenges the prevailing ideology of the society that produced it by examining the relationship between the documentaries, their target audiences, and the dynamics of the post-apartheid transformation (Martill, 2017). This is due to the highly artificial nature of the films, which are primarily shaped by the creators' ideologies (Maynard, 2013).

The last section of the analysis looked at the documentaries *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011), which discuss the challenges that South Africans face even now, twenty years after apartheid ended. The low standard of living that people still experience in South Africa even after apartheid is depicted in both documentaries from the perspective of an authentic black South African. Therefore, ideological analysis of the documentary films involved analysing poverty, political bigotry, indices of superiority, inferences, and other forms of ongoing prejudice in post-apartheid South Africa. Moreover, this analysis encompassed an ideological examination of the depictions, emblems, legends, and stories linked to modern governing structures as presented in the documentaries.

4.3 QUALITY CRITERIA IN THE STUDY

The researcher employed the qualitative research method for data collection and analysis in order to guarantee conformability, credibility, dependability, and transferability. The research made use of up-to-date, documented literature on film analysis and production. The study aimed to produce results and findings that could be credibly consolidated in scholarly works that were globally acceptable, methodically proven, contextually and theoretically accurate, and credible. With this in mind, the researcher tried to follow the standards of scientific studies, which include credibility, dependability, transferability, and conformability. We talk about these below.

4.3.1 Credibility/authenticity

To assess how authentic, trustworthy, or authoritative the study results are, credibility and authenticity will be upheld. As per Waston (2015), authenticity permits the formulation of specific deductions and relationships based on a credible foundation of research results, whereas credibility entails proving that the research results are credible. Thus, credibility established a connection between the study's conclusions and the scientific frameworks and guidelines that ought to be applied in the search for reliable scientific answers to research issues. Every scientific procedure used in the study was adhered to assiduously and impartially. The research process employed thick descriptions as a means of paying close attention to and accounting for processes, and contexts, and establishing logical links and relationships between concepts and facts. An analytical comparison took into account deeper and implicit plots of producers and screenwriters in addition to the scenes in the documentary film script about *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011). In the literature review, these were contrasted with theories about film.

To make it easier for the reader to find the use of the study, references and citations were included in the list. The research process employs tenable, reliable, and trustworthy methods that adhere to every stage of the protocol. Since historical studies like this one must avoid distortion and misrepresentation, a variety of literature sources will be reviewed with the goal of assimilating various narratives.

4.3.2 Dependability

In order to maintain consistency in the research findings, dependability necessitates that the researcher adhere to a well-thought-out and explicit research plan (Bless et al. 2013). The realisation of this occurs when research replications yield identical findings. A transparent audit trail was upheld throughout the study, ensuring that desk research notes and other research materials were appropriately cited, particularly when it came to works that were pertinent to the documentaries *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011). It was demonstrated that the film's content had not been altered by compiling a file detailing the procedures used to gather, examine, and evaluate data. The literature that has already been written about *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011) that is similar to them has been cited in the research findings. To help the reader locate references and citations and understand how they

are used in the study and research findings, a list of references and citations was included (Priest, 2010).

4.3.3 Transferability

Transferability aims to persuade readers that the study's conclusions are sufficiently general and broad to be applicable to other research contexts. By providing a detailed description of the research context and key assumptions for the study, the researcher has ensured transferability and explaining how data were gathered, examined, and interpreted through notes in the file (Bless et al., 2013). The methods for gathering data were thoroughly described, along with the reasons behind their selection as the best instruments for the investigation and the time frame over which the data was gathered. In this instance, the number of replays with digital slow motions and without tampering with the original film composition will facilitate the production of outcomes that can be applied elsewhere. In order to align the reproducibility and transferability of common and universal principles and truths that are confirmed or contested, the overarching theoretical footprints regarding *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011) in the population sampling frame were monitored.

4.3.4 Conformability

Conformability is the extent to which other people can verify or corroborate the results. When attempting to interpret how free the research is from subjectivity and bias, it also tackles the question of neutrality (Priest, 2010). By maintaining a paper trail and double-checking the data throughout the investigation, the researcher will adhere to the research protocols. According to this, Bless et al. Conformability, according to (2013), is the extent to which the findings are free from bias and support the findings of other researchers. The results of this study are impartial and devoid of the researcher's personal opinion or bias because the researcher's judgment was kept to a minimum to ensure that conformability was achieved in the investigation. Furthermore, without altering the plot or script in any way, the researcher created an analysis grid on which sequences and portions of the films under examination were noted. Prior to the start of the data collection process, the supervisor moderated the analytical tools, the theoretical framework, and the related literature. In accordance with the Harvard style of academic in-text citation and referencing, all research documents were appropriately acknowledged, listed, and documented.

4.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

This study complied with numerous ethical guidelines that researchers ought to follow when doing their research. Research ethics are crucial, particularly when it comes to studies involving human subjects. By using information free from bias and correctly interpreting it as instructed (Du Plooy, 2011). The researcher made sure the study was impartial and independent. The researcher avoided stirring up sensitive apartheid dynamics in a way that would impede healing and reconciliation in democratic South Africa because the topic at hand involves racism, discrimination and exploitation which were employed during apartheid. Thus, the subsequent protocols were adhered to:

4.4.1 Permission to conduct the study

The University of Limpopo Research Ethics Committee (ULTREC) granted the researcher clearance before the data collection process could begin. Producers were not contacted for permission to use the chosen documentaries because the films are in the public domain. The researcher was required by the clearance certificate to fairly use the documentaries contents solely for this study's objectives.

4.4.2 Honesty

No data was created, manipulated, or misrepresented in the study, which aimed to be truthful in all scientific communications. By citing and quoting past researchers and research works, respect for intellectual property was maintained while avoiding plagiarism. Throughout the investigation, the investigator made certain that every section was run through a plagiarism detector or Turnitin program to identify instances in which moral or expert standards were violated. The researcher went over the sections that required more work after receiving the report, and this process continued until all dissertation chapters had the required minimum percentage points.

4.5 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter has addressed the research methodologies employed in this investigation to accomplish the study's goal. The chapter focused on the introduction, research approach, research design, population and sampling procedures, data collection, data analysis, quality criteria, ethical considerations, and limitations of the study. The researcher provided evidence to support the methods' application and how they help gather sufficient data. The qualitative research approach was utilised in the study to

examine the portrayal of post-apartheid socio-economic and political issues in the chosen South African documentaries. The socio-economic and political difficulties faced in the post-apartheid era were described, and the ideological frameworks employed in the documentary films portraying the mine workers' strike on low wages in post-apartheid South Africa were examined, using a descriptive case study design and methodology to ensure that the resulting analysis is reliable and thorough. The chapter has given a detailed account of the methods used to collect and evaluate data in order to produce findings about documentary films that are both scientifically sound and capable of reflecting the difficulties that societies face on a daily basis. Data presentation and analysis are presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the data collected for the investigation and the analysis which yielded the study's findings. This entails the presentation and analysis of data on the representation of post-apartheid socio-economic and political challenges in the selected South African documentary films; *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011). This chapter sought to answer the research aim and objectives as introduced in Chapter 1 sections 1.3.1 and 1.3.2 respectively. The researcher examined the following aspects in the process of data presentation and analysis: synopsis of both documentaries, *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011), Marikana in the North-West Province and Durban informal settlements in Kwa-Zulu Natal province as the film sites, brief description of characters in the films, socio-economic, and political challenges, and how the films mirror or depict the post-apartheid socio-economic and political challenges in South Africa. The themes emerging from the description of the phenomenon are identified first, following which the researcher familiarised herself with the data and progressed to generate initial codes. This was followed by the process of searching for themes, which were reviewed in relation to the coded data. Unwanted elements of themes were removed thus refining and defining the themes and potential sub-themes as explained in detail in section 3.6.1 The chapter further presents a discussion of the main socio-economic and political challenges faced by post-apartheid South Africa. This discussion culminates in analysing how the symbolism in the two films mirrors the complex challenges that society faces in post-democratic South Africa.

5.2 CONTEXT AND NARRATIVE FOCUS OF THE SELECTED FILMS

This subsection of the study presents the synopsis of the selected films, namely *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011) as the focal areas and units of analysis of the study. This is useful in outlining the storyline or script upon which the films are based to enable a clear reading process into the different segments of the study entities including the sequencing of events as they unfold. Moreover, the overview helps the reader to benefit from the analogy of the films based on their similar or dissimilar narratives to facilitate the logical analysis presented below.

5.2.1 The documentary films synopsis

5.2.1.1 Miners Shot Down (2014)

a. The documentary film synopsis

Miners Shot Down (2014) is a documentary film directed by Rehad Desai who also does a voice-over by presenting clear evidence of the planning and preparations which went into the police operations and the miners' contribution to the August 2012 fateful events that led to the post-apartheid massacre. The film is about rock drillers at Lonmin mine (South Africa's biggest platinum mine) at Marikana in the North-West province, miners who began a wildcat strike for better wages. The miners took matters into their own hands as they felt marginalised by their employer, their union the National Union of Mineworkers of South Africa, who refused to take up their wage grievances, the government and the police (Angus, 2015). It was where 34 miners were brutally killed and many injured by police using ammunition, who insisted they shot in self-defence. The film portrays the central point-of-view of three strike leaders, Mambush, Tholakele and Mzoxolo, with compelling police footage, a TV archive and interviews with lawyers representing the miners in the ensuing commission of inquiry into the massacre. What emerges is a tragedy that arises out of the beautifully shot, and sensitively told with a haunting soundtrack, *Miners Shot Down (2014)* reveals how far the government has strayed from its progressive liberationist roots and leaves the citizens with an uncomfortable view of those that profit from the minerals in their own country.

b. Marikana as the context of Miners Shot Down (2014)

Marikana, formerly known as Rooikoppies (red hills in Afrikaans), is a town that was laid out in 1870 in the Rustenburg local municipality, Bojanala Platinum District Municipality in the North-West province of South Africa. It is in one of the most poverty-stricken corners of South Africa. During apartheid, it was set up as a border industry directly neighbouring the African Bantustan of Bophuthatswana. Like the rest of the black homelands, it was a deceptively independent statelet scattered. In Marikana, the platinum mines were first established in 1971 and Lonmin is the third largest producer of platinum in the world, however, it was reported that the company has horrendous housing conditions for the company's workers, open sewage, asbestos in school buildings, etc. Moreover, Lonmin operations are contract workers, long-distance commuters who live in horrific conditions in shack settlements near the mines, as

highlighted in the film. This platinum giant's notoriety came to light when South African police massacred thirty-four striking miners who were demanding a wage increase and left seventy-eight seriously injured. Marikana's event took shape against a backdrop of unemployment, weaknesses in public service delivery, and overall socioeconomic inequalities (Twala, 2012).

This event culminated after an intense week-long protest in which the miners were demanding a wage increase at the Lonmin platinum mine in a wildcat strike (strike action undertaken by unionised workers without the union leadership's authorisation, support, or approval). The strikers sought a sizeable wage increase, to R12,500 monthly, to be negotiated outside the existing collective wage agreement. The fatal breakdown in communication between the miners and their union further aggravated a volatile situation, in which the miners were desperately trying to have their voices heard and their needs met (Chinguno, 2013). As the strike escalated, the miners were unable to attain a negotiation meeting with NUM (National Union of Mineworkers) or Lonmin representatives, additional police force was deployed, live ammunition were ordered, and mortuary vans were also ordered (narrative time: 0:54:27). Furthermore, barbed wire was erected of the barrier which clearly unsettled the crowd. Whether this was provoked by concern about being trapped and attacked by the police is unclear, but a large group of the miners descended from the hill and rounded the end of the barbed wire barricade. Therefore, this led to the intense shooting of miners by police and killing thirty-four miners and injuring many.

Miners killed, were Mgacineni "Mambush" Noki (who was shot fourteen times including two fatal wounds to the head), Bongani Nqongophele, Janaveke Raphael, Van Wyk Sagalala, security guard Matlhomola Mabelane, Andries Ntshenyeho, Xolani Nduzuzu, Telang Mohai, Thabile Mpumza, Stelega Gadlela, Thabiso Thelejane, Thabiso Mosebetsane, Jackson Lehupa and many others. However, the police force authorities claimed the officers opened fire on the miners in self-defence, after the miners attempted to attack them using machetes, spears, and clubs. As a result, the Marikana Commission of Inquiry was set up to investigate the massacre of miners at Marikana. The massacre reminded South Africans about the deadliest force used by South African police forces against citizens since the Soweto uprising in 1976, and it has been associated with the 1960 Sharpeville massacre.

Marikana and Sharpeville massacres have comparable tragedies that will forever haunt South Africa. Without any warning the police fired into an unarmed crowd at Sharpeville in Vereeniging, killing at least sixty-nine anti-pass law protesters. This incident was seen by scholars as a turning point in the struggle against apartheid. Although this incident happened more than fifty years ago it united the oppressed masses against the apartheid government, in the same way the Marikana massacre has (narration time: 1:20:38). However, unlike Sharpeville which focused on apartheid laws, Marikana was a protest against economic inequality and injustice. Hence, the protests by the miners of Lonmin at Marikana had a clear economic agenda that can be traced back to the economic exploitation of the colonial and apartheid eras in South Africa. One of the primary demands of the workers was a wage of R12 500 per month from R4 500. Lonmin management considered the R12 500 increase to be completely unrealistic and the miners responded by engaging in protest and strike action. This highlighted that the colonial and apartheid legacy that justified economic inequality based on race had not been addressed since the first democratic election of 1994 (Boëttger and Rathbone, 2016)

5.2.1.2 *Dear Mandela (2011)*

a. *Dear Mandela (2011) synopsis*

Dear Mandela (2011) is a documentary film directed by Christopher Nizza and Dara Kell about efforts by a housing rights group (*Abahlali base Mjondodlo*) in Kennedy Road informal settlement on the outskirts of Durban in Kwa-Zulu Natal province South Africa. At Kennedy Road, there is a lack of infrastructural services such as sanitation facilities, solid-waste management, proper electricity supply and a storm-water drainage system has a negative impact on the environment such that, the environment in the area is degraded and is characterized by pollution (Mbonambi, 2016). The film *Dear Mandela (2011)* narrates how the injustices in the democratic era have taken place since apartheid was once enforced, as the local government has initiated a new Slum Act (2007) law which at demolishing and relocating the shack dwellers. The documentary features three activists which include a mischievous shopkeeper, Mnikelo; an HIV/Aids orphan, Zama; and an enlightened schoolboy, Mazwi and their president, S'bu Zikode. The members are part of a growing number of people who feel betrayed by the African National Congress, which has broken promises made to the

people. Committed to bringing the Slum Act (2007) down, which aims to demolish and eviction of the shacks, they held meetings with members of their community through candlelight and came to the realization that the new Slum Act (2007) law had made evictions legal and violated fundamental human rights stated in the constitution of South Africa. With the aid of lawyer Staut Wilson, they were able to challenge the Slum Act (2007) all the way to the Constitutional Court of South Africa. The documentary also portrays, members of the activist groups facing violence threats, their homes demolished and exiled from their residences in Kennedy Road and relocated to a safe house located near Durban's port. Hence, *Dear Mandela (2011)* is a bold documentary that dares to narrate the growing anger against the African National Congress, and its leader, Nelson Mandela, by a young generation that feels disappointed and betrayed by a government that promised to serve them.

The script takes a cue from the view that it was Mandela's determination that facilitated a negotiated transition to democracy and the spirit of reconciliation. It acknowledges that this trajectory made South Africa one of the few envious constitutional democracies, which seems poised to be a beacon for democracy and human rights in Africa and abroad at the time of inception (Lyman, 2014). For this reason, there have been numerous artistic works including media texts that have successfully showcased the multi-faceted political context within which Mandela's qualities as a leader and revolutionary have been purveyed. In the context of this study, it is important to note that the documentary *Dear Mandela (2011)* serves to display his great vigour and virtuous calibre that championed and reconfigured the complex apartheid system to deliver the "miracle" rainbow nation in 1994. With hindsight, it is appreciable that the democratic dispensation was born amid the divergent political aspirations of the various political constituencies premised on deep-seated colonial bigotry and its accompanying prejudices (Muswede & Masvopo, 2018). As such, the documentary is a reflection of the aspirations which most South Africans hope for but have yet to realise as their hopes are marred with unfulfilled promises.

5.2.2 Brief description of the main characters in the selected films

5.2.2.1 Miners Shot Down (2014).

The director highlighted different characters to represent different perspectives in the documentary film *Miners Shot Down* (2014). Therefore, it is important to analyse the role of different characters portrayed in the film to understand the socio-economic and political challenges experienced by the miners and other characters in post-apartheid South Africa.



Figure 5.1: Mgcineni Noki, with the striking platinum miners on 16 August 2012.

Photograph: Leon Sadiki/Getty Images

Mgcineni “Mambush” Noki

Mr Noki known to his family and friends as Mambush, is the main protagonist of this documentary film. He is central to the strike for an increase of wages to R12 500, which was considered unreasonable by their employer Lonmin. Most media outlets and the public refer to him as the “Man in a green blanket” as shown in the image below, he is the iconic symbol of post-apartheid man-made tragedy in South Africa. He was one of the five men the striking miners had chosen as their leaders. He was

the loudest leader and never needed a loudhailer to address the crowd. Sadly, he was shot 14 times including two fatal wounds to the head.

Tholakele Dlunga

Mr Dlunga was one of the active strike leaders elected by the miners to represent them in negotiations with their employers on the increase of their wages. Like Mambush, he was working as a contract rock drill operator at Lonmin mine in Marikana. He was affiliated as a NUM (National Union of Mine Workers) member, which was allegedly accused of not responding to their grievances. The miners grew suspicious that NUM was a hypocritical union working hand in glove with their employer and had no interest in advancing the problems of the miners. At the time of the tragedy, Dlunga had since joined AMCU (Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union), which promised to stand for the workers, and was speaking as an AMCU Shop Steward. However, he is faced with murder charges, like other miners especially those strike leaders who survived the massacre.

Mzoxolo Magidiwana

Mr Magidiwana was also one of the strike leaders featured in the larger part of the film script. Like other miners, he felt betrayed by their union NUM, hence they tried to negotiate the increased wages with their employer themselves outside the scope of the trade union. Unfortunately, he was shot during the chaos, he even recalled at how he thought he was dying without saying goodbye to his family (Narration time: 1:11:16). Sadly, he is permanently disabled but faces murder charges like other survivors of the tragedy at Marikana.

Joseph Mathunjwa

Mr Mathunjwa is the President of AMCU (Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union), a rival trade union some of whose members joined from the once popular trade union called NUM. The miners looked up to him as a mediator and saviour after pinning their hopes in NUM in vain. After they felt failed or betrayed by union (NUM) they affiliated with AMCU and only wished that the management of Lonmin could recognise AMCU as their representative.

Senzeni Zokwana

Mr Zokwana was the NUM President at the time of the Marikana massacre in 2012. He is featured in the film as someone who played a big role in presenting the strike as

an event to be considered illegal and an act of criminality. He also reportedly stated that “NUM will never be involved in this kind of barbaric way of dealing with issues” referring to the striking miners (Narration time: 0:34:20) who involved themselves in an unprotected strike. He was also quoted as having stated that the NUM official members that shot at the striking miners were acting in self-defence.

James Nichol

Mr James is a lawyer for the families of the deceased miners at the Commission of Inquiry into the fateful event popularly known as the Marikana Massacre. He is featured in the film as someone who gives the analytic report of the events that unfolded during the strike and how certain miners especially the strike leaders such as Mambush were targeted by police and eventually killed.

Advocate Dumisa Ntsebeza

Advocate Ntsebeza is a lawyer for the families of the deceased miners who were killed by the South African Police Services (SAPS) at Marikana and further represents them at the Commission of Inquiry. He is featured in the film giving an analysis of how the miners conducted themselves during the strike, and how their rights were violated up until they were brutally shot dead by the police.

Greg Marinovich

Mr Marinovich is a professional freelance photojournalist and author whose expertise are in social documentary and anthropology. He is featured in the film as he gives a journalistic perspective of the event and as a witness of the massacre. In the film he highlighted how miners were shot two to three times even when they were trying to surrender. His version of the massacre both as an eyewitness and media practitioner takes a swipe at the lethal approach that the SAPS used against the miners.

Riah Phiyega

At the time of the massacre, Phiyega was the South African National Police Commissioner responsible for overall police oversight in the country. Although she declines the film director’s interview, she played a big role as a police commissioner during the massacre as the ultimate government official with the powers to authorise or decline giving the mandate to use force within the police. She had the official duty

to answer for action at the commission of inquiry, particularly about who gave orders to the police to shoot at the miners with live ammunition. She is remembered for her bold statement which stated that “Whatever happened represents the best of responsible policing” (Narration time: 1:18:07), a statement that did not go well with most people both within and outside the security scope.

General Mpembe

He was the Deputy Police Commissioner of the North-west Province at the time of the Marikana massacre. He is featured prominently in the film since he was present throughout the strike up until the day of the massacre and was questioned during the commission of inquiry to give his version of the events building up to the fateful event on 16 August 2012.

Ronnie Kasrils

This is the former Minister of Intelligence in the ANC government from 1994 to 2004 under both Mr Nelson Mandela and Mr Thabo Mbeki’s presidencies. He joined the fight against the apartheid government in the 1960s, following the famous Sharpeville Massacre. He sat on the national executive committees of the ANC for twenty years and was considered by the white minority regime as one of their dangerous opponents. He is featured in the film as a critic of the events and provides expert analysis of how the massacre could have been avoided. Since the miners were not occupying any mining property, damaging any property, or blocking the national road.

Cyril Ramaphosa

At the time of the Marikana massacre, Mr Ramaphosa is a shareholder at Lonmin Mining Company and a non-Executive Director who wield executive and political power as a National Executive Council (NEC) member of the ruling party. He is featured in the film as a non-Executive Director who was anticipated to have stood on the miners’ side since he was the founding leader of NUM which represented workers’ plight during the apartheid era. However, he insisted on speaking on general terms about the unfolding of events until his appearance at the commission of inquiry, particularly with regard to electronic communication that ensued between him and senior police officers on how to deal with the miners.

Barnard Mokwena

Mr Mokwena is a Senior Vice President at the Lonmin mining company. He is featured in the film as a representative of the company providing updates on what the company was doing to end the strike. He had an interview on SAFM with presenter Xolani Gwala including the union presidents from both AMCU and NUM. During the interview the union leaders agreed on meeting the miners at the mountain to moot the way forward in resolving their issues before the massacre, however, Mr Mokwena remains silent on whether he would join them.

5.2.2.2 *Dear Mandela (2011).*

The producers and directors of the *Dear Mandela (2011)* documentary film portrayed different characters and their roles to represent different perspectives in the film. Therefore, it is important to analyse the role of the characters portrayed in the film to understand the socio-economic and political challenges experienced by the activists and their community members in post-apartheid South Africa.

S'bu Zikode

Mr Zikode has been the president of *Abahlali base Mjondolo* for 13 years. He is featured in the film as a representative of his organisation members and the shack dwellers. He encourages them to fight against the government's proposed act of legislation called the Slum Act (2007) that aims at relocating people to the "tin houses" but will never fulfil their promises of allocating them proper housing. According to Mr Zikode, the proposed act of legislation is an attack against shack dwellers. Since the dreadful incidents towards the activist and some community members, Mr Zikode has been receiving death threats, his home was demolished, and he is now living in a safe house with his family given refuge by university students.

Zama

She is one of the activists, who stays in a small one-room shack in the outskirts of Durban in KwaZulu-Natal. She stays with her three siblings and her son, her parents have already passed on. Zama is a visible member of the *Abahlali base Mjondolo* organisation, which according to Zama it represents the shack dwellers against the provincial government led by ANC that is willing to demolish their shacks and move people to unbearable tin houses. In this documentary, she is portrayed as an orphan, unemployed, and a student who is trying by all means to earn a living (since she

worked at the shelter), to keep her family together and keep a roof over their heads, hence she joined the struggle for housing.

Mnikelo

He is a shack dweller and an activist who stays alone in his shack, and he also opened a small tuck shop where he sells essential products to the community. He is one of the executive members of *Abahlali base Mjondolo*. He joined the organisation to correct the wrongdoings and injustices done by the government in their communities. He is keen on taking the government to constitutional court as he believes that they violated the constitution which does not support eviction and demolishing of people's houses without giving them an alternative. He is seen in the documentary film often referring to the constitution and helping people to rebuild their shacks that were demolished.

Mazwi

He is one of the activists. He claims to have joined the activists when he was just fourteen years old, and he is a member of *Abahlali base Mjondolo*. Mazwi lives with his family (both parents and siblings) in a section called Joe Slovo and they have been waiting for the government to build them a house since 1994 as promised. He was in high school doing matric and they also portrayed him at the University of KZN doing his first year during the shooting of this documentary. In this documentary, he is active, since went to other sections of the shack dwellers to encourage them to join their organisation in order to fight their provincial government in constitutional court.

Nelson Mandela

Nelson Mandela is the former first black president of South Africa, who fought against the apartheid regime and was imprisoned for twenty-seven years in Robben Island. In this film, Mandela is portrayed as the founding father of hope, prosperity and a progressive socio-economic trajectory, and a symbol of black resistance against apartheid and colonialism. He is also presented as a charismatic leader who delivered the "miracle rainbow nation" in 1994 when South Africa transformed from minority rule to democracy. The film's narrative reveals that society reminisces Mandela's leadership style of leading from the front, selflessness and generosity, which attributes are in contrast with the current corrupt ANC leadership.

Mike Mabuyakhulu

Mr Mabuyakhulu is an ANC housing minister at the Kwa-Zulu Natal provincial government. He is featured in the film as a representative of the government providing updates and intentions of the government on the shack dwellers at Kennedy Road. He highlights the alternative housing the government is provided when they move residents from their shacks so they can build proper houses. However, the community don't want to relocate to the "tin houses", hence they are taking the government to constitutional court over the proposed act of legislation (Slum Act, 2007).

Staut Wilson

Mr Wilson is a lawyer for the shack dwellers and their organisation Abahlali base Mjondolo at Kennedy Road outside Durban and he represented them at Johannesburg constitutional high court. He is featured in the film giving Abahlali an update on the court case and highlighting their rights as citizens of the republic at their headquarters.

Nirel Tolsi

Mr Tolsi is a Mail & Guardian professional journalist. He is featured in the film as he gives a journalistic perspective of the dreadful incident that took place at Kennedy Road scatter camp. In the film, he highlights how community members were left homeless, injured and some facing death threats, as their homes were demolished and set on fire during the night. His version of the incident as a media practitioner takes a swipe at the lethal approach that the ANC provincial government used against the shack dwellers.

5.3 FILMIC ELEMENTS AND DEPICTION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

This subsection discusses filmic elements, and they are used to depict the main socio-economic challenges of democratic South Africa in the two documentaries. This evolves from the view that films generally string together camera shots with different compositions and camera angles in order to tell a story in a particular way of fashion (Skvirsky, 2020). Below are some of the technical aspects discussed in relation to the film's composition and depiction of post-apartheid socio-economic and political challenges in South Africa.

5.3.1 Meaning and technique in the selected films.

Both *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011) have the technical qualities that confirm that film as an artefact is a marriage between technique and meaning (Kamei, 2019). This is evident where producers of both films use aesthetics such as sound, colour and camera work to represent the socio-economic challenges faced by the South African populace post-apartheid. The study acknowledges that not all meanings in a film are deliberate because some of these meanings come from the background or culture of filmmakers themselves who unconsciously infuse their views into the production (Dancyger, 2014). This is important in film production because audiences live in a culture that shapes how they think and what they think and believe in as the contextual setting that ultimately informs their behaviour. Both documentaries are influenced by the apartheid historical contestations that were laced with racial prejudice, which determines the choice of technical aspects to be used in the production. Thus, the meanings of both *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011) films are shaped by thematic or aesthetic necessity including visuals, shots, sound and audio elements which seem to have neither been entirely unconscious nor entirely deliberate. Most of the technical elements in the documentaries contain meaning that is either historical, political, cultural, psychological, social, or economic in a bid to capture the circumstantial mood of the post-apartheid state.



Figure 5.2: living conditions of shack dwellers in post-apartheid South Africa.

Photograph: from *Dear Mandela* (2011) film.

5.3.2 Camera Shots and Angles

The discussion under this subsection is informed by Dancyger's (2014) view, which emphasises the point that each technique in film production such as close-up, the long shot and low-key lighting can be used to create several different meanings. This is owed to the fact that no single technique has the same meaning in all the different instances in which it occurs. In the two films' understudy, numerous cinematographic techniques are used to accomplish the producers' intention of depicting the untenable socio-economic situations of the populace in post-apartheid South Africa. For example, in *Miners Shot Down (2014)*, a close-up shot is used to suggest emotional frustrations when the Lonmin management failed to respond to the grievances of the miners regarding the improvements in their working conditions. Furthermore, the close shot is used in (Narration time 0:08:02) where the striking miners are shown wielding traditional weapons of war including knobkerries, spears and shields as tools that could be used to instil fear to cause alarm to those to whom they are intended. In both instances, these images are deliberately used by the producers to depict a war-like situation evolving from the intensity of the contestation with the possibility of opening a window to psychological warfare.



Figure 5.3: Miners wielding traditional weapons of war. Photograph: from *Miners Shot Down* (2014) film.

Similarly, *Dear Mandela* (2011) also exploits numerous forms of camera shots such as medium and long shots to provide the viewer with both medium to long range as well as wide shots to capture the background of the events as they unfolded. This is evident when shack dwellers (Narration time 0:08:02) are shown in film 1 (F01) expressing dissent despite the prohibited nature of their discontent in South Africa. The study projects that some of these technical elements have their main source from elsewhere outside South Africa (Cowan, 2015). This is particularly relevant to cases that relate to the USA's Hollywood style which is leading the production of virtually all genres and types of films, especially in areas produced to technically provoke and engender dissent and protest such as those found in *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011).



Figure 5.4: Residents' encounters with the police in a long shot. Photograph: from
Dear Mandela (2011) film

5.3.3 Colour

In the selected films, the producers astutely used colour to depict numerous aspects of the transformation discourse in South Africa, especially politically inclined matters involving political formations and their role in governance. This is in terms of the whiteness or blackness to portray racial prejudice, inequality, and poverty both in the mining environment and the informal settlements. This is evidenced in film 1 *Miners Shot Down* (2014) (Narration time: 0:12:15 to 0:13:30) where the film portrays the poor living conditions of the miners', the formation of mining unions led by Cyril Ramaphosa, miners' continuous strikes during the apartheid era and the miners joining national strikes to fight against the apartheid government.



Figure 5.5: An old image of miners joining the fight against apartheid. Photograph: from *Miners Shot Down* (2014) film.

Therefore, colour plays an important role in films because producers use it to express views or perspectives which are rather difficult to state verbally. Furthermore, cinematographers use colour e.g., black Vs white to induce the viewers' mood, whether consciously or unconsciously as a technical imperative to accompany the textual narrative of the film. The use of colour within films such as those in the ANC emblem and organised labour or unions such as AMCU and NUM take a central role in depicting the degree of contestation between the conflicting parties pitted in both films. From the film producers' perspective, this evolves through artistic vision and technical innovation, which stems from extensive research conducted during the pre-production stage as part of the intriguing dimension of cinematography. Misek (2010) highlights that filmmakers are now able to depict a story with even more exposure and detail, manipulating the audience's moods and emotions quite simply through orchestrating colour. The films under study, *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011) are clear examples of how colour is used to provide more revealing scenes and details of the emotional paradigm of the police who claim that they were provoked by the miners. To date, the use of colour in cinematography is considered a vital part of creating a film owing to the aesthetic and complementary features it brings

to the film composition process rather than the contrary. Hence Costa (2011) suggests that the introduction of new techniques in cinema such as colour, depending on their use, is certainly able to add realism to the image. She further argues that:

Colour revealed its potential for entertainment and decorative use, and more importantly, the aesthetic value of colour became 'visible'. Colour cinematography assumed a crucial role in the narrative itself. There was a phase when filmmakers realized colour's potential for dramatic and aesthetic purposes. They started to accept the idea that colour could be used within realist narratives and could become an essential element to emphasize 'dramatists'. Colour was here useful in the way that it could help to describe a character, or to represent a mood or emotions, to mention just a few examples. It thus became an important element of the narrative.



Figure 5.6: aerial view of the informal settlement. Photograph: from *Dear Mandela* film (2011).

In view of the above images *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011), the study shows that colour has the amazing ability to grab the audience's attention, foreshadow information and control or influence the emotions of viewers consciously or subliminally. In both cases of the study units, evidence shows that the use of colour involves a combination of artefacts with respect to space, time and locations as attractions that serve as explanations of events and associations that augment existing frames at different levels (Cowan, 2015). The use of the physical aspects in both films involves the way specific colours such as the informal settlement, poverty and racial prejudices are employed to affect the viewer and his/her ability to read the films with a pleasant feeling. This confirms Misek's (2010) observation that highlights that colour has the potential to directly affect people's emotional state and how they consume specific film content.



Figure 5.7: Miners seated near Lonmin mine at AMCU rally to address their wage increase issues and wearing yellow and green regalia that represent AMCU.

Photograph: from *Miners Shot Down* (2014).

5.3.4 Visual effects

In this study, visual effects in the two documentaries are understood in terms of any form of imagery created, altered, or enhanced for the film, which could not be

accomplished during live-action shooting. In other words, this involves much of the visual effects that take place in the post-production stage, after primary image capture is complete (Reid & Sanders, 2021). Both films made use of visual effects which were added to live-action, captured through techniques such as interactive video compositing, rear- and front-screen projection and practical effects. More specifically, *Miners Shot Down* (2014) uses live- action: interactive video compositing, rear- and front-screen projection and practical effects in conjunction with computer graphic objects, characterisation, and environments; as well as compositing of images recorded in a number of ways (Misek, 2010). Producers of *Dear Mandela* (2011) exploited some of these technical aspects, particularly interactive video compositing and practical effects to reconcile the past events which occurred during the apartheid era and contemporary transformation challenges in post-apartheid South Africa. This is evident when the protesters refer to the Freedom Charter (1956) and the Constitution of the Republic (1996) to demonstrate how the government has deviated from the aspirations espoused in these founding documents.

The above visual effects are understood in terms of the recent explosion in digital technologies that facilitate flawless compositing, digital sets, and fully computer-generated editing, thereby technically empowering the image maker's tool kit. Despite these films falling within the documentary genre, this process is celebrated for stretching the genre boundaries because facilitates how imagery is altered, created, or enhanced for live action, particularly in the case where the latter could not be captured due to some reasons such cost, level of risk or impracticality (Evans, 2019). Hence, the visual approach techniques applicable in both films have been used as creative tools to reconstruct and re-enact what may have probably been impossible to collect or shoot taking into cognisance the historical aspects and sensitivity of forensic data of both films respectively.



Figure 5.8: Some miners laid down injured, and others were instantly killed by state police during the shooting. Photograph: from *Miners Shot Down* (2014) film.

Notably, the study tries to engage both films with respect to the discourse over the significance of these films in this day and age especially in terms of their aptitude to objectively serve as sources and documentation of political transformation challenges in post-apartheid South Africa. For *Miners Shot Down*

(2014), some scholars have argued how the footage of dead miners strewn all over the crime scene resembled the lethal response with which the apartheid police stamped out dissent in the pre-1994 era (Boëttger & Rathbone, 2016). Meanwhile, evidence in the camera shots from (Narration time:01:09:00) proves that, although the Marikana ordeal continues to serve as cumulative cultural heritage over the apartheid legacy, it carries the unintended purpose that (re) opening wounds which had otherwise virtually closed following the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of 1996. Despite most of the footage referred to in this scene is not necessarily central to the technical side of this study, the film's producers applied compelling technical production techniques to depict how dissent may be dealt with in the post-apartheid

democratic society. While this observation is controversial in as far as scholars present divergent views on challenges that South Africans encounter in a democratic dispensation, it is crucial to further analyse other facets of film compositions such as visual scripting to validate the relevance of visual elements in the production of both *Miners Shot Down (2014)* and *Dear Mandela (2011)* as post-apartheid socio-economic and political artefacts.

5.3.5 Visual scripting

The study noted that a combination of technical elements is critical for the composition of a documentary including the use of camera shots and angles, colour, and visual effects. In this subsection, these aspects are discussed in the context of the visual script without which the entire film narrative becomes unachievable. The researcher borrows Perez's (2019) definition which views visual scripting as the coordination of words with pictures in sequence. In both films under study, the producers adopted scripting features engendered in the context of popular protest deliberately designed to address the socio-economic and political grievances among disgruntled citizens. The scripts are designed and executed in a manner that is aligned explicitly to the reality genre with the intention to represent real issues affecting the welfare of society. This is evident in a scene (Narration time, 0:20:45) in *Dear Mandela (2011)* where the writer uses the narrative style of adaptive scripting to highlight how the democratisation process ushered great hope for the people but turned into a bliss of promises. This is juxtaposed with the legendary Mandela who championed the freedom project in South Africa and inspired hope in the citizens for a democratic, non-sexist and just society. Furthermore, it is against this background that the production and scripting of these films aimed at challenging colonial and discriminatory tendencies of the past which seems the writer uses to motivate the poor and marginalised groups of society to confront the injustices of the day.

The writers have exploited specific verbal and non-verbal scripting features including choice of language, tone, drama, music, conflict, vulnerability, and resistance antics to confront undemocratic practices. The film *Dear Mandela (2011)* does this through the use of music and dance (sloganeering), verbal articulation and commentary where Mnikelo denounces how the local leadership of the ANC have reneged on their promises to build houses and provide social amenities such as water and toilets for

the citizens. In these documentaries under study, visual scripting has succinctly presented a compilation of the social and economic realities, further exposing the malpractices of the post-apartheid government which has abandoned the collective approach to development. They further emphasise the concentration of power on individuals who happen to focus on their interests. The visual/screenplay scripts of both films thrive on the use of strong personalities or protagonists such as Mgcineni “Mambush” Noki in *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and Sbu Zikode in *Dear Mandela* (2011) who rose to the level of community heroism in challenging the symbols of capital monopoly and dominant class over the most pressing circumstances affecting the South African working class and marginalised communities.

5.3.6 Voice-over narration

As is commonly applied to many other film genres, the use of voice-over narration has been popularly used in film production and is useful for film critics as a technique that helps filmmakers to convey deeper meaning to the audience (Pérez, 2019). In this study, both films were not an exception as they adopted voice-over narration as an active agent that helped to engender the necessary delivery towards a greater understanding of the themes being driven to the audience in a way that an actor’s performance or scenery would not be able to do. The films appropriately use a voice-over to provide the viewers with audio-visual information through the film’s soundtrack, which is paired with important visual aids such as the colour of the sky, dried/green grass, etc. This technique provides filmmakers with a range of abilities in storytelling that they otherwise would not have been able to deliver in its absence. In both films’ understudy, the application of the voice-over concurs with Chovanec (2020) and Nicholas and Price’s (1998) view that, the real power of a voice-over is its ability to communicate directly with the audience. In this case, the films relied on the voice of an actor (narrator) who plays the invisible controlling role of narrator or storyteller without participating in it directly. In so doing, the voiceover in *Miners Shot Down* (2014) had the role of uncovering or solving the mystery of the anxiety that characterised the protracted strike by the Marikana protesters whose demands were met with lethal state power. In *Dear Mandela* (2011), unlike in most films, the voice-over is not restricted to one form but spread form, but the voice-over includes some of the participants in the name of Mazwi, Mnikelo and Zama whose role helps to corroborate the perspective of the protagonists to strengthen the cause of the

narrative. Thus, in both documentaries, the voice-over is used as a technical imperative to assume the role of uncovering or solving the mystery (Pérez, 2019), meanwhile, the images are either rolling or revealing accompanying footage. Whereas the voice-over may also be used in other genres such as the detective fiction film noir, where it can be applied to record the thoughts of the hero or to recount the story in a flashback, this technique is used in *Miners Shot Down* (2014) to reflect on what could have been done to avoid the Marikana tragedy, especially during the Farlam Commission of Inquiry (Narration time: 0:03:56).



Figure 5.9: Marikana Commission of Inquiry. Photograph: from *Miners Shot Down* (2014) film

5.4 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

The study showcases how the two films fit within Soudien's (2012) analysis of film as an artefact that is capable of speaking to the dissatisfaction of a particular group of people in society about the political elitism that continues to drive systematic socioeconomic exclusion in South Africa. This is evident in the analysis of the film's understudy, which thrives on common but extraordinary tentacles of poor governance in post-colonial Africa. As Berger (1991) noted a few decades ago, film especially the

documentary genre often tries to capture facts and realities as an authentic narrative to highlight societal struggles against injustice. In this subsection, this issue is discussed under the following subheadings.

5.4.1 Human Settlement and poor living conditions

The subject of human settlement and living conditions in South Africa has come under great scrutiny over the past decades into democracy (Budlender & Royston, 2016). However, the two films are a reflection of the current socio-economic and intricate political processes that preoccupy the progressive space, a tendency that often negatively affects the delivery of services. In *Dear Mandela (2011)*, this is highlighted through the ability of the leaderless community to mobilise some sections of civil society, particularly the poor homeless and marginalised people to seek alternative means of voicing their frustrations (Narration time: 0:37:56) (Mazwi edging community members to join their movement (*Abahlali-base-Mjondolo*) so there won't be evicted from their shacks until houses are built for them as promised by the government since 1994). In view of this leadership gap, apolitical individual personalities such as Mazwi, Mnikelo, Zama and S'bu Zikode came from the grassroots to help organise and direct the protesting communities to register their grievances.



Figure 5.10: The shack dwellers activists (from left to right) Mnikelo, Mazwi and Zama. Photograph: From *Dear Mandela* (2011) film.



Figure 5.11: The president of *Abahlali base Mjondolo* S'bu Zikonde at his home. Photograph: from *Dear Mandela* (2011) film.

Undoubtedly, this spectacle in a democratic environment is a clear demonstration of the disjuncture that exists between the elected leaders of society and the realities that exist within the communities where the latter have no access to standard housing, schools, healthcare, and clean water. In the case of the protesters in Marikana, evidence shows that the miners' human living conditions especially housing, health care and access to education for their children had been subjects of perennial discussion over the years with no light showing at the end of the tunnel (Smoke and Mirrors, 2016). Remarks by the leader(s) of the Kennedy Road informal settlement community in *Dear Mandela* (2011) are cast in the context where erstwhile protesters who were firmly located within the nationalist front against apartheid are now applying similar tactics to undermine and oppress their own people in a democratic South Africa. Hence, the protests are meant to put pressure on the *African National Congress*

which led the government to be more socially responsive to the demands of society. Ironically, the rhetoric in political statements by those in authority shows that mining operators operate in solidarity with other sympathetic formations to exploit the workers. Moreover, political commentators and civic organisations have been cited expressing their displeasure about the increasing gap between policy and practical material conditions of the citizens.



Figure 5.12: depiction of poor living conditions in Marikana informal settlements.

Photograph: from *Miners Shot Down* (2014) film.



Figure 5.13: shack houses in the Durban informal settlements. Photograph: from *Dear Mandela (2011) Film.*

5.4.2 Poor Governance and Service Delivery Challenges

Both films under study have an interface that converges in showcasing consequences of maladministration littered with offshoots of poor service delivery and accompanying protests. Despite this being a local scene in the South African context, Naidoo (2006) showed that “a prominent diagnosis of Africa’s post-colonial developmental crisis has been the absence of good and democratic governance among its member states. This means that, whereas the transition of Africa (including South Africa) from colonial (apartheid) rule to freedom came with potential opportunities for a progressive society, this development has been accompanied by numerous socio-economic challenges (Sebola & Tsheola, 2017). After the attainment of freedom, evidence in the two films shows that the South African government adopted the ‘developmental state’ framework to redress colonial injustices towards a new democratic social order. In many contexts including the rural areas and informal settlements, this came with noble policy reforms and structural reconfigurations that gave hope to the majority of formerly oppressed people. The documentaries show that, on the contrary, more than two decades after freedom, the citizens continue to witness weak socio-economic systems, largely blamed on maladministration and poor implementation of existing policies (Makhudu, 2017). In both documentaries, union leaders (including from

unrecognised formations) and unelected representatives of the people have lamented how this period has been characterised by abject neglect of the democratic virtues espoused in the freedom charter and the constitution of the country (Narration time: 0:08:32) in *Dear Mandela* (2011) film.



Figure 5.14: Mnikelo reading out loud and reminding the residents of their constitutional rights. Photograph: from *Dear Mandela* (2011) film.

Based on both narratives presented in the documentaries, this study observes that the post-apartheid era has largely fallen short of meeting the expectations of the people because there is evidence of failure to provide effective checks and balances where the executive becomes more responsive to the needs of the poor citizens. This is clear where despite the claims that there is the rule of law in the country, the absence of accountability and upholding of human rights have not been evident particularly where some communities have had to choose alternative leaders outside the electoral process to fill in the gap left by elected local government leaders.



Figure 5.15: AMCU president Joseph Mathunjwa at the rally addressing the miners.

Photograph: from *Miners Shot Down* (2014) film.

Suffice it to say that most of the matters raised in the documentaries relate to the Bill of Rights in Chapter of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) such as freedom of speech, association, assembly and human dignity. *Dear Mandela* (2011) film is a storyline that represents the view that socio-economic development for the majority of citizens, particularly the poor and formerly disenfranchised masses remains a pipe dream as elected leaders live without impunity meanwhile the voters are left without legal recourse and have to opt for violent and unprotected strikes, further exposing them to the ruthless security agents of the state. The narration time (0:26:51) scene in *Dear Mandela* (2011) demonstrates that widespread corruption and lack of accountability have grown to be precursors of overt systematic misdeeds of human rights abuses, particularly with respect to evictions of people in the informal settlements who have no means of sustaining their livelihoods and remain unemployed. In some instances, this situation has led to confrontations with the law and has led to the seizure of laws to the advantage of those in authority who use their political influence to misdirect government goals such as in the case of the Marikana massacre. The above situation has yielded intractable socio-economic and policy-

related challenges that have led to poor accountability and poor governance (Tshandu, 2010). In the context of the narrative depicted in the two films, this has given way to a barrage of social ills resulting from maladministration, corruption, and patronage. To this end, these convolutions and contestations have led to untenable confrontations that continue to undermine the democratic process to the demise of constitutionalism, human rights and national building associated with the founding fathers such as Mandela.



Figure 5.16: the “red-ants” sent by the municipality to demolish shacks with police present. Photograph: from *Dear Mandela* (2011) film.

5.4.3 Violence and Insecurity in the South African Townships

This study notes that the scriptwriters of both documentaries are conscious of the nature and physical environment within which the events portrayed in the films occurred. Undoubtedly, South Africa has a long and gruesome history of different forms of violence pre-1994 and in the democratic dispensation. This is against the hope and expectations the world held after the country attained freedom as a constitutional democracy, where it was expected that it would overcome the challenges it inherited from its violent past (Muswede, 2022). Both films have content that is laced with social protest however, there is political violence mixed with agitated trade unionism in the Marikana massacre (2012) which left at least 34 miners dead. Although this violence is inclined towards and may not necessarily be classified as criminality, it contributes to creating a bad perception of the country and its image internationally. Following this, a number of research reports have labelled South Africa as one of the most violent societies in the world with cities such as Johannesburg,

Cape Town and Durban featuring very high violence-related discourses (Gotsch, Katsaura, Urgur & Katsang, 2013; Cinini & Mkhize, 2021). Coincidentally, it is in these cities where violent crimes take numerous forms including politically motivated violence; intra and inter-gang fights; neighbourhood conflicts, and rampant xenophobic violence (Collins, 2013). Therefore, both scripts of the film's understudy reflect characteristics of the above violence, which may suggest that violent protests by both disgruntled workers and communities in the informal settlements could be taking a cue from society in general. In the recent past, both service delivery protests and labour disputes seem to display a consistent trend of violent campaigns and acts often compounded by shop lootings, vandalism, mob justice, and murder cases that go unreported due to alleged intimidation or lack of evidence (Cinini & Singh, 2021). The above scenario is evidently portrayed in the documentary *Miners Shot Down* (2014) in what is popularly known as the Marikana massacre where claims of the union NUM clashes with the miners at their offices were reported, and a number of shootings at the employees by NUM officials were recorded (Narration time: 0:16:55).



Figure 5.17: miners at AMCU rally since NUM failed to represent them. Photograph: from *Miners Shot Down* (2014) film.

With respect to the characterisation of violence and insecurity as portrayed in the two films, some scholars have concurred that incidences of crime and violence can be correlated with multi-dimensional urban risk factors such as increased poverty,

unemployment, inadequate basic services, health care and overcrowding (Gotsch, Katsaura, Ugur & Katsang, 2013). As highlighted in both *Dear Mandela (2011)* and *Miners Shot Down (2014)*, this observation feeds into the narrative that the South African government has failed its people, particularly its working class and the poor. In *Dear Mandela (2011)*, the community concerns have not been met despite numerous attempts by the same to engage the elected leadership and government structures responsible for community safety. Due to the authorities being unable to cater for and satisfy the socio-economic needs of its citizens, the people took it upon themselves to engage in violent protests and an array of multi-faceted anti-social behaviour in a bid to attract the attention of other stakeholders including the media (Include evidence if applicable). Due to these challenges, some scholars have argued that due to the anger created by these (socio-economic) strains, citizens tend to develop a tendency to be violent and intolerant even of migrants (Cinini & Singh, 2019). In the context of community safety and security which should be understood in terms of 'freedom from fear' and 'freedom from want' among residents, both documentaries paint an aggressive picture of the socio-political environment that characterises South Africa as a violent nation with little prospects for economic stability due to class conflicts and inequality. This is supported by the view that a large section of South Africans lives below the poverty line and therefore live in the terror of poor safety and insecurity compounded by perpetual fear of systematic and structural victimisation (Muswede, 2022).

5.4.4 Poverty, high unemployment and poor working conditions

This theme evolves around what the country has witnessed in the past few decades as evidenced by weak political and socio-economic systems. The Marikana ordeal is especially recognised for engendering the notable encounter between the law enforcement agents and society, which the media and opposition formations continue to associate with the unprecedented suffering of the majority of the poor and jobless people in South Africa.

Dear Mandela (2011) advances the view that, owing to the significant contribution of the working class towards the resistance and eventual collapse of the apartheid regime, post-apartheid South African society ought to be a better place to live. In the participants' view, this position is apparent because the goals of the struggle for

freedom are aimed at dealing with the legacies of racial superiority and exploitation of the black majority. Some of the participants are quoted stating that Mnikelo said the constitution clearly states that there is no legislature that may permit arbitrary evictions however, the Slum Act (2007) gives power to the municipality and landowners to evict people, something we will not allow. All the participants are decrying the democratic dispensation, which has evolved into a landscape of contestations over the same challenges experienced during the struggle for freedom.

Dear Mandela (2011) also highlights that, despite the clear prescripts in the Bill of Rights and other statutory organisations such as the South African Human Rights Commission, South African citizens still experience fundamental social and economic injustices. These socio-economic variations are more visibly biased to the detriment of the working class, a majority of whom are based in the townships, informal settlements and rural settings (Narration time: 0:18:40). This is where Zama explained how politicians come to count the shacks before elections putting numbers at each door promising the dwellers houses. Apparently, for the politicians this category of the population is very important because urban townships and rural communities form the core section of the electorate from which the government takes its mandate. For most poor parents who depend on the so-called “no-fee” schools, the right to quality education for their children has remained unattainable due to the lack of permanent homes, which limits opportunities to escape the generational poverty trap. This is true for most societies because, poverty has both a direct and indirect relationship with continuing inequality even in the face of democratic reforms (Spren & Vally, 2006). Thus, the documentary highlights how South Africa faces a big challenge to provide access to quality education for the majority of its poor population that live in townships and informal settlements such as those in the outskirts of Durban. The study notes that most of these challenges have been caused by a lack of sustained investment into transforming institutions of the state, which continue to reflect apartheid trends that were based on prejudice.



Figure 5.18: transit camp that residents refer to as a “dump site” / “tin houses” where the government will allegedly allocate people in a false pretence of giving them a house in 90 days. Photograph: from *Dear Mandela (2011)* film.

The challenge of unfair labour practices in the form of poor wages, poor living conditions and exploitation are traceable to the apartheid years. In the *Miners shot Down (2014)* film, the popular stance taken by AMCU resonated with the majority of the protesters because they had lost respect for NUM, which they felt did not take their grievances seriously. Part of the deliberations between Lonmin and the workers demonstrates racial undertones associated with South Africa’s colonial legacy which the documentary places predominantly on the doorstep of big business as the traditional symbols of the past regime. Hence, the film clearly portrays engrained patterns of racism and white privilege which still remain evident despite the broad claims of transformation that have characterised the post-apartheid socio-economic landscape in South Africa.

Although matters of race are not overtly covered in both documentaries, the underlying elements of the producers’ intentions show that race dynamics continue to be used to justify the exclusion of some sections of the South African population, specifically the black majority people (Soudien, 2012). The historical problem is that the racial hierarchy was entrenched in legislation and government systems which denied the majority of the black population access to viable economic activity including access to land; labour inequalities and ensuring that white employees were paid more than other people for the same kind of work (Soudien, 2012). *Miners Shot Down (2014)* presents the socio-political milieu of the post-apartheid era with the potential to promote the

voices of the marginalised majority, who are the working class yearning for economic and financial freedom. Despite its use of reconstruction and docu-drama aesthetics, the film demonstrates the degree of panic that gripped the mining industry at the time, reflective of an outright war situation where miners resorted to agitated and violent means of labour unionism. Coupled with the events that evolved from the protests by Durbanites in the informal settlements in *Dear Mandela (2011)*, both film scripts are carefully tailored to demonstrate the protesters' overall dissatisfaction with the socio-political circumstances induced by poor governance practices in democratic South Africa. Therefore, the documentaries are a critical contribution to our understanding of the urge by poor sections of society to protest against the unjust practices of corporate owners and government authorities.

5.4.5 Violation of human rights and freedom of association

For the producers of both documentaries' understudy, the key message in the narrative represents the need to uphold human rights including human dignity for all citizens. While speaking to the protesters, the leaders of the protests, Mgcineni "Mambush" Noki, Andries Ntshenyeho and fellow miners made converging comments that democracy should be seen as a system of governance that is concerned with human rights and the broad interests of the citizens (Narration time:0:25:20). Ideologically, this frames their understanding of democracy in the context of humanistic demands that are placed on those in power to pressure them to be responsive to the will of the people. This concurs with Heywood's (2015) view that democracy should allude to a scenario where the system of rule is defined in terms of governance by the people, punctuated by continuous participation in the decision-making processes of the government. In the South African political environment and as alluded to by the protesters in *Dear Mandela (2014)*, service delivery and poor governance are a product of corruption and maladministration in the local government sphere, which is the 3rd tier closest to the people. Furthermore, the leaders of the protests openly denounced their elected leaders whom they labelled as "hypocrites' oppressors" who had abandoned the basic principles of the struggle for freedom. Meanwhile, the presence of security agents was perceived as the perpetuation of the apartheid-style of repression, which interfered with their human rights including the right to freedom of expression, assembly and protest.



Figure 5.19: miners explaining their reason for striking to police who barricaded them and asked them to let them pass. Photograph: *Miners Shot Down* (2014) film.

The analysis further shows that both films are a projection of the roadmap towards a new political consciousness and nation-building process based on a forced dialogue by the protesters. The involvement of AMCU as a defect labour union at Lonmin is an illustration of how to traverse formalised procedures to subvert the injustices of the oppressor on the basis of political re-organisation and social mobilisation. This stage juxtaposes the diplomatic skills that Mandela possessed when he successfully created a balance between “past legacies of animosity and a future of hope” (Zagacki, 2003) against the contemporary use of reactive force in a democratic South Africa. However, while Mandela’s approach was accomplished without inducing fear and prejudice among the stakeholders, the latter approach used against homeless residents in Durban had the potential to further foment deep divisions between the poor and the elite, particularly the conservative parties. The film *Dear Mandela* (2011) especially casts the former President of South Africa as a leader with a profound democratic visionary who was committed to a government of the people, by the people and for the people”, which was inclusive of all the people in South Africa (Zagacki, 2003: 726). Essentially, the film producers successfully persuaded the viewers to see Mandela as the aspirational figure who carried the hopes of his own people and those of the rest of the world who shared his vision for a free non-racial and non-sexist democratic South Africa with equal opportunities for all. Despite this notion not being overtly

displayed in both films under study, Mandela's political beliefs were validated through the enactment of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa in 1996, which espoused his commitment to upholding human rights and promotion of good governance to enhance good living standards of the citizens (RSA: Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996).

5.5 POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL SYMBOLISM IN THE SELECTED FILMS

This section of the study examines the use of political and ideological symbolism as part of production and composition techniques employed by film producers to achieve scope and audience attraction in the selected films. This stems from the view that a symbol arises when an image is surrounded by a complexity of conscious and unconscious associations (Chante, 2021). In both films' under study, symbolism played a significant role in representing the contemporary as well as historical context of the South African socio-economic and political landscape. Since symbolism is a form of technical expression in film production, this involved use of diverse forms of symbols in the form of music, dance, colour, characters, images, and specific scenes to highlight crucial aspects of the socio-economic and political milieu. This perspective subscribes to the view that the interpretation of symbols differs from society to society and is not universal, hence the need to contextualise their analysis and interpretation as presented below.

5.5.1 Nelson Mandela: The Messianic symbol of hope for South Africa



Figure 5.20: former President Mandela on archival footage of April 1999.

Photograph: from *Dear Mandela* (2011) film.

In spite of the legacy associated with Nelson Mandela, many people in the world, the name resonates with the saintly man whose life became “the world’s favourite fairy tale” that mythologises South Africa’s transition to democracy in 1994 (Gevisser, 2000). This has led to the numerous accumulative collections of artistic expressions by a wide range of authors in an attempt to describe, interpret and celebrate his life in diverse, including films such as *Mandela the Living Legend* (2013) and *Dear Mandela* (2011), which is featured in the current study. In the latter film, Mandela is the founding father and symbol of a new dispensation that represents hope, prosperity and a progressive socio-economic trajectory (Narration time: 0:01:38). This is evident in some of the autobiographical works by Southall (2011) and Zagacki (2003) the authors present Mandela as the very symbol of black resistance against apartheid and colonialism. Like in the film, *Dear Mandela* (2011), he is also presented as a

charismatic leader who delivered the “miracle rainbow nation” in 1994 when South Africa transformed from minority rule to democracy. As the world’s most famous political prisoner (Pollard, 1994), Mandela’s political narrative in both local and international spaces reckon how he emerged with boldened dignity and strength after surviving 27 years of incarceration in what was meant to be a life sentence.

A close examination of the script, *Dear Mandela* (2011) demonstrates most of his political insights also evident in his personal writings such as *Long Walk to Freedom* (1994); *The struggle is my life* (1978) and *Conversations with Myself* (2010), which all serve as confirmatory records of his exemplary leadership qualities. In both *Dear Mandela* (2011) and *Miners Shot Down* (2014), the people’s narrative reveals that society reminisces Mandela’s leadership style of leading from the front, selflessness and generosity, which attributes are in contrast with the current corrupt ANC leadership. This is evident when Mzoxolo Magidiwana one of the strike leaders said, “What made us angry as Lonmin workers was the hypocrisy of the union we elected and we took a decision to negotiate with the employer by ourselves because we are struggling, while the NUM is sitting comfortably in their offices”. Both films lament the absence of Mandela’s legendary charisma that bestowed on him the international accolades of good leadership as a symbol of a people-driven revolutionary who gave hope to the South African people during difficult times (Pollard, 1994).

Beyond Mandela being presented as a symbol of political freedom, both *Dear Mandela* (2011) and *Miners Shot Down* (2014) seem to suggest that Mandela’s selfless leadership would have served them better even on the economic front. In the documentary, Tholakele Dlunga and Mgcineni “Mambush” Noki denounced the greed and maladministration associated with the ANC government which comes to the people during the electoral period only but neglects its obligation thereafter until another election period. The narrative implies that, despite Nelson Mandela having encountered numerous hurdles which stood in the way of the transition to democratic change in South Africa, his determination was revealed when he overcame the “multiple tropes of resistance as a leader to satisfaction of the rest of his constituents. This view is presented against the arrogance of the current leadership which has given up on their constituencies in order to fulfil their personal interests. For instance, the leaders of *Abahlali base Mjondolo* were intimidated, killed, and had death threats and their homes demolished, merely because they took the government/ municipality to

Constitutional Court over the Slum Act of 2007 that threatened to evict them from their shack homes. The members had to flee their homes and live in safe houses. Thus, the films portray how the transition to democracy has unfolded in a double-standard fashion where promises were made to promote justice and equality on the basis of reconstruction and nation-building but have been turned into a farce where the poor feel betrayed by their leaders.

In *Dear Mandela (2011)*, the producer seems to suggest that Mandela is the “bridge” that could withstand the pressure to maintain the balance between historically acclaimed antagonistic ideological forces, and therefore his style of leadership remains relevant to date. From this perspective, it would seem that the protesters’ only hope lies in Mandela’s shadow as the symbol of black people’s liberation from poor governance and poverty. The film mocks the current leadership as it espouses how the twenty-seven years of Mandela’s imprisonment enhanced his stature to emerge as a compassionate idealist, and astute thinker, which eventually transformed into a constitutional democratic socialite (Walshe, 1987). Although this is not directly stated in the films under study, Mandela’s own life as a nationalist and freedom fighter represents the calibre of selfless leaders of the ANC who mirrored the way in which a social movement should direct society. This is contrary to Marikana’s Lonmin management as represented by Barnard Mokwena a senior vice president whose interest was to maximise profit and shield an oppressive capitalist system, which resembles the apartheid extractive model (Narration time, 0:34:38). The protesters in both films, particularly in *Dear Mandela (2011)* express rhetorical statements that celebrate Mandela’s political courage, integrity and symbolic vision as personal elements that sustained his focus on the establishment of democracy in South Africa. As opposed to the current crop of leadership, particularly those who are elected into government, Mandela serves as the living symbol of African resistance against apartheid and the oppression of one man by another. This was demonstrated by his willingness to take political risks and rise above the racist tendencies of the apartheid and contending constituencies among his own people (Berg, 2014). Thus, the film uses this juxtaposed approach to remind South Africans that Nelson Mandela was a true revolutionary symbol of sacrifice, bravery, and determination whose selfless leadership should be espoused in today’s political environment to help address South Africa’s socio-economic challenges.

5.5.2 Songs and dances that reflect South Africa's struggles for freedom.

Both films' understudy makes use of a series of struggle songs, particularly freedom songs, which inspired the people who resisted apartheid and fought for freedom several decades before the attainment of democracy in South Africa. Like in the times of the struggle for freedom, the purpose of music among the protesters in both films is to generate and strengthen group identity and group solidarity among the workers, especially in *Miners Shot Down* (2014). As is applicable in numerous films during and after apartheid in South Africa, protesters' and marginalised communities' behaviour resonates with song and music in the repertoire of the musical genre (Gray, 2004). The denouncing songs sung in the streets and popular "kopje" which had become the traditional meeting place of the striking miners were the uniting force among the angry protesters. An analysis of the songs' lyrics provides a clear indication that the black people narrative in South Africa is characterised by poverty, oppression and victimisation. This is evident in the lyrics of the songs "*Senzeni na...*" (Narration time: 1:02:05) and "*the wind is blowing and we're left out in the cold...*" (Narration time: 0:48:29), whose refrains or choruses reveal that black people are servants of the capitalist system, further highlighting the intensity of the oppression that characterises the mining industry existed in apartheid South African and was administered by the Afrikaners or Boers.

Some of the songs can be interpreted as expressions that are articulating the struggle and oppression as miners and community protesters highlight their sufferings as marginalised people in a democratic country. In some moments, both film scripts indicate how their suffering unites them across their ethnic and cultural divide, which becomes their source of strength (Narration time: 0:08:02) when they sang "*Let us fight because white people (won't let us negotiate...*". In the case of *Miners Shot Down* (2014) where protesters had lost their colleagues and were overcome by grief, the deaths of their friends in the initial period of the protest did not discourage them from forging ahead with the strike demanding a living wage. In fact, after these initial events, they protested further and protractedly advanced beyond the demarcated areas and were seemingly determined to apply violence. The song *Senzeni na*, which denotes sombreness and a strong sense of loss as protesters mourned their colleagues and

the plight of the nation illuminates both the struggle of black South Africans and the pain of Africa at large (West, 2017). This message broadly resonates with a great deal of the social, cultural and economic environment, which has been disrupted by the political manoeuvring of capital in Africa. This is echoed by the union leaders and commentators who also noted that native South Africans have lost most of their human rights. In the process, this has caused them to lose their form of wealth or financial sustenance which is the biggest cause of black poverty and social disempowerment of black South Africans (Mubangizi, 2020).

Some scholars have noted that songs of the struggle in most Africans contribute to the construction of multi-layered contexts in which socio-economic, political and personal human experiences are articulated (le Roux-Kemp, 2014). Each song has its own unique focus but ultimately contributes to our understanding of how the participants in both contexts were affected by the unfolding events. For this reason, music has always been a part of the South African political discourse because black South Africans have used it as a modification of cultural styles influenced by their socio-economic and political conditions (Herget, 2021). Hence, the producers/directors of the selected films justifiably made use of struggle songs for the audience to understand the social conditions in which the protesters found themselves. Conversely, the adoption of music in a protest has also served as an element to emphasise protesters' hope for the liberties or benefits associated with the strike as was the case with "*Freedom is coming tomorrow...*" as one of the songs that featured dominantly in the South African feature film *Sarafina* (Lubbe, 2016), which also depicted a push-back against oppression and colonial prejudice.

A close analysis of the events that unfold in both documentaries shows that music, particularly songs of the struggle for freedom was used as a tool to speak back to power. comprising the ruling party, the white minority who resembles the apartheid past and the new black capitalists who include business executives, who continue to apply oppressive tendencies and resist transformation. Numerous slogans, chants and denigratory lyrics- such as "No matter how you strengthen your balls you are nothing..." and "Let us fight because white people won't let us negotiate..." in *Miners Shot Down* (2014) were used to mock and ridicule the police and executive authorities of Lonmin (Narrative time: 0:26:58).

5.5.2.1 Dance as an expression of political defiance

Similarly, the use of dance and choreography along with songs associated with social commentary is representative of the contemporary South African form of protest (Omotayo, 2019). This involves a situation where dance is used as a means of artistic caricature to break free from orthodox practice and enhance a mood that enables protesters to express themselves without limitations or any form of consequence. In the films under study, particularly in *Dear Mandela* (2011), the protest features as a space where community members freely vent out their frustrations laced with a sense of arrogance and assurance that this approach will yield the desired attention from the authorities who should help them acquire decent houses and other social amenities.

In view of the above arguments, it is clear that dance can speak to the dissatisfaction of a particular class of people, especially in areas where racial prejudice and oppression are involved as the main social evils that drive systematic socio-economic exclusion of the masses from basic services (Soudien, 2012). More importantly, old memories about related events can be invoked through dances that relate to the class struggle for freedom and equality, which many South Africans still relate to. This approach to the resistance against apartheid was performed in other films such as *Sarafina* (1992), *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* (1987) and *Cry Freedom* (1987) before 1994 where struggle songs were used as a gesture that galvanised South Africans, particularly the youth to united against the oppressive forces of apartheid. Through choreography and costumes, regardless of their uncoordinated fashion or design, the combination of dance and song gave protesters in *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011) the “old-time” anti-apartheid posture and the potential to mobilise all oppressed South Africans to gather under a stronger sense of collective identity to challenge the elected government of South Africa. Apparently, these were the tools with which nationalists and anti-apartheid activists galvanised support among the masses to fight the apartheid system. This concurs with some scholars’ view who observed that “when independence came, (some) Africans revitalised some traditional dances and formed dance companies whose members could be used to increase national identity while serving as ambassadors” (Snipe, 2007:71).

Unlike the use of traditional weapons and modern artillery, the use of dance and song coupled with rhythmic movements, steps, and multiple gestures often convey a unique

mood or psyche upon a specific event to give it social credence. To most of the black people both during apartheid and democratic South Africa, dance has become a way of socio-political expression, which resonates with sloganeering and picketing against injustices imposed by those in authority. Hence, the combination of dance and song portrayed in both films' understudy indicates that, regardless of the context within which the protest occurs, South African protesters are prone to use "black dance" as a form of political strength and a non-violent tool against oppression. In the films' understudy, some of the evident dances are IsiZulu traditional genres including Imbube, Ingquzu and re-arranged religious tunes such as *Senzeni na...* (Narration time: 1:02:05). The reconfiguration and re-arrangement of these dances and songs resemble the inclusive nature of African dance allowing protesters of all participating ethnic groups to move into a single rhythm resembling freedom and equality (Saks, 2010). Thus, beyond being a performance art practised over many years, dance in South Africa has been used during protests as a social expression that depicts political defiance against abuse of power, violation of human rights and other forms of oppression.

5.5.3 State security posture: Guns and heavy-handed policing



Figure 5.21: police heavily armed and their many vehicles as if they came to war.

Photograph: from *Miners Shot Down* (2014) film.

Miners Shot Down (2014) in particular is a composition that is specifically a dichotomous contestation between an arrogant government and proletariat mobilisation against corporate exploitation where Marikana turned from a conflict zone. This is explained by the film's predominant use of security features synonymous with apartheid police responding to the protest with unrestrained brutal violence and application of lethal force including firing live rounds of ammunition at the protesters.



Figure 5:22: armed police as their waiting on the red ants demolishing shacks at Kenny Road. Photograph: from *Dear Mandela* (2011) film.

In view of the structural arrangement of the economy in post-apartheid South Africa, political administration, some scholars have noted that the control over the major means of development remains within the power of the corporate sector (Tangri & Southall 2008). This compels the populace, particularly the working class to be fostered into perpetual subordination to the power and authority of business and the political elite. This is proven by the heavy presence of the police with lethal state security equipment which went beyond crowd management parameters. For example, in *Miners Shot Down* (2014) the police had cars, nyalas, helicopters, AK47s and live ammunition, which resembled troops going to war. Moreover, evidence from the Farlam Commission showed that the Police Command in the North-West Province took external instructions outside the ambit of the Department to make very important operational decisions which led to the massacre. This concurs with the developments that characterised the protests portrayed in *Dear Mandela* (2011) where some Black communities who so a long time have been seen as passive citizens have assumed a defiant posture to protest against their elected government. This is despite the

promised constitutional obligations placed on their political administration to provide them with basic services as stated in Chapter 2; of the Bill of Rights (RSA Constitution 1996). The government's response to the harsh living conditions of these people is to place local government restrictions and bylaws which outlaw the protesters' actions in terms of spatial and/or informal settlements legislation nearly synonymous with the apartheid system of governance. It is this kind of maltreatment of the citizens in both scenarios represented in the two films that necessitated mobilisation and agitated activism against the government and corporate structures. Therefore, the study shows that failure to honour constitutional obligations by the elected government including creating an environment that promotes equality and social justice contributed to reasons why the diverse labour and social formations converged to face both their physical and symbolic oppressors despite the latter's reinforcement of lethal response against them as depicted in both films.

5.5.4 Political Elitism, betrayal and legal recourse

The concepts discussed in this sub-section relate to the developments associated with the transition from colonialism to African rule in a majority of African countries. Whereas this transfer of power was expected to transform the colonial patterns of governance from authoritarian practice to pluralistic-consultative approaches, in contrast, most African governments degenerated into misrule, lack of accountability and no regard for human rights (Dieltiens, 2005). In South Africa, as portrayed in the numerous scenes in both films' understudy, society was optimistic that the new social order would produce effective structural redress of the injustices associated with colonial rule. This would further give rise to sustainable socio-economic gains for the majority of citizens, particularly the poor and formerly disenfranchised masses. Evidence in the films, particularly the depiction of the socio-economic distance between the rich and poor has made the constitutional aspirations of South Africans a pipe dream. In the context of economic freedom and distributive structures of the state resources, which have traditionally resided within the state, it is evident that not much has shifted as most resources are still in the hands of a minority who control the means of production as the state continue to fail to fulfil its obligations (Buscher & Dietz, 2005). Subsequently, the films reveal how the organs of the state such as the police and some politicians have abandoned their oath and continue to "serve distributive regimes

and patronage on behalf of the elite and private financial interests” (Sebola & Tsheola, 2017: 2).

Thus, the films’ understudy, especially *Dear Mandela (2011)*, uses Mandela’s leadership style as a sharp contrast to other nationalist leaders such as former president Jacob Zuma whom the producers have used as symbols of greed, elitism and betrayal of the national development project. This is particularly applicable in South Africa where anti-apartheid activism and incarceration have been used by some former nationalists as entitlement to exclusive privileges and unfettered access to state resources. Undemocratic, as this may be, the narrator (voice-over) implicitly deplores this tendency and how it creates a shift from the founding imperatives of the struggle for freedom towards the promotion of self-aggrandisement. Thus, the narrative in *Dear Mandela (2011)* ironically juxtaposes Mandela’s unique leadership style against the current crop of leaders who have abandoned the collective aspirations of a democratic South Africa into a state of oblivion that is characterised by landlessness and desperation.

While Both films seem to embrace and acknowledge the inherent influence of competing interests between international investment or capital and social justice and equity, they explicitly reject the violation of human rights and prejudice as exemplified in the values espoused by AMCU, which so members of NUM deflecting to join because of the former’s alignment with the working class. This ideological view categorically projects leaders of Mandela’s calibre at the centre of democratisation as people driven by conscious transformative politics “where the people represent the core values of the struggle” for both political and economic freedom (Campbell, 1991). Hence, the producers of both films ideologically framed the protagonists, that is Mgcineni “Mambush” Noki, Mnekelo and Zama among others as champions of the politics of self-emancipation beyond leaders to embrace constitutionalism, human rights and democratic values.

Summarily, the discussion above, augmented by the except images underscore the need for leaders to aspire to overlook their narrow political interests and embrace collective approaches to address the national socio-economic challenges that affect the general citizens of South Africa whose aspirations solely rely on the good governance of their country.

5.6 APARTHEID, COMMUNISM AND DEMOCRACY: IDEOLOGICAL CONTESTATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

5.6.1 Neo-liberalism in South Africa

The films under investigation should be understood within the context that presumes a situation where the antithesis of apartheid was to transform South Africa into a nation in which all people would live as equals. This is against the backdrop of erstwhile apartheid policies, which relegated non-white South Africans to a state of despondency, poverty, and oppression by marginalising them to the peripheries of society (Lephakga, 2017). In the films' understudy, the producers reveal that the democratic project has not benefitted the majority of the population of South Africans, but those who have been persuaded by sympathisers with the apartheid system and have succumbed to its ideology in exchange for peace. This view is implied in *Dear Mandela (2011)* where the film producers seem to advance an alternate view that Mandela's dream was not realistic or poorly thought. As such, this fits into the ideological perspective that, most films produced during the post-apartheid years in South Africa are constructs that critique the status quo, which has compromised the fundamental values of the democratic project. This trend agrees with the anti-apartheid film movement which also served as a purview to fight the oppressive regime, with filmmakers politically and ideologically united against racism (Soudien, 2012).

In addition, both in *Dear Mandela (2011)* and *Miners Shot Down (2014)*, constitutionalism plays an influential role as Christianity did during apartheid in the ideological formation and justification of the political system. This follows the observation that, both the state and corporate sector used the existing parameters within the law to prevent and suppress the protests by the poor people in KwaZulu Natal and impoverished miners at Marikana. Conversely, apartheid was preceded by missionarisation of the populace and Jesuit work which established churches and schools across the country to prepare black South Africans for colonial subjugation (Allen, 2005). As a reflection of reality and a mirror of societal issues, the films serve as a continuation of political activism to highlight the socio-cultural and historical challenges of post-apartheid South Africans. This is owed to the fact that people's experience and knowledge underlie their interpretation of reality and cannot be disconnected from their existing political beliefs and orientations (Krantz, 2008). The

analysis, therefore, shows that the main ideas inherent in the producers' minds upon shooting them were to serve as ideological constructs to depict the disjuncture between the constitutional ideals and realities ordinary South Africans are subjected to. This approach demonstrates a departure from the apartheid posture where the South African film industry served as an ideology that determined the content and form of films to suppress public opinion (Botha, 2014). To this end, the study has established that the producers' dominant messages in the two films were to highlight the people's urgency and need for social mobilisation to stir up active citizenship to protect human rights and oppression in South Africa.

5.6.2 Communism, democracy, and post-apartheid aspirations

The analyses of both films, *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011) under study depict an ideological context in which the sociocultural and political transformation in post-apartheid has been unfolding. The narratives articulate a complex ideological conflict, which is embodied in the main actors such as Lonmin and Directors, trade unions and their leaders, the State as well as the protesters on the ground. The setting reveals a complex political economy discourse with great potential to divide the country underpinning multi-faceted interpretations of constitutionalism and communist-inclined agitation. The ANC, which is a disciplined leftist and has alliance relations with the South African Communist Party and COSATU, the majority labour union in South Africa remain the main players in representing the people's aspirations. Some of their leaders who fearlessly represent the socio-cultural and political struggles of people have been champions of human rights and labour activists. However, as time evolved, the film narratives indicate that there has been a drift between the philosophical ideals of communism and realities that obtain on the ground where the masses live and work.



Figure 5.23: AMCU president Joseph Mathunjwa addressing the miners at the mountain. Photograph: from *Miners Shot Down* film.

This further demonstrates a shift from what contemporary society expected after the democratisation process which thrived on the social revolution pathway. Moreover, the agitation towards communism and its benefits to society has been seen by many poor people as the hope for social justice, equality and economic emancipation of South Africans. This is evident in the community leaders in *Dear Mandela* (2011) said the constitution does not allow any sort of eviction without the order of the high court however, the proposed act of legislation by the KZN provincial government is an attack against shack dwellers, as an emphasis of what the Freedom Charter (1956) espouses regarding the sharing of resources such as land and minerals.

A critique of the films under study denotes a philosophical posture that demonstrates Neo-Marxian ideas contesting against the capitalist ideas, which were the bedrock of the apartheid system but arguably continue to sustain the current economic structure. In the initial years, the same ideology assumed that the democratic dispensation would lead to socialism which in turn would transform into communism as the highest stage of human development where there is equality among all the people in all aspects of life (West, 2017). Therefore, the vibrant and agitated trade unionism associated with AMCU, and its leader Joseph Mathunjwa was perceived to be encouraging disruptive behaviour among the miners in Marikana and the mining sector in general. Subsequently, this leadership and specific protest leaders became the targets of police

agents for attempting to instil an ideology that is discordant with the status quo, which sustains the economy of South Africa.

Despite the assumed political naivety of the protesters at the initial stages of the strike, the harsh realities most miners were exposed to prompt a new wave of political consciousness, particularly following media reports about the death of some of the comrades. In retaliation to the police's anti-protest tactics, there was heavy mobilisation for a collective response by all miners who then threatened to fight back against the police meanwhile carrying outlawed traditional weapons such as knobkerries and pangas (Narration time 0:08:02). Whereas these actions posed an imminent risk to the miners' lives, it can be argued that the communist rhetoric delivered by the strike leaders such as Mgcineni "Mambush" Noki, Mzoxolo Magidiwana and Tholakele Dlunga emphasis on self-sacrifice bolstered the miners' confidence to courageously gather and (illegal) protest actions. Ultimately, the film producer shows vividly angry protesters marching as a crowd carrying placards and sloganeering their resentments, commitment to defiance, and expressing total dissatisfaction with the unjust corporate laws protected by the government of democratic South Africa.

5.6.3 Communalism, nationalism, and democracy

In South Africa and elsewhere in the continent, the achievement of freedom has been associated with the concept of Ubuntu philosophy, which espouses equality, justice and generosity in society (Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013). In the context of the struggle for freedom, combatants and nationalists emphasised the concept of communalism, which continues to be understood in terms of selfless service to others. As represented in the *Dear Mandela (2011)* film narrative, the community protest thrived on the awareness that an individual should not be seen as an isolated person, but as an entity whose being, and survival are consequent upon its union with other human beings (Makhudu, 2017). The film synopsis envisages the view that Black South Africans would be better off if they shared most of their life in common just like they did before colonialism. This is evident in the film, *Miners Shot Down (2014)* where the everyday acts of communality are espoused as the basis of the labour structure rooted in the principles of ubuntu. Some scholars have remarked that this tendency is embraced in most African films, where the community approach remains at the centre

of resolving people's problems (Reyneke, 2011). In *Miners Shot Down* (2014) there is a strong and deep respect for traditional authority and the culture of the respective protesters as demonstrated by the dress code, songs and dance as well as "war-like" tools they displayed during the strike.

In South Africa, the idea of communalism, which was disrupted by apartheid colonialism has for a long time served as an inspiration to cultivate nationalism towards national identity. In the initial years of democracy, the concept of *rainbowism* was coined to reflect on the historical trajectory of political resistance, segregation, and heroism, which came with the 1994 elections and majority rule (Durraini, 2014). However, as the analyses of both films show, the political economy dynamics and the ever-increasing inequality gap have become a fundamental part of the national identity narrative, thereby raising questions about who or which class has benefitted from the democratic dispensation and at whose expense. The protesting communities in *Dear Mandela* (2011) sounded a loud clarion call for the denunciation of the ruling elite for their negation of collective and accountable governance (Narration time: 0:00:03).



Figure 5.24: community members on service delivery strike burning tyres.

Photograph: from *Dear Mandela* (2011) film.

This is evident in Mr S'bu Zikode's speech when he referred to corruption, intimidation and entitlement which are a self-indictment of the values of constitutionalism and democratisation. Both film producers have succeeded in representing this disjuncture through compelling scripts that seek to control their audience's viewership with ample reflections on past colonial experiences and knowledge of the apartheid modus

operandi. Both *Dear Mandela* (2011) and *Miners Shot Down* (2014) serve as a reminder to Black South Africans regarding the pain, suffering and prejudice during the struggle against political dominance during the apartheid years, meanwhile reflecting on the missteps that the contemporary leaders are prowling. Although the two films portray variant ideological insinuations and undertones, they have the potential to present a platform for the reconstruction of political engagement in the new South Africa. Furthermore, they highlight that, no matter how diverse people's views and sources of their conflicts are in society, the spirit of nationalism and unity should prevail over these differences for society to move forward in the new democratic dispensation. Against the common individualist paradigms synonymous with political conquest and suppression of dissenting voices on which most undemocratic states are built, the documentary refers to Mandela's leadership model to stress how the current political arrangement has mistreated the working class and those in the margins of society in South Africa.

5.7 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This Chapter has presented the thematic analysis and interpretation of qualitative data from which study findings were derived. The chapter has also provided an account of the ideological frames inherent in the films and explored the relevance of the films in depicting the socio-economic challenges faced by citizens in South Africa. The films highlight how misrule and poor administration coupled with impunity have created untenable levels of mistrust between the government, corporate mining and the citizens with dire consequences, particularly in the case of the Marikana Massacre in 2012. This has served as an indictment of the capacity of the African government to inspire confidence in the people in terms of upholding human rights, development and delivery of basic services in communities. Thus, for the post-apartheid government, implementation of transformation reforms has taken a slow pace where current socio-economic challenges continue to sit alongside the old patterns of the apartheid system. Hence, civic outrages in the form of agitated trade unionism and violent community protests characterise the local government space, particularly in the informal settlements. Moreover, this has created a gap between the governing elite and the poor, whose actions continue to be met with police brutality leading to infringements of human rights, particularly freedom of association and expression. Ideally, both films' narrative serves as a reminder that changes in the new political

dispensation and progressive policies are not sufficient guarantees for equitable delivery of socio-economic benefits to all South Africans. The following chapter will provide a summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the summary of findings with specific reference to the aim and objectives of the study as stated in Chapter 1 subsection 1.3. The study analysed the representation of post-apartheid socio-economic and political challenges in the selected documentary films in South Africa. The summary of findings is presented in terms of the representation of socio-economic and political challenges in the post-apartheid era: context and narrative focus of the selected films, filmic elements and depiction of post-apartheid governance and governmentality within the tentacles of poor governance in post-apartheid, political symbolism in the selected films, apartheid, communism and democracy within the ideological contestations in South Africa. The chapter also presents the conclusion which is derived from the study findings followed by the recommendations and guidelines for future research.

6.2 RE-STATEMENT OF THE AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

6.2.1 *Aim of the study*

The aim of the study was to analyse the representation of post-apartheid socio-economic and political challenges in the selected South African documentary films. This was achieved by analysing selected documentary films, namely *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011), to highlight that documentary films can represent and mirror socio-economic and political challenges that affect societies in a democracy. This was achievable through studying reality-based images juxtaposed with historical events and the contemporary democratic context to determine how film as an audio-visual tool uses imagery to help the citizens to reflect on the transformation trajectory espoused by the country at the dawn of democracy to the contemporary period.

6.2.2. *Objectives of the study*

The objectives of the study were to:

- assess the filmic elements exploited by producers of the selected films to highlight socio-economic and political challenges in post-apartheid South Africa;

- establish themes in the selected documentary films about socio-economic and political challenges in South Africa;
- interrogate the selected documentary films' application of symbolism in portraying the context and narratives of socio-economic and political challenges; and to
- recommend scripting formats that benefit filmmakers' critique of post-apartheid challenges in South Africa.

6.3 NARRATIVE FOCUS AND CONTEXT IN THE SELECTED FILMS

This section presents the context and narratives based on the selected films' synopses, the interface on commonalities and variances, and characterisations and the themes identified in both films.

6.3.1 *Miners Shot Down (2014): Re-enactment of Sharpeville (1960)*

The analysis of the storyline about *Miners Shot Down (2014)* depicts how deplorable South African mine workers' working conditions decades after the attainment of democracy are. This is especially pinned down on the untenable underground personnel (rock drillers) grievances who mobilised towards their resolve to respond to their perpetual exploitation by their employers through a protracted "unprotected protest" at Lonmin Mining Company, popularly known as Marikana. The fatal encounter which saw at least 34 *Miners Shot Down (2014)* and some security officials was largely based on demands for an increase in wages to a minimum of R12 500 per month. This followed unfruitful attempts to convince the employers that most of their employees were surviving below the poverty datum line. The stalemate was experienced when the miners, most of whom were unionised under NUM, felt betrayed by their representatives from whose offices they received a backlash of repulsive remarks and barrages of law and order "ammunition" which led to severe injuries among the protesters. Subsequently, with the heavy presence of security agents and state apparatus represented by law enforcement, miners were bolstered to resist what they felt was the perpetuation of the apartheid-style of repression, featuring different forms of police machinery including Nyalas, Helicopters, AK47s and live ammunition resembling a war zone. This unfortunate encounter led to one police officer killed, 34

miners murdered and many severe injuries among the protesters due to police shooting, ostensibly in self-defence.

The study notes the producers' deliberate script to highlight the miners' decision to face their White employers on their own despite having paid affiliation fees to the now unpopular National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) for years, an "affiliate" organisation of the ruling African National Congress (ANC), which has become pro-capital. As the situation degenerates further, the drift by most of the miners who joined AMCU for labour representation confirms an ideological shift from the traditional nationalist associated with the ANC to alternative politics. Arguably, this contestation may be the reason why the strike became more complex, further attracting state security agents who responded with lethal action which ended up in the tragic massacre of thirty-four miners. The analysis also demonstrates that the aspirations of the democratic era fall short of meeting the mine workers' labour rights because, like the apartheid era, they have to join unions to get civil protection against their employer's greed and exploitation tactics. The film context is located within the neocolonial paradigm that seeks to reveal how apartheid tendencies have continued into the democratic dispensation where workers have no access to proper housing, decent work and essential services such as clean water and sanitation. The findings show that the lack of transformation and realisation of socio-economic aspirations espoused in the Bill of Rights (Constitution of 1996) fanned the weeklong protest rampage, which the security detail stamped through the application of an apartheid-style to deny the miners their constitutional rights. This confirms what some scholars condemned as a tragedy that resembles the Sharpeville massacre of 1960 more than fifty years where state security forces used live ammunition to silence citizens from expressing their civil rights against restrictive laws (Baker, 2014 and Chinguno, 2013 in Boëttger & Rathbone, 2016)

The apartheid policing style and arrogance were confirmed by Riah Phiyega, then South African National Police Commissioner who applauded the police that, "Whatever happened represents the best of responsible policing" (Narration time: 1:18:07) in response to the national outcry regarding the massacre. Overall, the representation of this carnage in the documentary is critical as a contemporary reflection on the perpetuation of colonial and apartheid tendencies to stamp opposition to the apartheid legacy in defence of economic inequality and injustices in democratic South Africa (Boëttger & Rathbone, 2016).

6.3.2 *Dear Mandela (2011): Aftermath of a betrayed vision and democratic project*

Dear Mandela (2011), a documentary film shot on the outskirts of Durban's informal settlements in the Kwa-Zulu Natal Province, South Africa highlights the feud between shack dwellers and the ANC-led local government for proper housing and basic services such as clean water and sanitation. This is against the background of clear constitutional prescripts in the Bill of Rights (Chapter 2) including complementary statutory institutions such as the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), which protect South African citizens against fundamental social and economic injustices (RSA: Constitution of 1996). The documentary refers to the local government's "Slum Act of 2007", which empowers the authorities to relocate shack or informal dwellers to "atrocious" locations and to demolish their shacks where they deem fit. It further illustrates how disgruntled residents end up mobilising shack dwellers to fight their eviction through a protest movement called *Abahlali base Mjondolo* whose shacks are under threat of being demolished. Despite intimidation, murder, death threats and living in demolished homes, the leaders of *Abahlali base Mjondolo* succeeded in taking up their frustration against the Slums Act (2007) to the Constitutional Court, popularly known as the Apex Court in South Africa. This position, in their view, agrees with the philosophy of the former President of South Africa, Mr Nelson Mandela whom the film presents as a profound democratic visionary who was committed to a "government of the people, by the people and for the people" (Madumo, 2014).

During the first democratic elections of 1994, the ANC government promised the public improved basic services for all including proper housing as part of the programme to redress the spatial settlement structure of the apartheid government. However, this promise has not been fulfilled among the shack dwellers since 1994 to date as they still live in squalor conditions. Conversely, instead of having houses built for them, shack dwellers receive slam aid, which facilitates for their eviction from their existing properties to be moved to tin houses. This compounds their situation because they already live in places that lack service delivery such as improper housing infrastructure, roads, electricity, water, and substandard ablution facilities. Subsequently, this leads to the community founding a parallel informal organisation to

fight the Slum Act (2007), regardless of multiple risks to their individual and collective livelihood.

Like the other film under study, *Dear Mandela* (2011) presents an ANC government that has “fallen from grace” bedevilled by its own ambitious broad social policy framework that has seen it failing to deliver on its promises to foster equality in a non-racial democratic post-apartheid South Africa. This situation has caused perpetual social strikes, riots, and court cases filed by communities against the ANC government, further creating distrust between the government and the poor working class. Subsequently, the leaders of the protests, Mgcineni “Mambush” Noki, Andries Ntshenyeho and fellow miners are presented making complimentary comments that democracy should be seen as a system of governance that is concerned with human rights and the broad interests of the citizens (Narration Time: 0:25:20). With this in mind, it is therefore, appreciable that the producers of the documentaries use this characterisation to highlight that the democratic dispensation was a product of divergent views from various political constituencies (Muswede & Masvopo, 2018).

6.3.3 Context and social justice in the selected films

a. Socio-economic context in the films

Although the two documentaries are premised on different geographic settings and ideological viewpoints, both films thrive on the portrayal of societal disharmony among key stakeholders in South Africa. This entails coverage of corruption among government officials, exploitation of workers by corporate companies, and lack of service delivery in areas such as roads, water and sanitation, housing, electricity, and development infrastructure. The films depict heroism among the self-styled leaders who are keen to fight for people’s rights to dignity, equality and self-determination in the face of alleged betrayal by government authorities. Their fight against the government system resembles defiance against corrupt officials, and corporate masters, who respond to the people’s plight through lethal policing strategies. This is resembled by the killing and silencing of protesting miners over the demands for human rights and decent living wages in the key sectors of the economy, an act synonymous with apartheid antics.

Essentially, both films poignantly highlight the suffering that the Black South Africans endure on a daily basis in what was founded as a constitutional democracy. They both

lament the rampant corruption, maladministration, inequality, and the control of government entities by corporate powers, in what came to be known as “state capture” following the Zondo Commission of Inquiry (2018). This concurs with Devereux (2014) who states that as an ideological construction, films can be designed to represent the goals and ideals of society, which include exposing the wrongdoings of governments.

b. Politics and unionisation of labour

The study notes that the involvement of politicians and the formation of workers’ unions in South Africa, particularly in the 1980s were attempts to put an end to the manipulation, abuse and exploitation of workers by corporate superiors for profit maximisation. In the study, AMCU is depicted as an imposter labour union at Lonmin and serves as an illustration of how to traverse formalised procedures to subvert the injustices of the oppressor based on political re-organisation and social mobilisation. This contestation juxtaposes the diplomatic skills that Mandela possessed when he successfully created a balance between “past legacies of animosity and a future of hope” (Zagacki, 2003), against the use of reactive force in a democratic South Africa. Furthermore, the leaders of the protests openly denounced NUM leaders as “hypocrites’ and sympathisers with oppressors” who had abandoned the basic principles of the struggle for freedom including the emancipation of the masses. Meanwhile, the presence of security agents was perceived as the perpetuation of the apartheid-style of repression, which interfered with workers’ human rights including the right to freedom of expression, assembly and protest.

c. Human rights and corporate labour practices in South Africa

Despite the numerous pieces of people-oriented legislation post-apartheid in South Africa, the documentaries present challenges of unfair labour practice in the form of poor wages, poor living conditions and exploitation synonymous with the apartheid years. In *Miners Shot Down (2014)*, AMCU’s stance resonates with the majority of the protesters after they lost respect for NUM, an affiliate organ of the ruling party. More than two decades after apartheid, the findings show that there are still deliberations with racial undertones between corporate management and workers in South Africa. This tendency is associated with South Africa’s colonial legacy, which the film producers place predominantly on the doorstep of big business as the traditional symbols of the past regime. In addition to this finding, the use of protest in both

documentaries is effectively used to attract the attention of those in authority, meanwhile demonstrating that workers can exercise their labour rights. This is stated in the Constitution of South Africa (1996) section 17 where it says “Everyone has the right to assembly, to demonstrate, to picket, and to present petitions”. However, the heavy presence of the police who used lethal state security equipment went beyond crowd management parameters. For instance, in *Miners Shot Down (2014)* the police had cars, nyalas, helicopters, AK47s and live ammunition, which resembled troops going to war. In *Dear Mandela (2011)*, heavily armed police, their vans and the *Red And Security Relocation and Eviction Services* also called the “red-ants” went on demolishing people’s shacks. These frames have the potential to narrow the viewers’ understanding of democracy in the context of the human demands that were placed on those in power to be responsive to the will of the people. This concurs with Heywood’s (2015) view that democracy should allude to a scenario where the system of rule is defined in terms of governance by the people, punctuated by continuous participation in the decision-making processes of the government. However, in this analysis, the developments in both films demonstrate that not everyone in the country is equal before the law, hence the need for representation of the shack dwellers, miners, and widows by esteemed legal minds in the form of Adv Ntsebeza, Mr James, Mr Wilson and Adv Dali Mpofu in the courts as well as the Farlam commission of enquiry for them to find justice.

6.4 FILMIC ELEMENTS AND DEPICTION OF THE POST-APARTHEID STATE

This section discusses filmic elements and how they are used to depict the socio-economic challenges of democratic South Africa in the selected documentaries. This includes film construction and techniques, camera shots and angles, colour, visual effects, visual scripting and voice-over narration as part of the films’ composition to depict the post-apartheid socio-economic and political challenges in South Africa.

6.4.1 Film techniques and articulation of meaning

The study noted that both *Miners Shot Down (2014)* and *Dear Mandela (2011)* have the technical qualities that confirm that film as an artefact is a marriage between technique and meaning (Kamei, 2019). This is evident where producers of both films use aesthetics such as sound, colour, and camera work to represent the socio-economic challenges faced by the South African populace post-apartheid. The study

further acknowledges that not all meanings in a film are deliberate because some of these meanings come from the background or culture of filmmakers themselves who unconsciously infuse their views into the production (Dancyger, 2014). This is important in film production because audiences live in a culture that shapes how they think and what they think and believe in as the contextual setting that ultimately informs their behaviour. Both documentaries are influenced by the apartheid historical contestations that are laced with racial prejudice, which determine the choice of technical aspects used in the production. Thus, the meanings of both *Miners Shot Down* (2014) and *Dear Mandela* (2011) films are shaped by thematic or aesthetic necessity including visuals, shots, sound, and audio elements which seem to be neither entirely unconscious nor entirely deliberate.

a . Voice-over narration

In this study, both films were not an exception as they adopted voice-over narration as an active agent that helped to represent the democracy anti-thesis through corroborative themes in a way that an actor's performance or scenery would not be able to do. The films appropriately used a voice-over to provide the viewers with audio-visual information through the film's soundtrack, which is paired with important visual aids such as the colour of the sky and dried or green grass to enhance the viewers' mood. Thus, in both documentaries, the voice-over is used as a technical imperative to assume the role of uncovering or solving the (post-apartheid) mystery (Pérez, 2019), meanwhile, the images are either rolling or revealing accompanying footage. In this case, both films relied on voice-over narration, audio-visuals and camera works to tell the story of abuse of authority, human rights violations, and unfair labour practices in post-apartheid South Africa.

This technique provided filmmakers with a range of abilities in story-telling that they otherwise would not have been able to deliver in its absence. In both films, the application of the voice-over concurs with Chovanec (2020) and Nicholas and Price's (1998) view that, the real power of a voice-over is its ability to communicate directly with the audience. Hence, the films relied on the voice of an actor (narrator) who played the invisible controlling role of storyteller without participating in it directly. In so doing, the voiceover in *Miners Shot Down* (2014) had the role of uncovering or solving the mystery that characterised the protracted strike whose demands were met with lethal state power. Furthermore, the study observed that the voice-over could not be

restricted to one form but may include actors' roles to corroborate the perspective of the protagonists to strengthen the cause of the narrative. This technique is used in *Miners Shot Down* (2014) to retrospectively reflect on the proactive actions that could have been taken to avoid the Marikana tragedy (Narration time: 0:03:56).

b. Camera shots and angles

In *Miners Shot Down* (2014), several close-up shots are used to represent emotional frustrations when the Lonmin management failed to respond to the grievances of the miners and when striking miners wielded traditional weapons of war including knobkerries, spears, and shields to register their grievances. *Dear Mandela* (2011) also exploits numerous forms of camera shots such as medium and long shots to provide the viewer with both medium to long focus as well as wide shots to capture the background of the events as they unfolded.

c. Colour

The study observed that some of these technical elements have their main source from elsewhere outside South Africa (Cowan, 2015), especially in cases that relate to the USA's Hollywood style used to technically provoke and engender collective dissent and protest. Furthermore, the films serve as clear examples of how colour is used to provide more revealing scenes and details of the emotional paradigm of the police who claim that they were provoked by the miners. This confirms that to date, the use of colour in cinematography remains a vital part of creating films owing to the aesthetic and complementary features it brings to the film composition process. The study notes that the producers of both documentaries astutely used colour to depict numerous aspects of the transformation discourse in South Africa, especially in terms of the whiteness or blackness of actors to portray racial prejudice, inequality, and poverty in the mining environment and informal settlements. In both cases, evidence shows that the use of colour involved a combination of artefacts with respect to space, time and locations as attractions that serve as explanations of events and associations that augment existing frames at different levels (Cowan, 2015). The use of the physical aspects in both films involved the way specific colours such as the informal settlement, poverty and racial prejudices are employed to affect the viewer and his/her ability to read the films with a pleasant feeling. This confirms Misek's (2010) observation that

highlights colour as having the potential to directly affect people's emotional state and how they consume specific film content.

d. Visual effects

Both films made use of visual effects which were added to live-action, captured through techniques such as interactive video compositing, rear- and front-screen projection and practical effects. *Miners Shot Down (2014)* used live-action: interactive video compositing, rear- and front-screen projection and practical effects in conjunction with computer graphic objects, characterisation, and environments; as well as compositing of images recorded in a number of ways (Misek, 2010). *Dear Mandela (2011)* exploited some of these technical aspects, particularly interactive video compositing and practical effects to reconcile the past events which occurred during the apartheid era and contemporary transformation challenges in post-apartheid South Africa. For *Miners Shot Down (2014)*, some analysts have argued how the footage of dead miners strewn all over the crime scene resembles the lethal response with which the apartheid police stamped out dissent in the pre-1994 era (Boëttger & Rathbone, 2016). Despite the negative encounter with law enforcement, the Marikana ordeal continues to serve as a cumulative cultural heritage over the apartheid legacy, as it carries the unintended purpose of (re) opening wounds which had otherwise virtually been closed after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of 1996. Ideologically, the study frames both films in terms of their aptitude to objectively serve as sources and documentation of transformation challenges in post-apartheid South Africa.

e. Visual scripting

In both films under study, the producers adopted scripting features engendered in the context of popular protest deliberately designed to highlight the socio-economic and political grievances among disgruntled citizens. The scripts are designed and executed in a manner that is aligned explicitly to the reality genre with the intention to represent real issues affecting the welfare of contemporary South African society. This is evident in a scene (Narration time, 0:20:45) in *Dear Mandela (2011)* where the writer uses the narrative style of adaptive scripting to highlight how the democratisation process ushered great hope for the people but turned into a bliss of promises (Muswede & Lubinga, 2018). This is juxtaposed with the legendary Mandela who

championed the freedom project in South Africa and inspired hope in the citizens for a democratic, non-racial, non-sexist, and just society. Furthermore, it is against this background that the production and scripting of these films aimed at challenging colonial and discriminatory tendencies of the past, which the writer uses to motivate the poor and marginalised groups of society to confront the injustices of the day.

Furthermore, the writers have exploited specific verbal and non-verbal scripting features including choice of language, tone, drama, music, conflict, vulnerability, and resistance antics to confront undemocratic practices. *Dear Mandela (2011)* does this through the use of music and dance (sloganeering), verbal articulation and commentary where actors denounce how the local leadership of the ANC has reneged on its promises of basic providing social amenities such as housing, water, and toilets to the citizens. In both documentaries, visual or screenplay scripting has succinctly presented a compilation of the social and economic realities. This further helped to expose the malpractices of the post-apartheid government, which has abandoned the socialist approach to national development. The style further helped the writer to emphasise the concentration of power on individuals in South Africa who happen to focus on their personal interests at the expense of the broader society. Moreover, both films thrive on the use of strong personalities or protagonists (such as Mgcineni “Mambush” Noki in *Miners Shot Down (2014)* and S’bu Zikode in *Dear Mandela (2011)*) who rose to the level of community heroism by challenging the symbols of monopoly capital and dominant class ideology over the pressing circumstances affecting the working class and marginalised communities. For these reasons, both films can be viewed as ideological constructions informed by film text, which invite the audience to gravitate towards a specific reaction (Devereux, 2014), including social mobilisation and political activism.

6.5 GOVERNMENTALISM: POOR GOVERNANCE IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

The section discusses the summary of findings based on thematised areas that denote poor governance in post-apartheid South Africa. The discussion focuses on the poor living conditions in communities, maladministration and poor service delivery, violence and insecurity. The above aspects are also discussed in relation to high

unemployment, poor working conditions, and infringement of human rights including freedom of speech as represented in both documentaries.

6.5.1 Poor living conditions and the leadership gap in South Africa

The two films reflect contemporary socio-economic and intricate political processes that preoccupy the progressive space, a tendency that often negatively affects the delivery of the National Development Programme (NDP) in South African communities. This is highlighted through the ability of the leaderless community in informal settlements to mobilise some sections of civil society, particularly the poor homeless and marginalised people to seek alternative means of voicing their frustrations in an attempt to stop evictions from their shacks until houses are built for them as promised by the government since 1994). This demonstrates the leadership gap that exists between the citizens and the government, prompting apolitical individual personalities among the grassroots to help organise and direct the protesting communities to register their grievances.

Similarly, the miners in Marikana were subjected to inhumane living conditions in terms of the provision of decent housing, health care and access to education for their children, which had taken numerous years unresolved (Smoke & Mirrors, 2016). The rhetoric in political statements by those in authority shows that mining operators operate in solidarity with other sympathetic formations to exploit the workers. Moreover, political commentators and civic organisations in the documentaries have expressed their displeasure over the increasing gap between policy and practical material conditions of the citizens. These observations concur with Budlender and Royston's (2016) view that human settlement and living conditions have come under great scrutiny for over two decades in South Africa. The finding reflects the national service delivery outlook where the disjuncture between elected leadership and residents is characterised by mistrust regarding the fulfilment of social transformation promises such as access to housing, schools, healthcare, and clean water for the formerly marginalised communities. Hence, the ideological stance of staging collective protests was to mount pressure on the elected government led by the ANC to be responsive to the demands of society. This position concurs with Budlender and Royston's (2016) view that human settlement and living conditions have come under great scrutiny for over two decades in South Africa. Compounding this situation is the

common rhetoric in political statements by those in authority that demonstrate the corporate sector's solidarity stance with sympathetic labour formations such as NUM to exploit the working class, particularly in the mines. For this reason, political commentators and civic organisations have expressed their displeasure over the increasing gap between policy and practical material conditions of the citizens in South Africa (Breakfast, Bradshaw & Nomarwayi ,2019).

6.5.2 Maladministration and poor service delivery

The findings from the analysis of the two documentaries concur with scholarly evidence that for more than two decades after freedom in South Africa, the citizens have witnessed weak socio-economic systems, largely blamed on maladministration and poor implementation of existing policies (Makhudu, 2017). The study observed that the post-apartheid era has largely failed to meet the transformation expectations of the working class and people in the margins of society to ensure the provision of effective checks and balances where those in authority are made to account and be more responsive to the needs of the citizens. This is in the backdrop of popular claims that there is rule of law in the country, meanwhile lack of accountability and violation of human rights have been on the rise, particularly in informal communities. This has compelled citizens to adopt alternative means of communication outside of the government electoral process such as violent protest and vigilantism to register their grievances. This analysis shows that the authorities have reneged on their promises of establishing a 'developmental state' framework with which to redress colonial injustices towards a new democratic social order.

The findings from the analysis of both documentaries go beyond street protests and labour grievances, where union leaders and community representatives show discontent over housing and bread-and-butter issues. Their preoccupation represents a lamentation over the misplaced ideological focus of the ANC led government, which has over the two decades been characterised by abject neglect of the democratic virtues espoused in the Freedom Charter (1955 and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996). The analysis further reveals that both documentaries are intended to drive the point that poor service delivery contributes to confrontations with the law as a result of the seizure of national resources to the advantage of those in authority. This projects the latter as people who use their political influence to misdirect

government goals to benefit a few elite persons at the expense of the majority of the citizens. This tendency has allegedly given rise to a barrage of maladministration including corruption and patronage. Following this, the findings reveal both political and socio-economic contestations, which have led to untenable confrontations to the detriment of the democratic aspirations of the constitutional order that should thrive on the promotion of human rights and national building as espoused by the founding father of the nation, Nelson Mandela.

6.5.3 Violence and Insecurity

The study revealed that whereas South Africa has a long and gruesome history of different forms of violence pre-1994, the democratic dispensation came with the hope and expectations violence would be minimised shortly after the country attained freedom. However, due to the authorities being unable to cater for and satisfy the socio-economic needs of its citizens, the citizens often take it upon themselves to engage in violent protests accompanied by multi-faceted anti-social behaviour in a bid to attract the attention of other stakeholders including the media. Both documentaries under study present a negative picture of the socioeconomic and political environment that characterises South Africa as an unstable nation largely due to class conflicts and inequality (Makgatla, 2020). Therefore, both scripts reflect characteristics of Black-on-Black violence, where law enforcement agents deal with violent protests with lethal force as a form of 'general standard' in the country. As a result, in the recent past, both service delivery protests and labour disputes tend to display various forms of violence often compounded by acts of intimidation, vandalism, and murder (Cinini & Singh, 2021). In both *Dear Mandela (2011)* and *Miners Shot Down (2014)*, viewers are presented with the narrative that the government has failed its people, and government leadership failed to formally engage disgruntled residents via local government structures. Hence, both documentaries depict violence laced with social unrest mixed with agitated trade unionism, particularly in the Marikana massacre (2012), whose outcomes tarnished the democratic outlook and integrity of the post-1994 South African government.

6.5.4 Inequality, high unemployment and poor working conditions

The findings of the study show that the underlying elements of the producers' intentions in both documentaries were not to depict race relations in South Africa

because there is limited conflict based on colour. However, race dynamics are clandestinely implied, particularly at the Lonmin setting where miners were shot dead. Therefore, the study noted that race and class continue to be used to justify the exclusion of some sections of the South African population, specifically the black majority of people (Soudien, 2012). Some sections of both documentaries reveal that inequality in South Africa is a product of racial hierarchy that was entrenched in apartheid legislation and government systems. Apparently, this denied the majority of the black population access to viable economic activity including access to land; labour inequalities and entrenched white privilege in the country. As a result, the study notes how the producers of the documentary *Miners Shot Down (2014)* attempt to highlight the socio-economic milieu of the post-apartheid era by giving workers a voice with which to vent out their state of prejudice in the country.

The findings of the study also denote that, by and large, both documentary scripts highlight how South Africa faces the challenge of providing access to quality education for the majority of its poor population that live in townships and informal settlements such as those in the outskirts of Durban. The study notes that most of these challenges have been caused by a lack of sustained investment into transforming institutions of the state, which continue to reflect apartheid trends that were based on prejudice. This is compounded by the challenge of unfair labour practices in the form of poor wages, poor living conditions and exploitation traceable to the apartheid years. Arguably, these are the conditions that sustained the populist stance taken by AMCU, which resonated with the majority of the protesters who alleged betrayal by NUM, a long-standing representative of the workers. Therefore, both film scripts are acknowledged clearly illustrating the protesters' overall dissatisfaction with the socio-economic circumstances reflective of inept governance practices in democratic South Africa.

6.6 POLITICAL SYMBOLISM IN THE SELECTED FILMS

This section of the study examines the use of political and ideological symbolism as part of production and composition techniques employed by film producers to achieve scope and audience attraction in the selected films. In the films' understudy, symbolism played a significant role in representing the contemporary as well as historical context of the South African socio-economic and political landscape.

6.6.1 Mandela legacy: Mirror of the dashed hopes of the rainbow nation

Revelations in the documentary *Dear Mandela* (2011) resonate with the view that the name Nelson Mandela resonates with the saintly man whose life became “the world’s favourite fairy tale” that symbolises South Africa’s precarious transition to democracy in 1994 (Gevisser, 2000). Hence, in the film *Dear Mandela* (2011), the icon is presented as a charismatic leader who delivered the symbolic “miracle rainbow nation” in 1994 when South Africa transformed from minority rule to democracy. As the world’s most famous political prisoner (Pollard, 1994), Mandela’s political narrative in both local and international spaces shows how he emerged with boldened dignity and strength after 27 years of incarceration to serve his people. The narrative reveals that society reminisces Mandela’s selfless and generous leadership style as attributes that are in contrast with the current ANC leadership. In the documentary, Mandela is presented as the founding father and symbol of a new dispensation that represents hope, prosperity and a progressive socio-economic trajectory. This is supported by the autobiographical works of Southall (2011) and Zagacki (2003) who also present Mandela as the very symbol of black resistance against apartheid and reconciliation after 1994.

Beyond Mandela being presented as a symbol of political freedom, both *Dear Mandela* (2011) and *Miners Shot Down* (2014) seem to suggest that Mandela’s selfless leadership would have served them better as an economic liberator had he continued to lead the country. This is juxtaposed with the greed and poor governance associated with the ANC government, which has continued to neglect its traditional constituency. Therefore, Mandela represents the founding father and symbol of a new dispensation inspired by hope, prosperity and a progressive socio-economic trajectory who remained true to the revolutionary values and principles of the people’s struggle. Both films seem to suggest that only selfless leadership would be appropriate to deal with South Africa’s current socio-economic challenges.

In *Dear Mandela* (2011), the producer seems to suggest that Mandela is the “bridge” that could withstand the pressure to maintain the balance between historically acclaimed antagonistic ideological forces, and therefore his style of leadership remains relevant to date. This is mirrored against the current corporate organisations, particularly mines, whose interests seem to be bent on maximising profit and thriving

on an oppressive capitalist system, which resembles the apartheid extractive model. Therefore, both films have a common thread that celebrates Mandela's political courage, integrity and symbolic vision, which both producers seem to believe would have sustained the envisioned democracy in South Africa. Thus, the film uses this juxtaposition to remind South Africans that Nelson Mandela was a true revolutionary symbol of sacrifice, bravery, and determination whose selfless leadership should be espoused in today's political space.

6.6.2 Song and dance as symbols of political defiance

The study findings confirm that dance in South Africa has traditionally been viewed as a social expression that depicts political defiance against abuse of power, violation of human rights and economic oppression (le Roux-Kemp, 2014). Both films employ music and dance to mobilise support and strengthen group solidarity among the protesters and workers as a rallying point against the elite in South Africa.

Furthermore, both films used various types of political and social songs as symbol expressions of discontent in their class struggle to highlight their sufferings as marginalised people in a democratic country. Among them is the song *Senzeni na*, literally asking the question "*What have we done wrong to deserve bad mistreatment*", which denotes sombreness and a strong sense of loss as citizens express their grievances. The struggle songs and dance help the audience to understand the social conditions in which both the protesters and miners found themselves. Hence, the symbolic nature of the song and dance assists in revealing the mood and context within which the protests occur, further demonstrating how South Africans are prone to use "black dance" as a form of political strength and a non-violent tool against oppression. This includes popular IsiZulu traditional genres such as Imbube, Ingquzu and re-arranged religious tunes to speak back to power. The rhythms also resemble the inclusive nature of African politics affecting all participating ethnic groups to demand freedom and equality (Saks, 2010).

The findings also noted that the combination of dance and song boosted in the protesters the "old-time" anti-apartheid posture with the potential to mobilise all oppressed South Africans under a collective identity to challenge the new capitalist order in the form of business executives who continue to apply apartheid tendencies and to resist social transformation. This is evident in the analysis of the songs' lyrics,

which reveal the black people's narrative in South Africa as characterised by poverty, oppression, and victimisation. Lyrics such as "*the wind is blowing and we're left out in the cold...*" (Narration time: 0:48:29) include refrains that depict black people as servants of the capitalist system, especially in the mining industry such as Lonmin in Marikana. Ideologically, this demonstrates a shift of power relations, which both films frame as popular humanistic demands placed on authorities to become responsive to the will of the people.

6.6.3 State security power as a symbol of authority

The study shows that in South Africa, the authorities have control over the means of development, which remains within the power of the corporate sector (Tangri & Southall, 2008). This compels the populace, particularly the working class to be in perpetual subordination to business and the political elite as was the case in Marikana. This comes into reality when protesting citizens are denied the space to express their collective rights as their actions are met with heavy police presence and display of lethal state security equipment applied beyond crowd management operations. Both documentaries feature armoured police vans, popularly known as Nyalas, helicopters, AK47 rifles and the firing of live ammunition, in a fashion that resembles apartheid tactics. The approach was further lamented by the Farlam Commission report (2015), which criticised the heavy-handedness of the police and its shortcoming of allowing external pressure to influence their operational strategies, which eventually led to the massacre at Marikana. This finding concurs with how *Dear Mandela* (2011) presents the government's insensitive enforcement of abrupt local government restrictions to outlaw informal settlements in a style that is nearly synonymous with the apartheid system. Subsequently, the study highlights how these scenarios represented in the two films necessitate conditions for broader social mobilisation and agitated activism to stand against the ANC government and its corporate accomplices.

6.6.4 Political elitism as a symbol of entitlement and maladministration

Both documentaries present a political context of the formative years of democracy in 1994 when South Africans were promised the benefits associated with the transition from minority rule to majority rule. This narrative is premised on the view that, whereas this transfer of power was expected to transform the colonial patterns of governance from authoritarian practice to pluralistic-consultative approaches, in contrast, the

South African government abandoned this principle by allowing maladministration and suppression of human rights. Therefore, the analysis attributes the contemporary socio-economic challenges to elitist approaches to governance, which seem to work against the poor and formerly disenfranchised masses. The findings underscore the socio-economic drift between the rich (elite) and poor (working class), with the latter's constitutional aspirations turned into a pipe dream. The documentaries highlight that, despite the economic freedom and distributive structures of the state resources not much has changed because critical resources such as mines are still in the hands of a minority who continue to wield and usurp power over the poor people. The films reveal how the organs of the state such as the police and some politicians have abandoned their oath of office and now "serve distributive regimes and patronage on behalf of the elite and private financial interests" (Sebola & Tsheola, 2017: 2). Overall, both scripts seem to advance the narrative that puts blame on the ANC government under its post-Mandela leadership, which is pursuing self-enrichment goals and living in cahoots with big corporations, meanwhile condemning the poor to impoverished lives.

One of the films uses Mandela's leadership style to critique the current leaders' appetite for material gains as symbols of greed, elitism, and betrayal. In both films, the scripts seem to suggest that South Africa's black elite is largely associated with anti-apartheid activism and political incarceration or exile politics as some former freedom fighters' pride on entitlement to exclusive privileges and unfettered access to state resources. This creates a shift from the founding imperatives of the struggle for freedom towards the promotion of self-aggrandisement, thereby abandoning the collective aspirations of the populace. Both films project how leaders of Mandela's calibre who are at the centre of democratisation should represent society based on the core values of the struggle for both political and economic freedom (Campbell, 1991). Hence, the producers of both films ideologically framed the protesters (Miners and Informal settlement dwellers) as protagonists and champions of the politics of self-emancipation, promotion of constitutionalism, human rights, and democratic values.

6.7 CONCLUSION

The study has revealed how both political and socio-economic contestations in South Africa' political landscape have led to untenable confrontations among key role

players, to the detriment of the democratic aspirations of the post 1994 constitutional order. It notes that the documentaries are a critical contribution to society's understanding of the unjust practices by corporate companies and government authorities who are expected to jointly work towards uplifting the lives of all citizens in the country. Both documentary scripts have succeeded in presenting a critical contemporary reflection of the perpetuation of colonial and apartheid tendencies against human rights, economic equality and social justice among citizens in democratic South Africa. This is achieved through scripting formats that lay bare the extractive corporate practices, particularly in the corporate sector, especially mining, that fail to curtail the influence of narrow political interests that negate social justice, equality, and human rights in labour environments. This highlights that failure to honour constitutional obligations by the elected government and corporate companies can yield anti-social mobilisation against the elected government with potential threats to national stability as evidenced at the Marikana massacre. Thus, both film scripts should be acknowledged for clearly illustrating the society's dissatisfaction with the socio-economic situation caused by inept governance in democratic South Africa. Furthermore, the study appreciates the films' use of symbolism and juxtaposition that highlight Nelson Mandela as a true revolutionary symbol of sacrifice, national-building, and selfless leadership, which are lacking qualities in today's political space. Ideologically, this demonstrates a shift of power relations, which both films frame as popular humanistic demands placed on authorities to become responsive to the will of the citizens, particularly the working class and homeless people. This concurs with Devereux's (2014) view that as an ideological construction, the film can be designed to critique the goals and ideals of society, by exposing the wrongdoings of governments such as maladministration and poor governance. In this study, the producers have developed scripts that have, to a large extent critiqued South Africa's contemporary governance practices and leadership shortcomings to dissuade authorities from pursuing narrow interests at the expense of collective national goals in order to benefit all citizens whose aspirations solely rely on good governance.

6.8 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study has noted the producers' ability to communicate multi-faceted meanings of the socio-economic and political challenges in South Africa based on the dissimilar but contextualised scripts of both films' understudy. While the film narratives are shaped

by either thematic or aesthetic necessity such as audio-visuals, camera shots, and accompanying production elements, this process seems to be neither entirely unconscious nor entirely deliberate. Therefore, the study suggests the following as recommendations of the study in order to improve scripting techniques:

- a. To enhance the script to uncover or (re)solve the mystery that characterises the Marikana protracted strike as well as the demands of urban shack dwellers, the producers needed to invest into extensive academic (in this case sociological, historical or political) research to delve deeper into understanding how the documentary genre is influenced by multiple-disciplinary contestations often premised on racial prejudice, abuse of authority, human rights violation or labour practice to tell the story of post-apartheid South Africa. This aspect has the prospect of yielding a nuanced perspective with which to determine the relevant technical aspects applicable to the production of the political documentary genre.
- b. Following observations that some of the technical elements used in the documentaries have their main sources from outside South Africa (Cowan, 2015), especially in cases that relate to the USA's Hollywood style, the study recommends the application of reconstruction (blended) scripting formats, which would help to effectively achieve the composition and *cinema verite* that the producers intended through collective dissent and popular protest rather than employ external aspects. Since both films employed technical aspects in the realist genre, particularly interactive video compositing and practical effects, re(construction) would assist in reconciling the past events regarding race, prejudice and poverty which occurred during the apartheid era and contemporary transformation challenges in post-apartheid South Africa. This would further complement the original exploitation of cinematographic features such as colour, sound, and images as vital parts of both films' aesthetics and composition process(es) to communicate their messages.
- c. Both political and socio-economic contestations in South Africa's political landscape pre-occupy the narratives in the two documentaries located within the post-1994 constitutional order. Therefore, a critical reflection of

contemporary neo-colonial and apartheid tendencies (or ideological) within the current government and corporate sector(s) would benefit from the infusion of some theoretical underpinnings, namely post-colonial theory, feminism, critical theory et cetera, to inform a holistic scripting process that portrays abject poverty, violation of human rights, inequality and social injustice in South Africa, which are somewhat underrepresented in both films.

6.9 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The selection of the study entities was done using a purposive sample in this investigation. As a result, one drawback of purposive sampling is that another researcher may identify more relevant features and identify different samples to ascertain the typical elements to accomplish the same study objectives (Creswell, 2013). Purposive sampling is generally most appropriate for the selection of small samples, frequently from a restricted geographic area or from a restricted population definition, where inference to the population is not the highest priority, given the subjectivity of the selection mechanism. The selection of the case under study depends on subjectivity and inherent bias because the expertise and experience of the expert making the decision is crucial to the success of the resulting sample in this kind of sampling. It can be challenging to argue for the sample's representativeness due to the subjective and non-probability-based nature of unit selection in purposive sampling. Put another way, it might be challenging to persuade the reader that the decision to choose the study's units was the right one. It is crucial to highlight that the researcher finds it challenging to definitively state that the research's findings based on purposive sampling can be applied to a larger population.

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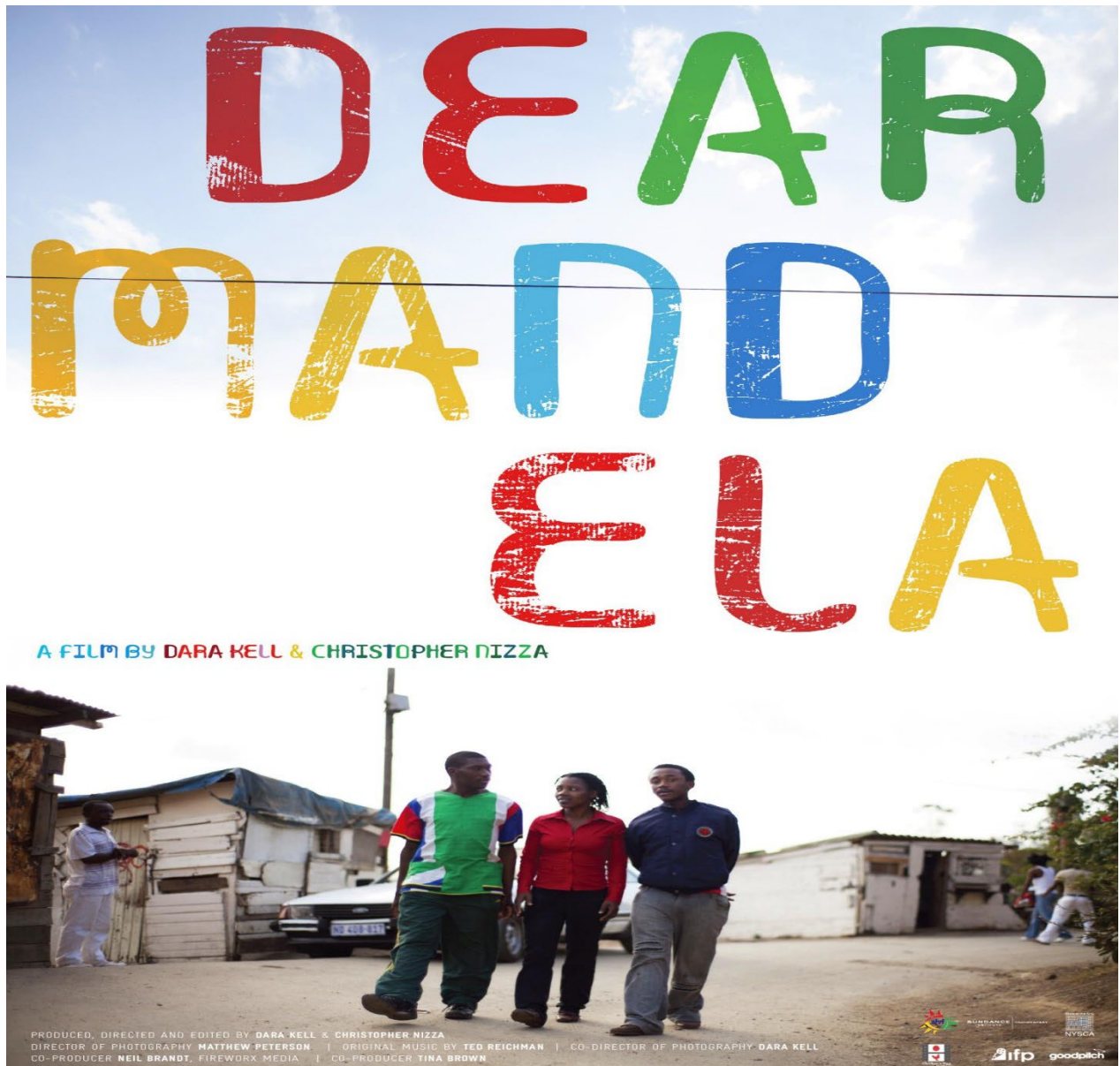
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APPENDIX 1: MINERS SHOT DOWN (2014)



APPENDIX 2: DEAR MANDELA (2011)



APPENDIX 3: CONTENT ANALYSIS INSTRUMENT

QUESTIONS FOR CONTENT ANALYSIS ON SELECTED DOCUMENTARY FILMS	Explanation/Discussion
1. Which characters are highlighted as major subjects within the documentary films?	
2. Which sources and interviews have been selected in the documentary films?	
3. Which social issues characters encounters are being examined in this study?	
4. Give a detailed description of social issues being studied. How is each social issue relevant in the examination of white privilege, inequality, stereotype and supremacy in these documentary films?	
5. How does these documentary films mirrors social issues faced by poor South African communities?	
6. From whose perspective does the documentary films portrays/represents?	
7. To what extend does the documentary films leave a sense of hope, involvement and/or despair on the viewers?	
8. Is the overall perspective of the documentary films consisted with the socio-economic and political worldview?	
9. Does the documentary films follow dominant ideologies or reflect the ethnic tension that exists in South Africa?	
10. How is South African police's attitude towards native people portrayed in the documentary films?	

11. What are the main filmic elements that are adopted in these films?	
12. How are these elements encapsulated in to reality character roles and scenes?	
13. What purposes do the elements serve in the documentary films?	
14. How does editing or other elements comment on the relationship between characters and the socio-economic and political challenges in South Africa?	
15. How does the lighting scheme shape our perception of the characters or mood in the documentary films?	
16. What themes are represented in the documentary films?	
17. How are these themes encapsulated into reality character roles and scenes?	
18. What sort of music/sound accompanies actions and movement of the characters and the theme in the scenes?	
19. How are narrative themes interconnected through continuous scenes?	
20. Do these themes represent the realities of typical South Africans who live in semi-urban, squatter camps and rural places?	
21. Do documentary films' themes interchange throughout the scenes? Explain further.	
22. What kind of essential areas or topics are missing in the documentary films?	
23. How are native people portrayed in South African television?	
24. Do the documentary films portray racial inequality, white privilege and stereotypes	

that exist in South Africa? How are these aspects enforced in the societies?	
25. How is white privilege, inequality and supremacy portrayed throughout the documentary films?	
26. How is the story told (linear, with flashbacks, flash-forward or episodically) in the documentary films?	
27. How is the plot consistence with the socio-economic and political challenges in South Africa?	
28. How are the camera angles shape our view of characters, mood and themes in the documentary films?	
29. What is the purpose of music in these films? How does the music direct our attention within the moving images? How does the music shape our interpretation of the moving images?	
30. Which languages dominate the films and which one the characters' use? Does language use have effect in the depiction of characters and their roles?	
31. How does the documentary films prompt particular reaction on the part of viewers through the use of (sound, editing, characterization, camera movement, etc)? Why do the films encourage such reactions?	
32. How are documentary films writers and producers monitored?	
33. What is the relevancy and importance of scripting in documentary films?	

34. What types of scripting formats adopted in these documentary films?	
35. What purposes does the scripting serve in these documentary films?	
36. Which elements of script were adopted in these films?	
37. How are these script elements summarised in the documentary films?	
38. How does scripting format, filmic elements and symbols used in the films complements each other?	
39. What kind of essential script elements are missing in these documentary films?	

APPENDIX 4: FACULTY APPROVAL.



University of Limpopo
Faculty of Humanities
Executive Dean

Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 4895, Fax: (015) 268 3425, Email: satsope.maoto@ul.ac.za

DATE: 12 April 2021

NAME OF STUDENT: THIPA, TP
STUDENT NUMBER: [REDACTED]
DEPARTMENT: PhD - Media Studies
SCHOOL: LANGCOM

Dear Student

FACULTY APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL (PROPOSAL NO. FHDC2020/10/03)

I have pleasure in informing you that your PhD proposal served at the Faculty Higher Degrees Meeting on 21 October 2020 and your title was approved as follows:

TITLE: REPRESENTATION OF POST-APARTHEID SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CHALLENGES IN SOUTH AFRICA: AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED DOCUMENTARY FILMS

Note the following:

Ethical Clearance	Tick One
In principle the study requires no ethical clearance, but will need a TREC permission letter before proceeding with the study	
Requires ethical clearance (Human) (TREC) (apply online) Proceed with the study only after receipt of ethical clearance certificate	✓
Requires ethical clearance (Animal) (AREC) Proceed with the study only after receipt of ethical clearance certificate	

Yours faithfully

Prof RS Maoto,
Executive Dean: Faculty of Humanities
Director: Dr JR Rammala
Supervisor: Prof NC Lesame

Finding solutions for Africa

APPENDIX 5: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE.



University of Limpopo
Department of Research Administration and Development
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 4713, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email:moore.hutamo@ul.ac.za

TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE **ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**

MEETING: 20 June 2023

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/85/2021: PG – Renewed

PROJECT:

Title: Representation of Post-Apartheid South Africa Socio-Economic and Political Challenges: An Analysis of Selected Documentary Films
Researcher: TP Thipa
Supervisor: Prof NC Lesame
Co-Supervisor/s: N/A
School: Languages and Communication Studies
Degree: PhD in Media Studies

PROF D MAPOSA
CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: **REC-0310111-031**

Note:

- i) This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.
- ii) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.
- iii) PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

Finding solutions for Africa

APPENDIX 6: EDITOR'S LETTER.

To whom it may concern

Re: Confirmation of editing services

This letter confirms that the Doctoral Thesis of Ms. Thipa T.P (200905109) titled *Representations of Post-apartheid South Africa socio-economic and political challenges: an analysis of selected documentary films* has been copy edited and proofread by Ms. Tshegofatso Rasekgotoma.

For any queries, please feel free to contact me directly.



Ms. Tshegofatso Rasekgotoma

Date: 9 November 2023

Email: t [REDACTED]

Contact number: [REDACTED]

APPENDIX 7: ORIGINALITY REPORT.

REPORT...

ORIGINALITY REPORT

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SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

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