

**EXPLORING THE POLITICAL COMMUNICATION
DYNAMICS
IN SOUTH AFRICA'S PLATINUM INDUSTRY**
The Case of Marikana

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ABSTRACT

After two decades of democracy, poverty and inequality remain at the heart of the development malaise in South Africa. Despite investor-friendly environments and economic growth forged during the previous administration, recent unrest in the platinum industry highlighted the strained relationship between labour and business, State and society, and the macabre consequences of not paying attention to these tensions. With the strife between labour and business appearing intractable, political and economic challenges evinced by Marikana and consequent events should be seen as the canary in the South African mine, the bedrock of the political economy.

This MA thesis of political communication starts from three premises: one, the complex set of social, political and economic processes communicated via the news media invite analysis of national development and can be explored using qualitative analysis of mediated products. As skeins of connectivity, mediated political information structures social imaginaries within a nation, and thus contributes to development trajectories. Two, within political communication processes there exists potential for a 'Social Justice of Communication', as theorized by Jurgen Habermas. Three, the growing convergence between the previously separable areas of politics and communication demonstrates the urgent need to address not only conventional media effects, but also the implications of nationwide social exclusion, particularly in the context of the public sphere. Thus, the remit of this thesis is the study of political communication dynamics and the roles and nature of mediated content within the process of national development.

This thesis studies media coverage of the Marikana massacre in 2012 and the wage strike led by the Association for Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) in 2014. Political communication in the context of the platinum industry, and how this relates to theories and practices of democracy in South Africa, is analysed using qualitative analysis of online news articles from four national newspapers: *The Times Live*; *The Daily Maverick*; *The Mail & Guardian* and; *The Business Day*. Using protest event analysis as a prism for exploring political communication, this research investigates indicators of the status quo in South Africa's democracy, as communicated via the news media.

Themes / Keywords:

Media framing; poverty and protest; political economy; discursive spaces; media representation.

Abbreviations

Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union	(AMCU)
Congress of SA Trade Unions	(COSATU)
National Union of Mineworkers	(NUM)
South African Police Services	(SAPS)

DECLARATION

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CHAPTER ONE:

Introduction

1. Chapter Outline

This introductory chapter details the background, methodology and scope of this research. As a study into mediated communication, the literature review presented in chapter two discusses the history of the topic in the media, and provides a thematic overview of previous studies. Given the importance of context in critical-political discourse analysis, chapter three presents the theoretical framework.

Chapter four introduces the South African news media landscape, and law enforcement as the most visible State force, by locating the period under investigation (August 2012 - June 2014) within the context of the mediated public sphere. The methodology used is a case study of framing effects used in initial reporting on the events at Marikana on the *TIMES LIVE* website, the online version of popular daily newspaper, *The Times*, an offshoot of *The Sunday Times*. Chapter 5 explores the relationship between poverty and protest to introduce the basis of the claims made by striking miners. The methodology employed is a discourse analysis of an article from *The Daily Maverick* online newspaper.

Chapter 6 investigates coverage of the five-month wage strike in the platinum industry, led by the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU). Where the first two chapters concentrate on law enforcement and striking workers, this chapter shifts focus to important power blocs, namely, miner representatives (trade unions) and the owners of capital (mine management). The methodology employed is a critical-political discourse analysis of selected articles from *The Mail and Guardian* newspaper against a development model for communication.

Chapter seven explores the politicization of the wage strike, by way of the focus on elite political actors in the news media. Given that political communication offers a rich context for examining post-apartheid renegotiation of identity, culture and power, this chapter explores the interrelationship between media and identity construction via analysis of media characterization of a key political actor in the platinum industry: Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa. As a political actor that has come to personify major themes in South Africa's political development, media representations of him in

The Business Day newspaper infer thematic lessons on the development of political and economic power in post-apartheid South Africa.

Finally, “the richest characterisation of genres of political discourse is not merely based on discursive properties per se, but also needs a systematic contextual definition in terms of relevant systems, organizations, actors, settings and cognitions, among others” (van Dijk 1997:19). Chapter eight concludes with a summation of the context of the Marikana massacre (2012) and the AMCU wage strike (2014) as instances of deliberative democratic expression, and a ‘breakout’ of development in both the platinum industry and the field of political communication. Recommendations are offered with respect to political communication as political action, how this may be protected and strengthened in the interests of national development.

2. Background

At the lowest economic base of the country, mineworkers bear the brunt of problems derived from an international political economy resistant to equity and a constrained national political economy. Go figure that socially excluded mineworkers living in poverty are ill equipped to patiently wait for improved labour and living conditions in a murky future. The causes and mechanisms of poverty and protest are as pivotal today as they were during the apartheid regime and untenable realities continue to prevail.

16 August 2012 will be a fateful day in South African history for years to come. On this day, a confrontation between grievance-mobilised mineworkers and a police service prone to excessive force resulted in the death of 34 striking mineworkers, and injury of 78. Prior to this, 10 people had been killed in what had previously been a little known platinum-mining town, Marikana. It was the stuff of nightmares – for mineworkers and their families, mine-owners and their investors, the State and the Farlam Commission of Inquiry later tasked to investigate the events.

Harvey suggests that “tragedies such as Marikana tend to catalyse change” – a potential tipping point on the trajectory of South Africa’s political economy, and thus its development – especially “given the salience of labour–employer and inter-union labour tensions as precipitating factors to Marikana” (2013:3). This thesis suggests

that studying political communication in this context could plausibly explore prevailing parameters of de facto power in South Africa's development.

South Africa holds the world's largest platinum reserves, contributing significantly to the country's massive mineral wealth, and Marikana lies at the heart of the platinum belt. This is a mining industry heavily relied upon for economic activity – South Africa's economic configuration is characterized as a mineral-energy complex that may be described in three fell swoops: overly dependent on the export of the country's rich mineral deposits; mined by labour drawn from an extensive migrant labour system; with profits benefited elsewhere at the expense of local industry (Ashman and Fine, 2013).

The transition from apartheid to democracy in 1994 was a truncated one. According to Terreblanche (2002) entrenching the neoliberal phase of capitalism meant that while the African National Congress (ANC) consolidated political power through negotiations, parallel negotiations with the then captains of industry guaranteed that the basic structure of the economy remained unchanged – its commanding heights remain largely in the same hands. Consequently, power dynamics cast by apartheid remain intact, notwithstanding that the formal trappings have been dismantled. This has created a reality of bracing barriers to transformation at all levels of society, including the media (ibid.)

The arrival of democracy in South Africa however brought with it great expectations about new ways of being – not just a better life for each individual, but a marked change in relations between the State and its citizens, and the mass media as the glue between the two in communicating information. After two decades of democracy, economic inequalities continue, making the notion of a transformed public sphere appear to be an endeavour in transcendence not transformation, given that

“the deeply desired, seductive qualities of political liberalism—voice, equality, inclusion, openness, tolerance—that are embodied in the South African Constitution and officially articulated in State discourses have proved elusive in the face of deep and seemingly intractable social cleavages.” (2009:455)

Norris explains political communication as “an interactive process concerning the transmission of information among politicians, the media and the public... operating downwards from governing institutions to citizens; horizontally through linkages

among political actors, as well as upwards from public opinion towards authorities” (2010:2). Some studies focus on investigating the relationship between news content and individual perception, an approach that Nickels argues is determined by the assumption that “the news is the principal means by which they (i.e. people) experience and learn about certain issues” (2005:22). Media frames can therefore be defined as “social and cultural indicators of a particular time” (2005: 26). On the flip side, Bennet and Iyengar (2008) contend that today, with growing opportunities to personalize media content, the way people learn about and experience the social world has changed, requiring a reconsideration of media effects theories in line with changing social environments. Nonetheless, despite changing media environments and the advance of the digital third age of communication, news media is often a primary framer of information.

The role of the mass media in democracy and development is however contested terrain. With little agreement on normative standards or consensus about how to achieve these standards, Norris asks should the news media serve as an agenda-setter, calling attention to urgent social needs and global problems, or should they prioritize their role in providing entertainment and soft news for the broadest possible audience, allowing the free market to determine story coverage? (2010:2) In the spirit of comparative research, this thesis seeks to investigate the role of the news media in national development through systematic comparison, to make descriptive and explanatory inferences about the ‘known facts’ communicated via the news media, so as to get closer to the unknown processes of political communication in South Africa.

2. Hypothesis

This research asserts that the ‘Marikana massacre’ that happened on 16 August 2012 at Lonmin mine near Rustenburg in the North West province of South Africa, where the South African Police Services (SAPS) shot dead 34 mineworkers for protesting impoverished livelihoods and living conditions must not be understood an accidental event. So too, the historic five-month wage strike led by the Association for Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) in the platinum industry should not be conceived of as an arbitrary occurrence, as desperate poverty and growing inequality augurs that wage disputes will continue.

The thesis statement of this research is that the tragedy of the massacre and the

success of the wage strike indicate that democracy in South Africa is equivocal more so than elusive. These case studies will be investigated through a political communication prism with the aim to glean insights about the character of South Africa's democracy. *It is hypothesized* that the selected case studies have dramatized, in visible ways, the relations between State, citizens and mass media, and further, that studying these might offer recommendations into mitigating the impact of social cleavages on national development. Using Jurgen Habermas' concept of 'a social justice of communication', *this thesis aims* to contribute to developmental communication studies by exploring political communication between key actors in the context of South Africa's platinum industry.

3. Rationale

The significance of this topic is at once a problem statement: the pervasive nature of protest and strikes in South Africa's democratic history intimate unmitigated suffering characteristic of a history of oppression, and opposition to it. This national heritage is as much a painful reminder of inequality, as it is a characteristic strength of the prevailing power of political participation by those living in poverty, and protesting it.

Nevertheless, the loss of lives in the platinum industry, and countless other protests across the country, illustrate the perils of protest. In the *Price of Protest*, Hardy suggests that manifestations of 'people power' in Africa might manifest an altogether new political landscape as mass protests are indicators of a transformation deeply affecting the African continent, therefore governments' response to their people's demands will be key in framing the negotiation of Africa's new social contracts (2011:10). Long-term aims of protest vary according to context – some protestors seek to end regimes or topple kings. In democratic South Africa however, protests and strikes take place alongside institutional mechanisms embedded in the country's legal framework, generally spontaneously and based on promises of the liberation ideology – not necessarily geared toward toppling the government (ibid).

Globally, governments generally react with repressive force to protests, seen as intended to erode their legitimacy but "recent history teaches us that repressing such movements hardly ever solves the root causes of the problem" (ibid). As an arbitrator between the State and the public, the news media is well placed to not only expose root causes of social and labour unrest, but responses too. News media content also tenders both a valuable dataset and an opportunity to study active

political communication processes and power relations. Locally, the complex media landscape is somewhat serpentine, having changed markedly since apartheid, but in a manner closely aligned to the commercial media model, shaped by economic forces. As a result then of the market-driven nature of transformation, the shaping of the media system is influenced by social inequalities. This helps to explain why mediated political communication has, as Duncan (2013) describes, “developed the character of a funnel: higher income groups have access to a plurality of media and their media options are expanding all the time, but for all that, media access tapers off further down the funnel”. This warrants analysis of how media content contributes to social imaginaries of development, given the binary of haves and have-nots that continue to shape it.

A key argument is that understandings of Marikana and its consequences are constructions that are often far removed from the actual precipitating factors that originated the incident. Agenda-setting news media often shape public understanding and this construction in turn shapes the power practices in South Africa. As such, exploring political communication sheds insight not only into interpretations of events, but also the complexities and nuances of collective memory-making that shape master narratives of national development.

4. Methodology

In the context of South Africa’s platinum industry, this thesis analyses political communication using news media coverage sourced from the following online national newspapers: *The Times Live*; *the Daily Maverick*; *the Mail & Guardian* and; *the Business Day*, in the period between August 2012 and August 2014. Using protest event analysis as a prism for exploring political communication, this research investigates indicators of the status quo in South Africa’s democracy, as communicated via the news media. As such, it is a study of power and ideology exercised in and through discourse by key actors identified as: striking miners and their representatives, mine owners, the news media and the State.

Articles were sourced from the online websites of four national newspapers to present a reflective and diverse documentation of the coverage of the case studies. It is acknowledged beforehand that while the mass media has the power to set agendas and shape discourse, it is prudent not to assume direct effects of media content on people/society/national development. Further, this is primarily a textual

analysis, which only briefly explores the power of visual communication. The adopted methodology is primarily qualitative in nature and is operationalized by exploring the following:

- (1) The use of framing in news coverage;
- (2) The mediatisation of poverty and protest;
- (3) The political economy of the media and resultant discursive spaces;
- (4) Representation of elite actors.

The use of online text also allows for commentary on the role of new media in South Africa. Further, the choice of case studies (one violent, one peaceful) permits an exploration of 'peace journalism' as opposed to the use of conflict frames. The method of reviewing these events using media content not only traces problems associated with journalistic practice, but also contributes to communication scholarship by suggesting alternative visions for development.

5. Research Questions and Scope

- How did the news media report on the Marikana massacre and the AMCU platinum wage strike?
- What is the relationship between poverty and protest, and how does the news media report on this?
- What has been the influence of framing effects by the news media?
- How is new (news) media performing in South Africa?
- Is there potential for a 'peace journalism' approach to reporting in South Africa?
- As both discursive spaces and news categories, what lessons may be learnt from *Business* and *National* news narratives?
- What thematic lessons can be learnt about South Africa's political economy and key players, through studying representation of elite actors?

These questions cannot be answered conclusively given the small sample of news media content analysed. Instead, this research should be regarded as largely theoretical, exploratory, and establishing groundwork for future empirical research since the contribution is to be found not so much in the answering of these questions, but more so in the manner in which they are posed. Embarking on protest and strike event analysis entails systematically taking a 'slice' of media coverage from a set-

time frame. Thus, this allows for an event catalogue between years 2012 and 2014, based on “a set of descriptions of multiple social interactions collected from a delimited set of sources according to relatively uniform procedures” (Tilly 2008:47). This research thus focuses on the relations, transactions and mechanisms that combine to form observable social processes.

In order to examine challenges presented by the micro-context of the platinum industry and the macro-context of democratic development in South Africa, the methodological approach is thus a qualitative frame and discourse analysis of reportage of the two case studies, as it is hypothesized that this will present thematic lessons about political communication and national development in South Africa.

CHAPTER TWO:

Literature Review

Nearly three years after the massacre at Marikana, a strong body of work analysing the event and possible implications has developed. The resolution of the five month platinum strike is however relatively recent, having only been concluded in June 2014. Given the synergy between these events, pairing these case studies is an effort at contributing to political communication research, by documenting these developments. This chapter provides a concise discussion of the history of the topic in the media (keeping in mind that the data analysed has been sourced from online news websites) and a thematic overview of previous studies.

It is worth mentioning that in as much as the methodology was constructed in the spirit of comparative analysis, the same might be said of the themes explored in this chapter, and of course, the literature reviewed. Through systemic, but exploratory, comparison this thesis seeks to investigate the role of news media in national development, and similarly, this literature review seeks to explore descriptive and explanatory inferences about the themes explored in the chapters to come. In this way, critical analysis of the selected literature will be inferred. The following section presents a temporal overview of events, followed by a thematic consideration of previous studies.

1. History of the topic in the media

To understand the role of online news media in communicating political information, the news content studied is a sample of the topic in the media, by way of coverage of the chosen case studies. Given that this is a sample of recent media history, it is useful to provide a short timeline of events to locate the periods being investigated for the two case studies.

1.1. Timeline of events surrounding the Marikana workers strike in 2012

10/08/2012	Rock-drill operators at Lonmin mine, Marikana initiate an unprotected strike.
11/08/2012	A confrontation between the National Union of Mineworkers and workers leaves two miners injured.
11-15/08/2012	Strike violence and ten people are killed – miners, police officers and security guards.

16/08/2012	Police officers open fire on striking miners, killing thirty-four and injuring seventy-eight miners.
19/09/2012	The strike at Lonmin is resolved.

In chapter two, news media coverage from 13-19 August 2012 is studied as this covers the peak of the massacre at Lonmin mine, Marikana. In chapter three, the article selected for discourse analysis is from 16 August 2013, one year after the massacre as this affords an opportunity to explore the relationship between poverty and protest, illustrated by a review of past events and existing realities of striking miners.

1.2. Overview of the AMCU platinum wage strike in 2014

10/12/2013	AMCU gets permission to strike at Lonmin.
23/02/2014	AMCU begins strike at Lonmin, Impala Platinum Holdings and Anglo-American Platinum.
13/05/2014	Reports on Lonmin SMSes to workers.
18/05/2014	Reports on mineworker hit list.
7-8/06/2014	Mineral Resources Minister Ngoako Ramatlodi threatens to pull out of negotiations; the ANC question whether the strike is a collective bargaining strike or a political one.
23/06/2014	AMCU accepts wage settlement, ending the five-month strike.

Even without the sensationalism of tragic death that accompanied media reportage of the Marikana massacre, the coverage of the platinum wage strike was breathlessly delivered, with dramatic rumours and suspenseful presentation of twists and turns in the demands of AMCU and the offers by the platinum producers. Articles covering these plot developments during the five-month period have been selected, based on three perspectives: business, national and analysis, in accordance with the selected newspaper's categorization of news articles.

2. Previous Studies

The premise of this research is that the study of political communication in the platinum industry in South Africa is an experimental venture, and further that the coupling of the massacre and the AMCU platinum wage strike is equally novel.

Research studies into the public sphere; poverty, protest and strikes; the political economy (particularly in the platinum and media industries); and representation of elites in South Africa are all of interest to this work.

While there is a wealth of work examining the themes studied herein, there are few that tie them together with the aim to comment on democratic development in South Africa. Herein lies the crux of this literature view: for the sake of brevity, previous literature is reviewed according to the subthemes explored, and in the process of information seeking, critical appraisal of these identified areas of controversy will allow for the formulation of questions that need further research in consequent chapters. It is thus hoped that synthesizing a summary of what is and what is not known in relevant literature will begin to develop paths toward answering the key research questions.

2.1. Studying political participation 'by other means': protests and strikes

The aim is to investigate the protests and strikes in the platinum mining industry to better understand how they relate to the political development of the country. According to Netswera and Phago (2013) in "How popular protests influence public discourse and public accountability", as participation through the voters roll or other avenues like ward committee systems, either dwindles or fails, alternative mechanisms for engaging the sphere of public authority, such as protests, are now considered valid forms of participation. As such, this is a study into participation 'by other means', which may be loosely described as disassociation or negative participation, only coming into play at a particular time of selection by affected individuals, rather than periodically via the voters roll. In *Explaining Processes*, Tilly offers the term 'contentious gatherings' rather than 'protests', defined as

"an occasion on which a number of people (here, a minimum of ten) outside of the government gathered in a publicly accessible place and made claims on at least one person outside their own number, claims which if realised would affect the interests of their object" (2008:47).

On this topic, Alexander's (2010) "Rebellion of the Poor: South Africa's Service Delivery Protests" is seminal for a base understanding of how "protests reflect disappointment with the fruits of democracy". Similarly, Burger (2010) in "The Reasons behind Service Delivery Protests in South Africa" and Karamoko & Jain

(2011) in “Community Protests in South Africa: Trends, Analysis and Explanations” expound on the dimensions of reasons for protest, methods of protest, and the profile of protesters and their numbers. Hardy (2011) in “Protest in Africa: A Short Sociology in Anger” succinctly investigates manifestations of ‘people power’ in Africa suggesting that it might influence a new political landscape.

In an informative thesis titled “Ideology and Agency in Protest Politics: Service delivery struggles in post-apartheid South Africa”, Ngwane emphasises the exigency of locating protest politics within the context of a conversation between academic and activist theorization (2011:19). By the same token, Barker & Cox further define research that engages with social movements as “active processes that people engage with, experience and transform” rather than “as objects of study to be observed, described and explained” (2002:3). From this literature, the researcher asserts that the same rationale applies to political communication research, however the critique of the works on this subtheme is that none adequately reveal the relationship between poverty and protest or how the news media reports on this.

2.3. Developing a social justice of communication

In *The Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and the Rationalisation of Society*, Habermas (1984) lays formative groundwork for political communication research relative to the public sphere. In “Social Justice and Communication: Mill, Marx, and Habermas”, Morris suggests that a social justice of communication is established in the discourse ethics of Habermas’ ‘deliberative’ theory of democracy, and that no theory of democracy should be lax about an analysis of communication. He contends that the communicative mediation of the public sphere has the potential to ameliorate “the tension between individual autonomy and the solidarity of group membership by communicatively empowering individuals under conditions of mutual respect and equal dignity (2009).

In “How is Habermas’ rationale of the public sphere, useful in understanding the public debate South Africa’s Fifth Parliament?” Nunoo (2014) analyses how the scene has been set for the development of a public sphere, as theorised by Habermas, and what the preconditions implicit in communication are for developing a deliberative democracy. The author concentrates on parliamentary conflict as a context for engaging with two theories: classical (representative) parliamentarism and “deliberative democracy” (Habermas, 1992). It is noted that “Habermas posits

that the ideal democracy must be inextricably linked with the public sphere in what he calls deliberative democracy” (2014:3) and that “deliberative democracy is to a large extent linked with the necessity of talk and discussion” (ibid). The learning outcome of this is revealed by the highlighting of dimensions determining what constitutes a quality democracy, and how challenges to this are inherently related to the public sphere.

Hassim furthers this literature by detailing the dimensions of new conflicts in South Africa in “After Apartheid: Consensus, Contention, and Gender in South Africa’s Public Sphere” where she explores the quality of democracy by arguing that it is in “the interactions between citizens in the public sphere that we are able to ascertain the extent to which democratic values have become normalized” (2009) and not so much by existing formal institutions, important though they may be.

This is useful for beginning to construct a theoretical approach to making inferences about the mediatisation of poverty and protest, but still does not help in trying to answer the question of how the news media *actually* reported on the Marikana massacre and the AMCU platinum wage strike. Helpfully, Wooley (2000) in “Using Media-Based Data in Studies of Politics” explains that while the use of data compiled from media sources has become normalized amongst political scientists, studies that dominate political investigations are often measurements of the volume of media attention to an issue. Nonetheless, critical appraisal on this subtheme reveals that growing access to full-text data archives bodes well for the use of media-based datasets in political scholarship.

According to Glenn & Matte (2011), political scholarship in South Africa however seldom focuses systematically on “the three main actors of political communication: citizens, media organizations and professionals; and politicians and political parties”. This may be attributed to traditional approaches locating political communication in the predominant contexts of election analysis and the political economy of the media. This essentially marginalizes the potential of citizens to set the agenda for media content, and even less so for probing investigative journalism. Instead, they contend that the country’s mass media is afflicted by characteristic blights of neo-liberal globalization – a dominance of power hegemonies (and thus development agenda-setters) located within the traditional spheres of the market and the State. This work is thus a useful starting point for analysis of the public sphere but does not answer the question of how new (news) media is performing in South Africa, nor does it

explore the influence of media effects on this performance.

2.4. *Developing the Public Sphere*

In *Media Policy in a Changing Southern Africa: Critical Reflections on Media Reforms in the Global Age*, it is suggested that the momentum for media policy reform has been enervated by the State and corporate hierarchies, having countermanded some of the gains of the previous decade, which spawned 'second generation' reforms geared towards diversity and pluralism in the context of on-going democratization efforts (Chuma & Moyo, 2010). They contend that in the South African context, this is evidenced by two distinct characteristics of the mediated public sphere: hyper-commercialization and State interference.

The changes and continuities in the media suggest that monopoly ownership and control of broadcasting have remained as a State/business fetish, in spite of regime change. While the media has enjoyed citizen support in contesting state power, the same cannot be said in reverse. Rather, the requisite 'media-phobia' necessary to contest monopolies within the mainstream media appear to be absent, possibly as a result of the public not fully understanding the power of the media. Chuma and Moyo thus assert that the reigning orthodoxy of mainstream media relations emphasizes exclusion, a direct result of both political and media systems being overtly shaped by British models, as a result of the country's colonial legacy (ibid.) Fortunately, as an overwhelmingly diverse developing nation, South Africa presents a compelling case of 'mixed' political communications. Glenn & Matte pronounce this compound of communication – where 'pre-modern, modern and post-modern' features rally side by side in the media landscape – to be a style attracting very different views from citizens, well surmised by the following:

“For many black South Africans, the media landscape may seem characteristically modern: access limited to broadcast television or news provided in indigenous languages by a public broadcaster, or to widely read populist tabloid newspapers.

For many wealthier South Africans, particularly whites, the media landscape now has all the characteristics of post-modernity: it is characterized by fragmentation, almost unlimited choice, and a diminishing sense of national conversation or shared political destiny.” (2011:2)

While racial difference is important for understanding political participation in light of historical and enduring social inequalities, it is important to keep in mind that the democratic government has brought millions into higher economic categories, across

racial divides. At the same time, Leibbrandt & Woolard (2001) observe that “the bottom two fifths have moved backwards in real terms”, with this segment most adopting the favoured medium of political protest to communicate frustration at political representation. Thus, while the rest of the country may be defined as far removed from the politically conscious, highly engaged citizenry projected internationally after the elections in 1994, this bottom segment is just that – albeit violently marginalized. This suggests that while South Africans display low levels of political participation beyond the ballot box – in itself not especially impressive – the country ranks highly on the violent protest log.

This may be attributed to two factors; firstly, if citizens believed that their frustrations would be attended to, they would communicate them differently. Instead, the political system of proportional representation offers few incentives for elected officials, or even aspiring candidates, to engage in communication with ordinary citizens since party leaders have an almost total leverage over electing officials. Secondly, strikes and protests suggest a return by citizens to familiar forms of political expression learnt during the resistance movement against apartheid. In as much as the State is still on a communication learning curve, attempting to master the practice of democracy, so too are citizens faced with struggles to adapt to the scope and speed of neo-liberal development. Thus, in much the same way that former liberation organizations had to *unlearn* many of the habits developed during their years in exile (Glenn, 2008a) so too must the media and citizens unlearn many habits. One such habit is the tendency of the domestic news media, when reporting on major domestic events, to pander to how the rest of the world has covered those same events, what Glenn & Matte term ‘media triangulation’ (2011:22). Interestingly, Schraeder and Endless observe an interesting post-apartheid development: the manner in which international media have treated South Africa more severely (1998:29-36). The same thus applies to domestic media representation of events and actors - it can even be argued that domestic issues are increasingly mediated by sensitivity to international media’s opinion of South Africa.

This might be perceived as a tendency towards imitating media policies and regulations that are perceived as acceptable to Western countries. In spite of this, Kupe notes that “while not immune to the influences of global or local clamours for enhanced media freedom, States in Africa, with a few exceptions, continue to drive – at their own pace – the process of communication reform” (2007). With this in mind, consistent calls from the State for more patriotic reporting by the media appears to

be more than just a call for sunshiny journalism but rather a thinly-veiled slight against privately owned media that often come across as anti-establishment. With the fate of the public service broadcaster inextricably bound to the whims of the ruling party, privately owned media currently reports from a very different ideological position to that of 'patriotic' public media.

According to Chuma & Moyo, in this "obtaining, polarised climate, the media have become 'tribunes for competing elites in capital, civil society and the state'" (2009) often with media reforms implemented not necessarily to augment an inclusive public sphere, but rather to mollify critics and donors. The selected literature on this subtheme is important for shedding light into the political economy of the media and resultant discursive spaces, but falls short of new ideas for improved relations, transactions and mechanisms (that combine to form observable social processes in the public sphere) to offer recommendations into mitigating the impact of social cleavages on national development.

2.4. Socially excluded from the public sphere: potential for new media?

Olsen (1999) explains that social exclusion is considered normatively wrong in European democracies, because the belonging of citizens is considered sacrosanct, where 'belonging' is not just a link between the individual and the state, which confers some legal rights to citizens (McBride 2013b: 3) Rather, it includes a sense of shared solidarity - a deeper sense of shared history and values – as opposed to an act of charity, described as distinct from individualistic concepts of democratic rights articulated by Habermas (ibid). In South Africa, the socially excluded poor have been redesigned as policy targets, responsibilities of the State. Protest action can be interpreted as return to the more familiar form of political expression learnt during the struggle against apartheid (ibid) but Glenn & Matte argue that

"whatever frustrations people may have about the scope and speed of welfare and infrastructural development, they are exacerbated by what people experience as marginalization at the hands of an indifferent, if not hostile set of elected representatives." (2011:10)

In the South African context, Habermas' concept of a 'public sphere' assists in trying to understand the possibilities and limits to civic engagement, and how new media may be used by to improve cultures of citizenship and representation. This is posited on the assumption that political knowledge is gleaned from interpersonal

communication, public sphere interactions, and political participation leading to “social action, where different social understandings of the world lead to different social actions, and therefore the social construction of knowledge and truth has social consequences (Burr, 1995; Gergen, 1985)” in McBride (2013c: 7).

In this communicative environment, the arrival of the Internet and related ICTs are potentially reformist more so than revolutionary because virtual political engagement mirrors traditional political systems, where elite political actors remain in charge of what is communicated and how. This naturally impacts on citizen’s political knowledge and resultant opportunities to respond to this information by means of deliberation and political participation. Further, when analysing the extent to which media and communications are succeeding in empowering citizens, it is important to acknowledge that “digital communications may be a means of identify a deeper issue of empty citizenship, with South Africans not actively engaging with salient issues” (McBride 2013b: 4) such as protests and the policing thereof. As such, in spite of what Jones (2006) describes as the ubiquitous “wraparound presence” of the new plurality of media, digital communication may have the potential to improve this, but it cannot single-handedly create a culture of citizenship (McBride 2013b: 10).

According to the original conceptualization of the Habermasian public sphere “it should be a universally accessible space, within which free and rational debate about matters of public interest, should thrive” (McBride 2013b: 7). Calhoun (1992) prescribes two necessary conditions for a functional, healthy public sphere: an adequate quality of discourse and quantity of participation. He offers that the best conceptualization of the public sphere considers it to be a “field of discursive connections” (1992:37). Improving this field of political communication could improve the collaboration between citizen, media & the State. According to Bennett and Iyengar (2008), radical changes in media forms have not changed the fact that elites are still in charge, thus it is necessary to constantly rethink how to improve the relationships between audiences, messages and delivery technologies in political communication processes (in McBride 2013b). As with the previous subtheme, a ‘rethinking of things’ in the selected literature is imperative for beginning to describe theoretical issues with the public sphere, but does not answer questions pertaining to the context of this research, namely, to make sense of political communication in the two case studies.

2.4 Making sense of Marikana

Marikana – A View from the Mountain and a Case to Answer by Alexander et. al. (2012) was the first publication to systematically brave the morass of mad speculation around events at Marikana using a series of interviews conducted with workers that survived the massacre. It was well received as an earnest attempt at presenting a bottoms-up account of the story by weaving a narrative of preceding events from the perspective of the strikers, thus correcting imbalances in innumerable media and official accounts privileging the view of government and business.

Twala (2012) attempts to explain and interpret the events, causes, and the aftermath of the Marikana Massacre by providing “a historical overview of the fiduciary responsibilities of the African National Congress (ANC), the mine owners and labour unions in trying to create a conducive working atmosphere in the mining sector” (2012:61). The article correctly states that the historic event “showed in one-way or the other their handicaps in attempts to solve the mineworkers’ problems in South Africa” (ibid). Discussing the impact of events on ‘a relative labour stability’ the author suggests that “Marikana was a tragic continuation of the trend of strike action being associated with violence and criminal striker behaviour” before worryingly, intimating that “one of the biggest ramifications of Marikana, aside from the tragic deaths of so many, is the perception that the anarchy that was associated with the strike benefitted the strikers” (ibid, p. 66). The article concludes by declaring that irrespective of the legitimacy of the workers protestation, “no civilized democracy could condone the behaviour of the rampant strikers at Marikana.” It is telling that this article was written prior to the establishment of the Farlam Commission, where the behaviour of all stakeholders has been put under the gavel.

Motivated by the downgrading of South Africa’s sovereign debt rating by ratings agencies Moody’s and Standard & Poor soon after the events at Marikana, Neethling (2012) examined South Africa’s political risk profile, in particular, the impact of the labour unrest in the platinum industry. Given that “political risk directly relates to the functioning of two very different, but interacting domains, namely business and politics” (2012:37), this was almost a prescient investigation of the political, economic and social conditions in South Africa that give rise to political risk for potential investment. The author adopted a methodology employing fifteen risk indicators to determine the current political risk for South Africa, where political risk is defined as

“a potential harm to a business operation arising from political behaviour” (bid). This was well contextualized by acknowledging that because South Africa is a developing country, political risk is paramount to how the country’s future political landscape will evolve. The article concludes with a valuable learning outcome by declaring that the crux of political risk in South Africa pertains to social and political-economic variables.

Written after the media investigations and Farlam Commission testimonies, Alexander’s (2013) “Marikana Massacre: A Turning point in South African History?” goes far to explore just ‘how significant’ the massacre was and ‘in what way’, so as to infer suggestions about “changes triggered by the massacre, and how these might shape the future”. Duncan (2013) however lambasted the news media in “South African journalism and the Marikana massacre: A case study of an editorial failure”, contending that “coverage was heavily biased towards official accounts of the massacre, and that it overwhelmingly favoured business sources of news and analysis” which is “significant as many miners did not feel sufficiently represented by the unions” thus the absence of their voices, independent of the main trade union protagonists, may be interpreted as a failure of journalists to communicate their narrative contributing to the entrenching of dominant versions of events. In addition, she identifies themes that negatively represent the miners; organizational and occupational challenges influencing news coverage; and more generally, problems associated with South Africa’s political economy reproducing and reinforcing social inequalities.

Marikana “exposed the most unstable configuration of forces in post-apartheid South Africa, forged through entrenched social and economic inequalities”, and Bond & Mottiar (2013) similarly expose the context of neoliberalism, a history of social movements and a contemporary reality of widespread ‘popcorn protests’ in their efforts to make sense of Marikana. Exploring historical metaphors and political lessons leads the authors to suggest that looking into the future, contemporary South African narratives – be they based on ‘nationalism’, ‘populism’, ‘black consciousness’, ‘corporatism’, ‘liberalism’ and ‘neoliberalism’ – “all appear inadequate to the tasks at hand on the platinum belt and so many other workplaces and communities” (2013:299). They conclude with a well-formed suggestion to rebuild from micro-politics by discarding “any remaining illusions that the forces of ‘liberation’ will take South Africa to genuine freedom”, a lingering and permanent

effect of Marikana, “so long as protesters keep dodging police bullets and moving the socio-economic and political-ecological questions to centre stage” (ibid.)

Ndlovu (2013) presents a refreshingly alternative critique of the Marikana massacre using decolonial analysis to explain how “the modern world system has, since its advent in 1492 as global power structure, been producing a series of ‘Marikana-like’ conditions and events on the part of the non-Western subject that underlies its hierarchical arrangement” (2013:46). It echoes this research’s approach to the event as more than an accident or solitary happening, and in doing so “explicates how the modern South African State and capital are part of the same ‘colonial power matrix’” (ibid), to prove the hypothesis that the two were bound to collude against labour during the Marikana massacre.

A relatively recent publication, Botiveau’s (2014) exploration of South Africa’s changing labour relations in the context of the politics of Marikana is corroborative to this work by virtue of the author stating from the onset that the mining strikes presented such an enduring challenge because they were organized through and by the AMCU, beyond of course a degree a spontaneity from the striking miners. The paper explicates on the complexity of the threat posed by the AMCU to the existing labour regime by contextualizing the demise of the NUM. It also explores the political dimensions of the mineworkers’ mobilization as having “triggered another iteration of the recurring debate about the type of economic policy required to transform South Africa’s society and economy” (2014:129). The article concludes by averring that Marikana was not accidental and, giving credence to the hypothesis of this work, establishes that in actuality, the massacre represents “a new era of labour relations that will have far-reaching repercussions all the way from the mines deep underground to the top level of the state” (2014:137). The learning outcome of this subtheme was a curiosity to explore the repercussions revealed by media representation of the processes of political communication in the platinum industry, from the miners down below to the State high above. This was primarily due to the need for existing work to further articulate the influence of media effects on contextualizing contemporary development challenges in South Africa.

2.5. Contextualizing poverty, protest and social exclusion

Relative to this, a useful study on media representation of poverty and protest is Iyengar’s (1990) “Framing Responsibility for Political Issues: The Case of Poverty” as

well as Milner's (2006) "The Politics of Social Justice: A visual and verbal analysis of poverty in the news." For more contextualized overview of poverty in South Africa, Leibbrandt et. al's (2009) "A long-run perspective on contemporary poverty and inequality dynamics" is valuable when moving towards an understanding of social justice in communication relative to poverty and protest. To this end, Hickey and Bracking (2005) eloquently elucidate on both social justice and representation in "Exploring the Politics of Chronic Poverty: From Representation to a Politics of Justice?" Satgar (2012) explores this from the perspective of national development by examining actual economic practices to question the depiction of the post-Apartheid state as a 'developmental state', and implications for poverty and inequality in this context. The article concludes by "recognizing that South Africa's deep globalisation and globalised state affirm a form of State practice, beyond utilising market mechanisms, that includes perpetrating violence to secure its existence. Marikana makes this point (2012:33)."

2.6. *Tragedy and triumph on the platinum belt*

To date, scholarship and commentary on the pervasive unrest in the platinum industry has neglected the economic and socio-political drivers that created the environment in the first place. One such unquestioned driver is the abandonment in droves of the National Metalworkers Union (NUM), the majority trade union in the platinum industry at the time, in favour of a minority start-up union, the AMCU. Early commentary by the press on the unrest in the platinum industry fingered third parties, ranging from *muti*-men and *sangomas* to disaffected NUM members¹, thus missing an opportunity for early analysis of the causes and implications of the industrial action. Later commentary zeroed into the gross inequality, poverty and unemployment characterizing the lives of the miners and the appalling living conditions experienced by those at the forefront of the economic struggle in South Africa.

Both approaches are important. Nonetheless, this research is concerned more with the study of how driving forces have matured post-apartheid and how the news media can contribute to strategic suggestions for the platinum industry case study,

¹ For a snapshot see: [What's behind South Africa's mine violence?](#), CNN, 14 September 2012; [Of Marikana, Malema and Mangaung: South Africa's Faultlines](#), Foreign Policy Blogs, 19 September 2012; [Marikana men queued for muti - police](#), News24, 8 November 2012.

and by extension political communication for development. “Marikana Massacre and Strike Violence Post-Apartheid” is useful for presenting pertinent “questions on South Africa’s socio-economic and political order and the integrity of the industrial relations regime” (Chiguno 2013:3) as the paper succinctly outlines the underlying socio-economic and political factors governing actions by relevant actors.

This subtheme assists in linking the previous subtheme’s question of how to contextualize poverty and protest in South Africa’s development, by providing a conceptual home for these struggles: the platinum mines. The works reviewed in these subthemes neither answer questions about the relationship between poverty and protest or how the media reports on it in these illustrative case studies, but the critical insights afforded allow for a progressive move towards an exploration of the potential for peace journalism approaches.

2.7. Peace Journalism

Bratic & Schirch suggest that while

“History has shown that the media can incite people towards violence... the media’s impact on the escalation of conflict is more recognized than the media’s impact on peace building.” (2007:7)

Hyde-Clarke explores attention in the history of communication scholarship to the media’s role in war, observing a lack of scrutiny of the role of the media in relation to peace. This points to the tendency to disregard the role of the news media as a global actor and agent for change (2012:23). As such, the presentation of new visions is critical if, as Entman and Rojecki (2011) suggest, the news media may either “produce broader inequalities, or serve as a form of resistance and contestation, offering alternative discourses” based on how mediatized political information is framed and categorized.

Galtung (1998) explains that conflict reporting may be categorized according to whether attention is on the conflict and possible means of resolution, or whether focus is centred on the acts of violence and which side emerges as the victor. This usually entails events being discussed in terms of advances and losses sustained by clearly identified combatants, proof of news media reliance on conflict frames with

inescapable potential for sensationalism. In *The Structure of Foreign News*, Galtung & Ruge (1965) identify the following factors as likely to influence the newsworthiness of an event: threshold; frequency; negativity; unexpectedness; unambiguity and; reference to elites. These factors naturally speak to contemporary reporting being event-driven rather than process driven (Kempf, 1999 as cited in Peleg, 2007:4).

Therefore, although Hyde-Clarke's suggestion originally recommended peace journalism to address coverage of war and direct conflict, it can also be used to analyse instances of social violence, especially given that South Africa is not a community at peace, just a community not at war (2012:30). In light of the wide-reaching social implications of political and economy activity, the learning outcomes of this proposition are extended to suggest that the approach might be applied to protest and strike action too, especially given the propensity for these contentious gatherings to turn violent. While not answering the question of just how useful peace journalism in the South African context can be, these studies were nonetheless formative for promising the benefits thereof.

2.8. Democratic Capitalism and Representation of Elites

Pzeworski (1992) refers to democratic transitions characterized by simultaneous economic and democratic reform as 'democratic capitalism'. A political economic analysis of this pays attention to power dynamics inherent in the establishment, practice and consolidation of democracy, with O'Donnell (1996) pointing out that in the developing world, the deep social and economic crises inherited from "previous authoritarian regimes reinforce certain practices and conceptions about democratic power and authority" (Edozie 2008:45). Consequently, political structures are more inclined toward a 'delegative democracy' more so than a 'representative democracy' (ibid.)²

In *Capitalist Development and Democracy*, Reuschmeyer et. al. (1992) formulate various power dynamic constellations underlying the performance of democratic regimes. The first relates to "class coalitions in the context of the contemporary developing world, dominant classes are usually configured around political elites"

² "The deep social and economic crises that these democracies inherit from their previous authoritarian regimes reinforce certain practices and conceptions about democratic power and authority. Delegative democracy is not strongly embedded with either liberal values or the long-term historical features of representative institutions" (O'Donnell 1996 in Edozie 2008:45).

(Edozie 2008:45). Speaking to the inclination of delegative democracies to prioritise business and investment interests over citizens' interests, Block (1987) qualifies the autonomy that democratic political elites (or 'state managers') ensure for certain business classes, arguing that "the government's organisational position within the political system gives it a broader national perspective than most select constituents or corporate interests" (ibid). These arguments give rise to Edozie's question: "does capitalism subvert democracy?" (2008:47)

Scholars like Almond (1991) have asked similar questions such as—does capitalism support democracy? In attempting to respond to these questions, Edozie explores the synergy between capitalism and democracy in contemporary democratic regimes in Africa. This is realized by addressing "the paradoxes and dilemmas borne out of the complex integration between the two" using a political economy approach focusing on individual and collective actors, "whose power is grounded in the control of economic and organisational resources and/or of coercive force... the political and economic relations between a political system and the society to analyse processes of democracy" (2008:47).

While falling short of contextualizing issues of elite representation in the context of this democratic-capitalism nexus, this shortcoming of reviewed works on this subtheme are invaluable for introducing questions leading to potential thematic lessons about South Africa's political economy and key players, through studying representation of elite actors.

3. Learning outcomes

The learning outcome of this literature review is twofold: firstly for this research to be imbued with qualitative insights from pertinent previous studies and secondly to inform the construction of a theoretical scaffold in the following chapter. Approaching relevant literature thematically proved advantageous to studying political participation 'by other means', and focusing particularly on protests and strikes made way for the research to begin exploring the potential for a developing a social justice of communication. In turn, this led to questions about the development of the public sphere. The chosen case studies discuss a segment of the population that is socially excluded from the public sphere, to the point of having to resort to dangerous protest and strike action to communicate with their representatives. Consequently, the use of

online news media motivated the exploration of new media's potential to mitigate this challenge.

In trying to make sense of Marikana, the selected literature assisted in contextualizing poverty, protest and social exclusion to investigate the events in the platinum industry, and how various journalistic techniques such as framing contribute to the construction of narratives. Finally, exploration of work pertaining to the representation of elites in contemporary democratic capitalism facilitated a holistic approach to national development in South Africa because it integrates social, political and economic processes. This assisted in grounding this study of political communication by reminding the researcher that comparative political research, by virtue of exploring different arenas, must always take into account the interplay between social, economic, and political dynamics; and the constitutive role played by the media in constructing and communicating these processes.

The crises of poverty, inequality and resultant implications for the idea of class-based political representation underscore problematized processes by which the capacity and expression of voice in the public sphere are conceived. The ghosts of globalized capitalism reveal themselves in national political economies, and the struggle to manage expressions of discontent with class difference. In South Africa, social exclusion, and subsequent strikes protesting this, might be an apartheid spectre but it is undoubtedly a development demon. The increasing emphasis on identity in official and media discourse speaks to the ironic revalorization of class and cultural discourses, thus equivocating the causes and mechanisms of barriers to social transformation. The following chapter establishes a theoretical foundation for further exploration of this.

CHAPTER THREE:

Theoretical Framework

1. Introduction

This chapter is a theoretical introduction to the propositions iterated in this research. Critical discourse analysis allows for intentionally counter-intuitive suggestions, to subvert the gut reactions generally resulting from sensationalist reporting of the events investigated. The aim is to ground the reading of media coverage with sound theoretical explanations and inferences to pose new speculative questions that theorize both a 'social justice of communication' and reportage of social, political and economic events; frame the social reality of social exclusion and; present theories of representation with respect to elite actors.

Theoretically, the processes explored relate to the national development of South Africa: the relations between the State, media and actors in the mineral-energy complex (miners, management and trade unions) as well as the transactions and mechanisms of political communication taking place between them. As discursive subthemes, these are best explored via critical-political discourse analysis as this approach

“deals especially with the reproduction of political *power*, *power abuse* or *domination* through political discourse, including the various forms of resistance or counter-power against such forms of discursive dominance. In particular such an analysis deals with the discursive conditions and consequences of social and political *inequality* that results from such domination.”

(Fairclough 1995; van Dijk 1993:12)

van Dijk establishes that context is paramount when categorizing discourse as 'political' or not, asserting that “the study of political discourse should not be limited to the structural properties of the text or talk itself, but also include a systematic account of the context and its relations to the discursive structures” (1997:14). Thus, the theoretical context being unpacked is, in sum, the development of democracy.

2. Theorizing a Social Justice of Communication

Wolin (1996) describes democracy – constantly chased, seldom seeing the light of day – as 'fugitive' and rather than existing as a constant condition, experiences what

Blaug (1999) describes as often short-lived 'breakouts'. Theoretically, this research begins with the understanding that "events constitute what historians call 'turning points'" (Sewell 2005:218), supplemented by the 'vantage point' notion formulated by Burawoy (2001). The case studies selected are thus conceptualised as ephemeral evidence of a democratic breakout, presenting an opportunity for panoramic analysis of watershed moments in South Africa's political development.

While this research is inherently a study in political development, the data engaged with to prove the hypotheses may be described as mediated communication, having been sourced from online news media. Apropos to this, the guiding socio-political approach adopted is the 'social justice of communication' discussed in the discourse ethics of Jurgen Habermas' 'deliberative' theory of democracy. Habermas has been selected as the governing theorist of this work because he theorises "communication in terms of the realization of social justice" (Morris 2009:135). When discussing the logical order of 'communicative rationality', he asserts "one accepts or rejects a speaker's claim to validity on the basis of a 'warranty' implicit in the communicative offer, namely, that reasons can be given that would secure the claim to the satisfaction of speaker and hearer" (Habermas, 1984, in Morris 2009:147). Naturally, this demands "reciprocity of mutual understanding for the recognition" of validity to materialise, and result in communicatively coordinated action (Morris 2009:148).

It is contended that the establishment of motivation for mutual recognition takes place within the process of political communication. A fundamental condition for mutual understanding is however the freedom to accept or reject claims on validity. This proves to be key in Habermas' exploration of discourse ethics, which "at its most elemental requires actual participation in discourse and deliberation that is free and equal" (Morris 2009:150). According to Bohman, this demands 'effective social freedom' to avoid the 'political poverty' of citizens, given the greater social freedom held by dominant economic groups by virtue of their unofficial power (1997:338). An example of this is found in the practices of framing and agenda setting by media corporations, where some topics are excluded from public debate, thereby impoverishing everyone's political equality with respect to discourse development.

Fruitful social freedom in deliberative democracy is contingent not only on "the capacity to convert resources and other objective conditions into achievements of the agent's goals [but] by effective participation in a public process of decision-making" (Bohman 1997:334). In turn, effective participation is contingent on the uptake or

recognition by others, motivated by 'the cooperative search for truth' (Habermas 1990:91) thus revealing that "one of the goals of deliberation is cooperation itself" (Morris 2009:151). But what when one agent is more amenable to cooperation than the other? Or the social freedom of an agent is characterised as compromised more than effective?

Morris describes these tensions as the point where a connection may be established between communicative action and social bonding, as it is through the "raising and redeeming of validity claims" that the binding effect of sociality is established (2009:151). Further, Habermas explains that no longer is solidarity limited to the embodiment of a particular collectivism such as the concrete 'lifeworld' of the nation, but is extended and universalised through discourse into "an ideal communication community... that includes all subjects capable of speech and action" (1993:99). At the same time however, he asserts that the "system of rights and morality that protects individual identity cannot safeguard the integrity of individual persons without at the same time safeguarding the vitally necessary web of relationships of mutual recognition" (1993:98). From this, Morris establishes that

"the tension between individual autonomy and the solidarity of group membership is resolved not through any new identity but through the protection and enhancement of the processes of communication that allow the raising of validity claims and the communicative contexts of mutual recognition in which persons of equal dignity appear." (2009:152)

It is thus theorised that studying protest and strike action, as influential processes of political communication in South Africa, presents an opportunity to better understand (a) the validity claims of its citizens and (b) the communicative contexts of mutual recognition in which they are played out. In turn, this will allow for an investigation of the character of mutual recognition between the State and its citizens. It is however duly recognised that often there exists considerable distance between Habermas' political theory and the complexities of practical-political life, with its pluralism of roles, positions and arguments (ibid). Further,

"the communications of politicians, interest group players, bureaucratic organisations, corporations and the mass media itself are overwhelmingly strategic and instrumental and give little opportunity for the kind of free, open and reciprocal conditions necessary for a social justice of communication." (ibid)

Therefore, if the quality of discursive mediation in political communication is improved, this could reflect on political responsiveness, participation and the recognition of legitimacy in decision-making. The Marikana massacre and the platinum wage strike are approached as both democratic break-outs and vantage points, having precipitated a process of deliberation by mineworkers, in spite of an almost non-existent social justice of communication, given the compromised social freedom held by this group. As processes of political communication rich in discursive mediation, these happenings contested the compromises that obscure deliberative democracy, by protesting existing relations of mutual recognition and equality.

3. Framing the social reality of social exclusion

As a process inherent in discursive mediation, the foundations of framing theory rest on the widely accepted view that the media shapes public opinion (McBride 2013a: 1). According to Chong and Druckman (2007:100) the term 'frame' is used by communication scholars and political scientists in two ways: first, referring to the words, images, phrases, and presentation styles that a speaker uses when relaying information about an issue or event (Gamson & Modigliani 1989:24), where the chosen frame reveals what the speaker sees as most relevant to the topic, its salient point. Secondly, a frame in thought may refer to an individual's cognitive understanding of a given situation, which unlike frames in communication which reflect a speaker's emphasis, refers to what an audience member believes to be the most salient aspect of an issue (Chong & Druckman 2007:100). "The essence of framing is selection to prioritize some facts, images, or developments over others thereby unconsciously promoting one particular interpretation of events" (Norris et al 2003:11).

The use of framing as a construct of political communication in the initial reporting of the events at Marikana reveals the "tension between covering the event as a news story, and providing sufficient attention to its underlying context" (Neuman et. al., 1992:75 in McBride 2013a), a phenomena Iyengar identifies as the "episodic imperative of daily news coverage" (1991:67). As conceptual tools used by the media to convey, interpret and evaluate information, frames make it possible for the coverage of events to avoid dealing with processes or on-going conditions because they are often too difficult to package in an understandable way (McBride 2013a:2) Further, the framing of events within a dominant frame or narrative simultaneously

creates a dominant 'common sense' among the general citizenry, which structures the idea of the event, public reaction and possible interventions by the State and civil society (ibid). McQuail observed this effect on the audience as the media constructing social reality (1994:327).

According to Milner, social exclusion may be defined as a phenomenon characterized by both lack of resources and inaccessibility to institutions and social processes (2006:46 in McBride 2013c). This leads the suffering individual into a concomitant process whereby s/he is faced by uncertainty around the possibility of satisfying their needs – in this case, the promotion and protection of the rights enshrined by the Constitution (McBride 2013c: 3).

4. Theorizing reportage of the political economy

As the agenda-setters in South Africa, the news media is positioned to 'speak truth to power'. Labour reporting can thus be theorized in the context of the sociology of the news, or more simply put, the factors shaping news production in commercial news organizations. According to Schudson, rather than being a random response to accidental events, news production is a phenomenon that follows predictable patterns, and is hence systematic (2002: 263-282). Unfortunately, according to Duncan, substantive labour reporting has fallen prey to this system, replaced by a reportage style of episodically informing the public about major events, like strikes, as a result of the decline in status of the labour beat in newsrooms which is often assigned to inexperienced journalists (2013:13).

Simultaneously, business journalism has experienced a boom, making it a coveted beat, but one that has conflated 'economic' and 'business' journalism; unwittingly (or not) insinuating that reporting on economic issues should promote free market economics (ibid.) This is problematic because it constrains alternative theoretical debate on economic developments, infused as it is with a predisposition towards neoliberal capitalist values. Further, given the nature of journalism in South Africa as a largely middle-class profession, unacknowledged class bias in the exchange of information naturally features in the construction of news narratives. According to Alexander,

"Workers had a history of their stories being distorted and misrepresented by the media, because of their pro-business bias: academics on the other hand, were seen as being more impartial."

Further complicating representation of worker realities are the news values affecting journalistic practice, two of which have been identified by McNair as formative for how news production is structured in commercial news organizations: deviation and focus on elites. Here, the notion of deviation refers to newsworthy events constituting disruptions in the norm, giving scant attention to the causal factors of the deviance in the first place; and a focus on elites as a result of their actions “affecting more people than the actions of those who do not hold power” (2001:78-79).

5. Theories of representation and elite framing

Frame assessment allows for the more discursive aspects of this research, in particular, theories of representation. Entman (1993:52) describes frames as a way to “select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation”. In light of politicians having become celebrities in their own right, Stayner and Wring (2004:4) and Tresch (2009:67) write that given the ‘mediatisation of politics’, “the question of who gets into the news and why is of paramount importance.”

Larson however, observes that “the politics of representation does not result from a conspiracy between producers/ writers/ politicians”, adding that often, “politicians accuse the media of being biased ... distort messages and hinder communication with people” (2006:195). This might be attributed to the belief posited by Gunther et al. (2000:252) that “if journalists were once lapdogs of politicians they are now attack dogs.” According to Barnhurst (2011) “representation is the pattern of action and language revealing what people imagine” – in politics, this occurs through “the devices and techniques citizens and leaders employ on the public stage”(2011:574).

6. Learning outcomes

Constructing this theoretical scaffold resulted in a dual learning outcome: exploration of (a) the validity claims of its citizens and (b) the communicative contexts of mutual recognition in which they are played out. This introduced the importance of reciprocity of mutual understanding, as recognition is intrinsic for communicatively coordinated action. A review of media framing theory highlighted that selection of facts, images or developments at once prioritizes this information, and thus promotes

certain interpretation of events. Similarly, the devices and techniques of media representation constitute a pattern of action and language revealing what people imagine, or alternatively, what the media influences people to imagine. As such, the 'pro-business' accusation lobbied against the media by striking workers, speaks to a history of stories being distorted and misrepresented. This motivated for added attention to the often hidden use of media effects to (re)describe the events studied in this thesis, and expose discursive dominance such as the prioritizing of official or business accounts. In this way, the processes of political power, power abuse and domination may be more deeply explored through the selected case studies in the next chapters.

CHAPTER FOUR:

A Mediatized Massacre

This chapter investigates the Marikana massacre and contextualizes mediated communication in South Africa by exploring media characterization of the most visible State force, the South African Police Services (SAPS). The chapter employs a case study of the effects of media framing in reportage on the events at Marikana. As media content has been sourced from an online newspaper, concluding comments include insights into the discursive environment offered by technological advancements.

1. The Massacre at Marikana, 2012

1.1. Background

34 striking platinum miners were killed by the South African Police Services on 16 August 2012, outside the small town of Marikana. The gravitas of this happening has been compared to historic events of Sharpeville (1960), Soweto (1976), the strikes in Durban (1973) and according to Alexander (2012),

It has been described as a 'watershed moment' (Bizos quoted in Tolsi 2012), a 'turning point' (Legassick 2012; Pityana 2012), a 'tipping point' (Gumede 2012), 'seminal' (Wikipedia 2013), a 'seismic event' (Alexander et al. 2012) and as marking a 'tectonic shift' (Smith 2012)... For one US historian, the killings 'signalled the quasi-official end of post-apartheid South Africa's revolutionary era' (Cole 2013).

Sewell writes: "social transformations that are effectuated in events depend on the details of what happens" (2004:219). As such, this section briefly outlines (1) the run up to the massacre; (2) the workers' demands and (3) responses. This is in the interests of preliminary protest event analysis to allow for an investigation of news media representation of the SAPS. It is hypothesized that "there is value in assessing significant events in order to influence resulting processes" (ibid), in particular, changes triggered by the massacre and the future implications of this.

1.2. Run up to a massacre

In foregrounding the Marikana massacre as a turning point, it is prudent to note that this was not a solitary event but intrinsically linked to the broader post-apartheid order and industrial relations regime accompanying it. In January 2012 a strike wave started at Impala platinum mine and spread to coal, iron and other sectors. The initial strike was started as an insurgency by rock drill operators, uncompromising in their demands for a 200% wage increase (from R3000 to R9000 per month), and from the onset, adamantly against the involvement of the sole organized union at the time, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) (Alexander 2014). The strike was characterized by unprecedented worker militancy and workers not only persuaded others to join them, but also to 'connect the strike to broader community struggles' (ibid) thus elevating and blurring lines between wage strike and popular protest action. As one unemployed community member explained:

'We saw that it was clear the police was prepared to use brutal force as a result we had no choice as a community, we had to support the cause of the workers'. (Chiguno 2013:160)

1.3. The workers' demands

Like many others, the workers at Lonmin were inspired by the Impala strike, which became a strong reference point when demanding a wage adjustment outside the collective bargaining framework. The simultaneous rise of the Association of Mining and Construction Union (AMCU) further challenged existing industrial relations in South Africa, making it apparent that a new era in democratic development was rapidly unfolding.

Striking for a wage demand of R12 500 per month, triple the net salaries paid to ordinary workers, the workers' action was 'unprotected', as it was led by an independent strike committee, not a union, meaning that they could be dismissed for not abiding by the regulations of the Labour Relations Act (Alexander, 2014). In spite of this, after one day of striking, the majority of Lonmin's 28,000-strong workforce had downed tools, driven primarily by wage demands in addition to other key drivers including, but not limited to, associated inequality, injustice, hazardous locations, health concerns, debt-traps and housing concerns (ibid).

1.4. Response

According to Bishop Jo Seoka (2012), who later helped broker a settlement: “the massacre could have been avoided if Lonmin’s management had listened to the workers’ concerns.” Fingers can however be pointed in many directions. The first book publication on the massacre, *A View from the Mountain and a Case to Answer* provides the following account:

On the night the strike started, 10 August 2012, NUM mobilised scabs to break the action. The following day, 11 August, shop stewards from the union shot at a peaceful march of about 3000 strikers, seriously wounding two of them. The workers fled; eventually arriving at a koppie (an igneous outcrop) they called the ‘mountain’.

Here they remained, arming themselves with traditional weapons in order to defend themselves from NUM. On 13 August, Frans Beleni, NUM’s general secretary, called for ‘the deployment of the Special Task Force or the South African Defence Force’.

On 16 August, three days later, this task force carried out the massacre. (Alexander et al. 2012, 178).

On 23 August, President Jacob Zuma established the Commission of Inquiry into the events at Marikana, with retired judge of the Supreme Court of Appeal Ian Farlam as chairperson (Dixon, 2013:5). The search for smoking guns began almost immediately, as did efforts to wipe hands clean of culpability. With the hindsight afforded by the proceedings at the Farlam Commission and the evidence it brought to light, Alexander’s account two years later is as follows:

Lonmin attempted to absolve itself of responsibility, claiming that clashes were a consequence of competition between NUM and a new union, the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU). But the strike committee included members of both organisations, and union leaders rightly denied that rivalry caused the stoppage.

In the days leading to the massacre Lonmin lobbied government to treat the workers’ actions as criminal, rather than an industrial dispute, thus justifying a police response ... Lonmin also provided crucial logistical support for the police ... Critically, the company refused to talk to their employees.

(Alexander 2014)

It is impossible to provide more than a flavour of the narrative evident in the Farlam Commission coverage and commentary, but amidst various accounts of the order of events on the day (and the questionable claims from the SAPS that they acted in self-defence), “there is no doubt that police gunfire was the immediate cause of the massacre. The police killed all 34 men (and no police were injured)” (ibid). Chillingly, it was not the expected public order police (POP) units that were deployed but rather,

special paramilitary task teams, armed only with automatic weapons (ibid, p.608.)

Finally,

Indeed, the police ordered four mortuary vehicles early on the morning of the killings, so they were expecting deaths to occur. Immediately after the massacre, police placed weapons alongside dead strikers, making it appear that they had been a mortal threat.

Recently, having analyzed a police hard-drive, the inquiry's evidence leaders stated that the SAPS had given evidence that was 'in material respects not the truth'. Evidence is mounting that the massacre was not an accident, but, rather, the consequence of a premeditated decision to use lethal force against strikers. (Alexander, 2014)

2. Case Study:

Framing effects used in coverage of the Marikana massacre

This case study reflects on the use of framing by the South African news media and how this has influenced reporting on the events at Lonmin mine in August 2012. This research submits that the framing of events significantly impacted on the meting out of information. First, an overview of framing theory is presented, followed by content analysis of a sample of news articles from *The Times Live* during this period, which investigates various frames employed when reporting on events in the week preceding and following 16 August 2012. This section investigates the characteristics of the political news media landscape in South Africa, as well as the official response by the State with respect to the actions of the SAPS at Marikana. This will allow for insights into the processes of communication between citizens (striking miners), news media and State.

2.1. Frames used in initial reporting

How the strike at Marikana was depicted by the news media has been characterised by a variety of different frames, at various points in the unfolding of events. Union rivalry was the presiding interpretation in the weeks preceding 16 August 2012, however "the initial coverage of the massacre, and the selection of visuals and video footage carried by both print media and television, played out to the world, appeared to indicate that the miners were shot in a suicidal charge at police lines" (McBride 2013a:2). In a news article titled, "Marikana: We should be incandescent with rage", Reid (2012) suggests that it is laughable to consider that one of the first prevailing frames attributed the loss of lives to primitive superstitions held by the miners (the evidence being the use of protective *muti*), resulting in a suicidal kamikaze-style

charge against the SAPS, whose response was (naturally) self-defence. These initial frames thus labelled either the 'violent' miners or the 'embattled' labour unions culpable for the deaths.

Masango (2012) notes that blaming of trade unions was two-pronged: either the NUM was at fault for not adequately representing the workers' interests or the AMCU was at fault for leading them down a dangerous path of great expectations (Masango, p.2012). Both of these approaches totally exempted the role of mine owners. Only later did issues of corporate social responsibility on the part of Lonmin mine gain traction, instead, another popular frame was presenting events in the context of threats to the economy, "in terms of industrial unrest disconcerting foreign investment, ultimately leading to the collapse of the economy" (McBride 2013a: 3). Freemantle (2012) implies that the emphasis placed on the mining sector woes facilitated the communication of a false 'common knowledge' about the 'descent' of South Africa's economy, arguing that analysis based on real data, not framed by sentiment, is critical when reporting on 'economic' knowledge, in order to avoid conjectural communication.

The frames discussed are but a few adopted in the coverage of events at Marikana. This study focuses on two opposing frames, which gained weight during initial news coverage: the twin peaks of police killings and police killers. "The first frame alludes to the increasing violence of protesting communities, and the second frame to the existence of an authoritarian and violent State on the other" (McBride 2013a: 3). The use of these frames, as the analysis will reveal, distracted attention from *why* the massacre happened, and subsequently, *how* to deal with the repercussions of this.

2.2. Critical analysis of dominant opposing frames

To narrow the focus, articles from *The Times Live* in the week preceding 16 August 2012 and the week after, were selected to investigate the use of framing in news reporting using the following tags: "MARIKANA", "POLICE", and "KILL". It was hypothesized that a shift in the salient points of the articles will reflect a change in frame. Sourced from preliminary research conducted in "Framing Theory" *Position Paper* (McBride 2013a), below is a synopsis of key points from the selected articles, and analysis thereof.

“Policeman killed by machete in mining union clash, death toll at 5”, 13 August 2012

- “Five people including a police officer have been killed in clashes between unions at a South African mine operated by world no. 3 platinum producer Lonmin, the most deadly round of violence in an eight-month turf war rocking the sector.”
- “The clashes involve a struggle for membership between the dominant National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and the upstart Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU).”
- “The trouble began on Friday with an illegal strike by 3,000 rock drill operators at Western Platinum mine.”

Analysis: Mention is not made of workers’ demands, or the underlying reasons for the strikes, which are incorrectly labelled as illegal, when they are merely unprotected, not in contravention of the law. Instead, reference is made to the impact on the mining sector, noting that Lonmin’s shares dropped by 1.5% in London. In this instance, the death of a policeman is used as an attention grabber, pointing to the frame of police acting in self-defence.

“Marikana locals stunned by Lonmin violence”, 17 August 2012

- “Thursday’s shooting followed the deaths of 10 people, among them police and security guards, since protests at the mine began a week ago.”
- “The protests are believed to be linked to rivalry between the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union about recognition agreements at the mine.”
- “Police Minister Nathi Mthethwa told Talk Radio 702 on Friday that more than 30 people were killed and that “many” more were injured. “Police did everything they could... but people [miners] said they were not leaving and are prepared to fight,” he said.”
- “On Thursday, Captain Dennis Adriaio said police had to use force to protect themselves. “The SA Police Service was viciously attacked by the group, using a variety of weapons, including firearms,” he said. “The police, in order to protect their own lives and in self-defence, were forced to engage the group with force.”

Analysis: Emphasis has shifted away from the sensationalism of police having been killed, to the sensationalism of police having to defend themselves against ‘vicious attack.’ Further, in terms of numbers of people killed and injured, the information presented by the Minister is vague, while the statement of innocent self-defence is vehemently asserted. This points to the beginning of a shift in the actionable character of the police – from victim of violence during strikes to perpetrators thereof.

“Killing Fields”, 17 August 2012

- “The extremely tense week-long stand-off between police and striking workers at the mine in North West ended in just over two minutes of bloodshed when the police opened fire with semi-automatic assault rifles and pistols just before 3pm yesterday.”
- “The initial outbreak of violence has been blamed on animosity between the National Union of Mineworkers and the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union.”
- “They [NUM leaders and Lonmin] have called the police to come and kill us. We are not afraid because we work underground and our lives are forever at risk,” said worker Andries Tsinyao.”

Analysis: Following the breathless reporting characterizing the actual shootings, the idea of police culpability began to be presented to the public from the viewpoint of a worker at Lonmin mine. From this point onward, initial framing of the police as victims of violent illegal strikes, acting in self-defence against crazed miners, was replaced by the beginnings of public outcry against the approach used by the police at Marikana.

“Mixed reaction to Lonmin's Marikana mine shooting”, 19 August 2012

- “The Eastern Cape ANC Youth League on Saturday said it was disgusted by the action of the SA Police Service. “The police engaged in the mass killings of defenseless workers.”
- “We are...appalled by the ANC government which behaves in exactly the same disposition of an apartheid state when interacting with our peoples demands for economic freedom,” (quote from The Eastern Cape ANC Youth League)
- Further quotes from various political stakeholders indicating calls for responsibility for events to be established.

Analysis: In line with the previous article’s analysis, focus has shifted completely from the police as victims to being fully responsible for the tragedy. The State is compared to the apartheid state because of it approving of the use of force by law enforcement bodies, indicating the beginning of the State being depicted as violently authoritarian. Critical analysis of crowd control measures is lacking, as well as a history of past instances of abuse of force by police.

“Lonmin self-defence argument queried”, 21 August 2012

- "Two core values in our democratic order include the right to life and the right to human dignity," chairman of the General Council of the Bar of SA, IAM Semanya SC said in a statement.
- "The duty to prevent, combat and investigate crime, to maintain public order, to protect and secure the inhabitants of the republic and their property, and to uphold the law, is also placed squarely on the police under the Constitution."
- "Spokespeople for the police have claimed that they acted in self-defence. These contentions should urgently be tested."

Analysis: This article is one of the first on the website to call on the Constitution to inform perspective on the tragedy, more specifically the tension between the right to protest, the duty of police to maintain public order, and all the relevant civil and political rights tied to this tension. From this perspective, the initial blind acceptance of what became common knowledge about the police acting in self-defence is challenged, and a call is made to test this contention. While this indicates a definite departure from the frame of police as victims, it is also a progression from dramatically framing law enforcement as mass killers, rationally calling for more critical attention to their culpability in the tragedy.

“Double efforts to prevent repeat of Lonmin: Mthethwa”, 21 August 2012

- "It is our responsibility both as individuals and as a nation to ensure that it does not happen again." - Police Minister Nathi Mthethwa
- ""Thursday's event is tragic because many people lost their lives in a manner that could have been avoided if all of us had adhered to the noble principles of our Constitution," he said."
- ""The police as part of our security services are always and at all material times guided by the Constitution of the Republic," Mthethwa said."
- "The events of Thursday, 16 August 2012, were not sudden eruptions but a culmination of events that were building over months and months."
- "Police were saddened by the events in Marikana, and did their best to avert violence. The loss of life among workers and members of the police service was tragic and regrettable."
- "The Constitution of the Republic guarantees us the right to strike, to protest in a peaceful orderly manner to express our dissatisfaction with anything. While all South Africans enjoy these rights, rights always come with responsibilities."

Analysis: The statements made by the Minister continue to point to the aforementioned tension between constitutional rights and responsibilities. The focus on police sentiment about the tragedy with the reminder that while the loss of life is

regrettable, and the distancing of law enforcement from responsibility for the event by calling on the nation to prevent such a tragedy from reoccurring, indicates a definite shift from police as victims defending themselves, to police as perpetrators defending themselves from criticism.

The use of Constitutional values to justify state action, and the balancing thereof are used as justification for the state exercising authority through its law enforcement agencies, instead of focusing attention on why authority was needed in the first place i.e. underlying issues that led to the tragedy and subsequently, how this authority was doled out. The information communicated by this framing, impacts on the social reality of policing in South Africa communicated to the public by the newspaper.

2.3. Discussion of Frames

While it is acknowledged that this source selection provides a limited snapshot of the shift in perceptions around the role of the police at Marikana and that the timeframe analysed precedes the appointment of the Farlam Commission, the use of frames in the selected articles reporting on events in the week before and after 16 August 2012 is evidenced by the clear shift in salient points.

The change from the frame of police as victims of strike violence caused by union rivalry to police framed as perpetrators of violence naturally resulted in much public outcry against police. Therefore, the political information communicated by both of these opposing frames is found to be lacking on the basis that public outrage at the police may have borne a very different character had the initial reporting been framed differently. Regardless of the outcome of the Farlam Commission with respect to the culpability of the police in the events on 16 August 2012 at Marikana, the framing of stories reported by the media influenced the common knowledge created around their role in events.

Initial presentation of the events as a result of union rivalry characterized by bloodthirsty violent miners, against which the police had to defend themselves, morphed over a period of two weeks to impassioned denouncing of bloodthirsty violent police. A different framing might have produced more intense, but sustainable, public sentiment around the role of police in the current environment of increasing unrest around socio-economic issues. It is asserted that had the

information communicated using both frames been framed in a more buxom historical, political and socio-economic context, the events on 16 August 2012 would not have appeared to be an exception to the norm, an isolated instance of the critical state of policing in South Africa.

3. Concluding Comments: Framing National Narratives

Irrespective of the notion that online newspapers belong to the 'new media' category, the traditional format of daily news reporting – predominantly occupied by one event at a time, preventing space to engage with an issue via deep investigative reporting to develop a more informed common knowledge – is evident in the use of framing in online news media accounts of the events at Marikana.

“The role of the police at Marikana has resulted in more attention to the long history of deeply questionable law enforcement activity, reinforced by diligent reporting of instances of police brutality, a now salient point in public consciousness” (McBride 2013a:8). Avoiding a long list of examples of media coverage of police abuse of force for the sake of brevity, this chapter revealed that “locating the SAPS dead centre of a complex event like the tragedy at Lonmin mine, either by framing them as needing to defend themselves from violence or as perpetrators thereof, prevents critical analysis of the seemingly impossible mandate of the SAPS in maintaining social order” (ibid).

Another set of parallel problems pertaining to the police is the mounting evidence of poor training and police inefficiency. This indicates that in addition to paying closer attention to the why of violent strikes, similar scrutiny is needed when discussing the basic mission of law enforcement. The impact of policing, in the context of public protest and strikes turned violent, is improbable in light of law enforcement not being the cause (nor the cure) of the root causes of the protest action.

In this chapter, it was revealed that the paucity of context and the choice of isolated salient points, contributed to the creation of sometimes misinformed and often shallow, common knowledge. Given that political communication pervades across various societal sectors, theoretical constructs that act as vectors, probing the presentation of political information, are more constructive than traditional and narrow frames. As such, the use of broader frames, better equipped to communicate contextualized information, can engender deeper understandings of the often-

untenable position occupied by the SAPS in the context of protests and strikes. “This will simultaneously lead to a better understanding of the relationship between the media and the police, and by extension the State, as it governs the actions of law enforcement bodies mandated to police social order” (ibid, p.9).

CHAPTER FIVE:

Poverty in Praxis: Protests and Strikes

As a transforming society where the national agenda is constantly contested, increasingly so by citizens living in poverty and protesting it, developing and protecting the public sphere is complex. Nonetheless, possibilities exist for both the state and the public to harness the potential of communication to improve democracy. The new societal environment resulting from technological advancements presents an opportune moment for analysis that moves past “the twin challenges of access and skills, and the twin competing views of democratic revival and prospects of a dystopian future” (McBride 2013b: 11). Before this is possible, it is imperative that the relationship between poverty and protest is emphasized, to understand the role played by the news media in communicating information about and to people that are unable to fully participate in said public sphere.

Having explored framing effects in the previous chapter, this chapter delves deeper into discourse analysis multo reflect on the performance of the South African news media, through the prism of protest as an indicator of social exclusion engendered by poverty. This is a progression of previous research that focused on the interplay between media and national development in “Poverty and Protest” *Position Paper* (2013c), operationalized using the method of critical discourse analysis on an article by veteran journalist Greg Marinovich for the Daily Maverick online newspaper, “*Marikana, on year later: the hell above and below ground*”. The aim of the chapter is to explore the contention that news media “panders to political sensitivities” in the construction of debates around protest as poverty in praxis (McBride 2013c: 2)

1. Poverty and social exclusion

Wodak and Meyer (2009) state that the method of critical discourse studies shows movement between the text and the context in which it exists. In the context of media narratives on poverty, it may be discerned that “poverty is not exterior to communication, but it is constituted in communication” (ibid). Individually, the central concepts of poverty and protest are multidimensional, multimodal, crossing numerous disciplinary frameworks, but together, are a socio-political conundrum.

The relationship between these phenomena, and equally as important, media representation thereof, is pivotal to consequent responses. It is asserted, “protest by the poor is reported on in a manner that represents the response to their grievances, subsequently neglecting the opportunity to critically report on the grievances themselves” (ibid, p.4). As a result, poverty and protest are characterised by the news media as post-apartheid pathologies, subsequently “masking the real structural elements and relations that perpetuate poverty in capitalist societies” (ibid, p.2).

2. The poverty-protest dichotomy in South Africa

2.1. The State and poverty

According to Karamoko et al, “protesters often cite the lack of accountability of government officials, along with the absence of public participation as aggravating factors for protest” (2011:3). Their data supports these complaints and reveals “protest activity is likely to increase if communities believe government officials are neglecting the promises made during election campaigns” (McBride 2013c: 3). Sociologist Ted Gurr supports the ‘frustration-aggression’ theory in his book *Why Men Rebel*, elaborating on the violence often accompanying the expression of frustration – ‘the more intense and prolonged the frustration, the greater the probability of aggression.’ He therefore posits that the intensity and scope of relative deprivation determines the potential for collective violence, concluding that frustration-aggression is the “primary source of the human capacity for violence” (1970:73).

This is a serious assertion when taking into consideration that poor communities in post-apartheid South Africa have been frustrated with the rate of change in living conditions for nearly two decades. According to Ronnie Kasrils, the ANC-Communist party leadership entered into a Faustian pact that saw the poorest South Africans being “sold down the river”, subject to the mercies of the international capitalist system as a result of being

“bequeathed an economy so tied in to the neoliberal global formula and market fundamentalism that there is very little room to alleviate the plight of most... Little wonder that their patience is running out; that their anguished protests increase as they wrestle with deteriorating conditions of life; and that those in power have no solutions. The scraps are left go to the

emergent black elite; corruption has taken root as the greedy and ambitious fight like dogs over a bone.” (Kasrils, 2013)

Research by Karamoko suggests that the winter months generally yield higher rates of protest (2011:9), a trend diametrically related to the political promises made during election period, usually before winter, to address issues of socio-economic concerns such as inadequate housing, toilets and running water and unemployment add to growing dissatisfaction in poor communities (McBride 2013c: 5). Additional motivation to protest includes nepotism and corruption claims against government officials, and when coupled with aggressive responses from law enforcement, the “ruinous relationship between poverty and protest” is exacerbated (ibid). After the tragic death of Andries Tatane at the hands of police during the 2011 service delivery protests in Ficksburg, livid community members set fire to the library and the home affairs office,³ illustrating the danger of further social exclusion by, and of, people living in poverty and protesting it.

While law enforcement needs to be capacitated to secure public order and enforce the law in a manner that protects the human rights of citizens, the selling of service delivery dreams by local politicians needs to be monitored – especially when it appears certain that they will be appointed to government positions after elections – so as to facilitate the requisite responsibility for promises made and expectations created. Similarly, the State needs to be responsible in official responses to unhappy communities and instances of protest action. According to Karamoko, President Zuma’s unannounced visits to protesting communities around the time of fatal waves of xenophobia in 2009, appeared to have incentivized dramatic protests in other communities, possibly to attract similar attention to their plight (2011:32).

The industry of strike action is akin to that of protest, where one wildcat strike often results in a ripple effect across different industries, much the same as protest action in one community giving rise to same in another. Political figures, state representatives especially, thus need to ensure that a responsible, sensitive presence in and amongst protesting and striking groups is maintained. Evaluating state responses to protest action necessarily warrants examination of media response and representation of events, as this often informs responses by the state. Before examining media representation however, detailing media discourse in the context of the poverty-protest dichotomy is necessary.

³ Reported in: *The Citizen*, “Tatane’s death was a Hit”, 17 April 2011 and “Ficksburg Erupts in Mob Violence”, 15 April 2013.

2.2. The news media and poverty

When taking into account that “most mainstream journalism is stuck in the reality-based community of empiricism” (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005: xvii), it is problematic that, as pointed out by Cladas-Coulthard (2003), the news is a cultural construct, based on recontextualizing, through a series of sources, perspectives, content and opinions by newsagents. The potential for nuanced contextualizing of the dynamics between poverty and protest is diminished by such an evidence-based approach to reporting.

Communities in protest are often construed as if they have been airbrushed into existence, as if journalists are surprised at both their existence, and their demands. This is ironic given that “protesting, socially excluded, poor people were the driving force behind democratic change in South Africa” (McBride 2013c: 6). According to Iyengar (1990), the framing of poverty affects the politics of poverty, a notion furthered by Yapa’s (1996) research into issues of subjectivity and reality with regard to poverty. Approaches of this nature refine understandings about the mechanisms of poverty discourses and might be extended to conceptualize discourse pertaining to the relationship between poverty and protest.

The need for ethical news reporting on poverty issues is irrefutable, especially in light of pervasive and prevailing challenges to information literacy. As such, the same calls for responsibility and accountability in governance structures echo about the media machinery, given that media power is somewhat akin to that of the State: either a force of legitimization and empowerment, or a medium for social exclusion. Put differently, “the binaries of the post-apartheid realities are reflected in both the state and the media, as both struggle to convince that they are winning in the struggle for transformation” (ibid, p.7). Barnett suggests that the communications sector has re-determined national interest in terms of economic development (1999: 665), as opposed to a conceptualizing it in terms of democracy. This does not bode well for transformation, as the envisaged path to political participation is found to be lacking in solidarity, or even support, for those oppressed by poverty. Compounding this, the ruling party often gives the impression of struggling to manage communication flows about its policies, as evidenced by the increased tightening of information regulation.

That the mass medium often falls short of fulfilling expectations about its post-apartheid role – medium of national unification and democratic citizenship (1999: 649) – does not need to be reiterated. Instead, this research acknowledges that “the cultural, economic and technological legacies of apartheid are intertwined and that these structural limitations inhibit positive performances by the South African news media” (McBride 2013c: 7). This is an appropriate time to “take stock of the advances made in the communication of political information from *within* the patterns of control that characterize the economy and political communication” (ibid). Keane (1990) imagines test-beds for “the possibilities of imagining and implementing new forms of institutional arrangement that examine both state control and private capital” – this research asserts that the South African communications case acts as quite an interesting one.

This dual analysis is valuable for efforts at understanding the structural effects of apartheid as an extra-colonial historical construct. Bond (2008:84) articulates that we must never afford ourselves the luxury of forgetting the historical legacy of a continent looted, with racist ideologies used to justify colonialism, resulting in people unfortunate enough to find themselves surplus to capitalism’s labour power requirements, having to fend for themselves – or simply die. Discursive formations that explore the global reality of the war on poverty having morphed into the war on the poor assist in understanding collective action against this war, allowing for extra attention to how the media represents this socio-economic struggle, and how it is politicized in the process.

Glenn and Matt observe that there is no daily offline newspaper regularly reporting on government policy, or the structural impact that this has on South African society, following the convergence of the former white English and Afrikaans print media and the disappearance of a radical left-wing press (2011:19). The print media is thus prioritized in this chapter, as a detailed investigation of the commercialized communications juggernaut is beyond the limitations of this chapter. “*The Daily Maverick* heralded a new wave of new(s) media in the country, apparently unconstrained by overt politicization or commercialization” (McBride 2013c: 8), and has been selected for discourse analysis because this relatively young news publication proved itself seminal in communicating information about the events that transpired at Marikana.

3. Case Study:

Discourse analysis of media representation of poverty and protest

3.1. Peace/war reportage

Instead of acknowledging structural discrimination, Milner suggests in *The Politics of Social Justice* that news media often construe poverty as a normal element of modern life – as if it involves some element of choice or will on the part of participants (2006:48) consequently surmising that poverty is in fact a form of structural violence derived from unjust social and economic practices.

To begin remedying this he recommends examining common journalistic practices and conventions when reporting on conflict, given that this often shapes how a narrative about poverty is framed. This approach is somewhat alternative as it eschews the liberal ‘freedom of the press’ objectivity in favour of providing more balance, fairness and accuracy to the reporting (ibid). As a journalistic model informed by conflict analysis and transformation, this approach mitigates the effects of “brute force reporting - politicized and sensationalized - in favour of a non-violent response to conflict” (McBride 2013c: 9) that frames conflict as “a multi-party situation with a variety of possible outcomes, instead of as a two-party win-lose characteristic of war journalism” (Milner 2006:48). Using this approach as a methodology to analyse the following article by Greg Marinovich, “*Marikana, one year later: the hell above and below ground*”, the peace/war journalism binary is used to survey the presentation of actors in the protest by the selected news outlet.

3.2. Discussion of findings (see annex.1)

After conducting preliminary research in position paper on poverty and protest (see McBride 2013c), reporting constellationally – “connecting the dots between the various power repositories that allowed for the inequality and social exclusion of seemingly powerless protesting miners to become victims of state sanctioned violence, the worst seen in South Africa since Sharpeville” (ibid, p.11) – appeared easier with hindsight. With this in mind, the investigation of the performance of *The Daily Maverick*, a relatively new newsagent, is promising. Providing a “blend of visceral visuals, news and analysis, and humorous but informed opinion” (ibid), it also appears free from official interference. When discussing poverty through the prism of protest – a double edged sword in South Africa, promising as it does potential for change and for horror – it is encouraging that not all South African news

media performs poorly by pandering to political sensitivities. As inherently politicised as the poverty-protest dichotomy, *The Daily Maverick's* use of framing does not however indicate a sensitivity to the performance of the government, as it continues to struggle with increasing poverty levels and concomitant social exclusion two decades after apartheid.

4. Concluding Comments:

Poverty and protest as discursive spaces

This chapter explored the relationship between poverty and protest, paying special attention to social exclusion arising from this. The case study investigated news media performance so as to uncover whether news media panders to political sensitivities. It was refreshing to reveal that in this instance, news media has potential for 'peaceful' reporting geared towards development. Further, after exploring the use of framing effects in the previous chapter, this chapter illustrated the potential for improved discursive practices as a development away from contrived narrative frames. The following chapter extends this attention to discursive spaces to investigate the AMCU platinum wage strike that took place between January and June 2014, by exploring media coverage through the lens of the political economy.

CHAPTER SIX:

The Political Economy of Platinum and Protest

This chapter explores South Africa's political economy by investigating the platinum wage strike led by the Association for Mineworkers and Construction Union in 2014. According to Mosco (2009), political economy encapsulates the relationship between structures of control in capitalist society and the production of wealth needed to reproduce that society, including the power dynamics associated with the production and consumption of media. For this reason, an investigation of media coverage of key players and their demands is pertinent, so long as it includes the root causes of tensions in their relationships and visions for resolving these.

Having explored protest and poverty in the previous chapter and with it the importance of discursive spaces for development, this chapter seeks to explore how mediatizing information about the contestation of power in the platinum industry can be orientated towards peaceful development. An overview of the strike is followed by a comparative analysis of articles from *The Mail & Guardian* newspaper, based on two of its news categories: business and national. This approach allows for investigation of the structural aspects of news media history, economic systems and ideologies as well as the more flexible and dynamic cultural dimensions of political communication (Murphy, 2007:8). The aim is to present discursive recommendations about business and national news storytelling.

1. The AMCU Platinum Wage Strike

“In around 20 years from now, when someone, somewhere, considers the moment that really brought long term change to the South African political system, this strike is going to feature.” (Grootes, 2014)

In December 2013, the AMCU was issued a certificate of non-resolution by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) following the union's rejection of Lonmin mine's wage-increase proposals. This certificate allowed workers to strike without the risk of dismissal from their jobs (Burkhardt and Janse van Vuuren, 2013), thus beginning a historic strike rooted in poverty, inequality, union politics, and last but most certainly not least, the massacre at Marikana. After the five-month long strike, the country was left wondering who exactly benefitted most. Isaacs provides a succinct overview on what exactly the demands, offers and

settlement consisted of, explaining that the AMCU originally demanded an increase of the lowest basic wage in the platinum industry (targeting the three biggest suppliers: Lonmin, Amplats and Implats) be set at R12 500, finally agreeing to “a wage settlement that would increase the basic salary of the lowest paid worker by R1000 over three years, excluding other benefits” (Isaacs, 2014). He goes on to explain that the settlement will “improve the lives of the workers, but not result in a radical upheaval within the operations of the companies”, concluding that

“Given the desperate poverty and growing inequality in South Africa, without far-reaching structural change in the economy, this will not be the last tenaciously contested wage dispute we shall see.” (ibid.)

Speaking at the Royal Bafokeng Sports Palace in Phokeng Rustenburg, AMCU leader Joseph Mathunjwa told about 20 000 members,

“AMCU makes a difference. You made history with your strike. Your strike is the third longest strike in the world.”⁴

As this was the most costly, and longest, strike in South African history, his words ring true. This process of negotiating livelihoods and living conditions played out like a microcosm of the welfare triad of poverty, protest and inequality, spurring debate on labour and economic development trajectories for the crux of South Africa’s political economy: the mineral-energy complex. The following section aims to develop a literature of this core industry’s narrative, to proceed to an investigation of media coverage thereof.

2. Reporting on the Political Economy

2.1. The Mineral Energy Complex

“Over the past few decades, South Africa’s economy has become heavily dependent on the mining industry for economic activity and by the 1980s; was dominated by six interlocked mining and finance companies” (McKenzie & Pons-Vignon, 2012:6). As a result, there is an overreliance on the export of mineral deposits, mined on the backs of cheap labour, supplied by the nationwide migrant labour system. This means that while platinum is a relatively new metal on the market, mining in South Africa has

⁴ See: [“Platinum strike has ended says AMCU”](#)

historically been characterised by super exploitation of poor, black workers from its onset in the late 1800s (Chiguno 2013:165). Post-1994, with the formal framework of democracy established, this has meant that the basic structure of South Africa's political economy experienced a truncated transition. This is most obviously evidenced by the entrenching of neoliberal capitalism as the ideology of choice for national development. The harsh inequalities in the platinum industry illustrate that the neoliberal dispensation thrives on the continuities of the past regime - the exploitation of workers.

The ebb and flow of industrial struggles prior to this has primarily been due to the alliance between the main trade union federation, COSATU, and the ruling party. At the same time, this has "compromised the ability of the movement to act as an independent voice of class struggle in the country" (Duncan 2013:3). In this context, it is critical that heed is paid to the instances where voices are raised concerning industrial strike action, conjoined as it is to protest as a process of political communication. Equally as important are the responses by the state, as this may be said to be a reflection of the ruling party's approach to growing class polarisation. In 2013, the Minister of State Security, Siyabonga Cwele, declared that

"Industrial action tended to be protracted, illegal, unprotected, and disruptive to key sectors of the economy, with a new trend of the shunning of union representation and hard-won established labour relations dispensation in South Africa" (Cwele 2013:2)⁵

This disregard for the AMCU as a representative chosen by workers on the platinum belt – a representative that signed recognition agreements at all three of the country's major platinum producers, ousting the NUM as the majority union at Lonmin, Implats and Amplats in January 2013⁶, and less than a year later followed the requisite procedure to conduct a legal, protected strike – speaks volumes as a show of partisanship towards the NUM. It also speaks to the complexities of not only the protesting of existing socio-economic orders, but also the complexities of representing this struggle. As trade unions battle to represent as many workers as they can, and the state classifies these workers as criminal threats to national security, the labour landscape in the platinum industry has also highlighted complexities in media representation of these dynamics.

⁵ See: [Budget Vote Speech, 2013](#)

⁶ See: ["The Rise of AMCU Timeline"](#). Also worth mentioning is the policy on the platinum belt of only engaging with the majority trade union.

2.2. Peace journalism for labour reporting

In democratic South Africa, this is the first substantive demonstration of political power by a black organization not aligned to the ruling party. Moreover, it is the first show of political participation foregrounding class struggle.

“Just this one fact alone could be a game-changer. It shows that there are now more actors in politics, and that the game has more players who have power in their own right. Should AMCU continue to grow, into other sectors, with the weapon of striking it now has, it could become very powerful indeed.” (Grootes, 2014)

News media coverage of challenges to the existing political economic order is imperative, as is cognizance of the role of the media in communicating information about political and economic activity that might point to changes in national development trajectories. This naturally warrants an examination of how the news media presents potentially game-changing information, as this could shed light into the game itself.

Having introduced the AMCU wage strike as a case study, the following section explores the potential for approaches to peace journalism in South Africa. This is a continuation of the previous chapter’s exploration of the peace/war binary in reporting on conflict. It is hypothesized that when engaging in comparative analysis of news articles, this approach will contribute to recommendations for discursive development in the context of business and national news reporting. As such, the following case study of news articles covering the AMCU strike, sourced from *The Mail & Guardian* newspaper, present an opportunity to tackle the news media’s potential as a conduit for peaceful development, away from the tendency of focusing extensively on crises, in pursuit of progressive reporting on challenges/improvements to the norm, and not only deviations from it.

3. Case Study:

Comparative analysis of the AMCU strike coverage

3.1. Analyzing conflict reportage

The methodology employed in this case study is a critical-political discourse analysis of articles using a development model for communication by looking at the text's communication of and ability to: understand all needs; analyze all key participants; explore the communication relationship between participants; accessible decodability of messages and cognizance of the internal and external environment. This was operationalized by applying three of Galtung's questions for journalists covering conflict (1998) to the selected news articles in order to shed light on possible thematic lessons from the AMCU wage strike and comment on the potential for news media coverage to be more developmental in nature. These questions are:

1. *What is the conflict about? Who are the main parties and what are their real goals, beyond the immediate arena of violence?*
2. *What are the deeper roots of the conflict, structural and cultural, including the history of both?*
3. *What visions exist about outcomes other than the one party imposing itself on the other – what particularly creative, new ideas?* (Galtung, 1998)

Since this study is an attempt at critical-political discourse analysis, inquiry "should not be limited to the structural properties of the text, but also include a systematic account of the context and its relations to discursive structures" (van Dijk 2009: 15). For this reason, discursive spaces opted for are two types of news characterizations favoured by the selected newspaper: *Business and National*.

The sample to be analysed is based on the following online search for both discursive categories: using the tags "PLATINUM"; "AMCU"; "STRIKE" and "MARIKANA" as a supplemental search⁷, however not all selected articles speak to Marikana.

A further narrowing of the focus of case study: reports on twists and turns such as Lonmin mine management sending SMSes compelling workers to return to work⁸ or rumours of a miner hit list were avoided⁹, as well as news articles that gave direct attention to individual actors in the negotiations.¹⁰ This is because the aim was to analyse reportage of the strike process, not specific events/details within this process. Together with these search criteria, an attempt was made to refine the

⁷ The last search tag is designated as supplementary given that not all selected articles speak to Marikana, but this was included as a search criterion given that an overwhelming number of news articles on the AMCU strike make pertinent reference to events at Marikana.

⁸ See: "[Lonmin SMS Fuels Tensions Amongst Marikana Miners](#)"

⁹ See: "[Amcu, Lonmin Dismiss Knowing About Mineworker Hit List](#)"

¹⁰ See: "[Ramathodi: Platinum Talks Can't Go on Forever](#)"

search in a way that would reflect reporting at the start, middle and end of the five-month period. This was however not always possible for both categories, for instance the first “national” news article responding to all the search tags appeared almost a month after the strike had begun. Using a ‘peace journalism’ approach, the following section of the case study presents key points of the selected articles to investigate Business and National news, as both news categories and discursive spaces.

3.2. Business news article analysis (see annex.2)

All three articles paid scant attention to the root causes of the AMCU strike, beyond reference to Marikana. This reveals that the texts do not understand the needs driving the story being reported on, and analysis of the key participants or newsmakers is consequently constrained. Semantically, the text in article 1 is emotive – example: “the most severe labour turmoil/”the deadly clash” — and speaks more to sensationalist reporting than insightful reporting into the communication relationship between the key actors. Coverage lacks adequate provision of context such as nationwide protests or labour unrest on the platinum belt, thus neglecting coverage of the internal and external environment that gave rise to the strike. Finally, the decodability of messages is simple enough, adequately revealing goals of the key players, such as the SAPS to maintain peace during the strike, however; the main shortcoming revealed by this analysis is the failure to provide alternative visions. In this regard, the only article that reported on a possible solution was article 2, speaking to the establishment of the Framework for Agreement.

3.3. National news article analysis (see annex.2)

Interestingly, the title of the first reportage on the strike alluded to effects on the micro and macro, but did not delve into micro and macro root causes, beyond explaining it as a result of a “turf war” between the AMCU and the NUM. The second article was more insightful as to the actors and their demands and critically, provided a temporal overview of root causes. This coverage of both the actors and the context allowed for an understanding of both the internal and external environment of the strike, thus affording perspective on the communication relationship between the participants. The suggestion that “creating employment” should be a key consideration in the wage debate is also somewhat visionary, given the tendency of news articles to neglect the broader context of unemployment and poverty motivating protest and strike action.

Finally, article 3 reveals a sterling attempt at balanced communication about the strike's key actors, as well as more peripheral ones, and importantly, how they relate to one another. It also traces the evolution of industrial action, as tied to community movements, and in doing so, makes the messages communicated easier to decode, as the strike narrative presented is not dominated by deviation-type events/elite figures, but rather a comprehensive picture of the landscape. Further, two divergent paths for critique and recommendations are presented.

3.4. Comparative analysis of business and national news

It is duly acknowledged that the sample of news articles is too small to conduct a conclusive comparative analysis of the two categories as discursive spaces. Nonetheless, pairing them for the purposes of critical-political discourse analysis presented interesting observations. One, there was a tendency to avoid exploring new visions or recommendations to the resolution of the 'conflict', in itself problematic, but given that aforementioned conflict was referred to dramatically, is even more concerning. Balanced presentation of contentious events or developments (such as protests/strikes) is as critical as the presentation of balanced recommendations. This was a trend that especially applied to the business category.

Secondly, insufficient attention was given to the actors and their goals, again especially for business news, which further constrained the possibility of communicating the motivation for their actions, and the responses by other parties. This is problematic because it panders to the idea that news media, especially labour reporting, is event driven and neglects reporting on the processes that lead to events. Further, these actors were often pitched against one another, for example, "No talks are scheduled between the two sides to the strike." Thirdly, national news articles referred to economic contexts in their descriptions of the demands and offers by miners and mines respectively, but the same cannot be said for business news. This reveals a fault line in contextualizing political developments, where business news is failing to present the full story by zeroing into the economic dimensions of it, accompanied by a bias towards business values.

Finally, it is interesting that the news article ticking all boxes (with respect to Galtung's questions) was written by a labour expert and not a journalist, Leonard Gentle, Director of the International Labour and Research Information Group (ILRIG).

Ting Lee contends that peace journalism is most likely to appear in editorials and columns, while Hyde-Clarke asks the question, is there space in general news stories for a new way of reporting (2012:32)? The insights offered in editorials can most certainly be communicated via news articles, as illustrated by the selected example. This does however require that the authors are knowledgeable about the subject matter, not inexperienced journalists relegated undesirable tasks like the labour beat. Moreover, this demands a move away from reliance on official sources (all business articles were sourced from SAPA and Bloomberg, with additional reporting by staff reporters.)

4. Concluding Comments:

Business and National news as discursive spaces for political communication

On a theoretical level, peace journalism is useful for reminding media practitioners to present alternative interpretations of what may be at stake, and how best to engage with less confrontational outcomes – avoiding traditional journalistic practices of sensationalist reporting, the polarisation of parties in media coverage and relying predominantly on official sources (Hyde-Clarke 2012:32). Practically, it might be said that this theory is an oversimplified solution to the very complex system of sociology of the news, which is further complicated by different discursive spaces.

In the context of South African media reporting on protests and strikes, the categories examined – business and national – proffer a curious binary through which to view both political communication and development. Using strike action as a case study, it has been surmised that news media coverage of how power is contested is as significant as the processes involved in said contestations. The communication of information can be more than reportage on fact-finding missions, or dull detailing of drama, but also present informed research into the cause and effects of protests and strikes, as well as recommendations going forward. In conclusion, both business and national categories of news have provided lessons with regard to categories of discursive spaces namely, the imperative of news media to report on the roots of an issue; the actors (and their demands) involved; and visions for new developments.

Consequently, it is hypothesized that the interrelationship between business and national imperatives has a strong influence on reporting thereon, and political communication processes as a result. Further, the positioning of key political actors

by the news media, such as trade unions or politicians, contributes to how information about extended narratives is communicated to the public. This in turn presents a rich context for examining post-apartheid renegotiation of identity, culture and power, through examining media representation of key characters in national development.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

Media representation of power players

This chapter aims to investigate post-apartheid narratives, namely, the negotiation of identity and power, through examining media representation of political elites. The case study focuses on media framing of Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa as an economic and political actor that has not only featured prominently in the platinum industry, but also come to personify major themes in South Africa's development. Often, scholars use media to measure processes which are either unobservable or for which good data have not been available in relevant time periods (Wooley 2000:164). It is thus hypothesized that critical analysis of representation of this political and economic actor in *The Business Day Live* will yield pertinent insights into the interrelationship between the media and identity construction as well as allow for thematic lessons to be inferred on collision and collusion of political and economic power in democratic South Africa's development.

1. Democratic Capitalism and the news media

Following the previous chapter's exploration of business and national discursive spaces, this chapter explores the merger of these, and the positioning of key political actors by the news media within this hybrid space. In South Africa, increasing unemployment and heightened inequality stem not only from inherited disparities, but have been entrenched by pro-capitalist economic policies. Soon after it came into power, the new government consented to the privatization of important industries as well as massive capital flight from South Africa, (Ashman, Fine, & Newman 2011), a generally neoliberal approach that brings into question the comprehensiveness of attempts to restructure and reform the economy. An important (and much criticized) reform can however be found in the 'Black Economic Empowerment' (BEE) policy.

As a redistributive effort, BEE has been criticized for depriving the majority living in poverty of resources, those who lack the education, skills, or social capital to gain access to BEE's rewards. One the most oft-cited beneficiaries of this is Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa. Before it is possible to explore how the news media has characterized him in the space created by the transition to democratic capitalism, it is necessary to first locate this investigation within an understanding of his political and economic background. By zooming in on media representation of a pivotal political

and economic actor in not only the platinum industry, but also the country as a whole, it is possible to infer thematic lessons about how South Africa's key players are imagined and what this suggests for national development given that,

“Political communication grows out of processes but also out of how actors and collectivities imagine politics, envision communication, and leave traces of those images in the actions they take (2011:584)”

The following section provides a brief background to Cyril Ramaphosa, in the context of his appearance before the Farlam Commission of Inquiry, before progressing to an investigation of how he has been represented in *The Business Day Live*.

2. Forrest Gump at the Farlam Commission

“Now that we have been politically empowered,
It's time we became economically empowered.”
- Cyril Ramaphosa, 1997-

Once called, "South Africa's Lech Walesa" after the Polish labour leader and democracy activist,¹¹ in recent times Rampahosa has been pilloried as a cold-hearted capitalist. As one of the founders of the NUM, he is by extension not only an architect of the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) and the tripartite alliance, but as a champion negotiator, pivotal in South Africa's negotiated transition to democracy and former Secretary-General of the ruling party. Before formally returning to the political arena, Rampahosa amassed significant wealth as a pioneer of black entrepreneurship, leading to him becoming a shareholder at Lonmin mine in 2004 through Shanduka, the black economic empowerment vehicle he founded. Thus, the industries that made him a champion of the liberation struggle solidified his status as a very wealthy man in the post-apartheid economy. According to Butler, author of Ramaphosa's biography and professor of public policy at the University of Cape Town, "Cyril is the Forrest Gump of South African political history", in reference to his ubiquitous presence in the foreground of virtually every important moment in the modern history of the country (Keller: 2013).

While he remained an ANC stalwart during his business forays, it is his most recent return to politics after being elected Deputy President of the ruling party, appointed to

¹¹ See: [“South Africa miners’ strike: Labour hero Cyril Ramaphosa urged crackdown, emails show”](#). Reuters, 25 October 25, 2012

this position by President Zuma on 25 May 2014 that is of import for this research. As a high-level member of the ANC as well as a Lonmin shareholder, the news media spotlight has been placed on his political and economic power *prior* to this appointment, relating to the influence allegedly exerted in the days before the massacre in 2012.

His appearance before the Farlam Commission as Deputy President affords an invaluable opportunity to analyze him as a key character from two perspectives: as a mining magnate and a high-level State representative. Focusing on Ramaphosa's role at Marikana is especially relevant in light of the appearance of the AMCU as a contender to the NUM hegemony that he helped establish, as this is an instance of contemporary changes to the post-apartheid political landscape. This testimony related to his role in the weeks preceding 16 August 2012, the day that law enforcement officials gunned down 34 striking mine workers. During the week before, 10 people were killed. In an email the day before the massacre, he wrote that "concomitant action" must be taken in respect of "dastardly criminal" acts of violence. While testifying on 12 August 2014, he explained that he meant "appropriate" action — that the police should identify and arrest the perpetrators of the "horrific" murders that had occurred. Much media attention has been devoted to this appearance and the response from the public, in particular the heckling by protestors in the gallery.

According to Keller, the mine killings entangled Ramaphosa in a controversy that, in America, would surely have the suffix "gate" attached to it, but according to Ramaphosa however,

"What Marikana gives us is an opportunity — it has come at great cost — to actually start afresh. Marikana is a huge wake-up call." (Keller: 2013).

Prior to the historic AMCU wage strike, Bond and Mottiar forecast that beyond the obvious travesties, with regard to human rights and labour-relations, inherent at the events at Marikana, the incident offered the "potential for a deep political rethink", but that

"... broader questions remain, including how discourses of revolution, revulsion and rear-guard defence will play out in coming months and years. How far will the diverse momentums of Marikana pull South African society? Which political narratives are emerging, and can they become the basis for a social understanding that will mobilise the tens of millions of disgruntled South Africans into a force capable of breaking sweetheart relations between state,

ruling party, labour aristocrats, Black Economic Empowerment capital and the mining houses?” (2013:298)

The following section explores media representation of Cyril Ramaphosa with the aim to answer these questions, explore emerging political narratives and uncover the potential for political communication to contribute to a mobilizing social understanding of national development.

3. Case Study:

Media Representation of Cyril Ramaphosa

Adopting the same methodology as in the previous chapter, a search on *The Business Day* online newspaper was sourced using the tags “Cyril Ramaphosa”, “Marikana” and “AMCU”, yielding 39 results. This was subsequently narrowed to only include references that included interpretable commentary i.e. where the reference to this actor demonstrated the use of frames. This made for a sample of 13 articles published between 2012 and 2014 and spanning across the categories of Business/National/Labour and Opinion/Analysis. It is contended that since “news promoters will frame attributes associated with people... in negative or positive terms” (Johnson-Cartee 2005: 200), these frames go on to shape public opinion and subsequently entrench media characterizations. As such, the analysis will be structured according to the following categories: positive and negative framing.

3.1 Analysis of positive framing (see annex.3)

There are four articles in the study that follow the pattern of positive framing, these are: article two, three, six and twelve.

Article two contests the “Malema narrative” that “exploitative and cruel ‘white’ business” is ultimately culpable for the crisis at Marikana, in an attempt to refute the notion that the mining industry has “done nothing” for the mineworkers bar a “small sliver of politically connect empowerment players”. Ramaphosa is cited as one of these, but it is stated, “his company lost a small fortune on its investment in Lonmin” in an attempt to prove that facts about him run contrary to narratives “popular with the foreign press at the moment.” This attempt at a positive frame is in fact counterproductive to creating a favourable representation, by using him as a proof of poorly evidenced notions about national narratives.

Article three frames Ramaphosa as not only a former trade unionist, but also a champion for workers' rights after he instructed Shanduka Coal management to review its dismissal of 250 workers who staged an illegal strike, quoting him as saying that "Problems that give rise to such action can always be remedied by discussion and negotiation". This is no doubt in reference to his history as a notable negotiator. The article goes on to imply that calls from the ANC Youth League (ANCYL) for Ramaphosa to be arrested for his alleged part in the massacre at Marikana were "not so surprising, given that Mr. Ramaphosa chaired the appeals committee that ejected former leader Julius Malema from the ANC." It concludes by stating that his presence on the boards of blue-chip companies illustrate how comfortable the corporate sector is with him, but that "his challenge is now to reassert his moral authority among workers and the wider population", with the "actions in support of coal workers being a step in the right direction". This frame presents him as a consistent advocate for just labour relations, trusted by the corporate sector, and a moral compass for the nation.

Article six is a lengthy editorial profiling him as a frontrunner to the presidency, framing him as a "big-picture man" in the context of damage control for President Zuma, citing his crowd control at the memorial service for Nelson Mandela as showing "his credentials as a possible unifier in an increasingly divide South Africa." NUM general-secretary Frans Baleni is quoted describing him as "an action man" and Shanduka CEO Phuti Mahanyele is quoted denying that Ramaphosa has used his political influence to help his business - "He's never said, 'Let me call this minister because I know him or her and I need this done.'" Both of these sources are partial to Ramaphosa, politically and economically, however the article also includes a brief overview of his critics, quoting general secretary of NUMSA Irvin Jim describing Ramaphosa as "seriously conflicted." This is however followed by corporate finance specialist at Shanduka, Ndoda Madalane stating, "Mr Ramaphosa's mettle and gravitas make him the right choice as president."

The article concludes by describing Ramaphosa's visit to the shack of a disabled community member (in South Africa, the metaphorical equivalent of kissing babies on a campaign trail) where he declares that "it should pain leaders of the revolution to see how our people all over the country", since "everyone can do more, business especially" before ending with his declaration that business has not "grasped the nettle yet, and that's what I'll be driving." The insertion of critical opinions in the article does not mask that as a potential future president, he has been framed as

action hero.

In the context of the clash with Dali Mpofu before the Farlam Commission, article twelve frames Ramaphosa as a seasoned statesman – “smoothly accepting responsibility”, “readily making concessions” and “managing to avoid sounding like a total thug.” The article forecasts the political and legal damage done during the cross-examination, concluding that Ramaphosa succeeded in the legal tussle by “ducking personal responsibility”, albeit at (or because of?) the expense of defending Lonmin management in the events at Marikana. This framing of him as first and foremost, a national leader, circumvents the critical characterization of him as a political enemy by Dali Mpofu especially given that the article focuses on the cross-examination as not only a legal battleground, but also a political one between the ANC and EFF.

3.2. Analysis of negative framing (see annex.3)

The majority of articles in the study follow the pattern of negative framing, eight in total. These are articles one, four, five, seven, eight, nine, ten and eleven.

After describing conditions faced by rock-drillers, article one reminds readers, “Mr. Ramaphosa and much of the NUM hierarchy are no longer part of the same existential struggle.” This is echoed in article eight where the 1987 NUM strike led by Ramaphosa is compared to the 2014 AMCU wage strike, stating that this time around Ramaphosa appears to be “sitting uncomfortably on the other side of the table.” The article concludes that ANC leadership not only wanted the strike to end, but also to destroy the AMCU so as to restore NUM control in the sector, naturally implicating Ramaphosa in this accusation too. Again, the notion of crossing sides is iterated in article nine, where Ramaphosa is cited as the most prominent example of “the co-option of the new political elite” given that he “morphed from union leader to mining boss” like “many of his erstwhile comrades” who were “cut deals.” Again, he is not only framed as a floor crosser, but also implicated in bigger representations of the current class of political elites.

Discussing new power dynamics on the labour landscape, article four reports that “despite the stature of its main speaker, party deputy president and former NUM boss”, the ANC’s May Day rally was poorly attended in comparison to that of the AMCU. This framing is interesting for its description of Ramaphosa as a party big

shot, and not a national one, as well as its insinuation that despite his personal pre-eminence, party power dynamics reflect badly on him too. This sentiment is reiterated in article five, where it is vehemently contended that supporters of President Zuma will feel the ire of history. It is stated “even though his reputation had already been soiled by his role at the Marikana massacre, as ANC deputy president, Ramaphosa was meant to give legitimacy to an already politically corrupt project.” It proceeds to describe him as “infected by its political logic”, citing his much-criticized comment “if you don’t vote, the Boer will come back” as evidence of this. The article ends with a sarcastic questioning of his “principles and intellectual heft.”

Discussing the changing generational profile of South Africa’s political leadership, article seven asserts that while “senior comrades may have played some role in the struggle”, the fact that Ramaphosa led a march in 1987 will be “irrelevant to 18 year old voters” in 2024. This frame downplays the role of liberation leaders and dismisses Ramaphosa’s relevance to young people. After describing him as one of Cosatu’s “proudest sons”, article ten also frames Ramaphosa in the context of comparing his role in 1987 and now, describing his Farlam cross-examination as “surreal”.

Article eleven, where the focus is placed on Ramaphosa’s legal team, described as “a battery of white lawyers”, is perhaps most pertinent to this study. Detailing the blows received during cross-examination, it gleefully reports on Advocate Ntsebeza reminding Ramaphosa that he was once the chairman of the black economic empowerment commission – framing not only his legal team, but also his public character, as a “painful irony”. Discussing the probability of Ramaphosa being faced with criminal charges (“highly unlikely”), the author proceeds to discuss the “court of public opinion” and the political significance of the bad blood at the Farlam Commission. He contends that if political damage was inflicted on Ramaphosa as a high-level State representative, “the question is whether it extends significantly to the leadership structures.”

Put differently, “if the insinuation that Ramaphosa is an errand boy of white capital has a basis in reality, the question that arises is whether it is fair to limit the insinuation to the deputy president?” By framing Ramaphosa as “but an example of a broader problem”, this article presents a negative characterization of him personally but simultaneously allows for deeper introspection, beyond the focus on individual elites. The article emphatically concludes by declaring that the “renting out of political

influence” is a sin worse than being an apartheid spy. With the notion of a “moral compass” for the nation consistently being lobbied around, this statement is metaphorically on par with the positive representation of Ramaphosa while visiting poor communities, in that it negates past struggle credentials by comparing the exercise of political power in business as paramount to the greatest crime during the struggle for liberation against apartheid.

4. Concluding comments:

Recurring themes in media representation

Gamson et al. (1987: 143) suggest that a frame is “a central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events, weaving a connection among them”. From this perspective, *The Business Day Live* newspaper’s use of frames, appear to highlight a negative “organizing story line” in its depiction of Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa during 2012 and 2014, with respect to the massacre at Marikana and the AMCU wage strike.

Earlier in Chapter 2, analysis of news media’s frames led to the suggestion that broader frames need to be adopted to contextualize how power is contested, as this scene-setting is as significant as the processes involved in said contestations. Consequently, Chapter 3 investigated whether the news media panders to political sensitivities, and the potential for more comprehensive ‘peaceful’ reporting, geared towards development in spite of this. Chapter 4 discussed the imperative of news media to report on the roots of an issue; the actors (and their demands) involved; and visions for new developments. By concentrating on how elite actors are represented in the news media using frames, this Chapter has exposed the more discursive dynamic inherent in political communication, namely, the recurrent themes that contribute to the negotiation of power and development in democratic South Africa. It is thus posited that using Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa a prism for analysis, key drivers in the political narrative may be inferred.

Firstly, the theme of “haves versus have-nots” is inescapable and exigent. Secondly, the notion of “exploitative white business” is often juxtaposed with disloyal empowerment beneficiaries in the context of an always changing and always charged political landscape and unreformed economy, giving credence to suggestion that South Africa’s democracy is more “delegative” than representative. Thirdly, the constant reference to “negotiation as a solution” - by now a catchword that is almost synonymous with Ramaphosa - speaks to the power of communication in the

deliberation for democracy. Unfortunately, calls for “moral authority” from leaders to the “nation at large” are equally as constant, and negate the possibilities for equal deliberation between citizens and state. The importance of the youth and labour support are also constantly stressed, highlighting that these are critical groups to win over, which is interesting given that they most reveal the changing power dynamics in the national narrative. Finally, the liminality of leadership, with constant comparisons of then and now and questioning of whose side political elites are really on, exposes the crux of contemporary democratic discourse in post-apartheid South Africa. As a national storyline, it is indeed “surreal” that after twenty years of democracy, the figureheads of liberation and national development are being grilled by the news media about which side of democratic capitalism they fight for: labour or capital.

Chapter Eight:

Concluding Comments and Recommendations

Just before the massacre at Marikana, Ngwane described protests as the fly in the ointment of the “new” democratic South Africa because “they smudge the idyllic picture of the rainbow nation by challenging post-apartheid society’s complacency and thus necessitating a degree of collective self-appraisal by all” (2011:123). This research explored political communication in the platinum industry using the events at Marikana and the wage strike led by the Association of Mineworkers Union as instances of ‘breakouts’ of democracy to expose proverbial flies in the ointment. Investigating news media coverage sourced from four of the country’s most prominent publications exposed indicators of the status quo with regard to political participation/expression via protests and strikes; citizen and labour rights; the political economy and media performance – in sum, key aspects of the development of democracy in South Africa.

More than a degree of collective self-appraisal is needed to make sense of what it all *means* for the future. Instead, systematic and primarily qualitative analysis of the news media was conducted with the view to derive not only a valuable dataset of political information documenting media coverage of these watershed moments, but also thematic understandings of contemporary democracy in post-apartheid South Africa and the potential for political communication to contribute to this. The findings and analysis of this dataset supported the thesis statement that the tragedy of the massacre and the triumph of the wage strike reveal democracy in South Africa to be equivocal more so than elusive, and proved true the hypothesis that the case studies have dramatized, in visible ways, the relations between the State, citizens and mass media.

Analysis of early news media coverage of the events at Marikana in Chapter 4 revealed that given “the sprawling nature of political communication, probing theoretical constructs are vital when presenting political information about South Africa” (McBride 2013a:8). The use of framing as a media effect was investigated in *The Times Live* newspaper focusing on shifts in the framing of law enforcement, as the most visible and powerful State force. Poor journalistic practice, such as “lack of context and choice of isolated salient points, contributes to the creation of sometimes misinformed, and often shallow, common knowledge” (ibid). This inspires the first

recommendation of this research: broader frames are essential for providing contextualized information that does not bias representation of actors. This will improve understandings of the relationship between protesting and striking citizens (in this study represented by mineworkers), the media and the police, and by extension the State.

Chapter 5 explored the relationship between poverty and protest as discursive spaces, paying special attention to social exclusion arising from this. The case study – a detailed critical discourse analysis of news media representations of poverty in *The Daily Maverick* newspaper – indicated that not all news media panders to political sensitivities, and explored the potential for peace journalism approaches when reporting on contentious and complicated social realities. Stemming from this, it was recommended that there is valuable potential to be harnessed in developing discursive and deliberative political communication practices, away from contrived narrative frames used in reporting on poverty and protest, inclined towards a peace journalism model of reporting.

Chapter 6 expounded on the potential for peace journalism as a means to present alternative interpretations that avoid traditional journalistic practices of sensationalist reporting, the polarisation of parties in media coverage and relying predominantly on official sources. It also explored the complexities of the sociology of the news, which is further complicated by different discursive spaces. Using analysis of *The Mail & Guardian* newspaper, it was observed that business and national news categories offer a curious binary through which to view both political communication and development. It was thus recommended that the news media could improve on realizing the imperative to report not only on events, but also on the roots of an issue; the actors (and their demands) involved; and visions for new developments. This might thus improve how the public is informed about the interrelationship between business and national imperatives, not to mention a deeper understanding of key actors that navigate these spaces.

Chapter 7 returned to frame analysis so as to expose more discursive aspects of media representation of elite actors, under the premise that a media frame is “a central organizing idea or storyline.” It was observed that *The Business Day Live* newspaper’s use of frames appeared to highlight a negative ‘organizing story line’ in its depiction of Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa during 2012 and 2014, with respect to the massacre at Marikana and the AMCU wage strike. This case study

used the Deputy President as a prism for analysis, consequently exposing key drivers in the political narrative.

Thematically, notions of “haves versus have-nots”, “exploitative business” and “empowerment beneficiaries” recurred throughout analysis of his representation, with coverage giving credence to suggestion that South Africa’s democracy is more “delegative” than representative. In addition, “negotiation as a solution” and calls for “moral authority” from leaders to the “nation at large” were equally as prevalent. Most common were “then and now” comparisons of political elites, exposing the crux of contemporary democratic discourse in post-apartheid South Africa – doubt about the delivery of democracy in South Africa. In this murky context characterised by uncertainty, it is recommended that increased attention to news media representation of contestations to the existing status quo are thus of prime importance.

Studying media coverage of these political events allowed for this study to be firmly located with Jurgen Habermas’ concept of “a social justice of communication”, as a pathway for analysing deliberative and discursive dimensions of democratic practice. Additionally, the potential for new media in the public sphere was addressed, as well as the prospect for peace journalism for reporting on socio-economic conflict such as protest and strike action. The study of flows of political information between key stakeholders thus contributes to developmental communication studies by exploring political communication within the context of the platinum industry.

Conclusion

In documenting the selected case studies, this study sought not to define or capture recent history but rather to (re)describe mediated understandings of social reality, given that this is a negotiated construct, constrained by the power dynamics of the political economy.

According to LeFort, “power belongs to the individual or individuals who ... speak in the name of the people and give them their name” (1986:110) intimating that contemporary characteristics of democracy – deliberative, delegative or truly representative - are spaces to be “revised, erased, and revised again by countless acts of representative creativity” (Coleman 2011:40). Much like mediatized narratives, the development of democracy could be seen to be a dramatically constructed, historically incomplete process, always in a state of flux.

A defining motif of contemporary political communication is the ambivalence of this murky context – it provides a space for investigation about what it means to *feel* represented or socially excluded, and consequent political expression and responses. “The tension between the claims of the represented to become present on their own terms and the claims of politicians – and other, less accountable mediators – to know and speak for the public will be a central and recurring theme” (ibid.) in the relations between citizen, State and news media. Future analysis and research into developing this triptych of political communication flows needs to take into account that within the mediated public sphere, battles fought in the name of democracy are “fought with sophisticated weapons of mediation” and increasingly, mediated contestations of this nature dominate politics, more so than familiar ideological conflicts (Coleman 2011:47).

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- 13/06/14:** "Platinum belt upheaval has parallels with 1987 strike". Author: Butler, A.
- 17/06/14:** "Struggle for a better life has been declared". Author: Morudu, P.
- 15/08/14:** "No wonder Cosatu in tatters if it ignores its own rules". Author: Marrian, N.
- 18/08/14:** "Lily-white team undermines Ramaphosa". Author: Matshiqi, A.
- 20/08/14:** "Little evidence that Marikana changed anything". Author: Friedman, S.
- 21/08/14:** "Legal and political battleground". Author: Rabkin, F.

Annex. 1: Chapter 5

Peace/War Reportage of the massacre at Marikana:

	<u>Peace/Conflict Journalism</u> (Development orientated)	<u>War/Violence Journalism</u> (Politicized)
	<i>Miners working conditions in Lonmin mine, 2013</i>	<i>Generalized overview of coverage of miners on strike, 2012</i>
Visuals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collective shots of miners, orderly assembled on the conveyer belt delivering them to mining locations underground, as well as when at work. 2. Individual portraits, including both positive and resigned expressions by miners. 3. Documentation of the dangers of mining realities. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collective shots of striking miners, orderly assembled in an attempt to convey grievances. 2. Protesters seldom presented as individuals, bar representatives of the protesting poor. 3. Beyond the tardy documentation of the collision between the protesters and the police, the dangers faced by ill-equipped law enforcement officers were wholly absent from most reports.
Agents	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Miners “fatally shot by police”. 2. South Africa’s “slumbering”, once prominent human rights organizations. 3. “The circus of political concern”: ministerial delegations sent by the President; revolutionary imposters; die-hard Marxists and expensively suited democrats. 4. 276 miners tortured in jail for two weeks. 5. Brotherhood of miners, police, politicians and analysts vs. uncertain journalists 6. Working force of Lonmin miners, “the time of hard men”, contextualized as a migrant labour workforce from the rural areas. 7. The Farlam Commission, “light years away from the hell that Marikana is.” 	<p>The comprehensive inclusion of actors one year later is a far departure from the framing of the conflict on the mines during 2012 as mostly two dimensional, i.e.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miners versus mine management in wage disputes • Miners versus labour unions • NUM versus AMCU • Miners versus police officers • The Farlam Commission versus the truth.
Role of the government, and nation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To commiserate: “ministerial delegations sent by the President spoke of a “tragedy”, as if it were a tornado that had ripped through Marikana.” 2. To be informed: “Phase two (of the Farlam Commission) is meant to inform the President, an hopefully the nation, about the conditions that led to men 	<p>A starting point for understanding how the government and nation was framed during the war reportage of the protests is to be found in the state’s conceptualization of the poverty-protest dichotomy – a tragedy. The fatalities arising from this are subsequently not attributable to the state, or the nation, and culpability for this was subsequently shifted to the state’s law enforcement officials.</p>

being prepared to give up their lives for a few Rands more.”

3. To prevent:
“One year on, the dead of Marikana are still looking for closure. It is on us, the people of South Africa, to help find this closure and never, ever let Marikana happen again.”

Tropes

1. Justice – “best served to the ones with the bigger chequebooks.”
2. “Wealthy servants of the people and their learned counsel; squabble interminably about their right to earn many thousands a day.”
3. “The people the law and state are meant to serve continue to toil in hellish subterranean wage bondage.”

The impact of this reportage is evident in the departure from the Farlam Commission Terms of Reference, which had stipulated that the conduct of Lonmin mine be addressed first in trying to understand the events. Instead, police culpability dominated Phase one of the Commission.

During 2012, frames of barbaric striking warriors, competing labour unions and inept public order policing structures called for justice to be upheld by maximum force from the state, through law enforcement officials.

The complicity between securocrat state officials and big business was often ignored, and the responsibility of the general public consuming the news media - not poor or protesting – was absent.

Annex. 2: Chapter 6

Business news articles

Q:	<i>What is the conflict about? Who are the main parties and what are their real goals, beyond the immediate arena of violence?</i>	<i>What are the deeper roots of the conflict, structural and cultural, including the history of both?</i>	<i>What visions exist about outcomes other than the one party imposing itself on the other – what particularly creative, new ideas?</i>
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PLATINUM MINES BRACE FOR STRIKE, 20 January 2014

1:

Conflict:	Roots:	New visions:
<p>“The most severe labour turmoil since 44 people died during a strike at Lonmin in August 2012.”</p> <p>Actors and Goals:</p> <p>1. “At least 70 000 members of the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (Amcu).”</p> <p>“Mathunjwa's union is demanding that the basic monthly pay for some workers be more than doubled to R12 500.</p> <p>2. “The world's largest platinum mines”</p> <p>“They need to control the cost base and they need to take a firm stand on the wage bill”</p>	<p>“The deadly clash 17 months ago at Lonmin's Marikana mine came after workers declared, "enough is enough," Amcu President Joseph Mathunjwa said last week as he addressed thousands of his members. "We also want the wealth, we want to support and raise our children.”</p> <p>“We are here reminding the employer that their blood was not shed for nothing.”</p>	<p><i>Not explored</i></p>

2:

THIS TIME OUR STRIKE WILL BE PEACEFUL, 23 January 2014

Conflict:	Roots:	New visions:
<p>This was the first article confirming the beginning of the strike.</p> <p>Actors and Goals:</p> <p>1. AMCU: “the union says its platinum protests will be peaceful.”</p> <p>2. Mines: “It is of great concern to the platinum companies that employees are being made promises by Amcu that cannot be delivered upon," the platinum companies chief executives said</p>	<p>“Forty-four people were killed during a violent strike at Lonmin's Marikana operations in August 2012. Thirty-four were killed on August 16, 2012 when the police fired at them. Another 10 people, including two policemen and two security guards, were killed in the preceding week.”</p> <p>“Slowing growth in China, the decline in commodity prices and the domestic work stoppages had contributed to</p>	<p>'Commitment to work together' - The purpose of the Framework Agreement, which was signed in July, was to bring affected parties together to work on improving the problems within the sector” - (then) Deputy-President Kgalema Motlanthe</p> <p>(This agreement was signed by the government, the Chamber of Mines, the National Union of</p>

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| in a joint statement. | the sector's slow growth." | Mineworkers, Cosatu, Uasa, Solidarity and the Federation of Unions of South Africa |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|--|
3. **Police:** "Members of the SAPS, [and] public order policing will be deployed to ensure peace and security of both the striking mine workers and the general public."

"As the South African Police Service, we have the responsibility to ensure that the laws of the republic are enforced where there is disregard." - Brigadier Thulani Ngubane.

3: **PLATINUM STRIKE HAS ENDED, SAYS AMCU, 23 June 2014**

Conflict:	Roots:	New visions:
"Amcu members in the platinum sector went on strike on January 23 demanding a basic monthly salary of R12 500."	<i>Not explored.</i>	<i>Not explored.</i>

Actors and Goals:

AMCU: "The union accepted a wage settlement that would increase the basic salary of the lowest-paid worker by R1 000 over three years, excluding other benefits."

National news articles

- | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|
| Q: | <i>What is the conflict about? Who are the main parties and what are their real goals, beyond the immediate arena of violence?</i> | <i>What are the deeper roots of the conflict, structural and cultural, including the history of both?</i> | <i>What visions exist about outcomes other than the one party imposing itself on the other – what particularly creative, new ideas?</i> |
|----|--|---|---|

1: **MINING STRIKE HITS SA MACRO AND MICRO ECONOMY, 20 March 2014**

Conflict:	Roots:	New visions:
"The ongoing strike in the platinum belt is having a detrimental effect on the pockets of not only miners, but the community at large."	"A wave of <u>violent, wildcat strikes that erupted periodically in 2012</u> , rooted in a turf war between Amcu and the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM)"	<i>Not explored.</i>

"No talks are scheduled between the two sides to the

strike, the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (Amcu) and the world's top platinum producers, Anglo American Platinum, Impala Platinum and Lonmin, and they remain poles apart on the issue of wages.”

Actors and Goals:

- **AMCU and platinum mines:** *Goals are not explored*
- **Community members:** Striking miner Oupa Majodina; tavern-owner Patrick Tlou; Ig Bronkhorst, owner of Campworld. *Coverage does not explore their goals, but rather the impact of the strike on them.*

2: **MINING STRIKE: THE BOSSES EAT, BUT WE ARE STARVING, 16 May 2014**

Conflict:

“Platinum belt miners are angry and glaring wage inequality is at the root of their dissatisfaction.”

“the breaking of the platinum strike may represent a temporary reprieve rather than a resolution, both for the sector and beyond.”

Actors and Goals:

- **Amplats mine:** Announced the details of bonus and incentive schemes for its directors.
- **Protestors:** “... workers from across gold, platinum and coal mines. Service delivery protesters from Gauteng to the Western Cape... Workers employed by labour brokers... Seasonal agricultural workers”

All actors calling for an end to “what they have termed “slave wages”.

Roots:

“... impossible for an underground worker at the company to earn in a lifetime what the average director pockets in a year. To equal the annual pay of the company’s chief executive, an underground worker would have to live a bit beyond 130, start work as soon as he legally can, and work until he drops dead.”

“Relative inequality has been cited as the root of their anger by workers from across gold, platinum and coal mines.”

“In 2012 Lonmin workers pointed to opulent executive offices and massive capital expenditure as proof that there was enough money to go around. In 2013, Amplats employees said they had seen the payslips of middle managers, and that they were no longer willing to risk their lives underground while paper-pushers got all the money. This week Implats (Impala Platinum) workers said they were being

New visions:

“It is not only about the pay gap; it is also about economic issues like creating employment.”

- **Striking miners:** exploited, and simply weren't having it anymore."
 "In Marikana and the surrounding Rustenburg platinum belt the demand was simple from the start: R12 500."

- **Political players:**
 The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF); National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa (Numsa).

"Now you may find the EFF and Numsa and the like using the wage gap as an emotive way to gain ground from the political perspective."

- **Mine Executives:**
 Defending privilege: "Must I run this company and deal with all this nonsense for nothing? I'm at work. I'm not on strike. I'm not demanding to be paid what I'm not worth." - Amplats CEO Chris Griffiths,

3:

WORKERS RALLY TO A DIFFERENT FLAG, 13 June 2014

Conflict:

"The debilitating 21-week-long platinum strike tells us two starkly opposing tales about what is happening on the labour front in South Africa."

Actors and Goals:

Miners:

"... the 70 000 mineworkers belonging to the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (Amcu), leading a struggle to bury the tradition of cheap migrant labour."

Trade Unions:

1. "... the once mighty Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), reduced to infighting as a result of being drawn into ANC alliance politics, with its new traditions of wealth accumulation and political

Roots:

" At its deepest level, the underlying causes of the problems within Cosatu lie in the major structural changes that have affected the working class under neoliberal capitalism, alongside the realignment of Cosatu's membership.

Over 20 years, South Africa's working class has essentially become an unemployed, casualised, semi-homeless mass, whereas Cosatu has changed in composition from a predominantly blue-collar, working-class federation in its heyday to the largely public sector white-collar group that it is today."

"In South Africa, for the past 12 years community-based social movements have been at the forefront of working-class

New visions:

"... two divergent paths to their critique and possible remedy.

On the right, the story goes that Cosatu unions have been too political and have sacrificed workers' interests for political gain. From this side the call goes out for unions to go "back to basics" – meaning focusing on pure collective bargaining and servicing members.

On the left, the analysis is that Cosatu has adopted the wrong politics, kowtowing to the ANC's neoliberal policies. It's not a problem of Cosatu being too political, but of not being political enough; if Cosatu embraced revolutionary politics then the problem of worker disaffection would be solved."

" So should we be mourning the

patronage.”

2. “The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) is caught in a conundrum. On the one hand, it is pitching its tent on the ground of the United Front, an initiative seeking common ground with hundreds of existing working-class struggles in communities and, on the other, it is held captive by the need to honour its obligations to save Cosatu from itself.”
3. “Amcu, in turn, was formed by ex-National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) officials dismissed by the union and disgruntled workers sick of what they saw as the NUM’s cosy sweetheart relations with the mine bosses. Apart from this, Amcu is quite a “traditional” union, apolitical and an affiliate of the National Council of Trade Unions (Nactu).”

struggles, whereas the trade unions have largely stuck to Labour Relations Act-regulated wage struggles and labour peace. But then along came the platinum workers. These are the workers who sowed what would become the whirlwind of the Marikana massacre, the inheritors of the self-organised strike committees who sparked the 2012 strike wave that drew in the 100 000 workers who have joined Amcu.”

“ In South Africa, for the past 12 years community-based social movements have been at the forefront of working-class struggles, whereas the trade unions have largely stuck to Labour Relations Act-regulated wage struggles and labour peace.

imminent demise of Cosatu in the context of a growing movement of community-based struggles by the working class, the post-Marikana strike wave and the struggles of the platinum workers today? Or should we instead be celebrating the rise of new forms of organisation and a new movement?”

“An old slogan from the 1980s shouted out: “Don’t mourn, mobilise!” This is your answer.”

Annex. 3: Chapter 7

Synopsis of articles

TITLE:	SYNOPSIS:	AUTHOR:	DATE:
1. Microcosm of SA's key issues	Marikana massacre encapsulating national dynamics, especially "haves versus have-nots".	No by-line	12/08/12
2. Marikana was a Black Swan event — up to a point	Marikana as: 1. An outlier event, or "outside realm of regular expectation" 2. Having extreme effects 3. Human nature concocting explanations for it after the fact. Focus on rationalisations.	Tim Cohen	03/09/12
3. Ramaphosa comes out for fired workers	Ramaphosa responding to dismissal of mineworkers at Shanduka Coal Management. Focus on his position regarding worker's rights and moral authority.	Tina Weavind	31/03/13
4. NUM's fall from power reflects badly on the ANC	NUM loss of power on the platinum belt and implications for the ANC hegemony.	Natasha Marrian	17/07/13
5. Facts are stubborn and history will not be kind	Critique of ANC loyalists in context of Nkandla corruption case.	Palesa Morudu	22/04/14
6. Succession frontrunner a big-picture man	In-depth analysis of Ramaphosa as a frontrunner to succeed President Zuma.	Agency Staff	06/05/14
7. The dead hand of the past will lift after 2014	Predictions of future electoral outcomes after May elections, in context of 20 years of democracy.	Palesa Morudu	06/05/14
8. Platinum belt upheaval has parallels with 1987 strike	Comparison of the NUM-led labour strike of 1987 and the AMCU-led strike in 2014.	Anthony Butler	13/06/14
9. Struggle for a better life has been declared	AMCU platinum strike as evidence that miners have taken the lead in "national dialogue about a new social contract"	Palesa Morudu	17/06/14
10. No wonder Cosatu in tatters if it ignores its own rules.	Cosatu's internal strife	Natasha Marrian	15/08/14
11. Lily-white team undermines	Commentary on Ramaphosa's appearance at Farlam Commission with an all-white legal	Aubrey Matshiqi	18/08/14

Ramaphosa	team. Focus on cross-examination as a “battle between ANC politician and EFF politician”.		
12. Little evidence that Marikana changed anything	Analysis of Marikana as a watershed: changing behavior or opinions among key actors – government, business and labour.	Steven Friedman	20/08/14
13. Legal and political battleground	Commentary on discord between Ramaphosa and Advocate Dali Mpofu at the Farlam Commission	Franky Rabkin	21/08/14