More Than A Joke:
Race and Class Inequalities in South African Political Cartoons after the Marikana Massacre

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Semester Project (7th semester)
Culture, Communication and Globalization (MA)
Aalborg University
December 2012
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# Table of Content

List of Figures: ....................................................................................................................... iii  
Abstract .................................................................................................................................. v  

1. Introduction ........................................................................................................................ 1  
   1.1 Background on the Marikana Massacre ................................................................. 2  
   1.2 The Power of Visual Discourses ................................................................................ 6  
   1.3 The Power of Political Cartoons ............................................................................. 7  

2. Methodology ....................................................................................................................... 10  
   2.1 Choice of Cartoons ................................................................................................. 10  
   2.2 Visual Discourse Analysis ...................................................................................... 11  
      2.21 Iconography ....................................................................................................... 12  
      2.22 Web Survey ....................................................................................................... 14  

3. Theory .................................................................................................................................. 16  
   3.1 Main Approach .......................................................................................................... 16  
      3.11 Postcolonialism: A Brief Introduction ................................................................. 16  
      3.12 Postcolonialism: Race and Class ........................................................................ 17  
      3.13 Postcolonialism: Marikana and Political Cartoons .............................................. 19  
   3.2 How Postcolonialism was Applied ............................................................................. 20  
      3.21 Recognising Knowledge as Socially and Historically Constructed ................. 20  
      3.22 Exposing non-Western World Views ................................................................. 21  
      3.23 Highlighting African Agency and Resistance ..................................................... 22  
      3.24 Danger of the Single Story ................................................................................. 23  
   3.3 Discourses within Cartoons in South Africa: A Brief History .................................. 24  

4. Analysis .............................................................................................................................. 27  
   4.1 Historical – “Problem” Rooted in Apartheid ......................................................... 27  
   4.2 Economical – “Problem” Linked to Post-Apartheid Neoliberal Structures ............ 34  
      4.21 Macro-Economic Structures .............................................................................. 35  
      4.22 Micro-Economic Structures .............................................................................. 43
4.3 Socio-Cultural – “Problem” Identified as the “Black Elite”................................. 47

5. Conclusions.........................................................................................................................55

6. Bibliography....................................................................................................................... 60

Appendices.............................................................................................................................. 69
  Appendix A.............................................................................................................................. 69
  Appendix B.............................................................................................................................. 70
  Appendix C.............................................................................................................................. 73
  Appendix D.............................................................................................................................. 74
List of Figures

Fig. 1: “The Blame Game” by Miles, published on 17 September 2012 in Daily Dispatch. Available at: <http://africartoons.com/cartoon/8788>; accessed 20/10/2012.

Fig. 2: GINI coefficient of selected countries. OECD Report (2011, p.51).

Fig. 3: “The Spear of the Nation” by Brett Murray (2012). Available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/greenslade/2012/may/28/southafrica-press-freedom>; accessed 21/11/2012.

Fig. 4: “The Rape of Justice” by Zapiro, published on 07 September 2008 in Sunday Times. Available at: <http://africartoons.com/cartoon/382>; accessed 22/11/2012.

Fig. 5: Screenshot from the official homepage of “Aid for Africa”. Available at: <http://www.aidforafrica.org/>; accessed 04/12/2012.

Fig. 6: Video screenshot from “Simon Cowell, Comic Relief 2009” (Imburble 2009).

Fig. 7: “All among the Hottentots capering to shore” by George Cruikshank (1820). Available at: <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/6a/Cruikshank_All_among_the_Hottentots_capering_to_shore_1820.jpg>; accessed 15/11/2012.

Fig. 8: “A Lesson” by Sir John Tenniel, published in 1876 in Punch. Available at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/seriykotik/219795645/in/set-72157594241587135>; accessed 15/11/2012.

Fig. 9: Title unknown by G. L. Norton, published circa 1950 in Chamber of Mines Newspaper (Mason 2009, p.259).

Fig. 10: Title unknown by Zapiro, published on 06 May 2006 in Independent Newspapers (Koelble & Robins 2007).


Fig. 13: “Sharpeville Revisited” by Niël van Vuuren, published on 18 August 2012 in Volksblad. Available at: <http://africartoons.com/cartoon/8499?cartoonist=78>; accessed 20/10/2012.

Fig. 14: “President Zuma’s Secret Consultant” by Brandan, published on 16 September

**Fig. 15:** “34 Reasons to be Concerned” by Niël van Vuuren, published on 24 August 2012 in *Beeld*. Available at: <http://africartoons.com/cartoon/8562?cartoonist=78>; accessed 17/10/2012.

**Fig. 16:** “A Twist of Oliver” by Yalo, published on 11 September 2012 in *Sowetan*. Available at: <http://africartoons.com/cartoon/8810?cartoonist=38>; accessed 27/10/2012.

**Fig. 17:** “The Lonmin Ultimatum” by Yalo, published on 22 August 2012 in *Sowetan*. Available at: <http://africartoons.com/cartoon/8508?cartoonist=38>; accessed 20/10/2012.

**Fig. 18:** “A Deal Signed in Blood” by Jerm, published on 07 September 2012 in *The New Age*. Available at: <http://africartoons.com/cartoon/8836>; accessed 19/10/2012.

**Fig. 19:** “Blood on Their Hands” by Brandan, published on 22 August 2012 in *Business Day*. Available at: <http://africartoons.com/cartoon/8513?cartoonist=6>; accessed 19/10/2012.

**Fig. 20:** “Winners and Losers” by Mark Wiggett, published on 18 August 2012 in *Weekend Post*. Available at: <http://africartoons.com/cartoon/8494?cartoonist=22>; accessed 18/10/2012.

**Fig. 21:** “South Africa at a Crossroads” by Dov Fedler, published on 18 September in *The Mercury*. Available at: <http://africartoons.com/cartoon/8821?cartoonist=10>; accessed 23/10/2012.

**Fig. 22:** “Mein Kumback” by Brandan, published on 25 August 2012 in *Weekend Argus*. Available at: <http://africartoons.com/cartoon/8553?cartoonist=6>; accessed 26/10/2012.

**Fig. 23:** “The Champion of the Poor” by Niël van Vuuren, published on 14 September 2012 in *Beeld*. Available at: <http://africartoons.com/cartoon/8767?cartoonist=17>; accessed 18/10/2012.

**Fig. 24:** Unknown title by Niël van Vuuren, published on 12 October 2012 in *Beeld*. Available at: <http://africartoons.com/cartoon/9056?cartoonist=78>; accessed 30/10/2012.
Abstract

Whilst there has been some academic research into political cartoons, this has been rather limited, mainly focussing on cartoons which have caused specific controversies. This paper argues that a postcolonial analysis of political cartoons can reveal a lot about a society. Focussing specifically on cartoons commenting on the Marikana massacre (16/08/2012), this paper utilises a modified version of Panofsky's Iconography to analyse twelve political cartoons from a range of South African newspapers and cartoonists.

As race and class continue to be seminal issues in South Africa, the intention of this paper is to understand current discourses on race and class and how they are (dis)connected to colonial discourses. Certainly colonial representations, such as the “ogre” and the “mock European”, can be seen within many of the cartoons but mainly utilised in a way which (re)produces the reverse message, viz. black people as “us” and white people as “them”. The post-apartheid emergence of a “black elite” has ruptured these easy distinctions of black and poor versus white and rich which cartoonists have responded to creatively.

Whilst some (ageing white) cartoonists can be seen to still portray race and class in a somewhat colonial manner, contemporary political cartoons generally reverse this discourse, portraying race and class inequalities as a product of (political and economic) exploitation and not, as per colonial discourse, as a mere consequence of blackness. Interestingly, whilst this exploitation is largely condemned, material wealth is depicted as undesirable through exaggerated depictions of the “black elite” and their lifestyle.
1. Introduction

“I have walked that long road to freedom. I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way. But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb. I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can only rest for a moment, for with freedom come responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not yet ended.” (Mandela 1995, p.751)

The last paragraph of Nelson Mandela's extraordinary autobiography “Long Walk to Freedom” (1995) was, in August 2012, seemingly more relevant than ever since South Africa's transition in 1994 from racial segregation under apartheid to a democratic “rainbow nation”. His emotive “hill” metaphor describing the exhausting struggle and the final victory against white minority rule in South Africa has been tainted by the realities at Marikana platinum mine on 16 August 2012 near Johannesburg.

During a strike, where several thousand mineworkers were protesting for higher salaries, 34 miners were shot dead and 78 injured by the police (Bond 2012, p.1). A hill where the protesting miners used to gather was then dubbed the “Hill of Horror”. National and especially international media (Smith 2012) were quick to draw parallels to apartheid-era massacres, such as in the townships of Sharpeville (1960) or Soweto (1976). Though it has been eighteen years since the official end of apartheid, race and class (which this paper views as socially constructed and inevitably intertwined) can still be seen as ongoing tensions, epitomised by Marikana.

Put explicitly, this paper is interested in how the specific events in Marikana were understood, constructed and communicated with regard to the ubiquitous discourses of race and class in post-apartheid South Africa.

Discourses of race and class inequalities will be looked at, focussing particularly on political cartoons in mainstream newspapers in South Africa. Political cartoons as empirical data material “provide alternative views of reality” (Terblanche 2011, p.156). Through often controversial satire, they give “insights into the dispositions of a society...and act as baromet-
ers of opinion” (Hammett 2010b, p.89). Viewing the Marikana massacre as one these exceptional events where various opinion makers seek to manifest their positions, the satirical, often controversial element of political cartoons gives access to alternative interpretations of perceived realities (see Plumb 2004, p.432). Another feature of cartoons as a unique discursive tool is their ability to put certain events, such as Marikana, into context and explore “the relations between these and broader trends and paradigms” (Hammett 2010a, p.4), such as race and class inequalities.

In order to explore these relations and representations of race and class in cartoons, a postcolonial theoretical approach was employed. Postcolonialism, with its interest in alternative perspectives of reality in former colonies and highlighting “hidden” voices, in combination with the above outlined features of political cartoons, is therefore appropriate to analyse political cartoons’ representations of race and class in post-apartheid South Africa.

These preliminary deliberations led to the investigation of the explicit research question: “How have political cartoons commenting on the Marikana massacre (16 August 2012) presented ongoing race and class inequalities in the post-apartheid “rainbow society”?”

Firstly, an introductory overview of the events in Marikana will be given and contextualised with regard to race and class inequalities in post-apartheid South Africa. Secondly an overview of visuals and political cartoons and their recent impact, particularly in South Africa, will be given.

1.1 Background on the Marikana Massacre

The strike at Marikana platinum mine near Rustenburg, 100km north-west of Johannesburg, owned by the London-based mining company Lonmin, started on the 10 August 2012 when some 3000 mineworkers initiated a wildcat strike demanding a pay increase. During the first days of the strike, 10 people were killed including mineworkers, police officers and representatives of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). The clashes culminated on the 16 August 2012 known as the Marikana massacre killing 34 and wounding 78 mineworkers by police forces. As depicted in the cartoon below (figure 1), finger-pointing started after the shooting, blaming various actors for the incident.
A Commission of Inquiry, headed by the retired judge Ian Farlam, was set up by president Jacob Zuma soon after the massacre to establish the facts of the incident.

Richard Calland (2012) in the *Mail & Guardian* called Marikana “a perfect storm”, representing “[a]ll the worst and weakest elements of this complex society”. Many reasons for the strike were considered by himself and various other analysts: poor living and working conditions, inappropriate wages, dissatisfaction with workers’ unions and the perceived exploitation of black labour by white-dominated multinational business and the South African ruling tripartite alliance, consisting of the African National Congress (ANC), the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the South African Communist Party (SACP) (Bond 2012; Gumede 2012; Hartford 2012). The first element Calland listed, however, was “the vicious inequality”; an analysis echoed by Gumede:

“Marikana may present the tipping point where black anger spills over. Last year [2011], South Africa replaced Brazil as the most unequal society, with the gap between the poorest and richest individuals the highest in the world.” (Gumede 2012, p.54)
The “vicious inequality”, according to the GINI coefficient\(^1\) in figure 2, has increased since the ANC took power in 1994 (Plaut & Holden 2012, p.354), leaving Mandela’s notion of a “rainbow nation” an unfulfilled dream. As Bond points out:

“...the 1994 election of an African National Congress (ANC) majority...did not alter the enormous structural gap in wealth between the majority black and minority white populations. Indeed, it set in motion neoliberal policies that exacerbated class, race, and gender inequality” (Bond 2004, p.45).

These inequalities, especially with regard to the economic system in South Africa, are firmly rooted in apartheid:

“As for the "banks, mines and monopoly industry" that Mandela had pledged to nationalize, they remained [since the end of apartheid] firmly in the hands of the same four white-owned megaconglomerates that also control 80 percent of the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. In 2005, only 4 percent of the companies listed on the exchange were owned or controlled by blacks.” (Klein 2007, p.206)

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1. The GINI coefficient is a common tool to measure inequality. It ranges from 0 in case of complete equality and 1 in the case of complete inequality (one person of the population has all the income or consumption).
Only a small group of black people can be seen to have benefited economically in post-apartheid South Africa. This paper refers to this group as the “black elite”; also known as “South Africa's new 'Randlords' [or] the Black Economic Empowerment [BEE] elite” (Plaut & Holden 2012, p.349). Hence, the neoliberal policies, embodied in the Marikana massacre *inter alia* by the multinational mining firm Lonmin, can be seen as largely responsible for the widening gap between rich and poor in the post-apartheid society. This led Bond to suggest that “…South Africa has witnessed the replacement of racial apartheid with what is increasingly referred to as class apartheid” (Bond 2004, p.47).

It was race and class, however, which together replaced discourses of the “rainbow nation” with discourses of a divided nation. In a speech in 1998, then deputy president Thabo Mbeki created distinct binaries in identifying South Africa as “two nations”; one rich and white, the other poor and black (Mbeki 1998). His “racialisation of class through his 'two nations' construction further revitalised apartheid-era narratives of race and stifled the possibility to deconstruct race as a social construct” (Hammett 2010b, p.91). This re-racialising binary was then further reproduced when former ANC Youth League (ANCYL) president Julius Malema (his role in Marikana investigated in section 4.3) was expelled from the ANC in 2011 for the controversial use of the anti-apartheid song “Kill the Boer”\(^2\). Evidently, one cannot deny that race continues to be a persistent topic in governmental rhetoric.

“Race remains a crux issue in the nation-building process” (Hammett 2010b, p.91) and was once more hotly debated after the Marikana massacre. Mineworkers, involved in traditional rituals before the shooting, were allegedly given *muti* (traditional medicine) by *sangomas* (traditional (witch)doctors) to ward off live ammunition used by the police. “Plenty of press reports and even the…SACP’s official statement refer to the workers’ pre-capitalist spiritual sensibilities” (Bond 2012, p.2) and “…have unleashed a torrent of racist remarks on online news sites and social networks” (Duncan 2012). These sorts of images and references, even if they are truthful, reconstruct classic colonial stereotypes (Centre for Civil Society 2012, p.772) and reinforce binary oppositions of “us” versus “them”. A postcolonial perspective will help this paper to identify and analyse these kind of narratives within the race and class discourses found in political cartoons commenting on Marikana.

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\(^2\) “Boer” (Afrikaans) = farmer; referring to white South Africans of Dutch ancestry; derogatory term for any white person.
As outlined in this section, South Africa’s transitional process from apartheid to democracy was only partly successful, because the vast majority of black people has not benefited from the political transformation. This paper’s issue of concern is to focus on the discourses of race and class inequalities drawn out by representations of Marikana.

1.2 The Power of Visual Discourses

Visual communication is an omnipresent phenomenon worldwide. Through our eyes we can not only see the world, but we can grasp, understand, remember and judge it. Various “texts”, such as paintings, photographs, television, the world wide web, etc. all produce visual representations of the world which can, in Foucauldian terms, be thought of as discourse (Hall 2001, p.72). Discourse, according to Foucault, with its characteristic knowledge and meaning production, is closely related to the notion of power (Hall 2001); a person can only know what is communicated to them. Through their power to construct “reality”, images inevitably contain messages which, from time to time, provoke controversy. The ability of visuals to spark controversies was proved, for instance, in the mid-2000s when photographs of US soldiers torturing Iraqi prisoners in Abu Ghraib were circulated (Sontag 2004). With regard to South Africa, the following example also underlines the power of visuals.

![Fig. 3: “The Spear of the Nation” by Brett Murray (2012).](image-url)
The painting “Spear of the Nation”³, produced by white South African artist Brett Murray, depicts president Zuma in a Leninist pose with his genitals exposed. It does not only contain discourses of power by explicitly criticising the president's polygamous lifestyle, but it also ignited a countrywide debate in May 2012 about race and racism after it was published in the mainstream newspaper *City Press*. The ANC publicly condemned the painting and a court case was launched against the exhibiting gallery and the City Press editor; Gwede Mantashe, the secretary-general of the African National Congress, was quoted saying: "From where I am sitting, that picture is racist. It is disrespectful. It is crude and it is rude. The more black South Africans forgive and forget, the more they get a kick in the teeth" (Mantashe quoted in Herskovitz 2012).

Enoch Mthembu, the spokesperson of the Nazareth Baptist Church in South Africa, even called for Murray “to be stoned to death” because his piece of art “clearly shows his racist upbringing” (Mthembu quoted in May & Nagel 2012). The reception of Murray's painting evidently shows how visual discourses in South Africa recently contributed to the still ongoing debate and (re)construction of race as a defining social factor.

1.3 The Power of Political Cartoons

Political cartoons are a particular sort of visual discourse relying on the interplay between visual and textual elements (Müller, et al. 2009, p.28). By compressing “a complex phenomenon into a single image that is purported to capture its essence graphically” (Morris 1993, p.200), cartoons position their audience “within a discursive context of “meaning making”” (Greenberg 2002, p.182). They appear mainly on the opinion pages of printed newspapers and contribute their often satirical and controversial angle on certain events. Political cartoons “can accuse, encourage debate, convey opinion, and allow the reader to consider an issue from a different point of view” (Plumb 2004, p.432). Through references to a particular canon of culturally embedded discourses, cartoons usually target a narrow and at most national audience, who are familiar with the allusions to a certain person or event and are able to decipher the intended meaning(s) of the cartoonist's work (Müller, et al. 2009).

³ The title “The spear of the Nation” alludes to the literal translation of the ANC's military wing “Umkhonto we Sizwe” (MK) during the struggle against apartheid.
In the case of the infamous and controversial Muhammad cartoons published in 2005 by the Danish newspaper *Jylland’s Posten*, a wider audience in countries with different cultural, political and religious background was reached via the publication of the cartoons on the internet. The reception, in the mainly Muslim countries, caused “global tensions that pitched the “West” against “the Muslim world”” (Müller, et al. 2009, p.37). Some effects of this so called “Muhammad cartoon crisis” were worldwide; several attacks on European, mainly Danish embassies in Muslim countries and death threats to the Danish cartoonist Kurt Westergaard.

In South Africa a cartoon by the famous white cartoonist Jonathan “Zapiro” Shapiro sparked a major discussion about freedom of speech, racial prejudices and defamation.

Zapiro’s depiction of president Jacob Zuma, supported by his allies in the ANC, ANCYL, SACP and COSATU, as ready to “rape” Lady Justice, refers to former rape, corruption and fraud charges laid against Zuma.

Zuma’s “showerhead” refers to a rape trial against Zuma in 2005/2006 and has since been used by Zapiro as Zuma’s “trademark”. In the trial, Zuma was accused of having raped a friend. Zuma’s statement was that, after the consensual sexual intercourse, having known about the friend’s positive HIV status, he took a shower to minimize the risk of infection. The “showerhead” became a well-known metaphor used by Zapiro to rate Zuma’s performance as the country’s president. This metaphor was included by a South African fast food company (The Fish & Chip Company) in their recent, banned commercial.
featuring a comic figure of Zuma consuming their products (RoMaCu200 2012). The reference to Zapiro's work indicates the influence of political cartoons in South Africa.

Zapiro's satirical allusions to Zuma's, and allegedly all black males', sexual drive, initiated a countrywide discussion about racial stereotypes, their public application and significance for the "rainbow nation". A legal case was issued against Zapiro and the publisher of the Sunday Times accusing them of defamation and offence against the constitutionally enshrined dignity of human beings. Confronted with arguments for freedom of speech, Zuma withdrew the legal case in October 2012, but still insists on the inappropriate controversial usage of stereotypical racial markers by Zapiro (The Presidency 2012b).

This example clearly unveils the powerful discursive capacity of political cartoons; their controversial use of satire can provide "...a space of resistance that can be used to challenge elites and hold governments to account" (Hammett 2010b, p.88). Hammett furthermore describes political cartoons as "weapons of the weak" (2010a, p.8), giving alternative, critical insights into current discourses. Cartoons can therefore be considered revealing and complex qualitative empirical data to explore notions of race and class, particularly commenting upon the tragedies in Marikana. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to analyse how discourses on race and class inequalities were manifested in political cartoons' representations of Marikana.

Section 2 of this paper will present the methodological considerations, legitimising the choice of the analysed cartoon sample and the tools employed for the visual discourse analysis. Section 3 will outline the theoretical framework of postcolonialism, the lens through which discourses of race and class are explored. In Section 4, the analysis provides an in-depth examination of several cartoons aiming to disclose prevailing race and class discourses drawn out by the Marikana massacre, followed by concluding statements of the findings in Section 5.
2. Methodology

This section will first deal with the criteria considered for the choice of cartoons. It will explain how and why certain cartoons were chosen for the analytical part. Secondly, a methodological tool will be introduced which was used for the visual discourse analysis. Finally, the consideration of a web survey will be legitimised and explained.

2.1 Choice of Cartoons

As outlined in the introduction, this paper's focus will be on political cartoons as qualitative empirical data. Due to time limitations, the website www.africartoons.com was used as the main source for cartoons as opposed to the newspapers themselves. This website, updated daily, stores political cartoons by the main South African cartoonists, reaching back partly more than 20 years.

169 cartoons, all underpinned to a greater or lesser extent by the Marikana massacre and published between 17 August 2012 and 15 November 2012, were collected. Covering three months, the timespan allows this paper not only to analyse the discourses of the immediate aftermath, but also of the following developments concerning the massacre. Due to time limitations the 15 November was chosen as a cut off point.

The key elements of the preliminary selection were “race and class inequality” and applied to filter the initially collected 169 cartoons according to their analytical relevance to this research. The reason for these criteria were, as outlined in the introduction, the significance and omnipresence of race and class discourses in post-apartheid South Africa. The approach, used to extract these discourses from the cartoons, was influenced by the unequal “realities” described in section 1.1.

The choice of the cartoons does not seek to confirm or reinforce the above mentioned unequal “realities”. By accepting these inequalities a priori, this paper rather tries to examine how, indeed if, they are presented by political cartoonists in the context of the Marikana massacre. However, it should be acknowledged, that a certain bias or arbitrariness in the choice of the cartoons cannot be completely avoided. In exploring poetry Madge and Eshun admit that “…as academics we are always complicit in the knowledge creation process (albeit to varying degrees)…” (2012, p.1395). Consequently, this paper admittedly focuses on the most clear and explicit cartoons dealing with race and class inequalities, from
the researchers’ perspective. However, to mitigate this limitation and to include a more heterogeneous depiction of the above mentioned discourses, a wide range of Afrikaans and English language newspapers and ethnically diverse cartoonists (according to the still existing distinctions established by the apartheid regime – black, coloured, white and Indian; referred to in this paper as such) were considered.

12 cartoons were then chosen for in-depth analysis. All of them were published in regional or national mainstream South African newspapers with daily or weekly circulations (Beeld, Business Day, Sowetan, Sunday Times, The Mercury, The New Age, Volksblad, Weekend Argus and Weekend Post). The 12 selected cartoons were then grouped into subordinate categories, according to the main “problem” depicted in the cartoon. These categories, namely historical (“problem” rooted in apartheid), economic (“problem” linked to post-apartheid neoliberal structures) and socio-cultural (“problem” identified as the “black elite”), presented the main sub-discourses with regard to Marikana. All three subordinate categories include ongoing discourses on race and class in South Africa. Other recurring discourses in cartoons dealing with Marikana (e.g. Zuma’s incompetency, or the political battle between Zuma and Malema) were identified, but discarded, as they were not explicitly concerned issues of race or class issues.

2.2 Visual Discourse Analysis

As stated in the introduction, this paper recognises political cartoons as a form of visual discourse. Specifically they are “a form of visual news discourse” (Greenberg 2002, 181) carrying a multitude of specific allusions to often complex culturally, socially and politically embedded discourses (Danjoux 2007, p.289). A methodological tool was therefore required to extract these various meanings which are produced on two mutually enriching levels – visual and linguistic.

While Mitchell emphasises the perceived gulf between visual and linguistic signs in general (in his own words the “struggle for territory, a contest of rival ideologies” (Mitchell 1987, p.43)), this paper will rather focus on the meaning creating power of visuals and language which, in the specific context of political cartoons, are mutually reinforcing. However, considering the important aspect of visual communication (as opposed to linguistic) in car-
toons, a thorough analysis of the pictorial element is required, as emphasised by Müller and Özcan in their analysis of the infamous Muhammad cartoons from Denmark:

“They while academic and journalistic texts are based on argumentation and reasoning, visuals follow a logic by association, connecting different meanings that would not necessarily make sense if written down or communicated orally. Visual communication is based on visual similarity and individual experience with the visual motif.” (Müller & Özcan 2007, p.287)

Accepting the view of Müller & Özcan, iconography is an appropriate analytical approach.

2.21 Iconography

Originating from the field of the history of art and shaped by Erwin Panofsky, iconography investigates and discloses the meaning(s) of visuals by putting them into context(s). Panofsky proposes a three-step interpretive methodology to identify the subject matter and the different layers of meaning in visuals (Panofsky 1972):

The first step includes a pre-iconographical description, revealing the “primary or natural meanings” and identifying artistic motifs. (Panofsky 1972, p.5; original italics removed). The focus lies basically on “the recognition of images arising from the subjective basis of our everyday experience of our own persons and of the practical world” (Summers 1995, 11). This pre-iconographical step concentrates on the basic artistic features of form and shape.

The second step, iconographical analysis, discloses the “secondary or conventional” meanings whereby the artistic motifs identified in the first step are combined “with themes and concepts manifested in images, stories and allegories” (Panofsky 1972, p.6; original italics removed). It means de facto that forms and shapes receive a meaning and can be identified as certain characters, settings or events. These characters, settings or events are then contextualised in the third step.

The third step, an iconographical interpretation, is then applied to identify and interpret the “symbolical values” (Panofsky 1972, p.8; original italics removed) of the visual themes and concepts. This contextualisation provides historical and socio-cultural references which are
essential for a proper understanding of the meaning(s) political cartoons are intended to convey.

As mentioned above, iconography originated from the history of art (mainly paintings and sculptures) and was not intended for the analysis of political cartoons. Therefore, Panofsky's tool was adjusted in the two following ways.

Firstly, while iconography only focuses on the meaning(s) of pictorial language, the analysis of cartoons requires consideration of the textual elements, appreciating the symbiotic relationship between the two. Both meaning producing aspects of cartoons – visual and textual – are seen as complementary, mutually reinforcing the intended message(s). Therefore, Panofsky's iconography was adapted in order to suit cartoon analysis; the textual elements of the respective cartoons were considered integral to the pictorial aspects and were as such included in all three steps.

Secondly, in order to draw relationships between the analysed cartoons, a fourth step was added. In this step, meanings and representations in the individual cartoons, with regard to race and class, were compared and contrasted to each other in order to distinguish prevailing discourses.

Panofsky's iconography is used to extract, decipher and interpret the various meanings from the visual aspect of the cartoons. However, the main focus will be put on the third step, the iconographical interpretation. This step, contextualising the visual, will be employed to understand the allusions to and different representations of race and class discourses.

In the analysis of the cartoons, no clear distinction will be made between Panofsky's steps of iconographical analysis, himself underlining that “...in actual work, the methods of approach which here appear as three [or in this case four] unrelated operations of research merge with each other into one organic and indivisible process” (Panofsky 1972, p.17).

Although both visual and textual aspects of political cartoons are seen as highly important, the analysis will not focus to an extensive extent on how exactly for instance comedy or tragedy is generated, or indeed the way a cartoon is drawn. This paper will rather seek to put the content of the chosen cartoons into the context of race and class discourses and representations.
Panofsky correctly points out that “[i]n whichever stratum [of visual analysis] we move, our identifications and interpretations will depend on our subjective equipment” (Panofsky 1972, 16). Visual discourse analysis on its own does not reveal how and if the audience will actually understand the message of a cartoon (Greenberg 2002, 186). Expanding this notion to the entire discourse analysis, a web survey was used to broaden the researchers’ limited geographical as well as cultural understanding of the diverse discourses evolving around the events at the Marikana mine which are construed in the analysed cartoons. The survey will help to mitigate the researchers’ subjectivity as it also considers local, South African points of view. Three cartoons (figures 14, 18 and 23), each representing the above mentioned historical, economical and socio-cultural categories, were therefore presented to a group of South Africans to explore different perspectives. Additionally, two general questions about political cartoons were posed as well as one asking about the prevalence of discourses in the three cartoons in everyday society. Questions of the web survey can be found in appendix B. Furthermore, in the interest of ethical academic practice, a research information sheet was sent to all participants (appendix A).

The respondents are not a representative sample of the South African population, with biases evident in age, gender, race, geography, occupation and political affiliation. All eight respondents are black, and geographically based near the South African administrative capital of Pretoria. Two of them are clearly affiliated to the ANC. Further information can be found in appendix C.

Despite these constraints, the web survey underlines, in more general research terms, the ontological and epistemological deliberations which are considered in this paper.

From an ontological point of view, a constructionist approach was embraced in order to emphasise that the meanings attributed to social reality and phenomena depend on social actors and do not exist in an impersonal vacuum (Bryman 2012, p.33). Thus, in political cartoons, certain discourses of social reality are negotiated, commented upon and provided with (new) meanings. In this constructionist approach, not only the production, but the interpretation and judgement of certain discourses are important in grasping the
multiple dimensions of social reality. The web survey, therefore, provides a rich pool of local interpretations which are included in the analysis.

In epistemological terms, this paper rather focuses on the interpretivist paradigm whereby “the subjective meaning of social action” (Bryman 2012, 30) is foregrounded and human behaviour is not to be explained with the application of natural sciences but rather to be understood.

In line with the paper's postcolonial approach and with the ontological and epistemological considerations, the web survey is an attempt to mitigate methodological limitations inherent in analysing art.
3. Theory

3.1 Main Approach

This paper submits that political cartoons are suitable discourses for postcolonial analysis. This section begins with a brief introduction to postcolonialism before focussing specifically on postcolonialism in relation to race and class.

3.11 Postcolonialism: A Brief Introduction

Postcolonialism is an approach with porous boundaries and no single coherent position (Kapoor 2008), but can generally be defined as a historical and critical approach that “seeks to offer alternative accounts of the world” (Sharp 2009, p.4). Postcolonial writing “…attempts to contest and shift dominant world views by including hidden voices, challenging mainstream assumptions, opposing binary ways of thinking (“Othering”) and problematising hegemonic power structures” (Ashby 2012, p.2).

Of particular focus in postcolonialism therefore, are the continuities of hegemonic power and its resistances (Moore-Gilbert 1997) which tend to be represented in binary terms. Colonial discourses produce and reproduce these binaries in various texts by representing the colonised as the “Other” in order to justify colonialism and keep natives in a subordinate position (Said 1978). With reference to specific colonial dualisms, the notion of “us” versus “them” appears in the analysis section of this paper to indicate who the audience is presumed to sympathise and/or empathise with (the “Self”) and conversely, who is being represented as the undesirable or lesser “Other”.

Even after independence, the political, economic and cultural development of former colonies are inextricably tied to colonialism (Fanon 1961). In South Africa, Patrick Bond (2004; 2006) and Naomi Klein (2007) have both written on how the transition from apartheid to independence was tied to formal economic and political conditions, ultimately benefiting former colonial powers (and the West in general) and restricting true independence.

Understanding the historic continuities from the colonial period, a postcolonial approach directly challenges colonialism, arguing that its impact is ongoing; its knowledges, values
and structures being reproduced in educational, governmental and media institutions (Sharp 2009).

Whilst there are many theories relating to postcolonialism, only those useful to this analysis will be mentioned in this chapter.

3.12 Postcolonialism: Race and Class

“[P]ostcolonial scholarship provides a historical and international depth to the understanding of cultural power. It studies issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, and nationality, that are of concern to contemporary critical scholarship by situating these phenomena within geopolitical arrangements, and relations of nations and their international histories.” (Shome and Hegde 2002, p.252)

Race and class constitute the two most seminal divisions within contemporary South African society, the discourses of which can be clearly linked to colonialism. As the quote above notes, postcolonialism is also interested in gender, sexuality and nationality but this paper focuses predominately on race and class as the most prevalent divisions represented in media discourses and scholarship concerning post-apartheid South Africa.

Whist colonial discourses of race are still ongoing, attitudes towards race can be seen to vary across time and space. Therefore, instead of viewing race as a stable category, this paper takes the view that race is socially constructed (Lentin 2008) and various discourses are mobilised depending on what specific agendas are being propagated (Apple 1993). During apartheid, the agenda was legitimating white rule. This was done by imposing a set of perceived character deficits onto the colonised (therefore racial deficits) which were then reproduced and reinforced in various written and visual texts (Said 1978). Race is then constructed in the imaginations of both the colonisers and the colonised according to these depictions. This led to the entrenchment of white supremacy and black inferiority leading Frantz Fanon, though not in the context of South Africa, to write: “For the black man there is only one destiny. And it is white” (Fanon 1952, p.10). Fanon’s writings went on to inspire black consciousness movements around the world (McEwan 2009) including Steve Biko in South Africa who echoed Fanon in writing:
“...[T]he type of black man we have today has lost his manhood. Reduced to an obliging shell, he looks with awe at the white power structures and accepts what he regards as the ‘inevitable position’” (Biko 1978, p.28)

During apartheid, the division between class and race were one and the same. With the official end of apartheid, the distinctions have become more complex. Class is thought of in this paper not only in terms of wealth but as a set of practices “such as attire, carriage, speech, diet, habitation and forms of lifestyle consumption – all linked to underlying unequal structures of material resources” (Gidwani 2009, p.88). As mentioned in the introduction, Patrick Bond (2004) has suggested racial distinctions and discourses have been replaced by those relating to class but from a postcolonial perspective, this binary distinction between race and class becomes problematic; evidently, race determined access to privileges under apartheid which then shaped the structure of class post-apartheid (Seekings and Nattrass 2005):

“...we are failing to talk about race in a way that addresses the racist inequities we have inherited from apartheid and have been further exacerbated by 17 years of neoliberal ANC rule.” (Satgar 2011)

Therefore, far from being replaced, racial distinctions continue and as such, racial discourses remain prevalent in South Africa. Additionally, many South Africans, black and white, feel the ANC is increasingly “...contributing to the re-racialisation of society along lines similar to - but a reversal of - the apartheid past” (Ansell 2004, p.10). This is evident for instance in Mbeki’s “Two Nations” speech mentioned in section 1.1.

With respect to Marikana, Jane Duncan writes:

“Public opinion remains sharply divided about whether the police were justified in shooting the miners, and much opinion has divided along racial lines, which is hardly surprising given the experiential and perception gaps between so many black and white people.” (Duncan 2012)

In postcolonialism, class is often linked to European mimicry; a person can be black in colour, but European “…in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect” (Macaulay 1958, quoted in Bhabha 1984, p.128). Class and race are therefore intrinsically related in
postcolonial analysis (McEwan 2009). During colonialism the inevitable gap between European (white) mimicry and totality can never be fully realised (Bhabha 1984) keeping black natives subordinate to the white colonisers. It is this feature which led to the writings by Frantz Fanon and subsequently Steve Biko on the psychology of colonialism. As European mimicry is still posited as a discourse within South African cartoons (Mason 2011), the analysis will assess how this feature is used currently.

Both class and race distinctions engender binaries of “us” and “them”, “self” and “other”; a dichotomy firmly rooted in colonial representations. This paper is therefore interested in how (post)colonial discourses on race and class are maintained or disrupted in political cartoons.

3.13 Postcolonialism: Marikana and Political Cartoons

Postcolonialism, as mentioned in section 3.1, is able to draw connections between colonialism and current society. Colonialism laid the groundwork for many of the issues facing South Africa today and nowhere is this more clear than in the mining sector. As Smith (2012) notes in The Guardian (UK): “[M]ining has powered the South African economy, and warped its society, since the arrival of the empire builder Cecil Rhodes”. Given its colonial origins and neo-colonial transformation (Lonmin mine in Marikana being British owned), mining in South Africa is an appropriate starting point for a postcolonial analysis.

Parallels were drawn between Marikana and the massacres at Sharpeville and Soweto (section 1) in mainstream media, but these comparisons, whilst powerful, were flippant; simplifying and distorting reality. Whilst similar patterns of power and resistance can be noted, the protests in Sharpeville and Soweto were unambiguously caused by the racial discrimination of the apartheid regime. With the official end of racial apartheid (whilst race is an ongoing tension), understanding the causes and effects of Marikana is more complex. As mentioned, class has become a seminal division in society with some scholars, such as Patrick Bond (2004; 2006), arguing it has become an even more salient tension than race. This paper maintains that race and class are both fundamental divisions

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4 British-born colonist in the late 19th century in South Africa
which are intrinsically related to each other.

Analysing mainstream media discourses can be a useful way to assess these different tensions, but this paper contends that art (in all its forms) is an often overlooked discourse within postcolonial literature. Madge and Eshun have attempted to “seize back the creative initiative” (2012, p.1395) in assessing how useful poetry is in postcolonial research. Political cartoons are appropriate for postcolonial analysis as they open up another set of voices which, whilst tied to mainstream media, can offer alternative perspectives and challenge dominant discourses. Furthermore, it has been suggested that political cartoonists are given more latitude than regular columnists (Templin 1999) and the fact that the cartoons have been known to stir up so much controversy (section 1.3), particularly with political elites, suggests they have a counter-hegemonic power and are thus further relevant to postcolonial analysis.

3.2 How Postcolonialism was Applied

3.21 Recognising Knowledge as Socially and Historically Constructed

In a postcolonial framework, knowledges are not absolute but related to time, space and power. For example, European knowledges were used to drive production in a capitalist system; its rapid industrialisation then used by colonial powers to distinguish themselves as more developed when compared to other societies with different knowledges and alternative development patterns (Sharp 2009).

Foucault was very explicit in linking knowledge to power and hegemony. In “Culture and Imperialism”, Said, inspired by Foucault, argues the “the connection between imperial politics and culture is astonishingly direct” (1994, p.7) continuing to say that this connection created dominant “us” versus “them” discourses. These discourses are subsequently used by subaltern cultures in resisting European colonial and neo-colonial hegemony (Mason 2010). Due to Dutch and British colonisation, European knowledges have clearly had a huge impact within South Africa. These knowledges have, in turn, been responsible for (re)producing “us” versus “them” discourses within the country. As this paper considers political cartoons, to a large extent, to be a discourse of subversion and
resistance, it seeks to analyse how current “us” versus “them” in contemporary political cartoons relate to colonial discourses.

3.22 Exposing non-Western World Views

The historically entrenched European knowledge hegemony has led some postcolonial scholars to challenge Eurocentric views, writing about and legitimising the value of non-scientific ways of knowing. Madge and Eshun (2012) have also shown how art can be useful in exposing these views in their paper exploring poetry. Their article shows that such study is useful but warns that academics are complicit in the knowledge creation process. This paper has therefore sought to be cautious to mitigate this limitation whilst asserting the usefulness of cartoons (and art generally) as a being able to:

“...imaginatively project thoughts and ideas, opening up space so new meanings, understandings and perspectives can emerge; it thus has potential in altering thinking and practices and challenging hegemonic knowledge creation” (Madge and Eshun [on poetry] 2012, p.1420)

Inequality in South Africa is heavily connected to European knowledges and power due to its history and, though changing, it is still mainly white cartoonists publishing in South Africa. Because of this, there is an uneasy dichotomy in considering cartoons as being able to reveal popular local concerns whilst recognising that cartooning continues this colonial tradition of not letting the subaltern (marginalised majority) speak for themselves (Spivak 1988). However, though it is still mainly white cartoonists drawing, political cartoons remain a *subjugated knowledge*, viz.,

“...a whole set of knowledges that have been disqualified as inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborated: naïve knowledges, located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity” (Foucault 1980, p.82).

Whilst South Africa and its (under)development is heavily bound in European knowledges due to its history, Hammett posits “political cartoons are windows on a nation's psyche” (2010b, p.89). Whilst Andrew Mason identifies this phrase as “too glib, suggesting that a
nation can have a single, unitary ‘psyche’” (2010, p.12), this paper, through its survey findings, considers political cartoons as South African discourses emphasising popular South African concerns.

3.23 Highlighting African Agency and Resistance

Colonial discourses portrayed Africans in a variety of ways in order to justify their marginalisation: “...the African ‘Other’ is sometimes depicted in romantic terms, but more often is seen through a derogatory lens as passive, corrupt and dangerous” (McEwan 2009, p.218). These discourses have colonial roots but persist today, especially in the images promoting charity (figures 5 and 6):

![Fig. 5: Screenshot from the official homepage of “Aid for Africa”.](image)

![Fig. 6: Video screenshot from “Simon Cowell, Comic Relief 2009”.](image)
These ubiquitous images reproduce imaginations of Africans as “helpless” and “passive” entrenching the belief that “Africa” is poor and underdeveloped (Baaz 2005). This paper seeks to disrupt this enduring colonial binary between the “active” subjects of the West and the “passive” objects of the South (Baaz 2005) in a number of ways. Firstly, the point of departure for this paper was the Marikana massacre and the mining strikes which in itself is a form of agency and resistance, interrupting reproducing colonial narratives of the African as “passive”. Secondly, the paper considers political cartoons in themselves, a form of agency and potential sites of resistance. The discourses within these cartoons are also linked historically, to the Steve Biko and the Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa. Biko had enormous impact in ending apartheid by reversing colonial discourses, promoting black empowerment and, as mentioned in section 3.12, questioning the “inevitability” of white rule.

3.24 Danger of the Single Story

The two examples in section 3.23, are examples of a single story, or reductive repetition; certain stories being (re)used at the expense of others creating an “image” of a place which does not adequately represent the complex and variegated realities. Countries within Africa (or commonly, just “Africa”) are reduced to a problematic space which require foreign “solutions” (Power 2009). In the video “Simon Cowell, Comic Relief 2009” (figure 6), for example, it is not said how the “waste economy is a significant area for informal entrepreneurship” (Rogerson 2001, p.256), exhibiting African agency, but only how “[t]his is quite literally [sic.] hell on earth. But every day, this is home to hundreds of young children desperately trying to make enough money just to stay alive” (Cowell in Imburble 2009). Much postcolonial literature focuses on how these single stories are produced and reproduced whereas others directly challenge them by opening up new perspectives.

In her TED talk, Chimamanda Adichie talks about the danger of the single story, “how impressionable and vulnerable we are in face of a story” (Adichie in TED 2009):

“If I had not grown up in Nigeria, and if all I knew about Africa were from popular images, I too would think, that Africa was a place of beautiful landscapes, beautiful animals and incomprehensible people fighting senseless wars, dying of poverty and
aids, unable to speak for themselves and waiting to be saved by a kind, white foreigner” (Adichie in TED 2009).

Political cartoons can open up new perspectives from people living in South Africa which relate to the lives and concerns of the people there. This paper presents cartoons by South Africans (admittedly mainly white) to a South African audience and produces the main discourses (the main “stories”) within them as opposed to reproducing old stories of Africa. Though the choosing of Marikana as a point of departure could be seen as reproducing the image of Africa as “violent”, this paper focuses on the agency of the cartoonists and the protesting miners.

### 3.3 Discourses within Cartoons in South Africa: A Brief History

As mentioned, a postcolonial approach intends to challenge the binaries set up by colonialism; the dominant “us” versus “them” discourse between the colonizer and colonized.

Whilst looking at cartoons is certainly an identifiable gap in academic research, South African cartoonist Andy Mason has done some academic work in this field. Mason notes two main racial discourses attributed to natives in colonial cartoons from Britain, *viz.* “the ogre” (or more generally, “predator”) and “the mock European” (Mason 2011, p.13). This can be seen clearly in the following two examples:

**Fig. 7:** “All among the Hottentots capering to shore” (1820) by British cartoonist and illustrator George Cruikshank clearly shows Mason’s “the ogre” or “predator”.

**Fig. 8:** “A Lesson” (1876) by British cartoonist and illustrator, Sir John Tenniel clearly shows Mason’s “the mock European”.
During apartheid, though there were cartoonists sympathising with the oppressed black majority and their struggle, these colonial messages continued:

![Fig. 9: Title unknown by G. L. Norton (circa 1950). The cartoon distinctly shows Mason’s “the ogre” and “the mock european”.

Mason argues that these representations of “the ogre” (or “predator”) and “the mock European” have influenced contemporary South African cartoons. The explicitly racist messages of the above cartoons are of course not present in contemporary political cartoons, but colonial representations persist even if the message is decidedly anti-colonial or anti-apartheid (Mason 2010). The use of “Othering”, depicting “us” versus “them”, Mason argues, continues to influence South African cartoons, as does the depiction of “them” as “ogres” (or “predators”) or as “mock Europeans”:

![Fig. 10: Title unknown by Zapiro, published on 06 May 2006 in Independent Newspapers – president Jacob Zuma as a sexual “predator”.

25
What Mason has demonstrated, is that whilst the cartoonist may now often side with the black majority, the representations within the cartoons may still be colonial. These elements will be analysed in relation to the Marikana cartoons in section 4 in order to establish if race or class is presented in these two ways.
4. Analysis

The analytical section is divided into three parts as outlined in section 2.1. The first part (4.1) focuses on the historical aspect, where the “problem” identified in the cartoons is rooted in apartheid. The second part (4.2) examines economic aspects manifesting the “problem” in post-apartheid neoliberal structures. This part contains two sub-sections, dealing with macro-economic (4.21) and micro-economic elements (4.22). The third part (4.23) deals with socio-cultural issues identifying the “problem” as the “black elite”.

Although these main “problems” or sub-discourses with regard to Marikana are partly overlapping, the cartoons were allocated to their respective categories according to the main “problem” identified.

4.1 Historical – “Problem” Rooted in Apartheid

This first part of the analysis will examine three cartoons explicitly putting the Marikana massacre in a historical context.

![Cartoon: Return to the Dark Ages](image)

**Fig. 12:** “Return to the Dark Ages” by Zapiro, published on 19 August 2012, in *Sunday Times* (national; English).
As described in the introduction, the killing of 34 mineworkers in Marikana caused a massive outcry in the national and international media. Comparisons to apartheid-era massacres were obviously difficult to overlook (section 3.22). Figures 12 and 13, published shortly after the incident, situate Marikana in a historical context in comparing them to the Sharpeville massacre in 1976 and the Soweto uprising in 1960 respectively. Whilst both cartoons conjure up memories of the struggle against racial oppression, discourses, especially about race, become evident.

The set-up of Zapiro's cartoon (figure 12) is a television screen showing “Breaking News” coverage of the Marikana massacre. The black (though depicted in white colour) news reporter announces in front of a black background that South Africans should “set [their] clocks back thirty years”, while a news scroll at the bottom of the screen reports the killing of at least 34 miners by police forces in Marikana.

This cartoon clearly links the current conditions, in particular the brutal police response to said demonstrations/strikes, to the Soweto uprising in 1976 during the colonial era of apartheid. Though the causes for both demonstrations were different (in 1976 black students were protesting in Soweto against Afrikaans as the only language of instruction in educational institutions), Zapiro’s cartoon sympathises with both victim groups, the protesting miners in Marikana and the demonstrators in Soweto. It is widely accepted that Soweto has gone down in history as a symbolic landmark for the struggle against racial oppression.

Fig. 13: “Sharpeville Revisited” by Niël van Vuuren, published on 18 August 2012 in Volksblad (regional: Free State & Northern Cape; Afrikaans).

\[ \text{Soweto} = \text{South Western Township; close to Johannesburg} \]
segregation and discrimination. By drawing out similarities between these two events, Zapiro's cartoon sides with the striking miners at Marikana mine and emphasises the wrongdoing of the ANC government. The overall oppressing political structures suggested in this cartoon, remain the same despite the transition in 1994; the black government is not different in its actions from the apartheid-regime.

By doing so, Zapiro (a white cartoonist with anti-apartheid “struggle credentials” (Mason 2009, p.277)) uses colonial binaries of “us” versus “them” in a reversed way to resist the governmental power, represented in the case of Marikana by the police (state) forces. Whilst the dualistic “us” versus “them” colonial narratives, as explained in section 3.11, intended to portray “us” as white and good and “them” as black and bad, the clear anti-colonial message of his cartoon is created by reversing this colonial dichotomy. In this cartoon, “us” can be seen to stand for the black, innocent mineworkers who were killed by “them”, the police, representing state force, thus implicating the black, guilty ANC government. This government, through the comparison of its actions to the white apartheid-regime, can be interpreted as white. The colonial binaries are therefore entirely reversed: “Us” (black workers) versus “them” (black, but metaphorically “white” government). Thus, the miners are symbolic of a larger, still ongoing race struggle against a government, which is black, but adopts similar violent strategies to deal with protesting people akin to how the white apartheid government used to do to maintain their power.

Niël van Vuuren's cartoon (figure 13) picks up on the same topic as figure 12. While Zapiro's cartoon uses a metaphorical, quite implicit comparison to link Marikana to an apartheid massacre, van Vuuren makes the same point very graphically and explicitly. His cartoon “Sharpeville Revisited” consists of two almost identical halves, divided, or rather connected, by a horizontal line. Both halves show almost exactly the same scenario; three heavily armed police officers with their backs to the reader stand in the foreground of the cartoon in front of several dead bodies, assumingly shot by the police. Only two aspects – a linguistic and a visual – differ in the two otherwise identical parts of the black and white cartoon. The upper half is contextualised by the inscription “Sharpeville, 1960” and the flag of apartheid South Africa. Instead, the lower half shows the wording “Lonmin, Marikana, 2012” and the flag of the democratic South Africa. Colour was only used in the cartoon to depict the flags, drawing the reader's attention to them.
The identical depiction of both massacres, apart from the inscription and the flag, is used by van Vuuren to explicitly compare these two incidents by drawing out parallels between the heroic struggle against apartheid and the therefore heroic deaths of the miners in Marikana. Similar to figure 12, this cartoon suggests that basically nothing has changed since 1994 but the flag. The ANC government, again represented by the police and additionally by the flag of the democratic South Africa, are exposed as employing the same tactics as the apartheid government did; the structures remaining unaltered.

The Sharpeville massacre, as the Soweto uprising, is deeply anchored in South Africa’s memory. 69 people were shot dead by the police during a demonstration against apartheid-era pass laws, restricting the movement of black South Africans. The 21st March, the day of the massacre, is a public holiday in present day South Africa to celebrate human rights, continually reinforcing the events.

Using this set-up in the upper half of the cartoon, van Vuuren explicitly revives “the memory of distinct episodes of racism” (Idowu 2009, p.429) in South Africa. Reminding the audience of discourses on race during apartheid, the lower part of the cartoon supports rather Patrick Bond's (2004) (over)general observation (see section 1.1) of a noticeable shift from race to class apartheid since the democratic transformation in 1994. The direct reference in the cartoon to the multinational mining company Lonmin, suggests that the main reason for Marikana can be found in the neoliberal policies adopted by the ANC since it came to power. In increasing the gap between rich and poor, these neoliberal policies have only benefited a small group, the “black elite”. Considering this fact, the bottom part of the cartoon depicts the current class struggle while the upper part reminds of the race struggle under apartheid.

As mentioned before, the horizontal line between the two halves is seen in this interpretation as a connection rather than a division. Hence, discourses on race and class are not, as Bond suggests, generally distinguishable but in van Vuuren’s cartoon, interconnected and explicitly reminded of.

The reversed colonial binaries of “us” versus “them”, evident in figure 12 can also be found in figure 13. As mentioned above, the clear anti-colonial message of the cartoon is manifested in the heroic comparison of the dead miners in Marikana with the dead protesters in Sharpeville. Van Vuuren’s cartoon is sympathetic to the black protesters in both parts and implies the reverse colonial “us” (black demonstrators as good). In contrast,
the police ("them"), representing the respective governments, are portrayed according to Mason’s notion of the “ogre”; violent and dangerous.

Both analysed cartoons, figures 12 and 13, have a similar anti-colonial message, comparing the current ANC government to the apartheid-era government. By reversing the colonial “us” versus “them” dichotomy in favour of the protesters in all three massacres (Soweto, Sharpeville, Marikana), they have a clear message: Little, if not nothing, has changed since the political transition in 1994.

The cartoon “President Zuma’s Secret Consultant” by the young, coloured cartoonist Brandan [Reynolds] depicts President Jacob Zuma asking apartheid-era Prime Minister Hendrik F. Verwoerd for advice regarding the situation after the Marikana massacre. Published one month after the incident, Brandan's cartoon situates Zuma at the threshold of Verwoerd's governmental consultancy office, reporting that the “common purpose doctrine” could not be implemented and asking for Verwoerd's “input on tackling illegal gatherings” and “declaring a state of emergency”. His words, together with his anxious facial expression, directly reveal his concerns in handling the Marikana case. This cartoon, as figure 12, places the Marikana massacre entirely in the political sphere, disregarding the involvement of economic structures or actors (Lonmin).

Similar to figures 12 and 13, Brandan suggests with this cartoon that nothing has changed
under the black government. The depiction of Hendrik F. Verwoerd, often referred to as the “architect of apartheid”, as Zuma's consultant underlines this suggestion. Verwoerd, though assassinated in 1966, symbolically is still alive in this cartoon and continues to pull the political strings by consulting the black government. Merging the past with the present is literally possible in political cartoons, and in this cartoon it reveals the “real” power structures in the young democracy of South Africa. Zuma’s words, using explicit apartheid-era vocabulary (“common purpose doctrine”, “illegal gatherings” and “state of emergency”), further highlights this message.

As respondent 1 of the conducted web survey draws out, the “common purpose doctrine” is a still existing law which was used by “the apartheid regime to charge a leader and the followers as well as by-standers” for any unlawful action, implying criminal liability to all participants irrespective of the perpetrator. Amongst others, this law was used during apartheid to eliminate political opponents (mainly MK members) and revived in the aftermath of the Marikana massacre by the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) on 28 August. It was used to charge 270 mineworkers, who were arrested on the day of the shooting (16 August), with murder and attempted murder of their 34 killed and 78 injured colleagues. Though the law itself, evoking emotive memories of the apartheid regime (reproduced in this cartoon) was debated, it was rather its questionable application against the arrested miners causing a national and international outcry. Charges under the “common purpose law” were dropped soon after and all 270 miners were released from custody.

Zuma’s use of other apartheid-era vocabulary in Brandan's cartoon, such as “illegal gatherings” and “state of emergency”, further strengthens the link made to apartheid. The “state of emergency” reference especially draws direct connections to the former regime as it was for the Public Safety Act of 1953, that allowed the government to declare such states (Meyer 1999). States of emergency were declared after the Sharpeville massacre and mainly in the 1980s, the last years of apartheid, and widely considered to be “...a draconian instrument used by the apartheid government to detain people in large numbers while bypassing legal avenues” (South African History Online 2012).

Drawing upon these emotionally loaded narratives with regard to the situation in Marikana, the ANC did little to dismantle the comparisons to the apartheid-regime. Despite Zuma announcing in a press release on the same day Brandan's cartoon was published (16 September) that “the law enforcement measures undertaken in Marikana are not in any
way aimed at undermining the civil liberties of strikers and residents" (The Presidency 2012a), several protest marches were declared illegal and “an undeclared state of emergency“ was perceived in Marikana (Duncan in de Waal 2012). Jane Duncan adds that “...it looks as if local authorities are doing everything in their power to ensure that people’s rights “to assemble, to demonstrate, to picket and to present petitions” as stipulated in Section 17 of the [South African] Constitution, as well as the Regulation of Gatherings Act, is quashed.” (Duncan in de Waal 2012)

All these points, captured in Brandan's cartoon, show that Zuma's tactics in dealing with the Marikana massacre are very similar to the apartheid regime. Several respondents confirm the cartoon's message: Respondent 2 notes that “under democracy, president Zuma was caught openly doing exactly what the apartheid government did”; respondent 3 posits “they [politicians] use tactics of the former government indirectly to curb what they consider to be problematic”; respondent 4 underlines these observations by saying: “It shows the South African Leadership (Government) using the same tactics used previously by the apartheid government in dealing with people who are protesting in disagreement against the powers that be.”

In linking Zuma (and the ANC) so strongly to the white minority government of the apartheid era, Zuma is portrayed as white, or close to white, in this cartoon. Depicting both Zuma and Verwoerd visually with almost identical complexions, Brandan reverses the colonial dichotomy of “us” versus “them” similar to figures 12 and 13. Whiteness (“them”) is shown again as dangerous and brutal, suppressing black protests (“us”). Elements of Mason's idea of the “mock European” (the tie and the suit) support the interpretation of the black president being depicted as almost white (in appearance and behaviour). Issues of race and class are herewith closely interconnected and mirror the importance of the ongoing (re)construction of these discourses in post-apartheid South Africa.

The fact that Zuma is consulting Verwoerd draws out another nuance in the otherwise clear anti-colonial message of this cartoon. Although respondents 3 and 4 interpret the actions of the post-apartheid government as active (through the employment of the verb “use”), Zuma's anxious and desperate facial expression and his dependence on Verwoerd's advice in the cartoon draw upon the colonial discourse of black Africans being passive and helpless. Brandan depicts Zuma as a marionette of the still existing apartheid
structures. Although Zuma looks exhausted, implying his busy schedule as a president, he nevertheless seems to have little agency attributed in this cartoon. The main decisions are made by Verwoerd, symbolically representing apartheid structures. In this regard another interesting thought was made by respondent 1: “[T]his cartoon further deals with access to justice which is still far from [black] Africans and still in the hands of white judges who used to preside during apartheid and hanged our people”. Although in an emotional way, this comment reflects on the above mentioned context, where a white prosecutor of the NPA laid charges against the arrested 270 miners, accusing them in the name of an apartheid law of murder and attempted murder.

These colonial representations of black people indicate the still existing hierarchy in the post-apartheid “rainbow society”: white, "black elite", black. Taking a postcolonial approach, the boundaries of race and class are not viewed as absolute, stable categories, but rather as social constructions:

“For Bhabha as for Fanon, there is no fact of blackness, and there is no ‘fact' of whiteness, not if those facts or identities are imagined as permanent. At the moment you hope to have fixed yourself, you find yourself slipping away yet again.” (Huddart 2006, p.44)

Referring Bhabha's and Fanon's thoughts on identity to the context of Brandan's cartoon, one could finally say, that in the cartoon Zuma, neither representing pure blackness (through his actions against blacks), nor pure whiteness (helplessly/passively trapped in Kafkaesque white colonial structures), assumes his position in the enduring hierarchy.

4.2 Economical – “Problem” Linked to Post-Apartheid Neoliberal Structures

The comparably large size of this section represents the fact that many of the 169 cartoons reveal systematic economic failures as the main “problem” with regard to Marikana. This is hardly surprising as the original reason for the strike was unfair pay. Situating the problem of the economy was either done on a large temporal and spatial scale, in which macro-economic, neoliberal structures are seen as the main issue, or on a smaller temporal and spatial scale (recent and national) which tended to focus on specific
actors and institutions as the source of the “problem”. Most of these smaller scale cartoons either focussed on or included trade unions which were consistently depicted in a negative way. This section is therefore divided up into two sub-sections in order to represent, and distinguish between, these two scales.

4.21 Macro-Economic Structures

Whereas other cartoons in section 4.21 indubitably distinguish the main “problem” as “economical”, figure 15 is more ambiguous. The “problem” can be viewed as the “black elite” and as such, should be included in the socio-cultural category (4.3). However, whilst this is an important element that is analysed below, Zuma is depicted here supporting neoliberal expansion, i.e. facilitating the main “problem” of the economy, thus justifying its categorisation.

The cartoon depicts president Zuma talking to miners. From the text, it becomes obvious that he is attempting to reassure the miners with regard to foreign investment opportunities. The backdrop of a mine along with the speech of the miner (both in the right half of the cartoon) show a different set of priorities distinguishing Zuma (here representing the “black elite”) from the miners. In mentioning the 34 deaths, it can be inferred that the mine in the background represents Marikana.

Whilst strike action has been shown to curtail growth and investment opportunities in the
platinum mining sector (South African Reserve Bank 2012), the cartoon shows that Zuma considers this as the main issue whereas the miners rather view the working and pay conditions as more seminal. On the 11th October, two months after the publication of figure 15, Zuma did in fact vindicate the cartoon by focussing on foreign investment opportunities, stating:

“The ongoing strikes in the mining sector have had a significant effect on the economy. Our economic data does not indicate a significant drop in business confidence yet, but our responsibility is that we do not reach a crisis point.” (Zuma quoted in Wild and Cohen 2012).

The speech from the miner as well as the representation of Marikana, create the image of the miners being in touch with the tragic reality, showing a concern for the human cost as opposed to Zuma who disseminates concern for the economic cost. This creates a distance between the miners and Zuma reflecting (and reproducing) concerns within South African society that the ANC “is becoming increasingly distant from the concerns of its poor, mass base” (Malala 2012). This division is reinforced pictorially by having Zuma and his cohorts distinctly on the left and the mine and miners distinctly on the right. In Black Skin, White Masks, Fanon (1952, p.218) writes “he who is reluctant to recognize me opposes me” with reference to the colonial oppressors. As Zuma does not recognise the struggle of the miners in this cartoon, but only the struggle of neoliberal capitalism, further distance is created by linking him to (neo)colonists. Furthermore, Zuma is not only representative of the ANC in this cartoon, but also the “black elite”, entrenching this distance and creating strong “us” versus “them” binaries.

With depicting the “black elite” in cartoons, the dualisms of rich and white versus poor and black becomes harder to manage. The representations of the “black elite” are therefore adjusted or exaggerated as can be seen in this cartoon, attributing members of the “black elite” with white or colonial characteristics.

Zuma can be seen to be rich and white in a number of ways; his respective height in the cartoon compared to the miners, his entourage (holding a parasol to keep him comfortable) and concomitantly, his suit (all presidents wear suits but when depicted next to miners in their scruffy, casual clothes, the distance is highlighted and therefore the
strength of the binary, is increased). These three aspects are used to suggest *froideur*, wealth and a higher status in terms of *class*. Because of these aspects, van Vuuren can be said to be featuring Zuma as a “mock European”. This is then reinforced by his speech which is concerned with *foreign investors*; in relation to Marikana, this infers Lonmin, headquartered in London. Zuma is therefore looking after European interests, specifically the interests of a company built during, and on the inequalities of, colonialism. Similar to figure 14, Zuma is depicted as propagating policies not in the interests of the majority population, not particularly because he is disingenuous or corrupt, but because he has little *agency*. Whereas in figure 14, Zuma was depicted as a puppet of apartheid, here he can be seen as a puppet of *neoliberalism*.

Though at first glance, this cartoon could be seen to support Bond's argument that class has become more important than race, a detailed analysis of this cartoon reveals how representations of class are also racial. What it means to be “black” in South Africa is therefore, not just skin colour but, as Biko (1978) noted, connected to a set of *attitudes*. It is these sets of attitudes which, in this cartoon, distinguish “white” from “black”.

Additionally, in questioning the arguments of the “black elite”, *agency* is attributed to the miners in this cartoon; they are not just accepting the voice of authority, but doubting it, thus identifying Zuma (and therefore the “black elite”) as *untrustworthy* or even *passive* and/or *helpless* depending on the interpretation. Both these terms were, during colonialism, used to distinguish black people from whites. The cartoon can therefore be distinctly seen to be reversing colonial messages and *representations*. 

37
Whist figure 15 explicitly highlights the complicity of the “black elite” in the “problem” of the economy, figures 16 and 17, by black cartoonist Yalo, focus on white capitalists themselves, subtly suggesting either incompetence or complicity on the part of the “black elite” by excluding them. Both cartoons were chosen due to their explicit comment on inequality which can be seen to be manifested in terms of both race and class.

Figure 16 shows a corpulent white man standing by, and in charge of distributing, a vat of
what is presumably gruel. This can be seen to be a metaphor for Lonmin profits (and more widely, the racialised economic inequality) due to the ownership of the gruel being attributed to Lonmin. The much smaller and emaciated black man can be identified as a miner due to the use of the helmet as a bowl. Though the cartoon can stand on its own as an illustration of perceived race and class relations, due to publication time and the explicit reference to Lonmin, Yalo is remarking on Marikana specifically, vindicating the miners' claims that they are not paid a living wage and thus reversing the colonial perspective.

Figure 17 shows a white man in the foreground, who clearly represents Lonmin, and a group of black men standing behind the graves, identifiable through their helmets, attire and sombre expressions, as miners who are mourning the loss of their colleagues. The Lonmin manager in the foreground is shown checking his watch, an attribute which featured in many of the 169 cartoons originally selected, used to symbolise wealth and western values (cartoons 2 and 3; appendix D). This man can be identified as a Lonmin manager due to his apparel (lack of helmet, for instance), skin colour and watch checking.

Similar to figure 15, figure 16 uses explicit and exaggerated binaries in order to establish the “good” from the “bad” and maintain distance between them. The binaries could not be more explicit: white/black, big/small, tall/short, greedy/hungry, uncivilized/polite. The message is clearly anti-colonial in its depiction, criticising Lonmin and, more widely, race and class inequalities. Significantly, the big, uncivilized white man is represented in a way similar to Mason’s “ogre” and/or “predator”; a representation used for depicting black people in order to justify colonial expansion and exploitation (a “civilising mission”). Here it is used to highlight, and therefore resist, exploitation.

Figure 17 also exaggerates binaries to create Manichean discourses and maintain distance between the miners and the Lonmin manager. This distance is captured not only in the representations of specific and opposing actors, but also in the way the cartoon is drawn. Though it has been stated that this is not a primary aim of this paper, on this point it is worth noting how the graves pictorially create this division between the Lonmin manager and the miners in order to increase the distance and therefore strengthen the dualism. Though connecting white people to time and punctuality (as per this cartoon) could be viewed as perpetuating stereotypes about African’s (lack of) punctuality (i.e. “African time”), here it is used to satirise the manager for prioritising time (and therefore money)
above what can be considered more *human* needs. In many ways (most notably the “ogre”
depiction), colonial discourses suppress black majorities by claiming they are *less human*
than white people. Here, this is completely reversed not only by representing the Lonmin
manager as more interested in time and money but by representing the miners as
positively *celestial*; they stand together with their eyes closed (signifying a deep emotional
state); they occupy higher ground than the Lonmin manager (indicating higher *moral*
ground) and the lights from the helmets appear as halos (signifying angelic qualities such
as innocence and non-violence).

Both cartoons focus on unfair working conditions but do this in different ways. In figure 17,
the workers do not even get chance to mourn properly before being pressured back into
working for the company many see as responsible for the unrest. In linking the miners’
struggle to the plight of Oliver Twist, figure 16 equates Lonmin to the grim workhouse in
the Dickens' novel and, by using this intertextual reference, helps to create meaning.

Poverty and class are two major themes Dickens draws upon in many of his novels and
Oliver Twist is no different. In transferring this reference to South Africa, it has become
racialised with “Mr. Bumble” retaining his race, and “Oliver Twist” becoming black. Mr.
Bumble, in the novel and this cartoon, is shown to be rapacious and exploitative (with his
large size denoting his importance in the class structure) whereas Oliver is seen as
innocent and poverty-stricken (his small size denoting his insignificance). The dualism
between *rich and white* and *poor and black* can therefore be said to be very strong and
discernible in this cartoon and as such, can be considered to have reversed colonial
representations to a large extent. As well as reversing colonial discourse, the cartoon can
be seen to have subverted them too; the mother and child discourses of colonialism have
been subverted for that of boss and worker, *i.e.* Britain goes from being the *mother* country
(with all its connotations) to the uncaring employer.

Though this subverts a prominent colonial discourse, by highlighting the exploitation, it
could be seen to be reproducing the idea of the *helpless* African. Yalo avoids this
somewhat by using the Dickens reference, comparing the miner (representative of the
*miners*) to Oliver Twist. In the story, Oliver breaks free from the workhouse and ends up
with a better life. This is not such an explicit representation of agency but certainly
suggests potential agency. Similarly, figure 17 uses the word “victims” which, whilst
portraying the miners in a compassionate way, also reproduces the idea that they are helpless. In showing the black miners sticking together, however, this cartoon also suggests potential agency. Yalo is therefore able to walk a thin line; showing black people as overexploited whilst suggesting this could be changed.

As a final point, it can be noted that both cartoons oppose Fanon when he says: “For the black man there is only one destiny. And it is white” (Fanon 1952 , p.10). By showing white people in such negative terms, and black people conversely, whiteness is not depicted as something which is to be desired but rather something to be avoided and resisted. As a black cartoonist, Yalo can be seen to be furthering the discourse of Steve Biko in suggesting that blackness is a set of attitudes to be proud of but dissimilarly, these cartoons suggest these attitudes are fixed absolutely to the colours white and black and cannot be transcended.

Figure 18 is a “graphic” (respondent 4) cartoon in which a black hand is about to sign a contract with Lonmin. In reality, the contract would not be stained with blood and is showing once again, how cartoons can be used to say something “true” without accurately portraying “reality.”

The black hand represents the miners (and possibly, as highlighted in the first category, black struggle) and the contract represents Lonmin (symbolic of the West, the rich, white
people (Lonmin is headquartered in London) and, our survey suggests, capitalism. The blood symbolises the price paid for the agreement, reinforced by the use of “a bullet instead of a pen” (respondent 4). South Africa, according to most recent statistics, is the most economically unequal country in the world (section 1.1) and this cartoon highlights this inequality in terms of both race and class.

The distinction between race and class are represented subtly in this cartoon as the “problem” is not a person but a company (or even capitalism). This cartoon can therefore be seen to play off existing binaries of rich and white versus poor and black; Lonmin representing the former and the miners, the latter. Representations of race and class are therefore presented as the same divide creating very strong and unforgiving binaries redolent with (though a reversal of) apartheid.

Because of this, it can be discerned that colonial “us” versus “them” binaries have been reversed creating an anti-colonial message; black miners are depicted sympathetically and Lonmin, as the main “problem” (the blood is stained on Lonmin’s contract, suggesting they are to blame). This is supported by the survey where Lonmin was associated with “exploitation” (respondent 3) and the “brutal system of capitalism” (respondent 1). The description of capitalism as “brutal” is also relevant in the sense that the cartoon is using the colonial “ogre” and/or “predator” metaphor to characterise Lonmin. In linking Lonmin (representing capitalism) to violence and brutality, depictions of the “ogre” or “predator”, used in colonial discourses to present black people as inferior and uncivilized, are now not used in reference to a racialised representation of capitalism.

Furthermore, the cartoon shows Lonmin as having bad intentions; not caring that they are responsible for bloodshed and presenting the miners with a contract with no words. The lack of words in the cartoon could represent the fact that the workers cannot read the contract, not because black people are less intelligent (as per colonial discourses) but because Lonmin are using ambiguous and complicated wordings in order to deceive the workers and are therefore represented as apathetic and untrustworthy. This can be seen to be reversing colonial discourses, viz. “[colonial discourses assert that] whites are clever, honest and hard working, while blacks are stupid, untrustworthy and lazy” (Manning 2007, p.528). In connecting Lonmin to the bloodshed, this cartoon has directly challenged many colonial
discourses in terms of how Lonmin are portrayed. However, whilst the cartoon sympathises with the miners, the colonial depiction of black people as being *passive* and/or *helpless* is continued. One participant noted “whoever is signing is being *forced*...” (respondent 5; italics added). Secondly, it can be noted that whilst “the picture is stating that the agreement reached between the trade unions representing the miners and the management of the mines was reached at a high cost of human life” (respondent 6), the cartoon pre-dates the actual agreement, whereby miners secured pay rises of between 11 and 22%, by eleven days. Because of these two reasons, the cartoon (whilst reversing colonial “us” versus “them”) can be said to be reproducing the colonial binary of white people being active agents and black people being *passive* and *helpless*.

The lack of government in this picture could be seen to show, if anything, the *passive* and/or *helpless* nature of government in intervening. Some survey respondents, however, interpreted this as an example of government *corruption*: “[W]hat we have observed with our leaders is that when their term of office come [sic.] to an end, they are appointed into positions of directorship in various mining houses” (respondent 1). Whereas the political “black elite” can be interpreted as “white” in figure 15, here they are not represented at all. As such, whilst corruption is identifiable as a colonial discourse, this cartoon neither reverses nor reproduces this.

**4.22 Micro-Economic Structures**

Whereas many of the 169 cartoons initially presented macro-structural economic elements as the main “problem”, some did situate the problem on a smaller temporal and spatial scale (current national economic structures). Most of these either focussed on or included Trade Unions which were generally depicted in a negative way.
Figure 19 shows a police boss, a mine boss and two union bosses. The mine boss is explicitly representative of several mine bosses given the plural used on the name tag. They are all lining up for admittance into “the cleansing ceremony”; one of the traditional practices of certain ethnic groups in South Africa conducted in the event of a loved one's death to rid the body of bad luck (Setsiba 2012). It is part of the bereavement process, often uses traditional healers and is customarily, as in this cartoon, conducted in the household. In trying to get into the cleansing ceremony, the bosses are trying to appear bereaved with the cartoon suggesting they are anything but.

The blood on their hands depicts all the actors in the cartoon as guilty. With this and the words “we are here for the cleansing ceremony”, it can be interpreted that they want to show bereavement in order to cleanse themselves without feeling any actual regret. The still smoking gun entrenches this portrayal of ostensible mournfulness as it highlights the short time span between the massacre and the funeral; there has not been enough time for genuine self-reflection.

The police commissioner Riah Mangwashi Phiyega is depicted at the front of the line (recognisable due to the name tag and a stud earring she is often seen wearing). Here, she is portrayed in a very masculine way linking violence to men in a way which, though can be linked to Fanon, is outside the delimitations of this paper and will not be analysed.
The message of the cartoon is clearly anti-colonial criticising and caricaturing the economic elite whilst siding with the miners and the families of those killed. This message is strengthened in many ways using race and class. For instance, all the economic actors (the mine boss and the union bosses), are seen as white in skin colour. The mine bosses are, in reality, white and this is made distinctive in the cartoon through the use of the thin lips and (using the stereotype of) the bow tie. The union leaders are, in reality, black but are depicted as white through their skin colour whilst still maintaining some black features such as the thick lips. This, and the fact that they are standing behind the mine boss, suggests (similar to figure 15), that the gap between mimicry and totality can as never be fully realised (Bhabha 1984).

The depiction also conforms to Mason's “mock European”, reversing colonial discourses yet again, by using it in connection to the “black elite”. By showing the union bosses as stout people with cigars, their whiteness and elitism (class and race), and therefore their metaphorical distance from the miners, is increased. This is further reinforced with each actor in the cartoon looking in the opposite direction of Marikana. In connecting whiteness to greed and insincerity (merging the “mock European” with the “ogre”), this cartoon presents whiteness as something the black man wants (Fanon 1952) but as something which replaces blackness with undesirable characteristics.

![Cartoon Image]

*Fig. 20:* “Winners and Losers” by Mark Wiggett, published on 18 August 2012 in *Weekend Post* (regional: Eastern Cape; English).
Figure 20 shows the winners and losers with regard to the Marikana massacre. The “winners” are seen here as NUM (National Union of Mineworkers) and AMCU (Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union). The former being the largest affiliate of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) which was an anti-apartheid force and the latter, is a NUM breakaway faction. There was much finger pointing between the rival unions after Marikana but in this cartoon they are represented as having exactly the same values, only a different name.

Wigget frequently splits up the page in two halves to create and draw attention to specific binaries: Us/them, winners/losers, before/after. This produces cartoons which are clear for the reader but often serve to simplify messages to the point of distortion. The miners, for example, are depicted as the “losers” and shown in a helpless way. Not only does this reproduce colonial discourses, it reduces the experiences of the miners to a single story in a similar way to figures 5 and 6; a story in which they lack any sort of agency despite the fact they were protesting. That being said, the miners in this cartoon are the only ones who can reasonably be considered “us” in the “us” versus “them” dichotomy exhibited in most political cartoons; the only ones a reader can be expected to sympathise with. From a different perspective however, Lonmin are portrayed in a relatively neutral way and could be considered “us” by some people. In previous cartoons, Lonmin (often representative of white capital or the global economic system) are shown as a (or the) perpetrator but here, the company could be considered victims.

Because of this, it can be said that the cartoon does not produce a strong enough “us” versus “them” distinctions to attest as to whether it reverses or reproduces colonial dualisms. It can therefore be seen that the union leaders are “winners” at the expense of South African society (including the individual, state and industrial level notwithstanding race). Additionally, the union leaders are exposed in this cartoon as exploiting the miners (black exploiting black) and the message can therefore neither be seen as colonial nor anti-colonial. However, the representations of race and class are decidedly colonial in a number of ways.

As stated, the miners are depicted as helpless which reproduces a colonial representation. The police are portrayed shooting their guns in a trigger happy manner and can therefore be said to be mindlessly violent reproducing a stereotype used during colonialism to justify
the “civilising mission”. The black union leaders are depicted in a particularly negative and colonial way.

In previous cartoons, the “black elite” is portrayed as white through depicting them as the “mock European” but this cannot be said for figure 19. As such, this cartoon reproduces colonial representations through the use of the black “ogre”. The “ogre” is used to characterise the union leaders as greedy, corrupt and also less human by depicting them only focusing on money.

By showing black people as winners and Lonmin as losers, the cartoon could be said to be partially reversing colonial discourses by highlighting African agency and Lonmin (white) victimhood (*helplessness*) but as the union leaders are seen as corrupt, the miners as helpless and Lonmin as innocent, it can generally be stated that this cartoon continues colonial representations.

4.3 Socio-Cultural – “Problem” Identified as the “Black Elite”

As mentioned in the introduction, only a small number of black people could benefit from the post-apartheid BEE policies, aimed to empower the black population economically. These policies created a so called “black elite”, a group of politicians and/or entrepreneurs. “Worsening class division and social segregation appear [therefore] to be the inexorable outcome of [this] elite transition” (Bond 2006 p.17; original italics) in post-apartheid South Africa. The conduct of the "black elite" in the aftermath of the Marikana massacre sparked controversies and was also critically dealt with in political cartoons. As section 4.22, narratives about the "black elite" are located on a temporally and spatially small scale, analysing individual instead of structural elements.
Figures 21 and 22 deal specifically with Julius Malema’s conduct after the Marikana massacre. Having been expelled as the president of the ANC Youth League in early 2012, his behaviour after Marikana stirred controversies. On the one hand, he sided himself with the mineworkers and functioned as their mouthpiece, seemingly reducing the miners to one voice. On the other hand, Malema taking sides with the protesters was interpreted as a calculated step to give him a stage for a political comeback. Malema, often described as a firebrand politician, pledged long before the Marikana massacre for a nationalisation of mines and vocally addressed the land redistribution issue in post-apartheid South Africa.
He has been (and is) involved in several political controversies, e.g. “Shoot the Boer” song (see section 1.1), and faced several fraud, corruption and money laundering charges.

Dov [David] Fedler, “…one of the [white] veterans of South African political cartooning…” (Mason 2009, p.251) elaborates in his cartoon (figure 21) on Malema’s role in Marikana. Malema, depicted oversized on a platform with a megaphone and a “follow my lead” t-shirt, is pushed by a myriad of people from an area with a shaft tower (clearly representing Marikana) along a crooked road in the direction of “political power”. At the crossroad, the convoy is blocking the “ANC 2012” bus with the party’s leadership heading towards the ANC Mangaung conference in mid-December 2012.

Published one month after the Marikana massacre, Fedler’s cartoon comments on Malema’s active, but ambiguous role in this event. “Right after the shootings, Malema was seen in Marikana, lending workers an ear, generously paying for a memorial service and castigating the administration of President Jacob Zuma for mishandling the Marikana situation” (Essa 2012). Others have accused him of taking advantage of the situation in an opportunist and populist way seeking “instant popularity in the face of the pain of the strikers” (Hartford 2012).

Considering Malema’s involvement in Marikana, the masses in Fedler’s cartoon pushing the juggernaut-esque Malema, encouraged by his slogan “follow my lead”, can be identified as mineworkers. At the crossroad, Malema’s convoy outmaneuvers the ANC officials on their way to the decisive conference where the party leadership (including presidential nomination) will be elected. Fedler's cartoon shows the ANC as having lost support to Malema who did what the ANC failed to do: taking sides with the masses (the protesting workers) fighting for economic equality.

However, the cartoon takes a critical stance on Malema’s role as the mineworkers’ mouthpiece creating a clear binary in terms of class between him, the black political elite, and the working class. Malema is standing on the pedestal with his eyes closed and his back turned to Marikana. The cartoon therefore underlines Malema’s opportunistic intentions, portraying him as being little interested in the real struggle of the miners. Together with his oversized depiction, the megaphone, the wide open mouth and the command on his shirt, he is clearly depicted as a populist and opportunist who has only egoistic intentions.
Through the oversized depiction and the rather arrogant statue-like pose, Malema is portrayed as much superior to the masses. Drawing on Mason’s notion of the colonial “ogre” (in terms of scale), Dov Fedler’s illustration of Malema explicitly revives, as in figure 20, colonial discourses of black people being corrupt and dangerous.

Not taking obvious sides with any of the three parties (neither Malema, ANC nor the miners), the cartoon, through its clear criticism of Malema and the ANC (indifferent to miners with only Mangaung in mind), can only be considered, at a stretch, to tenuously sympathise with the miners who are blinded by a populist and ignored by the government. Therefore, the black political elite (“them”), depicted as negligent, corrupt and dangerous, and the “blinded” masses (“us”) create a dichotomy in terms of class.

However, the working class masses are represented in Fedler’s cartoon with another colonial discourse – the passive black people. Though they are actively pushing Malema, they are depicted as a faceless, homogeneous mass with little agency, unquestioningly following populist narratives. Additionally, they are armed with sticks and, depicted as an “angry mob”, furthering colonial discourses of black people being dangerous and violent.

Conversely to most of the previously analysed cartoons, Dov Fedler reproduces colonial discourses on race, such as black people as “the ogre” and/or corrupt and dangerous. Other “problems” around the Marikana massacre – history or economy – analysed in the previous two sections of this paper, are completely disregarded by him in this cartoon. It is interesting to note that Fedler, already in his 70s, used to draw during apartheid for newspapers aimed at white readership. Mason posits that Dov Fedler and others “had to adapt to a very different readership” (2009, p.251) after the political transition in 1994. Another possible explanation for the reproduction of colonial stereotypes in his cartoon could be the self-definition of The Mercury, the newspaper having published figure 21. Angela Quintal, the editor of The Mercury, describes the newspaper, having “...a 157-year-old pedigree, it appeals to upmarket and successful people across the province [KwaZulu-Natal], as well as ambitious, upwardly mobile and aspirational residents” (Quintal 2012). The newspaper’s clear focus on the South African elite offers another possible explanation for the continuation of colonial narratives on race.

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6 Another example of Fedler depicting the black masses as violent, dangerous and mindless can be found in appendix D (cartoon 1). There, Fedler portrays the “black mob” threaten Mandela’s legacy and his notion of the “rainbow society”.

50
Julius Malema’s political opportunism and populism in the aftermath of the Marikana massacre is in some ways depicted similarly to figure 21. Most notably, Marikana is used as a background which here is being used to stage his political comeback (“Mine Kumberk”). Again, Malema’s back is turned to Marikana, implying that he has egoistic intentions and is deliberately using the moment for his own benefit. The wordplay in his slogan “Mine Kumberk” also suggests that the mining massacre is only used by him for regaining political power and not in the interests of the miners themselves. The inscription “Extracting the ore of opportunity from the vast and infinite Zuma leadership gap”, though also criticising the president’s poor handling of the Marikana massacre, further underlines Malema’s populism and shows how “...populist mobilization forces a clear line between “the people” and those who oppose their interests” (Comaroff 2011, p.104).

Brandan portrays Malema in his cartoon, published shortly after the massacre, as a right-wing nationalist with strong allusions to Adolf Hitler and the Nazi-era; Malema is dressed in a military coat with an “Anti-Zuma” patch on his heart and, in a Heil Hitler-like salute pose, holds a megaphone as a gun in his right hand. This depiction corresponds with critics calling him a “demagogue”. In a press release, the National Education Health & Allied Workers’ Union (NEHAWU) explicitly compared Malema to a Nazi:

“There is nothing new in his Nazi tactics of preying on the vulnerability of the poor and inventing a bogeymen for political ends. All fascists always opportunistically prey on the hungry and jobless in order to prop up their own political careers.” (NEHAWU 2012)

Notwithstanding, his populist rhetoric in Marikana (e.g. “The British are making money out of this mine...It is not the British who were killed. It is our black brothers” (Malema quoted in Chothia 2012)) brought him a lot of support and popularity amongst the working class. The political analyst William Gumede adds that

 “[a]s far as a miner living in a shack is concerned, Mr Malema speaks truth to power. When he talks of nationalisation [of mines], it gives them the hope that they will see some benefit from the riches of South Africa” (Gumede quoted in Chothia 2012).
Although “Malema's popularity, according to analysts, illuminates the working class's hunger for representation in a society with gross inequality and lingering racial animosity” (Essa 2012), issues of class are also evident in Brandan's cartoon. Malema, embodying the black political elite, is pictured alone on a podium overtopping a crowd of faceless mineworkers and additionally equipped with a watch (a recurring symbol for Malema's wealth in other cartoons; see appendix D, cartoons 2 and 3). His discrepant position in the cartoon creates clear class binaries between the elite (“them”) and the working class (“us”).

Malema’s depiction in Brandan's cartoon as Hitler exposes him as a populist demagogue and possibly comparing him to white minority rule under apartheid. Although it is contested whether (and how) the racial ideology of apartheid was influenced by Nazi-Germany, links between Hendrik F. Verwoerd, the architect of apartheid, are drawn to Adolf Hitler: “Verwoerd was an eager fellow traveller of his white supremacist brethren in Europe. H.F. Verwoerd was not a Nazi in fact, but he was in spirit” (Goodman & Weinberg 1999, 146). The comparison implies that Malema, the "black elite", is “white”. His “ogre”-like depiction (scale, facial expression, megaphone as a gun) furthers these binaries by attributing Mason's notion of the colonial black “ogre” to the “white” Malema. Through depicting “white” Malema as dangerous, Brandan can therefore be seen to be reversing colonial representations. Through heavily satirising “white” populist Malema, this cartoon represents the miners as “us” but, in a way similar to figure 21, colonial discourses of Africans being helpless are reproduced.

Fig. 23: “The Champion of the Poor” by Niël van Vuuren, published on 14 September 2012 in Beeld (national; Afrikaans).

Miner: “Julius, we came to fetch the cheese.” (our translation)
While figures 21 and 22 describe the expelled ANCYL leader Julius Malema, representative of the "black elite", as a political opportunist and populist, figure 23 emphasises a different aspect of Malema's controversial conduct in South Africa around the events in Marikana.

Respondent 6 notes that van Vuuren's cartoon “presents an extreme juxtaposition of the thrifty luxurious life of [South African] politicians...and the reality of the poor”. This juxtaposition is expressed in many ways and on different levels in the cartoon ironically named “The Champion of the Poor”. It is divided into two diametrically opposed halves. While the left part depicts Malema and a fellow representative of the "black elite" in a decadent and extravagant setting in Sandton, an affluent suburb of Johannesburg, the right presents an unemployed (“werkloos”) mineworker's family who came “to collect what was promised (the “cheese”, metaphor for wealth) to them from a leadership that seems ignorant to their struggle” (respondent 6).

The contrasts, revealing discourses of race and class (as in figure 16), could barely be more explicit. The "black elite" is depicted dining on a golden framed podium in a luxurious setting. Wine, cigars, sushi and designer clothes clearly distinguish them in terms of class from the casually dressed working class family. The fact that the "black elite", especially Malema, is portrayed with a much lighter complexion than the working class, draws on issues of race. The "black elite" is presented as less black (or “whiter”) than the ordinary black South African. Negative undesirable character traits, such as indifference, ignorance, arrogance and hypocrisy are therefore attributed to “whiteness” in van Vuuren's cartoon. Malema, although claiming to represent the poor, was often accused in media and in the web survey of not practising what he preaches (respondents 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7). BBC journalist Chothia comments:

“He moves with ease between the two groups, toyi-toying (a revolutionary dance popularised during the anti-apartheid struggle) at rallies in shack settlements, before slipping away to leafy suburbs for all-night parties with the nouveau riche.” (Chothia 2012)

The cartoon can therefore be said to reflect broader media norms (Greenberg 2002). His depiction of living a white “affluent lifestyle” (respondent 4) underlines the racial tensions in
South Africa. His “whiteness”, in complexion and behaviour, can be interpreted as Mason’s “mock European”\(^7\). By portraying the “white” “black elite” as “them”, van Vuuren reverses, in his cartoon, the colonial representations of black people. His cartoon clearly sympathises with the black working class (“us”) by “simply display[ing] the realities and inequalities that we see in life” (respondent 8). Through its exaggeration, it is evidenced in this cartoon how race and class are inevitably intertwined and shows how representations of class, largely follow racial lines allowing for clear binaries to be made.

Not only has the colonial message been reversed by doing this, so too have the representations, with the black miners being attributed with some level of agency; the black mineworker, with one foot on the golden stair, came to demand his promised share and exposes the “white” Malema as hypocrite.

\(^7\) It is interesting to note, that from researcher experience in South Africa, black people “behaving” like whites, e.g. explicitly displaying their wealth, are colloquially called in setswana (one of the eleven official languages) “lekgoa”, a word used to describe a “white person”. Dipaha (2010) confirms this by saying that “the black middle-class [or elite] are also referred to as Makgoa (the plural form of Lekgoa)”.

54
5. Conclusions

Due to the lack of frameworks available in analysing political cartoons, this paper applied Panofsky's iconography to a medium it was not designed to analyse. However, the use of (a modified version of) iconography has, throughout this paper, shown potential in analysing cartoons as a visual discourse. The main limitation of this method is its disregard for textual elements which are important in creating meaning in most political cartoons. This, therefore, was included in all three steps. Additionally, another step was added allowing similarities and differences between the cartoons to be drawn out and commented upon.

***

The cartoons presented three main, partially overlapping discourses about Marikana which demonstrate the importance of, and complex relationship between, race and class in contemporary South Africa; historical (“problem” rooted in apartheid), economical (“problem” linked to post-apartheid neoliberal structures) and socio-cultural (“problem” identified as the “black elite”).

“Us” versus “them” discourses have been found to be central to many political cartoons and the figure below, though not used in the analysis, exemplifies these binaries of race and class in explicit terms:

![Fig. 24: Unknown title by Niël van Vuuren, published on 12 October 2012 in Beeld (national: 5/9 provinces; Afrikaans).]

“Checkmate!” (our translation)
Binaries, such as the ones in figure 24, are used in political cartoons to create a Manichaean discourse which clearly posits who or what is the “problem” and who are the “victims”. Because of this, political cartoons can often lack a nuance that can be achieved in writing, leaving cartoons often more open to controversy. This paper sought to establish which “us” versus “them” messages are being expressed, how race and class representations are used in creating this dichotomy and how these representations relate to colonial discourses.

The analysis shows that whilst colonial discourses presented white people as “us” and black people as “them”, most cartoons have reversed this showing that race is still a prominent feature in contemporary South African discourses. Having said this, the cartoons which operate on a smaller temporal and spatial scale (sections 4.22 and 4.3) are more ambiguous, with only figure 23 exhibiting a strong “us” versus “them” dualism as one of the few cartoons which didn't just show the miners as one homogeneous group.

Cartoons can be said to “reflect real life stories, especially in politics, and thereby reinforcing our hard earned freedom of speech” (respondent 2). Whilst it is true that cartoons reflect real stories, the way they are represented and contextualised concerns the perspective of reality the cartoonist has, perhaps largely shared by the specific readership of a particular newspaper.

Firstly, it can be stated that the cartoons in this paper, to a large extent, (re)produce relatively consistent anti-colonial messages in all three categories. Figures 20 and 21 however, were interpreted as reproducing colonial narratives. The white cartoonists who drew these, Mark Wigget and Dov Fedler, both lived and worked during apartheid and show how colonial narratives can still be reproduced in post-apartheid South Africa. This is not to say that all white cartoonists reproduce colonial narratives. Most cartoonists in South Africa are white (as this paper reflects) and, whilst acknowledging there are exceptions, the general conclusion is that political cartoons with regard to Marikana largely reverse colonial discourses.

Whilst the cartoons therefore generally depict poor black people as “us” and rich white people as “them” (as per Mbeki’s speech), with regard to race and class, the emergence of a “black elite” has made the distinction problematic. Whilst figures 14 and 15 produce a
Bhabhaian hierarchy where the distance between the black masses and Zuma is shorter than the distance between them and Verwoerd or white capitalists (respectively), generally, the “black elite” are seen as “them” (rich and “white”). In most of the cartoons, the once colonial representation of black people as “mock European” is therefore utilised for the “black elite” to create and exaggerate this distinction. The “mock European” not only represents a discourse which has been reversed, but used in a different way. The cartoons suggested that black people can be “uncivilised”, often by being “materialistic” (especially figure 23), through the connection to being white. Representations of class, therefore, can be seen to have developed along racial lines. This representation can be seen as a continuation of Steve Biko’s discourse during the apartheid struggle where being “black” was not about skin pigmentation, but rather a set of character traits.

The cartoons which link Marikana to apartheid (section 4.1) reverse colonial discourses (as already established in media) to further binaries relevant to the massacre. In comparing the black miners to the struggle against apartheid, the first category can be seen to be creating a discourse whereby the miners (“us”) represent a nation wide struggle against structural forces (“them”). This can be linked to Steve Biko, who in “We Blacks” (1978) used the “...black male as an emblematic figure for the troubles and struggle of all black people...” (Editorial 2003, p.130). Hence the miners’ concerns and struggles are emblematic for the concerns and struggles of South African society in general.

In terms of class, the political cartoons in this section subvert the apartheid binary of white versus black. Figure 14 shows Zuma as consulting Verwoerd and suggesting the use of laws created during apartheid. The political elite are therefore depicted as puppets of apartheid. Figure 13, as opposed to depicting the political “black elite” as puppets, shows them as more passive and helpless by excluding them completely but including Lonmin. These cartoons therefore position the political “black elite” with the black masses by suggesting they too, are subject to structural forces.

In the second category, economical, the racial discourse remains similar, reversing colonial representations of “us” versus “them”. White dominance (“them”) and black oppression (“us”) are represented in these cartoons by representations of white capitalists (mainly associated to Lonmin) versus the miners. Whereas colonial discourses portrayed white people as “more human” and black people as “less human”, the reverse can be seen to be
true in these cartoons. White people are portrayed as “less human” (even “ogres”) through their concern over time and money whereas black people are presented as “more human” by showing greater concern over the deaths of their colleagues than the financial implications. The white capitalists are generally depicted as “ogre/predators” in this section, not through depicting them as primitive (as in colonial discourses), but in depicting them as less caring and exploitative. Representations of the “black elite” use both “ogre”, in terms of the union leaders (figure 20) and “mock European”, for Zuma (figure 15); both not understanding, or responding, to the concerns of the miners. Generally the “blackness” of both were removed but in figure 20, this was not done and this cartoon can then be said to be furthering colonial representations of black people as “corrupt”.

It is the third and final category, where the problematic binary between race and class becomes most explicit. Julius Malema is depicted as the “ogre” (figures 21 and 22) and the “mock European” (figure 23) to create these “us” versus “them” binaries and criticise either his opportunism and populism (“ogre”) and/or extravagant lifestyle (“mock European”). In colonial times, black people were portrayed as “mock Europeans” in order to entrench colonialism; black people could become nearly, but never totally, European, thus maintaining a subordinate position (Bhabha 1984). In figure 23, the “mock European” is being used in a different way and therefore cannot, in itself, be said to be a colonial discourse (indeed linking “corruption” to white people reverses colonial discourses). It does, however have a knock on effect, reproducing colonial discourses in terms of agency.

The “black elite” in this category, are depicted as having more agency by choosing to be more interested in power and/or money than the people, allowing the cartoonist to attack their characters more explicitly. Conversely, the miners in this section can be seen as having little or no agency, furthering the colonial discourse that black people are “passive” or “helpless” and white people (the “black elite”) are “active”; certainly the miners in figures 21 and 22 are depicted as blindly following Malema.

This is different to how black people are represented in the economical category where some level of agency can be evidenced in over half the cartoons. Again this is different from the first category, where all black people (notwithstanding their socio-economic status) are represented as “helpless”. A conclusion of this paper is therefore, that whilst the core messages of the political cartoons tend to be anti-colonial (i.e. black miners as “us”),
the representations can still be (and often are) colonial.

Political cartoons about the Marikana massacre in mainstream newspapers can be seen throughout this paper to represent race and class inequalities in various ways. Whilst a reversal of “us” versus “them” can be identified, the representations of race do often continue some colonial representations; most notably, that black people are “passive” and/or “helpless”. By largely depicting the “black elite” as white (“mock Europeans”), the representations of class, can be seen to have largely developed along racial lines, allowing cartoons to reproduce binaries which, though now reversed, have existed since colonisation.

It can not be overlooked that many cartoonists remain white despite this being a racial minority. Though we can recognise the mainly reversed colonial discourses in political cartoons and the fact that black cartoonists are emerging, this white over-representation in itself demonstrates the continuing race and class inequalities in South Africa. As the demographics of political cartoonists in South Africa continue to change (along with other variables), with black and younger cartoonists beginning to publish, the binaries and representations of race and class present in cartoons will also change and be relevant for future postcolonial research.
6. Bibliography


Appendix A

Project Information Sheet sent to web survey respondents:

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**Project Information Sheet**

This study has been subjected to ethical review assessment by Aalborg University. All data will be collected and stored in accordance with The Act on Processing of Personal Data (Act No. 429 of May 2000).

You are invited to participate in a semester project concerning political cartoons related to the miners’ strikes and the Marikana massacre in South African newspapers. Before deciding whether or not to take part, feel free to read the following information and direct any further questions to either David Ashby or Waldemar Diener (emails below).

**Who’s Project?**
Researchers: David Ashby dashby12@student.aau.dk
Waldemar Diener wdiene12@student.aau.dk

Supervisor: Assistant Prof. Susi Meret Meret@cgs.aau.dk

**Title of our Project**
How have political cartoons around the Marikana massacre (16/08/2012) in mainstream South African newspapers framed discourses about race, class and inequality in the post-apartheid “rainbow society”?

**Aim of our Project**
- To analyze the significance and meaning of cartoons.
- To analyze different ways Marikana is being understood.

**Why you have been chosen?**
As a native of South Africa, you are a potential target for these cartoons and the meanings you get from them are important in analyzing how cartoons are understood.

**What are you being asked to do?**
You are being asked to fill out a short survey. You will be shown three cartoons which were published in South African newspapers and asked for thoughts on them. Due to time constraints, you are asked to send the completed survey back by 03/12/2012. You have the right to not answer and can withdraw your consent up to the 07/12/2012 without giving a reason.

**What happens to the data?**
The surveys will be added as an appendix to the project *anonymously*. They will be used to include local perspectives on political cartoons in a report which intends to analyze the significance and meaning of cartoons.

**Will the project be published?**
Our project will be kept for the records of Aalborg University and available in the university’s library. Your identity in this publication will remain confidential. On request, you may be sent an electronic copy of the project.

To withdraw consent, request a copy of the final project or ask any questions, please contact either David or Waldemar on one of the email addresses given above.

*subject to amendment at any time.*
Appendix B


1. Do you take any notice of political cartoons in newspapers?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Sometimes

2. In your view, how influential are political cartoons?
   - Very influential
   - Influential
   - Neutral
   - Not so influential
   - Not at all influential
Political Cartoons about the Marikana Massacre

'A Deal Signed in Blood' by Jerm, published on 07 September 2012 in 'The New Age'

3. In a couple of sentences, what is your interpretation of this cartoon? Do you agree with the messages of this cartoon? Please give reasons for your answer.

Political Cartoons about the Marikana Massacre

'The Champion of the Poor' by Niel van Vuuren, published on 14 September 2012 in 'Beeld'

4. In a couple of sentences, what is your interpretation of this cartoon? Do you agree with the messages of this cartoon? Please give reasons for your answer.
Political Cartoons about the Marikana Massacre

"President Zuma's Secret Consultant" by Brandan, published on 16 September 2012 in 'Weekend Argus'

5. In a couple of sentences, what is your interpretation of this cartoon? Do you agree with the messages of this cartoon? Please give reasons for your answer.

Political Cartoons about the Marikana Massacre

6. How does the messages of the three cartoons fit to discussions on the Marikana massacre? (tick as many as you wish)

☐ I heard similar discussions on TV
☐ I heard similar discussions on the radio
☐ I read/overheard similar discussions on the internet
☐ I read similar discussions in newspapers
☐ I had similar discussions with friends/family/colleagues
☐ I have overheard similar discussions
Other (please specify)

Political Cartoons about the Marikana Massacre

7. Thank you very much for your participation. Please state your name here (this information will be treated confidentially) and give extra comments if you wish...

Best Regards,
Dave and Waldemar
## Appendix C

Web Survey respondents:

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<th>Respondent</th>
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<td>Local politician. Academic.</td>
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<td>None official</td>
<td>Black</td>
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<td>Black</td>
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<td>Black</td>
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<td>Black</td>
<td>Prof. at UNISA</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Appendix D

Cartoons:

**Cartoon 1:** "Crashing the Madiba Legacy" by Dov Fedler, published on 10 September 2012 in Cape Times.

<http://africartoons.com/cartoon/8825?cartoonist=10>

**Cartoon 2:** "Malema Drills Zuma" by Niël van Vuuren, published on 06 September 2012 in Beeld.

<http://africartoons.com/cartoon/8686?cartoonist=78>
Cartoon 3: "A Short Run For Freedom" by Zapiro, published on 25 September 2012 in *The Times*.