The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.
Cape of German Hopes – The Dissertation Paper

A Reflective Essay supporting the
Documentary Film 'Cape of German Hopes'
with special references from the director's and editor's perspective

By

Anna Sacco

SCCANN001

A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of
the degree of

MASTERS IN MEDIA THEORY AND PRACTICE

Centre for Film and Media Studies
Faculty of the Humanities
University of Cape Town
2011

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It
is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the
work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature: __________________________________________ Date: __________
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract..........................................................................................................................................................1

1. Introduction..............................................................................................................................................2

2. Theoretical Framework ..........................................................................................................................4

3. The Documentary Film 'Cape of German Hopes'.................................................................9
   3.1. The Making of the Documentary.................................................................................................9
   3.1.1. Preproduction Period.............................................................................................................9
   3.1.2. Shooting Period..................................................................................................................16
   3.1.3. Post-Production Period........................................................................................................17
   3.2. The Examination of the Documentary ......................................................................................21
   3.3. Problems and Limitations........................................................................................................34
   3.4. Promoting the Documentary ..................................................................................................35

4. Conclusion............................................................................................................................................37

Appendix I: The Poem................................................................................................................................38
Appendix II: The German Song..............................................................................................................39
Appendix III: Survey & Questionnaire..................................................................................................40

Bibliography..............................................................................................................................................42

Documentary Film List................................................................................................................................44
ABSTRACT

Documentary film, in the words of Linda Williams, always has the receding goal of finding “some form of truth”. Yet documentary film as an art also blurs the notions of fact and fiction and runs the risk to construct reality rather than merely show it. This dissertation paper is a Reflective Essay supporting the documentary film 'Cape of German Hopes' and aims, with special references from the director's and editor's perspective, to back up the documentary by explaining more in depth about the motivation, goals and achievements of the film.

The documentary is a journey that explores life experiences of German families and people of German heritage who settled in Cape Town. It uncovers how they seek to find a balance between their cultural heritage and the culture they are living in. In selected scenes, the paper illustrates how the protagonists on the one hand open up to the South African culture, but on the other still manage to keep their typical 'Germanness'.

As migration increases around the world, the studies of its cultural consequences concern more and more people. Exploring cultural aspects of other social groups implies dealing with anthropological terms like identity, transnationalism and acculturation. But it is difficult to define, what shows itself only in full play. Consequently, the documentary film wants to serve not only the German community in Cape Town, but also function as a blueprint for other immigration groups living all over the world.
1. Introduction

“Ex Africa semper aliquid novi.”
(Pliny the Elder)

Human beings always have had a strong interest for the lives of others. The more distant and exotic the country, the juicer and more exciting the news out of it. The drive to know new things pushed the boundaries further and further. Images and messages from Africa especially have thrilled and amazed people from the Western world. Many issues have come to light since the days of the first German Africa explorer Prof. Dr. Heinrich Barth who started the European academic study on African history in the middle of the 19th century. In those days new insights were difficult to spread. Today, with the possibilities of new media, information is fast and easily accessible. Parallel to the acceleration of the exchange and the increase in mobility, the interest in accounts of other peoples' lives on distant places grew. With the revolutionary technical invention of motion pictures, storytelling became a new dimension.

This Reflective Essay is supporting the documentary film 'Cape of German Hopes' which deals with German culture in Cape Town. Though it is a cultural topic, it is not an anthropological work. But as the film is exploring the life world of other people, it has to include necessarily anthropological elements. Writing about issues like identity, cultural heritage, transnationalism and acculturation is not an easy task. Dealing with it on film is an even bigger challenge. Hence, this paper aims to back up the documentary by explaining more in depth motivation, aims and achievements of the film.

The documentary film 'Cape of German Hopes' is a journey which explores German culture in Cape Town. It looks into the life of several German families or people of German heritage in order to understand how they deal with being part in two so remarkably distinctive countries. The five central characters/couples and the places where they live, work and play, form the focus of the story and guide the audience to an understanding of the bigger German network. The film uncovers how many Germans seek to open up to an African culture while keeping their typical 'Germanness'. It also
explores the distinctive differences and the surprisingly similar historical parallels between Germany and South Africa.

Chapter two provides a theoretical framework to the documentary. After a brief outline which helps in embedding the genre of documentary into the history of films, key notions such as 'transnationalism', 'identity' and 'acculturation' are addressed.

A full description of the making of the documentary will be found in chapter 3.1. It explains the process of developing the idea in the preproduction period and ends with reflections on the editing process during the post-production period. Chapter 3.2. deals with a detailed examination of the different acts of the documentary. It explains the meaning and reason behind selected key scenes and interprets poem as well as music as important elements of the narrative storytelling.

Chapter three ends with reflections about problems and limitations of the production. Additionally, a sample of ideas of how to promote the documentary is provided.

The conclusion finally reflects on the achievements of the documentary and sums up its most important findings.
2. Theoretical Framework

“Reality television is not the end of civilisation as we know it; it is civilisation as we know it.”

(Germaine Greet)

Human beings have always had a special fascination for 'reality-based' programmes like television news, documentaries or reality TV. Documentary films already date back to the beginning of filmmaking at the end of the nineteenth century. The first short films by the Lumière brothers such as 'Workers Leaving a Factory' (1895) or 'Train Arriving at a Station' ([www.filmsite.org](http://www.filmsite.org)) used film simply to record reality, i.e. to 'document' it. Though the fictional branch of filmmaking, which developed into the feature films of Hollywood, enjoyed bigger commercial popularity, the more 'serious' documentary film cannot be thought away from the stage any more (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler, 2005). The documentary genre changed over the course of the years, producing more provocative films like Michael Moore's 'Bowling for Columbine' (2002) or more experimental ones like Zina Saro-Wiwa's 'This is my Africa' (2010). Yet, they would all remain true to the original meaning of the Latin word 'doceo' from were 'documentary' derives: the mission to warn or advise and raise awareness, in one way or the other, about important issues in the world.

Good documentaries engage the audiences on more than just one level. Apart from the immediate story plot and the characters, there is also a deeper layer, called theme in literary terms. A theme is the “general underlying subject of a specific story, a recurring idea that often illuminates an aspect of the human condition” (Bernard, 2003). The documentary 'Cape of German Hopes' tells an overarching story of German life experiences at the Cape. The underlying themes include double-identity, integration and how to keep your cultural heritage when living in a foreign country. It also unpacks sensitive issues like belonging and acculturation.

**Academic context**

One of the biggest global challenges of our time is to comprehend how groups from different cultural and social backgrounds can live peacefully together within the same
space. In this regard it is not only crucial to increase research in the field of human migration and integration, but also to provide cultural awareness in order to generate a greater understanding for each other.

The phenomenon of globalization has changed the nature of migration. As a result of new, more affordable and more accessible technologies which helped increase mobility, more and more people will not live their whole life in the country of their birth (Gaude, 2004). With the Internet and its communication systems it is easy to keep in touch with one's home country even when living on another continent. Social and geographical spaces do not need to be congruent any-more and immigrants can now claim more than one home country. The multiple connections of immigrants to both country of origin and host society, implies the use of the term 'transnationalism'. Also the protagonists of 'Cape of German Hopes' maintain intensive ties with South Africa and Germany, calling home 'here' and 'there'.

Closely linked to the concept of 'transnationalism' is the concept of 'identity':

"This is so, because, on the one hand, many peoples' transnational networks are grounded upon the perception that they share some form of common identity, often based upon a place of origin and the cultural and linguistic traits associated with it. […] On the other hand, […] the identities of specific individuals and groups of people are negotiated within social worlds than span more than one place." (Vertoc, 2001)

Transnational connections do not only affect how collective identities are being constructed, maintained and negotiated, but also make a significant impact on the second generation. The children of immigrants are born with strong ties to a cultural heritage of the country that they have never or perhaps only briefly been in touch with. In the documentary this is exemplified by an interviewee who is the daughter of a (mixed-race) South African-German couple. Although she declares to feel more South-African than German, she struggles with definitions about her identity. Her – and also other interviewees' - attitudes towards the homeland was often an ambivalent combination of distancing and yearning which is typical for immigrants (Shuval, 2002).

1 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transnationalism
Another theoretical framework applicable to the documentary could be 'acculturation'. It implies a fourfold classification describing how individuals respond to new cultural contexts: assimilation is the strategy where the individual does not maintain any contacts with his or her original culture, but seeks interaction only with the host society. Separation occurs when the individual does not pursue any contact at all and only holds on his/her original culture. The integration strategy implies an interest in preserving home ties, but also a strong involvement in the host culture. In contrast, marginalization means that the individual has lost both its contacts. This categorization suggests a linear process, but as Bhatia & Ram (2009) rightly point out various structural and sociological forces can easily influence an immigrant's journey through acculturation. Also various scenes about discrimination in 'Cape of German Hopes' reflect that immigrants or their children experience different - and sometimes changing - psychological positions of feeling assimilated, separated, marginalized or integrated. As the documentary deals with many diverse elements of the human condition, finding only one theoretical approach to frame it is difficult.

The documentary concludes on this topic with Bhatia & Ram (2009) on the note that:

"[A]cculturation is process that involves continuous, contested, negotiations that will forever be in progress as an immigrant grapples with his/her place in the larger structures of the history, culture, and politics."

**Background on Germans in Cape Town**

"Caput Bonae Spei Hodiernum", a scripture published at Nuremberg, Germany in 1719, was the only writing in respect of South Africa for the whole German-, Dutch-, English- and French-speaking world for half a century (Reinhardt, 1952). Its writer, rector Peter Kolb, was supposed to live at the Cape for a research period of three years. He stayed longer.

Throughout history, there were many Germans like Peter who could not resist the pull-factors of the Cape’s natural beauty: at the end of the eighteenth century more than half of the white population of the Cape was of German heritage (De Kadt, 2002). These Germans of the first generation were mostly men who soon merged into the South
African population (Schnell, 1954). Later, German-speaking settlers would start to create their own schools and churches, and express “very clearly the determination to distance itself from other settlers and to remain 'German'” (De Kadt, 2002). Cape Town, situated at the peak of the 'rainbow nation' South Africa, is a melting pot for many diverse cultures. The Germans amongst them are very dominant, not only due to their considerable number (between 20,000 and 30,000, plus an increasing number of 'swallows', Gaude, 2004), but also because of their distinctive 'Germanness'. The German cachet which stands for quality is internationally known and popular also in Cape Town. But the German pragmatic mentality bears a possible conflict regarding the nonchalance of South Africa's 'mother city'.

Exploring this social group in particular at the Cape promises not only to be highly fascinating, but has, in my case, also a personal motivation which will be explained more fully in Chapter Three.

Ethical considerations
Sergej Eisenstein argued that “A good film deals with the truth, not with the reality.” Many filmmakers think that some staging is legitimate if it serves the larger purpose of presenting information (Bordewell & Thompson, 2010). We know that even Lumière had his workers inside the factory instructed to wait there until he would start shooting. By just walking past the camera without acknowledging it, the real event was already distorted. An ethical question about documentary films arises from that: Do they 'show' reality or do they 'construct' it?

Bernard (2003) notes that

“The power of documentaries comes from their veracity, and it's undermined if people discover that in the interest of a compelling argument, they've been misled.”

The discussion is a difficult one, but something is certain: all kinds of writers do have some sort of social responsibility to inform and inspire humankind without deliberately misinterpreting the facts (Beker, 2004).
When I did the documentary about Germans in Cape Town, my intention was to create a better understanding for the German society and mentality. Cape Town is the home of many different cultures and subcultures. This enriches the city on the one hand; but on the other, this also leads to an even bigger cultural fragmentation. With my film, I wanted to contribute to the cultural exchange and generate a mutual understanding.

In general, the making of the documentary was influenced by Jill Godmilow’s (1997) argument that

“So good filmmaking (responsible filmmaking) should always be good art, good education of the mind.”
3. The Documentary Film 'Cape of German Hopes'

3.1. The Making of the Documentary Film

“At its most basic, a story has a beginning, middle, and end.”

(Bernard, 2003)

What sounds obvious to most of us can easily be lost in the heat of the documentary filmmaking. Also to me, this simple clarification was most valuable and served as a guideline throughout the whole film making process.

3.1.1. Preproduction Period

The idea

In August 2010, I first had the idea to make a documentary film about German expatriates in South Africa. Due to practical and logistic reasons, it quickly became clear for me that focusing specifically on the “little German colony” at the Cape would be a good idea. What grabbed me most about this topic was, in a nutshell, the question of how Germans manage to make a foreign country their home without losing their German identity as their strong point of reference.

During my research, I was surprised by the overwhelming number of Germans, whose characteristics are known for being organized and well-structured, that had decided to settle in South Africa. South Africa, with its more laid-back mentality, does not seem to be the perfect place to satisfy German aspirations and needs. And on the other hand, the 'typical' German behaviour, especially with its perfectionism, is often misunderstood as pessimism. It seemed to me, that these contradictions could only amount to problematic and conflicted situations. Due to my Italian upbringing in a German environment, I was especially sensitive to this possible clash of life and work attitudes. I have been torn between two life philosophies for my entire life, which in its most simple form could be described as: “Working for a living” versus “Living for work”. As I experienced many times as an Italian living in Germany, “la dolce vita” and strict
discipline rarely go together. Now I was curious to explore how German-South Africans would reconcile this difference in mentalities.

Moreover, I wanted to illustrate that Germans living abroad would present themselves as reluctant to fully integrate into their adopted society. Rather, I set out to show that they would form an insular interconnected German community in the Cape. As a foreigner living in Germany, this was especially important to me. For many years Germany refused the idea of being an immigrant country itself. By failing to integrate incoming populations, they ignored pressing immigration concerns. Going in depth into this discussion, would go beyond the scope of this paper, but let me mention one persisting point from this discussion about integration of foreigners in Germany: it is believed that cultural conflicts emerge from the fact that foreigners are not prepared to integrate fully into the German society.\(^2\) It was somehow expected, that foreigners should accept the German culture as the guiding culture (‘Leitkultur’), regardless of their background. Immigrants, who wanted the possibility to climb the social ladder, had to adapt to German society. Efforts to treasure the original foreign culture and tradition were and still are confronted with the accusation of forming a 'parallel society' within the German society. But as Bhatia & Ram (2009) point out:

“[…] it is simplistic to assume that the burden of acculturation whether successful, failed, or reversed, and reworked lies primarily with the individual.”

Also in Cape Town, I found that Germans would manage to live in a largely interconnected 'bubble' within the 'mother city'. But my intention was not to judge the German community in Cape Town. To the contrary, I wanted to show that forming a network of confidence and acquaintances with fellow countrymen is a cultural phenomenon that happens with every immigration group and in every immigration country. Especially when living abroad, seeking your compatriots' company helps to reconnect and keep in touch with your original country. In this way, one's own cultural heritage becomes the constant in an increasingly mobile society.

\(^2\) See Vertoc (2001): “Among other issues currently raised in this filed, one view holds that transnational ties weaken immigrants' integration in the receiving country.”
My goal was to take the German audience along with me on this journey of exploring the German community in Cape Town. But consequently, the documentary film would also function as a blue print for other foreign cultures living all over the world.

**Putting a team together**

To make a good documentary is impossible on your own – and even if it was, I would prefer working with a team. For me it is important that different backgrounds come together over a project because in discussing issues and exchanging opinions many new and good ideas naturally come up. Seeing the same things from a variety of eyes is not only productive but also highly fascinating on an anthropological level. I received my first Master's degree in Philosophy. I have always valued eclectic approaches that encourage collaboration in creating and illustrating 'the bigger picture'.

My study peer and friend, Lemay Llorente Quesada, joined the project, as producer and responsible person for camera work, almost immediately. I was happy with her decision to make the film to her Masters Creative Production as well. This would mean not only to share the responsibility of the making of the documentary, but also a more personal involvement and dedication from her side from which the project would only benefit. Due to different personal relationships and connections to Germans in South Africa and elsewhere, Lemay has a basic understanding of the German way of thinking and behaving. As a young Cuban immigrant to the United States of America, she also shared the experience of immigration with all its issues and benefits. This was valuable for me for two reasons: first, it is important to have a non-German view on the topic in order to make the documentary also interesting to audiences outside the German community. Second, her migration background would help to shape the documentary in a way that would make it applicable for other cultures living in foreign countries all over the world.

I was very pleased to gain Sorrel Adams as camera woman for our team. I had worked with her on other projects and appreciated her natural eye for camera views. She brought a necessary South African perspective into the project. After all, the documentary should also appeal to South Africans with an interest in international topics.
as well as to an international audience interested in a South African (sub)culture. With Chloé Adams, also a Centre for Film and Media student, who did the sound, our team was complete and ready to start shooting.

**Probing characters and locations**

It was not difficult to detect traits of German culture and tradition in Cape Town. Apart from being uniquely distinctive, especially abroad, the German ex pats also deliberately express their culture by reproducing popular German events such as the 'Oktoberfest' (the biggest Volksfest in the world) in their adopted homes. In Cape Town, institutions like the local German International School of Cape Town (DSK – Deutsche Schule Kapstadt), which organises an annual “DSK School Basar” with 'typical' German features (sausages, beer, German folk music) and the “Deutsche Klub in Kapstadt” (German club of Cape Town) which has existed since 1930, form a network throughout Cape Town which allows the German community to treasure their culture and tradition on the African continent. No matter where Germans live, the 'Made in Germany' cachet is always with them: Cape Town hosts several German bakeries, German butchers and German shops. There is also a German hair dresser, a German dentist, a German book store, a German estate office, German job agencies and not to forget the German builders and car mechanics. The German reputation stands for quality, especially abroad. Their own people are their main target audience, because only Germans know how Germans like it best. After all, aren't they known for always wanting it their way? Or is this just an antiquated stereotype of Germans? Is the German culture more merged with that of the Cape than assumed or would we, with a segregated German community, find the stereotypes confirmed?

Excited, we embarked on our journey to explore the different facets of German culture in Cape Town. Additionally, and in order to make sure that we were anticipating the correct clichés about German culture, we conducted a small survey (see Appendix III) amongst our friends and acquaintances. The results confirmed our expectations about the German stereotype.
Our first point of contact was the German Consulate General in Cape Town. Consul Hans-Werner Bußmann and Renate Reichardt from the cultural affairs department were immediately supportive of the cause and provided us with a small budget, different contacts and several tickets for German events (e.g. the opening concert of the 'German Cultural Weeks in Cape Town').

After intensive thought we decided deliberately not to shoot in Somerset West, a neighbourhood famous for its strong German representation, in order to avoid “picking” the cliché. It was important to us, that the main characters be representative and thus well spread around the Cape Peninsula. We also did not want to visit the 'German Club in Cape Town' because our aim was to look for German cultural expressions in the public and not in private locations which were established for this special purpose. However, we did decide to shoot at the German School and the Paulaner Bräuhaus due to the importance of these (German) institutions established in and open for Cape Town residents.

Finding Germans willing to participate as interviewee in our documentary was only a matter of time. We wanted the characters to differ in age, gender and location. But our most important criterion was that the characters would not be new to Cape Town, but members of the German community who had lived there for a considerable amount of time. Therefore, we avoided travellers or exchange students, but rather sought out settled immigrants who deliberately chose to live in Cape Town during their life time (however, during the process this criterion shifted slightly). After holding several pre-interviews, we decided to choose five characters that comprised an appropriate mix of compelling background and 'typical' (in the sense of frequently occurring) stories. This decision was of course taken on completely subjective grounds.

The interviewees of 'Cape of German Hopes' are:

- Marina and Willi Vitz: an elderly couple from Hout Bay who are acquainted with the parents of one of my German friends
- Bernd Barbrock and Chris Hönkhaus: surfers from Bloubergstrand in whose hostel I stayed at my arrival in Cape Town
– Birgit and Tshamano Sebe from Upper Wodstock are friends of a German friend of Lemay Llorente Quesada who suggested us to contact Birgit because of the interesting life story
– Naima Sebe as the daughter of a mix-raced couple had to become our interviewee as she is a living probe of a German-South African heritage
– Professor Mark Solms from Franschhoek was our 'wild card'. My colleague on this production knew about his German heritage and suggested me to explore that story as he could “well represent the blend of the old and the new South Africa in a metaphorical way”
– The project ‘iThemba School Capricorn’ in Vrygrond, Muizenberg is funded by a big German company and was chosen to illustrate German involvement in South Africa

Writing a script
Before writing out a script, we researched German history in South Africa and Cape Town. Due to our decision to focus on Germans who settle in Cape Town during their own lifetimes, this research was rather short, but helped to sharpen our profile. Additionally, we researched existing projects with same or similar topics. Many German reality TV shows recently dealt with expatriates and their lives in a foreign country. A recurrent topic seemed to be that life outside Germany makes the people somehow happier and more relaxed. It was also helpful to analyze documentaries like 'High Hopes' (2004), 'Double Vision' (2005) or 'This is my Africa' (2010) which dealt with issues like double-identity and keeping one's own cultural heritage while living abroad on a deeper level. We adopted some ideas, but both agreed on trying a different, more experimental style of documentary filmmaking. Our young eyes preferred a different, faster pace in the storytelling.

One important move to avoid losing the 'red thread' of a documentary is to ask through which eyes the story would be told. Our supervisor emphasized the importance of this question from the beginning, but we were reluctant to the idea of restricting ourselves to a final decision early in the process. Yet, during the process it became increasingly
more apparent, that it was necessary for me as the interviewer to lead the journey and connect the different stories to a more obvious common theme (see also section 'The Role of the Interviewer'). As the editor, I would later regret not making that decision earlier in the process as I later encountered different problems regarding the logical assembly of sequences.

We were thankful our supervisor approved of the rather 'open' script and treatment for the documentary. It gave us enough freedom to experiment (e.g. our use of a poem as narrative voice-over) and to let the story of each character evolve in a natural and genuine way. Our first approach was observational and we wanted to use voice-over only where necessary to create bridges. Later we used a combined approach with more participatory elements (e.g. the interviewer also appears on camera, but only with the second camera). Many times we were forced to adjust our first intentions and therefore the final version of the script was only developed gradually in the making of the documentary.

The interview questions were asked in a way that would make it possible to be heard on camera or later to cut them off completely if they became redundant. Though I had a handful of specific story points the interview needed to cover, I also wanted to go “fishing” (Bernard, 2003), i.e. hear what topics develops out of the interview. In this way, I was able to increase the audience's involvement by making them care about my interviewees. As the interviewer, I wanted to follow the flow of each interview and play devil’s advocate if necessary.

Regarding the language, I was convinced that organizing the documentary in a bilingual fashion would best suit the film. Language makes up a big part of a one's identity and therefore I wanted to let my interviewees talk about their lives in the language they most feel comfortable using. I already expected them to switch frequently from one language to the other, because – being myself bilingual – I knew that this is the way one thinks and talks among others who understand the same languages. Even though an English-speaking audience may find the sudden changes in language and the subtitles to be disturbing, I took that risk in order to give the most authentic
impression of my interviewees' life world. Later, my assumption would prove to be right and even peak in a scene where Birgit spontaneously changed from German into English in the middle of a sentence as if it were nothing.

By examining language, we scrutinized who the main target audience would be. We decided that the film should be shaped according to the expectations of a German audience, without losing the attention of other nationalities, especially South-Africans. With the mix of our characters, e.g. with the mixed-race couple and Mister Solms representing a South African perspective (including topics like the political struggle etc.) and Willi and Marina or the surfers representing the German expatriate's side, we managed to make the documentary interesting for a wide range of spectators.

3.1.2. Shooting Period

As often in life and especially in creative processes expectations are frequently being overthrown by reality. This happened many times in 'Cape of German Hopes', but in the end these changes were always for the benefit of the documentary.

The shooting period (October to December 2010) went well and mostly according to plan. We were equipped with two Sony Z1 cameras, sound kits and other shooting devices provided by the University of Cape Town.

Besides different German events (Oktoberfest; Opening concert of the 'German Cultural Weeks'; German School Basar; one of our interviewees going to the screening of a German movie), we shot cutaways of different Cape Townian landmarks (Table Mountain; Signal Hill; Lion's Head; Long Street; Waterfront etc.). We tried to shoot with the story in mind, while at the same time maintaining an open mind to new ideas which were expected to arise during the filming process. The camera women were allowed creative freedom at our various locations in order to establish time, place and people within the environment of the interviewee. I was happy that little explanation was needed to get the footage I had in mind. Sorrel Adams and Lemay Llorente Quesada would also film spontaneously generic visuals, i.e. materials which were not linked to any particular character or story (e.g. clocks; kids’ toys and other associative things).
These “wallpapers” (Bernard, 2003) would turn out to be really helpful in the editing process later.

Being also the editor of the documentary, I advised my camera persons to shot also with editing in mind, i.e. to vary wide shots, middle shots and close-ups. For the interviews we used camera one as the main camera and camera two for zoom or detail shots. The close-ups of hand gestures, faces etc. was supposed to help catch the emotions of our interviewees. As the footage should always advance the understanding of a character (Bernard, 2003), we made sure that the background would always fit the interviewee(s). It is important that the subject is not overwhelmed by the surrounding in order to get the best “environmental portrait” (Bernard, 2003).

During the interviews, I let the discussions flow in a natural way, but occasionally helped realign their stories when the interview would digress too much from the topic. I engaged in 'small-talk' to relax the interviewees and let them forget about first insecurities and embarrassment. I had already conducted pre-interviews with each interviewee, so I knew which ground each person could best cover. I asked specific questions, but also went “fishing” and waited for topics to come up. In this way, I was able to convey hard facts about the interviewees' lives, but at the same time left spaces to evoke their feelings. The result was a genuine interaction between interviewer and interviewee which I hope will be visible to the audience.

3.1.3. Post-Production Period

“The drama is already there; it's a matter of finding the 'creative arrangement', the strongest way to tell it.” (Bernard, 2003)

The post-production period was the longest and most exhausting phase in the making of the documentary film. Now, in post post-production it is easy to say that 'Cape of German Hopes' is the story of a journey: an exploration of German culture in Cape Town. But at first, it took me some time to understand that it was my journey and my own exploration of the familiar German culture, inspired by Cape Town.
**Edit a structure**

The combination of camera work and editing mimics the observer's eye movement (Rabiger, 2003). This has to be done carefully, because angle and comment already judge what is shown. The footage we had was enough of serving the “principle of abundance” (Rabiger, 2003) which allows more choice in the editing. But documentary film is not like drama where you place the shots together in the most effective way. It generally proceeds in the opposite manner: the filmmaker follows the subjects, there are no performers, and the film is found and shaped only in the editing (Dancyger, 2002). You could say that a film is born three times: in writing the script, in shooting and in editing. Bernard (2003) also notes:

> “On the majority of films, story and structure do not truly come together until the editor begins to assemble and pare down filmed material.”

The narrative spine was clearly about German culture in Cape Town; nevertheless it was sometimes difficult to decide where to enter the story and to find the best “point of attack” (Bernard, 2003). I had to find the structure that would tell the different stories in the best way. Structure works in response to the audience's built-in expectations; a filmmaker can heighten or confound those expectations (Bernard, 2003). My intention was to tell the audience a story by *showing* it and involve them by taking them with me on a journey. They should not only watch the characters, but be there with them.

In my script I followed the “three-act structure”-model (details see under 3.2.), but already during the production I found different stories that altered the story focus. But as Bernard (2003) points out:

> “It's not unusual for filmmakers to begin one project, only to be drawn by the characters and situations they encounter towards a film that is both different and stronger than they anticipated.”

The interview with Mister Solms was such a case. The impressive story about his farm where he created a workers' trust in order to let his workers partake in the profits of the wine estate, was so rich and powerful, that it could have formed a documentary on his own. It was at risk to become the main story line and to overshadow the other
characters. However, the documentary was supposed to be about Germans in Cape Town and not about German history and influences in the Cape. Therefore, I had to change the structure of the documentary in order to make it work together. Mister Solms' story would now be told in blocks and run parallel to the other stories instead of intermixing him with the others. The result was that it now enriched the documentary with an additional, historic dimension.

**Multiple topics**

The other stories were easier to arrange; recurrent topics helped to structure them and to form a natural order. After introducing and establishing the characters, I choose material that revealed issues I wanted to raise such as differences in mentalities, contradictions in life and their reconciliations, etc. I cut between my interviewees to synthesize the story and was sometimes really thrilled by the outcome. By arranging Willi and Marina's digression about the German wall next to Birgit and Tshamano's story of why they decided to move to South Africa for instance, I could not only relate the fall of the wall with the end of the *Apartheid*-system, but also point out the strange similarities between South Africa and Germany as societies with "disgraced histories". Although the juxtaposition did not come across overly didactic (after all, my characters expressed it in a very natural, charismatic way), I was sure that this was one of the "special" (arguable) moments of a documentary that make up its energy and let people discuss later.

I had to drop some topics during the editing process (e.g. about Tshamano performing the political struggle on stage or Bernd remembering how Bloubergstrand did look like before the building boom started) because not all of the interview bits were strong and clear. This is in line with Bernard (2003) who states that:

> "Filmmaking is about choices, and among the most important choices you face is what you include and what to leave out."

Too much information to explain something can dilute the story. Therefore, I had to scrutinize whether the topic added value to the film or not. Furthermore, it was helpful to discuss this issue with my colleague in order to get an outside perspective. After all,
with my strong German connection, I am way too close to decide completely objectively if something is also interesting to a non-German audience. The "give-and-take process" (Bernard, 2003) usually turned out to be really productive. Especially with Mister Solms' story we had some problems. His interview was so intense and rich that it was difficult to break it down to the most meaningful parts. I cut his blocks several times, but was also reluctant to lose too much information on how he came to the decision of sharing his farm with the workers. My intention to show by means of Mister Solms' action how easy it actually is to make the world a better place won over filmic concerns of lengthiness. Even though I was running the risk that too much of him and his good deeds would make the other characters look pathetic, his story occupied the most 'airtime'. Nevertheless, I think that I interwove it witty enough to keep the audience's interest even when going back to the other stories.

**Cutaways, titles and voice-over**

Inserting the cutaways as transitions or for montages was a pleasant part as it left much space for artistic craft. I also used cutaways to cover my edits in the interviews. Renownedly, "Shots that do not vary in angle by a region of at least 30° will be felt to jump" (Button, 2002). It was interesting to experience how using shots as hole filler to hide these *jump cuts* would never work in the film. Visual information also conveys basic narrative information (Bernard, 2003) and therefore needs considerable amount of thought as well. The audience can feel it when a cutaway is just random which will disturb the flow of the film.

I used text on screen to add information that otherwise would not be evident. In order to keep the pace of the documentary, I chose lower thirds, i.e. text over screen, to convey names of interviewees or event locations. The poem of Lemay Llorente Quesada (see also under 'The poem' in section 3.2.) served as narrative voice-over to introduce the general topic of the documentary as well as to summarize my experience of Germans in Cape Town at the end. It was inspired by the journey and the people we encountered along our way and reflects the deeper dimension of the film in a metaphorical way.
Due to major problems regarding the presentation of the school 'iThemba' as planned (see 'Problems and Limitations'), additional narration was needed. I wrote something that would fit the visuals and add information to it. We recorded it together with the poem and everything proceeded without any further problems.

**Revision**

After the picture lock, I reread my initial proposal and scripts to detect if anything got lost along the way. I was pleased to confirm, that although the documentary had taken some surprising new directions, almost everything I aimed for was covered.

Several times during the editing process I showed the documentary to different experts and partly included their feedback. Nawaal Deane's suggestion to include more little montages of German events in order to take the audience away from the talking heads and give them music and a bit of context in the rest of Cape Town was of great value.

After the online editing was completed, I organized a test screening with a couple of German, South African and non-German, non-South African friends. Most of them were filmic laymen and it was interesting to me to observe if they would laugh or be intent at the moments I intended them to be. I also had prepared a questionnaire (see Appendix III) to get more detailed feedback. Their reaction was overwhelmingly good and there was no comment that would make me think of significant changes. However, a consequent discussion about the meaning of the poem brought me to make one additional edit which made a big change in the understanding of it (see also the section 'The poem').

**3.2. The Examination of the Documentary**

“Even when meticulously planned, filmmaking is always a serendipitous activity and often one’s vision must be jettisoned and energy redirected to deal with the unforeseen.” (Rabiger, 2003)

I took it as a challenge to my inventiveness and insight whenever I had to adapt to the unexpected and it usually turned out to be to the benefit of the documentary. Ironically,
we would have more problems with the external people surrounding the project who were supposed to help and support us and not with the project itself (see 3.2.). Relying on our own strength and creativity, and after we found professionals who would work like professionals, we managed to wrap up the documentary film in June 2011.

*The form*

It is difficult to classify 'Cape of German Hopes' to a specific form of documentary film form. It wants to convey some information about the world (= how Germans live in Cape Town) to audiences, insofar it is organized categorically. *Categorical films* often begin by identifying its subjects and are rather simple in principle (Bordewell & Thompson, 2010). However, by mixing in other kinds of forms, the film becomes more complex and maintains its tension. 'Cape of German Hopes' also uses narrative as organizational structure. Some other scenes clearly draw upon the *rhetorical form*: in jest, as director, I want to make an argument that would convince the spectator of something (= that the German stereotype is accurate). According to Bordewell & Thompson (2010) there are four basic attributes that define rhetorical form. First, it addresses the viewer openly by trying to move him or her to a new intellectual conviction, to a new emotional attitude, or to action. 'Cape of German Hopes' shows some montages which clearly illustrate how German stereotype is being executed (Beerfest; folk music). Second, the subject of the film will usually not be an issue of scientific truth but a matter of opinion. Stereotypical German behaviour is being presented without explicitly defining what 'Germanness' is. Consequently and third, the film appeals to emotions and perceptions, rather than presenting factual evidence. Fourth, the film will attempt to persuade the viewer to make a choice that will have an effect on his or her everyday life. With subject-centred arguments, the documentary appeals to an existing stereotype. The viewer of 'Cape of German Hopes' will believe that the cliché of Germans - with some exemptions - is being served in Cape Town.
Structure and Exposition

Structure is “the foundation on which story is built, [...]” (Bernard, 2003). 'Cape of German Hopes' uses mainly the “three-act structure” in order to develop its story. The documentary starts with an exposition which grounds the audience into the story. The information included in the 'Spiegel'-scene gives them already everything they need to follow what is unfolding. In this scene, a person is reading the popular German magazine 'Spiegel'. Nothing unusual, except for the background that is revealed through a zoom: the person is leaning against a fence at the beach and we can see a panorama of majestic Table Mountain. This is something everybody can relate to and the story, which was expected to be settled in Germany, is immediately drawn to South African ground. Details that at first glance were overlooked make sense now: the sunglasses, the casual clothing of the reader and the whole informal look of the setting suddenly suit the frame. A smart and trained eye will also notice the irony that lies in comparing the person on the front cover of the magazine with the person on the beach. There is a huge contrast between the woman in business outfit who kneels in the frame of the cover magazine, cramped, desperate and stressed, and the energetic, sun-bathing woman who reads the magazine outside, smiling. The notion, that you can have the good German features without the everyday struggles in Germany, is (for a German-speaking audience) topped off by the juxtaposition of this beautiful day at the beach on the one hand, and the depressive cover story of the magazine titled “Burnt out” on the other. If you like, you could also interpret in this initial sequence the latent question if Germans, with their obsession of work and perfectionism, tend to have a deep, depressive, self-destructive streak. Additionally, classical dramatic music is used to underline the unusual incident and to indicate a possible conflict in the emblematic image. When the documentary title appears, the audience has already decoded different elements of the exposition and is allowed inside the story.

Before the first act starts, a brief interlude informs the audience in a voice-over about motivation, topic and deeper lawyer of the documentary. We hear South African drum music which together with moving and still shots of landscape and later diverse people on the streets creates intimacy and a feeling of being there. The person from the beach
travels with the car through South African landscape. We learn that we travel on a journey with this person (me) who wants to find answers to existential questions. For now, the poem which partly contains answers is presented to the audience in a metaphorical way and will unveil its full meaning only at the end of the documentary (see also under section 'The Poem').

**Act One**

The first act of the documentary introduces the five characters plus the school project respectively the five characters introduce themselves to the audience. I deliberately chose to do it this way because thereby it was possible to simultaneously present hard facts and evoke first sympathies in a natural way. The driving shots in-between the characters’ location is in sync with the journey we embarked on and indicates the audience that we are moving around at the Cape region.

While Willi and Marina serve the stereotype of a middle-aged German couple who came to South Africa to enjoy their premature pension, but still cannot stop working (they run a guesthouse), the surfers Bernd and Chris represent another German cliché. Their love for water sports and Cape Town’s perfect conditions was their only reason to move there. The (South-African) children from the school project ‘iThemba’ who are introduced right after the Germans, form a contrast to the seemingly uninvolved Germans. The audience might be surprised to see the kids in the row with the characters. This confusion will be solved only later when the project is being revealed as an example for a big German company’s involvement in South Africa. When the music who was sung in German (see also under section ‘The German Song’) changes to drum rhythms, the audience knows that we are going to visit another South African. But contrary to the expectations, Mister Solms tells us about his own German roots and his many German family branches. While for now he only appears to represent German history at the Cape, the audience will later learn that he is also an example for the philosophy of giving back to the community and has therefore an important part in the South African reconciliation process. The theme goes on when the mixed-race couple Birgit and Tshamano are introduced. He as black South African and she as white
German form the perfect example of the New South Africa. Finally, Naima who was born in Germany, but grew up in Cape Town, is introduced and it is not difficult to the audience to detect that the coloured girl is their daughter. This young, energetic girl is a living incarnation of the two worlds the documentary is telling us about. When Naima shares with us that she just wrote her last exam at the (German) school, we know that the whole world is at her feet.

The first act presents many inciting incidents that get everything rolling. The audience learns about the people's connection with Cape Town and is intrigued to know why and how they ended up living there. The second act is being launched and expected to answer questions like: What are the German searching for or what did they lack in Germany? How is their daily life in Cape Town? How do they raise their children (thinking of Naima visiting the German School)? Additionally, first differences in mentalities are being addressed (e.g. the significance of work when Marina talks about Germany being famous for its “quality work”).

**Act Two**

The second act covers all important topics around the lives of the characters and, with a surprising historic parallel between Germany and South Africa, even more than that. After a musical montage of the opening concert of the German Cultural Weeks, the pace of the documentary increases while the topics are being aligned in a natural, spontaneous order. The montage serves to take the viewers more into the story. They are following me on the journey to find Germans in Cape Town and will be surprised to discover how deeply-rooted the German influence is.

As soon as we come back to the characters, first complications emerge when Willi tells us about the stress-free life in Cape Town and Marina adds that you have to adapt to that which is actually not easy for a German. “Germans always want it their way”, she admits and serves with that a first stereotype about Germans being little flexible for new approaches. Cutaways from their 'typical' German equipment (e.g. a bloomy flour pot) or – more metaphorical - seagulls neatly lined up one next to each other spell out the point made.
While Naima informs us about Cape Town's multiculturalism, its happy atmosphere and good weather, her mother suffers under the decision of her oldest daughter Thandi to go back to Germany for studies. Her emotional statement "I want to be there and there at the same time" sums up the whole dilemma of being an immigrant in a foreign country. Her central struggle lies clearly in the conflict between the decision of raising her children in a country where they would be accepted more and missing her family and the life in Germany.

Intrigued by the stories of the characters and the reasons why they decided to settle in Cape Town, the audience wants to find out more about my discoveries of German culture in Cape Town. Traces can be found all over town, but most strongly at the Bazaar of the German International School in Cape Town. The montage is a collage of basically all events at the festival and gives the audience time to relax.

Fitting the topic of German elements in Cape Town, the first block of Mister Solms appears where he tells us that he left South Africa to avoid going to the army. A first parallel to another character arises: Tshamano and Mister Solms, the black and the white South African, both leave their home country for different reasons, but out of protest against the Apartheid system. Mister Solms explains why he later took over the family farm in order to “fix a little piece” of earth. The audience is now drawn into the troubled history of South Africa and finds the characters suddenly reflecting about such pressing topics like poverty, crime, safety, discrimination and identity. It is odd to observe how the pragmatic German trait shows itself even in delicate issues such as safety: Marina weighs the danger of South African crime with the rising worldwide terrorism and concludes that you cannot be completely safe anywhere anymore and hence you might as well keep on living in Africa. The whole sequence ends on an interesting juxtaposition which demonstrates the different perceptions of the characters: while Tshamano instances Johannesburg as positive example of cultural mix (in contrast to Cape Town), Willi portraits the life in Johannesburg as dangerous and hostile as European boulevard papers present the whole of South Africa (in contrast to Cape Town). As side info, the (German) audience learns at the same time that the
image of South Africa which is being mediated overseas might not be an accurate one, but has also a lot to do with scaremongering.

This topic is further deepened by Mister Solms’ second block where he informs the audience about South Africa’s troubled history in social and economic terms and the special, symbolic meaning of land in the country. He ends quite distraught on the notion that the process of working together with his workers on equal terms on the farm seemed an idealistic and unfeasible dream.

At this very moment, the documentary reaches its morally lowest point, only to be heightened again by an unexpected twist. By connecting the two country histories and making a parallel between the fall of the Berlin wall and the end of Apartheid, an important notion about changes that need time to be accepted is being made (see also under section 'Multiple topics'). We are reminded of the good things that have happened since Nelson Mandela was elected as the first president of all South-Africans in 1994. Additionally, the audience also come to know why the mixed-raced couple decided to settle in South Africa and not in Germany (where they first met) anymore: ironically, they felt safer in the 'New South Africa' than in Germany at that time. Ironically especially from a Western point of view, where the safety issue in the country (discussed in the documentary with Willi and Marina) seems to be the biggest concern.

The third and last block of Mister Solms flows on a positive, motivating tone as well. He tells us how he made a change on his farm and in the history of his country by openly unveiling the difficult and painful past in order to pave the way for a future for all. The museum on the farm both celebrates and commemorates the common heritage on this piece of land and the farm workers’ foundation makes not only a symbolical but an actual change in the property situation by actually partaking the workers on the profits of the farm. Finally, with the crèche on the farm, the basis for a better future of the farm children is set by giving them the possibility to become whatever they want to become without educational or financial limitations.

It is then Willi and Marina who take the topic back to a German perspective and, in their usual pragmatic way, led the way to another example of successful (German) involvement in the country for the benefit of underprivileged children. The 'iThemba
School Capricorn is a pre-primary school located in Vrygrond, one of the oldest informal settlements outside of Cape Town. It was opened in the beginning of 2010 and is financed by the Lufthansa Employee Organization HelpAlliance and the GTS company which is also a subsidiary of Lufthansa. There are many German companies like the big airline that believe in giving back to the communities they operate in. Apart from showing German involvement in the country, my intention with this interlude was also to illustrate how the concept of social justice is being executed in the German mentality. The German sense of solidarity includes the philosophy of doing “your share” in order to make the system work and so a sober mentality of “giving-back” is also part of a German stereotype which is implemented in a distinct, pragmatic German way. This was best personified in the Lufthansa GTS Group CEO Birgit Thümecke who appears at the end of the interlude playing with an iThemba-child. The audience will not know it, but originally, she was also supposed to be an interview partner. Due to several complications (see under section 'Problems and Limitations'), I had to cut her interview completely out.

The last segment of the main act comes across as a rather light and funny summary of obvious and less obvious differences comparing German and South African everyday life. But on a larger scale, many deep and complex contradictions are being addressed which show a still existing gab between the two worlds. It is funny, how Marina complains that handymen have to be supervised and we see a cutaway of Willi working while his employee is watching him, but it also demonstrates the latent German tendency of superior attitude (he himself can do it best). We will laugh, when Chris tells us how every time he arrives 30 minutes late at a meeting, he is still the first one arriving, but it reveals the completely different perceptions of timing. Comments on the dependency on cars and the vastness of the city or the randomly-run public transport system make us think about development of infrastructure and its influence on the urban life. Exuberant encomiums on South-African friendliness evokes the impression that Germans are rude and cold and open up to strangers only when the sun is shining which does not happen overly frequently. When Bernd narrates his little story about shopping in German where he always feels like he is disturbing the cashier woman
when he wants to pay, make you think about the reasons for the German frustration and their inability to be pleased about the little things. Additionally, the documentary deals with specific second-generation issues like identity and belonging when growing up with two cultures. Every child of the mixed-race couple – all of them interestingly with African names - experiences it in his own way. The mother explains how the oldest daughter Thandi always felt more German and suffered when they moved to South Africa. Only German kindergarten and German school would make her feel better and once grown up, she moved back to Germany. Whether this decision had to do with the discrimination she experienced as only coloured girl in her class, remains open. Fact is that even if Birgit tells us that things have changed now, we still see pictures from a German school choir with only one coloured girl being Singhita, her youngest daughter. Furthermore, Singhita speaks almost only German and though she looks the most African, she seems to completely identify with the German culture. Naima on the other hand, identifies herself more with the South African culture and refuses to speak German on screen. Sometimes she would drop a German word, but handle it totally naturally. It is remarkable that she would explain her rejection of speaking German with the notion that she does not like to make mistakes. Ironically, this very statement reveals an aspiration of perfectionism which is really typical for the German, pragmatic view on things. Her hesitation at the beginning of a sentence with the notion that she doesn't like to "out" herself as a German (she reformulates the sentence later), might also indicate Naima's own insecurity and guilt about being a German with the “wrong” colour. Apparently, she has chosen deliberately to be South African with the expectation to be judged less than if she would “out” herself as a German.

Language plays also an important part in the life of Bernd's son. Although he wants his South African-born son to be bilingual, he wants to connect with him in his own language. The German International School in Cape Town gives him the possibility to leave a future in both countries open.

Language makes up a big part of the identity and it is both symbolic and sad to hear that Birgit and Tshamano’s plan to teach their children Tshamano's mother tongue Venda just vanished during the course of years. We also get an idea of the obstacles a
bilingual household bears in everyday life due to linguistic misunderstandings. In the same context, we are reminded of the difficult background we are moving in, when Birgit narrates us that Tshamano would refuse to learn German when they first met because it reminded him to much of Afrikaans, the language of the oppressor (see about language also under section 'Preproduction').

A last montage brings us a little bit more of German flavour in Africa. The 'Oktoberfest' at Paulaner Bräuhaus in Cape Town, with stitch ceremony, folk music band and swaying people, offers everything a good beerfest should have. Even the impatient customer, grabbing his *Schweinshaxe* (pork hock) from the waitress' tablet, is a typical German action. This scene could be located anywhere in Germany if it would not be for the black girl in the *dirndl* (traditional Bavarian dress).

**Act Three**

The third act starts when the protagonists begin wonder if they would go back to Germany one day. Although he liked the experience in Germany, Tshamano declares quite decisively that he could not think of going back. He admits that it is a beautiful country, but can only recollect the cold weather there. Also Birgit firmly states that she is happier in Cape Town, but has to admit that she misses quite a lot of things from her life in Germany. Willi and Marina are, despite all the adjustments to their German aspirations they had to make, apparently at peace with their life in Cape Town and also Bernd warmed himself up to what is there.

Every character expresses in an end statement what they learned from their experiences and this indicates to every single ones' hopes and dreams for the future. Bernd and Chris who turned their love for the sea into their work (they run a surf hostel), find their life style to work out well for them and do not want to change a thing. Mister Solms, freed from the burden of his ancestors, enjoys his life in sync with his country and its people. His belief that all our fates are tied together is the underlying idea of his life philosophy. Together with Naima, he forms the moral centre of the documentary which I as the director strongly subscribe.
Marina’s contradictions in life culminate in the comment that if you are not prepared to adapt your life to a South African pace, you should not move to the country. This is the only time where I, as the interviewer, confirm a statement made in order to put it into a global context: Acculturation is an important part of feeling at home in a foreign country. What follows is seemingly Marina and Willi agreeing with me with Marina offering “adaptation” as key word of the discussion and Willie turning the argument into a different direction with wider implication. He states that if everybody would live like a “guest” in the foreign country, everything would be fine with the world. I thought about his statement for a long time and was even tempted to take it out. This was not what I intended to say. To the contrary, I believe that it is crucial to feel at home and not as a random guest in your adopted country in order to feel connected and try to solve identity issues. I decided to leave Willi’s argument in to illustrate how a 'typical' German would perceive the discussion about immigration issues, and to show that even after openly talking about all the contradictions in his German-South African life, a 'typical' German like Willi would still believe that cultural problems would emerge from the fact that an immigrant would not be prepared to adapt fully to the foreign country. Once again, the stereotype was being served.

In his end statement, Tshamano reflects again about the cultural exchange of Germany and South Africa and Birgit resolves her struggle once and for all with the statement that it was the best decision for the family to move to South Africa.

Beautiful young Naima, the personified reconciliation of German and South African elements closes the documentary with her personal resolution to her identity conflict: “You don't have to have a specific colour to be South African, or a Cape Townian.” Your cultural heritage comes from deep inside, it is a personal gift and it is colour blind. If you accept it, the confusion and insecurity will weaken and make way to celebrate an enriched identity.

**The Role of the Interviewer**

Every documentary represents a “slice of life” (Bernard, 2003) that people lead around the world. The characters must speak for themselves whenever possible, but the
The audience also yearns to hear a person reflecting about the just seen. Though 'Cape of German Hopes' is an anthology (and thus broadly informational), it is also personal (me telling a story). The film is as much about the characters in it as it is about me. However, even if my on-screen presence is necessary to tell the story I wanted to tell, I am not a protagonist.

I open the documentary as first-person narrator ("I"), but I am not an obvious narrator, even if I am obviously always there. The voice-over explains the aim and purpose of the documentary: we embark on a journey in order to find answer about gone and future days. The film will present topics that have to do with the past, but that are also important for our future. The use of the second-person ("your trail") involves the audience and makes clear that they should identify with me, the traveller who sets out to explore. When my interviewees talk, the audience should feel like they are talking to them. When I appear in cutaways or in the montages, I want them to be there with me.

The Poem

The poem of Lemay Llorente Quesada reflects in a metaphorical way the general underlying topic of the documentary. Each character in the documentary has an own line in the poem which was inspired through the encounter with them. In order to reveal its full meaning, these lines are repeated at the end of the documentary with the related characters. Only with this last edit, the test audience would understand the relation of the poem and the documentary.

In the second verse the "insatiable traveller" is spoken to directly. Narrator, audience and characters in the documentary are addressed at the same time: what are they hoping for? Why did the Germans come from the “vast waters of the Rhine” (Germany) to the “vast lands of the Cape” (Cape Town)? To the “the place where life began” (cradle of humanity), to the “place where life could end” (think of crime and safety)? South Africa is a place of many “challenges” and “changes”; there is much “diversity” and “many cultures” come together, especially in the melting pot of Cape Town. Here, they are forced to deal with each other.
The last verse which we hear in the end summarizes the experience of Germans in Cape Town. Life at the Cape goes on; the city does not care for specific problems. The night is dark, because we still see in black and white, but the worlds start to mingle. Drums (South Africa) and guitars (Germany) make a new beautiful music. We have seen parallels and differences between Germany and South Africa; resilience is certainly a characteristic that both of them share.

It is difficult to treasure your cultural heritage when living far away from home, but cultural identity has no borders, it doesn't stop at a frontier and so you can make the “new ground” to your “home” and claim your heritage “back” wherever you are: from east to west, from north (Germany) to south (South Africa).

**The German Song**

Music is a really important element of a documentary: it evokes emotions and draws the audience into the story by creating intimacy and the feeling of being there. From the beginning it was clear that the documentary would need different kind of music: one reflecting the German vision and one reflecting South Africa. We were consciously playing with clichés, because it would serve the purpose of the documentary best. 'AMORAIm' plays South African so-called ‘shamantic drum music’ and I got the permission to use different pieces from the album to underline landscape shots in order to give it a more “African” feeling. We also hear it with Mister Solms talking about the country's history. Finally, it accompanies the poem because after all the documentary takes place in South Africa.

The German song was especially composed for the documentary. My briefing contained that it should reflect being a German in Cape Town and, more generally, being an immigrant in another country and having more than one identity. I was really amazed when I heard that the singer-songwriter translated my information even with bilingual lyrics. The German song tells us in a catchy rhythm that “There is no place on earth where I would rather be” (Cape Town). It addresses issues such as searching and finding, settling and living in a place where you might not come from, but where you feel at home now. It reminds us that we are free to come and leave, whenever we do not
feel happy anymore and that borders are only in our mind. It implies that you can still be a German, though living outside of Germany, but it also acknowledges the struggle of an expatriate and the never ceasing wish to be “there and over there” at the same time. The German song is basically the musical translation of many topics in the documentary.

3.3. Problems and Limitations

During the process of the documentary film making we encountered many problems which could be solved in the one way or the other. One of the most significant issues was probably the financial aspect: as a student project our budget was really limited. Luckily, the German Consulate General provided us with a small funding. Although our equipment was provided by UCT and our filming crew worked pro bono, it was not enough to cover all the expenses spent on petrol, tapes, final mix person and graphic designer. We were forced to make compromises, such as the opening-scene ('Spiegel'-scene). We would have liked to appoint a professional photographer to shoot it exactly the way I pictured it. But filmmaking is always a balancing act between best quality and low budget.

Protagonists backing out after agreeing on participation were problems that were easier to fix. The complete miscommunication and catastrophic shooting of the iThemba-chairperson and Lufthana GTS Group MD Birgit Thümecke was more difficult. In the beginning I was excited to have a direct contact to the boss of a big German company, but after months of being stalled on the interview, we finally got the chance to interview her. The setting was completely inappropriate, the background noises could not be eliminated and additionally, I was wrongly briefed about the private background of this interviewee. But what ruined the whole was the MD’s attitude, being all stressed, blank and unappealing on screen. The things she was saying were good and important, but the bad energy she mediated made her seem unreliable and interrupted the whole flow of the documentary. Although she also would have been a perfect stereotype of
'Germanness', we decided to replace her with cutaways of iThemba and a personal voice-over from me being in situ.

The shooting as such was a big learning process where many so-called 'beginners-mistakes' happened, e.g. shaky images due to handhold camera work or the accidental switch from 'HDV' to 'DV' camera setting. I also forgot to think of the clothing of the people, though I knew that it conveys story telling as well (Bernard, 2003). This led to problems such as not being able to read the subtitles on Marina's white shirt background.

Some of the problems could be fixed in the post-production, others like the wrong staging of Willi and Marina (too far from each other; no looking room) had to be accepted. I learned, that you have to trick normal distances as the lens of the camera takes only one quarter of the human eye's angle of acceptance (Rabiger, 2003). I also noticed that the framing of Tshamano was misleading: due to the background, people would immediately assume that he is a musician instead of an actor.

Apart from these rather minor problems, time was a big issue in this project. The timeline of 'Cape of German Hopes' had to be readjusted several times due to different technical and interpersonal problems. It is one thing if you plan your schedule too tight (which we did), but it is another if people you rely on leave you high and dry because of their own irrational or ego-centric kind of issues. Last minute, we had to search for another Final Audio Mix person, because the allegedly professional we had established contacts with, was impossible to work with. Also some producers' and our own supervisor's support was disappointing at some stage in the documentary-making.

The whole production was a learning process and we also learned another valuable lesson: people love to talk, but there is no free lunch.

3.4. Promoting the Documentary

In order to promote the documentary and a reach wider audience, we make use of different forms of media. The homepage (www.capeofgermanhopes.com) and the 'Cape of
German Hopes'-facebook site will inform the public about the screenings and events around the documentary. It provides also photos and additional information about the making-of, the behind-the-scenes and our contact for spectators who want to know more. By linking other German portals or magazines with our website, we plan to achieve a higher ranking in the worldwideweb.

We had already different online appearances (e.g. in the Newsletters of the German Consulate General and Solms-Delta) and a feature at the German page of capetownmagazine.com (http://www.kapstadtmagazin.de/news/Dokumentarfilm-Kap-der-deutschen-Hoffnung/10_22_17755). Kapstadt.com, a German-speaking magazine in Cape Town, will have a whole-page feature about 'Cape of German Hopes’ in their next print edition.

We are currently busy preparing a premiere at Labia Cinema and once the date is fixed, we will announce it through these German channels.

Additionally, we plan to submit the documentary to several national and international Film Festival, “Cape Winelands Film Festival” (http://films-for-africa.co.za/) being the first one later this year.

The ultimate goal is to get 'Cape of German Hopes' screened on German TV (for that purpose I will add German subtitles and take out the English ones). The documentary suits the profile of many German channels, “Deutsche Welle TV” being the first. This channel screens mainly travel magazines and alike and is popular amongst expat Germans. But also more sophisticated artistic channels like “3sat”, “WDR” and “arte” will have an interest in screening our documentary due to the different complex topics it touches. I will also offer it to the second state channel “ZDF” by using my old contacts (I worked with them in 2005).
4. Conclusion

“We need to know because it makes us uncomfortable not to know.”

(Bernard, 2003)

New technologies and international media make up for the physical distance that separates the world’s population. We can easily access different parts of the world and satisfies our urge to learn new things about it. Documentary films give us even the possibility to be a tourist in other people’s lives while still sitting in our armchair. ‘Cape of German Hopes’ deals with German culture in Cape Town and we travel with the documentary right into that life. We discover that there is no need to go in search for the stereotype, because the stereotype often manifests itself through the action. We learn that there is nothing wrong with (a bit of) cliché because the cliché is also part of the cultural heritage which has to be treasured. We understand that identity conflicts arise from the obsession to define what one wants to be, and can only be solved by embracing what one is. We have experienced how deeply-rooted the German elements in Cape Town are and we have heard of historical parallels between the two countries. This will help to generate a mutual understanding and contribute to the appreciation of the diversity of humankind. Germans outside of Cape Town will be given reason to adjust their view of ‘dangerous’ South Africa and, together with the Germans in Cape Town, they will either enjoy, laugh, be embarrassed, sad or angry about the documentary. But in some way or the other, they will identify with the storyline and reflect on how it applies to their own lives. Perhaps they will also understand a bit more of their own 'Germanness', like I did during the whole production period.

At the beginning of the documentary, the narrator/interviewer, the audience and the characters alike set out on a journey to find the answers to their anthropological notions of identity, transnationalism and acculturation. But over the course of the documentary the events and the people they encounter transform them. Only gradually, they all come to realize that it is difficult to capture in words and definitions what is best documented in real life.
Appendix I

**Voice-over:**

_I have so many questions to ask, and so I take my pen and my backpack. I'm embarking on a journey to follow your trail. I want to uncover the legacy of days gone by and I want to uncover the essence of days to come._

**Poem:**

_Voyage in A-minor_

Poem written by Lemay Llorente Quesada

Crossing the sand of time, as a traveller you venture into unknown lands
From east to west, from north to south
Escaping the pressures of life
Searching for the secret code of the sea
Yearning for a fresh smell of freedom
Hoping to unveil the sins of the past
Hoping to blend YOUR colours with those of the Rainbow

Insatiable Traveller!
You come from the vast waters of the Rhine to the vast lands of the Cape, what are you hoping for?
You came to the place where life began,
You came to the place where life could end.
Facing the challenges of change
Facing the diversity of this landscape, where many cultures are forced to converge.

As the night unfolds in black and white,
the city goes on with life.
The rhythm of African drums merge with the gentle sound of a guitar.
Music, passion and the resilient spirit of these two nations fused under the same sky.
Bringing the uncertainly certain back home to a new ground,
From east to west, from north to south.
Appendix II

'KEIN ORT AUF DER WELT'

Lyrics: Jens Rudolph
Music: BOB

Du sagst: 'Die Welt ist so groß',
Du sagst: 'I'm missing out',
Mir gefällt es hier, ich hab' alles was ich brauch'.
Ich hab' lang gesucht,
bin endlich angekommen.
This is the place to be and it's the only one.

Es gibt kein Ort auf der Welt
an dem ich jetzt lieber wär'.

Es gibt noch viel zu seh'n,
Ich sag' nur: 'Keep it real!'
Ich hab' kein Bock zu gehen, ich hab' ein gutes Gefühl.
Denn Zuhause ist dort, wo man sich so fühlt,
not where you born and bred,
it's about what you feel.

Es gibt kein Ort auf der Welt
an dem ich jetzt lieber wär'.

And if you really want,
you know that you'll be back.
And if I want to leave,
I just take my suitcase and start to pack.
There is no place on earth where I would rather be.

Du bist am liebsten hier und
und dort und over there zugleich.
Ich bleib an einem Ort und
fühl' mich federleicht.

My mail is full of postcards from you
Sie sind schön anzusehen,
ich setz' mich hier zur Ruh'.

Es gibt kein Ort auf der Welt
an dem ich jetzt lieber wär'.

You say: 'The world is so big',
You say: 'I'm missing out',
I like it here, I have everything I need.
I've been searching for a long time,
I finally arrived.
This is the place to be and it's the only one.

There is no place on earth
where I would rather be.

There is still a lot to see,
just saying: 'Keep it real!'
I don't want to leave, I have a good feeling.
Cause home is where you feel like home,
not where you born and bred,
it's about what you feel.

There is no place on earth
where I would rather be.

And if you really want,
you know that you'll be back.
And if I want to leave,
I just take my suitcase and start to pack.
There is no place on earth where I would rather be.

You love nothing better than being here and
there and over there at once.
I stay at one place and
feel feder-light.

My mail is full of postcards from you,
they are beautiful to look at,
I will retire here.

There is no place on earth
where I would rather be.
Appendix III

Survey on German Migration

- Do you know any German(s) living in Cape Town?
  _________________________________________________________
  _________________________________________________________

- If applicable, in which context did you meet him/her/them?
  _________________________________________________________
  _________________________________________________________
  _________________________________________________________
  _________________________________________________________

- Have you come across any German-owned business in Cape Town?
  _________________________________________________________
  _________________________________________________________
  _________________________________________________________

- What do you think of the services/products offered? Briefly explain please.
  _________________________________________________________
  _________________________________________________________
  _________________________________________________________

- In your opinion what is distinctively German?
  _________________________________________________________
TEST SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE “Cape of German Hopes”

Content:

Could you follow the story? If not, where exactly did you loose track?

Do you think the documentary has enough depth?

Which opening scene ('Spiegel-scene') did you like better?

Do you think the characters were properly introduced?

Did you miss the interviewer's voice at some point?

Did you have the feeling to get an insight into the German community of Cape Town?

Did you wish to know more/less about the wine-maker Mark Solms?

Did you understand the narrative of the poem (beginning and end)? How did you like it?

Do you think, the ending was strong enough?

Technical:

Do you think, there were too many 'talking heads'?

Did you wish to see more cutaways?

How did you like the staging of the interviewees?

Do you think the driving scenes were too fast?

Were you irritated by shaky images?

COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS/ETC:
BIBLIOGRAPHY


DOCUMENTARY FILM LIST

- *Carbon Nation* (2010). Directed by Peter Byck. Produced by Peter Byck, Artemis Joukowsky et. al.
- *March of the Penguins (2005).* Directed by Luc Jacquet. Produced by Yves Darondeau et al.
- *This is my Africa (2010).* Directed and produced by Zina Saro-Wiwa.