Die Boere Is Hier Om Te Blij

On Local White Stories About Social Reality In A Changing South Africa

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Index

Foreword

Already as a child I was curious and eager to 'safe the world'. I would spend hours in the public library reading about the exhaustion of the tropical rainforest in Brazil, about the devastating effects of commercial fishing for the marine life in our Oceans, and about global warming, to go home and cry to my mom about it. At some level it felt as if it was my personal task to do something about the injustices I saw in the books I read. Even today I still want to make the world a little bit of a better and safer place, and I have found the way through which I would like to make my contribution: research.

Having oneself as the most important research instrument in the field is both fantastic and demanding at the same time. Indisputably as social scientists and researchers we are bound by a number of ethical codes that are there to help guide the decisions we make. These codes represent our moral compass, but they can also be interpreted and applied differently by each and every individual. As researchers we try to establish close, confidential relationships with our informants in order to gain access to peoples true feelings and thoughts. But apart from the fact that our informants providing us with the information we need, they also offer us a unique opportunity to measure our humanness first, before we measure ourselves as scholars. It is to them, my informants, that I owe my humble gratitude. So while reading this, please keep in mind that none of this would have been possible without their undivided attention, trust, and willingness to share their thoughts and emotions with me. I hope I will do them justice.

Though as researchers we are mostly 'on our own', the road of writing a research proposal, doing field research, analyzing data, and eventually writing a thesis would have been a lonely one without a number of people that were there for me along the way. Most importantly I would like to thank my mom for always believing in me. Subsequently, I would like to thank my boyfriend, for making me laugh when I rather felt like crying; my friends, for being my sounding board; and my fellow classmates, for the endless nightly motivational

talks. Last but not least, I wish to thank my supervisor, Jolle Demmers. If it were not for her enthusiasm and support every step of the way, I would not have been able to proudly present this thesis.

Introduction

"We had a visiting student from America who was black. This black American youth spoke, to my amazement, in an American accent. Which meant that blacks did not automatically talk in a different accent from whites. Which meant that accent had nothing to do with race. Which meant that a Japanese or Indian, or for that matter a Xhosa, brought up from childhood in Buckingham Palace, would speak exactly like the King of England. Which meant a whole lot of other things besides. Including the thought that culture is a matter of environment, not race or color. This really set off a chain reaction of conclusions, culminating in the conclusion that if all these things were determined by environment, we white South Africans might by virtue of the same principle of environmental conditioning be victims of inherited thinking wrongly based in fact and therefore false."

Donald J. Woods (1978: 43-44)

On 27 April 1994, for the first time in 350 years, black South Africans could say that they were free. Free of white oppression, free to move around the country - their country - as they pleased, free to reclaim the lands that were taken from them by the colonialists, and free to vote and live in a democracy. Significant social, political and economic transformations have taken place, of which the most momentous probably is the shift in power from the white minority to the black majority that has occurred. However, that does not mean all of black people's problems have been resolved; on the contrary. For many, daily reality still includes the struggle to survive in a society where they indeed are free, but do not have the means to compete with those that have held the power for decades. The end of apartheid meant the end of an oppressive and racist regime, but it also heralded a time of rising crime rates, a worsening of the educational system, an overtaxed social safety net, poor service delivery,

HIV/AIDS, and the government's inability to deal with the extreme, ever rising poverty. Certain remains of the apartheid legacy are persistent in character; most notably the racial issues the country has been dealing with for what seems as forever.

Donald Woods, quoted above, was a white South African journalist and famous anti-apartheid activist who became close friends with Bantu Stephen Biko, one of the founders of the Black Conscious Movement of the 1960s.[1] He, like many other whites, had numerous prejudices about blacks and was a firm believer in the systems of apartheid and segregation. Until that one day in college, after he heard a young, black American guy speak, and he realized that maybe his ideas about black people in South Africa were based on false facts.

One cannot escape race in South Africa; it is everywhere. After a period of seventeen years the racial discourse is as prominent again as it was during the freedom struggle in the 90s; Nelson Mandela's dream of the Rainbow nation, where ideally it does not matter who you are, where you are from, and whether you are black or white, has not been realized yet. It does matter who you are, where you are from, and it most certainly matters whether you are black or white. The important difference now is that the tables are turned. Political power is concentrated in the hands of the black majority, whereas the previously dominant white minority is slowly handing over the power they are trying to hold on to, while learning to deal with their somewhat uncertain future in a rapidly changing society. Discussing racial issues in South Africa is a delicate matter and white South Africans are quick to say that *"You don't understand, you are not from here",* and I believe there is a truth to that. Nevertheless I still made an effort to understand it better, and because I was offered a unique glance into the world of white people and interacted with them every single day for four months, I do believe I came somewhat closer to understanding their feelings and the racist grudges they hold

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[1] Black Conscious Movement was a grassroots anti-apartheid activist movement, that came into being in the 1960s.

against black people. At the same time I also came to understand the potential destructive force of the national black 'anti'-white language that so strongly exists at the moment.

For a period of twelve weeks I carried out my field research in Polokwane, South Africa; capital of the Limpopo province and squeezed in between three former Bantustans: Venda, Lebowa, and Gazankulu[2]. Uptown, in the 'white' suburbs where I lived, people daily discussed matters of race in the intimacy of their homes, surrounded by people who share their thoughts and the color of their skin: white. In the context of rapidly changing realities and political, social and economic transformations in South Africa, I have tried to understand the local racial discourse I observed. Driven by a personal interest in the processes through which people internalize certain stories about themselves and the world they live in, the ways by which they reproduce these stories and the purposes they serve, I sought to understand the racial discourse so prevalent in the environment I lived and worked in. Guided by Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (2003) the purpose of this thesis is to answer the following question:

> "In the current reality of social, political, and economic transformations in South
> Africa, what stories about social reality have white people inhibited, how are these
> stories legitimized, and what functions do they serve?"

The goal of my research puzzle is to give insight into how white people cope with the radical changes that are occurring in South Africa, to give them a voice and hopefully give

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[2] The idea behind the Bantustans, or homelands as they are also known, was to concentrate different African tribes into different territories in an attempt to turn South Africa into an ethnically homogenous country. Seeking to realize a white demographic majority in South Africa, President Hendrik Verwoerd implemented the system of Bantustans as a crucial part of his strategy; make blacks obligatory citizens of these Bantustans so that they lose their South African citizenship. With that accomplished they would also lose their voting right, giving whites the opportunity to stay in control (Terreblanche 2002: 78).

'outsiders' an opportunity to come closer to understanding where racism comes from.

South Africa is the largest and most developed economy of the continent, and for many African countries it serves as an example of success and prosperity, especially because of its history of oppression and the struggle for freedom. A lot of fascinating and interesting works have been devoted to the struggle of the black majority. However, in this thesis I will specifically focus on the current position of the white minority that has, after centuries, lost its dominance over political power. It happens all too often that ones a majority group takes over the power that was previously in the hands of the minority, that minority is subsequently repressed.[3]

The reason for that being is I think we might be able to learn from the way white people cope with these changes through an analysis of the stories they inhibit about social reality. There are numerous countries that have undergone similar transformation like South Africa where minority groups, which used to hold the power lost it to the majority.

Methodology and Ethics

The research puzzle as stated above is not the same as the one I took along when entering the field. More so, it was after I came back with pages of analyzed documents, transcribed interviews, and extensive outlines that I decided to follow my heart and turn my research puzzle around. Initially I set out to do research on the social and environmental implications of mining operations on local communities at the Mogalakwena platinum mine near Polokwane, owned by the British platinum magnate Anglo Platinum. For four months I conducted interviews with several people from the Department of Environmental Affairs, mining law professors, lawyers representing the local communities, agricultural experts, several staff members from different NGOs concerned with the well-being of the local residents, residents of two communities living on or near the platinum mine themselves, and the local tribal authority of that specific chieftaincy. A week or two into my research I noticed

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[3] For example Rwanda.

that there were two completely different stories about what was going on between Anglo Platinum and the local communities, and that at the core of every story lay the issue of race; whites were blaming the blacks and blacks were blaming the whites.

As a researcher I am, and throughout the research period have been, fully aware of my observer and ethnographer bias. The fact that I am a woman, white, and fairly young have influenced my data for which all my recordings made are partial; for the simple fact that the observer and his/her circumstances cannot be separated from the accounts he/she writes. Moreover, as interpretative anthropology makes clear, every individual brings biases and predispositions to the field, and these cannot ever be fully circumvented for they constitute in part who we are and how we define ourselves. The only thing to do is to be as open and explicit about our biases as possible (Dewalt and Dewalt 2002: 79-81). One cannot escape race in South Africa, not as a South African, not as an outsider, and so neither could I.

Living in uptown, 'white' Polokwane things were gradually expected from me. The longer I was there the more I started to feel the pressing weight of the importance of race, as well as the significance of 'on which side' you were on, and at first, I was on the 'black' side. Biased and judgmental as I was, I entered the field being sympathetic of the blacks and not so much of the whites. Soon that started to pose difficulties for my research and myself. As white people constituted a large part of my informants and my direct environment, for the sake of my research I had to drop my prejudices and start taking their stories seriously. The deeper I dug into the root causes of the conflict between Anglo Platinum and the local communities, the closer I came to issues of race, and as I grew closer to the people in my direct environment, I slowly started to understand where white people's stories and judgments about black people were coming from. Unconsciously their stories had snuck up on me, subdued me to their power, and for a short while I became part of the racial narrative I was surrounded by every day. I became increasingly aware of the color of my skin up to the point that I could not dismiss it, and in a society where 'birds of a feather flock together' my tendency to flock with black people was hardly ever appreciated, if not even in some cases disapproved of by whites. As part of the whites I was expected to *be* white, which meant

being *with* the white, and for me that raised a lot of questions concerning loyalty related issues; I had to choose, or so I thought.

My disappointment in white people for their racism made place for understanding. Not only was I painfully aware of the color of my skin, I was paranoid and obsessed about it and I had taken over the language of the people around me, a racist language. It is said that every researcher goes through a 'crisis phase', and I suppose this was mine. Torn between my own moral principles and a sense of obligation towards the people that had done so much for me it felt as if I were two people at the same time, and at that point I hated both of them. I had to find a way to forgive myself that I had become afraid of the people I had sympathized with ever since I was a little child, the blacks, so I forced myself to observe my feelings and thoughts regarding black and white people and to put things in perspective.

Practice makes perfect, as does ultimate participant observation; after I had analyzed myself I was able to put my frustrations at rest and step out of the arena in which the discourse was played out and truly observe and try to understand why the white people in my environment were so racist. That is the reason why I decided to focus on the racial discourse and write this thesis about it; because it is that easy to unnoticeably become part of something you always thought you opposed, yet it is much harder to step out of it, especially if it has been all you have ever known. As researchers we are trained in observing others, and we are in the unique position to uncover the processes and patterns through which ideologies like racism are built and kept in place.

Methodologically and ethically these changes, at the stage in which they were carried out, posed some challenges. In the first place it implies that most of the data presented will be drawn from my personal journal instead of the semi-structured interviews I conducted while still doing research on the conflict between AP and the local communities. One of the most important functions of the diary is to be a private outlet for the researchers' frustrations, doubts and hardships and many researchers use it as a self-reflexive tool. However, diaries are also part of the fieldwork record, and may as well contain important data, thus keeping a diary can be important for personal as well as analytical purposes (Dewalt and Dewalt 2002: 152).

Even though it is common among researchers to use their journals for data, it might not be considered the most recommendable strategy. Nevertheless, considering the fact that I will not be making any generalizations outside of my research population, and the fact that I have systematically written in my journal, I do not think that its usage as one of my primary sources of information will make my data any less valid or reliable. Furthermore, I have used different techniques to cross-validate my conclusions by comparing the data drawn from recordings in my journal to data obtained differently, to be precise the review of documents and texts such as newspapers, as well as video and audio material like speeches in the news by political leaders.

The implications for the people whose words will be used in this thesis are of much bigger importance. The main reason that my choices have complicated the ethics of my research is because I never intended to use the information that I wrote down in my journal as official data in the first place, which in itself raises the greatest number of ethical questions with respect to 'informed consent' and the right of people to choose to participate in research. With respect to my research people never really had a choice, and they certainly could not have known when I was and when I was not doing research and gathering data. Not only has the above had implications for the matter of informed consent, also (participant) observation as a research method raises the same questions. Dewalt and Dewalt (2002) explain how a fieldworker deals with a fine line between being a fieldworker and simply a fellow companion participating in whatever the community members are doing. While traveling, working, visiting activities and hanging out with community members, the fieldworker might also be gathering data. The fact that fieldworkers make themselves 'invisible' to make people forget that we are outsiders, in order to blend in as good as possible and thus obtain the possibility to observe people when they are not aware that they are being watched, also makes them very vulnerable to the critique of not obtaining the necessary informed consent. Even if a fieldworker explains that he/she is 'writing a book' or report on his/her experiences, informants may not always realize that what they share as 'gossip' during chitchat with each other may form part of this report. We seek to develop sufficient rapport and have community

members become so comfortable with us as community participants that they will share insights and information that only insiders would know (2002: 197-198; Hart, Boeije and Hox 2005: 217). I accomplished exactly that with the people in my direct environment, yet one could rightfully argue that this only happened because those people never knew they were part of a research. The truth is that they initially never even were part thereof, which complicates the situation even more. I never obtained the informed consent, and though it could be argued that because of that the data that will be presented are not valid or perhaps should not even be used. The only thing left for me to do is to take all the necessary measures to protect the identity of the people whose stories I will use. In the first place all the names used in this thesis will be feigned, but since that is not enough to assure their anonymity, I will also take them out of their direct context so that it will become practically impossible to trace back who those people actually were. I will refer to them as people from my 'direct environment' so as to leave it in the middle which exact environment I am referring to, while at the same time making clear that it entails people with whom I established close relationships. Moreover, for the sake of clarity in writing and reading, I will refer to them as my participants, respectively informants, even though some of them never officially and knowingly participated.

It was never my intention to betray or embarrass the trust of the people for whom I have come to care a lot, hence making the decision to use their accounts in my thesis was a conflicting one for myself as well. There was a certain perversity to it, to write about people who have trusted me with their deepest emotions, unaware that their stories could ever be used in this manner. Despite the objections uttered by others as well as myself I have done all that lies in my power to protect their identities and privacy, and I sought to carefully analyze their verbal and non-verbal accounts and write them down with the sincerest care. Even though I acknowledge the fact that the choices I made can be judged as unconventional and unethical even, considering all the measures taken to control the potential damage to my informants privacy or my relationship with them, I stand behind my decision to amongst other sources, use their stories in order to answer my research puzzle.

This thesis will consist of three chapters. In the first chapter I will set out the historical background against which I will situate the research puzzle as well as the other two chapters. In order to understand the present, we need to be informed about the past. More so, we need to pay attention to these historical events that might help us understand through what language certain behavior and choices in the present are legitimized. Therefore chapter one will discuss South Africa's colonial rule and apartheid legacy by looking into the justifications of both systems, the effects of centuries of cultural hegemony on present day South Africa, how this is related to and what implications it has for the current transformation in power, and how events in the past relate to the current re-racialization of society. Chapter two will outline the local, white 'anti'-black discourse that I observed in Polokwane. As part of the explanation for the fierceness and persistence of the white racist discourse, I will from time to time use examples from the national-level 'anti'-white comments made by prominent politicians. By the use of Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis and Michel Foucault's notion of 'regimes of truth', central themes to the chapter will be: i) how the discourse is told, and ii) how it is enacted and inculcated. Finally I will present the argument that since white people have lost the power to control the dominant discourse, they are currently involved in a contestation for 'truth' with black people. Consequently, the core themes of chapter three will be the i) legitimization of the discourse, and ii) the functions that it serves. I will present the assumption that the 'fierceness' and persistence of both discourses in part can be explained by notions of glorifications of the past, nostalgia, and strong feelings of home and belonging. Finally I will present the argument that based mainly on data from the field when I was doing research on Anglo Platinum and local communities, that the fierceness and persistence of the white discourse can in part be explained by use of the globalization versus traditionalism debate. I will argue that the differences in how blacks and whites view the world, either through the lens of globalization or that of traditionalism, contribute to the re-racialization of South African society and the persistence of the white discourse.

These three chapters will add up to the concluding part of this thesis. We define ourselves by means of what we are not, and each constituent part of that definition of the self comes with certain implications. If we are not black, we are thus white. And if we are white people living in a society where race matters, the boundaries of whiteness and blackness will be strictly enacted. People inhibit certain narratives, which do not only become apparent in the language that they use, but also in ways in which people for example shop, live, and play sports. The local, white, racist 'anti'-black discourse white people have internalized seems to serve as a coping mechanism in times of uncertainty, a time in which white people are for the first time learning to cope with not being in power to control the dominant discourse.

1 A History of Inequality: Changing Realities?

"But freedom is not enough. You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of the race and then say, you are free to compete with all the others, and still justly believe that you have been completely fair. Thus it is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. All our citizens must have the ability to walk though the gates… We seek not just freedom but opportunity – not just legal equity but human ability – not just equality as a right and a theory but equality as a fact and as a result"

Speech President L.B. Johnson (in Terreblanche 2002: 35)

Numerous books and articles have been devoted to South Africa's intriguing and complex history. The long history of Dutch and British colonialism, decades of apartheid, the remarkable struggle of the African National Congress (ANC) to fight an unjust system and Nelson Mandela's incredible victory in the legendary April 1994 elections which led the country towards a transformation into a democratic system, in which all citizens are equal. Many things have changed significantly ever since. Not in the least were the efforts by white South Africans to sustain a 'white' political system finally overcome. It has, and still is, not been easy for white South Africans to acknowledge the evils of colonialism, segregation, and apartheid, and the argumentation used to legitimize those forms of oppression. However, Sampie Terreblanche in his book *A History of Inequality in South Africa 1965-2002*, points out that if whites do not seriously reconsider their past, they cannot expect the victims of colonialism to accept them as reliable companions in building a common future (2002: 4). This implies that they should overtly recognize that they have benefited from colonialism, segregation, and apartheid, and that most black South Africans have been victims of these systems.

Unfortunately, as Hein Maris points out, *"in many respects, [white] South Africans' vision of the future rests on foreshortened perspectives of the past. This applies centrally to the millions who engineered, administered, and savored the complex of exploitative practices that penetrated every aspect of lived reality – few [whites] of whom will today admit to their authorship of, or moral culpability for, the devastation they achieved"* (Maris in Terreblanche 2002: 4). Given the weakness of the South African economy, whites are most likely not in a position to recompense the black victims of systemic exploitation, but they ought to at least be prepared to reconsider South Africa's past. When in 1994 the democratically elected government came to power it inherited the most developed economy on the continent and major socio-economic challenges simultaneously. At that time South Africa was dealing with high unemployment rates and an abject poverty of fifty per cent of the population, as well as high levels of crime and violence. What makes these problems so worrying is that it is mostly blacks – and especially Africans – who still are at the receiving end of poverty, violence and crime (Terreblanche 2002: 4).

While until 1994 political power was concentrated in the hands of the whites, it is now concentrated in the hands of a democratically elected government, and, given the composition of the population, mainly in the hands of blacks. Every South African can be proud of the political and human rights transformations that have been taking place ever since the inauguration of the first Mandela administration. Unfortunately, one cannot say that the socio-economic transformations have caught up with the political and human rights transformations just yet. In the past seventeen years it seems as if the painful remains of the apartheid system have slowly but viciously been unveiled, to show the new and hopeful Rainbow Nation all of its most ugly colors. It is no pretty sight, passing by Cape Town's largest, seemingly never ending (informal) township, *Khayelitsha*, when driving into the city from the airport. Likewise, it is no pretty sight driving from Johannesburg to Pretoria and passing *Diepsloot*, or *Alexandra*, two of the largest, overcrowded, notoriously dangerous (informal) townships in Johannesburg, and seeing row after row after row of tin shacks, as far

as the eye can reach. And these sights just scratch the surface; the real issues people are daily dealing with, are hardly visible from the highway.

Though these townships, or informal settlements as they are called, are a result of the Group Areas Act, it is disturbing to see that the insecure socio-economic situation in which a large number of these people find themselves in, has not improved during the post-apartheid period, but has in fact gotten worse [4]. That is a matter of great concern, especially considering that many people had put their faith in the post-elections expectations of a restoration of social justice and a drastic improvement of the living conditions of the blacks (Terreblanche 2002: 27). The fact that these expectations have not been met, is leading to growing frustrations among the black population as well as a growing realization at the government level that something must be done. The recent municipal elections of May 2011 very well exemplified this; all parties were repeatedly stressing their commitment to 'proper service delivery'.

However, who is to blame for this appalling state of affairs? It cannot be denied that some part of the blame needs to be put on the new government. Nonetheless, it can hardly be denied that the white, racist regimes of the past, should take most of the blame for South Africa's severe socio-economic concerns. Because of that I chose to open this chapter with Lyndon Johnsons quote, where he claims that 'freedom alone' is not enough. For in South Africa's case, the mere fact that black people liberated themselves from centuries of white oppressive ruling, has not automatically given them the same opportunities to equally compete with those people that ruled the country for centuries on end.

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[4] The Group Areas Act was an act of parliament passed by the apartheid government in April 1950. The act appointed different racial groups to different residential and business areas. The intention of the law was to prohibit non-whites from living in the most developed areas of the country, which were then restricted to whites. It caused many non-whites to have to travel large distances from their homes in order to work. The law meant that non-whites were forcibly removed because they lived in the 'wrong' areas. The non-white majority was given a much smaller space to live in than the white minority (Terreblanche 2002: 37).

1.1   Colonialism and Apartheid Ideology: The Legacy

Even seventeen years after apartheid, most of the unemployed, poverty-stricken people are black South Africans. The inequities in the allocation of income, property, and opportunities are mainly to the disadvantage of blacks. It is mostly blacks that were criminalized during the long period of discrimination, repression, and violence, and it is mostly blacks that are still today the number one victims of aggression and criminality (Terreblanche 2002: 25). White people often tend to say that that the socio-economic issues inherited from the colonial system and period of white domination should not only be judged in isolation:

> "[We] have also provided the country with a strong economy, a good educational and
> health system, and modern infrastructures. In general we made this country a modern
> and developed one." [5]

Gerrit P.

The role white South Africans and the western world have played in developing South Africa once again should not be dismissed. Nevertheless it is beyond every argument that the white colonial powers and local white establishments that ruled the country from the mid 17th to the late 20th centuries have used their monopoly over economic, political, military, and ideological power not only to benefit themselves but also to steal from indigenous people, disrupt their social structures, and turn them into exploited workers (Terreblanche 2002: 25). It is important to realize that the issues of poverty, inequality, unemployment, violence and criminality that exist in contemporary South Africa have been consciously shaped and created overtime and are deeply rooted in the countries' long colonial and apartheid history. They thus have an unarguable systemic, structural character. The failure of the new government to reform institutions dealing with poverty relief is not solely their own responsibility. For the most part of the 20th century the duty of bringing welfare and other services to the rural

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[5] Authors interview with informant on 7 March 2011.

population was trusted to traditional African authorities, like chiefs and headmen. Many of them had become part of apartheid engineering, and when the system of 'Bantu' authorities was implemented in the 1950s, the traditional authorities were transformed into paid bureaucracies; *"This facilitated the creation of an African bureaucratic elite that was – as part of the apartheid bureaucracy – inclined towards self-enrichment and corruption, and disinclined to deliver services to those who needed them most"* (Terreblanche 2002: 37).

In a little less than thirty years, the apartheid regime forcibly 'resettled' more than three million people; almost a fifth of the population in 1960. On its way, apartheid disrupted lives and peoples' livelihoods while chasing down a racist political vision. Among blacks currently the unemployment rate is more than 40 per cent; in most of the rural areas this rate supersedes 70 per cent, compared to twenty-two per cent in urban areas. Studies show strong correlations between education and poverty, as well as between unemployment and poverty (Terreblanche 2002: 190). Moreover, due to the notorious but extremely efficient Land Act, from 1936 until 1994, blacks were prohibited from owing land in eighty-seven per cent of the country.[6] Comparatively, while whites made up approximately 20 per cent of the population during the first 70 years of the 20th century, they consistently received more than 70 per cent of the income, whereas Africans made up about 70 per cent of the population and received 20 per cent of the income. The violence and cruelty of everyday poverty remain a persistent aspect of social life: inadequate housing, water, and sanitation; illness, malnutrition, and infant death; alcoholism, shattered families, sexual violence, and the resentment and revulsion born out of structural, chronic hopelessness (Crais 2002: 2; Terreblanche 2002: 383).

Poverty is one of the greatest and most persistent legacies of the apartheid regime, and there are several factors that contributed to this. Firstly, the government systematically

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[6] The Land Act was passed in 1913 as an attempt to destroy all forms of sharecropping and squatter farming by the blacks. As a result of this legislation and additional laws that prohibited Africans from conducting business in white areas, before 1980, Africans were almost completely deprived of the opportunity to legally accumulate capital and entrepreneurial skills outside of the Bantustans (Terreblanche 2002: 397).

deprived African tribes of their land and purposely proletarialised them in order to institutionalize a repressive labor system. Secondly, many discriminatory actions were taken to protect the Afrikaners from competition over jobs from the blacks, which were prepared to work for a cheaper loan. Thirdly, certain laws also prevented Africans from doing skilled, highly paid jobs, gain skills and undertake professional training, which prevented them from being able to move beyond low-paid and unskilled labor in the first place. Fourth and lastly, as part of these discriminatory measures the government structurally spent less money on 'social spending' on the blacks, which meant that there was far less money for black schools, houses and clinics to be renovated or equipped when needed. Governments spending on education have been very unequally distributed among the different racial groups in South Africa during the period of apartheid. In 1953 the educational system was transformed from mission schools to the department of Bantu education. Though the new system did extend the reach of primary education, it remained significantly inferior to white education. Until 1982 the total spending on African education was less than half that on white education, despite the fact that the African population was more than four and a half time larger than the white population.

It is not surprising that after decades of severe neglect, African education has fallen so far behind that a vicious circle of inferiority has been established and that the effect of this neglect is immeasurable. The majority of the job opportunities that were created since 1970 have been in the service sector, but because of their low educational level, Africans have not bee able to compete for these jobs to the same extent as other population groups. Owing to their inadequate education and professional training, many Africans are not in a position to make full use of the new opportunities. As a result of inferior training, the productivity of many Africans is very low, and it will most certainly take decades before this educational backlog will be eliminated (Van der Berg and Bhorat in Terreblanche 2002: 398).

Yet, the abject poverty, poor education, violence, and all the other hardships many blacks are dealing with today are not the only matters of concern. What must not be forgotten is that during the colonial wars the social structures of several African tribes were disrupted,

their chieftainships undermined, and that essentially there was enormous harm done to the physical and cultural existence of these tribes (Terreblanche 2002: 385-387; Harber 2011: 16). The seizure of the ancestral land of African tribes and the undermining of their culture and traditional power structures during colonialism is still a very sensitive cultural topic with which the current South African ANC government is having trouble dealing with. This will be further elaborated on in chapters 2 and 4.

The impoverishment and proletarianisation of different African tribes began in the 17th century and lasted until 1990. During European expansionism it were the Dutch who first 'set foot' in South Africa as colonizers. However, as their power began to decline during the first few years of the 19th century, the British saw their chance and moved in to fill the void the Dutch were leaving behind. For a while the two parties fought each other for control over South Africa, but eventually in 1806 the British took over. This power shift that was caused by British colonialism had a devastating effect on the social order of both the Afrikaners and African tribes. The real victims were the Xhosa and the Zulu, who were defeated in bloody wars and disposed of their lands, while large numbers of them were forced to turn into a subdued proletariat. In the late 19th century British colonial policy was transformed into an aggressive type of exploitative and expansionist imperialism. This was partly due to an increased competition between the biggest industrial countries, and partly because of the profitable prospects offered to Britain once gold was discovered in South Africa in 1872. Mining became big business and has been ever since, though on the ground very little locals have benefitted from this. Almost all the repressive and exploitative legislations passed in the period after 1890 were filed by and on behalf of the powerful mining companies. Expansionist imperialism and racial capitalism were legitimized in terms of the racist ideology of Social Darwinism and segregation, and during the hegemony of the English establishment in the first decades of the 20th century, racially based segregation became the

official policy, institutionalizing both repressive and discriminatory labor patterns.[7] Both these measures were exploitative and repressive, and not only brought about but also increased socio-economic inequalities between whites and blacks (Terreblanche 2002: 393-395).

These historical details on British victory over the Dutch, and their racist ideologies promoted during their rule hold quite some importance given that they have had significant implications for the cruelty of the apartheid system that was put in place after the Afrikaners were given the right to self-rule in what had become the Union of South Africa [8]. While the British regime did severely discriminate against the blacks, in cruelty it was by far outdone by the apartheid regime designed by the Afrikaners (Crais 2002: 31). During the 1930s a group of young intellectuals came forward, which guided the Afrikaner National Party (from now on NP) towards a more aggressive and exclusive form of nationalism, referred to as 'Afrikaner Christian Nationalism'. Terreblanche says the following about this new generation of Afrikaner nationalists: *"By stressing the supposed injustices done to Afrikaners by British imperialism and foreign capitalism, and exaggerating the dangers of swart 'oorstroming' ('black swamping'), Afrikaner ideologues succeeded in creating a 'syndrome of victimization' – id est., the idea that the existence and interests of the Afrikaner volk were endangered by*

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[7] In The Origins of Species Charles Darwin presented a theory of evolution that explained the diversity of species found on Earth. He proposed that each species undergoes random physical and mental changes, or mutations. Some of these changes enable a species to survive other mutations make survival more difficult or even impossible. A process of 'natural selection' decides which species are fitted to survive by nature, and which are not. Herbert Spencer used that theory to develop the social principle of the 'survival of the fittest'. People who are best suited by nature to survive, rise to the top, while the less fit fall to the bottom. Inequalities of wealth, social position and political power are therefore natural and inevitable, and no attempt should be made by government to interfere with them (Hewood 1992: 52).

[8] The Union of South Africa is the forerunner of the current Republic of South Africa and came into being with the unity of earlier separate colonies of Natal, the Cape, Transvaal and Orange Free State. The Union was founded as a dominion of the British Empire and governed as a constitutional monarchy (Terreblanche 2002: 239).

other population groups" (2002: 298). By playing the 'ethnic card' the NP was able to mobilize many Afrikaners by portraying them as the unjust victims, threatened from two sides: the first their exploitation from 'above' by British colonialism, and the second the danger from 'below' of the threat posed to Afrikaner culture by the 'uncivilized' African majority. With their eyes set on power and wealth of which they sincerely thought it rightfully belonged to them, and in protection of their Afrikaner culture, the NP ideologues put together a clear-cut and offensive version of racism, which was translated into the policy of apartheid. *"Consequently, the ideology of Afrikaner nationalism was really a means to an end, namely the mobilization of ethnic power to acquire political power, and especially greater wealth. The racism accompanying this ideology was also a means to an end, namely maintaining the subordination of allegedly inferior indigenous races in order to create the 'space' for Afrikaners to attain their political and economic aims, and their promised land"* (Terreblanche 2002: 299).

Many Afrikaners envied the English speaking whites because of the wealth they had acquired by using extra-economic means in order to turn blacks into cheap resources of labor. After the Afrikaners had assumed political power they believed that it was now their turn to benefit from the exploitation of blacks. It was the Afrikaner *volksbeweging* that had delivered the NP its victory in the 1948 elections, and the continuation of NP rule for almost 50 years. The power shift that took place after 1948 was initiated by the Afrikaners themselves, who therefore saw themselves not only as a divinely chosen people, but also as the wronged victims of British colonialism, and a group threatened by the supposedly uncivilized Africans that constituted a threatening majority. It was the first time that an Afrikaner party had gained political power, and carried away in 'the heat' of the moment the NP abused that political power to a great extent. It manipulated the constitutional system to ensure NP rule and it implemented a wide variety of racist laws in order to suppress and take advantage of blacks, excessively more than the British government had during their period of rule; from the viewpoint of the Afrikaners they had been suppressed enough by the British which made

them take matters into their own hands as to prevent that from happening again (Terreblanche 2002: 393-395).

In the19[th] century the British had justified the start of the New Imperialism in terms of Social Darwinism and their assumed supremacy over people of other races, as well as the assumed inferiority of indigenous people. Even though the similarities between the British and the Afrikaner ideologies, through which they tried to legitimize their imperialism and economic plunder outnumber their differences, it is important to briefly consider them in order to understand the scope of devastation apartheid has had on contemporary South Africa. There are four reasons, according to Terreblanche, why apartheid has had a more devastating effect on South African society than British imperialism. First, the British were a lot subtler in their propagation of their superiority than the Afrikaner establishment that imitated the English ideas of white superiority and black inferiority, but did so in a rather clumsy way. That some of the key ideologues of Afrikaner nationalism were exposed to German philosophy and Nazi propaganda in the 1920s and 1930s helps explains the influence of the *herrenvolk* ideas present in Afrikaner political thinking.[9] Second, whereas religion played a role in the British belief that they were an exclusively chosen people, these thoughts were by far not as explicit as the argument of Afrikaners that *they* were a divinely chosen people charged with the promotion of Christian civilization and high moral values among the members of *all* other population groups, including the English. Third, the ideological offensive committed by the British can be considered as a 'classic' response of a world power threatened by the loss of control. The Afrikaner ideological offensive can be characterized as typical of a petit bourgeoisie trying to achieve political power for the very first time.[10] Finally,

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[9] *Herrenvolk* is a term drawn from Nietzsche's idea of the übermensch – the superhuman that shall surpass man – a creature to be surpassed. Superhuman is a warrior (Matson 2000: 521).

[10] Petit bourgeoisie is a term that originally refers to the lower middle-class (Kellner, Douglas, "Jean Baudrillard", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Winter 2009 Edition)*, Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2009/entries/baudrillard/>.)

the British framed and propagated their vision of white supremacy and indigenous inferiority before the Second World War, while the Afrikaner nationalists framed their ideologies about Afrikaner superiority and indigenous inferiority throughout and after the Second World War.

What is so essential about this is that one of the results of the defeat of the German Nazi regime was the worldwide contestation of racial superiority. When the NP formulated its ideas in the 1940s, and institutionalized its racist policies in the 1950s and 1960s, it went completely against the international communities' post-war opinion. That they were able to get away with such a despicably crude ideology anyway is at least remarkable, but it is needless to say that without the support of Britain and the United States during the second half of the 20th century, the apartheid regime would never have lasted for its forty-six brutal years (2002: 301). With the NP in control and its political power controlled to promote the interests of the Afrikaners, the volksbeweging *"went seriously wrong"; the Afrikaner establishment became notorious for its uncritical self-righteousness, and it was this 'sick' society that uncritically institutionalized and defended apartheid"* (Terreblanche 2002: 299). With the implementation of the various racist laws the NP seemed particularly concerned about the dangers of the *'oorstroming':* the 'flooding' of big cities like Cape Town and Johannesburg with black workers looking to take the jobs of the whites.

Their agenda was mainly intended to serve three purposes. The first was to employ the apartheid policy as an answer to the 'native problem' in order to ascertain the purity of the Afrikaner *volk* and neutralize the conflict innate to the process of racial integration. The second was to reform the economy so as to free Afrikaners from 'foreign' capitalism and adjust it to the needs of the Afrikaners. The third and last was to solve the issues of poor white Afrikaners and remedy the injustices of the past by implementing a wide-ranging welfare policy for uplifting Afrikaner farmers and urban workers (Terreblanche 2002: 303). In the process of implementing the apartheid policies, the NP made sure to build large organizational structures in order to not only control the movement of Africans, but also to restrict them in their working- and living space, as well as in their intellectual interests.

Segregation was well modified to labor needs during the mining revolution whereas the system of apartheid was developed to secure the interests of the industrial revolution.[11]

1.2   Apartheid at its End; Turning Tables and Current Challenges

At times it happened that protests against apartheid became violent, but they were always effectively suppressed by the security systems put in place by the government. Consequently, the ideology and execution of white supremacy was never truly endangered until the 1970s. The first and most serious crisis for the apartheid regime occurred in March 1960 and was set off by the Sharpville massacre where the police shot and killed sixty-nine people in a township near Vereeniging. This was during an ANC and Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) campaign against the passing of yet again certain discriminatory laws. The government arrested thousands of people in response, banned the ANC and the PAC, and sealed off the township. The ANC went underground and continued their struggle against the racist apartheid regime, in a time when President Vorster set up a web of security measures that by the end of 1960 made South Africa resemble a police state.

However, by the mid-1970s a number of incidents started to pose a threat to the white hegemonic order. This caused a deep paradigm shift in the ideological thinking of both whites and blacks, and drastically changed the power relations within white supremacy thinking and racial capitalism (Terreblanche 2002: 307). In the beginning of the 1970s the white hegemonic order had seemed indestructible. It was based on well-thought and integrated political, economic, and ideological power, and had the support of major western countries like the United States, England and Germany. During the next twenty years the government was able to fend off an increasing number of offensives from the liberation movement, inspired by a growing discontentedness about the white regime, by shoring up its political and

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[11] The mineral revolution is referred to when speaking of the period from 1870 onward in South African history, in which rapid industrial and economic changes happened. This revolution was mainly driven by an increasing need in permanent working force to work the mines (Terreblanche 2002: 230).

economic power – but the administration failed to maintain its legitimacy. Moreover, the critical attitude of the Carter administration in the United States succeeded in putting the 'immortality' of the apartheid regime in the international limelight. Lacking the necessary legitimacy and international support, the white hegemonic order, and with that the racist regime of apartheid, collapsed in the early 1990s.

Already before the Soweto uprising of 1976 the economy had moved into a recession, caused by the OPEC oil price hikes and a downturn in the international economy [12]. This economic downturn, combined with the growing liberation struggle, negated all attempts by the white hegemonic order to create conditions helpful to accumulation of more wealth. After the Soweto uprisings the black liberation struggle really took off, but it was still met with a fierce amount of violence from the government, in desperate attempts to keep repressing the black majority eager to free themselves from decades of oppression (Terreblanche 2002: 306-308).

In the western political order it is usually accepted that a legitimate government can use state violence to restore or maintain law and order. But when a government is illegitimate, and not trusted by its people, the use of violence becomes controversial. What is beyond dispute is that colonial powers and white regimes in South Africa have repeatedly misused their undemocratically obtained political and military power, and their control over labor patterns to institutionalize and achieve the exploitation of indigenous people. It is to no ones surprise that this use of violence regularly provoked resistance from the oppressed blacks.

It is against this background that we should understand that South African history is a history of institutionalized and systematic violence. This has caused irreparable harm to the social and cultural structures of indigenous people over a period of 350 years. It is safe to say that this systematic violence has not only been responsible for harvesting a subculture of

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[12] The Soweto uprisings were a number of protests led by students from various Sowetan schools as a response to the introduction of Afrikaans as the primary language in teaching in local schools. Approximately 20 000 students took part in the protests of which some 600 were killed and 6 000 arrested (Davenport and Saunders 2000: 453).

poverty, but one of criminal behavior as well. So if today one wonders why South African cities like Johannesburg and Durban are among the most dangerous cities in the world, together with for example Guatemala City, this is your answer: we should understand that the subculture of criminality is an integral part of both a system that harvested violence and the syndrome of chronic poverty. The widespread inclination towards violence and crime has become deeply embedded among poor, marginalized Africans, who see no other way. The combined effects of the Land Act and deteriorating social and economic conditions in the Bantustans on the one hand, and strictly enforced influx control measures on the other, created a situation of systematic violence that deliberately criminalized many Africans. The inevitable result of this inhumane situation was that millions of Africans were drawn into a vicious circle of violence, lawlessness, and criminality. Systematic violence passed on to the Africans by the colonial regimes and the apartheid governments, and the subculture of criminality together with chronic poverty, should be seen as the most horrible legacies of colonialism, segregation, and apartheid. Once again, we should realize that they are so deeply embedded in South Africa's history and 'normality', that it will take years to get rid of their devastating effects (Terreblanche 2002: 400-405).

The relationship between black and white South Africans is a problematic one, and when reflecting on the violent history of South Africa it should be noted that the systematic violence and criminality of the past and present have not only left deep traces and marks on the blacks, but on the whites as well. On the same account Lötter observes, *"apartheid did major moral harm to white people, a harm that seriously affected the core of their humanity"* (2002: 405). Subsequently, Vivian Taylor comes to the conclusion that *"The painful reality is that the sustained level of violence has had a physical, psychological, and structural impact on both the victims and the agents of violence. That it has its basis in and is reinforced by the social, economic, and political inequalities that are a legacy of apartheid and is part of the crisis of capitalism, makes the problem of political violence a lot more complex"* (1993: 187). The apartheid regime desperately tried to protect an illegitimate system; as a result of that the police often used violence against blacks, which consequently remained unpunished and

accordingly created an opening for lawlessness. As a result *"opportunities were created for already sizeable criminal elements in the black community to wreak havoc with their lawlessness and violent gang activities. The struggle and resistance to it gave people on both sides of the great divide ample opportunities to find all kinds of moral, religious, and ideological justifications for violent and criminal activities"* (Terreblanche 2002: 406). These inclinations towards anti-social ways of conduct and easy ideological justification for such behavior have almost become inherent in large parts of South African society. Denis Huschka and Steffen Mau refer to this notion as 'social anomie'. This concept, developed by scholars like Emile Durkheim, refers to an absence of clear social norms and values and to a lack of sense of social regulation. Durkheim links his idea of social anomie to the occurrence of rapid social change within a society; according to him at such moments normative regulation is threatened with being undermined and people are very likely to lack the social and psychological means to adjust in times of rapid social change. In their article, Huschka and Mau examine the levels of social anomie in South Africa and set out to discover whether this anomie correlates with race and social and economic inequalities. After all these years of colonialism, segregation, and apartheid, as well as the struggles against them, they conclude that South Africans are not only divided along racial lines, but also moral and attitudinal ones as.

In this chapter I have elaborated on, and outlined which are, in the context of this thesis, the most important features of the legacy of colonialism and apartheid. Seventeen years after the first democratic elections South Africa is still dealing with major issues. Of these issues poverty, poor educational levels, and chronic violence and criminality are only a few, tough very prominent and important ones. The country is dealing with enormous social and political transformations and power shifts; all of which come with their own intrinsic dynamics and implications. For decades, white people have ruled the country and treated blacks as inferior, practically worthless beings. But even though that has changed, we are still witnessing a political arena on edge. During the latest municipal elections, in May 2011, the sharpened debate between the ANC and the DA became painfully visible. For white people to

deal with political power slipping away from them is a new thing, for black people to gain political power and learn to use it constructively is a new thing as well. What is evident is that the DA's speaks cautiously about race in general, whereas people like Julius Malema, seem intent to polarize the relationship between blacks and whites. As in many places around the world, populism in South Africa is at rise. The tables have turned, and now blacks realize it is their time to shine, their time to turn this country into what they want it to be. But along the way they are encountering many obstacles and hard choices to make, for being powerless is hard, but being *in* power might be even harder.

In the next chapter I will take a closer look at the discourse of white people. What stories about social reality have they internalized, how do they explain and legitimize these stories, and what functions do these stories serve?

"Truth is not the reward of free spirits, nor the privilege of those who have succeeded

in liberating themselves. Truth is a thing of this world: It is produced only by virtue

of multiple forms of constraint"

Michel Foucault (1984)

Discourse analysis *"aims to give an explicit and systematic description of discourses within their specific historical and power context. It focuses on the formation and contestation of 'collective narratives': of the 'shared stories' people tell about themselves and their situation, about who they are and who they are not"* (Demmers, forthcoming, chapter 6). The discursive approach *"focuses on the way in which communities construct their limits; their relationships to that which they are not or what threatens them; and the narratives which produce the founding past of the community, its identity, and its projections of the future"* (Sayyid and Zac 1998: 261). Discourse analysis thus pays attention to i) how communities construct their boundaries, ii) their relationships to what they are not, and iii) the narratives which produce the past of the communities and its identity. Language takes up an essential role in how we define who we are, who we are not and where we belong. Groups are accordingly made through the reproduction of narratives and discourse analysis steps into society in search of the dominant narrative in order to expose those who have the power to construct it, how it is maintained, contested, institutionalized, policed and protected (Demmers, forthcoming, chapter 6).

Drawing on Saussurean theory that language is a system of signs of which each sign acquires its identity in relation to the identity of another sign, people construct their identity by definition of what they are *not*. Following that line, being white only has relevance when compared to somebody who is black, and vice versa; more so, there is no meaning to 'white',

if not compared to the meaning of 'black'. Sayyid and Zac argue that *"as signification involves the construction of identity, there is no identity before meaning. Not only does identity come into existence through signification, but its construction involves the construction of its link to other identities"* (1998: 258). There is no identity before meaning, which would imply that being white or black in South Africa meant nothing; until something happened that created a significant difference between blackness and whiteness and it thus started to mean something. I would like to argue that what happened and constructed this meaning of whiteness and blackness, is power and the contestation for power.

As presented in chapter one, for centuries white people were in the possession of power to control the dominant discourse. Now they are not any longer, and on the national level, black politicians are for the first time exercising that power which they did not have for centuries: the power to control the dominant discourse. Especially in the case of South Africa, that has undergone such drastic social and political transformations, this is a challenging task, and it may seem tempting 'to give it all back to them'.

As laid out in the introduction, the discourse that will be the focus of analysis is the local white, racist 'anti'-black discourse. Central themes include i) how the discourse is told and ii) how the discourse is enacted and inculcated. In this chapter I will also make use of the national black, 'anti'-white language used by certain politicians, to illustrate that this contributes to a 'hardening' of the local, white, racist 'anti'-black discourse due to a rising distrust of the government on the side of the whites.

2.1   Stories about Social Reality

"Whites have stolen from the blacks and must give it all back — without compensation. Why should I pay for what I own? White farms must be seized, Zimbabwe-style." [13]

Julius Malema

"The whole discussion about who were here first has already been resolved. The oldest human fossils to be found in Africa had straight hair, not curly. So who were here first? The whites!" [14]

Helen P.

Until this day both of these quotes still overwhelm me. For me they are the ultimate embodiment of the difference between the white and black discourse. They are such absolute, determined, and profound products of internalized narratives about the truth that one would not dare contest them. They speak the language of a resolute wish for acknowledgment, but at the same time there is a cry of hopelessness as a result of the fear not to be seen. One can feel the despair and bitterness, the weight of the entire history of South Africa has been fitted into these six lines and they speak the willingness to 'fight' for existence.

What I wish to illustrate with the above quotations, is that black and white people are involved in a contestation for the 'truth', and that contestation makes up an important part of the white discourse. Since white people do not have the political power to control the dominant discourse, their idea of 'truth' is no longer the absolute truth but is now challenged by black people. Both parties consider themselves as the ones 'who were there first', the ones that belong exactly where they are and according to that own the right of – in this case – land. However, the quote by Julius Malema, the current leader of the ANC Youth League and

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[13] Julius Malema is the leader of the ANC Youth League. This quotation is drawn from an article in the Economist on 30 June 2011.

[14] Author's interview with informant on 12 March 2011.

probably one of the most famous politicians in contemporary South Africa, has another very important implication to it. That Malema states whites have stolen from the blacks is nothing new. And, considering the historical evidence, this is an accurate statement. However, it is the determination with which he praises the way white farmers in Zimbabwe are brutally and violently being driven off their farms that is significant. He refers to 'white' farms that were legally owned and worked on for generations, which supplied the whole of Zimbabwe and its neighbors with grains and other products.[15] Considering the 'Zimbabwe-style' to be the 'right' way for black South Africans to take back what is claimed to be theirs and encouraging them to follow in the footsteps of Robert Mugabe *is* worrying and moreover loaded with *meaning*. The first sentence about properties being stolen by whites is given a wholly different connotation, and people are encouraged to take action in a very specific way to change that. Had Malema said something in the line of *"White people have stolen from the blacks and they must give it back"* that would have a different meaning than what he actually said. The reference to Zimbabwe and the ways by which white farmers there are expropriated from their property has a violent intention to it that speaks from his specifically chosen words. The reason that this is so significant is because there are many white farmers in South Africa who are frightened and who take this statement very seriously; more about that will be discussed in the next chapter. Another significant part of the contestation for truth is also the discussion about what the whites have or have not done for the blacks, in the past and present:

> "They don't do anything for us, they never have. They put us away in homelands like we were animals, and now they are taking our land again. Every time they promise it will be better, but they always lie. They don't want us to do better; they are bad. They must go now, this is our country, this is Africa."*[16]*

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[15] For more information on the issue of white farmers in Zimbabwe being driven off their land, see documentary 'Mugabe and the White Farmer'.

[16] Author's interview with the Mapela Tribal Authority on 27 April 2011.

Conversely, white people have a very different opinion about what they have or have not done for the blacks over the past decades:

> "On our old farm, we had a nursery school. I taught the women there to sow, knit, take care of their gardens, and I taught their children to read and write. All over the country white people were doing that for the people that were working for them. They say we haven't done anything for them, but what have they done for themselves? Currently young teenage girls get pregnant on purpose to receive extra grants, and then they let their grandmothers adopt their babies so they will receive even more money. They are ruining it for themselves."[17]
>
> Annemarie V.

> "Our domestic goes home over the weekends. Every Friday she says: 'Ma'am, could you give me R50, - for the bus?' as if I don't know that those buses don't cost her more than R20, -. They are used for holding up their hand and getting what they want, that is how the government treats them." [18]
>
> Helen P.

The great divide between both sides about what the whites have or have not done for the blacks is striking. There is no nuance, both parties portray figuratively it as black or white: it is either nothing, or everything. For white people in my direct environment, the economic, social and political relapse of South Africa is of great concern and a matter of daily discussion in which the blame is put on the blacks. The fact that black people have not been able to reach the white people's standards is mainly because they are lazy and not willing to work:

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[17] Authors interview with informant on 10 March 2011.

[18] Authors interview with informant on 13 April 2011.

> "We want to show them how to do things, but they don't want us to, they refuse to
> accept that we have the expertise that they don't have. They do nothing, refuse to
> work, and then complain that the Zimbabweans come here and take all the jobs. Well
> at least the Zimbabweans want to work, I'm glad they are here or otherwise
> everything would go to waste. You know, the Pedi's, the largest tribe here in the
> Limpopo, they are the laziest of all."[19]

<div align="right">Charl V.</div>

The references to 'show them how to' and 'expertise they don't have' contain a strong notion of white supremacy, whereas 'they do nothing', 'they refuse to work', and 'they are lazy' show a sense of bitterness and perhaps even anger that blacks supposedly do not want to work because they are lazy, which agitates whites. In 2003 the ANC launched a program that continues to this day and is called 'Black Economic Empowerment' (BEE), which is meant to redress the inequalities of apartheid by providing previously disadvantaged people economic opportunities they did not have in the past (Harber 2011: 53). This program is much to the dismay of white South Africans since it has had some serious consequences for them, and the state of the country in general. In short, as part of the program, certain plantations, farms, and other agricultural companies previously owned by white farmers have been – provided that the claims made were legitimate – given back to blacks. The intentions of the BEE program are good, however, their execution has been very poor, which has aggravated white people and especially white farmers. Though the government's aims have been to alleviate poverty and create jobs for black people, they have never given it a thorough thought that these people would also need skills in order to maintain the plantations and fields that they were given. In essence, white farmers lost their land and jobs and now see everything they have worked so hard for being ruined. This has left them feeling frustrated because potentially useful land is

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[19] Authors interview with informant on 5 April 2011.

being wasted while they know how to keep it viable and profitable. Any discussion about these issues opens the door for prejudices about blacks:

 "Black people don't know how to drive. It has been proven that they don't have it in them to know how to measure distances." [20]

<div align="right">Jan van N.</div>

"Black people are afraid of water, that is why they smell so bad. If you go downtown to a mall, you will see that you won't be able to find a bathing suite, even not this time of year. That is because they don't swim, because they are afraid of water." [21]

<div align="right">Annemarie V.</div>

"This country isn't functioning because black people don't know how to lead it. I have read scientific articles about the brain of black people, in which they prove that blacks miss a specific part in their brain that allows them to organize things and think into the future." [22]

<div align="right">Charl V.</div>

White people have internalized a racist, prejudicial way of thinking and speaking about black people: a view that stigmatizes and labels black people as lazy, stupid, unthankful, and above all, inferior to whites. The essence of the stories white people tell to others and themselves is that they are better, and that blacks are responsible for their own problems. In the past whites have done a better job than the blacks are currently doing since they took over power, and whites will always be better than the blacks. They manage to portray themselves as the victims of the political transformation that has been taking place for the past seventeen years,

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[20] Authors interview with informant on 7 April 2011.

[21] Authors interview with informant on 22 March 2011.

[22] Authors interview with informant on 14 March 2011.

but, as shown in chapter one, white people have used this 'victimhood' role in their advantage and justification of apartheid before. However, ever since black people took over political power they have to compete with them for that same victimhood. On the national level politicians like Julius Malema are emphasizing black peoples' history of oppression. Unfortunately I cannot be very specific because I did not gather data on that, but what is clear is that in all of his public appearances he utilizes the opportunity to re-emphasize black people's suffering and a need for action. The effect this is having on white people will be elaborated on in chapter three, but during the four months I interacted with them daily, I have most certainly witnessed that it elicits emotional reactions.

2.2   Enacting the Narrative

An important aspect of discourse analysis is drawn from Anthony Giddens' idea of the 'duality of structures' (1984). According to Giddens as individuals we can act purposively although we are not entirely free to do so. We are born in certain structures, which both enable and constrain us. Moreover, social structures do not exist independently from us, we make them and we are made by them (Demmer, forthcoming, chapter 6). A good – and in this case the best – example of this duality is language. On a daily basis we use language as a medium to express ourselves and at the same time, by speaking, we reproduce language as an embedded structure. Because we talk, we change language over time by for example adding new words, but we still reproduce it as something we were born with. As Giddens strikingly says *"we cannot speak outside our language"* (Giddens in Demmers forthcoming, chapter 6). Vivienne Jabri (1996) explains that it is through discourses and institutions that social life becomes visible and therefore researchable to us. We are born into a culture where certain narratives about the world exist. Stories about signification (what 'importance' things have, what their meaning is) and legitimation (what is 'normal' and 'acceptable'). At the same time, these stories are institutionalized in our societies executive structures like schools, shopping malls, the judicial system and many others (1996: 96). Giddens adds a third structure of

'domination' to the above-mentioned signification and legitimation. In society not everyone has the same 'power to define', so power is constituted through language (discourse) and is supported by material and symbolic resources. Thus the struggle over words is one over power and over meaning (Demmers, forthcoming, chapter 6).

As mentioned before people use language as a medium to express themselves, while at the same time by talking they also reproduce language as a structure. For Fairclough *"Discourses include representations of how things are and have been, as well as imaginaries – representations of how things might or could or should be. These imaginaries may be enacted as actual (networks of) practices – imagines activities, subjects, social relations etc. can become real activities, subjects, social relations, etc."* (2003: 207) Fairclough calls such enactments 'materializations of discourse'. Illustrations hereof in Polokwane are numerous. An example is that people shop in different malls: uptown there are certain malls where white people go, and downtown malls where black people go. I cannot speak for how it is for a black person to be in an uptown mall, but I certainly know how it is to be a white person in a downtown mall: scary. Scary because during the period that I had become part of the white racist discourse I had become aware of the fact that I was one of the very few whites in a black mall, where everybody was looking to steal from me or hurt me; at least that is what white people in my direct environment believe and told me. Shopping is segregated, leisure activities are segregated, and sports are segregated. The last becomes very visible on the national level when looking to the national rugby or soccer teams: there are just a few black players among the Springboks, and just a few white player among the Bafana's.[23] Besides the fact that people sport segregated, they also live segregated: if one would take a city map of Polokwane it would be easy to indicate the parts of town where white people live, and the parts where the black people live. Roughly one could say that white people reside uptown, and black people downtown. What Mark Duffield (2006) refers to as a 'spatial dimension' to the policy discourse on the securitazation of aid of military compounds in countries like

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Afghanistan, can very well be applied in South Africa. Not only in Polokwane, but also in the rest of the country, an increasing number of people is moving to so called 'gated communities': little villages within cities build behind high walls with barbed wire and twenty-four hour surveillance. Finally, blacks and whites even use different names for the town they live in. White people refer to it as Pietersburg, the name the town had during the apartheid regimes. After apartheid the government changed the name of the town to Polokwane, which is how black people refer it to, but you will never hear whites say Polokwane, or blacks say Pietersburg.

Fairclough explains how discourses are not only enacted in practice and materialized in certain ways, but that they can also become *inculcated*. Inculcation is a matter of people coming to 'own' the discourse, coming to *"position themselves inside them, to act and think and talk and see themselves in terms of this discourse"* (2003: 208). He explains that inculcation is a complex process and that a stage towards it is 'rhetorical deployment': *"people may learn new discourses and use them for certain purposes while at the same time self-consciously keeping a distance from them. One of the mysteries of the dialectics of discourse is the process in which what begins as self-conscious rhetorical deployment becomes 'ownership' – how people become unconsciously positioned within a discourse"* (2003: 208). In the case of white people's racist, 'anti'-black discourse, I started to call that the 'dissociation' from racism. While watching a movie situated in the United States in which racism occurred, people in my direct environment reacted with disapproval of the racist language and behavior they saw, yet at no point were they aware of the fact that in their own lives they were doing the exact same thing; they are unconsciously taking part in behavior they question and even disapprove of in others. Fairclough also argues that inculcation also materializes: *"discourses are dialectically inculcated not only in styles, ways of using language, they are also materialized in bodies, postures, gestures, ways of moving, and so forth"* (2003: 208). During my observation of white people at times when they were amongst black people I became aware of the fact that their body language changed. I once went to a downtown mall with a white woman, and I was amazed at how different her behavior there

was from uptown. I could see her hands clamped around her purse, so hard that her knuckles had turned white, and she walked remarkably faster with her head down; behavior I had not observed in uptown malls. When I started paying attention to it, I noticed that especially white women are very protective of their personal belongings, so much that they do not even notice they physically hurt themselves by holding on to their belongings so tight. The link between criminality and black people has become such an automatic one that white people unconsciously show signs of protection when around groups of black people.

What I have tried to show in this chapter is the discourse white people have inhibited. On the national level politicians like Julius Malema regularly make strong anti-white comments, and even though he is not a Minister or in parliament, he is a prominent ANC member, and more importantly, the leader of its Youth League. Julius Malema portrays white people, and especially white farmers, as evil people who should violently be expropriated of their properties in a 'Zimbabwe-style', so that black people can get back what they feel is rightfully theirs. In the strong local, white, anti-black and racist narrative black people are depicted as lazy, stupid, violent, and scientifically proven to be inferior to whites. The fact that the ANC defends some of the statements Malema makes, does not contribute positively to the idea white people in Polokwane have about blacks; their grudges against black people are only strengthened. Moreover, ever since blacks took over power, blacks and whites are involved in a contestation for truth about who were the 'first people' in Africa; both claim the right of owning land and having political power. The discourse white people have internalized has materialized in society in the form of segregation, and the result is that white and black people shop, live and sport separately. White people have unconsciously become part of a narrative and behavioral patterns, which blind them from seeing the racist character of their own language and behavioral patterns. The question that rightfully arises after having discussed the stories about social reality whites have inhibited and the enactment and inculcation of these stories, is why there is a need for these stories, and how people themselves make sense of them. In other words, what function do these stories serve, and how are they legitimized? Those will be the leading questions in chapter three.

3 Legitimations and Functions of the Discourse

Chapter two discussed the racist, 'anti'-black discourse white people have internalized and the way the discourse is enacted, and inculcated. Moreover, it touched upon the fierceness and persistence of that discourse white people have inhibited. Central questions to this chapter will be: i) how do white people legitimize the racist, 'anti'-black discourse (how do they explain it themselves), and ii) what functions does this discourse serve?

3.1 Ligitimizing the Discourse

"I come from Louis Trichardt, a little more than an hour up north from here. It is a nice, pretty little town, and it used to be very safe. Not anymore. As everywhere else in the country a growing number of white farmers is being attacked and killed, and to be honest, it doesn't seem like the government even cares. Sure they say they condemn the violence and all that, but in the meantime blacks just keep singing the 'Kill de Boer' song, so what am I supposed to make of that? The government is black, all black, and only represents the blacks. Police do nothing. They harass whites, hand out fines for ridiculous things, and if you try to file a complaint against them you are simply being laughed at, at the police station, by the chief of police. South Africa is one of the most violent countries in the world, and it is not the whites that are to blame for that."[24]

Danny P.

"There are about fifteen different tribes in South Africa, all with their own religions and beliefs, and almost every one of them is involved in some kind of conflict with

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[24] Authors interview with informant on 26 April 2011.

some other tribe. When apartheid ended and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was installed, do you think part of that reconciliation was the reconciliation between any of these tribes? No, and to be honest I don't think that is even possible, but anyway, the emphasis was on reconciliation between blacks and whites, while the blacks are all the same killing each other now. The current government is only concerned with black peoples interests, and they are even failing in that, but they are not at all addressing any of our issues. We are not prepared to lose our culture, our religion, everything we have worked hard for: so we must stand up for ourselves."[25]

Louis E.

"Sometimes it is tiring how much people keep talking about apartheid legacy this, and apartheid legacy that, and how poor black people are, and how poorly educated they are. But you never hear them say something about the fact that increasingly more whites are living in squatter camps below the poverty line. Is our government doing anything about that, are they addressing these issues?"[26]

Danny P.

The stories white people tell others and themselves about black people, as illustrated in chapter two, are rooted in a number of insecurities. In the first place, as clearly shown in the first quote, these insecurities have a lot to do with the sky-high violence and crime rates in South Africa. White people will not deny that apartheid was a 'bad' system in the sense that it thoroughly excluded blacks from developments whites were benefiting from, but they most certainly long back for it, for among other things safety. Criminality and violence are structural and worrying issues, and over the past couple of years, an increasing amount of white farmers have been attacked or even been killed by blacks (Harber 2011: 27). Though I

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[25] Authors interview with informant on 28 februari 2011.

[26] Authors interview with informant on 7 March 2011.

cannot prove if what my informant is saying is actually true and the government and police are not doing anything to prevent or stop these attacks, that is not a matter of concern here. In their reality, white people feel fundamentally unsafe and left alone by a government that claims to be there for everybody. While doing research I daily read articles in the newspaper about incidents of black police officers harassing white youngsters over minor offenses. The fact that white people increasingly choose to live in gated communities or to build high walls around their houses might seem exaggerated or unnecessary to outsiders, but my assumption is that for white people their feelings of unsafety are real to them, and that these walls and gates are one of the few things in which they find the safety and comfort they are looking for.

The song my informant is referring to in the first quote, 'Kill the Boer', has been a matter of great discussion and protest. According to the ANC, the song is an old struggle song that was sang during apartheid and has absolutely no intention of encouraging black people to actually kill white farmers.[27] However, for white people it most definitely is not 'just a struggle song' that was sang during apartheid. Especially when considering the attacks and killings of white farmers, 'shoot the Boer' does not sound as if it has no intention of encouraging blacks to kill whites. In chapter two we have seen Julius Malema's statement that white farms must be seized 'Zimbabwe-style', which is a direct reference to the use of violent means to drive white farmers away from their land. If that is taken into account, together with the 'Kill the Boer' song, it becomes understandable why white people report to feel unsafe, especially farmers, and why they act upon those feelings by living behind fences and having racist prejudices about black people.

Narratives are very powerful because violence is stored in societies collective memory and therefore always 'in stock' to be used again. This is also referred to as 'residues' of anger that can be mobilized again (Apter 1997: 5; Schröder and Schmidt 2001: 8). Performative representations of violent confrontations serve as public rituals in which

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[27] The two lines that are repeated throughout the 'Kill the Boer' song: 'The cowards are scared, shoot, shoot the Boer', and 'The dogs are raping, shoot, shoot the Boer' (Harber 2011: 47).

antagonistic attitudes are played out and are great in creating a strong image of what you should be aligning with. Violence as a performance also gets the message across to the majority of people that are not physically affected by it; "its performative quality makes violence an everyday experience without anybody actually experiencing physical hurt every day" (Schröder and Schmidt 2001: 6; 10).

Discourse theory has proven that language is a powerful tool to glorify the self, keep stories of past violence alive and reproduce them until they are cemented into societies structures, unambiguous and not fluid. Through language we communicate and create, but we also reproduce what is already there (Schröder and Schmidt 2001: 8). White people are until this day proud of the accomplishments of the apartheid regimes.

"If it were not for the European colonizers, South Africa would not be what it is today. It is because of the knowledge and expertise and civilization of the British and Dutch, from whom we descend, that there are such good institutions in South Africa, good infrastructure, and that this country is the most developed on the continent in general. And the sad thing is that black people now can not even maintain all the things we left behind for them: no, everything is being ruined."[28]

Charl V.

"During apartheid, things really were better, believe me, and not just for the whites. If we would only take the crime rates at the time of apartheid, and we would compare them to current numbers, you would see that things have gotten worse. Black police just don't do a thing. Back then you could walk the streets without being afraid you would be robbed, towns looked neater and more organized. Now, wherever you turn, there is pollution and chaos. Black people don't see the point of cleaning up after

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[28] Authors interview with informant on 13 April 2011.

42

themselves. They just do as they please without thinking about tomorrow. They miss that part of the brain which enables white people to plan ahead and organize things."[29]

<div align="right">Danny P.</div>

The previous citations show that my informants long back for the time of apartheid. In the first place my informant mentions how whites are descendents from the Europeans who came here and turned South Africa into a civilized, developed country. At the same time, he mentions that black people are still not as developed as white people are, because they cannot even maintain the 'good' things the whites have 'left behind' for them after apartheid came to its end. The fact that he mentions that the Europeans brought 'civilization' to South Africa means that according to him, before the Europeans arrived, blacks were 'savages'. This clearly speaks of the idea and belief in white supremacy, which has been discussed in chapter one. Whites have, during their period of political dominance, done an excellent job in building up the country and providing it with solid bureaucratic institutions and infrastructures, which demonstrates their capability to manage a country. White people say that now that it is black peoples turn to govern and develop the country, they appear not even capable of maintaining what is already there, let alone adding anything to it. Moreover, white peoples ideas about black inferiority are, according to themselves, supported by scientific evidence, which for them is prove that the white brain is superior to the black brain (Kidd in Dubow 1995: 198).

Additionally, the aforementioned quotations show that the idea of white supremacy is accompanied by the glorification of the past. Schröder and Schmidt (2001) argue that by glorifying the own group or by emphasizing perceived injustices, losses and sufferings, people are over and over again fed the story of how they are aggrieved (2001: 8). I would like to add to this that in this particular case, the glorification of the past helps explain the idea of

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[29] Authors interview with informant on 26 April 2011.

white supremacy, as well as the persistence of the white racist, 'anti'-black discourse. The glorification of their past only has meaning when compared to their current decline in political power and the observation of their hard work going to waste. The stories about their past accomplishments provides them with the opportunity to, despite their diminishing political importance, still feel good about themselves.

While I was doing I research on AP and the local communities, I came to understand that there is big difference in how blacks and whites see the world. Locally, the older, black generation, especially the chiefs, do not want their traditional way of life to change. The principles that chieftaincy is passed on from father to son, that villagers discuss their issues with the chiefs, and that the chiefs have the final say in the resolution of certain conflicts, should according to them stay exactly like that. White people from my direct environment consider this a 'backward' way of thinking that stands in the way of black peoples development. As descendents from the Europeans, whites in South Africa have been 'brought up' with the industrial revolution and the processes of modernization, and have in a way introduced this modernization in South Africa. For them, as 'modernized' individuals, it is incomprehensible that black people choose to gather under a tree, to consequently listen to everybody's opinion, before any decisions can be made.

> "White people disregard our traditional power structures. They do not care that in our culture, the chief is the most important person and decisions are made and negotiated with him. They do as they please, arrange things the way they please. That makes us angry, because we are being undermined, our importance in our communities and in the traditional power structures is undermined."[30]

> Mapela Tribal Authority

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[30] Authors interview with informant on 27 April 2011.

"When people from whichever department of government need to go into the communities to discuss certain issues, it takes up an entire day. It takes ages before everybody that is supposed to attend the meeting arrives, and then everybody is given the chance to speak for as long as they want to. We live in a democracy, but at the local level, people cannot vote for their most important representative: the chief. It is passed on from father and son, and there is thus no mechanism in place to replace a malfunctioning chief, for there is no principle of voting, or addressing issues differently then with the chief."[31]

Danny P.

Personally I would like to argue that white peoples incomprehension of black peoples traditional way of life is giving them more grounds for having (racist) prejudices about blacks. White people in my direct environment interpret black peoples wish to hold on to their traditionalism as an unwillingness to develop. If we take into account that South Africa is dealing with great poverty, and violence and criminality largely perpetrated by blacks, it is understandable why whites might think that if blacks would 'follow their example', their country would perhaps be a safer one. Following their logic they have every reason to believe they are right; South Africa was a better, safer place for whites during apartheid.

3.2 The Functions of the Discourse

"Power is a key component of all social systems: some agents can draw on more resources than others in seeking to achieve desired outcomes" (Giddens in Demmers, forthcoming, chapter 6). Giddens differentiates between 'allocative' and 'authoritative' resources: the first refers to the control over material facilities, the second to the control over the activities of humans. As mentioned earlier, apart from the structures of signification and legitimation, Giddens defines a third structure of 'domination'. The asymmetrical distribution of power results in that certain agents have more 'power to define' (Demmers, forthcoming, chapter 6).

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[31] Authors interview with informant on 26 April 2011.

"People need to make sense of the overwhelming complexity of life and hence embrace and (re) construct symbolic orders, modes of discourse, and codes of conduct" (Demmers, forthcoming, chapter 6). For white people in my direct environment, the internalization of the racist, 'anti'-black discourse is a coping mechanism, a way to make sense of the drastic changes in South African society. White peoples daily reality has changed drastically over the past seventeen years, and from one day to another they went from being in power, to being powerless. However, besides the fact that they are now learning to 'survive' in a society where they do not have the power to control the dominant discourse anymore, they are also learning to deal with the footprint apartheid has left on South African society. Under the system of apartheid white people in my direct environment had a comfortable life, most of them as farmers, and even though they still have comfortable lives, they live in a country where the system under which they were enabled to become so wealthy, is constantly under attack. They will surely acknowledge that certain aspects of apartheid were 'not good', but through the ways by which they have justified apartheid and their racist, 'anti'-black discourse, they are still holding on to their stories, because at this moment, they are comforting for them. In a way we could say that the white people in my direct environment are a product of apartheid; they were born into the structures of apartheid, and through their education they have systematically reproduced that system, and certain thoughts that stem from the apartheid system are still a part of their identity.

"Wars are fought from memory, and they are often fought over memory, over the power to establish one's group view of the past as the legitimate one. From this perspective violence is not only a resource for solving conflicts over material issues, but also a resource in world making, to assert one group's claim to truth and history against rival claims. With all the social and economic consequences this entails." (Schröder and Schmidt 2001: 9). Though there is no violent conflict in South Africa at this very moment, the point that Schröder and Schmidt make here is equally so important: violence is also a resource to assert one groups claim to truth. There is a clear and overt contestation in South Africa over the power to assert

the claim to truth and history, and although there is no actual violence involved, the patterns are there. Even though my research has not been about violent conflict, I would still like to mention the following, because I do believe it adds to the explanation of the fierceness of the white discourse. Schröder and Schmidt (2001) argue that for violence to be carried out, it first needs to be imagined, and they describe the process from conflict to war in four steps (2001: 9). The first stage, 'conflict', is seen as the contradiction at the base of intergroup competition. As they point out, violence does not automatically result from contradiction: *"Wars are made by those individuals, groups or classes that have the power successfully to represent violence as the appropriate course of action in a given situation"* (2001: 5). The second and the third stage, 'confrontation' and 'legitimation' are needed for war to actually break out. The second stage, 'confrontation' means that the parties come to see the 'contradiction' as relevant, and in the third stage 'legitimation' violence is officially sanctioned as the legitimate course of action through the imagining of violent scenarios, or what Schröder and Schmidt refer to as 'violent imaginaries' (2001: 9).

Conclusion

In the context of rapidly changing realities and political, social and economic transformations in South Africa, I have tried to understand the local racial discourse I observed in Polokwane where I lived for four months. Motivated by a personal interest in the processes through which people internalize particular stories about themselves and the world they live in, the ways by which they reproduce these stories and the purposes they serve, I wanted to understand the racial discourse so dominant in the environment I lived and worked in. Lead by Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (2003), the purpose of this thesis was to answer the following question: *"In the current reality of social, political, and economic transformations in South Africa, what stories about social reality have white people inhibited, how are these stories legitimized, and what functions do they serve?"* The goal of my research puzzle was to create an insight into how white people cope with the radical changes that are occurring in South Africa, to give them a voice and hopefully give 'outsiders' an opportunity to come closer to understanding where racism comes from.

There is no short answer to the research puzzle for it is too complex and encompasses too many aspects. Nonetheless I will do my best to be as concise and coherent as possible, while doing equal justice to all the constituent parts of the puzzle.

South Africa is the biggest and most developed economy on the African continent, and for many countries in the region it serves as an example of success, especially because of its history of repression and the struggle for freedom. Even though there are many interesting things to research among the black population, in this thesis I chose to specifically focus on the current position of the white minority, which has after centuries lost its power as the dominant political party. While until 1994 political power was concentrated in the hands of the whites, it is now concentrated in the hands of a democratically elected government, and, given the composition of the population, mainly in the hands of blacks. Though the steps South Africa has made in the political and human rights arena since 1994 are significant, one

cannot say that the socio-economic transformations have caught up just yet. Seventeen years after apartheid, most of the unemployed and poor people are black South Africans. The inequities in the distribution of income, property, and opportunities are still mainly to the disadvantage of blacks. It is mostly blacks that were criminalized during the long period of discrimination, repression, and violence, and it is mostly blacks that are still today the number one victims of aggression and criminality (Terreblanche 2002: 25).

It is important to realize that the issues of poverty, inequality, unemployment, violence and criminality that exist in contemporary South Africa have been intentionally shaped and created overtime, and are deeply rooted in the long history of colonialism and apartheid. The failure of the new government to reform institutions dealing with poverty relief is not solely their own responsibility. It is beyond every argument that the white colonial powers and establishments that ruled the country from the mid 17th to the late 20th centuries have used their monopoly over economic, political, military, and ideological power not only to benefit themselves but also to steal from indigenous people, disrupt their social structures, and turn them into exploited workers (Terreblanche 2002: 25).

While the British regime did severely discriminate against the blacks, in cruelty it was by far outdone by the apartheid regime designed by the Afrikaners (Crais 2002: 31). During the 1930s a group of young intellectuals guided the Afrikaner NP towards a more aggressive and exclusive form of nationalism. This new group stressed the supposed injustices done to the Afrikaners during the British regime, and they exaggerated the dangers of black 'swamping'. By doing this they created a 'syndrome of victimization', which was based on the supposed threat of the existence of the Afrikaners (Terreblanche 2002: 298). By playing the 'ethnic card' the NP was able to mobilize many Afrikaners by portraying them as the unjust victims, threatened from two sides: the first their exploitation from 'above' by British colonialism, and the second the danger from 'below' of the threat posed to Afrikaner culture by the 'uncivilized' African majority. However, by the mid-1970s a number of incidents started to pose a threat to the white hegemonic order. This caused a deep paradigm shift in the ideological thinking of both whites and blacks, and drastically changed the power

relations within white supremacy thinking and racial capitalism (Terreblanche 2002: 307). In the beginning of the 1970s the white hegemonic order had seemed indestructible. During the next twenty years the government was able to fend off an increasing number of offensives from the liberation movement, inspired by a growing discontentedness about the white regime, by shoring up its political and economic power – but the administration failed to maintain its legitimacy. Lacking the necessary legitimacy and international support, the white hegemonic order, and with that the racist regime of apartheid, collapsed in the early 1990s.

In chapter two I have given an overview of the discourse white people have inhibited and the ways through which that discourse is enacted and inculcated. Discourse analysis pays attention to i) how communities construct their boundaries, ii) their relationships to what they are not, and iii) the narratives which produce the past of the communities and its identity. Language takes up an essential role in how we define who we are, who we are not and where we belong. Groups are accordingly made through the reproduction of narratives and discourse analysis steps into society in search of the dominant narrative in order to expose those who have the power to construct it, how it is maintained, contested, institutionalized, policed and protected (Demmers, forthcoming, chapter 6).

Black and white people are involved in a contestation for the 'truth', and that contestation makes up an important part of the white discourse. Since white people do not have the political power to control the dominant discourse, their idea of 'truth' is no longer the absolute truth but is now challenged by black people. Both parties consider themselves as the ones 'who were there first', the ones that belong exactly where they are and according to that own the right of – in this case – land.

For white people in my direct environment, the economic, social and political relapse of South Africa is of great concern and a matter of daily discussion in which the blame is put on the blacks. The fact that black people have not been able to reach the white people's standards is mainly because they are lazy and not willing to work. White people have internalized a racist, prejudicial way of thinking and speaking about black people: a view that

stigmatizes and labels black people as lazy, stupid, unthankful, and above all, inferior to whites. The essence of the stories white people tell to others and themselves is that they are better, and that blacks are responsible for their own problems. In the past whites have done a better job than the blacks are currently doing since they took over power, and whites will always be better than the blacks. They manage to portray themselves as the victims of the political transformation that has been taking place for the past seventeen years.

Vivienne Jabri (1996) explains that we are born into a culture where certain narratives about the world exist. Stories about signification (what 'importance' things have, what their meaning is) and legitimation (what is 'normal' and 'acceptable'). At the same time, these stories are institutionalized in our societies executive structures like schools, shopping malls, the judicial system and many others (1996: 96). Anthony Giddens adds a third structure of 'domination' to the above-mentioned signification and legitimation. In society not everyone has the same 'power to define', so power is constituted through language (discourse) and is supported by material and symbolic resources. Thus the struggle over words is one over power and over meaning (Demmers, forthcoming, chapter 6). According to Fairclough discourses include representations of how things are and have been, as well as imaginaries – representations of how things might or could or should be and these imaginaries may be enacted as actual (networks of) practices (2003: 207). There are numerous examples in Polokwane of the enactment of the representations and imaginaries of discourse. An example is that people shop in different malls: uptown there are certain malls where white people go, and downtown malls where black people go. Shopping is segregated, leisure activities are segregated, and sports are segregated. The last becomes very visible on the national level when looking to the national rugby or soccer teams: there are just a few black players among the Springboks, and just a few white player among the Bafana's.[32] Besides the fact that people sport separately, they also live separately: if one would take a city map of Polokwane it would be easy to point out the parts of town where white people live, and the

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parts where the black people live. Roughly one could say that white people reside uptown, and black people downtown. Not only in Polokwane, but also in the rest of the country, an increasing number of people is moving to so called 'gated communities': little villages within cities build behind high walls with barbed wire and twenty-four hour surveillance. Finally, blacks and whites even use different names for the town they live in. White people refer to it as Pietersburg, the name the town had during the apartheid regimes. After apartheid the government changed the name of the town to Polokwane, which is how black people refer it to, but you will never hear whites say Polokwane, or blacks say Pietersburg. Fairclough also explains how discourses are not only enacted in practice and materialized in certain ways, but that they can also become *inculcated*. Inculcation is a matter of people coming to 'own' the discourse, coming to *"position themselves inside them, to act and think and talk and see themselves in terms of this discourse"* (2003: 208). In the case of white peoples racist, 'anti'-black discourse, I came to see this 'inculcation' as their 'dissociation' from racism. People in my direct environment reacted with disapproval of the racist language and behavior they saw, yet at no point were they aware of the fact that in their own lives they were doing the exact same thing; they are unconsciously taking part in behavior they question and even disapprove of in others. Fairclough also argues that inculcation also materializes: *"discourses are dialectically inculcated not only in styles, ways of using language, they are also materialized in bodies, postures, gestures, ways of moving, and so forth"* (2003: 208). During my observation of white people at times when they were amongst black people I became aware of the fact that their body language changed. I once went to a downtown mall with a white woman, and I was amazed at how different her behavior there was from uptown. I could see her hands clamped around her purse, so hard that her knuckles had turned white, and she walked remarkably faster with her head down; behavior I had not observed in uptown malls. When I started paying attention to it, I noticed that especially white women are very protective of their personal belongings, so much that they do not even notice they physically hurt themselves by holding on to their belongings so tight. The link between criminality and

black people has become such an automatic one that white people unconsciously show signs of protection when around groups of black people.

The stories white people tell others and themselves about black people, as illustrated in chapter two, are rooted in a number of insecurities. The fierceness and persistence of the white discourse can best be explained through three elements: i) fundamental physical insecurities due to high crime and violence rates and the idea that the government is not there for the white people as well, ii) glorification of the own past, iii) the myth of the white supremacy, and iv) a different world views that can be brought back to the debate of 'globalization' versus 'traditionalism'.

In the first place white people feel unsafe due to the high violence and crime rates in South Africa. In recent years an increasing amount of white farmers have been attacked or even been killed by blacks. White people will to a certain extent accept that apartheid was a 'bad' system in the sense that it thoroughly excluded blacks from developments whites were benefiting from, but they also long back for it. As became clear, white people do not have the idea that the current government is there for them as well, which only exacerbates the feelings of unsafety that they already have because of the increased number of attacks on white farmers.

Secondly, white people in my direct environment tend to overemphasize the 'positive' aspects of apartheid, and thus glorify their past. For them those were the years that white people were building up South Africa, developing it, putting it on the map. According to themselves, they, the Afrikaners, have done that. The streets were safer and cleaner, and above all, white people firmly held the political power in their own hands. Schröder and Schmidt (2001) argue that by glorifying the own group or by emphasizing perceived injustice, losses and sufferings, people are over and over again fed the story of how they are aggrieved (2001: 8). We have seen that is certainly the case for the justification of the system of apartheid in which Afrikaners managed to portray themselves as the victims of both the British, and the 'uncivilized' black majority. I would like to add to this that in this particular

case, the glorification of the past helps explain the idea of white supremacy, as well as the persistence of the white racist, 'anti'-black discourse. The glorification of their past only has meaning when compared to their current decline in political power and the observation of their hard work going to waste. The stories about their past accomplishments provides them with the opportunity to, despite their diminishing political importance, still feel good about themselves.

This is how we arrive at the point of white supremacy, which is still very persistent among the white people in the environment where I stayed for four months. The idea that whites are superior to the blacks is deeply imbedded in apartheid ideology, and seventeen years is too short to expect it too have dissolved. The notion that whites are better is closely linked to the fact that they glorify their past; both enforce the existence of the other, which makes both more persistent and meaningful.

Finally, in the field, I have observed different perceptions about what view enjoys more approval: modernization, or traditionalism. As descendents from the Europeans, white people were accustomed to the processes of industrialization and modernization. Because black people were excluded from participating in and benefiting from the processes of modernization during periods of colonization and apartheid, up until this day, they have not truly gotten accustomed to the ideas of modernization and globalization. Locally, the older, black generation, especially the chiefs, do not want their traditional way of life to change. The principle that chieftaincy is passed on from father to son, that villagers discuss their issues with the chiefs, and that the chiefs have the final say in the resolution of certain conflicts, should according to them stay exactly like that. White people from my direct environment consider this a 'backward' way of thinking that stands in the way of black peoples development.

These factors combined show the different legitimatizations white people have for the racist, 'anti'-black discourse they have internalized. The last piece of the research puzzle that needs to be answered is the purpose of the discourse. In short, white people have internalized an

'anti'-black discourse as a coping mechanism. White people's daily reality has changed drastically over the past seventeen years, and from one day to another they went from being in power, to being powerless. However, besides the fact that they are now learning to 'survive' in a society where they do not have the power to control the dominant discourse anymore, they are also learning to deal with the footprint apartheid has left on South African society. Under the system of apartheid white people in my direct environment had a comfortable life, most of them as farmers, and even though they still have comfortable lives, they live in a country where the system under which they were enabled to become so wealthy, is constantly under attack. They will surely acknowledge that certain aspects of apartheid were 'not good', but through the ways by which they have justified apartheid and their racist, 'anti'-black discourse, they are still holding on to their stories, because at this moment, they are comforting for them.

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