Introduction

Outline of Arguments, Theoretical Moves, and Research Sources

A theoretically-informed analysis of stereotyping in advertising is a largely unchartered territory. Coupled to this problem is a complexity deriving from the fact that a variety of instruments (be they administrative, technological, ideological, or theoretical) when enacted in the South African context, often lead to counter-intuitive results. Tints, regressive ethnic stereotypes may have been “good” in certain South African contexts and progressive ones “bad” in others. The incorporation of “black” ethnicity in advertising in the West is held to be largely symbolic and masks the lack of real incorporation. Yet in South Africa, in certain circumstances, it prefigures black incorporation given the rise of the black consumer. A discourse geared towards stereotypes of minorities in a dominant ethnicity context, which sees them as bad, may be functional in a multiracial and multicultural context.

Instances such as these are symptomatic of a more general problem encountered in the application of theories from First World contexts to the South African context (Muller and Tomaselli 1990: Louw, 1991). Third World countries might not always follow the same patterns or even stages of development that have previously occurred in the advanced industrial states. Third World countries will be profoundly affected by current development theories and policies practised in advanced industrial or post-industrial states. From a globalisation point of view, technological developments that have rendered certain modes of production and their attenuating labour reproduction requirements obsolete, inevitably hear influence upon Third World countries. While not underestimating the level of South African sophistication in industrialisation and business management, these observations must to some extent hold true about future development of the South African social formation, Care should therefore be exercised in the application of theories and concepts from abroad. Theoretical insight might be enhanced by establishing how concepts such as ‘racial stereotyping’ or apparently more established critical approaches to advertising relate to their own originating contexts. This approach
can be informative about the manner in which such concepts relate to the South African context: whether they do so in a sufficiently similar manner as to the contexts that gave rise to their original formulations, or whether some adaptation is required.\footnote{Tomaselli (1992) gives a critique of South African intercultural communication theory’s unproblematised distortions of American instances.} By developing approaches based upon what might he called ‘relative analogy’, or ‘contextual interrelationship’ techniques, it may he possible to overcome the danger of clouding over of local practices with foreign meanings. The application of mis-matched, anachronistic or strategically inept theories to local contexts should thus be avoided. At the same time the scrutiny of foreign critical concepts (rather than their unquestioned assimilation) should not be regarded as a new or further form of ‘separate development’. In this instance the intention is to facilitate conceptual clarity and thus better understanding about the relationship of local advertising practices to South African reform processes. How does one apply ‘relative analogy’? It is an approach which as far as possible also takes cognisance of the original contextual processes that gave rise to the theories being considered. Theories, then, are selected and applied by assessment and comparison to find out how appropriate their contextual relationships are to local contextual processes.

The purpose of this general introduction is to rehearse in summary the arguments and topography of the thesis and sketch in skeletal form the main theoretical moves being made. An analysis of racial stereotyping in advertising commercials on television in relation to ‘reform’ in South Africa, requires the consideration and interrelationship of many areas of study: stereotyping theory, theoretically-informed advertising criticism, political economy. Post-World War II South African history, reform, broadcast media, local marketing/advertising practices, and film theory. The first theoretical move will consist of establishing some sort of relationship between a stereotyping critical approach and the main corpus of theoretically-informed advertising criticism. This process of exploration is initiated in Chapter 1 with clarification in three aspects of primary relevance to this study: the definition’ of the concept of stereotype; the relationship of stereotypes to ideology; and the nature of ‘racial stereotyping’. The genealogy of the concept of stereotype is traced from what seem to be its earlier origins, to its more formal
definition by Walter Lippmann (1922), and to Perkins’s (1979) important reassessment. After a review of Perkins’s (1979) examination of the conception of stereotypes, it becomes apparent that certain stereotypes its more closely related to dominant ideological forms than others. The positive stereotypes in the mass media with which we so readily (and often unconsciously) identify, might be understood to articulate something similar to what Althusser (1971) conceived of as an imaginary relationship to our conditions of existence. One way of regarding such stereotypes would be that they are agents of what Althusser (1971) has called *interpellation*. These positive stereotypes play a role in ‘class formation’, or in the forms of socialisation that give the appearance of classless social structures in post-industrial societies. In the mainstream media representations of the predominantly liberal political economies of western countries, pejorative stereotyping (especially racial stereotyping in its pejorative sense) has little basis. Such pejorative stereotypes are either residual from earlier eras, or might emanate from more extremist-inclined groups situated outside the mainstream of political discourse. In South Africa, during the period from 1978 to 1992, overt pejorative racial stereotyping also came to be incongruous with mainstream media practices. However, although not overtly pejorative, the forms of racial stereotyping directed at the indigenous population during this period tended to be defined by ethnicity or by departures from this tendency.

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2 In the United States, conservative political forces in the latter 1970s and during the 1980s have indeed made inroads upon social programs instituted in the 1950s and 1970s to redress the mainly black disadvantaged (Leiman, 1993:2). However, it would be outright political insanity for this attack to become represented as pejorative racial stereotypes in the mass media. Characters on U.S. television have always been inclined to be middle or upper middle class; now, in the 1990s, black people have become an equal and everyday part of this upwardly mobile world (Jhally & Lewis, 1992:131). The current tendency in television media practices in advanced industrial democracies in general seems to be to reflect an ideology that emphasises progressive self-reliance and upward mobility of blacks.

3 The term ethnic has its roots in the Greek term *ethnikos*, which originally meant ‘national’ or ‘of a nation’. According to Williams (1976:119), this term was widely used in the senses of heathen, pagan, or Gentile, until the 19th century, when this sense was generally superseded by the sense of a racial characteristic. *Ethnics* came to be used in the United States as a polite term for Jews, Italians and other less breads. The apprehension of ethnicity obviously requires the existence of a ‘non-ethnic’ or someone from another, usually more dominant culture or nation. From within the vantage point of their own culture, an ethnic group is not likely to be able to regard any major ‘otherness’ in themselves.

In a South African context during the period of apartheid, the motives of the government were to racially differentiate groups in the country, as a means of preventing absorption or elements of the indigenous black population into the white nation-state, in order to ensure European and particularly Afrikaner hegemony within this state. Government institutions articulated this policy with an emphasis upon the preservation or resurrection of aspects of the traditionally-based tribal cultures of the indigenous population. English-
For analytical purposes it is helpful to consider the forms of South African racial stereotyping in terms of the following category framework: i) pejorative; ii) ethnic; iii) ethnic middle class; and iv) non-ethnic middle class.

It was observed above that the South African context may in some instances be found to differ from the political economies of the advanced industrial states. The hesitant movement in SABC-TV commercials from separate advertisements, featuring ethnic categories of racial stereotyping (and their accompanied discourse of ‘structured absences’), to the apparently non-ethnic, non-racial, black bourgeois or affirmatively-inclined stereotypes of ‘integrated’ advertising, may to some extent be consistent with this observation. The terms of economic and social change entailed by ‘reform’ might be expected to manifest specific idiosyncratic tendencies when enacted upon a context in some respect still subject to a form of detached colonisation. Pejorative racial stereotypes, similar to those of the advanced industrial democracies, have at times also been present but are incongruous with apartheid. Firstly, in the case of pre-reformist apartheid, pejorative stereotypes of blacks would have undermined the supposed integrity of separate development. Secondly, in the case of reformist apartheid such stereotypes would readily have been recognisable in First World terms as aspects of racial oppression.

The forms of racial stereotyping in South African television advertising commercials need to be considered in the light the fundamental contentions of theoretically-informed advertising criticism. Such an undertaking presents two main areas of difficult. Firstly, in the advanced industrial democracies the study of advertising as a cultural phenomenon speaking academics tended to criticise the ensuing forms of political development as being based upon ethnicity.

4 If blacks are portrayed in negative roles, the inequality of separate development becomes revealed. On the other hand ‘structured absences’ may to some extent prevent inequality from becoming apparent (see Chapter 4)

5 Pieter Fourie (1982) develops a model of intercultural communication to support his argument for the need for positive depictions of blacks in South African cinema. Photographic representation depicting black and white relations were likely to be seized as examples of prevailing race relations, and in this respect the South African film maker was urged to be premeditated in portraying relations that were as ‘normal’ as possible, or at least that their films should have sought solutions to ‘abnormal’ race relations (1982:67).
has been a tentative field. The debate about the social role of advertising concretised during the period from the mid-1970s to the latter half of the 1980s (see Pollay, 1978; Leiss, Kline & Jhally, 1986:5-6), after the publication of several important works. By the end of the 1980, advertising was increasingly becoming a subject of interest to the humanities. Secondly, the fact that most of the critical ideas about the economic and social role of advertising in South Africa are predominantly informed by advertising criticism from First World countries, is also problematic. The drift of pre-post structural theoretically-informed critical positions is that advertising generally plays an ancillary ideological role that helps dilute class struggle. Advertising is thus supposed to assume the role of an ‘ideological state apparatus’ or factor of hegemony. However (as will become apparent in succeeding chapters), because in an apartheid context force always tended to predominate over consent, any achievement of hegemony in relation to blacks existed only tentatively. While hegemony in South Africa during the apartheid period and its reform must be understood in qualified terms. First World theoretically-informed advertising criticism tends to see advertising as a principal ideological means through which consumption is established as a means of hegemony without any such qualification.

The purpose of Chapter 2 is to focus on advertising criticism with the object of marrying a stereotyping approach to the general oeuvre of theoretically-informed advertising criticism. Theoretically-informed criticism claims that advertising plays an additional role to that of facilitating the mass marketing and distribution of manufactured goods: the advertising of consumer products also sells the capitalist system. Several distinctions can be made between the different theoretically-informed critical positions. Some of these positions maintain or imply that the ideological role of consumer advertising is determinist or conspiratorial (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1944; Ewen, 1976). Other positions see this role in more contingent terms (Williams, [1960] 1980; Inglis, 1972).

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6 In 1992 a critical approach to the study of advertising was being offered as a subject in the Humanities Faculty at the University of Technology, Sydney, Australia.

7 This important essay was originally written as a chapter in The Long Revolution (1951) but withdrawn from that book for inclusion in a collective book on advertising which was never published. It was published in part in New Left Review, 4, July/August 1960, while the Afterword to this essay was published in The Listener, 31 July, 1959. It is available in Problems in Materialism and Culture (Williams, 1980). The
A distinction can also be made in terms of some positions that tend to see the ideology of consumer advertising in rather absolute terms (Ewen, 1976), and other positions that allow for the possibility of our being able to resist this ideology (Williams, [1960] 1980). Nevertheless, from an assessment of these positions it is both possible and viable to support a critical position that views advertising as the agency through which consumption is established as a means of hegemony in a consumer, or market democracy situation (Williams, [1960] 1980; Gramsci, 1971).

In seeking to integrate a stereotyping approach with theoretically-informed advertising criticism, the problem is approached through a determination of the ideological location of stereotypes within this oblique role of advertising as facilitator of consumption as a means of hegemony. One finds the relationship between advertising and stereotyping to be a special one because it is located in the very area of advanced industrial production and mass distribution of consumer goods and services. It is these goods and services that have enabled a bourgeois lifestyle to become broadly disseminated in its petty bourgeois forms. It is here that answers should be sought about the primary role of stereotyping in advertising. Inherent in the nature of advertising for consumer goods is the constant reconstitution and re-articulation of petty bourgeois stereotypes. These positive stereotypes are intertwined with the products or services that are being sold, either through the depiction of the human circumstances of the use of such goods or through image association.\(^8\)

A very brief outline here of the historical background which has given rise to this position of prominence for modern advertising might provide a better understanding of the nature of its ideological role. Advertising is a cultural form as old as urban society (Pope, 1983:4). The transformation from entrepreneurial capitalism to monopoly

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\(^8\) Regardless of whether the applied form of advertising approach concentrates on the product (“reason why”?USP approach), or focuses upon the problems of the consumer (“lifestyle”), a discourse of middle class stereotyping still applies (see Chapter 2). In the case of “lifestyle oriented approaches, the resulting image associations and interpellatory force of the stereotyping is likely to be more calculated and powerful, as the analysis of Williamson (1978) shows.
capitalism at the end of the 19th century led to a transition to large-scale mass production. Large-scale mass production is dependent upon heavy capital outlay (for machinery buildings, large inventories of raw materials, and for labour costs). A predictable foxy of industrially produced goods is required. To ensure consumption’, industrialists have to be able to ‘organise and where possible control’ the markets for their goods (Williams, [1960] 1980:177-8), rather than to simply inform and supply their customers. The organisation and control of consumer markets entails constant efforts in the further construction, definition and expansion of such markets. It is at this point in the history of industrial capitalism that advertising begins to assume a new role. As Williams ([1960] 1980:187) points out:

…this period of fundamental change in the economy is the key to the emergence of full-scale modern advertising is shown also by the radical changes in the organisation of advertising itself.

From the eighteenth century onwards, certain shops which had been collection points for advertisements for newspapers evolved into agents which bought and resold the space to advertisers. With increasing emphasis after the 1880s, these agencies began to change their function to one of offering advice and service to manufacturers, while still having to sell space for the newspapers (Turner, 1952). By the turn of the century newspapers had their own advertising managers, while agencies stopped selling space and concentrated on serving and advising manufacturers, and booking space after a campaign had been agreed upon. In conjunction with the continuum transformation of existing media, and the establishment of new media (Williams, 1990), advertising processes became more firmly established after each of the two world wars. Particularly after World War H and during the Cold War period, advertising is believed to have played an important role in the extension of consumer democracies and the stabilisation of working classes across Western Europe (Sinclair, 1986:7-8), as initially facilitated thorough the Marshall Plan.

If one looks at the role of racial’ stereotyping in South African advertising, and particularly in television commercials, several factors will become apparent with respect
to the above observations. Post-World War II South African society comprised of an affluent white ruling class that was predominantly English-speaking, and a slightly larger Afrikaans-speaking group that was well into the process of capital accumulation and conversion to an urban base. A small black middle class with limited capital resources at their disposal also existed. The much larger black working class was at that stage economically and strategically very weak.\(^9\) The largest population sector consisted of marginally-educated rural blacks who subsisted off the land, either in the reserves\(^10\) or on white farms. In South Africa in the post-World War II period there was nothing equivalent of a Marshall Plan or consumer democracy to address the state of underdevelopment, and to ‘stabilise’ the majority black population (through access to consumer goods and services and appropriate psychological orientation). Indeed, no such solution has ever been applied to Third World sectors of the non-core capitalist centres of the West, and this course of action would in all probability have been incompatible with South Africa’s status or location within the system of international economic relations of the time. Although the implication of economic determinism should be avoided, the pattern suggests that this matter should not be simply regarded as a denial only consistent with a localised apartheid situation. With the coming to power of the National Party further Afrikaner working class stabilisation did occur through the extension of state-sponsored job opportunities in the parastatals.\(^11\) However, earlier racial discrimination practised against blacks became entrenched through the more formal establishment of apartheid.

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\(^9\) African trade Unions never actually became illegal but instead legislation had been enacted which made it extremely difficult for them to function effectively (Lodge, 1987: 188).

\(^10\) Tribally controlled regions that had been protected from white colonialisation. These regions later formed the basis for the apartheid project of establishing independent black states.

\(^11\) The economic policies of the PACT government had earlier set the scene for government intervention in the South African economy. A political alliance in 1924, between white labour and white Afrikaner dominated rural capital, had resulted in the formation of the PACT government. This alliance entrenched the economic position of both white labour and white farming interests, vis-à-vis those of South African blacks. The PACT government also embarked on a determined policy of industrialisation based on direct investment by the government and the creation of a wide range of protective tariffs designed to raise domestic price levels to the point at which certain commodities previously imported, could be profitably produced within South Africa. In 1927 a bill was passed establishing the wholly state-owned iron and steel corporation, ISCOR. In 1977 the total output of the public corporations contributed 11% to the country’s total manufacturing production (See Natrass, 1981:153). Other important state-owned corporations were
In Chapter 3, some of the aspects of post-World War II South African political economy which have underpinned the ensuing forms of South African racial stereotyping are outlined. In the face of the combined effects of many factors, apartheid was a self-conflicting system applied with some experimentation and varying degrees of forcefulness over the years that followed (Hindson, 1987; Lipton. 1986). The most significant of the factors that stood in contradiction to the success of apartheid were internal resistance by blacks, international opposition, the failing objectives of the Bantustan project, and (particularly important to the present research) the structural contradictions arising out of an economic dependence on black labour coupled with growing black consumer power. As in the case of other post-World War II fascist regimes during the Cold War, apartheid South Africa’s continuing ability to negotiate its co-existence within the international Western hegemonic order was based upon certain key factors: this country’s strategic significance at the time, its history of some communist party activity, the potential susceptibility of previously colonial black states in Africa to align themselves with then Soviet-orchestrated Third World.

If the constitution or re-articulation of petty bourgeois stereotypes is inherent within the advertising process for the promotion of consumer goods and services, then an understanding of ‘racial’ stereotyping in South African advertising must be dependent upon an understanding of the relationship between capitalism and apartheid. The apartheid project as theorised by H.F. Verwoerd in terms of Bantustans envisaged eventual total national separation between whites and blacks. The clarification envisaged

SOEKOR (oil exploration) SASOL (oil from coal production), ARMSCOR (arms Production), postal services and telecommunications, SABC (public broadcaster), SAR (railways).

12 In terms of the Bantustan Project, as envisaged by Prime Minister H.F. Verwoerd, it was intended that about 13% of the land of South Africa previously allocated, as ‘native reserves’ would be consolidated into independent states. Although, in theory, all indigenous inhabitants of South Africa would eventually have had to locate themselves within me new states, there were some powerful factors suggesting that this was not likely to be realised. The South African economy was dependent on black labour. Many blacks had so called Section 10 rights (Hindson, 1987) entitling them to permanent residence in urban areas. The Bantustans were never likely to gain any international recognition as independent states.

13 H.F. Verwoerd was the third South African Prime Minister after the Afrikaner Nationalist government came to power in 1948 (first came D.F. Malan, then J.G. Strydom, then Verwoerd. Verwoerd belonged the minority Lutheran branch of Protestantism, rather than the majority Calvinist group within Afrikanerdom In the sense that he was born in Holland and migrated to Africa with his parents as a child Verwoerd was ‘new’ Afrikaner (Davenport, 1991:352).
maintenance of ethnicity to define and erect different black nation-states was one of the key underpinning factors of early apartheid. This discourse was enacted into law through a variety of legislation, and thus necessarily permeated the daily practices of institutions of the public and private spheres. Under these circumstances, an ethnically-biased form in stereotyping is a key and defining characteristic of racial stereotyping. However, ethnic stereotyping is also a form (and especially so in the case of product advertising) that might act in contradiction to continuing industrialisation, urbanisation and growth in monopoly capitalism, and particularly to longer term requirements for urban social integration on a class basis. During the Cold War period capitalism in South Africa was in a situation of simultaneous connivance, opposition, and in terms of longer-term processes organically in dynamic tension with apartheid. The story of racial stereotyping in South African advertising lies essentially within this dynamic tension. Broadly, what one sees is a difficult and variously impeded movement from ethnic black stereotyping towards a universal petty bourgeois stereotype.\(^\text{14}\)

Economic growth and increased black employment in the industrial or service sectors meant that a growing number of blacks were augmenting the market for consumer goods and services, and therefore entering processes that would lead them away from an ethnic interpellation. Thus processes of a ‘reformation’ in terms of change in the structure of the social formation were in motion long before political reform. Apartheid (as practised during Verwoerd’s tenure as prime minister) was framed upon an understanding and anticipation of these integrative processes of industrial capitalism, and sought to control and reverse these processes. Political reform actually begins in the Vorster\(^\text{15}\) era with improved relations between the government and the business sector and the institution of the Wiehahn and Riekert Commissions (1977-9). These Commissions aimed at revising

\(^{14}\) The recent research on South African television advertising by Cassim & Monteiro (1988) points out that there is “a significant over-representation of blacks in professional occupations and significant under representation of blacks in low-skilled occupations”. It was also observed that the subjects depicted were mostly young adults, dressed in high fashion clothing, and spoke in English more than any other language.

\(^{15}\) B.J. Vorster followed as South African prime minister after Verwoerd was assassinated in September 1966.
or removing restrictions upon black employment and urbanisation, spelt the death of the underlying principle of Verwoerdian apartheid: ultimate total separation. But this was certainly not the end of apartheid, as even with the loss of any teleological sense, and with its theoretical and constitutional coherence undermined, the system continued. For almost three decades after Verwoerd, apartheid remained quite intact in terms of its underpinning legislation, and in terms of its complex oscillations in the psyche of the White ruling classes. Apartheid factors manifesting themselves at various levels continued to impose impediments or distortions upon the development of a middle class inclusive of blacks. But it must also be emphasised that impediments to the further development of middle class blacks were economic as well, because economic growth turned out to be inconsistent.

Chapter 4 outlines the ensuing SABC broadcasting dispensation. Television was also introduced during the B.J. Vorster era in 1976. When television advertising commenced in 1978, some of the early TV1 commercials were inclusive of blacks. In a few of these

16 According to Stadler (1987:96-100;156-157) , the progress of the reform movement may be traced in three phases. The first phase consists of the changes within as well as between parliamentary politics, leading to the expulsion of the verkramptes (right wing conservatives) form the National Party. The Wiehahn and Riekert commissions were part of second phase. This phase was shaped by the failure of the first phase to achieve any significant advance through parliament, and was probably also accelerated by the strikes of the 1970s and the popular struggles beginning with the 1976 Soweto school children’s revolt. This second phase took the form of attempts to reconstruct government policy through various ad hoc devices available internally to the government, of which commissions of inquiry, particularly those orchestrated by experts, became favourite instruments.

The strategy of stabilisation which developed after 1975 was based on the recognition of permanent African urban communities and the consequent attempt to establish appropriate political, fiscal and administrative structures. The policy was largely the work of two groups, the Riekert Commission (1977-9) which formulated its principles, and the Grosskopf Committee (1980-i) which considered the legislative implications of the Riekert Commission. The reports of both groups stressed the permanence of the urban black population, and addressed themselves to questions of defining this population and regulating the future entry of people into the urban areas.

The relative success of the Wiehahn commission in the area of labour relations reform compared with the failure of the Riekert Commission to come up with a solution to the problem of urbanisation, enhanced the reputation and political authority of neutral experts, and coincided with the reconstruction of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) as an instrument of reform during the late 1970s and early 1980s. The second phase nevertheless consisted of piecemeal and reversible efforts to introduce changes within the party- legislative-bureaucratic structures. The third phase which symbolically coincided (though historically preceded) P.W. Botha’s accession to the premiership in 1978 and saw a profound shift in the state’s structure.
early commercials it is possible to find examples of black depictions that are pejorative in the First World sense of the term. But, as will be argued in Chapter 4, such pejorative depictions in the mass media tend to be rejected by the aggrieved group. In any society with pretensions to rationality, prejudice can never simply be justified as prejudice but needs to be disguised as something else. If pejorative stereotypes in the mass media make a prejudice public, this gives just grounds for a call for redress, and may thus constitute a precursor to some form of affirmative action. It is only in the so-called ‘reform era’ during the P.W. Botha\textsuperscript{17} government that the television broadcasting infrastructure was extended with TV2/3 in 1982, and only then did televised ‘apartheid racial stereotyping’ become truly feasible, In this respect. Chapter 4 explains how the question of structured absences’ became relevant in the gatekeeping\textsuperscript{18} rules of the television broadcasting medium. The term ‘Structured Absence’ refers to what a text ‘cannot say’. A tacit set of rules will often develop in text production practices which will underpin the forms of representation. In the case of early apartheid, text designed for white consumption would have totally excluded blacks or presented them as related to their own homelands. While texts designed by whites for black consumption would have tended towards the representation of a black world, where social interaction with whites was mostly absent. However, this principle could not be properly applied in television advertising before the 1982 advent of channels specifically intended for blacks. The TV2/3 channels introduced in 1982, were designed to broadcast their programming and advertising in the vernacular, to which strict adherence was enforced in television commercials. P.W. Botha is on record as conceding that black middle classes were a good thing, in as far these classes might have operated as a resistance to communism. But he made an important qualification that black middle classes should nevertheless have identified themselves in terms of various different black ‘nations’ in South Africa, Radio Bantu and TV2/3 might be seen to have been interpreting and applying this policy during most of the reform period.

\textsuperscript{17} After B.J. Vorster, P.W. Botha followed initially as prime minister and then as executive president after the amendment of the South African constitution.

SABC-TV broadcasting regulations and practices were a powerful influence upon the structuring and underlying forms of racial stereotyping in television commercials. The transition in forms of racial stereotyping in South Africa were indeed taking place from an ethnic category to a more Westernised middle class category. But in terms of its chronological occurrence within SABC-TV broadcasting practices, one might thus categorise the stereotyping of blacks in SABC-TV commercials, as follows: 1) pejorative (limited); 2) ethnic (structured absences); 3) ethnic middle class (structured absences); 4) Integrated (non-ethnic) middle class. In responding to integrative economic dynamics (stated above) some advertisers during this period were finding that conceptualisation and communication in terms of a separate white market and black market was in certain instances inappropriate. But SABC-TV broadcasting policy was restrictive because it was dedicated to maintaining ethnicity in order to facilitate the development of ‘ethnic black middle classes’. While this underlying purpose prevailed with the broadcaster, advertisers who wished to conceptualise commercials in terms of a single market approach were either prevented from doing so, or their task was frustrated and made more difficult. The final section of Chapter 4 re-examines the gatekeeping role of the SABC vis-à-vis the reform of apartheid and tries to assess the extent to which this influence was predominant or determining amongst the material structural factors restricting the transformation to a more racially integrated development of stereotyping in advertising commercials. It appears that conservative influences originated from a combination of factors. What was in some instances a genuine need to communicate in ethnic terms, might in many instances also have served as an excuse for entrenched residual racist thinking at the various levels related to the advertising process, such as marketing, research, and broadcasting. In this context the SABC as gatekeeper was in a powerful position to inhibit change, but was not, so to speak, ‘all alone out there’. A quite considerable capacity to reform apartheid advertising emanating directly from SABC broadcasting restrictions must surely have rested with the dominant corporations of the business sector that were paving for it. Such pressure does seem to have gathered momentum from 1985 onwards.
After the mid-1980s, SABC-TV rules of acceptance for commercials were to some extent relaxed. Integrated marketing approaches did become possible through TV1 and through TV4, but the vernacular language requirements of TV2/3 remained in place. However, in some instances left-wing critics do not seem to have fully appreciated the significance of these apartheid media restrictions. In fact, these restrictions were inconsistent with historical materialist conceptions of normal capitalism based upon expanding processes of industrialisation and the growth of consumer markets. As pointed out above, these are the very processes that are believed to have brought about the development of modern advertising. Instead, some critics collapsed their interpretation of the growing interest of marketers in black consumers as evidence of a general capitalist conspiracy with the reformist National Party government and with Total Strategy. This view may have been encouraged by the fact that some advertising practitioners added to the confusion by canvassing for government use of political or public service advertising to sell reform or certain of its aspects to either the white electorate and/or to the (at that stage the still non-enfranchised) majority black population. Political advertising or public service advertising are two forms that should be distinguished in the mode of action of their ideological role from that of consumer product advertising. Chapter 5 specifically examines political and public service advertising in South Africa during the 1980s. It appears that in spite of consistent advocacy by some members of the advertising profession for the need for political advertising, there was little that was ‘total’ or

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19 Total Strategy refers to militarist concept tested in the peripheries of Western dominance during the Cold War, and adapted to local conditions by the South African defence force. While fighting the ‘communist inspired’ guerrillas or ‘terrorists’, every effort had to be made to win the hearts and minds of certain sections of the population that the insurgents were trying to liberate (Tomaselli & Louw, 1989).

20 The chief executive of Lindsay Smithers (FCB), Len van Zyl, wrote in the ‘In My Opinion’ columns of the Financial Mail outlining his reasons for his opposition to political advertising (Financial Mail, 7 March 1986:64). According to Van Zyl any product which doesn’t meet its advertised promise will not be repurchased by the consumer, (not strictly speaking correct as products such as cigarettes, perfumes etc. do not have any objectively discernible benefit). However, according to Van Zyl, public esteem of advertising as an institution could be seriously damaged by the consequences of false claims of political advertisements which unlike in the case of products have to be endured for a five year term. Van, Zyl’s apparent reservation about political advertising were consistent with the views of John O’Toole, executive chairman of Foote, Cone and Belding (FCB) in the United States (O’Toole, 1981). George Lois (1979) outlines his views for being in favour of political advertising and offers a basis for what he believes to be a disciplined effective approach.
wilfully co-ordinated with government interests in the manner this industry operated during the reform era.

After the mid-1980s, television commercials for consumer products (especially in the case of beer advertising) indeed began to stereotype blacks in highly affirmative middle class roles and to depict them together with whites in integrated commercials flighted on TV1 and TV4. In terms of theoretical debates about the ideological role of consumer product advertising, this development would on the whole seem to have been more affirmatively (and politically) motivated than being simply contingent to the selling of beer. However, from the case study in Chapter 7 it becomes apparent that the ideology of these commercials is not indicative of any conspiracy with ‘Total Strategy’. When closely examined these commercials indicate that a schism indeed had occurred between English-speaking capital and the National Party government after 1985.

**Advertising in the Context of ‘Reform’**

A logical initial question to ask in any study of South African advertising in relation to the reformist discourse of the 1980s is what role advertising might possibly have played in relation to apartheid? Could advertising have reinforced apartheid, eroded it, or could it be simply have been irrelevant? Or, could it not have done all of these things at the same time? In its political dimension, it is within the realms of possibility that ‘reform’ affected advertising (not necessarily only consumer product advertising) on three levels: (i) as a strategy to achieve some sort of social engineering goal -- in terms of the government’s Total Strategy, or in terms of the predominately English-speaking capital-inspired alternative of an integrated and inclusive middle class: (ii) as an instrument of diplomacy to produce images that would favourably have influenced world opinion towards the South African government; and (iii) as an ideological discourse interpellating advertising practitioners to be amenable to the performance of any of the former tasks.

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21 In the earlier 1980s particularly through SABC influences in favour of the government. But in the latter 1980s more through business sector influences, in terms of a general improvement in the image of the South African state.
Considering the matter at the level of production practices in advertising agencies, one might wonder as through what path any reformist ideological shift communicated itself into these practices. It seems quite logical that one aspect of political discourse might have been able to affect advertising fairly directly through government influence of the SABC and the determining of broadcasting regulations. But in another aspect, political discourse mostly would have affected advertising less directly through ideological interpellation of practitioners at the various institutional levels involved in the production of the advertising text. During the period of crisis in South Africa such ideological interpellation within the then dominant petty bourgeoisie white group (from where marketing and media practitioners were mostly drawn) was complex, fluctuating and divergent.

One of the problems with Marxist analyses of consumer advertising is the fact that its ideological role is usually seen as necessary for the reproduction of the system. While it is recognised that such ‘functional’ necessity emerges historically, the historical relationship between advertising and economic and social change is understood in deterministic and instrumental rather than dialectical terms (Sinclair. 1987:24-25). Stuart Ewen’s (1976) Marxist approach to the role played by advertising in the United States in the 1920s falls into a group of studies that adopt a somewhat conspiratorial or deterministic view (ibid.). On the opposite end of the spectrum, a left-Leavisite approach such as Fred Inglis (1972) adopts a rather more organic view (ibid.). According to Inglis the system becomes reified as if it has a logic of its own, independent of the individual or collective actions of human agents. The difficulty of arriving at a suitably balanced approach remains a key problem in theoretically-informed advertising criticism. This question also belongs to one of the more fundamental debates in cultural studies: the problem of understanding how events in the ‘superstructure’ might relate to events in the ‘substructure’:

Any modern approach to a Marxist theory of culture must begin by considering the proposition of a determining base and a determined superstructure. From a strictly theoretical point of view this is not, in fact, where we might choose to begin. It would be in many ways preferable if
we could begin from a proposition which originally was equally central, equally authentic: namely the proposition that social being determines social consciousness (Williams. [1973] 1980:31).

It is accepted that the concept of base and superstructure is a simplification. Nevertheless, considered as a metaphor, base and superstructure remains a useful tool for the determination of initial bearings within the confusion about how the ideological role of consumer advertising occurs. Advertising practices are part of the selling process. There is some ambivalence in orthodox Marxism whether the selling of goods should be located at the productive base (and thus be considered a ‘productive activity’) or whether it should be located as a superstructural, ‘nonproductive’ activity (Williams. [1973] 1980:35). According to Marx’s original thesis, it is quite unlikely that advertising at that stage of its development could have been given any recognition as a productive activity. However, within a late capitalist framework (Mandel, 1978), the ‘information ace’, where media and advertising and other parts of the service sector have become key areas of economic activity, and significant contributors to gross national product (Arriaga, 1984), the original Marxist framework is surely no longer applicable. The question of whether or not advertising should be seen as a ‘productive activity’ needs to be approached cautiously. What seems to be a logical, and most important observation, is that if advertising is to be considered an activity of the ‘superstructures’, it must be distinguished by the fact that it is more directly motivated by substructural events than other media texts. Although it might be argued that the ‘added value’ of an advertisement in certain cases is more important to the consumer than the actual product being advertised, consumer product advertisements continue to be primarily intended as vehicles for facilitating the movement of products or services. In comparison to other texts such as poems, novels, feature films22, or soap operas, a difference exists in the fact that advertisements and their ideology are not in purpose principally the product intended for ‘consumption’. In order to reach a balanced assessment of the role of South African advertising in relation to the reformist objectives of South African capitalism, and those

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22 It is noted that a slight exception exists in the case of feature films. There is trend to insert various branded products in some broadly marketed feature films in return for compensation to the film producers by the manufacturers of these products.
of the state as articulated by Afrikaner Nationalist governments (whose position after the late 1960s was a shifting one), a particularly sensitive approach is needed.

A complicating factor in the study of racial stereotyping in advertising in the context of reform in South Africa is the fact that change in the forms of black depiction has simultaneously also been vitally affected by structural or organic processes as well as political discourse. As structural economic processes these deeper or underpinning currents of reform operated upon the social formation so that the market for consumer goods and services was gradually transformed. It is the business of marketing, advertising, and broadcasting institutions to be quite sensitive to the consumer market. This influence upon South African advertising is consistent with what might be termed normally contingent ideological processes inherent in consumer product advertising (Chapter 2). In some cases this effect would not have been altogether dissimilar or completely separable from some effects reformist political discourse might have had upon advertising. In other cases it is quite probable that the responses of institutional practices to structural change were not always necessarily in tune with contemporaneous political imperatives of ‘reform’.

Reform in South Africa has been fundamentally organically related to the drive to monopoly capitalism, to changing industrial structure, to changes in labour relations, and to changes in urbanisation policy. These processes bear some relationship to the typical processes that are supposed to have brought about the development of modern advertising in the First World (Williams, [1960] 1980; Turner, 1952; Schudson, 1984; Ewen, 1976). Representing itself through such changing material conditions or structural processes, reform in this aspect was affecting ‘the market’ for consumer goods. Product advertising responded directly to this influence. But it is also quite probable that some of the political/ideological aspects of reform also influenced advertising practices less directly through the *interpellation* of practitioners within reformist discourse at various levels of what has been described as an institutional production loop (Hall, 1980:128-138). To do

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justice to this complexity, changing racial stereotypes might be considered to have been affected by two separate influences dually mediating their way through advertising and broadcasting production practices: i) reform as a political discourse and ii) reform in terms of its preceding or underlying structural processes.

The intention of this thesis is to examine racial stereotyping in SABC-TV advertising commercials for consumer products or services (the main type of advertising on television). It is usually the more pervasive consumer product advertising that gives rise to criticism against advertising. However, a tendency exists for popular opinion to lump all types of advertising together (Sinclair, 1987:4). It has been pointed out above that in the earlier part of the 1980s considerable publicity had been given in the popular press to advocates of advertising as a means of facilitating the reform process. What was being suggested was that advertising could act as a vehicle for persuasion or propaganda for gaining public acceptance of certain policies or for effecting social change. What was being canvassed was political advertising, and possibly also public service advertising.24

As far as popular opinion is concerned, it is not unlikely that this discourse rubbed off onto product advertising and became confused with it. In line with a popular South African reading of Vance Packard’s (1957) advertising criticism (which focuses on manipulation or ‘brainwashing’), possibly coupled with some academically-orientated applications of determinist assessments, such as Ewen (1976), a belief might have arisen (and also been fostered by some advertising practitioners)25 that product advertising could be used or was being used to facilitate reform by creating or co-opting black middle classes. The inception of direct political advertising in South Africa during the

24 An example of a public service advertising might be a press advertisement warning women about the dangers of contracting German Measles during pregnancy. From a critical point of view what is defined as ‘public service advertising’ might often be found to have political implications. In an apartheid context or any other non-democratic situation, the implications of public service advertising to hegemony become more profound.

25 Advertising practitioners themselves, such as for example Tredoux in Frederikse (1986:56), might have added to the contusion by implying that product advertising could play such a role in reform strategy: “The skilled magicians, the masters of the masses, must be seen as ultimately involved in the general weakness which they not only exploit but are exploited by” (Williams, [19601 1980:189-190).
P.W. Botha era probably set the tone for the relationship between reformist discourse and the advertising industry (Vorster, 1986). Chapter 5 thus pays some attention to this particular form, political advertising.

In order to obtain a more sensitive reading with regard to the above observations, Chapter 6 follows with an examination of the relationship between advertising and reform as a structural process. The organic type of reform predicted by O’Dowd (1964) drew some of its parallels from English social history, but for a contextual situation such as South Africa, this pace of social change turned out to be too limited in relation to what was necessary (in terms of the expectations of the black majority and the mounting international objections to apartheid). Reform as a structural process or at an organically occurring level (through the gradual extension of consumption as opposed to mere subsistence to urbanised members of the indigenous population) was not substantial enough to bring about any dramatic reversal in the level of underdevelopment of the indigenous population as a whole.

However, the gradual effects of such structural processes did nevertheless change the pattern of a consumer market that previously had still depended primarily upon white spending power. This process of extension already formed the underlying basis for some degree of an organic transition towards non-ethnic black middle class stereotypes in advertising. The facts which are outlined in Chapter 4 indicate that in spite of reform, such organic processes towards the formation of a more genuine black middle class were actually being thwarted by the ambivalent position of the government, and by entrenched or residual apartheid thinking in broadcasting, marketing and advertising practices. This was an organic transition that preceded any ‘conspiratorial’ schemes to create or co-opt black middle classes, (if any such dubious schemes existed). By this is meant that it preceded: a) late 1970s or early 1980s co-optive possibilities, while rapprochement between English-dominated capital and government endured; b) the public ideological divergence from the policies of the P.W. Botha government; this divergence was implicit.

26 Michael O’Dowd (1964) had applied Rostow (1950); Stages of Economic Growth, to the South African context, arguing that democratic change would come about with economic development.
in some of the forms of affirmative depiction of black character in consumer advertising by the business sector, particularly corporations associated with the English-dominated branch of South African capital from the second half of the 1980s onwards. In Chapter 6, the responses of marketing and advertising practices are examined in the light of structural changes in the consumer market and reformist political discourse. There is no evidence of any co-ordination between government and capital in South Africa with respect to the devising of any consistent reformist consumer communication strategy, and this fact strongly detracts from any potential applicability of theories suggesting conspiracy with regard to the ideological component of consumer product advertising.

The area of confusion around what role product advertising might have played in ‘reform as apolitical discourse’ arises from the issue of black middle class ‘co-option’ during the 1980s. From the earlier brief review of critical advertising theories (which are outlined in more detail Chapter 2), it seems that under normal circumstances any middle class socialisation effected by product advertising occurs contingently. Under normal circumstances product advertising is not ideological by conscious intention. The primary’ purpose of product advertising is to sell goods, and as such needs to be clearly-focused to achieving this purpose. There are two fundamental purposes advertising practitioners are supposed to keep in the front part of their minds when creating advertisements for products: “moving the product off the shelf” or “protecting the brand” (from competitors). It was pointed out above that in capitalist economies the apparent primary economic purposes of most consumer advertising is to help maintain the projected production capacity of factories by facilitating distribution and consumption of their products within specified periods of time (Turner, 1952; Williams, [1960] 1980; Schudson, 1984; Pope. 1983). Advertising does this along with many other components of the marketing cycle -- market research, promotions, publicity, sales representatives,

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27 Since about 1984, Sanlam, a corporation associated with Afrikaner capital, had featured babies in its television commercials for life assurance schemes (Willoughby, 1991). This campaign had initially featured white toddlers that were predominantly blond, but by the end of the 1980s it also began to include black babies in some commercials. However, it would be fair to associate the changing forms in the Sanlam commercials more with the type of pragmatic contextual adaptation that was generally occurring in television advertising by the end of the 1980s, than with the apartheid probing approach adopted much earlier by Castle Lager (Chapter 7)
supermarkets, merchandising. Advertising certainly might have promoted further black middle class formation causing the expansion of consumer markets where this was in consistency with the selling of goods and services. But consumer product advertising does not normally direct itself at people who are not in the foreseeable future likely to have any money to buy the particular goods or services on offer. Any latitude for practitioners to concentrate their creative efforts in the realisation of overt political purposes was likely to have been limited, difficult and problematic.

However, circumstances during the period of reform in South Africa were extraordinary rather than normal. During the 1980s crisis period there was much discussion within the business sector about the need to develop a ‘stable’ black middle class. This view also came to be shared by the P.W. Botha government but with the important reservations pointed out above (these ‘reservations’ will be further elaborated below and in Chapter 3). Given the fact that the general ideological climate was reformist during the 1980s, some examination needs to be made of how and at what levels advertising practices might have been subject to - these extraordinary influences. It must be taken into account that the process of production of major advertising campaigns takes place on many levels. Each level involves the input of one or more individual practitioner, with ‘execution taking place at each stage of the process (Crompton, 1979; O’Toole, 1981). So within the limitations of the primary purpose of selling goods, the opportunity to influence content in accordance with reformist discourse (in terms of which some practitioners might have been interpellated) did exist at each level of the advertisement production process. The case study in Chapter 7 (empirically verifiable in Appendix 1b) indicates that advertising commercials for Castle Lager indeed took on a more proactive reformist role after 1984 or 1985. But the ideology of these commercials diverged in a considerably more progressive direction than the reformist scenario of the National Party run government. This suggests that the capitalist state was beginning to move faster than its government, and Afrikaner-dominated legislative and repressive agencies were at the time able to follow. Similar trends to those noted in the Castle Lager advertising commercial history reel applied across all, other brands of beer. These trends were also reflected in the television advertising for other products and services but generally intensified at a later
stage, in the late 1980s or early 1990s, as demonstrated in the analysis of the Rama margarine advertising commercial history reel in Chapter 8. The emergence of this affirmative tendency in consumer advertising in the second half of the 1980s goes towards confirming that there was no conspiracy with government policy or with Total Strategy. In fact these advertisements were heralding the coming to power of the ANC. During the second half of the 1980s it was the major South African capitalist corporations in particular that were re-positioning themselves in anticipation of the coming of a new political order. From a critical advertising studies point of view, this further suggests that the ideological content of these advertisements was quite extraordinary. In some respects this development might be reminiscent of the type of shift that has occurred in the nature of product advertising in the advanced industrial states during exceptional periods such as the First or Second World Wars. It does in fact seem that in the context of a so-called organic crisis in South Africa (Saul, 1986), coupled with government paralysis in the application of reform, the corporate sector assumed a more proactive role in their advertising after 1984. What thus came to be depicted was an integrated society that was ahead of the reality of the time.

It seems that any strategic co-ordination between the business sector and the government in relation to product advertising was not likely to have been achievable, and this became less likely after the 1984 Tricameral Parliament elections. Reform during the P.W. Botha era was problematic. After the parting of ways between English-dominated capital and the government from 1984/5 onwards there was little likelihood that any significant co-ordination or collusion could occur between the government, advertisers and the SABC. To facilitate an assessment of the effects of reform on advertising some clarification is

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28 In the 1970s and earlier 1980s it was foreign corporations such as for example Polaroid or Mobil that had ideologically challenged apartheid.

29 While product advertising has continued during major war situations, rather than sell scarce or unobtainable goods, its orientation has shifted more towards ‘issue advertising’ or ‘corporate advertising’ approaches: promoting the name of the manufacturer while at the same time keeping in view the industrial power of the state (Watkins, 1949:149).

30 Capital owned by the English-speaking section of the South African white population, historically connected to British imperialism.

needed of apartheid and the problematic nature of its reform during the P.W. Botha era. It is postulated that political reform is usually a relationship between material conditions or structural processes and political responses to them by a dominant political order. At this point of time, though acknowledged as necessary, reform was still a rather a difficult rationalisation for Afrikaner Nationalist Party politicians: something that might have appeased blacks, something that would have counter-acted the threat of communism, and something that would have addressed world opinion and met the requirements of South African capital. During the P.W. Botha era, in spite of what was termed Total Strategy, no clear reform blue-print on how to respond to the underlying structural processes was ever devised. The reasons for this are obvious. Any logical unfolding of political reform contained an inescapably inherent contradiction: the implicit disempowerment of Afrikanerdon and the empowerment of blacks. The Nationalist Party government was therefore bound to a double agenda in its implementation of reform. In order to circumvent the threat posed to Afrikaner hegemony a brand of contradictory application of political reform developed that was largely unacceptable to blacks and did little to pacify the tensions in the country. This matter also led to tensions between capital and the Afrikaner-controlled government bureaucracy. A deterioration in the previously much publicised ‘reconciliation.’ between the dominant English-speaking sector of monopoly capital and the government followed. This renewed schism tended to re-emphasise the incoherence factor in the form of the South African state during apartheid. In due course, substantial residual power which in the South African state as in many other countries in the West has actually resided with capital, made its appearance to intervene within the parameters then normally the prerogative of the Afrikaner National Party government. The ideology of Castle Lager advertising commercials after 1984 also gives a foretaste of this residual power of capital. By mid-1989, P.W. Botha came to be succeeded by a more amenable F.W. de Klerk (see Saunders et al, 1992:487-496).

Notes on Research Sources

The theorisation of the categories of South African racial stereotyping was initially assembled through the consideration of a combination of factors derived from both
secondary and primary research sources. Chapters 7 and 8 consist of the two case studies which respectively examine the history reels of advertising commercials for Castle Lager (beer) and Rama (margarine). The systematic analysis of the history reels for Castle Lager and Rama brings about a further interaction and intermeshing between theorisation and empiricism. These two products are targeted at a mass market and are ‘brand leaders’ in their particular product categories. Because the market for these products cuts across the social formation, their advertising is likely to provide some evidence of underlying social, economic, and political dynamics. A further dimension is thus added by providing a source of confirming or contradicting documentary material whose organising principle is more independent of the researcher. The analytical procedure initially followed in writing the two case studies was to give overviews in chronological order of each the two history reels, specifying key characteristics of trends observed. However, in the case of Castle Lager the complexity of the campaign history made it difficult to sustain strict chronological order in the assessment. Several Castle Lager advertising campaigns, each seemingly intended for specific purposes, were found to be running concurrently. The case studies refer to ‘shots’ that have been catalogued and specially numbered and supported with stills in appendices to be found in Volume II of the thesis. Various observations are assessed and interrelated between the Castle Lager and Rama history reels.

It does not seem that media researchers are fully aware of the importance of history reels of advertising commercials as primary sources for research. The advantages of using history reels to overcome some the problems of constructing a representative sample of advertising commercials for use in social research is discussed below.

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32 What is meant here by use of the term a ‘shot’ is each separate edited frame sequence within a television commercial. When constructed together in their designed order of projection by the producers of a television commercial, these shots are intended to communicate its full meaning.
The history reel as ‘representative sample’

Most of the published critical works on advertising are based on print advertisements (Williamson, 1978; Leis, Kline & Jhally, 1986; Marchand, 1985; Ewen, 1976). On the other hand, a few works that have criticised television commercials have tended to concentrate on only one or a few randomly selected commercials that most pertinently illustrate the observations being brought across (Dyer, 1982; Bertelsen, 1985). Critical studies on print advertisements have usually entailed fairly rigorous and systematic research, based either on content analysis (Marchand, 1985; Pollay, 1985), or approaches combining both content analysis and semiotics (Leis, Kline & Jhally, 1986). The development of suitable methodological frameworks for the researching print advertisements is easier and more straightforward than in the case of television commercials. In the study of print advertisements the research material is to some extent already organised by virtue of the fact that advertisements studied are usually from issues of a magazine or newspaper taken over a period of time, and this historical, ordering readily informs methodology at a basic level.

To obtain an equivalent methodological starting point in the case of electronic media, one might consider studying all television commercials broadcast by a particular station over a period of time, an almost impossible task. Or, one might try to narrow down focus, and still maintain a systematic approach, by concentrating on commercials for particular product categories. However, even if this approach was feasible: i) from the point of view that master tapes have been kept by television stations; or tapes are available from tracking companies; ii) the researcher is able to gain access to this material -- it would be still be a very labour-intensive and prohibitively expensive procedure. Thus, a researcher might be left with an uneasy alternative of basing a selection on commercials which seem relevant to his/her hypotheses. One of the criticisms that have been levelled at Judith Williamson’s outstanding analysis of print advertising Decoding Advertisements (1978), is that the magazine advertisements used for her research had been collected over period
of time on the basis that she found them interesting. One should not underestimate the inherent pitfalls if the original organizing principle of the research material is not an archaeology independent from the life of the researcher.

A history reel is a videotape consisting of a chronological record of advertising commercials for a particular product or service. The availability of advertising commercials already arranged in the form of history reels is a great asset to the academic researcher. A history reel concentrates on one product. The individual commercials of a particular product history reel being already organized in a chronological order, in terms of production and broadcast, must undoubtedly bear various relationships to each other. For the marketer, a history reel can provide valuable clues about how and why a brand is perceived in particular way. Advertising agencies and marketing departments of most major companies selling products or services to the public should maintain history reels of the television commercials that have been broadcast for each of their brands. If this information is cross-referenced with market research findings, some of the most important strengths of a brand should become evident. By providing such insights or suggestions about how the image of a brand has been evolving, history reels can help indicate future direction for brand development. History reels can also contribute to a sense of continuity within marketing departments by providing valuable orientation for new staff.

For the researcher whose interest lies primarily in the social and cultural role of modern advertising, history reels can make an overwhelming research task more manageable. Particularly, if one wishes to study a topic as complex as racial stereotyping in advertising commercials during the period of reform in South Africa, one is faced with some difficulties in assembling a representative sample. There are two main problems. The first problem is accessing something as ephemeral and ubiquitous as a television commercial broadcast a decade or so ago. As was pointed out advertising tracking

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33 “I arrived in Berkeley with a bulging file of advertisements collected over many years. I had been tearing them out of magazines, and keeping them with a vague hope of coming to terms with their effect on me” (Williamson, 1-78:9).
organisations exist (such as Ornico\textsuperscript{34}) from where this material can be purchased, but the costs to the academic researcher can be quite prohibitive. Even if assuming that it were possible to randomly access past commercials, the second problem is one of selection. The prospect of deciding which commercials to use for research purposes amounts to a methodological nightmare. Sheer volume and diversity of choice can all so easily lead to the selection of commercials that are consistent with emerging theoretical development. A good history reel, one which comprehensively documents the development of the advertising for a particular single product, can solve some of these problems. History reels are likely to already exist within marketing departments or advertising agencies. Even if, as was the case with this study, these, usually have to be ‘downloaded’ onto VHS from U-Matic tapes, the research material is already relatively concentrated and ordered: The academic researcher should initially approach the marketing departments of corporate advertisers, as the authority to assist lies principally with the client company rather than their advertising agencies. It will be necessary to budget for dubbing, video tapes, and delivery costs, but this expense will be relatively modest compared to the cost of buying material from research organisations that cater for the business sector.

The researcher is able to choose advertising commercial history reels for types of product that have been targeted in the areas of ‘the market’ most likely to have been influential with regards to the phenomena s/he is trying to understand. Also, one can select products from companies associated with particular groups of capital. In this particular study, ‘mass market’ leading brand products such as Castle Lager and Rama were deemed likely to give a good indication of signs of the tensions between apartheid and reform (further explanation regarding the logic behind the selection of these products is given in Chapter 7 and Chapter 8). Advertising commercials are obviously products of the social contexts within which they were produced and into which they were broadcast. Viewed over a period of time, the relationships between the different commercials on a history reel must be indicative of signs of social change.

\textsuperscript{34} Ornico Productions, P.O. Box 783591, Sandton 2145, South Africa. Facsimile 011-783 9931.
Basing research upon a product history reel which has been carefully catalogued allows for more considered conclusions. It should be possible to consider observations regarding a particular edited shot within a commercial not only in context of that commercial, but also interrelated with observations about earlier and/or later commercials on the reel. The strength of this approach lies in the fact that by making a catalogue of every shot of each commercial of an entire history reel, one is including examples possibly contradictory to one’s basic arguments as well as examples that support them. In the criticism of texts comprising of moving images, one often finds observations or conclusions that are heavily weighted upon specific instants of the whole text. It is possible that such ‘instants’ are indicative or defining moments of the whole text. Ultimately, however, the proper defining moment of a text of moving images (and sound) must be judged as the total sequential effect this text is likely to have upon the receiver or audience. The reader of critical studies that are based on the analysis of moving image texts is not usually given any readily available access for independent judgement of the whole text. The principle behind the form of writing of the case studies in Chapter 7 and Chapter 8 is designed to overcome this problem. The reasoning presented in the case studies is as comprehensive of the totality of the research sample as has been possible, and this totality is at the same time represented in the appendices in Volume II so that an alternative judgmental process might not be precluded.

It should however also be taken into consideration that a history reel, like any other research source, may have certain limitations. It is not unusual for individuals or institutions to wish to portray their past in what they regard to be the best light possible. The possibility should thus be borne in mind that in some instances a history reel might turn out to be more of a ‘showreel’, and thus not be a true representation of all the commercials broadcast for a product or service. Commercials regarded to have failed in some way or other may well have been excised from material made available. In this study a comparison for the period 1985-1990 has been made of the Castle Lager history reel with an extract of tracked Castle Lager commercials from a list of all alcoholic beverage commercials broadcast for this period (see Vol. II, Appendix IC), and a reasonable degree of correlation has been found between the two accounts. Obviously,
the greater the number of history reels used in conjunction with each other, the more accurate the research observations are likely to be. However, in order to make the work accurate and self-sufficient it is necessary to catalogue the commercials one is using. This is an extremely demanding and time consuming task for one researcher to do. Thus, only the history reels for Castle Lager and Rama margarine have been catalogued for this study.

The reasoning behind the demanding exercise of cataloguing history reels (See Appendices 1B & 2B) derives from several considerations. Firstly, the researcher is impelled by a sense of responsibility implicitly bestowed upon anyone who sets out to produce a study that claims to provide general conclusions regarding entire institutional practices. It is not unfounded to regard this topic as one that deals with issues that continue to be quite sensitive, and therefore fraught with political implications. Yet it is not within the capacity of only one researcher working on a self-financed project to survey anything more than what amounts to a relatively minimal research sample. Notwithstanding these difficulties, one has either to produce a fair and just account or none at all. It is thus imperative that the sample chosen for such a study be one which is strategic; and that it should be as thoroughly and minutely researched as circumstances allow. The research sample should be strategic in the terms of the research questions, but at the same time it should not precipitate research findings. Secondly, the provision of catalogued transcripts of the research samples as appendices enable the thesis to stand as a self-sufficient research document. The expedience of directing readers to view video tapes as substance to one’s arguments is a thoroughly unsatisfactory solution. Even in the case of electronic visual media, research should be a wholly written work able to stand by itself Advertising commercials only become properly viable as research material after they have been catalogued. In the case of this particular work I feel that one needs to be able to make specific statements which can be supported by reference to specific and non-decontextualised shots found in an appendix.

The type of information provided in the catalogue of shots in the Castle Lager and Rama history reels is mainly about the people appearing in the frames of each shot: whether
they are whites or blacks, their manner of dress, their body language, their class; etc. Description of the action has been made in terms of location of people or objects in relation to frame borders, and the order of transition that occurs through the duration of a shot. Camera movements, approximate focal lengths of lenses, types and approximate direction of lighting, colours and other mise-en-scène details are also sometimes included in the catalogues (see also Introduction to Volume II).

Note on Financial Mail as a research source

To compliment some practical advertising experience gained while working as a copywriter, the researcher has extensively used reports on advertising appearing in the Financial Mail. Particularly, the Financial Mail supplements, Advertising: A Survey from 1978 to 1991 have been quite valuable. Over the years the Financial Mail provided occasional but in-depth coverage of the South African advertising industry, of commercial aspects of broadcasting, and of the print media. The Special Supplements, as well as other reports in the Financial Mail, provide a unique picture of the changing relations within these industries. The advantage of the Financial Mail reports over the advertising trade press is that the former are often based on interviews with important industry personnel, which in a publication of general business interest tend to be more broad-ranging and searching and reproduced at greater length and with higher standards of editing. On the other hand, articles in the advertising trade press are by design generally short and ‘punchy’ to keep in tune with the ephemeral ‘buzz’ requirements of the advertising fraternity.

In the 1980s era of apartheid reform, institutions of cultural production, such as advertising agencies or the broadcaster (SABC), had assumed an air of apparent openness. On the surface it appeared as if a climate of dialogue and free speech existed, even if this freedom of speech could mostly only be exercised by whites. Nevertheless, in practice it was not easy to obtain information deemed to be sensitive, and this situation became even more inhibitive after the state of emergency in the second half of the 1980s. During the apartheid era, the framing of the title of this thesis as an ‘Analysis of Racial
Stereotyping in SABC-TV commercials... immediately placed the thrust of the research in a controversial area, thus making potential respondents aloof. The research for this thesis was in fact delayed and frustrated by initial difficulty experienced in gaining access to a copy of the Castle Lager history reel. This difficulty may or may not have been entirely attributable to inhibitive factors that are apartheid-related. However, after 1994 it was possible to obtain advertising commercial history reels from no less than five companies in a very short period of time, including the Castle Lager history reel. If during the 1980s, and even the early 1990s, there had been some caution or reluctance, in the post-1994 period people contacted showed an apparent eagerness to be associated with this research project.

To some extent the Financial Mail has been used as a compromise research source, but a very effective one. Long periods of empirical research, in the form of interviews with advertising personnel in Sandton\textsuperscript{35}, Johannesburg, have always been out of the question with a very limited research budget. However, I believe that emphasis on the Financial Mail as a primary research source\textsuperscript{36} advantageously gives this particular work a more historical than sociological orientation. Original interviews, as an addition, certainly are very useful and add more dimensions to this work. Some limited reference is made to information gained from interviews but this information is mostly cited as additional confirming evidence rather than as substantive confirmation in support of concepts and conclusion. Concepts and conclusions have invariably been derived from published primary or secondary sources. Extensive use of the Financial Mail as a source arguably has several important advantages over the extensive reliance of interviews. It has been suggested (Greenberg, 1987) that a major weakness of the work of Merle Lipton (1986) derives from the fact of its heavy reliance upon interviews that cannot be verified for their accuracy. On the other hand, my use of the Financial Mail has been carefully referenced and this is a source that it can readily be referred to or verified by future

\textsuperscript{35} The advertising industry in South Africa is largely concentrated in Johannesburg, with head offices of many of the most important advertising agencies in the suburb of Sandton. Cape Town possesses some advertising industry infrastructure, while Durban is relatively peripheral.

\textsuperscript{36} Reference to the Financial Mail as a primary source is in terms of historiographic methodology rather than sociological methods which might regard this as a secondary source.
researchers. Also, it would be inaccurate to regard the use of the *Financial Mail* as a primary source for this thesis as uncritical. The importance of this publication lies precisely in the fact that it was a voice of English-orientated capital in South Africa. Quantitative research findings from commercial research organisations that have been published in the *Financial Mail* have sometimes been relied upon in some parts of this thesis to further substantiate arguments. The fact that an ideological element may exist in the manner of framing and/or interpretation of the findings of research from commercially-orientated market research organisations has been noted. However, in South Africa this data bank has generally been influential to both liberal and left-wing academic research, and usually with little circumspection.

Much of the material in the *Financial Mail* is based on interviews with key advertising personnel. Basing research upon a printed primary sources such as relevant newspapers or magazines (rather than conducting ones own interviews) gives a better historical perspective, as it allows the researcher to observe changing perceptions as these take place over a considerable period of time. This would not possible with self-conducted contemporary interviews. Although interviewees may discuss matters retrospectively, when uttered contemporaneously the events of the past are always being related to and rationalised with a present state of consciousness. Thus, a primary research source such as the *Financial Mail* allows the researcher to gain a more accurate sense of the interplay which was occurring between the different interest groups.
Chapter 1

Towards a workable definition of stereotyping

This chapter will clarify the definition of the concept of stereotype, the relationship of stereotypes to ideology, and the nature of racial stereotyping. There appears to be some overlap between Walter Lippmann’s (1922) concept of a stereotype and Louis Althusser’s (1971) concept of ideology. This correspondence possibly derives from the fact that both Lippmann and Althusser might have been drawing from the same Platonist strand of European rationalism. An understanding of the relationship between stereotypes and advertisements will be facilitated through a consideration of stereotypes in terms of Althusser’s conception of ideology. Of particular importance is the possible role of certain forms of stereotype\(^{37}\) in the process that Althusser (1971) has called interpellation. A tentative paper by Tessa Perkins (1979) will be used to throw light on this matter. Perkins tells us that: “stereotypes seem to be ideological phenomena and should therefore be capable of being accounted for by any theory of ideology; conversely as ideological phenomena of a peculiarly ‘public’ and easily identifiable kind they may provide a useful means of studying the practice of ideology”. No one as far as I know has ever developed Perkins’s tentative paper. This chapter will also explain what ‘racial’ stereotyping is. What particularly needs to be observed is that First World conceptions of racial stereotyping generally presume it to be a pejorative discourse, while in South Africa the special distinction deriving from the ethnicity/apartheid syndrome was an important factor during the period under study. This chapter proposes several categories of South African racial stereotyping which go some way towards explicating the complexity of the South African situation.

Added to the difficulty of potentially counter-intuitive meanings of concepts when enacted in a South African context, is the fact that the understanding of stereotypes continues to be somewhat controversial even in First World contexts. Barker (1989:210) categorically dismisses the usefulness of the concept of a stereotype as a tool for media research:

\(^{37}\) Perkins (1979) points out that different types of stereotypes exist.
My conclusion is that the concept of a ‘stereotype’ is useless as a tool for investigation of media texts. It is dangerous on both epistemological and political grounds. Its view of influence and learning is empiricist and individualistic, and leads to the anti-democratic politics which Lippmann first set into it. Finally, it leads to an arbitrary reading of texts which tells us only about the worries of the analyst.

Some theorists have successfully based their investigations on racial depiction in South African film and television on the concept of myth, instead of the concept of stereotype. For instance in *Myth Race and Power*, Tomaselli et al (1986) use *myth* to discuss the way different groups in South Africa have been imaged on film and television. Also, in a pioneering essay which semiotically analyses the depictions in early TV2 ethnic commercials aimed at the ‘black market’, Bertelsen (1985) based her analysis on the concept of myth. With respect to the type of difficulties which Barker has about the concept of stereotype, myth might be a less problematic concept to work with. But given that the term stereotype is now generally used in media studies, with the presumption that its meaning and implications are unproblematic, the term has acquired a meaning and focus that will not satisfactorily be replaced by other available conceptions. For instance, a critic of the calibre of Edward Said is able to write thus:

One aspect of the electronic, postmodern world is that there has been a reinforcement of the stereotypes by which the Orient is viewed. Television, the films, and all the media’s resources have forced information into more and more standardised models. So far as the Orient is concerned, standardisation and cultural stereotyping have intensified the hold of nineteenth-century academic and imaginative demonology of ‘The Mysterious Orient’ (Said 1985:26).

Thus, despite some grounds for Barker’s reservations, stereotyping is a concept that has become so well-established that it cannot simply be dispensed with. And, as Said’s use of the term stereotyping above suggests, it is a term particularly relevant to visual media and

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38 Bertelsen’s essay *Black Advertising as Myth: The Case of TV2* remains instructive for its incisiveness and the strong critical frame of reference she maintains throughout.
mass - communicative processes of standardised information. Also, it is impossible to ignore that the concept of ‘stereotype’ enjoys a generalised academic as well as a popular usage which ‘myth’ does not. The concept of stereotype therefore needs some clarification.

Some awareness of the existence of stereotypes (or something closely akin) has always existed within philosophical thinking. A well-known early example is Plato’s allegory of ‘the Cave’ in *The Republic*. Here, perception was conceived of in terms of shadows dancing upon the wall in an underground cave while the real scene was taking place outside in front of a fire. These shadows were being witnessed by lifelong prisoners chained to an opposite wall so that they could not turn around to see the real events taking place behind their backs (Walsh, 1985:24-28). The fundamental idea that human beings are incapable of seeing the real world but see instead a sort of ‘cutout’ of the most salient features of any phenomenon also occurs in the concept of a stereotype. Most modern day conceptions of ideology bear some relationship to this idea.

The modern conception of stereotypes as a consequence and prediction of human behaviour first entered social science literature after Walter Lippmann, an American journalist, coined the term in his book *Public Opinion* (Lippmann, 1922:79-156). The fact that stereotypes were only widely recognised after being identified by a journalist working in a highly industrialised and sophisticated society, is not without significance. In societies of increasing complexity, the gap between simple popular conceptions and objective reality widens (Albig, 1956:81; Fiske, 1982:83-5; Said 1985:26). In societies where the nature of social interaction is comparatively uncomplicated, ‘stereotypes’ may essentially be more accurate. Thus, the phenomenon of stereotyping is pertinent in the increasingly fragmented levels of labour division and more intense media environments of the mass communications era.

Lippmann (1922) never summed up his account of stereotypes in any concise paragraph. Although *Public Opinion* devotes five chapters to a discussion of stereotypes, this account remains an impressionistic one. Possibly, Lippmann intentionally avoids a
concise definition of so complex a subject. Part of Lippmann’s argument is that all definitions are essentially simplifying procedures, and therefore dependent on stereotyping practices. Nelson Cauthen et al (1971:108) single out the following premises of Lippmann’s (1922) argument: stereotypes are part of a simplifying mechanism to handle the “real environment (which) is altogether too big, too complex, and too fleeting for direct acquaintance”. A person’s actions are not based on “direct and certain knowledge, but on pictures made by himself or given to him”. It is “the way in which the world is imagined (that) determines at any particular moment what men will do”. Thus, we react, not to the real world, but to our reconstruction of it, “the picture in our head”. Cauthen et al (1971:103) also point out that in recent times a stereotype has come to mean a “category that singles out an individual as sharing assumed characteristics on the basis of his group membership”.

What is remarkable about Lippmann’s early description of stereotypes is the resemblance it in many respects bears to Althusser’s concept of ideology as a “representation of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence” (Althusser, 1971:152). This suggests that stereotypes might play an important role in the ideological process Althusser calls the interpellation or ‘hailing’ of individual subjects. In Rethinking Stereotypes, Perkins (1979) points out that the generally accepted definitions and assumptions about stereotypes actually prevent one from making any theoretical statements about how stereotypes work ideologically. Perkins’s reassessment goes some way in elucidating the complexities involved by indicating “where we should look for answers to these problems” (1979:135). She also proposes some ‘tentative hypotheses about stereotypes which might provide ideas for future research and have some relevance for political action” (ibid.). A caveat in the first paragraph of this paper warns: “it should be regarded strictly as a working paper many of whose ideas, are insufficiently worked out” (Perkins 1979:135). Perkins nevertheless does go some way towards rehabilitating stereotyping as a critical concept more amenable to the study of ideology.39

39 Barker (1989:207&308) obliquely refers to Perkins (1979), but does not comment on the viability or otherwise of this reassessment.
Perkins’s discussion of stereotypes is based on some explicit presuppositions about ideology:

Ideology must be understood as being both a ‘worked out’ system of ideas and being inconsistent, incoherent and unsystematic. The two levels are not totally separate or independent of each other -- on the contrary, ‘Every philosophical current leaves behind a sedimentation of “common sense” ... Common sense ... is continually transforming itself with scientific ideas...’ (Gramsci, 1971:326). We cannot understand ideology as operating merely in one of these modes, at one level only. It is the coexistence of both levels and their articulation with each other as well as with other practices that is crucial to any theorisation of how ideology functions, or of how any particular component functions...Potentially, stereotypes provide a means of studying a cross-section of ideology rather than a single stratum (Perkins, 1979:136).

According to Perkins (1971:136), it was a mistaken reluctance on the part of antihistoricists such as Althusser to posit any quality as a ‘human’ capacity that ultimately led them to a historicist position:

...any theory which purports to explain ideology must be able to explain the emergence of counter-ideologies and related phenomena. The problem surely is that while we must recognise (and theorise) the extent to which ideology does determine thought (and activity), we must allow that this determination is not, and cannot be, total. It might be that we must posit the capacity for creative non-ideologically-determined thought (I call it ‘creative’ for want of a better word), as a human capacity, rather than merely as an ideological effect which is therefore by implication false. ... Behind Gramsci’s notion of hegemony lies a recognition that the effectiveness of ideology cannot be relied on, but is constantly vulnerable, constantly a source of, and a ‘site’ of conflict. The definition of ideology cannot, in this view, presuppose that it is unilateral and unproblematically effective. An additional point I would wish to emphasise is that the problem is not merely to bring the recalcitrant back into line. It is the ideology itself which has to be constantly recreated and redefined. While the broad outlines of the ruling ideology are firm and relatively stable, the solutions to specific problems are not pre-given, they do not emerge ‘logically’ or automatically. They are negotiated within a framework. And this negotiation is itself a source of ideology’s effectiveness, of particular contradictions and the location of future problems (Perkins, 1979:136-7).

According to Perkins (1979:138) there are ten dominant, and often misleading assumptions about the nature of stereotypes, which often prevent us from making
theoretical statements about how stereotypes function ideologically: (1) always erroneous in content; (2) pejorative concepts; (3) and about groups with whom we have little/no social contact; by implication therefore, stereotypes are not held about one’s own group; (4) about minority groups (or about oppressed groups); (5) simple; (6) rigid and do not change; (7) not structurally reinforced. It is also assumed that the existence of contradictory stereotypes is evidence that they are erroneous, but of nothing else; (9) people either ‘hold’ stereotypes of a group (believe them to be true) or do not; (10) because someone holds a stereotype of a group, his/her behaviour towards a member of that group can be predicted.

Lippmann’s four key characteristics for a concept to be referred to as a ‘stereotype’, which have led to the above assumptions, describe only one form of stereotype (Perkins, 1979:139). Lippmann’s four key characteristics are: i) the implication that it is a simple rather than complex or differentiated concept; ii) erroneous rather than accurate; iii) secondhand, rather than from direct experience; iv) and resistant to modification by new experience. Although stereotypes do take this form on occasions, it is only the first of these characteristics that can be considered as part of the definition of ‘stereotype’, and even here Perkins has some reservations.

The conclusions of an examination of Lippmann’s four key characteristics (Perkins, 1979:140-I), may be summarised as follows: i) the question of accuracy appears to be central in the discussion of stereotypes ... possibility that stereotypes very often have the same structure as ideology in so far as they are both true and false; ii) ... it is misleading to say stereotypes are simple rather than complex. They are simple and complex; iii) Secondhandness is in any case a characteristic of the vast majority of our concepts, and cannot therefore be used to distinguish between stereotypes and other concepts; iv) We cannot simply assert that stereotypes are rigid. We must look at the social relationships to which they refer, and their conceptual status, and ask under what conditions stereotypes are more or less resistant to modification. This is not to deny that stereotypes are ‘strong’ concepts, and this may be a distinguishing feature.
However, any attempt to broaden the definition of stereotype to make it applicable to the analysis of ideology runs the risk that a stereotype will simply become indistinguishable from ‘role’ (Perkins, 1979:141). The definition of oneself, and others, as a member of a group is absolutely essential to the ideological effectiveness of stereotypes. Roles describe the dynamic aspects of status (Perkins, 1979:142). What then is the relationship between role, status and stereotype? Status refers to a position in society which entails a certain set of rights and duties (Perkins, 1979:142-3). Role refers to the performance of those rights and duties: it is relational. Stereotype refers to both the role and status at the same time, and the reference is perhaps always predominantly evaluative. Roles and statuses are also, of course, intrinsically evaluative concepts but the nature and presentness of the evaluation is different. A stereotype brings to the surface and makes explicit and central what is concealed in the concepts of status or role.

Pejorativeness has become almost built into the meaning of the word ‘stereotype’ (Perkins, 1979:144). However, positive stereotypes are an intrinsic part of ideology and are important in the socialisation of both dominant and oppressed groups. In order to focus attention on the ideological nature of stereotypes it might be much more useful to talk of pejorative and laudatory stereotypes, rather than to conceal ‘pejorativeness’ in the meaning of the term. As will be seen in the chapters that follow, it is the existence of positive and negative stereotypes, the function of their relationship to each other in the process of socialisation, that offers the key to an understanding of nature of stereotyping in advertisements. It is also the key to an understanding of the peculiar nature of ‘racial’ stereotyping in advertisements during the period of reform in South Africa.

The nature and form of stereotypes vary (Perkins 1979:145). This variation may not be arbitrary but may be related to the ideological or aesthetic functions of the stereotypes and/or to the structural position of the stereotyped group. We need to define ‘stereotype’ in a sufficiently open way so as to allow for the various forms it takes and yet try to isolate its distinctive characteristics. Perkins believes that the following characteristics are essential parts of the definition of stereotypes:

a) A group concept: It describes a group. Personality traits (broadly defined) predominate.
b) It is held by a group: There is a very considerable uniformity about its content. ‘Private’ stereotypes cannot exist.
c) Reflects an ‘inferior judgmental process’: (But not therefore leading necessarily to an inaccurate conclusion.) Stereotypes short-circuit or block capacity for objective and analytic judgements in favour of well-worn catch-all reactions. To some extent all concepts do this -- stereotypes do it to a much greater extent.
d) (b) and (c) give rise to simple structure (mentioned earlier) which frequently conceals complexity (see (e).
e) High probability that social stereotypes will be predominantly evaluative.
f) A concept -- and like other concepts it is a selective, cognitive organising system, and a feature of human thought.

What should be understood is that being group concepts, the same stereotypes might be regarded either as positive or negative by different groups, depending on their respective points of view. The existence of stereotyping that might be regarded as positive underpins the fundamental theorisation of this thesis. For instance, black depiction in the post-1985 Castle Lager advertisements (e.g. Canoe Race, 1989) might be regarded as being strongly affirmative (see Chapter 7). It will be outlined in Chapter 7 that this commercial suggests ‘race’ and ‘ethnicity’ have fallen away, while what is predominant in the stereotyping is ‘class’; these are supposedly young black male corporate executives, during their time of leisure activity; greater dominance is given to blacks than to whites within the frame composition of some of the shots. During the 1980s, from a liberal point of view, as well as from a South African left point of view, I believe, such stereotypes of blacks would have been considered as positive, and thus have gone largely unnoticed or unrecognised as ‘stereotypes’. But a more radical Marxist point of view might have considered these same ‘positive’ stereotypes negatively: as evidence that capitalism was in the process of co-opting blacks as ‘new middle classes’ (one might say, in a manner the reforming apartheid system of Afrikaner Nationalists or ‘Total Strategy’ had never been able to co-opt blacks). Another example: P.W. Botha and his supporters would have felt more comfortable with ‘ethnic black middle class stereotypes’, which they would have

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40 There is little doubt that these depictions were intended to be aspirational to blacks. It is debatable whether or not blacks identified with these depictions, most probably they did. Research on this matter is highly strategic, this information is of obvious financial value to competitors, and no advertising agency or client marketing department will ever give such research findings away in an interview with an ‘academic researcher’. Someone like Eric Mafuna (who like most marketing or advertising practitioners was always canvassing for his particular brand of research or advertising philosophy) might have argued
considered as particularly positive ... because such stereotypes countered communism, while at the same time identifying with the different black ‘nations’ or bantustans! But both English-speaking liberals and all those on the left would have considered such stereotypes as negative (and most probably as pejorative). On the other hand, an academic researcher such as Mersham (1985) considered such ethnically-orientated stereotypes (or the broadcasting structure which underpinned them) as positive, because according to his assessment this was all consistent with the ethnic and cultural topography of South Africa.

**What is Racial Stereotyping?**

Some reassessment of the term ‘racial stereotyping’ is also needed before an attempt can be made to locate it within the structural dynamics of the South African political economy during the period of reform. As Perkins would suggest, in First World contexts the common usage of the term racial stereotyping has been usually reserved exclusively for pejorative depictions. But in South Africa, the meaning of the term ‘racial stereotyping’ differed during the 1980s from the way it has been understood in advanced industrial centres such as Europe and the United States. One finds racial stereotyping in South Africa during the 1980s to have been more directly informed by the political economy, legislation, and government policies related to the Bantustan project (see Chapter 3). When applied to depictions during the period of reformist apartheid, as well as to the earlier post-World War II period, the term includes certain idiosyncratic South African stereotyping practices which can be distinguished by the fact that they were not overtly pejorative.

**Parallels in studies of Gender and Racism**

In advanced industrial societies, the two most controversial areas where stereotypes are believed to operate, are gender and race. However, some paucity exists in works that deal...
with racial stereotyping in terms of ideology. Works that use the term ‘racial’ stereotyping in their examination of the social construction of race, usually do so in less critical a manner than is suggested by the precepts for its definition outlined by Perkins. For example Courtney and Whipple’s *Sex Stereotyping in Advertising* (1983) apparently studies gender in advertising through the concept of stereotype. From its title, this work suggests itself to be particularly focused upon an aspect of stereotyping in advertising, and that it might be a good source of inspiration to the present work in terms of methodology. However, the analysis which follows is in terms of a somewhat looser conception of stereotypes that fails to clearly distinguish them from roles. Bronwyn Adams (1985) -- *Stereotypical Role Portrayals of Black Women in SABC-TV Commercials, and their Effects on Black Female Consumers* is similarly disappointing as a source of inspiration for the present work. Adams offers a tentative examination of both race and gender in SABC-TV commercials targeted at the black market. However, Adams does not apply the term racial stereotyping with much critical reflection. An entire chapter devoted to racial stereotyping discusses the problems advertisers face in creating ‘suitable’ black role portrayals, in the sense that blacks can in psychological terms positively identify with such roles. Adams fails to give any consideration to the concept ‘racial stereotype’ as such, or to its relevance to the South African political economy of the time.

The last two decades of critical work by feminists has caused research in areas relating to gender stereotyping to generally attract more interest than racial stereotyping. A work whose methodology has given some inspiration to the present thesis is Goffman’s *Gender Advertisements* (1979). This work analyses and discusses visual communication and gender display in advertising. One of its strengths derives from its systematic reference and documentation with a comprehensive selection of examples of gender portrayals from advertising photography.

In South Africa, Michelle Friedman (1986) has examined the social construction of gender through a study of advertisements in issues of *The Natal Mercury* (a daily
newspaper) between 1910 and 1930. Friedman does not claim to consider gender portrayals in terms of stereotypes. But her approach, to contextualise changing gender portrayals in terms of the history’ of the social formations structurally underpinning them, does provide some inspiration to the present study. Racial stereotyping obviously needs to be considered in terms of the social formation and political economy to which it is structurally related. In this respect, two other works have also been particularly useful. The first is Belinda Bozzoli (1931), *The Political Nature of a Ruling Class: Capitalism and Ideology in South Africa 1890-1933*. This study examines the role played by ‘organic intellectuals’ (attached to the capitalist class) in shaping the processes of state and class formation during earlier decades when the foundations of modern South Africa were being laid. The second work is *Currents of Power: State Broadcasting in South Africa* by Ruth Tomaselli *et al* (1989). Considered together these two works offer some indication towards an understanding of the complexities regarding the ‘interest translation’ of the capitalist class in the post World War II period: during the era of ascendancy of the Afrikaner Nationalists, and during the 1980s particularly with regard to the introduction of the ethnically and racially designated TV2/3 channels, and the underlying dynamism for reform of SABC-TV broadcasting.

A study of racial stereotyping in South African advertising needs to be aware of some studies of the mass media that have adopted looser conceptions of racism than racial stereotyping per se. Here one can mention the widely quoted study of racism in Britain by Paul Hartmann and Charles Husband (1973: 1974). This research consists of a content analysis of race-related stories found in four British, newspapers between 1963-1970. Hartmann and Husband sought to discover links between the stereotypical media roles of coloured people and a measured attitudinal change in white school children. In common with most ‘effects research’ this work is open to the criticism that it fails to avoid some of the pitfalls of the so-called ‘hypodermic approach’ (Barratt, 1986). However, Hartmann and Husband’s work has been argued to be theoretically more sophisticated than most effects research (ibid.).
To an analysis of racial stereotyping in South Africa, works such as Hartmann and Husband confirm that a contextual variation exists in the meaning of racial stereotyping. Colonial racial stereotyping (especially the South African variation during its apartheid stages) quite probably plays a different role from racial stereotyping in the advanced industrial democracies. In these latter countries one finds a general understanding that *pejorativeness* is strongly built into the meaning of racial stereotyping. It will be shown in later chapters that although a few rare instances of pejorative racial stereotyping persisted during the reform period in South Africa, it is the local ethnically-orientated variations and transitions from these that are of key importance. These variations were pegged around ideas that presumably were always ideologically motivated, but nevertheless these ideas remained open to debate: the need for ‘cultural authenticity’ or the need to preserve ‘cultural heritage’ in the face of cultural imperialism (e.g. see Mersham, 1985).

It also is important that some awareness should be built into this research of how racial stereotyping might be perceived and internalised by oppressed peoples themselves. Two works by Franz Fanon. *The Wretched of the Earth* (1968) and *Black Skins, White Masks* (1973) are seminal to the study of the psychological effects of colonialism and racism upon the subjectivities of the oppressed. This however is another study. Bernard Magubane’s *The Political Economy of Race and Class in South Africa* (1979) also deserves some mention in this respect. This work provides an insight into the underpinnings of racism in South Africa from the point of view of a black South African writing from exile during the 1970s. It is important to note that Magubane tended to identify apartheid more strongly with the interests of First World imperialism and South African mining capital than with Afrikaner Nationalism. The nature of the relationship between ‘race’ and ‘capital’, particularly the ‘functionality’ or ‘disfunctionality’ of apartheid to capitalism during different eras, has been a key debate within South African historiography. Bozzolli (198 1:2-3) outlines three broad approaches that have been adopted. Firstly, Legassick (1974) provided a periodisation of the evolution of racism in terms of the evolution of capitalism itself, and of the interests, particularly the economic interests of capital as a whole. Secondly, Johnstone (1976) related specific structures and
ideologies of racism within the mining industry between 1911 and 1924 to the particular accumulation requirements of mining capital itself, and the form taken by their realisation within the historical evolution of South African society. Thirdly, Wolpe (1972) related particular aspects of South African racism to particular needs of capital, citing the reproduction of labour as the problem to which territorial segregation was the solution. However, Lipton (1986) tends to shift the pivotal point of the structural forces underpinning apartheid away from capital:

Apartheid cannot simply’ be explained as the outcome of capitalism or of racism. Its origins lie in a complex interaction between class interests (of white labour as well as sections of capital) and racism/ethnicity and security factors (Lipton, 1986:365).

My position (as will be outlined in Chapter 3) focuses particularly upon post World War II structural process underpinning apartheid. Drawing upon all of the above positions, I also focus attention upon the important influence of larger contextual dynamics of the Cold War period. After 1924 domestic capital had gained ascendancy over imperial capital (Natrass, 1981:162-3). South Africa thus does not conform to a model of peripheral, colonial economy underdeveloped by metropolitan, imperial capital. However, notwithstanding the fact that post World War II economic growth came to be increasingly dependent upon blacks, for labour power and as a market for domestically produced goods and services, blacks continued to be excluded as citizens of the industrial state. To South Africans, Afrikaner Nationalism during the post-World War II period appeared as something totally indigenous, which indeed it was. But there were some parallels with suppressive fascist regimes during this period in countries such as Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, etc., where the bulk of the population appeared to Western interests as potentially vulnerable to penetration by Soviet influence. Thus, a refined type of dependency might nevertheless be seen to have existed within the forms through which Afrikaner governments, in spite of apartheid, were able to negotiate viable relations with the West.
Frederikse (1986) deals particularly with the history of the period under study and has been a useful and provocative work (see Chapter 5). Frederikse does not specifically use the term stereotype. But in the course of her examination of ‘Total Strategy’ and ‘reform’, when she touches on a matter of primary concern to this thesis: the potentially co-optive use of racial stereotyping in advertising. In terms of advertising criticism Frederikse’s position tends to fall within a category that might labelled as left-wing ‘conspiratorial’ (Sinclair 1987). Frederikse does however provide some very valuable points of reference, especially through some of her interviews that at times have a knack of being outstandingly pertinent and provocative.

As one reviews works with their focus on gender, race, or class stereotyping, or looser concepts of racism, it increasingly becomes apparent that part of the conceptual problem being investigated is that of arriving at a suitable or workable definition of the term ‘racial stereotyping’. Notwithstanding the fact that considerable research has been done on stereotyping in the advanced industrial democracies (see Cauthen et al 1971), a field specifically using the concept of racial stereotype will remain at an inconclusive stage until the concept is more rigorously defined. This, however, has not prevented the common sense understanding of the term racial stereotyping to become widely used. Consistent with the critique of the conventional definition of stereotyping (Perkins, 1978:138), one finds racial stereotyping is an almost sui generis term to describe depictions of ethnic or racial minorities in mass media, almost exclusively if such depictions are considered to be of an overtly pejorative nature. This assumption is implicit in some of the studies cited above. As a consequence of what might be seen to be an ideologically problematic definition, it would for instance be unconventional to apply the term racial stereotyping to depictions consistent with the discourse of affirmative depictions of black people in the advanced industrial democracies.

In a First World context the term racial stereotyping means the pejorative description of minorities. In the English-speaking world use of the term racial stereotyping has developed mainly in the United States and Britain (Cauthen et al, 1971). In these advanced industrial states, racial stereotyping has constituted the more visible end of a
panoply of constraints applied to people from former subject colonies, migrant workers or people who have become citizens. Pejorativeness may communicate itself in new ways, not initially perceived as pejorative, and which are currently consistent with the political economy. In England, for instance, blacks represent 4 percent of the population but constitute over 30 percent of professional sportsmen. This is believed to result from stereotypical preconceptions within the society that lead mainly black male school children to be encouraged to become involved in athletics or other sports.  

This aspect of racial stereotyping is not usually recognised as such because it is not readily identified as pejorative within the dominant value systems of advanced industrial democracies. In the case of the United States, blacks have their roots deeper than the periodic post World War II imports of cheap or unskilled labour into Western Europe. Nonetheless, the common sense understandings of the term racial stereotyping in the United States and Western Europe derive from the 1960s and 1970s and are not essentially dissimilar. The understanding is that the term racial stereotyping refers to the fact that people of different racial, ethnic, or cultural backgrounds (and since World War II ‘ethnic’ has usually meant of a darker skin tone) have been portrayed systematically or on recurrent occasions in predictably inferior roles. Or, alternatively, that they have come to be seen as displaying idiosyncrasies usually associated with their particular group by the commonsense or dominant point of view (Cauthen et al, 1971: 104).  

It seems that media institutions in the advanced industrial democracies as a rule are quite sensitive to accusations of racial stereotyping and quickly respond with a discourse of ‘affirmative action’ or non-pejorative middle class stereotypes of the aggrieved minority group. In certain circumstances pejorative racial stereotyping possibly represents a threat to effective hegemony: if racism manifests itself in the mainstream media it might well be indicative of a possible ideological alliance between petty bourgeois media practitioners

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41 BBC World Service Report, 3 May 1990; see also Perkins, 1979:141.  
42 In the post Cold-War period, given the wide media coverage of the rise of ethnically based nationalisms in Eastern Europe, the term ‘ethnic’ probably will no longer be used quite so narrowly.  
43 The prevalence of pejorative stereotypes with racist undertones applied to non-blacks have persisted in some cases, such as in the case of Irish (Catholics) in Britain, a practice which possibly deserves more critical attention than it receives. Similarly, in South Africa up until the early 1980s stereotypes of working class Afrikaners were quite popular amongst white English-speaking middle classes: a key example being the ‘Van der Merwe’ jokes, communicated primarily through word-of-mouth.
and indigenous working classes. In some instances residual concepts of nationalism (such as those that were canvassed by the National Front or Enoch Powell in Britain) have given rise to resentment about the presence and job competition of immigrant minorities. Such easily recognisable negative racial stereotypes, not consistent with currently more sophisticated forms racial ordering within the political economy, can be considered to be an ‘ideological aberration’ in the sense that they too readily provoke oppositional response from minority groups, leading to a rejection of the intended interpellation (see Gilroy, 1987). If affirmative depictions are more effective in interpellating minority groups than negative racial stereotyping, such depictions must be considered as ideologically more effective. In practice, affirmative images are usually even further removed from ethnographic veracity than racial stereotyping of a pejorative inclination. This ‘applied ethnography’, that is ostensibly supposed to have an assimilative role, often does little more than to further contribute to a sanitized plastic world of the so-called post-modern era. The ideological dimensions of affirmative imagery should not be overlooked. With regard to social portrayal in cinematie discourse in the developed countries, Robert Stain and Louise Spence (1985:634-5) point out that the insistence on ‘positive images’, finally, obscures the fact that ‘nice’ images might at times be as pernicious as overtly degrading ones, providing a bourgeois facade for paternalism, a more pervasive common sense racism. It might be fair to say then that in the advanced industrial democracies pejorative racial stereotyping, when it still occurs, results from a malfunctioning in the dominant ideological process. It is perhaps an irony that such ‘pejorative’ depictions of non-middle class members of society amount to a more accurately ethnographic representation\(^{44}\), in so far as the real conditions of existence of these groups are more revealed than concealed. One might conclude from this that the dominant ideology of affirmative action is a more finely tuned ideology.

\(^{44}\) Although any attempt to document or re-present a social group is bound to be to some extent distorted, it is possible to posit that one can distinguish between different levels of such distortion. Given within certain limitations, a distinction might be made between greater or lesser degrees of ethnographic veracity; in terms of identifiably greater or lesser deviation in the representation from the actual reality of a social group (see Heider, 1976; Banks, 1992)
I will show in Chapter 7 that after the mid-1980s beer advertising in South Africa assumed a proactive role in promoting affirmative imagery. This matter is of crucial importance to the debates about the ideological role of consumer advertising which will be outlined in Chapter 2. However, it is also maintained that in the South African case these affirmative depictions of black characters should not be considered to be the same as the ‘token blacks’ of the 1970s affirmative discourse from the advanced industrial states. In the South African case, there was a more profound underlying imperative for such depictions: both in terms of the overall importance of blacks to the market for products such as beer, and also in terms of the realisation by capital that the future lay in labour reproduction in terms of blacks, skilled with professional and managerial abilities. What is extraordinary in terms of theoretically-informed advertising criticism is that consumer advertising should have assumed such a visibly overt ideological role. As will be outlined in later chapters, the explanation for this sudden change lies in fact that an apartheid situation had previously in various ways restricted normal movement towards black middle class stereotypes in advertisements.

**Categories of South African Racial Stereotyping**

In South Africa, in addition to its First World pejorative meaning, the term racial stereotyping has included various forms of ethnic stereotyping meant to represent groups within the majority black population. Some of the meanings given to the term racial stereotyping during the 1980s were related to the media representations stemming from the alleged ethnic engineering project of an apartheid government. In terms of the political economy, which will be outlined in Chapter 3, the chronological movement of racial stereotyping in South Africa has been from ethnic to non-ethnic or westernised black middle class depiction. In terms of social dynamics, pejorative black depictions are more of a reformist than an apartheid form. As will be outlined in Chapter 4, due to the peculiarities of the South African situation in the 1980s, and due to the fact that the ethnic channels TV2/3 only began broadcasting in 1982, there were few instances of pejorative racial stereotypes, and these preceded ethnic and ethnic middle class depiction in television advertisements. Classification of racial stereotyping in SABC-TV advertising
commercials might be thus made according to the following scheme, which is outlined in greater detail in Chapter 4:

i) Pejorative depictions of blacks as in early TV 1 commercials, similar to the first world conceptions of racial stereotyping. As will be explained below this form featured less prominently in South Africa.

ii) Ethnic stereotypes on TV2/3, similar to the objectives of Radio Bantu (see Strydom, 1976).

iii) Ethnic black middle class stereotypes on TV2/3. A transitory form consistent with the P.W. Botha government’s conception of black middle classes as ‘amongst the nations of South Africa’ in order to facilitate plans of ‘consociational democracy’ engineering.

iv) ‘Positive’, non-ethnic black middle class depictions on TV1 and TV4. Fundamentally the most important form, representing New South Africa ideology from the business sector but also structurally underpinned in terms of economic transformation.

The thesis makes a point that the South African context has in certain important respects differed in its structural dynamics from the political economies of the advanced industrial states. In terms of the economic and social changes entailed by reform, what one sees in SABC-TV commercials is a hesitant movement from separate advertisements featuring ethnic categories of racial stereotyping (and their accompanied discourse of ‘structured absences’) during the 1980s to the apparently non-ethnic, non-racial, black middle class or affirmative stereotypes of ‘integrated’ advertising of the 1990s. Pejorative racial stereotypes, similar to those of the advanced industrial democracies, have at times also been present but are incongruous with apartheid: firstly, in the case of pre-reformist

45 According a presented by Lipjardt (1977), at the Rand Afrikaans University, ‘consociational democracy’ rather than ‘majority rule’ offered the means for the survival of democracy in deeply divided societies.
apartheid, such stereotypes would have undermined the supposed integrity of separate development; secondly, in the case of reformist apartheid such stereotypes would be easily recognisable in First World terms as aspects of racial oppression.

Conclusion

This chapter laid the ground for establishing a relationship between a stereotyping critical approach and the main corpus of theoretically-informed advertising criticism. This process of exploration was initiated with clarification in three key aspects to this study: the definition of the concept of stereotype; the relationship of stereotypes to ideology; and the nature of ‘racial stereotyping’. The indications are that stereotypes are closely related to ideology. It is particularly positive stereotypes in the mass media, the depictions we so readily and often unconsciously identify with, that articulate what Althusser (1971) has called our imaginary relationships to our real conditions of existence. The forms of positive stereotype occurring most particularly in advertising are prime agents of interpellation, and must play an important role in class formation.

How do the forms of racial stereotyping that occurred in South African advertising during the reform locate within a theory of advertising criticism?

Chapter 2 will review theoretically-informed advertising criticism and further elaborate on the linkage between stereotypes, consumer advertising, and the power relationships underpinning the ideological aspect of hegemony in consumer democracy situations. It is contended that in respect of blacks as consumers, and in terms of reproduction of labour, the forms of racial stereotyping in South Africa, particularly as represented in advertisements, articulate salient points in the course of movement (or stereotypical change) within a restricted aspect of consumption as means of hegemony.

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46 If blacks are portrayed in negative roles, the inequality of separate development becomes revealed. On the other hand ‘structured absences’ may to some extent prevent inequality from becoming apparent. In other words, what is present in the images must be understood in terms to what is concealed, or absent (see Tomaselli, 1996: 237)
Chapter 2

Consumption as a Means of Hegemony

If the post-World War II leftist social critique from the advanced industrial states is correct, some tripartite relationship must exist between power, democracy and consumption. The implication is that in the modern capitalist state, ‘democracy can only be extended (without power slipping away from established ruling classes) if some degree of mass consumption can be at the same time also extended (see Williams [1960] 1980:187-9). Thus, consumption might be conceived as a means of hegemony.

Apropos to this conception, the relationship between stereotyping and consumer advertising in a consumer democracy situation should be sought obliquely in the role that advertising plays as facilitator of consumption as a means of hegemony. In performing this particular ideological aspect of hegemony, the aggregate or archetypical human stereotype communicated by advertising must amount to a laudatory petty bourgeois stereotype. It is in the very area of advanced industrial production and mass distribution of consumer goods and services that some of the most pervasive forms of stereotyping occur. These are ‘positive’ stereotypes that are not intended to be readily noticeable as stereotypes, but rather designed so that audiences can readily identify with them. Consumer goods and services have enabled a bourgeois lifestyle to become broadly disseminated in its petty bourgeois forms. Advertising constantly re-constitutes and re-articulates petty bourgeois stereotypes and intertwines these with consumer goods or services: either through the depiction of the human circumstances of the use of such goods or services, or within the processes through which the self-identity of individuals accrues out of the connotations and symbols associated with certain brands of product, or service.

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47 Hegemony, “can be differentiated into its various economic, political and ideological regions” (Eagleton, 1989:171).

48 In combination with other agents of socialisation, such self-identity gradually and in some respect temporally accrues from image associations that come with the possession of certain types of advertised goods or services. Thus, a form of equality is seemingly obtainable in a universe of
My contention is that at this point of the consumption moment the interpellatory role of stereotypes in advertisements is achieved. Concomitant with these observations, theoretically-informed critiques claim that in the process of facilitating the marketing and distribution of manufactured goods, consumer advertising plays a further role of selling the capitalist system (Williamson, 1978:13). Advertising helps maintain societies based upon a form of hierarchical order where upward positioning comes with the acquisition of certain types of goods or services. It might thus be argued that class antagonisms have to a large extent become displaced by a general belief that the present order potentially offers everyone opportunity for equality on the basis freedom and self-determination (Baudrillard, 1968). If this is indeed the case, consumer advertising might in effect act as a powerful instrument of social pacification.

Different critical positions about advertising have been derived from Marx. An important characteristic of these different critiques is their implications about the ideological role of modern advertising. According to Sinclair (1927:25), some critiques tend towards falling back into the cliché of capitalism as a ruling class conspiracy, while on the other hand, other critiques tend to reify ‘the system’, that is, talking about it as if it has a logic of its own, independent from the collective actions of human agents. On the one end of the critical spectrum one finds the works of Adorno and Horkheimer (1944), Marcuse (1964), or Ewen (1976) which suggest that the ideological aspects of consumer advertising are total, determinist and/or conspiratorial. At the opposite extreme, Inglis (1972), writing from a Left-Leavisite position, also sees the emergence of advertising as a necessary tool of the capitalist order, but considers it to be more of an organic outgrowth of the system itself than as a conscious strategy. Most promising for the analysis of the role of advertising in society are middle ground approaches, such as the Cultural Materialism of Williams ([1960] 1980). Williams traces the rise of modern advertising and its fluctuating models of desirable self-identification that are purchasable together with certain types of consumer goods or services. For Baudrillard (1981) particularly, what the system of objects refers to is a status hierarchy signified by consumption.

Informed by various strains of Marxist theory or departures therefrom.
assumption of an ideological role in the context of changes in society and the economy, and changing organisations and intentions resulting from the transition from entrepreneurial capitalism to monopoly capitalism. While not neglecting the all important aspect of intentions and the interests of dominant groups, the assumption of an ideological role by modern advertising thus appears to be more of a process that has arisen contingently to the selling of goods and services. Also, the Cultural Materialist position is consistent with a Gramscian concept of hegemony, and thus allows for the possibility of some degree of resistance to the ideology of advertising.

The debate has also devolved upon the important question of whether or not goods should be seen as ‘needs’ only in terms of their use value, whether it is historically and anthropologically accurate to distinguish between ‘true needs’ or ‘false needs’ (see Leiss, Kline & Jhally, 1986; Sinclair 1987; Jhally, 1987). On the basis of anthropological evidence, such as that reported by Douglas and Isherwood (1978), or by Sahlins (1972), post-structuralist positions maintain that all needs are generated within a symbolic field. In particular, the critique of Sut Jhally (1987), which will be outlined below, has important implications with respect to certain aspects of the theoretical position of Williams’s ([1960] 1980). Jhally suggests that Williams has misdirected the development of theoretically-informed advertising criticism:

The contention that goods should be important to people for what they are used for rather than their symbolic meaning is very difficult to uphold in the light of the historical, anthropological and cross-cultural evidence. In all cultures at all time, it is the relation between use and symbol that provides the concrete context for the playing out of the universal person-object relation. The present radical critique of advertising is unbalanced in its perception of the ‘proper’ or ‘rational’ relation between use and symbol. It suffers from what could be called ‘commodity vision’. the problem of capitalist commodities has not been sufficiently distinguished from the problem of objects in general. While the person-object relation has been set within the context of power, the critique as presently conceptualised has lost the link with culture and history. That Raymond Williams should fall into this misperception is extremely surprising, for in the rest of his magnificent corpus of writings he strongly focuses on the central role that culture has played in the development of human societies (Jhally, 1987:4).
However, it seems that Jhally might not have fully appreciated the position of Williams ([1960] 1980). It is difficult to see how Williams could have been oblivious of ‘anthropological and cross-cultural evidence’, as it is aspects of such knowledge that form the basis of his own argument: hence the title his essay ‘Advertising: the Magic System’. In particular, Williams suggests that a relationship exists between some of the forms of inducement used in modern advertisements and the magical incantations of more primitive societies. The contention between Williams and some social anthropologists would seem to be underpinned by the question of whether or not a different form of democracy might be feasible: one that can support and be supported by a reformed economic system where there is no longer a ‘consumption’ market to be supplied and where the use of human labour and resources is shaped by more general social decisions. This matter, however, is not the major issue of my present investigation. The main interests of this chapter are the possible power relations endowed in a capitalist economy with the social meanings attached to the mass marketing of goods and services, and the relevance of such power relations to racial stereotyping and the South African context. (Jhally’s argument will however be further assessed below.) After taking into account the contradictory implications of various critical positions, the assessment in this chapter develops upon Williams ([1960] 1980) in as far as his position is consistent with the conception of advertising as a facilitator of consumption as a means of hegemony.  

Pivotal to this thesis is the fact that these above observations are based upon theoretically-informed advertising criticism from the First World. Such leftist critiques maintain that consumer advertising has played an important role in the advancement of consumer democracies, especially in post-World War II Europe. However, during this period consumer advertising in South Africa was not advancing a consumer democracy of this order. Thus, the final question this chapter will explore is what sort of validity an essentially First World critique has in a situation such as South Africa during the 1980s, where the majority of the population has only had limited access to consumer goods and services, and where whatever ‘pacification’ such goods and services might have
bestowed was bound to have been limited? Eve Bertelsen (1985), for example, appears to have criticised the petty bourgeois depictions directed at blacks in early SABC-TV2 commercials in terms of three aspects: i) a criticism which might also be applied to First World advertising: that the freedom indicated was ‘a freedom to consume’; but ii), this freedom must be seen to differ from general consumer discourse in the First World: it was ‘within a strict closure’, because ‘in all this’ the ‘white man’ though apparently absent from representation in the text ‘was the constitutive principle, the creator’; iii) a criticism also not so applicable to First World advertising: the degree of inconsistency between the conditions that were being depicted in advertisements for blacks and the far harsher conditions that existed in reality. Thus, if a pacificatory aspect of hegemony is the normal ideological discourse of consumer advertising in the First World, in what manner and to what extent did ‘racial stereotyping’ in South African advertising (television commercials) work to sell apartheid? In what sense might racial stereotyping (especially its ethnic varieties) during 1960s and 1970s era of apartheid, and also during the reform period of the 1980s, be considered to have been mediating some form of restricted aspect of consumption as a means of hegemony?

**Critical Approaches to the Study of Advertising**

This part of the chapter reviews various theoretically-informed critical approaches but draws upon Williams ([1960] 1980) in particular to outline a conception of consumption as a means of hegemony. Some liberal critical approaches, or works which either criticise advertising indirectly, or are useful to an understanding of the political economy of modern advertising will also be considered. As Sinclair (1987:11) has pointed out:

> In the critical study of advertising today, one can still find liberal and conservative analyses, but it is the Marxist, or more accurately, the neo-

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50 Williams’s ‘structure of feeling’ and Gramsci’s conception of ‘hegemony’ are plainly akin (Ferrara, 1989:105).

51 To sell consumer democracy and further the ‘pacification of class struggle’ by disseminating laudatory middle class stereotypes.
Marxist or ‘Marxisant’ perspectives which have come to provide the dominant paradigm...

In terms of liberal analyses one can name Vance Packard (1957), who focused on the so-called ‘depth approach’ in persuasion. Both Leiss, Kline & Jhally (1986:20) and Sinclair (1987:9), point out that Packard does not take issue with the practice of advertising as such, nor with the form of economic and social organisation that underpins it. These writers consider Packard’s approach to be somewhat sensationalist-inclined, because his main interest was to expose certain techniques being used by unscrupulous advertising agencies. The critical approach adopted by Wilson Bryan Key (1972 & 1976) – who focuses on the matter of subliminal sexual messages that are sometimes used in advertising – might also be accused of being more sensationalist than theoretically-based. However, even if critics such as Packard and Key do not take broader socio-economic implications into consideration, the fact that unorthodox methods of psychological persuasion might have been used to effect sales (and still be used) is by no means inconsistent with a broad conception of consumption as a means of hegemony. However, the emphasis on ‘manipulation’ implies helplessness and inability to resist on the part of the recipients of advertising messages, something which is not quite consistent with a conception of hegemony.

A non-marxist critique of advertising that is of considerable relevance to a conception of consumption as a means of hegemony is The Affluent Society (1958), by John Kenneth Galbraith. This was the first major critique of the apparent stability and prosperity of the post-World War II economic order. Writing from a neo-liberal reformist position, Galbraith’s primary interest was the nature of the economic system that needed to utilise

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52 Both Sinclair (1987:9) and Leiss et al. (1986:20) single out the following statement as confirmation of the limitations of Packard’s critical position: “Advertising . . . not only plays a vital role in promoting our economic growth but is a colourful, diverting aspect of American life; and many of the creations of ad men are tasteful, honest works of artistry” (Packard, 1957:15). Following Baran and Sweezy (1966:132), Sinclair believes that Packard’s work belongs to a tradition of American muckraking journalism. Some, of this criticism is a perhaps a little harsh. Surely Packard was being slightly complimentary so as not alienate his contacts who had provided him information. Packard’s later books such as The Status Seekers (1959), The Wastemakers (1950), and The Pyramid Climbers (1962), though albeit not in overtly Marxist theoretical terms, do tackle wider contextual issues. Packard’s social crusade therefore continued beyond merely exposing a ‘depth approach’ or which he believed was being practised by some advertising agencies.
persuasion through advertising. According to Galbraith (1958), economic growth had been achieved through the creation of artificial wants -- the “squirrel wheel” of what he called the “Dependence Effect”. Advertising and salesmanship played a key role in the affluent society by “creating desires” and bringing into existence wants that previously did not exist. Production, not only passively through emulation, but actively through advertising and related activities, creates wants it seeks to satisfy (Galbraith, 1958:131-7).

Marxist economists, Baran and Sweezy (1966), confirmed Galbraith’s negative assessment, They also identified persuasion through advertising as one of the most important processes through which the new capitalist democracy was being established:

...the central function of advertising and of all that goes with it in the economy of monopoly capitalism lies in its effect on the magnitude of aggregate effective demand and thus on level of income and employment (Baran and Sweezey 1966:127-8).

What seems to underpin Galbraith’s critique is an implicit questioning of the influence and the wisdom of socio-economic policy based upon the economic theory of John Maynard Keynes. A formula based upon Keynes’s idea of manipulating ‘aggregate effective demand’ in order to increase production was initially adopted by liberal governments in both Britain and the United States, but subsequently also by conservatives. Artificially stimulated consumption, increased production, economic growth and higher levels of employment become a key for winning votes and political power (Galbraith 1958:188-91). In his short critique of advertising and consumption, Williams ([1960] 1980) bears a certain degree of consistency with some of Galbraith’s observations about the problems of the modern capitalist economy. In particular, both Williams ([1960] 1980) and Galbraith (1953) suggest that advanced capitalist economies

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53 Philip Kleinman (1977), a British journalist who has specialised in writing about the advertising industry, believes that Galbraith’s critique has been one of the most damaging and difficult to rebut effectively. More so than the more sensationalist-inclined critique of the same period, Vance Packard’s *Hidden Persuaders* (1957), which is usually cited as major criticism against the advertising industry. The authoritative force of Galbraith’s work may lie in the fact that while it is based within an analysis of the political economy of advanced capitalism, it comes from within the establishment, from an apparently reputable non-Marxist source. Perhaps, Galbraith has to be taken seriously because he cannot easily be faulted in terms of methodology and neither can he be simply dismissed as subversion.
are irresponsible, that some of the products manufactured might be unnecessary and that as a consequence human needs have to be constantly redefined by advertising.

Some mention might also be here made about the type of criticism of advertising that Sinclair (1987:11) above refers to as ‘conservative’, Rather than being directed against capitalism, this position is characterised by the fact that it is a critique of modernism and its perceived vulgar popular forms such as advertising. Examples would be Leavis (1948) or Thompson (1963). This type of criticism belongs to a tradition that predates the full development of modern advertising (an indication that a more thorough understanding of the ideological role of modern advertising in capitalist economies might be obtained if its development is traced historically). Samuel Johnson’s writings in the Idler in 1758 (cited in Turner, 1952), might be regarded as an earlier example of the conservative tradition of advertising criticism:

The trade of advertising is now so near to perfection that it is not easy to propose any improvement (Johnson as quoted in Turner 1952),

In view of the subsequent further sophistication of advertising purposes and procedure, Johnson’s observations are generally held to have been premature (Williams, [1960] 1980; Dyer, 1982; Sinclair R, 1985; Sinclair J, 1987). However, Johnson’s comments should also be understood in terms of his characteristically wry wit; the fundamental perceptiveness of his statement should not be underestimated. It should not be assumed (as sometimes has been the case) that Johnson meant to preclude the possibility of future developments in advertising methodology What seems to be conveniently overlooked by some commentators is that the extract is a punch-line to a more important preceding conclusion:

Promise, large promise is the soul of an Advertisement. I remember a washbowl that had a quality truly wonderful -- it gave an exquisite edge to the razor! The trade of advertising is now so near to perfection that it is not easy to propose any improvement.

In principle these observations were not premature but remain perfectly valid today. One way or another, Promise, large promise, continues to be the soul of advertisements in advanced industrial societies in the twentieth century.
One of the most profoundly influential critiques of advertising has been that of Williams ([1960] 1980), *Advertising: the Magic System*. According to Williams ([1960] 1980:187), once advanced productive techniques have entered a society, new questions of structure and purpose in social organisation are posed. Somewhat idealistically perhaps, Williams believed that one set of answers is the development of ‘genuine democracy’ Genuine democracy would be a system in which human needs of all the people in a society are taken as the central purpose of all social activity, so that politics is not a system of government but of self-government, and the systems of production and communication are rooted in human needs and the development of human capacities (1980:187). But instead of this ideal, the set of answers that advanced industrial democracies have applied to these questions retain a limited social purpose (1980:187). In this respect, Williams (1980:193) considers advertising in its modern forms to be one of the consequences of social failure to find means of public information and decision over a wide range of everyday economic life.

Williams took particular exception to the very idea of ‘consumption’. The fact that the term ‘consumer’ has so generally been accepted, with so little questioning, is quite significant to Williams’s critique:

> The popularity of ‘consumer’, as a way of describing the ordinary member of modern capitalist society in a main part of his economic capacity, is very significant. The description is spreading very rapidly, arid is now being used by people to whom it ought, logically, to be very repugnant ... This metaphor drawn from the stomach or the furnace is only partially relevant even to our use of things. Yet we say ‘consumer’, rather than ‘user’, because in the form of society we have now, and in the forms of thinking which it almost imperceptibly fosters, it is as consumers that the majority of people are seen. We are the market which the system of industrial production has organised. We are the channels through which the product flows and disappears. In every respect of social communication, and in every version of what we are as a community, the pressure of a system of industrial production is towards these impersonal forms (Williams, [1960] 1980:187).

One should note the distinction Williams maintains between ‘consumer’ and ‘user’, as this is a matter pivotal to his argument. Although Williams was writing in the early 1960s (or perhaps the end of the 1950s), his eclectic methodology produced a more
sophisticated assessment than some Marxist positions of the time, and possibly also some that have followed in the 1970s and 1980s:

The real business of the historian of advertising is to trace the development from processes of specific attention and information to an institutionalised system of commercial information and persuasion; to relate this to changes in society and in the economy; and to trace changes in method in the context of changing organisations and intentions (Williams [1960] 1980:170).

It is important to note the above emphasis on ‘changing organisations and intentions’, and by inference, Williams’s pervading belief in the possibility also of *reshaping* society through the intervention of human intention. Williams’s analysis of the modern institution of advertising anticipates and contradicts also some of the post-structuralist arguments. As will be outlined below, some poststructuralist critiques suggest that goods have *never* been primarily desired for their use-value and therefore can never be. On the basis of anthropological evidence, a view has been put forward that in all forms of human society it has been the symbolic meaning of goods that has been of primary importance. Williams’s critique is remarkable for its grasp of the interlinkages between the various social, economic, political, historical, and institutional practices, and for his ability to come to an estimation of the institution of advertising within this complexity.

Williams ([1960] 1980:187) briefly traces the evolution of the specific power relations that he believes retain a negative purpose within the prevailing system:

In the first phase, loyal subjects as they were previously seen, became the labour market of industrial ‘hands’. Later, as the ‘hands’ reject this version of themselves, and claim a higher human status, the emphasis is changed. Any real concession of higher status would mean the end of class-society and the coming of socialist democracy. But intermediate concessions have been possible, including *material* concessions. Thus, the ‘subjects’ become the ‘electorate’, and ‘the mob’ becomes ‘public opinion’.

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54 A good example of William’s emphasis upon practices and intentions, and of his resistance to formalism as a mode of thought, is his critique of Marshall McLuhan’s conception of ‘The Medium is the Message’, Williams (1990:125-1281).
The consumer democracy phase might thus be seen as an intermediate stage of material concessions, where the majority of people are regarded as consumers, as the market, which the system of industrial production has organised. (In South Africa, the absence of this intermediate stage has been marked by apartheid.) According to Williams, the contemporary point of view that regards citizens as consumers derives from the fact that control of the means of production and distribution rests in minority hands (Williams [1960] 1980:187-188,193).

Taking these arguments a stage further, one might argue that it is this consumption aspect that has been characteristic of hegemony in the post-World War II period in advanced industrial democracies. From the point of view of the left in general, the long post-War World War II boom had gradually but inexorably subordinated labour to capital within the stabilised parliamentary democracies and emergent consumer societies of Western Europe (Anderson, P. 1983:15). Relatively full employment almost until the 1980s, increased wages for workers, and the emergence of new ‘middle class’ occupations made it possible and also necessary for increasing numbers of people to participate in this new ‘affluent society’. As John Berger (1972:142) has put it:

> Publicity is addressed to those who constitute the market, to the spectator buyer who is also the consumer-producer from whom profits are made twice over -- as worker and then as buyer. The only places relatively free of publicity are the quarters of the very rich; their money is theirs to keep.

This type of left-wing criticism has implied that ‘consumption’, orchestrated through consumer advertising in conjunction with other instruments of the marketing process (which might include industrial design, planned obsolescence, fashion, supermarkets, merchandising, consumer credit, etc.), performs a complex and multifarious role. By enticing the working classes to spend their money on a wide array of consumer goods, even the higher wages capitalism has to pay to buy ‘stabilised’ working classes are recouped. It is the means by which advanced capitalism has been able to avoid any

55 In this respect, (conservative) prime minister Harold Macmillan’s famous catch-phrase directed at the post-World War II working classes in Britain (‘You’ve never had it so good’) is perhaps noteworthy. A
fundamental redistribution of wealth while at the same time circumventing its own contradictions.\textsuperscript{56}

One might reasonably question the continuing relevance of the Marxist critique in the 1990s, or of the idiosyncratic brand of socialist radicalism that Williams developed and maintained till the end of his life. However, Williams’s reservations about the term ‘consumer’ should not be dismissed without some consideration. Are the negative connotations of the term ‘consumer’ simply etymological, or does the popular or common sense meaning of the term continue to be informed by a role it still plays in economic theory? The assessment of Galbraith (1958) also seems to support the suggestion that by reducing every ordinary citizen to a cypher of mathematical calculation in economic theory, the term does have an inherent tendency to be de-humanising

An irresponsible economic system can supply the ‘consumption’ market, whereas it could only meet the criterion of human use by becoming genuinely responsible: that is to say, shaped in its use of human labour and resources by general social decisions (Williams, [1960] 1980:188).

Williams ([1960] 1980:188) does point out that since ‘consumption’ within limits is a satisfactory activity, it can plausibly be offered as a commanding social purpose. But, he adds, that ‘consumption’ can never satisfy human needs because many of these are social, such as roads, hospitals, schools and quiet. Such social human needs can never be served by the consumption idea; in actual fact these needs will always be denied because consumption tends to materialise as an individual activity (Williams, [1960] 1980:188). At the basis of Williams’s argument is a clear vision that human needs can be objectively assessed; that a criterion of ‘human use’ does in fact exist, and that it would be possible to properly establish this if the \textit{intention} to do so were present in the framing of social

\textsuperscript{56} From a liberal point of view (Bell, 1952), capitalism and consumer democracy encompassed the generation and distribution of greater wealth and the end of conflict over a scarcity of the essentials for human life.
policies. Collins & Murroni (1996:14) address some of these issues by emphasising that people should be seen as citizens and consumers, and that their interests as citizens and consumers are interdependent. It is not within the scope of the present work to venture any viable alternatives to ‘consumer democracy’. However, the informing of an analysis of racial stereotyping in South Africa with a critique of consumption serves to highlight one stark alternative of denial of normal consumer status to the larger part of the population and the application of forceful repression instead.

The concept of hegemony became particularly important to culturalist perspectives, such as that of Williams. Hegemony represents a process whereby certain definitions of reality attain dominance in a society. In this manner one class or social group gains a controlling influence over other classes, but more through their consent than by the use of force. According to Gramsci (1971:80):

> The normal exercise of hegemony ... is characterised by a combination of force and consent, which balance each other out reciprocally, without force predominating excessively over consent. Indeed, the attempt is always made to ensure that force would appear to be based on the consent of the majority expressed by the so called organs of public opinion - newspapers and associations - which therefore in certain situations are multiplied.

It is important to note Gramsci’s position that force should not excessively predominate over consent. It should also be noted that Gramsci says that in certain situations organs of

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57 Consumer democracy, like earlier forms of socio-economic organisation might be seen as a passing stage. In terms of twentieth century globalism, consumer (or market) democracy is increasingly coming to represent the optimum, as a system of economic organisation which might provide dignity and quality of life wherever it can become established. But in terms of technological and social evolution, this stage might in the future be superseded. Leiss (1976) suggests that, as it is practised at present, this order is a problematic one that will ultimately encounter its limitations through the destruction of the environment and exhaustion of the earth’s resources. A recent report of the World Wild Life Fund (BBC World television, 3 October 1998) claims that human consumption is already approaching a level that the world can no longer sustain, with 30% of nature having been destroyed between 1970 and 1998.

58 Eagleton (1989: 170) points out that Williams greeted the idea of hegemony with acclaim and put it to powerful use in his work; but one of the reasons for this might have been a certain hostility to the notion of ideology, for which hegemony possibly substitutes.
public opinion such as ‘newspapers and associations’ are multiplied (in terms of Althusser these are instruments of ideology) to give the appearance that the use of force has been based on consent. In his account of hegemony, Gramsci does not specifically refer to the advertising and consumption equation, though he does point out that:

Undoubtedly the fact of hegemony presupposes that account be taken of the interests and tendencies of the groups over which hegemony is to be exercised, and that in certain circumstances equilibrium should be formed - in other words that the leading group should make sacrifices of an economic corporate kind. But there is no doubt that such sacrifices cannot touch the essential; for though hegemony is ethical-political, it must necessarily be based on the decisive function exercised by the leading group in the decisive nucleus of economic activity (Gramsci, 1971:161).

There does seem to be some essential correspondence between this statement and the effective application of Keynesian economic theory, which has given rise to the ensuing criticism from Galbraith (1958) or Williams (1960). In the case of Europe it would seem that consumption became more clearly pronounced as a factor in hegemony in the post-World War II period. In terms of the assessment of Stuart Ewen (1976), discussed below, advertising communications might be assumed to have already become a relevant hegemonic factor in the United States in the 1920s. It might be suggested that the post-World War II consumer democracies have been characterised by the development of a form of hegemony where the effective achievement of consent makes resort to force even less frequent than had been envisaged by Gramsci. In his adoption of the concept of hegemony Williams ([1973] 1980:39) reads in his notion of selective tradition. The manner in which advertising processes relate with and impact ideologically upon society is quite consistent with this understanding of hegemony:

from a whole possible area of past and present, certain meanings and practices are chosen for emphasis, certain other meanings and practices are neglected and excluded. Even more crucially, sonic these meanings and practices are reinterpreted, diluted or put into forms which support or at least do not contradict other elements within the effective dominant culture (Williams, [1973] 1980:39; italics have been added)
Consistent with this conception, Sinclair (1987:38) points out, the study of advertising shows that the dominant commercial forces construct their ‘markets’ of consumers’ out of the complex historical experience and material conditions of social groups who are addressed according to their demographic characteristics. If the code of a message does not fit into the audience’s experiences they may reject the meaning given and substitute their own interpretation (*ibid.*). However, media institutions such as advertising agencies and the commercial press have become particularly adept in miming the language of the culture of their target groups, so that a newspaper or an advertisement might for instance seem to speak to workers from their own position in society and to represent their own interests (*ibid.*). (See also Chapter 6 in this respect, about how the selection and appropriation of stereotypes comes about during the creative process of writing advertisements.) Although, there may be ‘aberrant decodings’ or ‘negotiated meanings’, for example, some people might subvert fashion by hacking the legs off their new jeans, or by tearing holes on them, such ‘popular absorption’ of culture (Fiske, 1989) is often from where the cutting edge of fashion is located or inspired. Thus, the apprehension and commercial exploitation of this source is also the life and breath of advertising agencies. It might be suggested that the process of assimilation of ‘aberrant decodings’ also plays a role in constantly informing, inspiring, modernising and rejuvenating the dominant ideology. The subordinate groups may take pride in the fact that the dominant culture takes heed of them, and that the dominant culture may in some respects even be irrevocably changed by them. However, the essential power relations usually tend to remain unchanged. Indeed, this point of *dialogue* which occurs between popular culture and the dominant culture should not underestimated or belittled, as hegemony does allow limited power inflections from the less dominant sectors of society. Nevertheless, twenty years on, the original conclusions of Judith Williamson (1978:178) still have some validity:

Thus ideologies cannot be known and undone, so much as engaged with - in a sort of running battle, almost a race since the pace at which all their forms, especially advertising, reabsorb all critical material, is alarmingly fast.
Not all sources of Western Marxist social criticism which have been influential to theoretically-informed debates about advertising readily fit into a hegemony framework. The works of Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer (1944), and Herbert Marcuse (1964) are of particular interest here. It is generally accepted that the Frankfurt School’s Critical Theory was a pessimistic, doctrine that gave little scope for oppositional readings of the dominant culture, and thus ‘praxis’ or practical efforts on the part of individuals or as groups to resist and oppose their domination (Held, 1980; Jay, 1973). In *The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception* (1944), Adorno and Horkheimer make the following statement:

Culture is a paradoxical commodity. So completely is it subject to the law of exchange that it is no longer exchanged; it is so blindly consumed in use that it can no longer be used. Therefore it amalgamates with advertising. The more meaningless the latter becomes under a monopoly, the more omnipotent it becomes (1944:161).

This statement is typical of Frankfurt School pessimism. Adjectives such as completely’, ‘blindly’, ‘meaningless’, ‘omnipotent’, indicate a condition that seems to be total and absolute and which offers little if anything in exchange to the subordinate classes. But despite this aspect, the above statement also bears some parallel to a key observation by Williams ([1960] 1980:185), namely, that modern advertising exploits our capacity for not being sensibly materialist in our use of goods. Williams’s implication is that we also have a potential for being sensibly materialist, and that if this capacity became more widely exercised, much of the advertising projected at us would be an insane irrelevance (1980:185). Adorno and Horkheimer (1944:161) also draw our attention to the totalitarian drive in capitalism through monopolisation, and to the application of technology in both production and social organisation. Despite their pessimism, Adorno and Horkheimer (1944:121) believed that, “This is the result not of a law of movement in technology but of its function in today’s economy”. There seems to be some recognition in this statement that technology in itself is not problematic, but rather the manner in which it was being put to use. Here again, there is some correspondence with Williams ([1960] 1980:187) similar but rather more positive observation: that once advanced productive techniques have entered a society, new questions of structure and purpose in social organisation are posed.

Some more peripheral adherents to the Frankfurt School had a less pessimistic vision, seeing opportunities for using technology to serve oppositional struggle. Walter Benjamin’s essay, *The Work of Art in an Era of Mechanical Reproduction* has been

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59 Contemporary with the Frankfurt School’s radical or Marxist engagement of mass culture, a similar question about the need to conserve ‘true values’ against the culture of industrial society was also being raised by conservative cultural critics such as Leavis (1948) in Britain.

60 Published in a collection of some of Benjamin’s writings, *Illuminations*, Fontana, Glasgow, 1979.
seminal in left-wing theorising about the potential utilisation of technology in order to achieve some form of social liberation. One can discern the inspiration of Adorno and Horkheimer (1944) and of Benjamin (1979) in John Berger’s seminal work on art criticism *Ways of Seeing* (1972). In Berger’s chapter on advertising (publicity) one can see a profound application of Benjamin’s inspiration, for instance:

> a technical development made it easy to translate the language of oil painting into publicity clichés... Colour photography is to the spectator-buyer what oil was to the spectator owner (Berger, 1972:140).

In a manner perhaps similar to how Benjamin (1979) in the pre-World War II period had regarded the potential of cinema in class struggle, Kathy Myers in *Understains* (1987) has advocated the use advertising techniques by the British Left in order to attain political ends. Myers seems to adopt a view of advertising as a sophisticated communication form of the advanced industrial stage:

> Advertising is a metaphor for the age. Used and abused as the key to private profits, it still provides the most sophisticated economic and ideological analysis of the desires, aims and ambitions of that strife-torn plunder pit called Britain. It provides a method for understanding the link between images and Utopias, occupation and ambition, class and culture, commodities and capitalism. It provides an analysis which is, by definition, political. The left ignores that at its peril (Myers 1987:151).

By the time of World War II, the Frankfurt School had moved to the United States, but was only to become influential in English-speaking countries in the 1960s and 1970s with the works of Herbert Marcuse. In *One Dimensional Man* (1964), Marcuse shows how modern capitalism achieves social control through a type of' soft' totalitarianism in which all sources of opposition are absorbed into the dominant 'universe of discourse' and thus neutralised. This view addresses similar problems to Williams ([1960] 1980), however, in as far domination is seen as total and absolute Marcuse's assessment is not consistent with consumption as a means of hegemony position. Capitalism is seen to superimpose 'false needs' on individuals in order to press them into the service of the system, depriving them of the very consciousness which would have enabled them to realise that their needs are false:
We may distinguish both true and false needs... Most of the prevailing needs to relax, to have fun, to behave and consume in accordance with the advertisements, to love and to hate what others love and hate, belong to this category of false needs" (Marcuse, 1964:21-2).

As has already been pointed out above (in relation to Williams's notion about the sensible use of goods), some anthropologists have challenged the validity of a conception of 'true' or 'false' needs, arguing that all needs are culturally determined, and that in all societies goods have always been primarily evaluated through their significatory meaning rather than their use-value (Douglas and Isherwood, 1978).

Frankfurt School critical theory, particularly the work of Adorno and Horkheimer (1944), seems to have been quite influential to Stuart Ewen's (1976) important critical work on American advertising in the 1920s, Captains of Consciousness. This study has been described as a Marxist historical analysis which sees advertising as being instrumental to capitalism (Tedlow, 1976). Ewen contends that advertising in the United States in the 1920s was a 'cultural apparatus' purposefully developed by a certain group of identifiable 'captains of consciousness':

Beyond standing at the helm of the industrial machines, businessmen understood the social nature of their hegemony. They looked beyond their nineteenth century characterisation as captains of industry toward a position in which they could control the entire social realm. They aspired to become captains of consciousness (Ewen, 1976:19).

According to Ewen, advertising was used deliberately as part of a strategy to integrate culturally diverse immigrant working classes into a single national culture through the 'imperialisation of the psyche'. Ewen does not make any reference to Williams ([1960] 1980) or review any works which consider the development of the ideological role of modern advertising more in terms being contingent to the growth and development of 20th Century capitalism. Sinclair (1987:25) points out that although Ewen's critique does show some recognition of the fact such a 'project of ideological consumerisation' generated resistance as well as complacency, and contradictions as well as consensus,
these more dialectical elements of his thesis are a token gesture when the thrust of the work is so clearly set within a problematic of manipulation.\textsuperscript{61}

It has been has pointed out by Tedlow (1976) that Ewen's critique does not account for a powerful counter-tendency in advertising methodology that has continued to concentrate more on the product than the consumer, Rather than to sell the system this counter-approach is designed to move merchandise pure and simple, and focuses on the product to find a 'reason why' a consumer should purchase instead of trying to exploit the personal shortcomings of the consumer (Pollay, 1985; Fox, 1984).\textsuperscript{62} However, contra Tedlow (1976), advertisements based upon a "reason why" approach might still have an ideological role to play. While the ideology of "lifestyle" approaches might result from a...
calculated manipulation of stereotypes in terms of the shortcomings of the individual, a "reason why/product differentiation approach also works ideologically, but at a different level. Advertisements based on a "reason why" or "USP" approach tend to be comparative with other products and therefore competitive. The cumulative effect of this form of advertising is bound to result in a re-affirming image of capitalist industrial society as the engine of technological evolution and progress. However, such advertisements are more designed to appeal to reason and therefore not quite as consistent with the 'blindly' or 'unconscious' connotations of the term consumer. The research of Leiss, Kline and Jhally (1986) might lead one to assume that "lifestyle" is a late capitalist or 'post-modern' form, while "reason why" or "USP" is a residual form from an industrial modernist era from earlier this century. However, some informed practitioners of advertising claim that prolonged deviation from giving consumers any "reason why" can result in the development of apathy towards a brand (Wight, 1972), and according to Fox (1984) both approaches have been in use since the early part of this century. If this be the case, there might be some grounds to Williams's ([1960] 1980) implication that we might also have a capacity for being sensibly materialist, and that the application of the consumer concept tends to obscure this.

Sinclair (1987:41) points out that for all its theoretical strengths, the Culturalist perspective for the analysis of advertising in society has been greatly overshadowed by another strain of thought developed from Western Marxism, namely the structuralism of Louis Althusser. Like culturalism, structuralism had sought to go beyond Marx's old base/superstructure metaphor in order to explain how the capitalist economic order creates its own kind of culture. What was decisive about the economic order (Althusser, 1971) was not so much that it was a system of production, but that it organised society so as to ensure the 'reproduction' of the system of production. All culture becomes equated with 'ideology' which has the function of 'constituting' individuals as 'subjects', calling each one into place as a loyal 'bearer (trager) or supporter of the ruling ideology by which the social formation is reproduced. Althusser originally argued that this ideological inculcation is achieved through the 'Ideological State Apparatuses' (ISA's)63 which

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63 However, in Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays Althusser (1971) is critical of the ISA conception and rejects it.
include the family and school as well as communication media and, by implication, advertising. These 'apparatuses' are unified by the ruling ideology which they institutionalise in their actual practices as a 'material force'. They call up or 'interpellate' individual subjects into the places in society which ideology already has prepared for them, and induce people to 'recognise' that they belong in the slots to which they are so assigned. These places are not their 'real' positions, however, for they can never be shown their real positions: "What is represented in ideology is ... not the system of real relations which govern the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relation of those individuals to the real relations in which they live" (Althusser 1971:155). It was pointed out in Chapter 1 that the concept of stereotype bears considerable similarity with this conception from Althusser. Stereotypes or something very closely akin presumably play an important role in the process Althusser refers to as 'interpellation'.

The influence of Althusser is apparent in Judith Williamson's *Decoding Advertisements* (1978). Williamson uses a complex application of structuralist ideas to show how advertising translates 'use-value' into 'exchange value'. The importance of Williamson's (1978) work lies in the fact that her 'decodings' provide some indication about the sign mechanisms through which positive forms of stereotyping achieve their interpellatory role in advertisements. According to Williamson (1978), advertisements constitute us as 'active receivers', but only because they call us into places they have already prepared for us. This is achieved through the way advertisements address us (appellation), and through the 'absences' in their structure which we are required to fill. Appellation works at both the individual and collective levels. At the individual level, Williamson applies Lacan's (1968) theory of how the subject ('us') is formed by language to explain how advertisements operate psychologically by offering us a coherent, unified self which we each and all desire but can never attain. In buying products with certain 'images' we create ourselves, our personality, our qualities, even our past and future. At the collective level, Levi-Strauss' (1966 & 1970) theory of totemism serves to explain the process of 'recognition' from which we identify ourselves by the use of certain product brands.

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64 Williamson's reference to 'absences' in the 'structure' of advertisements, which the receivers of the text are intended to fill, should not be confused with the conception of 'structured absences' (Chapter 7).
A shortcoming of Williamson’s work is that her research and decodings are based on a sample of magazine advertisements that has been assembled unsystematically over a period of several years (1978:9). Advertisements deriving from a reason why or USP technique have been underestimated while the more ideologically-inclined techniques have been emphasised. It is not without some justification that Sinclair (1987:51-2) criticises Williamson on the basis that the 'decodings' she provides suggest that her method systematically favours the meanings inscribed in the advertisements themselves while ignoring their contexts in the cultivation of consumer markets and the external reality of the society at any given time. Though 'we' supply the 'currency' of meaning, we do not all carry the same currency any more than we respond to the same appellation. Williamson (1978:184) nevertheless does acknowledge that abstraction is a weakness of the structuralist method: real 'subjects' have real needs, she admits, including the desire to share meaning with others, but advertising exploits these with its promises of false fulfilment. We are conscious that these promises are false and regard advertising with scepticism: so advertising is not 'ideological brainwashing forced on us from above'. It is the capacity of advertising to constantly exchange one meaning for another which keeps it a step ahead of consciousness, transforming the challenge of social movements and even criticism, against itself to its own terms. Thus Williamson moves closer to the Culturalist conception of hegemony, avoiding the shortcomings of more extreme structuralist approaches that are unable to account for so called 'aberrant decoding', or to allow for the possibility of theoretical praxis, such as that displayed by Williams ([1960]) 1980). Also, unlike some post-structuralists who believe meaning is only to be found in the structure of signs in a text and its relation to other texts, Williamson argued that meaning depends on the exchange between signs and 'specific, concrete receivers, people for whom and in whose system of belief, they have meaning'. Williamson recognises the limitations of structuralist and semiological approaches, warning that analysis of internal structures of signs within advertisements and of the ideological referent systems or discourses within culture can become an end in itself if we lose sight of how advertising fits into the structures of production and communication.
Williamson (1978), does not elaborate her position regarding the debate about the human propensity to evaluate goods for their meaning as signs rather than purely for their efficacy as implements. She does however seem to consider the translation of 'use value' of products into 'exchange value' without any such circumspection (Williamson 1978:12). As was pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, Williams's ([1960] 1980) position on the sensible use of goods which tends to underpin the culturalist praxis-oriented attempt to mobilise advertising criticism against the consumption-driven mode of monopoly capitalist production, is challenged by later works of advertising criticism such as StJhally (1987). These later works are underpinned by an anthropology of consumption which contends that all societies in history and even pre-history have been consumer societies. According to this view goods have universally been valued for their cultural meanings rather than for their usefulness or their capacity to satisfy human needs. The distinction between use-value and exchange-value made by classical economists, and carried over into Marx's critique of the fetish of commodities under capitalism, is thus repudiated by the anthropology of consumption (Sinclair 1987:53). Loss of this distinction may have far-reaching implications in the 1990s. Post-structural critics of consumption are provided with a counter-theory which directs them to the abandonment of the negative dialectic, perhaps pointing the way towards a reconciliation between a toned-down form of Marxism with mainstream liberal social theory.

The work of Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood, *The World of Goods* (1978) is one of the most sustained efforts to develop an anthropology of consumption. Douglas's theory of culture generally draws on the Durkheimian tradition of cultural anthropology to investigate the structure of meanings and moral order. According to Douglas and Isherwood (1978), goods have meaning in society because they are needed for making visible the categories of culture. Unlike the mainstream post-structuralists who still see a system of meaning derived from a repressive hierarchy for its own reproduction, Douglas and Isherwood (1978) see meaning arising out of active and consensual participation of everyone in a process of sharing meaning. They acknowledge that goods are used and valued unequally and function as social markers of given social inequalities. However, they are not concerned with conflict over socially generated scarcity implicit in their
theory. In accordance with their non-radical positions, they see the resulting competition as healthy: "How else should one relate to the Joneses if not by keeping up with them" (Douglas and Isherwood, 1978:125).

It has been observed by Sinclair (1987:57) that the work of Douglas and Isherwood has important implications for the critique of advertising, because it infers that the continuous growth of capitalism's system of meanings based on brand names has not simply been invented by advertising. These indications suggest that advertising and marketing have built on an already established capacity for learning, grading and sharing names which mark the social world. It might be noted here that the fact that Douglas and Isherwood and other anthropologists may have established a pre-existent or innate human capacity for 'learning, grading, and sharing names', does not necessarily prove that this capacity is an immutable aspect of a 'human nature' or that its constant nourishing is itself an indispensable or dominant human 'need'. It seems that Williams ([1960] 1980:185) may have been aware that human beings are not by 'nature' sensibly materialist; however he seems to have believed that if our cultural pattern was different we might be socialised to be more sensibly materialist. By the title of his essay Williams ([1960] 1980) suggests that advertising plays a major part in perpetuating what might be interpreted as a collective superstitious regression within social consciousness (because consumption is useful in underpinning the status quo):

If we were sensibly materialist, in that part of our living in which we use things, we should find most advertising to be an insane irrelevance. Beer would be enough for us without the additional promise that in drinking it we would show ourselves to be manly, young at heart, or neighbourly. A washing machine would be a useful machine to wash clothes, rather than an indication that we are forward-looking or an object of envy to our neighbours. But if these associations sell beer and washing machines, as some of the evidence suggests, it is clear that we have a cultural pattern in which objects are not enough but must be validated, if only in fantasy, by association with social and personal meanings which in a different cultural pattern might be more directly available. The short description of what we have is magic: a highly organised and professional system of
magical inducements and satisfactions, functionally very similar to magical systems in simpler societies, but rather strangely co-existent with a highly developed scientific technology (Williams, [1960] 1980:185).

Williams ([1960] 1980) is quite aware that some of the symbols used in advertising are based upon residual cultural forms from a primitive human past. But, Williams ([1960] 1980) felt that the exploitation of this phenomenon by advertising has amounted to a form of wilful regression within the social forms of advanced industrial democracy; and by implication, perhaps, leading to a suspension of development of forms of social progress more appropriate to technological progress:

Advertising, in its modern forms, then operates to preserve the consumption ideal from the criticism inexorably made of it by experience. If the consumption of individual goods leaves that whole area of human need unsatisfied, the attempt is made, by magic, to associate this consumption with human desires to which it has no real reference (Williams, [1960] 1980:189).

In effect, Williamson (1978) reinforced these contentions of Williams ([1960] 1980) when she applied Levi-Strauss (1966 & 1970) to show how advertising instills its attractiveness into manufactured goods. With characteristic optimism, Williams seems to have believed that it should be possible for industrial society to come to a reassessment of its intentions and begin making more rational decisions (in the sphere of production and distribution). Genuine use-value should form the basis in production and distribution instead of continuing to over-emphasise symbolic values which are underpinned by superstitiously-related motivations of more primitive cultures. It seems that the anthropology of consumption will insist that such progress is impossible because all societies in the past have valued goods superstitiously.

During the 1980s, insights from social anthropology were interpreted in post-structuralist perspectives. In For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign (1981), Jean Baudrillard retains the negative dialectic while taking the cultural meaning of goods to be more decisive for ‘political economy’ than to their origins in social labour. Goods speak a
language within a meaningful 'system of objects', says Baudrillard, but they also conceal
classical meaning of social groups, a system of social relations into which we are placed
according to the meaning of the goods we consume: "Through objects, each individual
and each group searches out his/her place in an order" (Baudrillard. 198 1:38).
Baudrillard considers all needs to be socially defined, to have an ideological origin. Thus,
the only needs which exist in individuals are those which the capitalist system imbues in
them according to the functional requirements of its own reproduction. Along with the
more conventional critique of consumer society such as Galbraith's, Baudrillard identifies
the rise of the individual consumer as the means by which capitalism circumvented the
issue of wealth re-distribution and secured its legitimacy in spite of its contradictions,
which basically is also consistent with the observations from Berger (1972), cited above.
Also, similarly to Marcuse, Baudrillard sees the 'liberalisation' of capitalism as a mask for
a more effective repression. Baudrillard re-defines consumption as a 'mechanism' which
binds individuals to itself concealing class differences while at the same time reproducing
them under the title of democracy of consumption, a point which has also been noted by
Williamson (1978:13).

William Leiss's primary interests in The Limits to Satisfaction (1976), are in the
ecological effects of Western capitalism. Leiss, applies a similar view to Baudrillard but
on a more universal basis. He begins with Marx's theory of commodity fetishism but also
adopts the view that ideological mystification of commodities is not unique to capitalism.
Leiss follows the ideas of Marshall Sahlins (1972) who also believes use-value to be a
matter of cultural definition in any society, pointing out that utility is framed by cultural
context and that even our interaction with the most mundane and 'ordinary' objects in
daily life is mediated within a symbolic field. Also, not unlike Williamson, Leiss
conceives of a system of persons on the one hand which is made to correspond to a
system of goods on the other. Thus, it becomes increasingly difficult for individual
subjects to maintain an individual coherent identity because as product differentiation
becomes increasingly finite their needs are made to look ever more fragmented. In post-
structuralist terms this phenomenon is identified as the 'de-centring' of the individual --
personal identity becomes supple and is constantly being reshaped by the daily message
mix. Along with Williamson, Leiss observes how traditional images of nature are
recreated by advertising, exploiting whatever yearnings may remain for a more harmonious and natural environment, than is readily accessible in: the advanced industrial democracies. Such practices can be seen to further compound the individual's destabilisation or psychic fragmentation by virtually eliminating any remaining capacity to judge which goods might satisfy which needs. In a sense, views such as those of Baudrillard or Leiss, refer to a yet more subtle version of the conceptions of Marcuse (1964). Late capitalism, however, does not only 'absorb' all sources of opposition. With individuals deprived of their capacity to focus on what is amiss in their lives, dissatisfactions can no longer coalesce and become coherent at a collective level as opposition.

Sut Jhally in *The Codes of Advertising* (1987) studies advertising in terms of Marx's theory of fetishism, but follows Douglas and Isherwood (1978) and Sahlins (1976) with respect to the significatory aspect of goods. Thus, Jhally (1987:3) believes that Williams's observation, to the effect: that we are in fact not *materialistic* enough, has stalled the development of a truly adequate perception of the role of advertising in modern consumer societies. Unfortunately, Jhally's reading of Williams ([1960] 1980) is a superficial one. Firstly, Jhally (1987:3) introduces Williams directly after he has discussed Stuart Ewen's *Captains of Consciousness* (1976) and refers to what appears to be taken verbatim from Williams, as Williams ([1960] 1980, p185). The implication is that Williams's position might be a development upon Ewen (1976). In fact, Jhally is not referring to the original publication date of *Advertising the Magic System*, (1960), but to a 1980 republication in a collection of Williams's essays. Secondly, Jhally imputes certain meanings to what Williams ([1960] 1980) said; however, these meanings seem to be Jhally's interpretation of Williams. This apparent stylistic carelessness on the part of Jhally is disturbing because it comes at a point of the introduction of a major theoretical

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65 Williams's words are actually: 'It is often said that our society is too materialist, and that advertising reflects this. We are in a phase of a relatively rapid distribution of what are called 'consumer goods', and advertising with its emphasis on 'bringing the good things of life', is taken as a central reason for this. But it seems to me that in this respect our society is evidently not quite materialist enough, and this paradoxically, is the result of a failure of social meanings, values, and ideals" (Williams, [1960] 1980:185)
reappraisal. In fact, Williams's above words are 'quite evidently not materialist enough" ([1960] 1980:185). Jhally goes on to claim that:

The contention that goods should be important to people for what they are 'used' for rather than their 'symbolic' meaning is very difficult to uphold in the light of the historical, anthropological and cross-cultural evidence. In all cultures at all times, it is the relation between use and symbol that provides the concrete context for the playing out of the universal person-object relationship. The present radical critique of advertising is unbalanced in its perception of the 'proper' or 'rational' relation between use and symbol (Jhally, 1987: 3).

The history of advertising campaigns and different product development strategies and resulting types of advertising in the twentieth century (Wight, 1972; Fox, 1984), suggest that Williams's views also have some validity. For instance, when the Cadbury’s advertising says 'a glass and a half of milk' (and this is pictured on the wrapper) people are not buying Cadbury's chocolate primarily for any symbolic meaning, but because the taste actually confirms that good ingredients are being used Or, supposing a make of refrigerator uses seventy-five per cent less electricity than other makes, this fact is advertised on the basis of a huge annual cost saving in electricity consumption. The success of advertisements such as these (and in some instances, such as the Cadbury's example, return to these forms after the failure of more symbolically-orientated advertisements, suggests that it is unlikely that Williams's belief in the capacity of human beings to be sensibly 'materialist' could be altogether unsound or have arisen simply from a lack of familiarity or oversight about the discoveries of social anthropology. Williams's understanding of the term 'materialist' should not be confused with 'materialistic'.

Williams probably meant exactly what he was saying: that if we were quite materialist (or allowed to become more materialist), which he believed to be possible under different conditions, goods would be assessed more for their use-value without confusion through

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66 One can have little doubt that Williams is very specific in his use of words. In Keywords (1976), Williams adopts a historical approach to trace the shifting forms and meaning of politically relevant words, including Materialism. Williams's use of the term 'materialist enough' should be assessed in relation to his own self-identification as a 'cultural materialist'. He will out-Marxize the Marxists by going the whole hog, extending materialism full-bloodeyed to cultural practices too; but in thus pressing Marxist logic to an extreme, he will undo the base-superstructure distinction and so retain a certain critical distance (Eagleton, 1989:6).
undue emphasis on their residual symbolic meaning. As a committed activist, Williams's adoption of a stance that might have mobilised advertising criticism as praxis (against monopoly capitalist criteria in production priorities and methods of distribution) would most likely have been intentional. The elevation of human choice in spite of the findings of social anthropologists would have been intrinsic to the humanism which permeates Williams's writings.

Racial Stereotyping as a Critical Approach to South African Advertising: Consumption as a Means of Hegemony under a Restricted Aspect

Having given an outline of the debates in theoretically-informed advertising criticism, some repetition is needed here of the observations made at the beginning of this chapter in respect of the South African context. It is pivotal that the above observations were based upon theoretically-informed advertising criticism from the First World. The leftist critique has maintained that consumer advertising plays an important role in the advancement of consumer democracies, especially in post-World War II Europe. However, during this period, consumer advertising in South Africa was not advancing a consumer democracy of this order. The final section of this chapter will thus explore the question about what sort of validity an essentially First World critique has in a situation such as South Africa during the 1980s, where the majority of the population has only had limited access to consumer goods and services, and where whatever 'pacification' such goods and services might have bestowed was bound to have been limited? If a pacificatory aspect of hegemony is the normal ideological discourse of consumer advertising\(^\text{67}\) in the First World, in what manner and to what extent did 'racial stereotyping' in South African advertising (television commercials) work to sell apartheid? Might racial stereotyping (especially its ethnic varieties) during 1960s and 1970s era of apartheid, and also during the earlier reform period of the 1980s, be

\(^{67}\)To sell consumer democracy and further the 'pacification of class struggle' by disseminating laudatory middle class stereotypes.
considered to have been mediating some form of restricted aspect of consumption as a means of hegemony?

It is generally accepted that in the post-World War II period Afrikaner Nationalism was the applying instrument of racism in South Africa, A critical analysis of the relationship between the order of racial stereotyping in South African advertisements needs to consider the basis of consumption as a means of hegemony in terms of factors of political as well as economic conditioning. Only with respect to English-speaking whites (cultural descendants of the core capitalist centre) has advertising always been able to play a role in disseminating petty bourgeois stereotypes. Subsequent to the conversion of South Africa into capitalism, after the Boer War, even Afrikaners were for a long period not fully included within middle class consumption hegemony (O'Meara, 1983). Thus, if historical material conditions precluded South African capitalism from extending a universalised bourgeois lifestyle (in its petty bourgeois forms) to include the more substantial part of the black population, the capacity of advertising to extend the attendant petty bourgeois stereotypes would also have been constrained. From this position racial stereotyping in South Africa (in as far as its ethnic varieties are concerned) might be considered to have been mediating a restricted aspect of consumption as a means of hegemony. The reform of apartheid and faltering economic growth reveal a difficult and variously impeded movement towards a universalised bourgeois stereotype. It is thus that transition in the forms of racial stereotyping in South African advertisements might be considered to have been taking place between the following general categories: ethnic, ethnic middle class, and a more universal or integrated all inclusive non-ethnic middle class.

The black middle class co-option or stabilisation aspects of reform policy (which are discussed below) might have borne some vague similarity to post-World War II stabilisation of working classes in the advanced industrial countries. Advertising criticism

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68 Consistent with their underclass, the ideology of the English-speaking media persisted to stereotype Afrikaners as culturally inferior well into the 1970s. Only when Afrikaners in sufficient numbers were deemed to have adopted the appropriate petty bourgeois outlook did such negative stereotypes begin to recede.
from this source must be considered to be relevant and appears to have been informative to the account of Bertlesen (1985), and possibly of Frederikse (1986). But due to its continental African/Third World post-colonial nature, the South African capitalist industrial context also has some complex differences from such First World contexts.

There appears to be some latitude and relativity involved in the definition of 'middle classes', in the 20th Century of what constitutes the petty bourgeoisie or middle classes. The state of being middle class must include a very important aspect regarding the form of consciousness that comes with the daily shaping of life through regular and uninterrupted access to consumer goods and services (Leiss Kline & Jhally, 1986:3). With regard to the issue of class analysis, it might be noted here that working classes in the post-World War II consumer democracies have increasingly become identified as the petty bourgeoisie. As Williamson (1978:13) points out:

But in our society, while the real distinctions between people are created by their role in the process of production, as workers, it is the products of their own work that are used, in the false categories invoked by advertising, to obscure the real structure of society by replacing class with the distinctions made by the consumption of particular goods (Williamson, 1978:13).

These new middle classes comprise of a rather broad group of subjects with considerable range in income earnings and with varying 'lifestyles'. According to Schudson (1984:28):

advertising tends to follow affluence. It is possible that the growth in sales or per capita sales that so many products have experienced in the past thirty or forty years is best explained as being a result of the general rise in disposable consumer income and the concurrent growth in consumer credit.

The nature of the black middle classes in South Africa is also a debatable matter. Those who constituted South African black middle classes during the 1980s reform era might have differed from conventional or post-World War II appraisals of middle classes in the First World. In terms of qualitative aspects of middle class life, the South African 'black
middle classes' were still quite marginal. More general exposure and access to consumer goods and services, though growing, was still relatively limited:

Because of the high' incidence of unemployment (and imprisonment), the average black customer's likely to take noticeably longer than agreed to complete his HP or account payments ... If a customer completes a 24 month commitment in only 30 months, we still regard him as a good one, says furniture retailer Sidney Ellerine (Special Report: Black Market. Financial Mail, 24 November 1978).

Nevertheless, even if his/her access to goods and services remained relatively restricted by First World standards, in relation to the unemployed majority any black person fortunate enough to have had a steady job might have appeared to belong to the black middle classes. In spite of an apartheid situation some resemblance does exist with the development of middle classes in the First World. The post-World War II South African political economy underwent various re-alignments within the given limits to consumption (see Lipton, 1986). These re-alignments often coincided with changes in effective head-of-state (see Chapter 3). In spite of the restrictive aspects, such as influx controls (to prevent migration of blacks from rural areas to 'first world' or urban areas), native African urbanisation and levels of employment continued to grow (Hindson, 1987). Consumption therefore did grow to some extent as a result of industrial 'growth and greater reliance on African labour, This process might be regarded as some mild evidence of naturally occurring underlying or organic social reform as had been envisaged by O'Dowd (1964), in terms of modernisation theory. The recognition of Indians and coloureds as middle class consumers might be seen to have come about somewhat organically during in the 1970s, after these population groups increasingly began to be included in marketing plans for what had previously been conceived as the 'white market' (Sinclair 1985:60-2). This development seems to be confirmative that some organic development towards a racially integrated middle class market may have been taking place. The broadening of the constitution in the 1984 Tricameral parliamentary dispensation to include Coloureds and Indians might possibly be seen to have followed this broadening of consumption.

However, limitations to consumption in South Africa have meant that as long as apartheid prevailed, whatever has existed of the 'affluent society' remained mostly the preserve of white society. Consumer advertising continued to be directed primarily at the white petty bourgeois consuming aristocracy. Although South African media studies developed quite quickly after the mid- 1980s (Tomaselli KG et al 1986; Tomaselli KG et al 1987; Tomaselli RE et al, 1989), relative to the considerable number of critical studies focusing on apartheid during the 1980s, surprisingly little attention was paid to consumer advertising. While there was little effort to relieve the miserable contextual economic and social conditions of blacks, 'theoretically-informed' criticism of the role of advertising in this capitalist society was slow to come forth. The most obvious response for critics of apartheid would have been to take advertising to task for not sufficiently including blacks in its so- called blandishments, The limitations to black consumption in the context of
white affluence spoke loudly of fundamental injustice. It thus seems that liberal positions and positions of the more marxist-inclined left concurred in viewing this deprivation as a negative social factor. South Africa's theoretically-informed critics could hardly point a finger at advertising as an instrument for the extension of consumption as a means of capitalist hegemony while this development remained so markedly absent in relation to blacks. Under these circumstances, advertising criticism such as that of Vance Packard, that focused upon unscrupulous manipulation, was likely to be prevalent. And, indeed, it appears that theoretically-inclined advertising criticism tended to concentrate more on gender issues (Frenkel, Orkin & Wolf, 1980; Friedman, 1986), or post-structuralist concerns (Coetzee, 1980).

Also, during most of the period of apartheid the South African state was so structured that the government' and the largest sector of capital to all intents and purposes seemed to be either disunited or in confronted opposition. But from about 1979, until 'the 1984 Tricameral election, there had been some degree of rapprochement between English-dominated capital and the P.W. Botha government in the implementation of reform, and' this factor may have stimulated the works of Bertelsen (1985) and Frederikse (1986). It was during this reform period under P.W. Botha that South African advertising first came under theoretically-informed critical scrutiny. This attention was probably alerted by reports that the business sector in conjunction with the government's 'Total Strategy' scenario wished to 'stabilise' black middle classes (e.g. see Hudson & Sarakinsky, 1986; Frederikse, 1986). The issue of any possible connivance between the business community and the government for the structuring of consumer advertising to be in tune with 'Total Strategy' during the 1980s would be of considerable interest to the debates about the nature of the ideological role of advertising, whether it occurs 'contingently or conspiratorially. (This matter is therefore examined in more detail in Chapter 5.) During the 1980s there was a government sponsored co-option programme, but this in some respects was self-frustrated and contradictory. It was always intended that this programme should be reconciled with a still largely intact ethnic dispensation. This initially resulted in a strictly enforced genre of ethnic black middle class stereotypes in SABC-TV commercials on TV2/3.
The observations of Bertelsen (1985) are inspired through a semiological analysis of the racial stereotyping in one the early vernacular television commercials broadcast after the TV2 channel began operating in 1982. This commercial on Sunshine D margarine is indicative of a particular moment of early 1980s social and political context:

But who is this typical black man of the advertisements? Here we see the precise anti-thesis of material conditions. He is invariably head of a contented nuclear family... well-nourished, loved and appreciated, contented and free... But it is freedom within a strict closure. He is free to consume. His happiness, his choices, his authority exists solely within the ambit of white society whose dream he inhabits, manifested here specifically in the advertiser's mythology. He is for the moment free to play at being a man. And where is the white man? He is everywhere, but unseen. His approving, 'normative gaze must be understood. For he is, in all this, the constitutive principle, the creator (Bertelsen, 1985:7-8).

The form of racial stereotyping indicated here is incipient ethnic middle black class at a moment when the reform process under P.W. Botha had not yet been discredited, and while the rapprochment between English and Afrikaans dominated capitals had not yet quite foundered. Bertelsen points the way towards a fusion of Western Marxist-inspired advertising criticism with South African social history. At the time there seemed to be some limited but purposeful movement to extend consumption to certain groups of South African blacks, but this development was intended to take place in a selective, ethnic, and exclusive manner. It is this co-option issue that first attracted the interest of theoretically-informed analysis to South African advertising. However, while the P.W. Botha administration remained in office, this more actively reformist stance continued to be qualified by the insistence upon the preservation of the ethnic factor in state planning. It should thus be seen as a veneer imposed by a government which was not even capable of bringing it into consistency with long-standing underlying processes of black consumption. This discourse can thus hardly be estimated to have been propelled by underlying processes of capitalism that could qualify it as indicative of the emergence of a more universal consumption as a means of hegemony. Only in the F.W. de Klerk era were politically imposed restrictions to movement to non-ethnic black bourgeois stereotypes at last completely suspended.
However, after the 1984 tricameral parliamentary elections, a parting of ways occurred between English-dominated capital and the P.W. Botha government. The apparent lack of any and coherent planned approach between capital and the state meant that, short of having to elucidate method out the ensuing confusion of the 1980s, there never was any lucid capitalist ideological plan to criticise. If, as some critics suggest, our daily concern about consumer goods that is directed and fostered by advertising amounts to the most sophisticated form of ideology in modern capitalist states (Leiss, Kline and Jhally 1986:3-4; Jhally, 1987:1), this form hegemony certainly did not fully fit into the picture while most of the indigenous inhabitants of the land were still being excluded from consumer status. Even if supportable at more abstract levels of theory, criticising advertising on the basis that it was trying to give more consumer goods to the deprived majority would have been a rather difficult argument to put forth in the context of the harsh repressive measures most South Africans of indigenous ancestry had to contend with.

If one looks at the translation of apartheid restrictions into media practices, the practice enforced by SABC-TV which allowed only vernacular (and therefore ethnically-inclined) commercials to be broadcast to urtanised native Africans through TV2/3 was

69 During the 1950s and 1970s no overt attempt was made to 'stabilise' black middle classes through an extension of consumption. In response to rising black wages advertising might gradually have been contributing to such an effect, but this was nothing alarming enough to alert theoretically-informed advertising critics. Consumer advertising continued to be largely concentrated on whites (the white market) who controlled most of the disposable income for consumer products.

70 Indeed, from a departure point of theorisation suggested earlier above (Williams, [1960] 1980), the impression might tentatively arise that the bantustan policy in South Africa possessed of some unintended merit by virtue of the fact that it denied or restricted integration into the first world sector, and therefore denied access to consumption. H.F. Verwoerd had rejected the Tomlinson Report which had advocated the purposeful development of the reserves through government and business sector investment (Marquard, 1969:37-40; Hindson, 1987). However, by that stage the reserves were no longer performing their earlier purpose of cushioning the impact of Western culture on a primitive subsistence economy. The livelihood of blacks whether they lived in the reserves or a white area depended on the economy of an industrialising South Africa. The conception of tribal lands could not be reconciled with a modern industrial economy as tribalism had received its death-blow with industrialisation. Apartheid, with its emphasis on ethnicity and 'separate development', could never restore or contribute anything to the chain of indigenous culture development that had been interrupted by foreign invasion and colonialism, instead it restricted the efforts of blacks to come to terms with industrial society. For even as Williams ([1950] 1980:188) concedes, 'consumption', which industrial production makes possible, is within limits a satisfactory activity.
undoubtedly 'dysfunctional' and retrograde in comparison to what the role of advertising has been in the advanced industrial democracies. On the other hand in respect of rural dwellers, who lived rurally according to continental African standards (and only spoke their vernacular), a case might be made as per Mersham (1985) for the 'authenticity' of ethnic communication. The intention of the government might well have been to entrench traditional cultures so that rural blacks would identify more strongly with their intended 'nations'. But it is unlikely that ethnic advertising always worked this way. Consumer goods in themselves might be considered to inherently contain the universalisation of the bourgeois stereotype⁷¹, which methods of industrial mass production have made possible. Thus in a rural context, the advertising of products in ethnic terms, and any related stereotypes, would have been contributing to the historical role which advertising has played in other societies: the gradual conversion of rural dwellers into consumers and ultimately attracting them to urban centres. Here, from a marketing point of view, education about consumer products as such was needed. The lifestyle and culture arising from of the use of consumer products had not yet developed sufficiently. Therefore, in some instances, the ethnic contextualisation of consumer products might have facilitated their initiation by making such products seem culturally more acceptable (Van der Reis, 1967), an effect not necessarily supportive of apartheid in the long term.

In the case of urban blacks, the positive effects of naturally occurring structural reform on the standard of living had made them the chief consumers of a wide variety of goods. This process made it increasingly possible (and attractive) for marketers to at least achieve urban distribution for some of their products by advertising with a single campaign to all groups. This meant producing a single TV commercial in English and broadcasting on TV1 and TV4 (until the beginning of the 1990s the language requirement of TV2/3 still prevented the fighting of non-vernacular commercials). Significantly, large numbers of blacks were also consumers of the supposedly 'white' media, especially television, so it was often quite possible to reach the urban 'black market' by advertising on these channels alone. Also, market researchers had apparently showed that the more-

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⁷¹ Even if such goods are not directly related with petty bourgeois stereotypes in their advertising, in the longer term access to such goods alters the mode of living from pre-modern culture to modern.
educated South Africans of all races held fairly similar views and values (Corder, 1986:14-17). So with a little imagination and 'creativity', which after all are supposed to be the chief resource of advertising agencies, it is not inconceivable that the 'cultural gap' between blacks and whites could have been bridged. There are some indications that this was happening, as according to Green and Lascaris (1988:114) the trend between 1979 and 1987 was for both blacks and whites to become consistently less unfavourably disposed to advertisements depicting whites and blacks together. After the mid-1980s, for example, beer advertising became predominantly non-racial. The brewing industry has been an unparalleled example of monopoly capitalism in South Africa, as all brands have been owned by a single company that has successfully stifled attempts by entrepreneurial capitalists to establish themselves in this market. However, monopoly in the instance of the South African brewing industry seems to have worked positively against media apartheid. By virtue of its monopoly it seems that this sector was able to combine unity of purpose with muscle in terms of advertising expenditure. The inhibitive barriers institutionalised within broadcasting and marketing, which tended to perpetuate regressive ethnic stereotypes in advertising to urban black audiences, where thus first overcome in beer advertising.

The most important form of 'racial stereotyping' of blacks in South African mass media, an emergent form during the 1980s, indicates a historical conjuncture where black media depictions did at last begin to be consistent with a conception of consumption as a means of hegemony. Blacks were depicted in progressively more middle class roles, but without differentiation on an ethnic or racial basis. Various instances of this approach were already occurring in advertisements after the mid-1980s. Such 'integrated', 'multiracial' or 'non-racial' advertisements are a realisation of a so-called 'horizontal approach' to marketing that had been advocated in the late 1970s by Sandra van der Merwe (1979:13-18). These earlier origins in marketing theory suggest that some underlying material

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72 Sandra van der Merwe was a leading South African marketing executive in a largely male dominated field. She was also an author and professor of marketing at the University of Witwatersrand Graduate School of Business Administration (see Financial Mail, 25 January 1980, pg. 283). She had worked her way up the ranks of commerce from the retailing industry and rose into prominence in the 1970s and 1980s but later settled in Switzerland.
basis has in fact existed for this development. A later version of this principle was also proposed by Sinclair (1985:66), and then it was further developed by Green and Lascaris (1988:17-25) in terms of what they referred to as a 'blobs into bands' scheme. It must be taken into account that during the 1970s and 1980s there was an underlying yearning, especially on the part of the English-speaking, business community, to persuade themselves 'and others of the presence of signs of a natural or organic economic evolution that would carry the social formation away from apartheid. The statistics of black consumption do however indicate some structural validity for this point of view.

With the adoption of the principle of integration in beer advertising (see Chapter 7), occasional tentative instances of integrated advertising in South African advertising became more frequent, suggesting that the emergent form in black social depiction had finally arrived. Instead of pejorative black racial stereotypes, or ethnic black racial stereotypes, or even ethnic black middle class racial stereotypes, by either setting or language, advertisements based on this type of approach tend to depict 'positive' black roles and situations. These depictions were usually of Westernised non-ethnic petty bourgeois blacks, sometimes incorporating a Rasta or 'proud-to-be-black' youth approach. They resulted in what might be considered as progressive' rather than regressive racial stereotyping in SABC-TV commercials. On the whole these were communications targeted at blacks (and whites) whose psychological profile was conceived in what in fact amounted to progressively more middle class terms (see Corder, 1986:14-17).

Although non-ethnic black middle class stereotyping might suggest some relationship to affirmative depictions of people of colour in the First World, that is, positive stereotypes that have been called 'token blacks'; there was a fundamental difference. At the same time as being affirmative, a genuine Underlying economic basis/marketing strategy for such advertisements has in fact existed, or been much greater in South Africa. While 'affirmative action' in the advanced industrial democracies has sometimes been in economic terms more of a cosmetic or ideological factor, these black consumers of a developing South African industrial economy were not merely 'token blacks'. In this respect it could be said that advertising was performing its ideological role of psychic
consumerisation (Ewen, 1976) for monopoly capitalism. Until the arrival of F.W. de Klerk in 1989, these were early indications of an emergent form. This new emergent form seems to have been the combination of underlying structural economic developments upon the consumer market and reformist discourse from the business sector rather than from the government brand of reformist discourse. The reformist discourse from the business sector in the second half of the 1980s can be distinguished from the reformist strategies of the government during the earlier part of the 1980s. But with the hesitant economic growth during the 1980s and without political change and greater capital transfer to black South Africans, it was still uncertain if non-ethnic black middle class stereotypes would be able to prevail within media practices. After the end of 1991 it seemed clear that a non-socialist order would result from pending political negotiations for a more democratic state. Advertising was therefore bound to continue to play a prominent role in production and distribution decisions in a post-apartheid South Africa. Thus middle class' non-racial depictions in advertising were virtually assured to become the norm.

To liberal critics of apartheid this discourse would not have been identifiable as racial stereotyping. It would instead have been welcomed or applauded as a harbinger of the final demise of apartheid, the foretaste of a 'non-racial', 'democratic' society. However, if considered from the point of view of a theoretically-informed analysis of advertising (which as outlined above has been shared a diversity of critics), some circumspection is required. Is it not in fact the non-pejorative, non-racial, non-ethnic depictions of the late 1980s and 1990s that should be regarded as the most insidious? From such a point of view, it would appear that advertising, no longer bridled to apartheid, would at last be able to freely render its ministry upon the working classes or proletariat in the manner it has been known to do in the advanced industrial democracies. Consumption in the form of an apparently universal middle class lifestyle would become inscribed as the alternative to what Williams ([1960] 1980:170-195), perhaps over-idealistically, had considered within the realms of possibility ... if there could have been 'true democracy'. The benefits of a more rational system of decision-making (than possible while the means
of production and distribution remained in minority hands) might have resulted in an unpolluted environment, better health services and education, and so on.

However, a certain inconsistency begins to suggest itself if these observations from theoretically-informed advertising criticism are considered in terms of the South African context. In terms of the stage of development of South Africa's industrial base, either in the short or medium term, whatever growing affluence has existed amongst native black South Africans has only been available to a relatively small minority. For at least the next two generations it is difficult to see how further economic growth on the basis of the present industrial substructure could possibly permit any appreciable growth in the number of black 'middle class' job holders or ‘consumers’ relative to those who will remain not privileged enough to qualify as consumers in the First World sense of the term. For most blacks the portrayed petty bourgeois lifestyles would have operated as a powerful stimulus for something worth striving for, as labourers or more likely in a hapless and pathetic 'informal sector' (see Wilkinson and Webster, 1985; Rudman, 1988; Innes, 1987). Thus, monopoly capital in South Africa may have succeeded in shedding an apartheid system which so tellingly revealed the inequities of its social order in black and white for all the world' to see (Saul, 1986). If previously outlawed organisations in due course become integrated in a new ruling oligarchy the exercise of hegemony in South Africa will be put on a more sound footing.

Finally, while drawing attention to the economic limitations to consumption in a South African context, one also should not lose sight of the fact that the development of apartheid was a complexly motivated process that cannot be explained entirely in materialist terms. Vectors of materialism have also undoubtedly been powerful determinants in the integration and the disintegration of the formal apartheid system. But a narrow interpretation of historical material conditions does not fully account for the structural underpinning of apartheid racial stereotypes. Possibly a more important underpinning factor of apartheid, and the articulation of its racial stereotypes, might have been the colonial/post-colonial situation resulting in an unsettled dichotomy of nationhood between South Africans of indigenous African ancestry and South Africans
of European ancestry. This matter will be explored more fully in Chapter 3. In this respect, ethnic stereotyping might be regarded as a manifestation of colonial racist ideology, attuned to the purpose of identifying and justifying 'borders' that in geographical terms did not always fully exist but which apartheid logic sought to create and maintain.
Chapter 3

Political Economy of Racial Stereotyping in South Africa

This chapter outlines some important aspects of the post-World War II South African political economy which have underpinned the ensuing forms of racial stereotyping. The fact that South Africa is by no means a fully-fledged consumer or market democracy\textsuperscript{73} is a key factor in this study. Some attention will be given to how South Africa was interlocked with broader international relations during the post-World War II period. South Africa’s position as a peripheral western state in the context of the Cold War was conducive to the apartheid project. It is possible to distinguish different eras in terms of various Nationalist Party administrations of the government. Apartheid reached its zenith in the premiership of HF. Verwoerd (1958-66), thereafter beginning a gradual process of dissolution. During these eras the apartheid system might be seen to have undergone several modifications or involuntary stages of experimentation. By the end of the 1970s, underlying organic processes for change in South Africa had gathered greater momentum. In particular, problems related to black urbanisation, labour legislation, permanent residential rights for blacks, and the right to own property in areas deemed to have been part of ‘white’ South Africa could no longer be sidestepped. Some important groundwork to address these problems had already been started by the government during the B.J. Vorster era, but only came into fruition during in the P.W. Botha era. The institution of an official policy of reform came at the beginning of the 1980s with a growing rapprochement between the business community and the government under P.W. Botha. However, after the 1983 tricameral parliamentary dispensation was strongly

\textsuperscript{73} In his address in Caracas, with reference to the political relationship between Venezuela and the USA, Bill Clinton reiterated that, “market democracies can deliver” (CNN, 14 October 1997). It is debatable how much difference actually exists between ‘consumer’ or ‘market’ democracy. The term ‘market democracy’ seems more able to circumvent some of the pejorative baggage (Williams [1960] 1980:187) attached to the term consumer. The terms are underpinned by what are claimed to be different approaches in the capitalist distribution of manufactured goods or services. Thus consumer democracy would be more consistent with a scenario where needs (or wants) are \textit{created} by advertising, subsequent to industry having fulfilled its productive capacity (Galbraith, 1958:131- 7). A market democracy orientation suggests that needs (or wants) have primacy with research first identifying these, and the production of appropriate goods and services following (Levitt 1986:142).
rejected by the excluded black majority, the business sector particularly English-dominated capital, distanced itself from the government. By the end of the 1980s South Africa’s location within the broader international context was becoming increasingly tenuous, partly as a result of the growing success of anti-apartheid organisations, and particularly because the strategic significance of this country was greatly diminished with the Cold War drawing to a close.

One of the most distinctive characteristic about the term ‘racial stereotyping’ as it has been applied in South Africa is that it has also tended to encompass what might be called ‘ethnic stereotyping’. (The nature of ethnic stereotyping in South Africa will be explained more fully in Chapter 4, where it is discussed with relation to the SABC-TV broadcasting dispensation.) This distinguishes South African racial stereotyping from the common sense understanding of racial stereotyping in the advanced industrial or market democracies, where its meaning has been limited to pejorative representations of blacks or other ethnic minorities. Racial stereotypes similar to the pejoratively-inclined depictions of minorities in the advanced industrial democracies, also occurred in some South African advertisements. However, the uncritical application of the term ‘racial stereotyping’ to describe certain of the ethnically sensitive practices in South African mass media, is not entirely unproblematic. During the reform period of the 1980s use of the term ‘racial stereotyping’ in South Africa might- implicitly have identified certain apartheid-related practices with a fundamentally different order of racial stereotyping that had occurred, or was still in some instances occurring, in the consumer democracies (or more lately market democracies) in the advanced industrial states.

Any study of racial stereotyping in South Africa needs to pay particular attention to the practice of applied ethnicity. In a situation where ethnicity is actually being enforced, it permeates all social practices. Its prevalence even in what might be supposed to be

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74 The new constitution of 1983 distinguished between ‘general affairs’, matters that were common to different racial groups, from ‘own affairs’, matters particular only to a certain racial group. The main features were the establishment of an executive presidency, two new parliamentary assemblies, the House of Representatives for coloureds and the House of Delegates for Indians. The existing whites-only House of Assembly was retained and the previous Senate became the President’s Council.
ideological, apparatuses such as broadcasting, must amount to more than merely an ideological practice. As in other African countries, colonialism (or more particularly also the process of industrialisation in South Africa), destroyed or eroded the material basis for the perpetuation of traditional cultures. In situations where large numbers of a pre-industrial population are being attracted to urban centres, and where their indigenous cultures have been detached from their originating productive bases, the intuitive or common sense formation of self-identity in the consciousness of these subjects is bound to be problematic. As a new urban-informed class culture begins to take shape, the normal course of events might be for ‘ethnic’ remnants from an old cultural formation to become residual in folklore. In First World contexts, state intervention has usually been directed at promoting the assimilation of diverse ethnic groups within an overriding national culture, as in the case of the United States in the 1920s (Ewen, 1976). As will be outlined in Chapter 4, the intentions of SABC-TV2/3 to address this problem in the 1980s were limited by contradictory apartheid objectives. Parameters for the regeneration of ethnicity were specifically designed in broadcasting policy so that political division of the indigenous population could be emphasised and perpetuated (Tomaselli RE et al, 1989:153-176).

Although racism was generally reformed in the West after World War II, it is contended that South Africa’s problematic location in a threatened international capitalist hegemonic order during the Cold War was also one of the key underlying factors preventing the state from adopting an assimilative course in relation to blacks until the late 1980s. It was principally this context that enabled Afrikaner governments to assert authority and (within some limitations) play out Afrikaner grievances and paranoia

75 The intention has not always been to necessarily extinguish ethnic identities, but rather to make them ascribe to an overriding national identity. This seems to be the case with Australian national policy of multi-culturalism (see Stratton & Ang, 1994) ‘Multi-culturalism’ in Australia seems to apply more easily if the ethnic minorities are immigrants (for example, from South East Asia), but is more problematically applicable in the case of the indigenous inhabitants or ‘Aboriginals’.

76 My conception of the South African ‘state’ in this thesis tends to be a somewhat broader one, consisting of an interplay between Afrikaner Nationalist governments, the local capitalist order, the enfranchised white population, the tenuous state of the indigenous African population, and the interlocking of this equation into the sphere of influence of the West during the Cold War.
resulting from earlier experiences of British imperialism. One of the results of this legacy for the indigenous black population was that ethnic remnants from their past form of existence (that had been interrupted by the arrival of European settlers and colonialism), came to be revitalised and nurtured by post-World War II Afrikaner-dominated government. These ethnic remnants were represented as defining cultural formations and became underpinned through the identification of ‘different nations’ or ‘own Bantustans’ and the creation of ‘homeland governments’.

Although the principle of ‘divide and rule’ on the basis of ethnic differences is not a South African invention, after World War II South Africa was unique as a capitalist economy and Westernised English-speaking country where the discourse of ethnic separation was being applied on the larger part of the population with such visible political motivations. As Docherty (1981:40) observed:

> The development of capitalism in South Africa has been characterised by the continued use of institutionalised violence both in order to secure a cheap labour supply (and thus extract a vast amount- of surplus value) and to keep the source of that labour supply economically and politically powerless. In no sense therefore has hegemony, which implies class-rule by consent of the subordinated classes, been obtained over the entire social formation. Where hegemony has been relatively successfully achieved is within the ideological unity of ‘the white population’.  

Racial stereotyping in the advanced industrial democracies has possibly worked to constrain the employment opportunities of immigrant minorities, or is an indication of residual racist sentiments at certain levels of the social formation (Hartmann & Husband, 1974). In South Africa, some of the practices that were termed ‘racial stereotyping’ during the period of apartheid were intended to perform a more central and complex purpose. This is not to say that blacks or ethnic minorities in the advanced industrial

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77 As was pointed out in Chapter 2, the Gramscian account of hegemony suggests that force might occasionally be resorted to (and to some extent this seems to have initially been the case during anti-Vietnam War protests in the USA, the 1968 revolts in France; or the securing of compliance with Western interests through the imposition of military juntas upon certain countries during the Cold War). However, it is probably fair to say that in the post-world War II consumer democracies, consent has generally been the norm beyond Gramsci’s conception. By ‘continued’ use of institutionalised violence’ the above quote suggests that force, in respect of blacks in South Africa, predominated over consent.
democracies have been fully integrated within the hegemony of the state, but as minorities their threat posed to the status quo has been very limited compared to the case of blacks in South Africa. If, as Docherty (1981) suggests, the black population fell outside the scope of hegemony, the ethnic variety of racial stereotyping (to be discussed below) must be seen more as an ancillary to the so-called repressive apparatuses than as simply ideological. Probably more akin to ‘institutionalised violence’, it might be located somewhere between the sphere of ideological practices and the repressive arm of the state. If not part of ‘the violence of the state’, ethnic racial stereotyping, communicated by means of an ethnic media dispensation, was closely related to it. Ethnic stereotyping might be seen as having belonged with other fundamentals of apartheid social engineering, such as influx control, forced removals, group areas, Bantu Education, the Bantustans, etc. In the 1980s, during the final phase of apartheid, media practices based on ethnic stereotyping became components of a system whereby the dominant culture of the ruling tricameral ethnic alliance, attempted and to some extent succeeded, in determining the shape and form of the subordinate cultures of the majority of the population by defining the different shades of ethnic consciousness amongst black South Africans. These stereotyping practices can be seen as aspects of a repressive apparatus because they were underpinned by the institutional machinery of the government. But in so far as affecting the way whites viewed and related to blacks, all South African racial stereotyping practices have operated in a more conventional ideological manner.

The research and theoretical works on racial stereotyping in the advanced industrial democracies, (that were mentioned in Chapter 1), have concentrated on minority groups.

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78 Part of the design of the Bantu Education Act of 1953 was to discourage the emergence of any broad South Africanism, especially through the form of socialisation of black school children that was occurring at some schools run by missionaries. In pursuit of this policy the government took over all existing African schools and brought these under the direct control of the Department of Native Affairs. The immediate management of these schools was placed in the hands of Bantu school boards. At Bantu schools, vernacular instruction was enforced in the junior level, both English and Afrikaans became compulsory subjects in the higher primary, and a differential syllabus, geared to the Governments conception of African education needs, was laid down. In earlier years, H.F. Verwoerd had publicly and explicitly referred to Bantu Education as education for a menial place in society, but according to Davenport (1991), Bantu Education did not diverge from ‘white’ education to the extent that the original policy had required (Stadler, 1987:178; Davenport 1991:338,389-70).
and are not readily applicable to the South African context.\textsuperscript{79} The situation of blacks in the South African social formation differed obviously from that of blacks in the advanced industrial democracies. Though blacks in South Africa were darker-skinned they were not in reality a racial minority or labour migrants from former colonies. While the Bantustan project still remained intact, Afrikaner Nationalist ideology indeed tried to entertain such an analogy. But broader international credibility about the justice of such a dispensation was never likely to be attained (see Tomaselli, Louw, Tomaselli, 1990). The government failed to acquire stakes in international information systems (as for example revealed by the Muldergate\textsuperscript{80} information scandal), which might have provided the necessary advantage in agenda-setting and discursive manipulation.\textsuperscript{81}

An overview of the South African situation during the post-World War II period presents a contrasting picture with what was occurring in the more advanced industrial states. While the countries of Western Europe in particular were undergoing economic growth and becoming more democratic, South Africa was also experiencing economic growth, but the new government in power was instituting apartheid and entrenching an undemocratic state. Whereas in the advanced industrial democracies increased

\textsuperscript{79} The works of Edward Said and Franz Fanon mentioned in Chapter 1 are not aimed at examining the experience of prejudice by minorities. These two works are useful inspiration for explicating certain specific problems, but also not entirely applicable to the South African case.

\textsuperscript{80} The Muldergate Information Scandal took its name from Dr CAP. Mulder who was minister in charge of the Department of Information. The Prime Minister, B.J. Vorster had obtained authority from parliament to establish a Security Services Special Account in 1959, which was to be subject to official audit only to the extent that the Minister of Finance determined, in consultation with the Prime Minister. In November 1975, the Auditor-General noticed irregularities about the manner in which the Department of Information’s secret funds were being invested, and he drew B.J. Vorster’s attention to the matter in June 1977. Rumours about these irregularities affected the succession to the premiership, for Dr CAP. Mulder was the main contender for the post in his capacity as leader of the Nationalist Party in the Transvaal. When the National Party caucus met on 27 September, a successful challenge for the premiership was mounted by the then Minister of Defence, P.W. Botha. Aspects of the Information Scandal included the setting up of a pro-National Party English language newspaper in South Africa, \textit{The Citizen}. There had also been plans to buy foreign newspapers or magazines for the purposes of promoting the dissemination of favourably-inclined information about South Africa. But some of the fuller implications of ‘Muldergate’ (hence the matter of ‘scandal’) have remained concealed (see Rees & Day, 1980; Davenport, 1991:394-6).

\textsuperscript{81} During the Cold War, ideological intervention on this level remained the exclusive prerogative of the major advanced industrial states in the West, and possibly some of their closest allies. After the Cold War even Britain came under increasing diplomatic pressure from the USA and military pressure from the Irish Republican Army (IRA), to come to a settlement (previously the Irish nationalists had been projected as nothing more than terrorists)
consumption has been ‘necessary’ for stabilisation, money circulation, and realisation of surplus value, it seems that one of the ‘functions’ apartheid came to serve was the facilitation of a system of local resource rationing necessary to South Africa’s peripheral capitalism. After 1948, apartheid deflected pressures for a broader extension of consumption that democracy might rapidly have converged onto capital. This breathing space provided for further capital accumulation and concentration. There is no reason why capitalism could not have gradually eroded apartheid (e.g. Lipton, 1986), while apartheid was at the same time ‘functional’ to capitalism by ensuring that such erosion of material deprivation remained a gradual enough process with which capital could cope (without sacrificing any of its own growth momentum). Thus, contrary to Lipton (1986), ‘dysfunctionality’ at some particular points of the system need not necessarily mean that apartheid was ‘dysfunctional’ to the overall long term, as well as many other immediate interests of South African capitalism during the post-World War II period.

After 1948, South African capitalism was only required to acquiesce to the cost of a relatively limited extension of ‘consumer democracy’ to encompass poor whites (mostly Afrikaners) -- through a tax burden and implicit socialism in the further development of the parastatals which provided for job opportunities and Afrikaner upliftment. To facilitate the development of the parastatals and state created jobs, a diversion of local and international loan capital from the private sector to the public sector persisted till about 1979 (Natrass 1981:83-4). Thus after World War II, the political importance of consumer democracy and therefore advertising came to function quite normally in respect of all whites.

Within the ideological unity of this group, achievement of hegemony\(^\text{82}\) was relatively successful. In the later phase (1980s onwards), when the advanced industrial democracies had developed into their post-industrial stages as stable consumer democracies, South Africa was becoming more democratic by reforming apartheid. But by this stage reform

\(^{82}\) In the post World War II consumer democracy sense of the term hegemony, where the force component very rarely if ever is resorted to.
had to take place within a context of a downturn in economic growth and a dramatic upswing in population numbers. It would therefore seem that an opportunity had irretrievably been lost. The ideal moment for general social responsibility in South African state planning, and for the extension of consumer democracy, would have been in the immediate post-World War II period: by expanding on the limited black social mobility which had taken place during the war, while economic growth to finance it was steady and while demographically the population numbers that had to be reached were far fewer. Post-World War II political developments for South African blacks however followed a different course. Democracy continued to be denied to most of the population, and so did its attendant palliative of consumption continue to be available only on a limited basis. Even worse, for blacks whatever improvements their status had acquired during World War II were being reversed:

Urban Africans -- the workers, businessmen, and professional men and women, who are the pride of our people in the stubborn and victorious march towards modernisation and progress -- are to be treated as outcasts ... Every vestige of rights and opportunities will be ruthlessly destroyed (Mandela, 1965:70-71).

During the period of rapid economic growth in the 1960s and 1970s organic intellectuals of South African capital, such as O’Dowd (1964), had predicted that economic growth and a rising standard of living would in due course displace apartheid. O’Dowd’s work thus implicitly conceded a material factor to have been dominant in apartheid. But by the early 1980s, after it had been realised that rapid growth in the economy had clearly

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83 Through a denial of what the left in the advanced industrial West has argued to be a qualified remedy of consumption and ineffectual political representation (Williams, [1960] 1980:187).

84 In response to demands by manufacturing interests for labour, the United Party had relaxed influx controls during World War II (Stadler, 1987:91). This had led to a growth in the economic and strategic contribution of blacks.

85 O’Dowd’s analysis was basically an extension of Rostow (1950), *The Stages of Economic Growth*, to the South African example of capitalist economies. In its assessment of capitalist economies, Rostow’s (1971) work seems to avoid any elaboration on the important example of South African capitalism. Rostow’s main concern seems to have been to vindicate capitalist forms of socio-economic development in the face of the Marxist-Leninist critique of capitalism during the Cold War. Possibly, the South African example would have undermined Rostow’s arguments or given cause for embarrassment in view of the West’s dependence at that stage on large quantities of apartheid produced South African gold.
faltered, some captains of industry were claiming that “the cake has not been big enough” to be shared round. The business sector was now canvassing for ‘deregulation’ as a means of overcoming economic stagnation. By implication, too much regulation was seen as being the main cause of stagnation (Wassenaar, 1977). The growing view amongst the business sector during the second half of the 1980s was that if market forces were released from what were being perceived primarily as apartheid-related restrictions, a form of economic growth consistent with increased employment and an extension of consumption would occur more or less naturally in a free market situation. (This was supposed likely to take place if the government could have been persuaded to make the requisite reforms for a lifting of economic and cultural sanctions and renewed investment from abroad.) But this sudden faith in reduced government regulation was inspired more by monetarist economic theories dominant in Britain and the United States during the 1980s (see Innes, 1987), than specifically from any analysis of the South African context. In the West, these theories were integral to the ideological front underpinning the Reagan/Thatcher policies of sustaining or fostering economic growth, while switching from state-sponsored social or consumption-related programmes in favour of increased military spending in preparation for the final stage of confrontation in the Cold War.

Deregulation was being linked by some members of the business community (e.g. Green & Lascaris, 1988) to the putative virtues of a ‘Third World Destiny’, practised in some apparently successful and ‘non-racist’ capitalist countries such as Brazil. A dual economy was envisaged, comprising an official sector and an unofficial sector euphemistically considered to be ‘more vibrant’. The Brazilian example of a ‘multi-

86 Zac de Beer as quoted in Saul (1985:5); see also, ‘Interview: Gavin Relly, in Leadership vol. 4 1985 no. 3, pp’1-20.

87 Also, although this was not openly considered, the fact that South African monopoly capital had been able to concentrate its efforts in a program of corporate internationalisation of its own (Kaplan, 1983), instead of having to build up export-oriented local industries, no doubt contributed to the downturn in internal economic growth during the 1970s.

88 In the 1990s it became more widely revealed in international news media that death squads are able to operate with impunity in Brazil, killing mostly homeless street children of African ancestry; also, handicapped people trying to earn their living as informal vendors have been viciously clubbed by the police in that country. Hardly a scenario for post-apartheid South Africa to emulate.
racial’ society which allows for great contrasts between a few huge fortunes and dire poverty and political impotence for the majority, was considered particularly attractive as a model for future South African development. But ideas for the future continued to be confused and seemed to alternate between uncertain scenarios. As an incentive for rapid transition to black majority rule, the West from time to time suggested the possibility of a ‘Marshall Plan’ for a post-Apartheid South Africa. Arguably, some major assistance to make transition stable might have been owed to South Africa by the advanced industrial West whose post-World War II prosperity had been advanced through the importation of minerals from South Africa at price levels too low to have been possible from any form of labour organisation other than that provided by apartheid. But such arguments were misplaced, as in the case of South Africa nothing on the scale of a ‘Marshall Plan’ (which had provided the basis for the establishment of post-World War II consumer democracies in Europe), was ever likely to be forthcoming.

Firstly, in the case of post-World War II Europe, the Marshall Plan had been intended to reinforce the strategic interests of the West in general and extend economic interests of the United States in particular. Though South Africa was strategically important during the two world wars, and during the Cold War, it has seemed far less so in the 1990s. Secondly, in the case of South Africa, actually stabilising the country by transforming a population that to a considerable extent remained unurbanised with low levels of education, would in relative terms have required considerably more resources and time than had been necessary for ‘stabilisation’ of post-war Europe. The conditions of the South African context have differed considerably from those anywhere in the advanced industrial democracies during the post-World War II period. The key concepts of advertising criticism from advanced industrial countries no doubt do bear some relevance to South Africa, because Third World societies are forced to attempt their long term


90 By the end of 1994 it became clear that the US was only going to offer to South Africa USD 500 million over a period of three years, a sum dubbed by President Mandela as ‘peanuts’. Unlike most of his Afrikaner predecessors (but perhaps a little like Jan Smuts), Mandela has been forged with stature and international standing by his past history, and this permits him to be more forthright about his opinions.
development within a larger framework imposed by those countries. However, it is not easy to discern which period of earlier development, from which advanced industrial country, most readily resembles post-World War II South Africa. No exact parallel is really possible. In some respects, what has been claimed to have been the role played by consumer advertising in capital’s integration of diverse immigrant cultures in the United States during the 1920s (Ewen, 1976), might be more relevant to the South African case than post-World War II stabilisation in Europe. A parallel between the United States in the 1920s and the South African reform context derives from mainly two factors. Firstly, like the South African industrial base and local monopoly capitalism, the substructure and monopoly capitalism of the United States were at an earlier stage of development in the 1920s. Secondly, some parallel might exist in the problem of forging a middle class consumer society in the United States out of ethnically diverse and potentially explosive mixture of immigrant working classes, and South Africa’s need to overcome post-colonial, Third World problems further exacerbated by apartheid’s applied social disintegration.

**Post Colonial or Crypto Colonial?**

Those subjected to media racial stereotyping in South Africa were the indigenous inhabitants who constituted the bulk of the labour force. They vastly outnumbered the dominant white group who were mainly descendants of settlers from the European countries that today form part of the metropole centres or advanced industrial democracies. On the one hand, if compared to the United States, Canada, or Australia, South Africa can be seen as a case of imperfect colonisation. Unlike South Africa, these former colonies developed into advanced industrial democracies with populations which are, in principle at least, fully integrated. Under the strain of massive European immigration, their indigenous inhabitants had by the end of the 19th Century, generally ceased to be of any political relevance, or economically important as labour. In this respect it must perhaps be conceded that in spite of the ravages of conquest, oppression and apartheid, 19th Century British liberalism and South Africa’s Christian missionary tradition generally operated much more effectively in protecting ‘aboriginals’ than in
other former colonies where the activities of white settlers were less carefully monitored (e.g., see Rutherford 1988). The future will be in a better position to judge whether capitalist utilisation of labour from the indigenous population in South Africa should be seen as destructive or constructive for them. Exploitative as this might have been, integration into the colonial economy nevertheless empowered the indigenous population by socialising them into industrial society and by making them indispensable components of the economic system, even during the later period when apartheid was supposed to exclude them.

The fact that the descendants of pre-colonial indigenous inhabitants strongly characterised the nation (in spite of apartheid) has made South Africa unique amongst Western industrial societies in the New World. South Africa’s African character has been preserved, while at the same time a more general transformation to petty bourgeois consumer society still remains incomplete. Although the colonial bourgeoisie may have wished for such a transformation to come about, they were for the most part only able to conceptualise this in terms of a state excluding the indigenous African population. For example, Jan Smuts was an Afrikaner visionary and Boer\textsuperscript{91} general who having fought against Britain during the Boer War (1899-1902), later played a key part in the conception of the British ‘Commonwealth’ as an entity within which a future South Africa would play a prominent First World role (Hancock and Van der Poel, 1966-1973). But not unlike his fellow imperialist bourgeoisie peers\textsuperscript{92}, Smuts was never able to identify indigenous black populations as full citizens of South Africa or of other Commonwealth states (ibid.). After 1948, this inconsistency matured into fully-fledged apartheid. While the international world order had become considerably transformed in the post-World War II period, Afrikaner-Nationalist governments nonetheless desperately

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\textsuperscript{91} The Boers were a community of agrarian-based Afrikaners, ‘boer’ being a Dutch \textit{(or Afrikaans)} word for ‘farmer’. This community had its origins in the 17th century settlement and establishment of a replenishment station at the Cape of Good Hope by the Dutch East India Company. The Boers variously resisted the coming British rule, \textit{most} prominently by embarking upon a major evacuation, the so called ‘Great Trek’ after the 1834 War with the Xhosas, and subsequently taking up arms at the end of the 19th century to resist British incorporation of the Boer Republics of Transvaal and the Orange Free State (Marquard, 1959:9-16).

\textsuperscript{92} See various references in Smuts’s correspondence and speeches (Hancock and Van der Pool, 1956-1973)
clung to the idea that South Africa was a fully integrated member of the West or First World.  

Another way of looking at South Africa under apartheid, is from the perspective of the rest of Africa. From this point of view South Africa could to some extent have been conceived as an African country still embraced by earlier patterns of colonialism. Though to all intents and purposes recognised internationally as an independent state, from an African perspective, and possibly according to principles sometimes applied in the critical analysis of international imperialism, South Africa retained certain aspects of ‘imperfect decolonisation’. In the early part of the 20th Century, in the more industrialised part of the world, Britain had developed various mechanisms through which government in the colonies mostly devolved to the settlers. Consistent with their many purposes, the constitutional forms that evolved might be seen to have also concealed the imperialistic expansion of the then dominant superpower. Among terms that have been used are ‘representative government’, or ‘responsible government’, or ‘dominion status’, and eventually even ‘full independence’ in the post-World War II period. The earlier of these forms mostly delegated control of important vested interests to a class of local ‘owners’ or managers, who were emigrants or descendants from the colonising power. Initially the interior ruling classes or local managers were almost exclusively of European origin. In the post-World War II period, a more sophisticated variation of this comprador mechanism came to operate, through the bourgeois classes of independent African states, and even the ruling classes of the more revolutionary independent states. These classes eventually found it necessary to come to terms with

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93 Another facet of the Smuts inheritance Afrikaner Nationalists were determined to keep was of course Namibia. Captured by Smuts during World War I at the insistence of Britain (against the wishes of most of the other Boer War Afrikaner generals who had to be forcibly suppressed for the military operation to proceed from South Africa). Smuts had been promised the incorporation of (South West Africa) Namibia into South Africa but this option came to be strongly opposed by the president of the United States, Woodrow Wilson. Smuts and his British friends found a compromise by devising what, was termed a “C” Class mandate or ‘Sacred Trust’ (under the League of Nations) which implied potential future annexation (see Hancock and Van der Poole, 1965-1973).

94 From experience in colonial relations, this course of action was also intended to defuse pressures for autonomy by the colonial capitalist base. In the case of the American colony such pressures could not be properly addressed and had led to conflict and the severing of links with the dominant capitalism of the mother country.
Western institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the mostly United States based transnational companies that regulate the relationship between the Third World and the advanced industrial states led by the United States (Rodney, 1972; Hayter, 1971).

This account is not meant to diminish the significance of local historical events whereby former colonies gained independence. What is suggested is that whether or not always overtly apparent, a considerable amount of residual influence has continued to reside in the former colonial powers or their successor, the United States. Such external influences must be borne in mind when considering the ‘political economies’ of the more peripheral Western states. At the same time, it must also be taken into account that South Africa has had some unique features in ‘post’ colonial African history. The South African economy did not revolve entirely around the export of primary goods. By African standards, local capitalism had achieved an exceptionally high level of secondary industrialisation. A considerable service sector had also developed.

**Larger Contextual Dynamics**

Some key shifts in the South African political economy had occurred as early as the 1920s. South Africa’s indigenous black population already formed an integral part of the industrial labour force. Thus, in terms of structural dynamics some limited upward mobility, with all the commensurate effects this might have had on economic, social and government structures, was already called for (see Johnstone, 1970). Without losing sight of the fact that the search is for a more accurate analysis of apartheid rather than for apologies, it must be considered that such a course of action by capitalists in South Africa would have been managers were almost exclusively of European origin. In the post-World War II period, a more sophisticated variation of this comprador mechanism came to operate, through the bourgeois classes of independent African states, and even the ruling classes of the more revolutionary independent states. These classes eventually found it necessary to come to terms with Western institutions such as the International
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the 1960s and 1970s. This means that contradictory influences upon South Africa continued to radiate from this powerful source even after World War II.

The atrocities committed by Germany during World War II, were a manifestation of racist thinking taken to the full inhumanity of its logical conclusion. The shock of German atrocities brought about considerable self-introspection within the developing entity of an. ‘international community of nations’. The League of Nations, which had been founded at the end of the World War I, was replaced by the United Nations at the end of World War II. The principle of non-racism was enshrined in the founding charter of the United Nations. There was a major retreat from most of the more obvious facets of racist dogma in the manner that the Western democracies conducted their relations. The Soviet Union, whose socialist ideology already outlawed racism, came to have an advantage in relating to the Third World. Somewhat erroneously, the Russians appeared (especially to black Africans), as the only European power never to have been actively involved in the colonial exploitation of non-whites, even prior to the Soviet Union\textsuperscript{95}. In the post-World War II period, the Soviet Union systematically championed the rights and interests of Third World countries in order to gain diplomatic advantage over the West (see Gromyko, 1989). This complex situation in the international context had profound implications upon white-ruled South Africa. On the one hand the West’s diplomatic interests \textit{vis-à-vis} Africa and the rest of the Third World placed it under pressure to compete with the Soviet Union for influence, making it pretty clear that South Africa had to be left out on a limb. Yet at the same time, while the Cold War prevailed, it was also important to Western strategic thinking that a ‘dependable pro-Western government’ should be in power in Pretoria.

The complexity of vested interests has strongly affected how influence or international hegemony\textsuperscript{96} of metropole capitalist centres is exercised. Such influence is difficult to

\textsuperscript{95} The Russians had subjected the Chinese and other Asian nations, but this was not a widely recognised tact by African countries in the post-world War II period.

\textsuperscript{96} Gills (1993) discusses the concept of hegemony with regard to how it has been shown to extend to international relations.
determine as it is more often characterised by inaction or omission rather than action, tacit understandings and unspoken agreements rather than open declarations. As much as through international conferences and signed agreements and treaties, decisive politics have also a habit of transpiring more silently through a coalescence of interests of divergent groups. Such perhaps was the case in South Africa in the post-World War II period leading up to 1948. In this respect, it is interesting to compare Jan Smuts’s decisive play in 1939, when he took South Africa into the conflict on the side of Britain, with a rather less-spirited display against the Afrikaner Nationalists in the period leading up to 1948 and afterwards (see Hancock, 1968). In a new context the options and possibilities for further creative politics were limited to a player encumbered by the baggage of a previous era, Smuts knew that the time had come for him to opt out (see Hancock and Van der Poole 1996-1973). For divergent reasons, the Afrikaner Nationalist victory at the polls and the subsequent severance of the British link became a matter consistent with dominant interests (except those of black South Africans). English-speaking white South Africans had long identified with the British connection. Afrikaner Nationalists hankered after a republic, while for the metropolitan power it became increasingly apparent that the South African interests would constitute acute embarrassment and political liability in a new non-racial British Commonwealth.

These interests represented themselves in a new tacit coalition between capitalists and the white working classes in South Africa. Though capitalists may not have appreciated the finer points of apartheid with the same insipid alacrity and enthusiasm of the Afrikaner ideologues, in practice they condoned apartheid because it was convenient. After World War II, the political infrastructure of English-dominated capital found itself culturally too close to the official position of its allies in the West, and therefore would have been vulnerable to political pressure from them. Neither side could have wanted such a scenario to come to pass. The security of western interests in South Africa might have

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97 The resort to the term ‘conspiracy theory’ misses the point because in all likelihood ‘conspiracy’, in terms of how it is normally understood, only very rarely needs to be resorted to as an urgent corrective measure. Although covert, such instances if and when they do occur might be considered in terms of Clausewitz’s dictum of war as an extension of diplomacy by other means, as small acts of a secret and undeclared war.
been jeopardised as external political pressure would have found itself more duty-bound in terms of the post-World War II value system (or according to its public performance on the international political arena) to exert itself upon any undemocratic regime controlled by fellow liberals. On the other hand, the more insular Afrikaner political tradition could both position itself and be positioned as the, forthright or unreasonable ‘White Tribe of Africa’ (Harrison, 1981; Tomaselli et al 1986), sturdy Voortrekker opponents of ‘international communist conspiracy’. Thus, the post-World War II storm of African decolonisation, was successfully ridden out by opting for a Republic and severing ties with the British. The options involved were few, and the events that transpired could not have been unpredictable to western strategies in the game of international power politics.

After their defeat and subjection to capitalism in the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), Afrikaner Nationalists had variously been effectively prevented from accession to state power. But according to popular mythology, Afrikaner Nationalists are held to have successfully mobilised themselves through their various organisations or institutions to seize control of the state by 1948. The efficacy of such Afrikaner mobilisation has been illuminatingly researched (see O’Meara, 1983; Dunbar Moodie, 1975). But given the initially marginal nature of the 1948 Afrikaner Nationalist victory, one wonders if the myth of Afrikaner cultural and economic mobilisation would have gained the same historical prominence had Afrikaners finally failed to secure the government, as might well have been the case had this not actually been in the broader post-World War II interests of the West. There is some evidence of financial assistance given to an Afrikaner Nationalist publishing group by mining capital during this period (Potter, 1975:70). ‘Assistance’, consisting of more covert measures such as ‘political inaction’ is difficult to measure, but the possible magnitude of its implications should not be underestimated.98 Subsequently, the English fraction of South African capital and

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98 Examples might possibly be Jan Smuts’ tardiness in failing to update the delineation of electoral constituencies prior to the 1948 election; or the ‘deaf ear’ he turned to E.G. Malherbe’s attempt facilitate Havenga’s defection to the United Party early after 1948 (see Hancock, 1968).
English-speaking South Africans generally performed as an opposition of limited effect in organisations such as the United Party or Progressive Party.

During the 1970s and 1980s there was much South African academic debate regarding the relationship between capitalism and race or racism, whether apartheid was ‘functional’ or ‘dysfunctional’ to capitalism. This equation underpinned the question as to whether or not capital was structurally complicit with apartheid. But given, the intensity with which the West was consumed in perceiving the Soviet Union and communism as a threat during the post-World War II/Cold War era, the correct formulation should be what would have been more dysfunctional to capitalism: apartheid or the instability of rapid progression to black majority rule, during an era when South Africa might have become aligned with the then Soviet-orchestrated Third World. This conception goes some way in explaining the theoretical anomaly whereby the English fraction of capital (that has always dominated the capital sector) appeared to be politically impotent from 1948 until the latter half of the 1980s. Given the choice between black majority rule and Afrikaner rule, at an earlier stage ‘at least, Afrikaner rule being more familiar and predictable, was therefore deemed to be a lesser of two evils. An alternative approach to ‘separate development’, as apartheid came to be called, would have been the early adoption of a single South Africa national strategy designed to at least gradually merge all South Africans into a single nation. As is well known, the opposite procedure was followed. But even so, the history shows that Afrikaner Nationalist governments were not in the long run completely free to operate in whatever way they might have wished. One might say that, their relative autonomy was in final instances limited by the requirements of the capitalist substructure.

On the level of international diplomacy, governments of the metropolitan industrial centres increasingly criticised the racial policies of the South African ruling classes after the end of World War II, as was incumbent on them to do, in terms of the United Nations Charter. A rather visible signal of this discourse of disapproval, was Harold Macmillan’s

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99 In her introduction, Bozolli (1981) outlines the apartheid debate in South African historiography. See also Lipton (1986)
'Winds of Change' speech, to the Cape Parliament in February 1960. This speech was apparently meant to serve notice to South Africa (and to black African states), that her racial policies were not acceptable to the West, and that if a choice had to be made between the friendship of two hundred million blacks and four million whites, there would be no question about how Britain would choose (Marquard, 1969:24). Up until the death of Hendrik Verwoerd in 1966, South African governments responded to criticism by insisting upon another principle of the United Nations Charter, that of non-interference in another state’s internal affairs. But later, the crumbling of such resistance gave birth to the early stages of political reform. Intervention in the Angolan Civil War during the B.J. Vorster era (see below) was an important turning point. This event affected the international standing of South Africa in a complex manner: a certain matrix consisting of a new sovereignty, insularity, and whatever claims to ‘innocence’ that might temporarily have accrued through the 1961 ‘rebirth’ as a republic were forfeited. With this new republic, Afrikanerdom had also implicitly freed itself from the imperialism it had been subjected to by the Boer War. However, with intervention in Angola, B.J. Vorster had joined South Africa in a pact with the imperialism of the United States (see Johnson, 1977:133-163). Subsequent to Angola, Afrikaner governments became much more susceptible to international criticism. A country that had so visibly intervened in the affairs of another, could hardly continue to insist that other countries should allow it to solve its own problems.

In practical terms, opposition to apartheid in the earlier years had only assumed the form of sports boycotts and a United Nations resolution banning the sale of arms. Some Western nations indirectly violated the arms ban by providing technological assistance to the South African government, so that self-sufficiency in the manufacture of armaments could be achieved (Klare, 1979; Rogers, 1979).100 While the struggle between Nato and the Warsaw Pact prevailed, South African governments were often able to find some leeway in a deeply divided world of conflicting interests. But by the 1980s, when reform

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100 One thing which ‘the West’ appears to have assured with the various contenders for the South African government was the dismantling of the more dangerous elements of the South African arsenal in time for the first democratic elections in 1994.
in South Africa had relatively speaking gathered a fair degree of momentum, one finds that the previously mainly vocal opposition from the West had also finally gathered itself into practical measures. Economic sanctions such as dis-investment, trade embargoes of South African products, the calling in of loans and a refusal to provide new loans, the cancellation of landing rights to South African Airways by some countries, put the economic squeeze on South Africa.

A chain of interrelated causes can be identified for this seemingly contradictory rapid deterioration of South Africa’s international standing in the face of reform. Possibly images of unrest and its forceful suppression in the 1980s (which were at first widely publicised in the relatively more open society of the P.W. Botha era), helped to toughen public opinion in the West against South Africa (Tomaselli RE, 1989). During its early period, while still brimming over with self-confidence, the Botha government had agreed to participate in the popular American *Nightline* television programme in a special series on South Africa. It is possible that South Africa’s department of foreign affairs naively believed that *Nightline* offered an opportunity to put ‘South Africa’s case’ persuasively across to Americans (See Tomaselli KG, 1986b). However, the motives behind the American network’s interest were probably more calculating: to make South Africa an issue in domestic American politics. In an unequal bout that followed with the vastly more complex and powerful ideological discourse of the centre of advanced capitalism itself the fledgling but relatively puny South African attempt at selling the virtues of reformist apartheid was more than smothered in the first few minutes. As far as positively influencing American audiences, the experiment was an unmitigated disaster from beginning to end. In the final episode of the series, P.W. Botha himself was interviewed and came across in a rather poor light. Reminiscent of the techniques used to give Richard Nixon negative connotations in the Kennedy/Nixon debates (McGinnis, 1969), camera positioning and lighting were calculated to make P.W. Botha appear quite ominous, while rhetorically he was cornered into reinforcing every negative stereotype American viewers might have held about Afrikaner nationalism.

Another cause adding to the intensification of international pressure upon the South African state in the face of reform, might have been the very fact that even with the limited concessions of the New
Constitution of 1984, and implementation of the new Tricameral Parliament, Pretoria itself had at last been forced to concede in front of the gaze of the whole world that the legitimacy of its previous constitutional status in fact had been in question. The price paid for a betterment in international relations in the earlier phase of the P.W. Botha government, when the black population remained relatively tranquil, proved to be restrictive when a new phase of unrest broke out. Unlike Sharpeville in 1960, or the Soweto uprising of 1976, the wave of internal resistance in the 1980s could no longer be smothered by resort to force. And, unlike previous eras, international pressures against South Africa in the latter half of the 1980s assumed a more threatening form. On this occasion, diplomatic censure came also from various advanced industrial democracies in Western Europe that Pretoria had always considered allies. A semi-withdrawal of international recognition from this quarter cast doubt on the very legitimacy of the South African state, as constituted, and must have been a severe psychological blow for Pretoria.

In terms of the denouement that took place in the Cold War, these developments might be taken as an indication that post-World War II history was now marching against the apartheid state: the West no longer found its interests in South Africa important enough to make continued co-operation with Afrikaner Nationalism necessary. Along with the many diverse factors that had contributed to the survival of apartheid, the East/West confrontation during the Cold War undoubtedly played the most vital role. Repressive regimes in the peripheries of Western capitalism, from South America to South Africa, were typical in underdeveloped countries in the uneasy post-World War II/Cold War period. In terms of the perceived ‘communist threat’, continued existence of regimes even more repressive and deplorable than South Africa did not only have to be tolerated by Liberal opinion in the advanced industrial democracies, but many such right-wing regimes were openly or covertly sponsored by these countries. But with the advent of the reformist Gorbachev and his policies of ‘perestroika’ and ‘glasnost’, the Soviet ‘enemy’ began to crumble and disintegrate, seemingly by itself without even a shot being fired. An uncertain concept of the ‘New World Order’ came into prominence. However the indications were not entirely promising about the ‘New World Order’. While the United States appeared to be concerned about the spread of nuclear weapons technology or chemical weapons’, there was no indication that advanced industrial states intended to bring about any curtailment to their own manufacture and marketing of armaments.\footnote{Jan Smuts (1918), in his “League of Nations: a practical suggestion”, had at the end of World War I proposed a cessation in the production of weapons of war (alongside with the elimination of essentially criminal activities interlocking into the world economy, such as trade in narcotics and international slave trafficking).} What did seem likely in the ‘New World Order’ was that conflict between the West and
the old Soviet Union through proxy wars would no longer prevail. Consequently, Pretoria’s doggedly unwavering dependability had become a dispensable factor in future calculations. Reduced too was the much-touted importance of South Africa’s strategic minerals, because rather than wishing to deprive the West of such materials, Gorbachev’s new Soviet Union urgently needed Investment’ or ‘aid’ from the West for which these previously scarce strategic minerals and other resources were gladly being exchanged.

Broadly, one may conclude that during the post-World War II/Cold War period the more hawkish and confrontational the constellation of Western governments towards the Soviet Union, the less pressure South African governments experienced to reform apartheid. In periods when more liberal politics prevailed in the West, when either democrats were in power in the United States or Labour in Britain, South Africa found itself more prominently on the defensive.

**Formative Eras of South African Racial Stereotyping**

The South African state variously adjusted to change in the key factors affecting it during the post-World War II period. As outlined above, these factors involved a complex interplay between South Africa’s relationship with the centre of gravity to which Western nations aligned themselves. This interplay orchestrated itself around South Africa’s links with its main trading partners, and around the all important political relationship with the United States as superpower and dominant Western state. But added to this interplay must be the key dynamic of South Africa’s own internal political economy, which includes the phases of political dissent of the mainly black South African working classes. If viewed, over a period of time, one can see that these adjustments to change have made some cultural forms once taken for granted in respect of black/white relations, seem increasingly less tenable. But there is no clear cut-off point between the termination of one stage and the beginning of another: earlier forms may sometimes continue alongside the newer emergent forms that at times may be wrestling with forms currently dominant. In this respect, Williams’s (1977:121-7) concept of dominant, emergent and residual cultural forms, is very useful. In the case of South Africa, the different stages to
which cultural forms are attached must be seen to have occurred in a more rapid sequence than in the English social formation (from where Williams derived his concepts, from a process which he called “The Long Revolution”).

It is useful for analytical purposes to further sketch some of the highlights of the political history of apartheid and related eras in the social formation. These eras seem to structurally underpin some of the key categories within which racial stereotypes directed at the indigenous African population have been generated. Although cultural forms, and especially stereotypes, are most typical during the eras when their structural underpinning is what one might call the dominant order, such forms can be resilient to change, often continuing to be structurally reinforced under changed conditions, and thus active beyond what might appear to be their particular eras (Perkins, 1979:151). Some difficulty exists in ascertaining the beginning of ‘reform’ in South Africa, because reform as structural organic change was already occurring at various levels before it became official policy (see Hindson, 1987).

It will not escape the notice of future historians that the three consecutive leaders preceding F.W. de Klerk, on whom the effective power of the South African government rested, left office under precipitous circumstances. To anyone who lived through this period it will also be apparent that social changes were not phased and gradual between changes in leadership, but accelerated initially after each new leader re-appointed the hierarchy of his administration. During this period South Africa was a unique member of the Western world. The ruling government gradually had to face the opposition of not only the Eastern Bloc and Third World countries, but also that of its own strategic allies. The South African situation became not too dissimilar to that of some South American countries during their less democratic stages. However, South Africa, as a former British colony and largely English-speaking country, was far more sensitively linked to the media networks and therefore the consciousness of the advanced Western democracies.

Verwoerdian Apartheid Era (1958-1966), Ethnic Stereotyping
The birth of ethnic stereotyping is to be found in the post-1948 period. In terms of unofficial or ‘naturally occurring’ reform this period was actually regressive. It saw reversal of any limited gains black South Africans might have made in establishing a petty bourgeois class during World War II. Segregation was further developed, culminating in Verwoerd’s theorisation of apartheid doctrine around the Bantustan concept. Ethnic stereotyping is intrinsically related to the Bantustan policy.

This period coincides with mass relocations of blacks in terms of apartheid town planning and the geographic and population incorporation required to make the Bantustans a reality. It was the period when influx controls were being strictly enforced on the flow of black labour to industry. This was the time when the purposes of Bantu Education Act of 1953 were being extended. It was the period of strict apartheid. But it was also a period during which apartheid had definite direction and consistency and was considered a feasible project by a large proportion of South Africans of European ancestry. Afrikaners and many English speakers alike were persuaded by Verwoerd’s republican rhetoric, which consisted of a talent for combining a forthright and simplistic analysis with unusual clarity of thought and presentation. Popular white support for apartheid was demonstrated in a referendum amongst whites on the issue of a Republic in October 1960. The removal of the British Crown as constitutional head-of-state was imperative if the apartheid project was to proceed unimpeded. This strategy was perhaps not entirely satisfactory, as at the London Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference held in March 1961, opposition by mostly Third World member countries also forced Verwoerd to withdraw South Africa’s application for continued Commonwealth membership (Davenport, 1991:360-1; Menzies, 1969: 198-210).

The implementation of Verwoerd’s apartheid plans had required the calling of a state of emergency to counter internal resistance from the black population. In March 1960, 69 African pass law protesters had been shot dead at Sharpeville, triggering off a major flight of foreign capital and focusing world attention on the policies which had directly

102 See earlier a footnote in this chapter.
led to this tragedy. Verwoerd however managed a dramatic recovery, based on tight fiscal policies and the importation of white skilled labour. The period was subsequently characterised by one of the highest rates of economic growth in the Western world.

In the larger context, a period of relative complacency followed after internal black resistance had been crushed. This was assisted by the fact that at that stage South Africa still enjoyed some measure of reassurance internationally, through the support of a few powerful world leaders of the old school, For instance, the prime minister of Australia, Robert Menzies (1969:198-210) was supportive, and the President of France, Charles de Gaulle supplied Mirage jets, and other military hardware in exchange for gold bullion. However, by 1963, the United States under J.F. Kennedy was already seriously antagonised through a race-related diplomatic incident where Verwoerd had insisted that black American sailors serving on visiting American warships should not be allowed shore passes because they would be required to observe petty apartheid restrictions. Verwoerd probably more than any South African leader before or since, actually believed and acted as if South Africa was an independent sovereign state almost on par with its former World War II allies.103 By arbitrarily creating borders and placing groups within those boundaries and then aspiring to give them ‘independence’, Verwoerd’s Bantustan policy was most audacious in the fact that it mimicked earlier actions of the imperialist superpowers. But what was lacking was sufficient influence at the centre of the capitalist system and in the United Nations Security Council to legitimise this aggression. What is rather difficult to explain is the fact that despite the notorious nature of the apartheid he was building, Verwoerd actually commanded a certain degree of awe and respect internationally as a major world leader while he was still alive. On the 6th of September 1966, Verwoerd was stabbed to death in parliament at the point when he was about to make an important policy speech (Davenport, 199 1:367). Although apartheid continued for decades after Verwoerd, his death was followed by the slow degeneration of the

103 In the post-apartheid era, Nelson Mandela has occasionally embarked on an independent foreign policy by acting in contradiction to the policies of the United States. In particular, his recent intercession (Commonwealth Conference, October 1997) on behalf of the Libyan government over Lockerby. While the Middle East remains an arena of unresolved conflict to the West, Mandela was attempting to precipitate an unwelcome extension of the post-Cold War process of undemonising states or groups previously labelled as terrorist’.
system he had not so much invented but rather able to fashion with his idiosyncratic interpretation of the circumstances he had found on hand.

**B.J. Vorster Era (1966-1978), Pejorative Racial Stereotyping**

In principle, pejorative racial stereotyping is inconsistent with the strict practice of theoretical apartheid. It is a catalyst for affirmative action and a precursor to assimilation. When applied to media practices, strict apartheid would require all representations to the coloniser ailing classes (whites) to totally exclude (or structure the absence”), of colonised indigenous people. This absence should include the black working classes, even if in actual fact they continue to ‘minister to the labour needs’ of the coloniser. It is probable that one of the less openly voiced reasons why the National Party (while still under Verwoerdian control) had resisted pressure from English-dominated capital for the introduction of television, was precisely, an understanding that, even with separate channels for each group, perfect exclusion would never have been possible. Under Vorster, who was more inclined to appease English-speaking capitalists than Verwoerd, the state was at last allowed to take the plunge and enter the television era with a limited service aimed at whites. But rather than allow any degree of free enterprise participation, which English-dominated capital might have preferred, all television had to be under the firm control of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC).

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104 In an important Statement of Policy speech in parliament on 9 March 1960, Verwoerd had deliberated at some length on the government’s position regarding television (Pelzer, 1955:346-353). Here Verwoerd did not entirely rule out the eventual introduction of television, but presented a treatise of problems: costs, technological, social etc. that would need to be overcome. At one point even comparing television to poison gas or the atom bomb:

> In this case the attitude should be adopted that when a new discovery entails a danger, one should rather be careful and refrain from introducing that discovery until such time as necessary knowledge is available on how the harmful consequences of that modern discovery can be warded off (ibid.: 348)

The closest Verwoerd comes in this speech to acknowledging the existence of blacks, is when he talks about the problem of ‘the fair treatment of the various language groups’, something which he thought would not happen if a commercial service (or one not under the proper control) was established (ibid.: 354). It might be concluded from this speech, that given the resources available, it was realised that this project would be difficult, very expensive, and that it would take time to achieve.
Although little else with immediate effect was done in the post-1966 era to overturn the major tenets of Verwoerdian apartheid, there was a gradual ‘running out of steam’ in the planning for the long term application of the system. At the same time, important structural changes within the economy began to occur, (such as the entrenchment of monopoly capitalist interests in industrial production), which made the positive realisation of Verwoerdian apartheid seem less likely.

Cautious of reactionary right-wing elements still within his own political party, B.J. Vorster cultivated a public impression that he did not tolerate even the least bit of interference or advice from the business community. In practice, however, Vorster was more of a pragmatist in his dealings with private industry. It is not surprising therefore that Vorster enjoyed a relatively positive portrayal from most the English press. Related to structural changes within the economy, the Wiehahn and Riekert Commissions of Inquiry were instituted.\(^{105}\) The implementation of the recommendations of the Wiehahn and Riekert reports in the P.W. Botha era represented a major departure from a Verwoerdian blueprint that had envisaged economic growth exclusively on the basis of the importation of skilled white labour migrants, rather than the training of blacks. The Vorster era must therefore be seen as the formative period of official reform.

Vorster also launched an outward-looking policy and made some immediate minor reforms to petty apartheid as part of his bid to improve relations with black African states. At one point he even made a ‘give us six months’ speech (to reform). However, intervention in the Angolan war at the behest of Henry Kissinger (Johnson, 1977:133-163) put an untimely end to South African ‘détente’. Previously, the apartheid state had consistently preached to other African states the principle of non-interference in each others’ internal affairs, but this doctrine was all to readily abandoned when called upon to participate in the Cold War calculations of the West.

\(^{105}\) The Wiehahn and Riekert Commissions were discussed previously in the Introduction to this thesis.
The Vorster regime was one of severe repression in the form of press censorship, bannings, house arrests, and intimidation of activists, refusal of visas to foreign journalists and churchmen and their frequent deportations, Vorster ruled with an iron fist, with the aid of a shadowy organisation called the ‘Bureau of State Security’ (BOSS), headed by a General Van den Bergh. The Soweto riots\textsuperscript{106} which broke out in 1976, resulted in further isolation of South Africa. Television was finally introduced the same year (1976), broadcasting alternatively in English and Afrikaans. A popular Black Consciousness activist, Steve Biko\textsuperscript{107}, was killed while in detention, leading to further erosion of whatever remained of South Africa’s international standing after the debacle of the Angolan war. Widespread corruption under Vorster culminated in the so-called Muldergate scandal (Rees and Day, 1980). Fallout from this debacle led to the collapse of the then government.

\textbf{P.W. Botha Era (1978-1989), Ethnic & Non-Ethnic Black Middle Class}

\textbf{Stereotyping}

\textsuperscript{106} An illegal student march on 15 June 1976 was stopped by police bullets with loss of life. The occasion of the march was a rejection by pupils of the compulsory use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in black Transvaal schools. However, most studies into the causes of these riots have concluded that the language issue was only a part of a wider background of frustrations. One important cause might have been perceptions that Bantu Education was an inferior system, which at a time of rising unemployment produced strong resentment. Also, the coming of ‘independence’ for the Transkei had brought a sudden realisation that citizens of the independent states would lose their South African citizenship rights and freedom of access to the job market in the Republic, even if they had never lived in a homeland (see Davenport, 1991:389-10).

\textsuperscript{107} Steve Biko was born in King Williamstown in 1945 and attended the Catholic Mission school at Marianhill, near Durban, and then studied medicine at Natal University before devoting himself fully to politics. Biko was a key figure in the emergence of Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa. This movement seems to have been inspired by Black Theology and Black power from the united States, and from the writings of Frantz Fanon in Algeria. Biko wanted blacks, to psychologically emancipate themselves from generations of conditioning as the underdog. This meant a rejection of tutelage from white liberals and their assumption that blacks wanted to become incorporated in a social system dominated by white cultural values. Black Consciousness may have had some limited correspondences with apartheid Government policy, in as far as multi-racialism with whites was expressly rejected. But there does appear to have been a genuine commitment to multi-racialism with other black groups, such as Coloureds and Indians (Stadler, 1987:172 Davenport 1991:388).
In the post-Muldergate era\textsuperscript{108} (1979ff), power shifted to the Cape caucus of the National Party, considered to be more liberal than Transvaal Nationalists, who at that stage were supposed to be more conservatively inclined (e.g., Mann, 1986; Lipton, 1986; Charney 1983). The Bureau of State Security was disbanded or redesigned, as were the more overt trappings of a police state. Reform officially began with relaxation in the control of information -- books of authors critical of petty-apartheid were unbanned, and suddenly appeared prominently displayed on the shelves of bookshops. Film censorship was also somewhat relaxed as the Directorate of publications freed itself from Dutch Reform Church influence and developed more systematic class-based controls (Tomaselli KG, 1988). These media adjustments can be interpreted as material manifestations of a changing ideological agenda. Meanings and practices previously excluded from hegemony were now being included. It is not unfair to infer that the dominant ideological currents were now operating to gently prime the white electorate for the planned ‘New Constitution’ which was to include people of colour -- a dramatic change for many whites still conditioned to think in diametrically opposite terms by Verwoerdian ideology.

For whites, at least, the early Botha regime was relatively a more liberal and open society than they had previously enjoyed. It was probably intended that South Africa could be governed in a more subtle manner, by reliance on sophisticated forms of ideological control, rather, than the crude repressive machinery of the state and routine censorship favoured by B.J. Vorster. The 1980s were thus an era when communications media acquired particular importance politically (Tomaselli KG \textit{et al}, 1987; Tomaselli RE \textit{et al}, 1989). During this era, the government attempted a shift to what might be called ideological apparatuses rather than repressive apparatuses as its primary means of social control. Had this move succeeded, South Africa could have acquired the trappings of an advanced industrial democracy rather than those of repressive developing nations at the peripheries of Western influence.

\textsuperscript{108} See discussion of Muldergate Information scandal in an earlier footnote in this chapter.
The P.W. Botha government had come into office with the wind firmly in its sails. A dramatic rise in the price of gold, temporarily achieving an almost incredible level of over US $850 an ounce (see Davenport, 1991:409) during the initial stages of the Afghanistan crisis, contributed to a short-lived economic boom of 1980-81. Ronald Reagan, who replaced Jimmy Carter as President of the United States, was more friendly towards South Africa. Reagan re-armed the West in the wake of the Russian intervention in Afghanistan and restored a deep-chill in East-West relations, reminiscent of the Cold War in the fifties and sixties. In this new scenario of international tension, South Africa seemed a strategically important ally again. Thus, under an umbrella of what came to be called ‘constructive engagement’ a certain degree of overt United States support for South Africa followed during Reagan’s first term of office. This windfall to the South African government was further augmented by the emergence of the staunchly ‘pro-South Africa’ Margaret Thatcher, who replaced the relatively left-inclined British Labour Government under James Callahan. In South Africa this confident period under Botha was also characterised by extremely good relations between the government and the local business sector, whose support, expertise, and advice were openly enlisted at various specially convened ‘conferences’ (Mann, 1986).

The recommendations of the Wiehahn (unions) and Riekert (urbanisation) Commissions of Inquiry were implemented. TV2/3 began to broadcast in January 1982 (see Chapter 4). But after 1982, South Africa moved into a deep recession. The negative effects of this recession on the black ‘working classes combined with the exclusion of blacks from the new constitutional dispensation, led to the emergence of a formidable oppositional force organised under the banner of the United Democratic Front (UDF). A long spate of uncontrollable township unrest followed. This eventually led to the declaration of a state of emergency -- something which the government had seemed to want to avoid as much as possible. Return to increased repression of earlier eras represented a failure of P.W. Botha’s initiatives of reform. In the eyes of Western governments, P.W. Botha had been expected to replace crude methods previously employed for maintaining the compliance of the indigenous African population during less sophisticated eras, not to renew such methods.
P.W. Botha’s new constitutional dispensation included a transformation of the South African system of government from the Westminster model inherited from Britain to an executive presidency. This gave P.W. Botha the power to grant reforms to blacks far beyond anything South African Prime ministers depending on white electoral support, were capable of in the past. One can surmise, that P.W. Botha’s propulsion into this position was quietly being orchestrated by the Western powers, especially Britain (see Barber et al, 1982). Policy-makers in Britain, other parts of Western Europe, and the United States, were well aware of how effectively the apparent veto of settler electorates could function as a stumbling block to reform in their favoured dependencies. P.W. Botha had fallen into the trap of assuming powers which he then could not bring himself to use to destroy apartheid. Such ‘radical’ adjustment to the nature of the South African state proved too foreign to P.W. Botha’s formative experiences as a politician. P.W. Botha proved to be quite unyielding to the wishes of South African capital as well as to international pressure, in some respects closer to Verwoerd than to Vorster. This became apparent in the so called ‘Rubicon’ speeches\(^{109}\), which apparently were anti-climactic to the expectations of overseas and local capitalists, whose business interests the crisis appeared to place under stress (see Allison-Broomhead et al 1986). After a short illness, and what might be seen as a putsch amongst the South African ruling oligarchy, PW. Botha was succeeded by a more ‘conciliatory’ F.W. de Klerk. F.W. de Klerk appeared to be more studied and sensitive to the political requirements of the new moment, able to interpellate himself beyond only the discourses of local politics, a man more cut out to implement the post-Cold War peripheral conflict cessation scenario in South Africa, and therefore also more acceptable to the West.

**Rethinking Reform and Apartheid**

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\(^{109}\) The Rubicon speeches belong to a circus of international media events with which the National Party government became embroiled after its participation in the Nightline series mentioned above.
Being such familiar terms to most South Africans, ‘reform’ and its object ‘apartheid’ might seem to have been quite self-explanatory. But before one can critically analyse developments in South African television advertising in relation to the context of reform, one must first have a ‘good sense’ rather than a common sense’ understanding of these terms. Only then does the inherently contradictory nature of reform in South Africa become apparent: In actual fact, reform is always a somewhat nebulous concept because it encompasses an interplay between theoretical principles, ideological factors, and material developments. Precisely because political reform invariably includes an ideological component, its meaning (both in theory and in practical applications) should never be expected to be straightforward.

In the case of ‘apartheid’, here too the ease and frequency with which the term was used to describe South African conditions, tended to conceal a complexity far from self-explanatory When the term apartheid is examined critically it too is found to encompass some intricate relations. The most important feature of apartheid in the analysis of racial stereotyping was undoubtedly the manner in which it stratified the indigenous African population into different groups and reintegrated them in terms of racial characteristics that identified each group with a certain Bantustan. But apartheid was not simply an irrational policy premised on racial differences. It was also designed to enforce extreme racial inequality, thereby facilitating the exploitation of mainly black labour by the white owners of the means of production. However, despite the importance of such broad economic elements in the structural underpinnings of apartheid-related phenomena such as ethnic racial stereotyping, it is also necessary to consider another factor in order to understand the situation more fully. Apartheid did also include a psychological or irrational factor and this fact made it difficult for any Afrikaner Nationalist government to design or abide by any clear blueprint for reform. Any blueprint necessitating progressive introduction of genuine reforms would have threatened what Afrikaner Nationalists at the time saw as their dominant position within white hegemony. It is quite important to notice such irrational aspects that limited the scope of reform. This question will be further touched upon in the following chapter in the course of outlining the conservation of ‘ethnic black middle class stereotyping’ in SABC-TV commercials during the P.W. Botha reform era.

This less rational element of apartheid and its reform in fact radiated from insecurity common to settler societies in many parts of the world. It cannot strictly speaking be racial in origin. It stems from an inherent fear or guilt regarding legitimacy of ‘title to the land’. In countries where the indigenous peoples have not been completely
exterminated\textsuperscript{110} (or are in the process of being so), this tension manifests itself in their continuous subjugation. For example, strong taboos have continued to exist in the United States with regard to the media portrayal of indigenous Americans. The case of chief Johnny Big Tree, is edifying here. This chief of an indigenous American tribe had been the original model for the bust minted on the Indian nickel coin. When in the mid-1960s chief Johnny Big Tree was found to be still living, it was decided by the editor of \textit{Esquire} magazine and its advertising agency to feature him on the front cover of an edition carrying an article on indigenous Americans (Lois, 1979:246-7). The fact that this particular edition achieved the worst sales in the magazine’s history, was at that time attributed to an aversion to publicity about indigenous Americans by its target market, middle-income Americans. George Lois, one of America’s most famous advertising art directors, admits that in creating this cover, he overlooked a prevailing discourse which (at the time) required a ‘structured absence’, as far as indigenous Americans were concerned. Racism practiced against black minorities in the United States and in Britain is of a different order and obviously \textit{does not} include this motive, whereas the discreet oppression of indigenous Americans in the United States and in Canada, certainly does. The position of indigenous Australians or aboriginals (Rutherford, 1988) has been quite similar to that of indigenous Americans. It is difficult to sustain a view that this sort of oppression is merely informed by racism. Apartheid to some degree also combined this element in addition to its more closely observed racist and labour exploitation elements. In a colonial situation, ‘racism’ masks the unredressed colonial crimes against humanity perpetrated by the original Western colonising nations and their settlers. In the type of segregation practiced against blacks in the United States this has obviously never been a key issue, because their negro slave ancestors possessed no better title to the new land than their invading white settler masters.

\textsuperscript{110} The term ‘extermination’ refers mainly to the intentional or unintentional destruction of the means of subsistence of indigenous people, and the failure to integrate them into any new form of economic organization. An example of ‘extermination’ might be seen in the slaughter of buffalo herds organised by the United States government with the intention of destroying the means of subsistence of indigenous Americans.
Problems of guilt mid fear within the colonial psyche, particularly fear in the case of South Africa, account for the often so-called ‘schizophrenic’ or contradictory behaviour of the state in dismantling apartheid. National Party politicians, especially in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, could not have manipulated the ‘swart gevaar’ (black danger) card so effectively, had the capacity to do so not already been inherent in the situation. ‘Swart gevaar’ was really a misnomer for the danger of the indigenous inhabitants that had been proletarianised by capitalism, and who in this colonial instance happened to be black. These implications become clearer when considered in relation to H.F. Verwoerd’s repeated claim: “this is our country, we have no where else to go”. Verwoerd and P.W. Botha made a similar mistake of thinking that they could overestimate the importance of the Afrikaner nation at the expense of the dynamism and momentum of economic forces. There were several occasions during the deepening crisis of the P.W. Botha era, when steps towards national reconciliation, requiring the abandonment of key apartheid components, seem to have been impeded by this very insecurity. This may have been the underlying reason why P.W. Botha’s ill-fated Rubicon speeches failed to satisfy international opinion (see Allison-Broomhead et al, 1986). The international community; especially Europe, were simply expecting too much from some quarters of their colonial offspring in South Africa. In the de Klerk era, when major reforms to apartheid at last seemed in the offing, General Olusegun Obasanjo, an eminent visitor to South Africa from Nigeria, seems to have been conscious of this endemic insecurity when he tried to conciliate and reassure white South Africans with the following statement: “Africa is your home and have no where else to go and it is also our home and we have no where you else to go...” (SABC-TV Newscast July 1990).

Reform: Between Material Conditions and Political Responses

Reform was by no means unique to the final stages of South African apartheid. It crops up at various stages in the political history of many countries. In the context of the industrial revolution and the struggle for political democracy in England, Edmund Burke had claimed:

Reform is not change in the substance or in the primary modification of the object, but a direct application of a remedy to the grievance complained of (quoted in Williams, 1958:27).

The usual course for conservative opinion to follow, when forced to introduce reforms, is not to resist them altogether, but to avoid schemes of wholesale innovation or radical reconstruction. Reforms in South Africa were perhaps being conceded with some similarity to this pattern. Indeed, P.W. Botha was very stubborn and hesitant in conceding reforms under pressure. P.W. Botha had been instituted as head of a state whose integrity (as he saw it, according to his interpellation), was now being challenged by the call for major change in ‘substance and primary modification’. The South African state was firmly in the orbit of Western culture, and administered by people who shared similar
values to the major Western countries. It also was perhaps slightly unfounded for critics from those fundamentally conservative states to have expected the application of reform here to have been discursively different from the application of reform there. The implication (possibly to some extent true) was that South Africa was in fact some sort of autonomous Western colony, different of course from the dependency of many African states, but with limitations to its sovereignty nonetheless.

The intention or application of ‘reform’ as a ‘political discourse’ should not be taken to mean anything more than its literal meaning: retaining the original with varying degrees of alteration to its shape (see Allison Broomhead et al, 1986). In practice, ‘reform’ becomes a political relationship to underlying structural processes. But it would be untenable for analytical purposes, to consider South African ‘reform’ simply as a one-sided ‘political discourse’ of ‘the ruling National Party’ without paying due attention to an interplay between structural processes and political responses to them. According to the interpretation of O’Dowd (1964), reform would have come about almost naturally in South Africa, through structural change from a South African ‘long revolution’ of sorts, in an era of sustained economic growth. This is not to say that had there been sufficient economic growth, the issue of national dichotomy between a settler state and the tentative state of the indigenous African population would have disappeared as a problem that sooner or later needed to be addressed and possibly resolved. Due to disproportionate population growth relative to economic growth, the pace of naturally occurring or organic reform turned out to have been much slower than expected, and by the 1980s, some sort of ‘quick fix’ was required. Structural problems within the order of the political economy and its related social formation had developed into what was termed an ‘organic crisis’ (Saul, 1986), with the danger of spontaneous change in the form of an uncontrollable violent revolution becoming a distinct possibility. As was pointed out above, it was no longer politically possible to correct this organic crisis within local capitalism by resorting to further repression, as might have been the case in earlier eras.

From the professed point of view of the English-speaking white middle classes, it had generally been hoped that ‘reform’ ideally should be a process of transforming South
Africa from apartheid into a Western-style capitalist ‘multi-racial’ or ‘non racial’ democracy. This was the ideological packaging of reform which the white middle classes had liked to play ball with for as long as possible: it was a ball that would only go through the goal posts tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow. In fact, the economic underpinnings to make this possible did not exist. On the other hand, the more radical left-wing scenario of massive wealth redistribution and nationalisation of certain key capitalist assets, (such as the wording of the Freedom Charter\textsuperscript{111} could have been taken to imply), was equally unrealistic within the context of dominant international economic relations. Ultimately, any black majority-ruled South Africa would have had to depend on trade, foreign investment, loans and aid from the West, in order to achieve economic growth.

If apartheid was an economic structure based on racial inequality in which class was determining, by replacing exploitation on the basis of race with exploitation entirely on the basis of class, it might in theory have seemed possible to achieve a type of reform acceptable to the West. But without some degree of wealth redistribution, or very rapid wealth creation, the removal of formal apartheid legislation would have exposed an even more dramatic class division. Without a vibrant and growing economy, the practical side of reform, black upliftment, would have placed an apartheid government electorally in a difficult position. It would have been necessary to lower the standard of living of working class and petty bourgeois whites. During the 1980s and 1990s a progressive lowering of the standard of living of whites did in fact occur, as a result of rising black wages and a reduction of the various channels of state patronage to whites. By then, however, the political repercussions of this change were apparently buffered by a structural shift in the social formation resulting from a larger proportion of the National Party electorate, having become more middle class, and thus less affected (see Charney, 1983). Also

\textsuperscript{111} The \textit{Freedom Charter} had been drafted at an ANC organised popular ‘Congress of the People’ held on 26 and 27 June 1955, at Kliptown, south of Johannesburg. This charter affirmed that South Africa belonged to all its inhabitants, black and white. It demanded a non-racial democratic system of government, and that the law should equally protect all people before the courts. The \textit{Freedom Charter} was unequivocally a non-racial document that sought equal work opportunities and the removal of restrictions on domestic family life. It did however also call for land redistribution and the nationalisation of banks, mines and heavy industry (Davenport, 1991:349-50; Polley, 1988; Ramgobin & Tomaselli, 1991)
important, were the changes made to the constitution by P.W. Botha. These changes had in fact weakened the veto power previously held by the white electorate.

The main point is, however, that limiting the state’s system of discriminatory socialism, which provided its benefits preferentially to working class or poorer whites, could not divert sufficient funds to similarly raise the living standard of a far greater number of poor blacks. Sufficient economic growth and an increase in new job opportunities were a prerequisite to a satisfactory improvement in the standard of living of blacks. In the absence of growth in the economy, other avenues for restructuring had to be sought. Thus, after the mid-1980s, those who perhaps continue to fulfil the role of organic intellectuals for South African capitalist interests were no longer thinking so much in terms of O’Dowd (1964). Instead, a new rhetoric was being formulated around the putative virtues of a ‘Third World’ or Brazilian scenario: ‘deregulations’, ‘the informal sector’, ‘free enterprise’ and so on, became key terms (Green and Lascaris, 1988; Rudman, 1988). At the same time, the standard of living of some urban blacks was apparently being raised to form what was termed ‘black middle classes’. But give and take the differences and attrition between English-dominated capital, Afrikaner-dominated capital, and the Afrikaner-controlled government, the underlying economic structure based on a massively disproportionate distribution of wealth was to be left largely intact.

The severity of crises reform is supposed to manage can vary. While controlled reform can correct structural problems it seeks to overcome, as has been the case in the English social formation (O’Dowd, 1964; Williams, 1958), a danger also exists that reform itself might be overcome by the very structural processes it seeks to modify. I understand National Party reform policy during the P.W. Botha era to have been intended as a partial suppression of racial inequality which would not have fundamentally disturbed the underlying economic and class-race organisation. The P.W. Botha government had no doubt been all too aware of the obvious pitfalls in the implementation of reform, but had no clear blueprint on how to go about avoiding these. The objectives of the P.W. Botha
government’s reform agenda were more complicated than those of capital. While both the National Party government and the business community as a whole obviously wished to preserve the capitalist economic system, the government also wished to preserve an undiminished Afrikaner role in hegemony. Thus, reforms were not applied in any progressive manner, but in stops and starts. As Stephen Friedman pointed out:

Co-optation implies that the co-optees must be given real benefits at the expense of those excluded from the deal. For apartheid to offer selected black groups enough to recruit them as allies, it would have to change its nature so as to become an entirely different system. Such a system of non-racial elitism may be on the agenda of some of the more far sighted business planners -- but it has not been on the state’s agenda throughout the reform period nor is it now. Government planners believe, probably correctly, that even a system which extended political influence to a minority of blacks would fatally erode the white supremacy they seek to maintain (Friedman, 1987:82).

Thus, in spite of the ‘rapprochement’ after November 1979, when a pragmatic alliance had replaced the previous hostility between English-dominated fractions of capital and the Afrikaans fractions of capital and the government and the military and police arms (Mann, 1986; Graaf, 1988), government bureaucrats felt too insecure to fully implement even this limited reform scenario demanded by much of the corporate sector. The logical unfoldment of these limited reforms was threatening, because without division on the basis of race, the level of Afrikaner nationalist hegemony would become diminished. The implication was gradual black empowerment and Afrikaner disempowerment. It will be shown in the following chapter how this dilemma affected the design, the development, and the management of SABC television broadcasting during this period, as the SABC has been a finely-tuned interpreter of prevailing government policy.

Visible racial elements were also retained in the design of the Tricameral Parliament in 1983. According to the tricameral parliamentary structure, the National Party government attempted to co-opt Coloureds and Indians in an unequal alliance with the Afrikaner-dominated ruling National Party, which remained totally dominant in the white House of Assembly. Blacks continued to be marginalised within this essentially racist dispensation,
though ‘autonomous city council status was imposed on them in a desperate attempt by the National Party government at bureaucratic co-optation of some petty bourgeois blacks willing to act against the black working classes. By October 1984, the state faced a severe crisis of hegemony, from which it never fully recovered (Pinnock, 1991). The irresolvable problem of genuine political rights for blacks for which neither capital nor the government were at the time able to offer any practical solution, remained. Intense political pressure from white Afrikaner conservatives, coupled with a lack of economic growth, constrained even the National Party’s limited reform to such an extent, that by the end of 1988 it was thought by the liberal English-language press to be either dead or in ‘intensive care.

In the context of the grave internal and international crisis, South African business interests had opened up a new front from 1985 onwards with political initiatives which led to talks with the exiled African Nationalist Congress (ANC) at Lusaka and Dakar. This avenue, though bitterly disapproved by P.W. Botha, could not be prevented, as in the last instance the relative autonomy of Pretoria governments had been subject to the dominant sector of local capital, and the international hegemony exercised by the major Western powers. Another, possibly no less valid point of view, could interpret these events as the belated prevalence of a good sense for economic survival by the South African state.

The events which followed P.W. Botha’s reform programme show that the hegemony with which his government had hoped to maintain political control of reform, was not immune to the forces of dissent. As a result of his cautious and hesitant nature, P.W. Botha lost the confidence of the South African business community as well as that of Western governments. Through the imposition of sanctions, South Africa became increasingly isolated both diplomatically and economically. Processes were thus set in motion through which P.W. Botha, in spite of his reluctance, was inevitably forced to give up his position as president of South Africa (Saunders et al, 1992:487-490).
In any scenario where a unitary state was to be retained it seemed likely that once repressive apparatuses (legislative, administrative, police, military, and perhaps under certain circumstances, even broadcasting), of the then state were suspended, the forces released would in due course have resulted in the merging of such contrivances as ‘the four race groups’ or ‘different nations’ (‘whites’, blacks, coloureds and Indians), into a more coherent social formation. P.W. Botha had been unwilling to entertain any eventuality that might in future have entailed a relative impotence of Afrikaner interests. On the other hand, after the mid-1980s, the dominant sector of capital, having utilised the breathing space provided by apartheid to multiply its assets manifold, and then successfully divest internationally (Kaplan, 1983), seems to have felt confident enough to risk the turbulence of restructuring and was becoming less ambivalent in its rejection of the apartheid system.

In the F.W. de Klerk era (1989-1994), reform of racial inequality was intended to go further, while it was hoped that the underlying economic and class organisation would be preserved. For this to be fulfilled it was necessary to incorporate into the state the more moderate elements of previously exiled ANC elites and to gradually wean radicals away from some of the more idealistic clauses of the Freedom Charter. Radical groups had believed that a redistribution of wealth as called for by the Freedom Charter offered a viable means for raising the standard of living of blacks. This would have entailed the nationalisation of the mines, banks, heavy industry and redistribution of land.

But such a course would not only have affected big capital negatively. Movement away from the private sector would have undermined the value of the rand and further weakened the economy. Reform was in fact designed to prevent conditions progressing into a revolutionary situation where such an eventuality might come about (see Saul, 1986). This radical option might initially have appeared attractive to the socialistically-inclined, but the public sector in South Africa was already overgrown relative to developments which were taking place internationally. These elements of Marxist economic thinking which had gone into the writing of the Freedom Charter in 1955 were completely incongruous with international economic relations by the time of the end of
the Cold War and collapse of the Eastern Bloc. A South African economy based on socialism would have found few viable economic links, save perhaps with beleaguered Cuba or North Korea. Thus, by 1992 the *Freedom Charter*, which occasionally had loomed on the horizon almost like South African Magna Carta, seemed on its way to becoming a dead letter as far as its more radical provisions were concerned, barely two years after its popular revitalisation.

In 1991, F.W. de Klerk’s National Party still considered itself as the key instrument through which a new South Africa could be achieved. The National Party now claimed (unlike the Conservative Party), that it would not exclude anyone in terms of race or colour, provided they shared the same values.\(^{112}\) The intention of this new philosophy was no doubt to attract black membership and the support of as many black voters as possible prior to the 1994 first democratic elections, that by then had become inevitable. At the time, F.W. de Klerk still claimed that there was a growing black support for the National Party, and that quite likely he would be able to defeat the ANC at the polls. Although F.W. de Klerk seemed quite successful in convincing his white supporters, overseas observers considered this position to be quite ludicrous. Opinion polls also indicated an overwhelming preference for the ANC amongst blacks.

\(^{112}\) Dawie De Villiers in SABC-TV1 Newscast, 18 May 1991.
Chapter 4

Categories of South African Racial Stereotyping in Relation to Broadcasting Design

Television was introduced in South Africa towards the end of the B.J. Vorster era in 1976. However, the new television dispensation was based on the *Meyer Commission Report* 1971. The principles enshrined in this report had not progressed very far beyond the type thinking current in the 1960s. With the introduction of TV2/3 in 1982, the reach of television was extended to cater specifically for blacks. What is of key importance here, is that in spite of the fact that the P.W. Botha administration was supposed to be ‘reformist’, these new stations were stringently ethnic-based. It was thus ensured that forms of racial stereotyping associated with previous states of apartheid, would be perpetuated in advertising commercials intended for urban blacks. The extension of SABC-TV had at last made effective ethnic television programming feasible. Even though the Bantustan policy had lost much of its credibility since the days of H.F. Verwoerd, Afrikaner bureaucrats were not going to let an opportunity that potentially offered powerful cultural output in support of it go by. Not, only was no provision made for broadcasting to blacks in English on TV2/3, but commercials aimed at urban blacks were restricted from using the English language or colloquialisms on these ethnic channels.

Part of the explanation for the persistence of older apartheid forms on SABC-TV2/3, may lie in the fact that these stations broadcasting regionally on the same channel, were trying to reconcile conflicting imperatives. TV2/3 programmes were designed to socialise permanently urbanised black middle classes into an industrial economy, as Tomaselli RE, *et al* (1989:155-6) have pointed out. But at the same time TV2/3 also followed a logical unfolding of the recommendations of the *Meyer Commission Report* (1971) into the

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introduction of television. There is an obvious contradiction between the reaffirmation of ethnicity and a developing urbanised petty-bourgeois culture. The Meyer Commission had delivered its report at an earlier and more conservative period. Although P.J. Meyer (who headed the commission) was able to survive the transition from Verwoerd to the Vorster bureaucracy, his mindset was that of an arch-conservative from an earlier era. The fact that Meyer was chairman of the Broederbond as well as of the SABC, speaks for itself, and indicates his conservative views and the power he must have wielded (see Wilkins and Strydom, 1978; Crankshaw, Williams and Hayman, 1983). According to the Report:

The Commission recommended that the television services should respect, preserve, strengthen and enrich the social structure of the country’s various communities by reflecting and projecting the cultural assets of each community (Meyer, 1971:18).

This handy euphemism in the terminology of the report is supposed to conceal the true ideological need for a special channel for blacks. Not so much to urbanise them, but to keep their faces out of the white channel and also to ensure that ethnic differences would continue to be clearly inscribed between blacks.

One of the less openly voiced political reasons for over a decade and a half of reluctance to the introduction of television, may have been fear that it could potentially stir up restiveness amongst the ‘non-white population’. By placing the inferiority of their conditions of existence in sharp contrast, unstructured televised images of South African life might presumably have made blacks more conscious of their inequality compared with whites. Hachten and Giffard (1984:206-8) refer to government misgivings about ‘the potential psychological and political impact of television on urban blacks’. From the communications industry point of view, advertising agency\textsuperscript{115} chairman, Bob Rightford, also confirms that a greater degree of dissatisfaction amongst black people had been

\textsuperscript{115} Ogilvy & Mather, Rightfiord, Searle, Tripp and Makin.
forecast when television was first introduced, because of the exposure it would give to other people’s lifestyles.\footnote{116}

But given that Afrikaner bureaucracy was not unknown to play the fiddle while Rome burnt, a less important misgiving may have featured more prominently in government thinking. It was feared that television would produce a cultural imbalance in favour of English-speaking South Africa at the expense of Afrikaans culture (Potter, 1975). It has been claimed (Hachten and Giffard 1984:207) that Afrikaners in the 1950s were already condemning the influences of Anglo-American mass culture, with arguments similar to those voiced in the 1980s by advocates of the New World Information Order. The fact that a major English language newspaper publishing group had over the years, been ardently lobbying, for the introduction of television, was cause enough for suspicion and paranoia in Afrikaner Nationalist circles.\footnote{117} Obviously, therefore, the first most important thing for Afrikaner Nationalists was to ensure that a television service (if and when one was introduced) would be under the effective control of the government.

When television is introduced, it will not be placed in the hands of private companies, but will be controlled by the existing Broadcasting Corporation or by a similar special utility company.\footnote{118}

According to the prevailing fears of state officials, South African television would, initially at least, have relied heavily on television programs from English-speaking countries. However, in 1968, a readership survey compiled by Market Research Africa for the Newspaper Publishers Union, revealed that Afrikaans speakers constituted more than 30% of white readership of English language newspapers compared to only 6% in 1962 (Potter, 1975:86). Thus, if these research findings (emanating from a research


\footnote{117} HF Verwoerd, Statement of Policy in the House of Assembly, March 9, 1960 (Pelzer 1966:354) -

organisation of English-speaking capital) are taken at face value\textsuperscript{119}, it could be argued that the introduction of a bilingual television service offered the possibility of restoring a ‘cultural balance’ that was already swinging in favour of English-speaking media.

As pointed out above, from the Meyer Commission’s recommendations, television in South Africa, was intended to have a counter-assimilative role (certainly as far as blacks were concerned). By 1979, the All Media Products Survey (AMPS) revealed that 850,000 blacks, roughly 8% of the total adult black population, already viewed ‘white’ TV each week, and that blacks owned about 50,000 sets, even though only 15%-20% of all urban blacks had electricity at that stage.\textsuperscript{120} The introduction of ethnic programming was a necessity if the underlying principles of the Meyer recommendations were to be observed. ‘Black’ ethnic TV had therefore been in the pipeline all along but could not be introduced at the same time as ‘white’ TV mainly due to economic and logistic reasons. Also, assuming that a separate service for blacks was really necessary, could something so highly coveted (as television was by that stage), have possibly been given to blacks in the old South Africa at the same time as whites? It is thus an irony, that due to the mainly logistical reasons preventing the introduction of TV2/3 at the same time as TV1, South Africa’s pejorative racial stereotyping era in advertising commercials, with its eventual assimilative possibilities for the ‘minorities’ so portrayed, actually preceded the ethnic racial stereotyping era.

Ethnic stereotyping in television commercials came later, at a supposedly more reformist stage. Ethnic stereotyping, as it was practised in the 1980s, derived from whatever was left over from the earlier permanently exclusive strategy. It was based on the dubious premise that the ethnically stereotyped cultural groups were separate and different, but \textit{not} unequal. From the point of view of a capitalist political economy that is able to

\textsuperscript{119} The formulation of research designs and the interpretation of the findings of public opinion surveys is quite probably often related to ideological considerations. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that in addition to giving insight into planning, some surveys that are used to publicise indications of public opinion in percentage figures may be intended to precipitate the course of politics through the so-called ‘band wagon effect’.

\textsuperscript{120} See ‘Black is Beautiful’, \textit{Financial Mail}, October 5, 1979:61.
ascribe to consumer or market democracy principles, ethnic stereotyping must in fact be seen as potentially more regressive and repressive a cultural form than pejorative racial stereotyping. In terms of social dynamics, pejorative racial stereotyping sets up relationships of inequality with the laudatory white bourgeois depictions. A strong case can be made that by allowing easy comparisons of lifestyles, the appearance of pejorative racial stereotyping in the mass media might make the aggrieved groups more aware of their inferiority and thus cause them to seek equality. Thus, in terms of any progressive transformation of the social formation towards an advanced industrial consumer or market democracy stage (where bourgeois culture tends to become universalised in its petty bourgeois forms), ethnic stereotyping is bound to be more regressive than is generally the case with pejorative racial stereotyping. To ensure the permanence of an exclusively white state, H.F. Verwoerd devised his Bantustan policy to counter what he saw as the predictable consequences of the longer term integrating logic of the consumer market: an alternative to affirmative action. Also underlying Verwoerd’s reasoning, seems to have been the archaic belief that a colonist state can only be preserved through its exclusion of the colonised.\textsuperscript{121} A good example of blacks being accommodated in a TV1 commercial (and thereby possibly fuelling a societal dynamic for affirmative action), can be found in the 1978 \textit{Tongue Tip Test} commercial for \textit{Rama} margarine.\textsuperscript{122} On the other hand, the early \textit{Castle Lager} commercials (1978-82) were consistent to the principle of structured absences.\textsuperscript{123}

When it was introduced, ‘black’ TV bore many Verwoerdian characteristics, despite the fact that ideological consensus within the ruling National Party is generally believed to have shifted closer to the views of English-speaking capital after the conservative right wing had been ousted (see Mann, 1986; O’Meara, 1982; Charney, 1983). In addition to the entrenchment of conservative forms within the structures and practices of the SABC,

\textsuperscript{121} Refer to Verwoerd discussing his reservations about Mr. Macmillan’s ‘Winds of Change Speech’, Statement of Policy Speech in the House of Assembly, March 9, 1960 (Pelzer 1996:360-9)

\textsuperscript{122} See Tongue \textit{Tip Test} in Chapter 8 and Appendix 25, especially Shot 28.

\textsuperscript{123} See early Castle Lager historical commercials in Chapter 7 and Appendix IB.
and in the practices of the marketing professions (Chapter 6), reasons for continuity derived also from the characteristic general uncertainty at the highest levels of the P.W. Botha administration about the future direction of reformist apartheid. The new Constitution of 1984, had been designed to adapt the political establishment so that Coloureds and Indians could be given a stake in it. Yet no clear decision was made with regard to the position of blacks. This problem caused complex constitutional headaches vis-a-vis the position of urban blacks versus ‘homeland blacks’ in relation to the central state structures. In the light of this uncertainty, older forms of apartheid could not always be addressed. Older apartheid elements, especially within the government’s more direct ideological apparatuses, such as the SABC, were allowed to continue. It would appear that in the early 1980s, the Verwoerdian elements still enduring in broadcasting practices were being felt less immediately on monopoly capitalist interests than such remaining elements at the level of the productive base or substructure, particularly labour legislation and urbanisation policy. This is nowhere more apparent than in the relatively uncontested introduction of a universally ethnic television service (TV2/3) to mainly urban blacks in January 1982, a period which must be considered to be the springtime of the P.W. Botha reform era.

**Categories of South African Racial Stereotyping**

Having briefly outlined the character of institutionalised apartheid broadcasting practice, a closer examination needs to be made of each particular category of South African racial stereotyping in relation to the broadcasting of television commercials through the SABC. The transition of racial stereotyping in South Africa has basically been from ethnic to non-ethnic, or westernised black middle class depiction. Pejorative black depictions are probably more of a reformist than an apartheid form, but as will be further outlined

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124 The fact that a major population group such as the Zulus had not agreed to accept ‘independence’ for their homeland, Kwazulu, was a very serious spanner in the works, despite the supposed connivance at the time of Chief Buthelezi with the Afrikaner Nationalists (see Davenport, 1991:376-8).

125 Indeed further growth of the internal consumer market, now mostly dependent on blacks, was becoming increasingly important to the continued growth of capitalism. However it seems that during a hiatus, while capital was still in the process of fully coming to terms with this realisation, the Afrikaner government was free to implement its own earlier communications strategy in broadcasting policy.
below, due to the peculiarities of the South African situation in the 1980s, and the fact that the ethnic stations TV2/3 only began broadcasting in 1982, these preceded ethnic and ethnic middle class depiction in television advertisements. Thus, to repeat the category framework outlined in Chapter 1, classification of racial stereotyping in SABC-TV advertising commercials, might be made according to the following scheme: 126

i) Pejorative depictions of blacks as in early TV1 commercials, similar to the first world conceptions of racial stereotyping. As will be explained below this form featured less prominently in South Africa.

ii) Ethnic stereotypes on TV2/3, similar to the objectives of Radio Bantu (see Strydom, 1976).

iii) Ethnic black middle class stereotypes on TV2/3. A transitory form consistent with the P.W. Botha government’s conception of black middle

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126 Some critics (Tomaselli KG ed., 1989:100) have drawn attention to a somewhat ephemeral appearance of ‘Black Consciousness’ stereotypes in advertisements following the Soweto riots of 1975. For instance, ‘Mainstay Cane Spirits’ ran a campaign based on the theme ‘Catch the Spirit of Freedom’ which featured a black model. Also, in 1978 the J Walter Thompson (JWT) advertising agency ran a ‘house ad’ (advertisement with the express purpose of bringing in more business for the agency) with the rather provocative headline, “If you want to sell me anything white man you’d better know what you are talking about”. This nicely designed print advertisement was illustrated with the photograph of a pouting young black executive dressed in pin stripe suit and reclining in an executive chair. The assertive negritude of the black model is underpinned by his well-groomed but brushed out Afro hairstyle, and the fact that he has been photographed to look the reader straight in the eyes with a penetrating expression. In trying to fathom the significance of this spate of advertisements based on black consciousness themes, the following factors might be taken into consideration. As a stereotyping form, the images depicted in such advertisements do not seem to have been sufficiently sustained to suggest that they were linked to any long-term structural trend within the political economy. It seems more likely that the ideological implications of these advertisements were not particularly unique to apartheid politics of the time, nor should the moment of their manifestation suggest any ‘conspiratorially motivated’ ideological underpinning. The short-lived representation of the Black Consciousness movement in South African advertisements might be seen ‘as a phenomenon consistent with’ the ‘natural proclivity’ of advertising to cannabilise, to reprocess for its resonance, and thus reify almost anything that bears novelty: topical events, revolutionary themes, or even criticism against itself. By ‘natural proclivity’ one means that in order to communicate with its target market (and harness them as consumers) advertising will try to anticipate and mimic their changing lifestyles, their habits, their heroes, the way they talk, think and feel. Similar examples have been evident in the appropriation of the themes and preoccupations of the feminist movement by advertising campaigns such as ‘You’ve Come A Long Way Babe’ for Virginia Slims cigarettes in the USA, or ‘The Only Thing A Woman Should Burn Is Her Bra’ for Ambre Solaire suntan oil in the UK. As was outlined in an earlier chapter, some variation exists in interpretations about how this rhetorical process might be specifically defined (Marcuse, 1964; Williams, 1973:3-16; Ewen, 1976; Williamson, 1978:177-8). In effect such advertisements perform a bridging process, reintegrating petty bourgeois discourse with the radicalism. In meeting their normal marketing purposes this ideological role of such advertisements is more likely contingent/hegemonic than conspiratorial.
classes as ‘amongst the nations of South Africa’ in order to facilitate plans of ‘consociational democracy’\footnote{A ‘consociational democracy’ would have amounted to a loose federation of separate states. See Lijphardt (1977) “Adaptation and Change, in South Africa, Majority Rule versus Democracy in Deeply Divided Societies”. This influential paper advocating a ‘consociational democracy’ was delivered by visiting Dutch political scientist at the Congress of Political Science Association of South Africa, 29\&30 September 1977, Rand Afrikaans University, Johannesburg.} engineering.

iv) Non-ethnic black middle class depictions on TV1 and TV4. Fundamentally the most important form, representing a ‘New South Africa’ ideology from the business sector that promoted a non-racial class-based society. This emerging new order was structurally underpinned due to the increased contribution of blacks in the economy, in terms of blue collar and white collar labour needs and as consumers.

Pejorative Racial Stereotyping -- The South African Version

Instances of overt pejorative racial stereotyping of blacks That did occur were mostly in earlier SABC-TV1 commercials, When commercials were first permitted on television in 1978, there were possibly still a fair number of whites in South Africa who had not yet quite recovered from a Verwoerdian-inspired illusion. This illusion would have caused them to believe that they lived in a white country and that blacks were ‘temporary sojourners in the cities’, perhaps something similar to The cheap unskilled labour imported by capitalists into Western Europe. For a while such preconceptions might have continued to cloud marketing practices. As Eric Mafuna, a black advertising executive lamented:

> It’s frustrating from a black marketing point of view. Marketers still talk about blacks as if they are a foreign amorphous mob. Political thinking permeates consumer concepts and as a result they’re outdated (‘Setting Trends’, Financial Mail October 26, 1979:397, library edition).

As in the case of the advanced industrial consumer democracies (prior to the further intensification of affirmative action there, after the later 1980s), pejorative racial stereotyping in South African advertising, precluded people of colour from being imaged in meaningful, i.e. petty bourgeois roles. Blacks were depicted in relatively menial roles. Unlike in the advanced industrial democracies however, blacks were not a minority group
in South Africa. Two classic examples of this form from the late 1970s and early 1980s, are the Dixie Dishwashing Liquid commercial and the Rolux Magnum commercial. In the Dixie Dishwashing Liquid commercial, ‘Beauty’, a black domestic servant, gesticulates ‘Hau Madam!’ when she is shown the efficacy of the said detergent. Beauty comes across as a down-to-earth and rather simple-minded black maid. The advertising idea actually plays upon the fact that the product has provided her white ‘madam’ with an opportunity to be patronising. The advertising idea in the Rolux Magnum lawnmower commercial, bears some similarity in format, though it works on more complex and offensive levels of satire. ‘Dr Livingstone’ is featured clearing a path through long elephant grass with the above-mentioned machine. He is followed by faithful black bearers who cheer him on by chanting the brand name: “Rolux Magnum”. The stereotyping of blacks as ‘garden boys’ could easily be read as pejorative, but more exacerbating is the representation of the Dr Livingstone myth and the disturbingly arrogant colonial ramifications suggested. In this example of what in an earlier chapter has been referred to as ‘ideological aberration’, it is suggested that by purchasing this lawnmower, every average white petty bourgeois householder in his backyard can imaginatively live a descendant role of Dr Livingstone’s African quest, while the average black descendant has amounted to no more than a garden boy. Both the Dixie and Rolux commercials feature the affectionate idiosyncrasies associated with black workers by many white South Africans during the 1970s and early 1980s (see Van der Walt 1989:58). These commercials were broadcast on TV1, and were directed particularly at white consumers. These commercials might be taken to constitute classic examples of racial stereotyping, in the sense that the pejorativeness articulates itself in a naive reflection of the innocuous type of blacks that whites might have found inherently desirable, without giving the matter a second thought. From the point of view of ethnographic reconstruction, representation in these commercials is perhaps not an unrealistic representation of how life at that time was being lived within the white petty bourgeois strata of the social formation.

However, by the 1980s, pejorative racial stereotyping had been largely phased out in South African advertising. During this period, one was more likely to encounter racial
stereotyping with overtly pejorative implications in the mass media of Western Europe or the United States, where it periodically resurfaced, albeit in sometimes very self-conscious tongue-in-cheek guises.\textsuperscript{128} Initially, as political pressure began to ease during F.W. de Klerk’s ‘post-apartheid’ era (1989-1994), some instances of pejorative racial stereotyping resurfaced in a few commercials. There were some indications of this in a commercial for \textit{Mazda} broadcast on TV1 in 1991. This advert showed a young black man directing a red \textit{Mazda} into a parking bay, while listening to music and raving about the car. This man was depicted as obviously ‘into music’ and ‘beat’ and ‘very cool’, but his street-wise persona did not redress the fact that he was also an unemployed riff-raff who earned his living by hustling rich motorists. Such parking touts did of course exist during this period. What is of relevance, is that both the creators and editing process though which this advertisement must have passed before publication, were not at that point in time restrained by any reservations about associating \textit{Mazda} with such a depiction. The stereotyping of the black person in this \textit{Mazda} commercial cuts a stark contrast with the laudatory depiction of ‘George’, as a very refined deracinated middle class black person, in the 1990 \textit{Castle Lager} beer commercial \textit{Homecoming} (Chapter 7). Also, there was a commercial for \textit{IGI Insurance} which depicted rural blacks in a negative light (see below).

Characterisations with more overt or subconsciously racist connotations continue to be used in advertisements in the advanced industrial democracies more regularly than overt pejorative racial stereotypes. This variation often uses animated characters seemingly oblivious of their racist connotations.\textsuperscript{129} A good South African example of covert racist

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128 A mid-1980s advertisement from Paris succeeded in being both intensely \textit{racist} and sexist at the same time by featuring a nude black woman holding a bottle with champagne spouting over her shoulders and into a glass perched on her exaggerated buttocks (Kleinmann, 1986/7:21) See also, \textit{Journal of Communication Inquiry}, Vol. 14 No 1, Winter 1990, special issue devoted to minority images in advertising.

129 In a conference on ‘Minority Images in Advertising, De Paul University, Chicago, April 1989, a controversial advertising campaign developed by Foote, Cone & Belding Communications served as a bench-march for discussions about this form. This campaign run in the United States from 1957 to 1970 and had featured \textit{Frito Bandito}, a wily cartoon character who coaxed others into giving him their \textit{Frito} corn chips in television and print advertisements After complaints from the Mexican American Committee a sanitised version of this character \textit{was} produced, but Mexican-American groups were still offended and pressured individual broadcasters and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for free time to
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connotations was a TV commercial for Caprison, that was broadcast during the mid-1980s. This commercial featured hip young whites on a desert island, snatching a pirate treasure chest containing the product, orange-based cool-drink in sachets, while under attack from partially clad black savages. The advertising idea of this commercial drew upon resultant mythology from an earlier wave of imperialism. The novel Robinson Crusoe is a fine example of the literary genre generated in the first world to facilitate ideological interpellation of recruits for colonial adventure. One might surmise that the authors of the Caprison commercial were probably oblivious to its negative connotations, because they did not readily identify these with their South African context.

But on the whole, save for odd exceptions and the few instances of covertly pejorative content, overtly pejorative racial stereotyping virtually disappeared from South African advertising during the 1980s. Advertisers must have been well aware that mass media, being subject to international scrutiny, would easily have constituted documentary evidence if not proof, of continuing apartheid during a sensitive era when South Africa was trying to convince the world that racial discrimination no longer existed or had virtually been abolished. The government had even gone so far as to advocate a policy of ‘consensus journalism’.

respond. According to Don Mc Comb, (Journal of Communication Inquiry), Vol. 14 No 1, Winter 1970 p.3-4) this form of negative stereotypical depiction of minorities continued to be a problem in the United States twenty years after the Frit Lay campaign.

Some further examples of overtly pejorative racial stereotyping may be found in Chapter 7 and Chapter 8, with empirical support in Volume II, Appendices 1B and 2B. The Castle Lager Gold Prospectors (1986) commercial shows pejoratively stereotyped blacks in Shots 4, 5, 6, 7. The semiotics of these shots are only fully meaningful when considered in terms of the total cumulative communication of the Castle Lager campaign history: it appears possible this commercial might at that point in time have been interpellated within polemical anti-apartheid strategies of English-dominated capital. Though on the surface pejorative in terms of the contextual history of the commercial these stereotypes are affirmative (Chapter 7) - The Rama Tongue Tip Test (1978) commercial shows a pejoratively stereotyped black man in Shot 28. This earlier example appears to constitute more of a naive slip-up on the part of the producers of the commercial (Chapter 8), and is consistent with what was above termed classic racial stereotyping.

South African Cabinet Minister, Chris Heunis, had called for ‘Consensus Journalism’: “A media style that will emphasise common matters and consensus opportunities, rather than one which concentrates exclusively on problems causing conflict and leaves it there without pointing out the potential for consensus and cooperation”. it was contested by critical media theorists that this form of Journalism would facilitate the preservation of a status quo, as consistent with the interests of apartheid (Louw, 1985:50-63). With regard to the depiction of blacks in South African Cinema, there are earlier indications of such a
Although my research has not specifically verified with the SABC if the policy of consensus journalism’ applied to vetting of advertisements acceptability of SABC-TV commercials was influenced by ‘prevailing norms’ \(^{132}\), and one can infer that anything overtly pejorative that might have offended blacks or caused a critical reaction from the mainstream liberal press would have been restricted.

There was however another dynamic, one which I contend was of more importance than the weathervane of superstructural reformist discourse. By the late 1970s blacks already constituted over 40% of the overall consumer market. The close connection between advertising and the consumer market or productive base, is bound to distinguish its ideology (racial stereotyping) by making it more responsive to systemic fundamentals than is the case with other texts. Advertisers can be expected to have been quite careful not to alienate the goodwill of a growing body of black consumers, who with increased politicisation sweeping the country had become quite sensitive and critical. As blacks constituted a substantial part of audiences for supposedly ‘white’ media \(^{133}\) they would quickly have become aware of any negative black depictions.

Also, by the mid-1980s, it is doubtful if obviously pejorative stereotypes of blacks would have appealed to very many members of white television audiences. The dominant reformist ideological consensus amongst whites would by that time, have made most feel rather uncomfortable with any obviously racist or negative black stereotypes (see Tomaselli KG, 1997). The practical effects of the widening cracks in apartheid during the 1980s, had resulted in many whites beginning to be able to relate a little better to the black point of view, instead of being wholly closeted within their own consciousness.

\(^{132}\) Interview with SAEC-TV General Manager, Advertising, 1987.

\(^{133}\) In the case of TV, ‘channel switching’ was believed to result in black viewers spending at least one-third of their time watching TV1 (see Financial Mail, 12 March 1982:1212, library edition)
Advertising agencies are acutely aware of changing norms and ‘latest fashions’ in the currency of cultural forms. As reform progressed, by the late 1980s or early 1990s, ‘integrated’ or ‘multiracial’ or non-racial’ advertisements were becoming more frequent, especially for those products that also called for this strategy from a sound marketing point of view. Such advertisements would have been placed in ‘white’, or what at the time were beginning to show signs of a possible reorientation into petty bourgeois non-racial or multiracial media, such as TV1 & TV4 (Chapter 6).

Thus, by the beginning of the 1990s, many of the remarkably transformed white middle classes would probably have been uncomfortable with some of the negative black stereotypes they had once felt at home with (Tomaselli KG, 1997). However, a decade or so previously, many of these same white middle classes would have felt rather threatened by some of the late 1980s or early 1990s ‘non-racist’ or affirmative action orientated advertisements. Such integrated advertisements (to be discussed below) can be considered to contain ‘positive black racial stereotypes’. These periodic shifts from acute racist bigotry to absurdly anti-racist sensitivity, is as telling an example of the all-pervasive power of ideology as one is likely to find anywhere. It seems also to be a confirmation of Althusser’s contention that ‘man is an ideological animal by nature’. Some right-wing or ultra-conservative groups such as the Afrikaner Weerstands beweging AWB134 (Leach, 1990:149-163), who either continued to evade direct subservience to monopoly capitalist hegemony or ultimately were inescapably playing a role to suit its ends135, might still have sympathised with pejorative black depictions. This would nevertheless have been a failing on their part. Had the ultra right been capable of understanding Verwoerdian apartheid with the proper rigour of its master, they should in

134 Afrikaner Resistance Movement.

135 On the eve of negotiations for democracy, the political spectrum in South Africa can be seen as having been composed of parties from the extreme right Afrikaner Weerstand Beweging (AWB) to the extreme left South African Communist Party (SACP). Hypothetically, should any political group have been removed from the scene, the nature of this spectrum would have changed. For example, if one removed the AWB, then the Conservative Party (CP) filled the position of the ultra-right; the National Party lost its acquired middle ground thus increasing the legitimacy of then still largely undefined ANC alliance in that portion of the spectrum; and the National Party’s capacity to mediate for the interests of Capital during this period would have been eroded.
theory have been able to resist their brand of racism and insist upon the maintenance of the strict structured absence of blacks. This approach would have been consistent with the eventual complete disappearance of native Africans, through a ‘return’ to ‘their homelands’, But something indeed dysfunctional to monopoly capital in terms of labour requirements or the further formation of urban mass markets for consumer goods. Thus, ultimately beyond the parameters within which the policies of any Afrikaner government administration were likely to be able to operate, for any prolonged period of time.

In conclusion, pejorative racial stereotyping in the South African context must in fact be seen as a reformist form, but also a politically very sensitive form. It was pointed out above that a strong case can be made for pejorative racial stereotyping working as a precursor to affirmative action. It was also pointed out that pejorative racial stereotyping is more readily decoded aberrantly than affirmative action (see Stain and Spence 1985:643-5). Verwoerd’s bantustan strategy was designed to circumvent the necessity of affirmative action in respect to blacks (the colonised), ever having to take place ‘within a ‘white’ South Africa. Of course, pejorative racial stereotyping in South Africa or abroad, varies in mildness or intensity, and does not always simply consist of blacks (or other ethnic groups subjected to prejudice), being depicted in menial roles. It includes a variety of more grievously negative traits. A psychological research study in the United States (Secord as in Cauthen, et al. 1971:104), found that photographs of Negroes identified as Negro by whites were stereotyped as lazy, dishonest, stupid, and superstitious, more frequently than those photographs of Negroes not identified as Negro. For those photographs identified as Negro there was no decrease in stereotyping from the most Negroid-looking to the most Caucasian-looking photographs. That is, once a photograph was identified as representing a Negro, the stereotype traits were elicited. On this basis it was concluded that once a person is identified as belonging to a minority group, s/he is automatically given the presumed characteristics of that group, i.e. stereotyped (see also Perkins, 1979:151). A favourite prejudice has been the claim that blacks possess lower IQ’s than whites; and that this is a genetic fact rather than environmentally determined. Strongly pejorative elements of a stereotype will usually circulate by word-of-mouth, or possibly in some of the less sophisticated print media. Stereotypes encompassing such
negative traits are most unlikely to be reflected directly in so sensitive a medium as television or advertising in the first place. But such stereotypes may influence the thinking which underlies market research assumptions (see Tomaselli RE et al, 1989:98-99), upon which less offensive versions appearing in mainstream mass media, will finally be concocted.

**Structured Absences**

South African television during apartheid was to some extent a reflector of the collective white psyche, while at the same time exercising a powerful influence upon it. It was not always a mirror in the ordinary sense of television’s ideological role in the advanced industrial states but one which specifically realised the necessity that content should be designed to support apartheid. The effects of structured absences in the mass media were crucially important to early apartheid because they suspended the portrayal of most levels of social interaction between blacks and whites. Tomaselli RE et al (1989:157), have eloquently described the principle of ‘structured absences’ in theoretical terms:

> Equally important is what the text cannot say ... the structured absences that are necessary to the text’s constitution. These ‘internal shadows of exclusion’, as Althusser calls them, identify the ideological tensions which occur at particular historical conjunctures.

If apartheid is operating properly one should find a media situation where white viewers or readers are presented with a pristine European world in which blacks simply do not exist, not even in subservient baaskap (paternalised) roles, as in the Dixie or Rolux Magnum commercials discussed previously. When blacks have to be seen, audiences should at least somehow be made aware that these people have some relationship to the Bantustans or homelands. It seems that this situation reached its fruition in the earlier P.W. Botha era (1978-1989), because although ‘reform’ was taking place in the ‘substructures’, Verwoerdtian apartheid was still being realised in the ‘superstructures’. As has been pointed out by Harriet Gavshon (1980), the principle of ‘structured absences’ already held true for most feature films produced for blacks during the Vorster era (1966-
The principle of Structured absences was subsequently absorbed into the institutional practices of SABC-TV for the production of programmes for TV2/3. This principle obviously also applied to advertising and other broadcast material directed at black audiences. In this case, the ‘structured absence’ of whites would have been essential if blacks were to remain spell-bound within an ethnic world during their television viewing experience. The intrusion of whites within such a text would have interrupted a psychological process which literary critics, after Coleridge, might refer to as ‘the willing suspension of disbelief.

As has been pointed out above, pejorative racial stereotyping is a more obvious form that can be readily recognised and identified. What was quite striking about South African advertising during the 1980s, was the relative absence of pejorative stereotypes. Thus, if racial stereotyping is understood strictly along the lines in which it is usually encountered in the advanced industrial democracies, ethnic stereotyping would probably have gone unnoticed. Indeed, some observers, depending on how they interpreted the term ‘racial stereotyping’, might have been led to believe that it hardly existed at all.

**Ethnic Stereotyping**

The existence of separate media for blacks and for whites facilitated the development of the form of racial stereotyping intrinsic to apartheid: ethnic stereotyping. The illusion of separate black and white worlds created by structured absences could to some degree be sustained through separate media for what had been designated the ‘different population groups’ in South Africa. As has been pointed out previously, in the case of television this principle could not be realised until 1982, after a separate channel was provided with special programmes for each of the designated different black races or ethnic groups in their own languages.
According to the Canadian communication theorist, Dallas W. Smythe (1980), the primary role of media in monopoly capitalist economies is the creation of stable audience blocks for sale to monopoly capitalist advertisers. Consistent with the requirements of apartheid, the South African consumer market might be considered to have been largely conceived, developed and sold to advertisers upon racial and ethnic lines. The ‘audience blocks’ thus created, were on a racial or ethnic basis, and monopoly capitalist advertisers were given little option but to buy their broadcast media on a racial and ethnic basis. The views of Mike Wells, below would support a conclusion that media in South Africa played a major role in structuring the consumer market along apartheid lines:

Without making excuses for the advertising industry, I believe the phenomenon of the black market would quickly pass over were it not for South Africa’s political policies. Advertisers are obliged to address themselves specifically to English, Afrikaans, Portuguese, Asian, coloured, Chinese, Xhosa, Zulu, Sotho, Tswana, Swazi and many other audiences. This is because the South African situation has not allowed these people to develop into a single homogenous market. Lifestyle economics, and even residential groupings, are artificial. Even communications media have become categorised with publications aimed at colour, rather than social or economic groups. (Mike Wells, MD of Bates Wells Rostron, Financial Mail 25 January 1980:282 lib. edit.)

Ethnic stereotyping revolves around communication on an ethnic basis. It is largely dependent upon vernacular language. Black broadcast media (radio) had been exclusively ethnic, utilising the vernaculars as language medium. But this began to change in the 1980s, after competition to the SABC from local privately owned radio stations utilising English, became possible. The privately owned Radio 702, broadcasting in the Pretoria Witwatersrand Vaal triangle (PWV as it was then called), possibly with the objective of non-racial segmentation of its target audience, and Transkei-owned Capital Radio in Natal and the Eastern Cape, and more particularly Radio Metro, (the SABC’s response to

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136 Some of Smythe’s ideas have been criticised as reductionist (Golding and Murdock, 1979:209-10; Garnham, Critical Sociology Vol. 7 No 1, undated). Nevertheless Smythe’s ideas about the capacity of media to create what he calls ‘stable audience blocks’ do have some plausibility, maybe even more so in a South African context where the SABC operating as a state monopoly capitalist ‘public service’ increasingly dominated commercial media.

this competition, became quite popular amongst blacks. In 1985, Radio Bophuthatswana (Bop), the largest of the independents, was broadcasting in a mixture of English and the vernacular in the PWV area. Its audience was mainly urban, affluent, sophisticated blacks, and it was considered to be an important medium by advertisers aiming specifically at this market. It is also debatable that TV4 might have been intended as a multiracial or ‘general affairs’ channel (Tomaselli KG & Tomaselli RE, 1988a). Many of the print media (magazines) owned by monopoly capital interests and intended for blacks, were being published with copies in the vernacular as well as in English. One can nevertheless conclude, that the designated ‘different ethnic groups’ were being communicated to in their ‘own’ vernaculars, because ethnically-designated broadcast media were bound to be fairly influential in a context of low literacy levels, especially in rural parts of the country.

The black South African vernaculars derive from remnants of old tribal structures which have given rise to the various dialects from the principal Nguni and Sotho languages. Prior to European settlement (due to geographic isolation and the migratory nature of the indigenous communities), these linguistic differences or dialects had probably developed only tentatively. Modern development of separate languages may owe quite a lot to the role played by various missionary projects in different areas of the country. Their intervention, through the introduction of alphabetical form and the printed word, possibly gave their permanence to what in some cases, were tentative linguistic differences (see Alexander, 1989:12-27; Anderson, 1983:41-49). These ‘languages’ were later used by the government as a basis for Bantu Education and the creation of separate nations or

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138 According to Jan Schutte (at the time SABC General Manager, Advertising), the SABC had had earlier plans to develop local radio but these plans had to be put on a backburner due to a shortage of manpower after the introduction of television (‘Local is Lekker’, Financial Mail, Advertising Supplement, June 28 1985: 107-110).


141 The Bantu Education Act, which was passed in 1953 directly, expressed the role which the Afrikaner Nationalist government had in mind for Africans in South Africa. They were to be given an education
Bantustans. Upon these foundations rested the rationale that underpinned the maintenance of at least seven black languages, and the claim that the geographical entity of South Africa comprised several separate ‘nations’.

Both this approach and the arguments mounted for its justification, have been criticised as being part of a thinly veiled attempt to split up or maintain the black majority in smaller groups that could be manipulated along classic ‘divide and rule’ principles, thus perpetuating the exclusive political power and hegemony of the minority white ruling classes (Tomaselli RE et al, 1989:155; see also Teer-Tomaselli, 1997). On the other hand, defenders of the ‘separate nationalities’ approach, maintained that communication in vernacular languages, on an ethnic basis, was essential for ‘culturally authentic’ communication to take place:

...in order for television to communicate at a culturally authentic level, it must be congruent with the ethnic structure of South African society (Mersham, 1985).

But the most important rationale behind ‘the concept of separate nationalities and concomitant ethnic emphasis in television dispensation, appears to have been the fact that it formed an integral part of the physical separation scenario of earlier interpretations of Bantustan policy. By the late 1980s, the unfolding of what had become conceptually a largely defunct Bantustan policy, had come to a standstill. At the beginning of the 1990s, when negotiations were pending for ‘re-incorporation’ of the Bantustans, it was widely accepted that the policy had been based on political decisions in the interests of Afrikaner Nationalism.

which fitted them for life in the reserves, on the farms, an in a predominantly migrant, unskilled labour force. They could not expect to enjoy an education which gave them equality with whites (Stadler, 1987:75; 177-9).

142 Negotiations for a post-apartheid democratic dispensation have resulted in the requisite implementation of SAEC-TV broadcasts in no less than eleven languages. This might be seen partly as result from the need for quick consensus in the negotiation processes. Though somewhat demanding upon post apartheid SAEC-TV resources, the manner of implementation of the new language policy could not be compared with the rigidity that had previously existed.
The *lingua franca* of the urban blacks to whom TV2/3 transmissions were primarily beamed was English. The ‘authentic’ culture of the urban black proletariat was in actual fact South African black working class culture. Mershnam (1985) suggested that broadcasting studies ignoring ethnicity in the South African context, might in some way have been equated with cultural imperialism. But his view is not really valid. Media critics on the Left as well as some advertising practitioners, were not suggesting that ethnicity should have been completely ignored. The point was that it should never have been *strictly* enforced through the SABC’s language ruling on TV2/3. The primary audiences of these channels were black urban dwellers, whose *lingua franca* according to market research findings, was English.

Contrary to claims that the ethnic approach to media was underpinned by cultural authenticity, evidence suggests that many native blacks in South Africa were more impelled to assimilate Western norms and culture so as to compete as effectively as possible within the given means of production: a white-dominated industrial society. It was realised that English was a means to power, as it gave a broader access to information than the vernacular languages or Afrikaans. Without any actual political representation, blacks in South Africa were never consulted, even within the terms or limitations (Williams [1960] 1980:187-188) of liberal Western democratic standards, about what sort of communication they might have preferred. From the Soweto riots of 1976, it became evident that Afrikaans was not very popular as a medium of instruction in schools.\(^{143}\) It is interesting to note that after the Transkei gained its nominal independence in 1963, English was quickly re-instated as the principal medium of instruction in place of Xhosa (Marquard, 1969:205). One of the explanations often given by post-colonial African states for their having opted for one-party systems in preference to the Westminster model, is a common need to avoid tribal divisions exacerbated by colonialism.

Communications based upon fundamentally unsound stereotypical preconceptions of the target audience, can potentially be a regressive socialising force. A commercial for Cadbury Chocolates (primarily targeted

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\(^{143}\) It is believed that government insistence upon the use of Afrikaans spark off these protests.
at children) which was broadcast in Xhosa to urban blacks on TV2, gives a some indication of this possibility. In this commercial, the English expression to ‘pass with flying colours’, takes on a new meaning when a school teacher rewards her star pupil with chocolates, saying: ‘you came through the leaves’! (Leshoai 1982:12, as in Mersham, 1985). It appears that the conceptualisers of this commercial might have presumed that urban-based black children would respond to a metaphor that in all likelihood would make good sense to a person whose consciousness had been structured through experience of living in a jungle. An important instigating factor for the inspiration for this type of thinking on the part of the creators of this commercial would have been the SABC’s language policy which called for ‘culturally authentic’ communication. English terms which have become universal to Western culture, such as ‘potato chips’ or ‘toothpaste’, were forbidden in TV2/3 commercials, despite the fact that blacks conventionally used these terms and there were no equivalent nouns in Zulu, Xhosa or Tswana for these products. Advertisers were forced to use the “African equivalent of Victorian English” by referring to “slices of potato fried in oil” or “the soap that cleans your teeth” (Sparks 1985:47, as in Mersham, 1985).

Particularly aberrant examples such as the one for Cadbury Chocolates might be argued to be single commercials taken out of their campaign context, as well out of total advertising exposure context. But such extreme cases of ethnic representation have nonetheless been known to enter the realm of popular consciousness. Their conceits become word-of-mouth and therefore tend to be remembered. So even if exceptional, such commercials may be assumed to have made some impact on the collective consciousness and therefore deserve to be included in the discussion. A more in-depth study of ethnic or ethnic middle class commercials will be given in the case study on Rama margarine, in Chapter 8. The instances of ethnic stereotyping in commercials on the Rama history reel were found to be not as extreme or offensive as the one cited above. In Chapter 8, comparisons between stereotypes of whites in TV1 commercials and stereotypes of blacks in equivalent TV2 or TV3, commercials are provided for the following commercials: Just One Bite and You Know You re Right (1979 - 1982); Rugby/Soccer (1986); Slipping and Sliding (1986); Housewife Campaign 1(1987); and Hurrah Ma - It’s Rama (1981). The methodology adopted in the case studies and their appendices is intended to provide a counter-balance or corrective lens element, to single extreme examples described in this chapter. This approach may go some way towards providing the sense of an accurate picture of what in reality was an extremely complex media environment, to which audiences were subjected to during the period under study.

Until the introduction of ethnic television in 1982, Radio Bantu had been the principal mass communication medium for the promotion of separate development (Strydom, 1976). TV2/3 may not exactly have been ‘Radio Bantu with pictures’, as Percy Qoboza
had once described it (Tomaselli RE et al., 1989:154), but these stations did nevertheless continue the objectives of Radio Bantu in a way refined and adapted as required by the shifts which had occurred in the political economy, or rather, according to how these changes were being interpreted by the government and bureaucratic intelligentsia of the SABC. Reform at the superstructural or ideological level, had not always logically been in tune with developments at the economic base. As has been pointed out, when TV2 was introduced in January 1982, the ethnic/vernacular language requirement was strictly applied to all material broadcast on this station. This invariably required marketers to acquiesce to producing strictly ethnic advertisements, something they were not very enthusiastic about at the time, as this increased costs and in advertising communication terms, it was not always the most efficient way of marketing some of their products (Chapter 6).

It must however be pointed out, that while by the mid-1980s black consumer power overtook that of whites in South Africa, the amount of advertising money actually spent in black-orientated media, (mainly ethnic) was still relatively very small. While the contribution of advertising to GNP had grown very considerably since the introduction of television, in 1985 only 14% of measured advertising expenditure was aimed at non-whites specifically. This ratio had risen, but not in pace with the growth in black consumer spending, which rapidly approached and then exceeded, 50% of total consumer spending. Growth in specifically black advertising expenditure was very slow as ten years before it had been 10%. The contribution of apartheid advertising to the overall ethnic stereotyped cultural output is important, but should be assessed with the above figures in mind. In case of advertising practice, the harm caused was possibly not so much through very high levels of successful ethnic interpellation as such, but through a diversion of effort from the task of developing non-racial communications based upon an idiom South Africans might commonly have identified with. An earlier application of

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145 Advertisements affected by the apartheid-related SABC-TV broadcasting dispensation of the Lime and/or apartheid influenced marketing conceptions.
non-racial communication would have quickened the pace of a form of cultural production more rational to the needs of an urbanised industrial community.

**Ethnic Black Middle Class Stereotyping**

Whereas Radio Bantu was one of the key instruments in the implementation of Bantustan policy (Strydom, 1976; Switzer, 1979; 1985), TV2/3 was an instrument through which apartheid sought to wriggle out of the homelands straitjacket while at the same time retaining continuity. The rationale behind TV2/3 was one which accepted the unavoidable necessity of a permanently urbanised and relatively skilled black labour force as per Riekert and Wiehahn Commissions (see Hindson, 1987). The TV2/3 channels supposedly took upon themselves the task of inculcating middle class aspirations amongst a stratum of urban blacks whom it was vaguely envisaged might somehow be co-opted into an alliance with the state: a percolation of the ideology projected by the business sector and also confirmed by left-wing theoretical critiques of both apartheid and capitalism. The enthusiastic words of Nick Tredoux, managing director of an advertising agency noted for its earlier work upon the ‘black market’ via Radio Bantu, succinctly articulates liberal reform-minded Afrikaner views of the time:

> I mean if black aspirations cannot be accommodated in a capitalist society - where are they going to go? They are going to go to a communist society - the choice is very simple. And television in my opinion is the key medium in bringing that message to blacks - showing what the capitalist society has to offer, and hopefully doing it in such a way that they can identify with the aspiration which is involved. So, in that sense, you know, it is more than just selling toothpaste and detergent (Tredoux in Frederikse, 1986:66).

The consequent third form of racial stereotyping in South Africa, is one that depicts blacks in progressively more middle class roles. However, as intimated by Nick Tredoux’s words “and hopefully doing it in such a way that they can identify with the aspiration which is involved”, the rites of passage from ethnic orientation to black middle class orientation were neither unproblematic for their subjects nor unequivocal for their
subjectors. Apparatuses such as Radio Bantu and Bantu Education, set up for the realisation of the Bantustan project, had retarded black development by resurrecting and re-articulating traditional forms. Although major reforms were made to original apartheid strategy vis-a-vis labour and urbanisation, during the P.W. Botha era, entrenchment of social division based on ethnicity still remained strategically essential for the engineering of a ‘consociational democracy as an adaptation to the Verwoerdian version of Bantustan policy (see Lijphart, 1977). As Hindson (1987:85) points out, urban Africans should have exercised political rights only in the Bantustans in terms of the recommendations of the Riekert Commission of enquiry into urbanisation.

In theory, middle class stereotyping, which is meant to bring people together within a single social formation as a class in terms of the position they occupy in relation to the means of production, (rather than as groups on an ethnic basis), should be in fundamental contradiction to ethnic stereotyping. While ethnic stereotyping draws its inspiration from pre-industrial traditional forms, middle class stereotyping is a post-industrialisation cultural form drawing its inspiration from industrial society or modern Western culture from the advanced industrial democracies. Urbanisation and reform in the economic sphere (provided substantial economic growth does take place in the future), should make a Westernised petty bourgeois black media depiction predominant. One can read this implication in the monopoly capitalist vision for South Africa until the 1980s (e.g. see O'Dowd, 1964). But in 1980s some forecasts or ‘scenario planning’ for South Africa foresaw what was being termed a ‘Third World Destiny’ (Green and Lascaris, 1988; Rudman, 1988). Though presented in a positive light at the time, these forecasts must be seen as inherently pessimistic.

During the 1980s, the government still tried to reconcile the contradictory implications of black middle classes’ to earlier apartheid forms, by stating that such black middle classes should be ‘amongst the nations of South Africa’. According to the views of state president P.W. Botha, free enterprise offered the potential:
to create black middle classes amongst the nations of South Africa, and thereby lay the foundation for resisting communism (Quoted in Posel, 1987; Quoted in Mann, 1986).

Hence, even the urban black middle classes were being conceived as being amongst the nations of South Africa. Urban black middle classes were nonetheless still supposed to be linked by an apartheid umbilical cord to the homelands or Bantustans. Save for the bureaucratic middle classes salaried by the homelands governments, and in turn subsidised by the central government, these Bantustans lacked the economic infrastructure to produce black middle classes. The means of production through which black native Africans could come to exist as a petty bourgeoisie, were situated in ‘white’ industrial South Africa, possibly bordering the homelands, but more likely within major cities.

Ethnic black middle classes of the 1980s can be seen as a transitory and contradictory form. They were a compromise symptomatic of the so called alliance, until the first half or the 1980s, between English-speaking and Afrikaans monopoly capital interests and the Nationalist Party governing bureaucracy under P.W. Botha (Mann, 1986). It is debatable to what extent government bureaucrats and Afrikaner business interests still actually held on to the belief of ‘separate nations’ by the 1980s. It is difficult to see how anyone could seriously have believed that even two or so decades of systematic ethnic programming and manipulation, could have laid sound enough foundations upon which to support ‘ethnic’ black middle classes - diverse black nationalities that could indefinitely maintain their distinct ethnic identities in the face of living and working in the melting-pot situation of an urbanised industrial society that integrated into a single economy. On the other hand, powerful English-dominated monopoly capital interests for much of the first half of the 1980s, still appeared somewhat disinterested about whether or not black middle classes should have been “amongst the nations of South Africa” (see Castle Lager case study in Chapter 7). At first advertisers generally showed some mild resistance to the vernacular language stipulation as it applied to TV2/3. The production of several commercials in the vernacular raised costs, while and it had been established by market research that South Africa’s highest concentration of urban blacks, (those living in
Johannesburg’s satellite city, Soweto), were more familiar with English than any of the other languages. But given the over subscription of TV1, advertisers soon acquiesced to supporting the final electronic touches to apartheid by producing ethnic black commercials. Nevertheless, TV2/3 never became self-financing and continued to be cross-subsidised from income generated by TV1 and TV4 which was introduced early 1987. The merging of TV2/3 with TV4 in 1991 marked a major departure from earlier strictures in official broadcasting policy as it represented a step towards forming a single national culture in South Africa.

If anything, the ethnic imperatives which continued to underpin SABC-TV broadcasting during the 1980s must have inhibited and frustrated advertising in South Africa from performing what according to much of the neo-Marxist criticism, is its monopoly capitalist ‘function’ (Sinclair 1987:24-25) of creating a consumerist mass culture. ‘Traditional’ African society to which ethnicity refers is contradictory to the middle class consumption ethic because it reverts back to pre-industrial tribal modes. Given that theories about the ideological role of advertising in modern industrial societies are complex and inconclusive one cannot have expected many Afrikaner politicians to have readily appreciated the possible ideological role of advertising in social reform in South Africa. In spite of the years of dire warnings about the evils of communism, it seems that Afrikaner government bureaucrats might have found capitalist ideas about the positive value of advertising a little foreign to their frame of reference. With few exceptions, most of the generation of Afrikaners with strong agrarian links, did not yet have their hearts fully within capitalism. Afrikaners had been drawn into capitalism by force of their defeat in the Anglo-Boer War (see Dunbar Moodie, 1975), and this experience to some extent continued to be reflected in the attitude of some National Party government bureaucrats, and certainly featured in a more focused form in the minds of right-wing Afrikaner politicians. In the post World War II period, after the government of South Africa slipped into the custody of the Afrikaners, Western governments and mediating local monopoly capitalist interests, for the most part had to grin and bear some of their idiosyncrasies.

(Non-ethnic) Black Middle Class Stereotyping

The fourth form of racial stereotyping in South African mass media is one that depicts blacks in progressively more middle class roles without differentiating on an ethnic basis. This form is fully consistent with ‘consumption as a means of hegemony’ and has already been discussed at the end of Chapter 2. It has been pointed out previously that many impediments existed to the transition to this approach, economic, cultural, and political. But various instances of this approach were already occurring in advertisements after the mid-1980s. The example of the threshold breaking ‘non-racial’ Mobil commercial of 1985 (to be discussed below) would not quite qualify for this category.\(^{147}\) It was with the adoption of the principle of racial integration in beer advertising, that race and class barriers came to be simultaneously breached in advertising commercials. By bringing blacks into a white middle class world, by depicting them as refined and sophisticated and as significant shareholders in this world, beer commercials came closest to articulating a definitive non-racial ‘South African’ identity during the reform period (see Chapter 7). The articulation of such an identity essentially also needed a suitable product, a product where its consumption could be repeatedly depicted in integrated situations, steeped within the trappings of white-collar corporate culture or other aspects of middle class existence. Beer advertising on television made black middle class depiction something more than a tentative emergent form in South African advertising. Castle Lager has therefore been selected for the basis of a detailed examination of this form of black stereotyping in Chapter 7.

**SABC Gate-keeping in an Era of Reform**

\(^{147}\) By featuring an integrated scene of a white woman petrol attendant dancing on the service station forecourt with male black petrol attendants) all wearing in similar uniforms (Ludman, 1985), the Mobil commercial was undoubtedly breaking racial barriers. Indeed, a young white middle class woman had come to share the working class job situation of these black petrol attendants. Petrol companies in South Africa have from time to time employed students in their public relations exercises, or to conduct various product or service promotions to motorists, so the situation depicted was not entirely implausible or unrealistic. However, the black petrol attendants were still being depicted in their apartheid allotted places, serving up petrol, so in terms of a de-restriction of job limitations and class-mobility this Mobil commercial was not yet particularly progressive.
As has been pointed out previously, SABC-TV was based upon a conservative mandate enshrined in the *Meyer Commission Report* (Meyer, 1971). Reform did not only come to the SABC due to changes in the political sphere, but also through constant market-related friction being generated - structural reform processes upon advertising and other broadcasting work practices. However, the process of change was slow and frustrating for some advertisers. Residual apartheid thinking in its various guises was strong and intimidating. When change came at the SABC, it was often a carefully measured and calculated change:

We are not oversensitive on racial mixing or multiracial advertising, we accept any artists in any commercial provided their language usage is that of the particular station on which it is broadcast. And that the language usage is the acceptable norm for that particular language group.... You see we have the different stations which are identified as an English station, or an Afrikaans station, an Inguni station, or a Sothu station. So, I mean, there, obviously, the language *must* be of the particular station and the acceptable norm. But as for the visuals and for the artists there will be no problem at all. A little while ago we had a commercial (for Standard Bank) which used all black artists and they spoke in English (broadcast only on TV1 & TV4) and we had no negative comment at all (Interview with SABC General Manager, Advertising Management, Auckland Park, April 1987).

One can see from the above quote, that by 1987, SABC-TV regulations had been eased slightly, but the overall language stipulation still remained sacrosanct. Initially in 1976, when a centralised national broadcast television service was first introduced, producers had been told by the SABC that no blacks could appear in ‘white’ (TV1) programmes. This proved impossible in documentaries, so the SABC relented (see RE Tomaselli, *et al* 1989). The reformist initiatives pursued by the P.W. Botha government from 1979 onwards, created a space for partial integration in both programmes and in advertising commercials which had been introduced in 1978. The first racial relaxation in advertising occurred when the SABC permitted blacks and whites to be intercut in separate sequences. Before the introduction of TV2/3 there were powerful structural reform pressures for blacks to be depicted within commercials on TV1, because (as wilt be
discussed in Chapter 8), they often formed the majority of the market for a particular product. Later, it became more permissible for blacks and whites to appear in the same frame (Chapter 7). In the first half of the 1980s most interracial mixing was seen in advertisements featuring children rather than adults. At that stage children were argued by SABC (and like-minded market research organisations) to be more tolerant of interracial images.

Beer advertisements after the mid-1980s were a clear exception. Here male non-ethnic bourgeois black males were portrayed interacting together with whites within the same camera frame, in bars, and other locations. Interestingly, in the case of beer advertising ideology consistent with monopoly capitalist labour needs for skilled and managerial blacks, seems to have been able to flow through SABC transmitters more freely. By the mid-1980s, in the case of Castle Lager (see Chapter 7), this ideology also reflected English-speaking capital’s political realignment and distancing from government policy. The language stipulation in respect of TV2/3 did continue to apply also to beer commercials. But for most of the reform period, beer commercials broadcast on TV1 and TV4 were consistently ‘multiracial’ (or perhaps one could say non-racial), in the sense that blacks and whites were depicted interacting together on a social level as equals (see Chapter 7). This certainly was not always the case with other products where black ‘consumption’ also exceeded white ‘consumption’. It might be argued, of course, that the ‘use’ or ‘consumption’ occasion of other mass market products, may not as easily have facilitated the depiction of interracial mixing as the beer drinking occasion. For example, in the case of tea drinking, this beverage is mostly consumed in a home situation. Thus, one would not normally have expected to find much interracial mixing during tea drinking sessions in either white suburban homes or even in the upper crust of black township homelife. Had there been a tea commercial depicting such interracial mixing in a home situation it might arguably have not been realistic in terms of the norm, but it would certainly been taboo breaking. Undeniably, beer was the product category which was the most taboo breaking.
Although one can say that during the P.W. Botha era of reform there was progressive relaxation in regard to the television portrayal of black and white social interaction, an ultimately contradictory dynamic was also at work. Language is the key means of delineating different cultures and ethnicity. As has been pointed out previously, the project for the reaffirmation of ethnicity remained firmly part of the political agenda during P.W. Botha’s administration. The SABC’s stipulation for strict adherence to the ethnic language of each channel, therefore remained paramount. In a nutshell, the logic of the P.W. Botha reform period seems to have been that South Africa was no longer a racist country, but a ‘constellation of states’. It was no different fraternising with blacks, Greeks, Germans or Portuguese as long as one clearly knew whether blacks were either Xhosas, Zulus, Sothos, Tswanas and so on. Up until the early 1990s, TV2 continued to broadcast to the Zulu, Xhosa, Swazi and Ndebele ‘groups’ (linguistically similar but separated for political reasons), while. TV3 transmitted to the Tswana, North Sotho, South Sotho and Venda ‘groups’, (also linguistically very similar). Both channels had been introduced in 1982. By design, these stations only transmitted to areas (urban and rural), where the respective ‘language groups’ had sometimes been forcibly settled by the state (Tomaselli KG & Tomaselli RE, 1988a).

There had been much consternation within advertising circles when the implications of the SABC’s language stipulation were first fully appreciated. This occurred in 1980, when an SABC directive officially informed advertising agencies that commercials for the future SABC-TV2 would have to be presented in two of five vernaculars -- Zulu, Xhosa, northern Sotho, southern Sotho and Tswana (Financial Mail, 8 August 1980:645). By a careful study of the implications of the Meyer Commission Report (1971), advertising agencies might have realised sooner that this would have been the case. One might perhaps conclude that there had been insufficient earlier forward planning on the part of advertising agencies. The language stipulation thus came as a shock when its implications could no longer be ignored, but in any case little concerted will existed to contest it.
According to Tim Hamilton Russel, who was at the time chairman and MID of the J Walter Thompson advertising agency, the cost of producing a TV commercial in either Afrikaans or English was at that stage roughly R30,000. Lip-synchronising for mandatory bilingual commercials, pushed up costs to an average R35,000. With the SABC’s formidable list of requirements for producing commercials in the vernaculars, however, costs would have risen to an average of R55,000 (1980). The SABC even went as far as recommending that commercials should actually be recorded in each ethnic area or perhaps ‘nation’ using authentic ethnic voices. For absolute authenticity, Xhosa commercials had to be recorded in King William’s Town by a Xhosa; Zulu commercials in Durban by a Zulu; Northern Sotho commercials in Pietersburg; southern Sotho commercials in Johannesburg; and Tswana in Pretoria. Ironically, (according to the pedantic SABC logic), a Zulu fluent in Xhosa was not supposed to record a Xhosa commercial as ethnicity had to be maintained at all costs. A second irony was that with SABC-TV2 (SABCTV2/3 was initially referred to as SABC-TV2), aimed at urban blacks, an All Media Products Survey (A.MPS) had revealed that in Soweto, 78,65% of blacks read and understood English. The ethnic languages trailed: 56% read and understood Zulu, 31% Xhosa; 24% northern Sotho, 44,1% southern Sotho, 35,6% Tswana; 6,7% Tsonga; and 5,6% Venda. Afrikaans rated 51,6%. Tim Hamilton Russel’s conclusion was that English was clearly the lingua franca in Soweto. But even on the basis of such unassailable facts it was unlikely the SABC would at that stage have altered its dedication to vernacular commercials. An account of the political reasons for strict enforcement of ethnic broadcasting to mainly urban blacks, has been given above. Also, there had been considerable uncertainty amongst the marketing professions, and this possibly was to some extent due to the influence of residual apartheid thinking in some marketing theories (see Chapter 6).

Pedantic SABC-TV insistence on the use of the stipulated ethnic languages, went a step further. As has already been pointed out previously, the ban also included words, of English origin that have become an essential part of modern Western consumer culture in

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non-English speaking-countries throughout the world. Advertisements in black languages were not allowed to have any English words such as ‘toothpaste’ or ‘chips’ (Mersham, 1985:150-154). However, some English-based terms were later allowed.\textsuperscript{149} The practical effect of this designed cultural diversity through pedantic insistence on language purity in broadcasting, was probably to restrict or disincline any natural tendencies towards the development of a distinctive South African creative advertising culture. It made advertising expressions very cumbersome and stifled the emergence or legitimation of common idiom, which television might have used to facilitate, instead of frustrate.

During the 1980s, reports in the more oppositionally-inclined liberal press, had given the impression that the business sector and advertising agencies, either through economic considerations or liberal convictions, wanted to convey advertising which was a lot more vigorously reformist than the SABC was at that stage prepared to allow (Ludman, 1985). For instance, it would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, for advertisers to persuade the SABC to flight a commercial to white viewers on TV1 depicting blacks and whites dancing together in the same frame (ibid.). But surprisingly, the 1985 Mobil petrol advertisement (mentioned earlier), flighted on both the ‘black’ and ‘white’ channels, had a white woman facing the camera centre frame dancing in a petrol station with black attendants flanking her on either side. An interview with the SABC’s director of advertising management did not shed any light on to why the SABC had relented in this case, except that the station was “moving with the times” (Interview, April 1987).

Mobil, in common with other major oil monopolies, adhered to a corporate strategy based upon themes of social or environmental responsibility. In the United States, a well-known consumer campaign by Mobil based on the theme -- ‘We want you to live’, used fearful images of motoring accidents to discourage careless driving. In South Africa, Mobil justified its continued presence in an apartheid economy by portraying itself as a promoter of black advancement and education. A print campaign around themes such as ‘Black education needn’t be a dead-end street -- This Graffiti’s meant for you, South

Africa!’ or ‘The only thing Mobil would like to see wiped out is ignorance’, were published in magazines.150

Advertising commercials to attract motorists to petrol stations often also have something larger in mind than ordinary product advertisements. These are also corporate advertisements. In the case of Mobil, their South African advertisements might also have had corporate advertising purposes (for Mobil in South Africa, but also for a very select audience in the United States). In an analysis of the ideological implications of such advertising by foreign-based multinationals, underlying dynamics should be analysed within a larger context than the advertising of local monopoly capital. The activities of these transnational corporations might be considered to have been ‘extra-hegemonic’ of local processes of hegemony. While acting within the strictures of a fluctuating discourse regarding the manner in which the advanced industrial democracies related to South Africa during apartheid, communications of the foreign multinationals at times probably had a catalytic effect. For instance, in their campaigns for equal employment opportunities (see Schomer, 1983:145-156), foreign corporations, such as Polariod in the 1970s, broke new ground with the adoption of policies which South African corporations might not have initiated as soon, but were too embarrassed not to follow. Thus, in pursuance of their own larger capitalist interests, some of the more powerful multinationals such as Mobil, or relatively smaller corporations such as Polariod, may at times have made genuine contributions to breaching apartheid in South Africa. But typically (in spite of their anti-apartheid agitation), as profit-driven organisations, foreign corporations in South Africa on the whole, could in practice have been no less exploitative of cheap black labour on the shop floor, than local corporations. Thus, it was not always easy to discern if disinvestment was only a sanction against apartheid or also flight at the face of the growing strength of South African trade unions in the wake of the reform of apartheid.

With regard to the above-mentioned Mobil advertisement, the director of advertising management at the SABC, could not rule out the possibility that some commercials broadcast through the SABC by international corporations, might have been politically motivated, in the sense of being calculated to make a favourable impression at shareholders’ meetings in some foreign country. However, he typically maintained that the SABC would in any case have judged such commercials on their own merits, according to the prevailing South African norms, without taking any other consideration into account (Interview, April 1987).

In line with reform, TV2/3 tended to mainly broadcast programmes using ‘black American’ themes and singers (Erasmus, 1981). The fact that blacks and whites (adults) were still not normally supposed to dance together in the same frame in commercials on TV1, is a little more difficult to explain. But if one looked at the dominant mainstream media discourse from the Anglo-Saxon advanced industrial states, portrayal of intimacy between mixed couples clearly of European and African origin still continued to be largely taboo during the 1980’s. When it did occur in films made for a mass market, it was exceptional (usually if the protagonist was a black man, the ‘white’ female might have been of Chinese or Tibetan origin). Possibly, it would not have been unfair to have expected white South Africans, as fellow Africans, to have applied higher standards of non-racism in relation to native black Africans than one found in the dominant media discourse of the United States or Britain at the time. But during the 1980s reform period, one could not have expected the SABC to cause trouble for the government by infuriating either the nationally racist sensitivities of the Afrikaner right-wing, or the sensitivities of large numbers of English-speaking petty bourgeoisie who liked to take their cue from what some critics have described, as the international cultural hegemony of the United States (Mattelart, 1979).

As far as ethnic programming via TV2/3 is concerned, anti-apartheid critics were in no doubt, that this had more to do with the government’s political imperatives, than with any of the arguments for its justification - that in pursuance of a divide-and-rule policy it was a strategy to magnify and mould cultural differences amongst South African blacks. The
National Party’s ethnic policy was seen to be subtly camouflaged to appear as something necessary for the ‘protection’ existing cultural, language, and historical diversities (see Tomaselli RE et al, 1989). Nevertheless, the situation is too complex to attribute the incidence and persistence of all unnecessary separate advertising to the SABC alone. Though the SABC as gatekeeper was in a strong position to discourage change, it was never alone in doing so. In view of the large sums spent on TV advertising, monopoly capitalist advertisers were always in a strong position to influence, if not dictate, their media requirements. But no consensus ever existed, as advertisers (corporations large and small), were generally too terrified and intimidated to offer any resistance to the SABC. Demand for commercial time on the white petty bourgeois TV1 channel always far exceeded the amount available. After deregulation according to free market principles, in 1987, the power of the SABC to intimidate advertisers, (through interpretation of its various rules in respect of the allocation of advertising time, so that the compliant advertisers might be favoured at the expense of any recalcitrant ones), was probably reduced. But by and large, many advertisers were also quite willing to accept conditions offered by the SABC, because they did not fully disagree with the generally held ethnic conception of the marketing situation.

As will be pointed in Chapter 6, apartheid in advertising also originated from deeper, residual structural causes. These included entrenched views about the racial nature of the South African market, still shared by much the marketing profession. It has not always been easy for the researcher to discern what was purely apartheid and what was sound marketing practice in South Africa. According to Tim Bester, deputy chairman of the South African branch of McCann-Erikson, one of the largest global advertising agencies in the United States:

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151 On the political level, the process of substantive changes at the SABC only gathered momentum after 1994. The form of ‘deregulation’ which is being referred to here was consistent with calls from the business sector during the 1980s for reduced government controls in the economy (Wassenaar, 1977). Prior to 1987, the SABC had only paid commission to accredited advertising agencies, but subsequently non-accredited agencies and even clients placing directly could get commission or rebate. Also, time slots would no longer be allocated at fixed rates but sold on a supply and demand basis (see ‘Creative Media Buying’, Advertising Supplement, Financial Mail, 21 August 1987:57-9; ‘Change of Signal’, Financial Mail, 27 February, 1987:95; ‘Cost of Freedom’, Financial Mail, 6 February 1987:83).
One has to recognise differences not because one is making a racial statement, but because the differences are relevant to the selling of the product (*The Star*, 18 February 1986, p13).

As a responsible advertising practitioner, Bester, might not have been faulted for taking such differences into regard at the time, if these were critical to the optimum realisation of a marketing strategy. However, post-apartheid advertisers also need to be duty-bound not to perpetuate those rigidities that unnecessarily underpinned and reinforced apartheid culture. In this light, it is interesting to note the same Tim Bester’s marked change of tone in a interview two and a half years later\(^\text{152}\), where he argued with equal conviction for a position diametrically opposed to his earlier one:

Because racial ‘differences’ are our start point, through the population registration act, we then seek to justify differences between races. I question this logic and this process on moral, ethical and political grounds, not to mention its applicability to effective marketing (*Saturday Star*, October 22 1988, p11).

A yardstick for evaluating what was in fact apartheid in advertising could be: a) whether only one advertising campaign for that particular product, in one language, might possibly have communicated to the whole market; and b) whether the emergence of such a campaign was prevented by the SABC and/or prejudice or lack of initiative on the part of marketers. It seems that the SABC’s policies would eventually be reviewed and revised, if they came under consistent and sustained criticism. Relaxation of restrictions was gradual, but in a context of much uncertainty amongst marketing and advertising institutions about what the norms should be, the SABC’s claim that it was keeping up with changing norms, was not entirely unfounded. On the whole, it cannot be denied that after the mid-1980s restrictions were considerably relaxed from when commercial television first started in January 1978. TV4, introduced in early 1987 to compete with M-Net, a privately owned pay service using SABC transmitters, consistently screened multi-racial programmes (*Benson, The Cosby’s, The Jefferson’s* etc.), and may to some

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extent have also been intended to make up for the shortcoming of TV2/3 with regard to English speaking urban blacks (Tomaselli KG, 1986b).

The pace of change at the SABC was probably one which could have been influenced a lot more strongly by marketing and advertising institutions, had they felt more strongly about it earlier. The SABC, along with the Advertising Agencies Association, and Newspaper Publishers Union (NPU), were party to the advertising industry’s self-regulatory body --the Advertising Standards Authority. The fact that there continued to be some friction between advertisers and the SABC on apartheid-related issues, is further indication that at a higher state level (government/monopoly capital), advertising-related problems were not seriously considered. This dispels conspiratorial notions that ‘total strategy’ can have existed as far as product advertising is concerned. Given that so many sacred cows of petty apartheid (‘hurtful’) had already been slaughtered, the abolition of some of the seemingly apartheid-related regulations of the SABC, might have seemed a trivial sacrifice.

The SABC had always maintained that its regulations had little to do with apartheid. As was pointed out previously, Mersham (1985) had argued in support of the SABC’s ethnic programming policy by claiming that it was in line with the existing ethnic topography of South African society, and thus necessary for ‘culturally authentic’ communication to take place. Advertisers failed to produce equally cogent arguments to the contrary. The Meyer Commission Report (197[)] never received any formidable contestation sponsored by the business sector.

By 1988, developments at the SABC were indeed beginning to follow a more democratic course, according to Owen Mundel153:

> The recession was wonderful for the industry, the best thing that ever happened. First it got rid of all the rubbish. A lot of people and agencies disappeared almost overnight. Then it converted our television situation

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153 Owen Mundel was one of the original founders of what became the ‘Grey Group’ of advertising agencies. He later left to start up his own advertising agency under the name of mundels.
from a State-run TV with commercials to a commercial TV station. At some stage during the recession, a memo went around SABC-TV. It was unsigned and it merely said: ‘make Profits’. I think it must have come from God. From then on, SABC-TV started behaving itself. It discovered demand driven rates and threw the service open to anything - 10 second spots, 20 second, 30 seconds, whatever. Creatively it was magnificent” (Advertising Supplement, *Financial Mail*, 8 July 1988:29-30).

In cases where a product was bought by a broad cross-section of consumers, the SABC should ideally have maintained a laissez-faire policy. Advertisers should have been permitted to broadcast whatever commercials they wished, provided such commercials conformed to the advertising code of ethics to which the SABC also subscribed. Overall consumer reactions to their brands would soon have taught marketers the real parameters they had to observe. By virtue of ‘market democracy the supermarket cash register could have been the ballot box for their brands. However, where a product or service had a limited target market, this principle might not have applied because a commercial could be offensive to large groups of people who would not be able to express their disapproval by withholding their patronage as buyers. Such was the case in 1991, with a commercial broadcast on TV1 to market the IGI Group’s medical insurance scheme. This commercial was cruelly offensive in its portrayal of rural blacks, who did not constitute part of the target market for IGI’s medical insurance services.154

By 1991, in the context of a government that had committed itself to negotiations with all parties for a new constitution, political pressures to democratise its operations could no longer be resisted by the SABC. For the first time in its history, the SABC appointed an African, Madala Mphahlele, (ex-employee of the Lintas advertising agency), to a

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154 A young white woman motorist was depicted being seriously injured in an accident in some isolated African locale. She was rescued by rural black people and taken to a rural black hospital from where she was airlifted by helicopter to more sophisticated First World attention. The underlying concept of this advertisement is not in itself flawed. However, the manner of execution of the idea or direction of the commercial suffered from a rather stupid form of racist clumsiness or so called ‘swart gevaar’ prejudice. The drama of peril was further heightened (an aspect already sufficiently established with the depiction of the accident) by creating the suggestion that IGI were timeously delivering the patient from rural black medical staff whose level of competence was potentially dangerous. In my opinion a very dubious and unnecessary attempt was made to persuade the white upmarket target audience with the use of a particular (and at the time politically most unwelcome) brand of fear. A more effective execution could have been devised by depicting the caring nature of the rural black staff and at the same time emphasising that ‘goodwill’ for IGI medical insurance reached to even the most remote hospitals.
powerful executive post. Incredible as it may in retrospect seem, his task was to oversee the merging of TV2/3 and TV4 into one channel:

My job is going to be to design a channel that meets the imagination of all South Africans -- whatever their race, colour, sex or class (New Nation, April 26 May 2 1991:10).

The still cumbersomely integrated TV2/3/4 unit was destined to become Contemporary Community Values Television (CCV-TV), in 1992. These developments amounted to a dramatic reversal of earlier policy. The road before these seemingly very logical requirements could be met was a long and torturous one.

One must conclude, that the SABC’s restrictions, although important should not be seen as entirely dominant. The perpetuation of apartheid through product advertising and the various forms of racial stereotyping it supported, needs to be considered in terms of the entire marketing, advertising production, and broadcasting processes. It was never the SABC alone holding back innovative advertising strategies and new milestones in popular South African idiom. It should not be forgotten that there were also other media with which the South African consumer could be reached, newspapers, magazines and billboards. The press, especially, was substantially controlled by powerful private sector interests which at the time were ostensibly critical of the government’s slow pace of reform. Powerful South African corporations could easily have paralysed the SABC’s ethnic policy by temporarily diverting or even threatening to divert some of their advertising to other media. However, the order of hegemony in South Africa has been such that governments have been free to perform within their given parameters as they see fit and, only very rarely has open confrontation with capital occurred.
Chapter 5

Political Dimensions of Reform as an Influence on Advertising

With the government's attempt to build an affluent, though voteless elite -- however half-hearted and insincere it seems to those inside the ‘black laager’-- came the private sector's mad scramble to corner 'the black market'. The black market really opened up in 1982, when the SABC launched separate television channels for blacks in Nguni and Sotho languages to complement the Afrikaans and English language TV channel for, whites and, since the new constitution, for Coloureds and Indians (Frederikse, 1986:62).

An important apartheid-related issue with regard to advertising in the P.W. Botha reform era revolved around an unsubstantiated contention by some left-wing intellectuals, as encapsulated by Frederikse (1986), that monopoly capital (both English and Afrikaner) and the government might in some way have been conspiring to use product advertising as one of the ingredients of so called ‘Total Strategy’ (see Tomaselli and Louw, 1989).

It was suspected by some anti-apartheid media activists that advertising in South Africa might somehow be playing an active part in the creation of a new 'black middle class' (see also Frederikse et al, 1989). Various theories about the ideological role of advertising in this regard have already been examined in an earlier chapter. This thesis takes it for granted that advertising maintains a climate of consumption amongst its selected subjects. If (as has generally been the case) this ideological role of advertising is seen as a 'function' (Sinclair 1987:24-25), should one see such a 'function' as having been a somewhat passive one during the era of reform in the 1980s? Or were there any actual intentions to include product advertising in any plan such as 'Total Strategy'? In other words can one attribute conspiratorial leanings in the use of product advertising during any of the phases of reform? Frederikse (1986) does not explain the exact structural relationship between what she calls 'the government's attempt to build an affluent, though voteless-- elite' and "the private sector's mad scramble to corner ‘the black market’". However, by saying that the one came with the other, it is suggested by implication that

155 See footnote No.12 in the Introduction to this thesis for an explanation about 'Total Strategy'.
there might have been some degree of conspiracy to use advertising to facilitate this co-option process.

In actual fact the growing interest of the private sector in the 'black market' has its roots in the 1970s and thus considerably preceded the P.W. Botha government's co-option plans. These circumstances (which will be examined in the following chapter) suggest that the growing economic interest in blacks as consumers was the result of a type of structural change which was more of an organic order than conspiratorial.

When the new black TV channels were introduced in 1982, there was certainly no 'mad scramble' to use commercial time on these strictly enforced ethnic channels. It has already been pointed out in Chapter 4 that there was some resistance because ethnic channels did not exactly meet advertisers specified needs. As will be discussed below, there are several reasons why any theory purporting that product advertising could have intentionally been used to 'create' black middle classes in South Africa, either in the short or long term, should be treated with some scepticism. A study of the historical role of advertising in relation to twentieth century industrialisation and monopolisation (Pope, 1983), suggests that this 'chemistry of capitalism' occurs organically, and that other ingredients also have to be present for such social transformation to take place. Sinclair (1987:31) points out that the alleged capacity of advertising to propel economic growth is questionable, on the empirical grounds that advertising has not achieved the alleged ability to manage demand, that growth has not been a continuous outcome, and that demand has ultimately been limited by the distribution of income across the class system. Obviously, the mere psychic impact of the consumerist ideology of advertising ('consumerisation of the psyche' as Ewen (1976) calls it), cannot alone guarantee that the material trappings of petty bourgeois culture will automatically follow on a significantly large scale. Up to the end of the 20th century, from examples in numerous countries, what also seems to have been present has been an export driven economic dynamism based upon manufactured goods. From these past histories such economic dynamism usually comes with education levels and culture which complement and propel labour and/or consumption requirements. It might be possible to postulate that because the world
now finds itself in a post-Fordist mode of production, 'information age' and so on, these above criteria no longer really apply. But such 'postmodernist' arguments are still speculative and may well prove to be incorrect.

Some critics seem to have read 'co-option' as one of the elements of 'reform as a political discourse,' and thus as part and parcel of what was considered to be an inadequate response by capital and the state in addressing the problem of equitable wealth redistribution. It was perceived that a small emerging black middle class could be co-opted as a buffer against the black working classes and growing numbers of unemployed (Frederikse, 1986). Also, it is possible that the psychological effects of some advertising during the 1980s, whether or not directly so intended, may have been promoting middle class values and aspirations amongst the urban working classes in competition with, or to counter the more radical or socialist-oriented cultural output of organisations such as the United Democratic Front and labour federations like the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Halt, 1988). However, as will be outlined below, even this assertion has somewhat problematic implications.

Consumer advertising may have been contributing to the raising of aspirations/expectations which could not be met, thus exacerbating rather than deflecting a conflict situation. If product advertising (advertising which sells branded consumer goods or services), is considered to be a 'superstructural' activity, it must be one whose relationship with the economic base is particularly direct (see Williams, [1960] 1980:34-35). For this reason, unless accompanied by an economic miracle (which seemed an increasingly unlikely prospect), attempts to use product advertising to create a 'black middle class' or class-mobile aspirations, would have amounted to little more than a sham which was bound to fail. The resulting consequences for the survival of capitalism in South Africa could have been dire (Molt, 1988). For what might be called 'a state of consumption hegemony' to operate successfully, there no doubt has to be a sound relationship between the degree of deception of advertising (if one should so call it) and what economic conditions can actually deliver. Without a significantly growing percentage of 'black township Joneses' driving new cars to work each year, how long
could 'people next door' harbour aspirations for upward mobility? Already, by the mid-1980s, there were indications that the very limited social mobility which was taking place was regarded as counter-revolutionary by a fair number of black people. Interestingly, by the mid-1990's, after democratic elections and the installment of a government of national unity, placards in a demonstration in Pietermaritzburg by members of less advantaged communities were calling 'for a chicken in every pot and a car in every driveway'.

In support of her study of the role of advertising in relation to reform, Frederikse (1986) interviewed several South African advertising practitioners who confirmed the 'black embourgeoisement' scenario in no uncertain terms. The most interesting of these interviews is with Nick Tredoux, who had been an adept communicator via Radio Bantu to the in certain respects, artificially fragmented 'black market'. In this interview Tredoux not only gives a revealing glimpse of the possible utility of television advertising to the reform scenario, but also confirms almost every suspicion which was held by the Left about the role advertising is supposed play in relation to capitalism generally. Tredoux's statements to Frederikse seem to have been interpellated within a discourse which at the time was trying to sell advertising itself to corporate capital, as well as to the government:

...showing what the capitalist society has to offer and hopefully doing it in such a way that they can identify with the aspiration which is involved (Frederikse 1986:66).

When one reads Tredoux's statements carefully one gets the impression that he might perhaps be showing off His statements are intended to resonate within pre-constructed public and business perceptions of the institutional practices in which he is interpellated. He thus appears to be keen to create publicity for himself and his own advertising business, At the same time, his answers fit in just too neatly with what then used to be the Left's critique of advertising.

One must bear in mind precedents in advertising history where practitioners used their interviews as a means of self-promotion. One notable instance, was Vance Packard's
interviews with Ernest Dichter in the 1950s (Packard, 1957; Mayer, 1958; Dichter, 1960). It would not have been difficult for advertising practitioners to adapt time-worn debates about advertising to the context of the South African crisis. One should proceed with caution before interpreting such suggestions as conclusive evidence of the existence of some 'officially planned' approach to use advertising, specifically product advertising, as part of reform strategy.

Critics of advertising tend to overlook the fact that notwithstanding the possible overall social effects of 'advertising', the quest to actually achieve any specific human response with an advertising campaign is in fact a rather optimistic endeavour, which is very exacting and fraught with difficulty. It is still sometimes believed by professional marketers that as much as "half of all advertising money is wasted" (Pope, 1983; Sinclair 1985). In spite of advances in market research tracking techniques, many unquantifiable variables remain, which can influence the performance of a product in the marketplace. Thus, to some extent, the problem remains one of 'not knowing which half of advertising money is wasted. Only in the case of 'direct response' advertising, where coupons on different versions of an advertisement can be keyed and the respondents physically counted (Caples, 1978), can there be any reliable objective measure of the effectiveness of advertisements. An advertising campaign which is strategically flawed or executionally inept, might cause more harm than good to the branding of a product, service, or institution (O'Toole, 1981). Therefore, advertising practitioners miss no opportunity to reassure advertisers that advertising actually works, and determinist criticism of advertising (e.g., Ewen, 1976) obviously makes this task a little bit easier.

When trying to assess the possible ideological effects of 'advertising' it is important to bear in mind that this term includes various types of publicity. The different types of advertising need to be distinguished from each other. Classified advertising, which is placed by private persons in local newspapers, ranks relatively low on the scale of ideological content. Retail advertising for consumer goods by supermarket chains, usually has a lower ideological content than branded product advertising, because it usually focuses on price. However, with increasing emphasis by supermarket chains in
the latter half of the 1980s, on their positioning vis-a-vis post-apartheid society, retail advertising during the reform era became considerably more ideological than is usually the case (see following chapter).

When critics talk of 'advertising' they are usually referring to brand advertising for consumer goods. But consumer goods advertising is by no means easily amenable to additional intentional direct communication objectives -- of ideological issues. The most successful and effective advertisements are those which have honed down the 'product benefit' to a single communication idea.

Consumer goods or product advertising also needs to be distinguished from other forms such as corporate advertising, issue advertising, public service advertising, or political advertising. Some form of 'ideological' objective or other is the primary and intended purpose of the message in these latter forms. The intention is to change or sell ideas rather than bring about the purchase manufactured goods or services (Garbett, 1981). Although the ideological output of consumer goods advertisements does consist of a general reinforcement of the bourgeois consumer discourse, this usually occurs through the connotation of subsidiary meanings (Chapter 2).

A few points need to be specified here about public service advertising. Though usually also produced by advertising agencies, public service advertising consists of specific communications by central or local government agencies, or perhaps non-government organisations (NGOs), and is aimed at the public for information purposes. In order to gain attention, public service advertising often uses techniques similar to those used for advertising branded goods or services of private sector companies. The purposes of public service advertisements are in principle socially inclined, but this form of advertising should by no means be viewed as ideologically neutral. It can at times provide a powerful vehicle for state propaganda (see Myers, 1987).

With respect to direct political advertising and public service advertising, if compared with advanced industrial democracies, the government sector in South Africa had not in
fact been spending very much money during the earlier apartheid eras. This did change to some extent in the P.W. Botha era, around the mid-1980s. In some respects, the government political advertising campaigns preceding the 1983 referendum for the New Constitution\textsuperscript{156}, the 1986 general elections, the 'Together We'll Build a Better Future' television and print campaigns, seem indicative of a desire on the part of the government to emulate the methods of advanced industrial democracies (perhaps desperately identifying with former friends by trying to communicate with the same ideological language, 'advertising'?). Also, as has been pointed out in an earlier chapter, the P.W. Botha government in the 1980's was trying to move to ideological means of maintaining social control instead of the earlier dependence upon repressive apparatuses. But at the same time there also seems to have been some hesitancy and scepticism about the worth of advertising. Paul Vorster (1986:27-42) points out:

After its innovative use of political advertising during the 1983 Referendum campaign, the National Party disappeared from the scene as far as employing advertising as a mode of political communication is concerned. This is disconcerting since the public is eagerly waiting for announcements regarding continued political reform.

Indeed, at that stage, there did not seem to be any growing realisation or confidence by the government in the efficacy of advertising as a tool which might have contributed to social control. It was mostly South African offices of internationally affiliated advertising agencies advocating the use of advertising to a still sceptical government.

Later however, the Bureau for Information advertising campaign for the 1988 municipal elections, did have a very precise strategy aimed at countering boycotts and legitimising racist political structures (see Tomaselli RE, 1989). This campaign has some interesting characteristics which are worth discussing briefly. At this 'particular historical conjuncture', separate advertisements for white with ethnically stereotyped versions for

\textsuperscript{156} Davenport (1991:433) refers to government advertising for the New Constitution as: "an unprecedented propaganda onslaught on the electorate by the Government, through full-page advertisements in all of the country's national and local newspapers, and full use of SABC television". This result of the referendum amongst whites was a two-thirds majority in favour of the New Constitution.
blacks (with entailing 'structured absences'), would have been both rejected by the main
target audience as well as immediately pounced upon by critics. By turning to a concept
popularised by Walt Disney, the Bureau for Information and their advertising agencies
devised a communication solution which even transcended 'structured absences'. As these
elections traversed all 'population groups' and Houses of Parliament, the state extricated
itself from racial imagery by using squirrels talking to each other in a tree about the
desirability of elections and voting. This gave the utterly false impression of a single
election in a unitary state in which everyone, regardless of race, would be able to
participate. It hid the fact that each 'population group' was exhorted to vote for what were
then known as ‘own’ (racially separated) institutions in racially demarcated ‘Group
Areas’, each subordinate to the white 'own affairs' administration, but separately
administered by 'white', 'coloured', 'Indian' and ‘black’ administrations.

The squirrels solution probably grew organically out of the vexed problems of
communicating effectively and in an uncontroversial way to a diverse South African
audience. A television commercial on SABC-TV for Trust Bank (circa July 1990) also
utilised squirrels, which probably goes to demonstrate the proven utility of this
advertising concept. While continuing to concentrate on 'preferred sectors' of the market,
it appears that this bank which was owned by Afrikaner capital was at pains in the 1980s
point out that it would serve the needs of customers 'irrespective of colour and creed'.

One might note that there seems to be a residue of editorial bias in this above-quoted
Financial Mail article, somewhat reminiscent of the 'Van der Merwe joke genre'.
Rightly or wrongly this article tends to stereotype Afrikaners as lower middle class,
parochial country bumpkins, who might slowly be finding their feet in a traditionally
English-speaking activity such as banking.

Animal imagery was also used to tackle the controversial issue of family planning in
South Africa in a non-racial way. Family planning in South Africa has been a

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158 The Van der Merwe jokes centred on a word-of-mouth comical character who depicted supposed
     Afrikaner idiosyncrasies.
controversial issue, because while the white population growth rate from the 1970s onwards was very slow or in decline, black population growth was very rapid. Even a conservative black leader such as Chief Buthelezi had in the past consistently urged his followers to have as many children as possible, as an increased black population would be the ultimate weapon against whites. A commercial on TV1 (circa November, 1990), by what appeared to be a non-governmental organisation, (but possibly a front set up by the government with the intention appearing neutral), made a comparison between a depiction of the regality of a lioness with her cubs and a depiction of a larger hyena family which appeared to be derelict and scavenging. A male voice-over explained the material benefits of smaller families. Approaches such as this were probably designed to navigate all the vexed problems of racial stereotyping in South Africa. However, it is doubtful whether animal imagery can exclusively or indefinitely be resorted to without it losing its communication and persuasive effectiveness. It is common knowledge within professional advertising circles, that advertisements have the tendency to become staid and boring when the same approach is used too often. Maximum effectiveness requires constant innovation or 'repetition with variation' (Bogart, 1996: 194-6).

As pointed out above, the increasing utilisation of direct political advertising by the government in the 1980s, followed on the heels of some heavy canvassing. Many advertising practitioners welcomed the opportunity to play an active role in the state reform programme. Lucrative government contracts ('accounts') could do a lot to boost agency billings, as well as reassure the ego of what in some respects remains an insecure profession. One must remember that this was the same era when the Saatchi and Saatchi advertising agency in Britain had propelled itself to international acclaim by supposedly helping Margaret Thatcher defeat the Labour Party.

Advertising practitioners around the world temporarily began to believe that they could indeed work miracles. Goaded on by such overseas acclaim, the South African advertising industry kept up a steady pressure during the 1980s to persuade an initially unenthusiastic Afrikaner Nationalist government, to advertise more. It is possible that the
use of advertising to sell the New Constitution might have been directly recommended to P.W. Botha by Mrs. Thatcher herself. The advertising was placed by an affiliate of Saatchi & Saatchi in South Africa. The clarity and directness of some of these particular advertisements has never been surpassed, and suggests they may have been the work of some of the same highly skilled individuals who had worked on Mrs. Thatcher's 1979 general election campaign. But it might also be noted that the tracts of advice by South African advertising executives in this period, echo an earlier South African tradition, where organic intellectuals of capital played a part in translating the interests of the class to which they attached themselves (Bozolli. 1981). But now, alas, such intellectuals were trying to re-articulate the changing needs of South African capitalism in a new era. According to Darryl Phillips, executive chairman of what used to be a somewhat boastful and bombastic advertising agency 159, called the Grey Group of advertising agencies:

In essence, the government quite simply has to sell 'reform' as a commodity, a consumer product which will add something to the lives of its adherents much like any other product they purchase. When considered in this light, the problem of making change acceptable to the electorate is immediately cast in very simple dimensions. It becomes apparent that classical marketing and communication techniques have to be put to work. While the product being 'sold' is somewhat more esoteric and crucial than soap powder or fast foods, the techniques remain the same. As with any other product, the first aspect of marketing that the manufacturer has to consider is which of his product qualities are most likely to evoke consumer response. Looking at 'reform' as a product, I would postulate that it offers peace and prosperity (Phillips, 1985:77-79).

Phillips was advocating the direct use of advertising to sell reform. He was perhaps indirectly making what in advertising jargon, would be called a 'pitch' for this 'account'. He was not alone. Rob Irving of J Walter Thompson, also published in the popular press on the subject. These articles are reductionist in the extreme, assuming that all that was needed was a legitimate product ('reform' as opposed to 'apartheid'), and a sales pitch to convince South Africans and foreigners alike that the new product could be 'sold'.

The controversial 'Together We'll Build A Brighter Future' (1986)\(^{160}\) campaign commissioned by the Bureau for Information, and which at the time cost an astronomical R8.7 million ($4.5 million), was indeed based quite closely on the thinking in articles written by Phillips and Irving. This campaign used about 50 black and white singers in a television studio to communicate the idea of peace, harmony and 'integration'. But 'Together ...' would probably never have seen the light of day had it not been for the subsequently deepening political crisis, in whose aftermath -- consequent on the state's reassertion of its hegemony through return to more severe forms of repression -- an ameliorating gesture was needed. As much as to impress people in black townships, this extravaganza could well have also been obliquely aimed at providing the Reagan administration with something to reassure the US Congress with about the South African government's good intentions. The crucial South African sanctions bill was being debated in the US Congress at the time.

In either event, 'Together...' failed miserably. In South Africa, the song encountered massive and sustained criticism from both the liberal English and government supporting Afrikaans Presses. This was exacerbated by subsequent bombings of the houses belonging to some of the black singers. Others dissociated themselves from the project, once they became aware of the extent of popular resentment over the music video's orientation with government strategy.

‘Together...’ is perhaps characteristic of the inconsistency in the attempts by government departments to use 'public service' advertising during the reform era. The so-called Bureau of Information had not even budgeted television fighting time, and was surprised when the SABC demanded payment for fighting the song. Had it been seriously planned that ‘Together...’ should play an important role in transforming South Africa into a Western style democracy, a more consistent and sustained advertising approach would have been required. Also, prior co-operation between the government and private

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\(^{160}\) This campaign was launched in the gloomy period of after the 1985 imposition of a State of Emergency which sanctioned draconian measures for the quelling of opposition to the government. But for a few short lapses, this State of Emergency continued to be renewed from 1985 until 1990.
enterprise over many years would have needed to have been assured. The various
e.xamples of government sponsored reform publicity published, fell very short of
anything of this nature. Several campaigns would have been needed to run concurrently,
addressing different areas of concern. The complex but yet fairly coherent
communication strategy that is examined in the case study on television advertising for
Castle Lager, is such an example. However, the development of a reformist message in
the Castle Lager campaign took place after the schism between the P.W. Botha
government and English-dominated capital, and the ideological content of this message
seems to suggests that a relationship was developing between capital and the ANC.

A good example of the lack of any communication strategy during this period must be the problematic
public image of the South African Police and Defence Forces. In spite of the difficult 'public relations
problems faced, recruitment-cum-image campaigns handled by advertising agencies for the army or police,
were notably absent in the 1980s. Equally absent were the health services, the Department of Manpower,
and many other government departments which should conceivably have been communicating to the public
with the immediacy and impact which advertising is supposed to provide. For example, it is remarkable
that in the United Kingdom, where there is no military conscription, advertising campaigns were
successfully used during the 1970s and 1980s to form a common consensus that employers preferred
prospective candidates with four years experience in the armed forces to those with degrees from
universities.

In South Africa, there had been growing resistance amongst white South African, youth
to extended military service, necessitated especially by war in Namibia, and proxy wars
being fought for the West within the context of Cold War strategy, in Angola and
Mozambique. But little attempt was made to counter pacifist resistance by 'selling' the
armed forces with professionally produced advertising. In fact, one advertisement by the
South African Defence Force which appeared in a Durban newspaper, suggests that it
might have been an 'in house' attempt by advertising amateurs within the armed forces.
This advertisement was completely inconsistent with the history of military advertising
and war propaganda produced in the advanced industrial democracies. It strangely adopts
a self-defeatist rather than persuasive approach -- openly conceding all the negative
implications of military service, without in any sense proposing any real benefits such
experience might provide for individuals concerned. It merely calls upon youth to stand
up and do their duty in spite of the unpleasantness of the task!
'Public service' advertising by the various government departments would certainly have created an impression of stability -- that is, if the services or benefits were offered to all the public, not just whites and co-opted black, Indian and coloured allies in the Tricameral Parliament and the homelands. The first South African AIDS advertising campaign in 1988 is an example to the contrary, but this also followed on the heels of AIDS advertising in all the advanced industrial democracies, with, which it could possibly have been displayed side by side in forums where post-modern trivia are displayed and discussed, implicitly communicating that South Africa, in spite of all the apartheid nonsense, was after all a civilised country. And yet South Africa had for years been plagued by bilharzia, rabies, tuberculosis, kwoshiakor and cholera, all affecting poor blacks who certainly would have benefited through information and education about these diseases, yet no systematic researched effort was ever made to use advertising to achieve this.

The development of the first South African AIDS campaign by the McCann-Erickson advertising agency typically followed a 'white market' and a 'black market' approach, thus necessitating two campaigns. It was apparently felt that a 'hard-hitting' approach playing upon fear would be rejected by whites, as this had apparently been the case in the advanced industrial democracies. For the black market, however, it was presumed that the campaign could be 'harder-hitting'. Therefore, both TV and print commercials for blacks depicted death fairly directly: a sheeted figure on the screen; a coffin being lowered into a grave in the print ad:

The disease was explained, for the benefit of the less sophisticated and less educated in the target market, in simple terms. And the message was put in directly and easily understood terms, modified for the black population by including a reference to ‘rituals that involve bleeding’ (Financial Mail, Advertising Supplement, 8 July 1988: 72^161)

The print advert which was mostly displayed as a poster in pharmacies features a coffin being lowered with white ropes into a hole in the ground, shot dramatically from above, This photograph is meticulously styled and art-directed. The viewer's eye is drawn to a
white-garbed black priest facing the coffin and looking up, as if to heaven. This priest forms the head of a circle of pall-bearers and mourners, all of whom are black. All are dressed in black, with two holding open black umbrellas. The racial stereotypes in this advert are mediated through signs of dress, hair styling, body language, and general demeanour that one would associate with ethnic black middle classes. The advertising agency obviously did not believe that the selected target market of this advertisement would have expected an AIDS victim amongst their ranks to have any white mourners at his/her funeral. Rather than overtly reformist, this poster is ethnographically accurate in content and form, but the fact that government bureaucracy apparently considered it its responsibility to warn black people about AIDS could be interpreted as reformist.

Save for these few exceptions, it would seem that no consensus (and possibly no funds) existed for the consistent use of direct advertising to lubricate social engineering goals required by reform. The human resources and accumulated propaganda expertise and culture required to make such a task practicable, are not readily available in developing countries, where historical precedent and experience in this field usually is more limited than in the advanced industrial states. Available talents and skills tend to be drawn away and utilised in tasks that are considered more urgent than ideological production.

Thus, given this general equivocation in the direct use of more directly ideologically-motivated advertising as part of reform strategy, it would be incorrect to impute that some conspiracy had been hatched between capital and the state to use product advertising to achieve some such ancillary goal. Both government and capital viewed the formation of a black middle class as very important (Saunders, 1986), but the government and sectors of Afrikaner capital, suffered from a dilemma of wanting a black middle class and the preservation of ethnicity and spatial differentiation at the same time. As pointed out in Chapter 4, according to P.W. Botha, free enterprise was a way to create black middle classes amongst the nations (sic) of South Africa, and thereby lay the foundation for resisting communism" (Quoted in Mann, 1986; Posel, 1987). English-speaking monopoly capital interests were more ambivalent about whether this black middle class...
should been "amongst the nations of South Africa (a National Party euphemism for both the 'independent' and 'self governing' bantustans). But at the time there were limits to how strongly the private sector was prepared to rock the boat. While English-dominated monopoly capital unequivocally rejected apartheid, its success owed much to the apartheid relations of production (Legassick, 1974; Clarke. 1978). As has been pointed out in the case study on Castle Lager in Chapter 7, by 1985, the communications contained in beer advertisements were becoming particularly probing of the limitations of apartheid broadcasting and social restrictions. This development seems indicative of the growing schism between English-speaking capital and the Afrikaner Nationalist run government. Rather than being part of a 'total strategy', the overall cultural identification of beer advertising from 1985 onwards, suggests an incipient realignment taking place towards the ideological position of the main currents of the ANC.

If anything, the 'ethnic imperatives' of the state were a serious inhibiting factor making it more difficult for advertising in South Africa to perform what according to neo-Marxists is its ideological function of creating a consumerist mass culture – ‘consumerisation of the psyche’. But it is quite unlikely that such 'theoretical' issues were ever considered, let alone resolved. The various highly publicised conferences which took place between the state under P.W. Botha and the private sector after 1979, would have been the ideal forum for such issues to be sorted out. But advertising practitioners themselves were not invited to these conferences until 1987.¹⁶² Also, as will be shown below, despite their advocacy for the use of advertising in reform strategy, the advertising fraternity did not (save for perhaps Nick Tredoux in his interview with Julie Frederikse in 1986), possess all that much perspicacity on these issues.

In the 1987 conference their most urgent concern had been to persuade or educate the government about the importance of the advertising industry to the economic and social infrastructure, so that the General Sales Tax (GST) burden upon advertising could be eased. South Africa was apparently the only country in the capitalist world where all

advertising was being taxed regardless of whether or not it formed any part of production and distribution costs. The imposition of GST on advertising in 1984 was followed by its rapid rise from 6% to 12%. This took place during an acutely recessionary period, which all but lent a death blow to an advertising industry which in South Africa, operates on lower margins of profit than, in advanced industrial states. This taxation resulted in the already narrow margin of agency profits being further reduced. Few clients were at the time prepared to increase their advertising budgets any further, having already done so several times to cover the effects of inflation, on media costs. It is not an exaggeration to say that GST decimated the advertising industry, forcing weaker agencies out of the business altogether and the retrenchment of advertising personnel throughout the industry.  

According to Hennie Merck, executive chairman of the Advertising Agencies Association, who attended the 1987 conference between the private sector and the state:

> If we had started doing this [lobbying government] a few years earlier, we would not have had GST imposed on advertising. It is frightening that a lot of people in the government still believe advertising is a luxury that should be taxed out of the system. We have begun to make them appreciate that it is the flag bearer of free enterprise ('Fire Fighter', *Financial Mail* Advertising Supplement, 21 August 1987:8.).

The fact that GST was imposed on advertising at all, and in such a heavy-handed manner, indicates a genuine lack of enthusiasm or appreciation in government circles about any ideological role advertising is normally supposed to play in the advanced industrial states. It certainly does not indicate any awareness that product advertising could have contributed to reform strategy by indirectly helping to foster black middle classes through an expansion of the ‘consumer’ spectrum. If it was believed that advertising could have helped to co-opt blacks by inculcating them with middle class values, then surely advertising should have been exempted from GST so that it would be resorted to more extensively? The indiscriminate taxation of advertising is probably another example of lack of coordination during the P.W. Botha regime. Even though the possibilities for

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consumer product advertising to play a direct political role in the short term are most likely limited, all SABC broadcasting inhibitions to the achievement of non-ethnic black middle class stereotyping in advertisements, might have been removed. The failure to make even this rudimentary adjustment could stem from the misunderstanding which existed between government and corporate capital about the nature of the black middle classes. Due to the anomalous relationship between government and capital, reform contained an inherent contradiction to the interests of Afrikaner hegemony. This resulted in a serious dislocation with institutions such as advertising, which from an extended Althusserian perspective, might be considered to be a key point in the ‘Ideological State Apparatuses’ of the normally functioning bourgeois state.

**Conclusion**

It must be concluded that in spite of its consistent advocacy by the advertising industry, there was little that was 'total' (or wilfully co-ordinated with state interests) about the way this institution operated during much of the reform era. Criticism of South African consumer product advertising which suggests conspiratorial intentions is likely to be flawed. Claims which were being made by advertising practitioners at the time about the role advertising could play in advancing the reform process should not confuse the issue. These claims proved to be over-optimistic. Because when one examines the public service advertising or the political advertising of this period, its ideological contribution turns out to be an equivocal one. It appears that such advertising might have been resorted to by the state with reservations and uncertainty, and that many campaigns fell short of achieving any precise objectives.

In view of indecision and ambivalent intentions with regard to advertising which is intentionally ideological, caution should be exercised when examining the basis of the ideological role of product advertising. While product advertising undoubtedly plays a powerful role in disseminating petty bourgeois ideology, it should be distinguished from political advertising, public service advertising and corporate advertising. A crudely
conspiratorial reading of the ideological role of product advertising in South Africa to facilitate bantustan policy during the era when ethnic stereotyping was dominant should be avoided. Such a reading should also be avoided with regard to the latter 1980s reform selective black African co-option into the ruling classes during the reform period, when stereotypes began to change towards non-ethnic middle class portrayals, should be avoided.
Chapter 6

Structural Processes of Reform as an Influence on Advertising

Major capitalist groups, whether identified as ‘Afrikaner’, such as for instance Gencor, Sanlam, or English-dominated, such as Anglo American, or Barlows, owned most of the means of production and distribution in South Africa. Critics might sometimes have assumed that these groupings had direct control over the advertising of each of the individual companies in which their interests were vested. However, in the hustle and bustle of everyday marketing practice this matter is not quite so simple. Although stockholders (capital), through their boards of directors, may be able to influence general company policy, such as the recruitment of employees, the selection and appointment of advertising agencies, and so on, their influence over branded product advertising cannot be a very direct one, The practical realities of the situation dictate that even within ‘monopoly’ capitalism, companies still have to respond to a competitive business environment. It is not unknown for individual companies belonging to the same group, to compete against each other. It is also not common for different brands owned by the same company to be allowed to compete against each other. Thus, responses of companies (albeit sometimes limited to a few big corporations), to the situation on the ground, the marketing environment, are in practice, usually more direct and overriding than responses to any indefinite or general imperatives of political ideology from above. Undeniably, during the 1980s there was an underlying adherence amongst much of the business sector to a reformist genre in their business communications and employment practices (see Freund, 1986). This changing climate in business culture was bound to be reflected in advertisements. But this aspect is nonetheless fundamentally a contextual factor to which the marketing departments of companies and their advertising agencies were responding.

Brand advertising for consumer products by its very nature, cannot be a specifically political instrument. In practice, marketing managers and brand managers work from predetermined budgets. Among various other marketing costs, they have to pay for advertising, which sells products as effectively as possible. Their jobs hinge on their
ability to fulfil this purpose successfully. ‘Accounts’ stay with advertising agencies as long as this purpose is being met. It is most unlikely that there could have ever been a marketing brief which said anything like ‘create a black middle class’, nor is it likely that there ever could have been any brief to contest SABC policies for any political end. The overriding factor has always been the economic imperative. Ethnic racial stereotypes were resorted to by advertisers because marketing parameters and the design of broadcast and other media were framed within ethnic categories. Stereotyping within these categories was therefore believed to communicate as effectively as possible to whomever marketers wanted to communicate (see Mike Wells quote in Chapter 4).

Advertising practitioners did not generally contest ethnicity, simply because they were politically committed to reform. After having been forced to grudgingly accept exclusively ethnic black television channels, marketers and advertising agencies in South Africa contested SABC policies whenever these were clearly seen as a frustration to the most efficient method of carrying out their work, or if these policies stood in the way of getting as much sales mileage as possible from an advertising budget. It has already been pointed out in previous chapters, that the process of producing ethnic commercials required dubbing into the various vernacular languages. The fulfilment of the language requirement was paramount, if commercials were to be broadcast for the full range of TV2/3 scheduling. Regardless of whether or not advertisers made the full range of ethnic commercials to take up the cross-language scheduling, they were in effect helping to pay for it. But while the combined influences of structural reform and political imperatives of reform might have been encouraging marketers to move away from rigid ethnic categories, transition to non-ethnic stereotyping was also at the same time both structurally and politically impeded. From a purely marketing point of view (depending on the type of product in question) it would sometimes have been feasible to have just one non-racial commercial in English for everyone. In Chapter 8, the case study on Rama margarine shows that such an approach was being resorted to by Unilever from as early

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as 1978, prior to the introduction of the TV2/3 ethnic channels in 1982. It was only many years later, in 1992, that Rama was able to return to this approach.

Enforced language segregation of television channels often increased costs and complicated the process of making commercials. The fact that in the latter part of the P.W. Botha era, the advertising industry was directly represented at the annual conferences taking place between the business sector and the government might have brought about a better understanding about the desirability of a non-racial communication policy in advertisements, but it didn’t. The subject was no doubt quite complex and a need existed for the pros and cons of conflicting theories and approaches to be assessed and clarified. However, as was pointed out in the previous chapter, the advertising industry did not have the reform of ethnic broadcasting policy on its agenda at the 1987 conference.\textsuperscript{165} Hennie Klerck’s reference to advertising as “the flag bearer of free enterprise”, seemed to be appealing to the basic ‘communist onslaught’ discourse of the 1970’s and 1980’s.\textsuperscript{166} But it should not have been necessary to be defensive of the advertising industry at this basic level. In spite of the fact that South Africa was a predominantly monopoly capitalist controlled economy, Klerck did not readily seem to be able to lobby the interests of the advertising industry in terms of the important social and economic role usually attributed to it by liberal ideology.

Finally, it must not be overlooked that in some instances it is possible that separate advertising for different racial groups, and the separate media to make this possible, might have been financially rewarding for some advertising agencies. This factor might have encouraged some connivance in the support of residual apartheid structures. Separate media and separate advertising, (ethnic racial stereotyping) could cost the client more money, and was in some respects costly for the economy of the country. However, unlike GST, separate advertisements as an expense well-established and accepted, could

\textsuperscript{165} Financial Mail Advertising Supplement, 21 August 1987:8

\textsuperscript{166} ibid.
sometimes mean more profit to some agencies -- in production costs and media commissions.

**Advertising Production Practice and Interpellation**

From the point of view of professional communicators stereotypes constitute a convenient ‘shorthand’ communication technique, and are therefore important components for the structuring of messages. During the thinking processes which occur in the course of advertising creativity, stereotypes can be particularly helpful in facilitating the realisation of research-derived target audiences, into actual persons. In the ordinary sense of the word, there is certainly no *conspiracy* involved. The following quote from a primer of copywriting methodology, refers particularly to the stereotyping of women in television commercials. This revealing glimpse into how the interpellatory role of stereotypes comes about in everyday advertising text production practices, is more generally applicable:

> It is claimed we talk down to women and that the inanity of some of the promises we make insults their intelligence. It is true that many of the women in TV commercials are caricatures. But why? Because creative people use cliché characters as a kind of shorthand to indicate the category of person the product is for. Since you have only 30 seconds to make a sales point you can hardly build up an original many-faceted character in your ad (Crompton, 1979:103-105).

The interpellatory process is initiated through an urgent desire to address each individual member of a large audience. This leads to an intuitive resort to the use of stereotypes by copywriters and art directors, who work together as a team to come up with a solution to the advertising problem on hand (a creative brief normally outlines the advertising problem, research findings, and a suggested strategy). The stereotypes are drawn from the personal frames of reference of the people responsible for conceptualising the advertisements. Through the selection of a salient, though always limited truth, an appeal is made to what is felt to be the generally prevailing preconceptions about their target
audience. Through propagation via mass media, such ‘caricatures’\textsuperscript{167} or stereotypes are further generalised or reified, and made to seem the norm. The complex induction and training processes of these advertising personnel will have most likely ensured that their own frames of reference are couched within the dominant ideology of the bourgeois state -- that these individuals themselves have been suitably interpellated.

With regard to the above quote from Crompton (1979), it is also worth noting that advertisers in the advanced industrial states have often assumed women to be the main decision-makers in the purchase of most consumer products. In David Ogilvy’s (1986:96) words, “the consumer isn’t a moron; she is your wife”. This approach is consistent with dominant relations of production in advanced industrial society, which continue to relegate most women to supposedly unskilled and unpaid employment in domestic work, or, as in the case of blacks, to usually lower status and wages, if and when, they are drawn into the job market (Edwards, 1979:194-199).

At the level of advertisement conceptualisation, the same principle and motivation applies in the stereotyping or cliché characterisation of both sexes, as well as to various groups or classes. Stereotypes will usually be positive, because they are intended to represent what one might call an ‘ideal type’ of the target audience, at which an advertised product is primarily aimed. Such stereotypes will conform to prevailing petty bourgeois norms of what is considered laudatory. At the same time, it is well-appreciated within sophisticated communication practice that in reality, there is no such thing as an ‘average’ or ‘statistical’ person (Crompton, 1979). Thus, advertisement conceptualisers go a step further by replacing this stereotype of the ‘average person’, (representative of their target audience), with some living person they know. Thus, in formulating their message, they are able to mentally relate to a real person whom they believe fits their stereotypical bill, in essence a living stereotype (see Arlen, 1981)\textsuperscript{168}. It is quite unlikely for stereotypes to be overtly pejorative if they are intended to represent the target

\textsuperscript{167} A caricature being a more extreme version of a stereotype (Perkins, 1979)

\textsuperscript{168} In his book ‘Thirty Seconds’, Michael Arlen provides an outstanding ethnography of the making of a television commercial for AT&T.
audience for the sale of a product. Stereotypes which are less positive, or even pejorative, may sometimes also be used. This occurs in the characterisation of subsidiary roles, of people portrayed who do not feature in the target market, but help bring across some point about the product or facilitate its dramatisation. In this respect, the *Dixie Dishwashing Liquid* commercial discussed in Chapter 4, was primarily targeted at petty bourgeois whites. It may well have been taken into account that through audience overlap, (see below), this commercial would also reach black consumers. At that stage, black consumers might not have been presumed to decode their depiction as docile domestic servants, aberrantly. The creators of the *Dixie* commercial (and possibly also some black viewers), were probably oblivious to any pejorative aspects attached to this depiction.

**Advertising Communication Problems in South Africa**

As was argued in the previous chapter, possibly some people in the advertising industry had, so to speak, jumped on the band wagon, deluding themselves and others about seductive advertising methods that could be utilised to play a role in reform strategy (see Vorster, 1986). Given that ideas about how to communicate to blacks were generally so uncertain, any scenario to intentionally use product advertising to effect some form of desired ideological orientation of blacks, was bound to have rested on some degree of self-delusion. Nick Tredoux alludes to this uncertainty (see fuller quote in Chapter 4):

> ...showing what capitalism has to offer, and hopefully doing it in such a way that they can identify with the aspiration which is involved (Frederikse, 1986:66).

It does not appear that Tredoux was simply presuming that the consumption ethic did not appeal to blacks, but rather that the rhetoric of white South African advertising was in many cases alien, or above their heads, that many images or situations appealing to whites were potentially off-putting to blacks.
Through its holding back of the emergence of a commonly shared culture as a basis for possibly supporting a non-racial South African identity, this problem had to a large extent been caused or exacerbated by apartheid. When commercial TV was introduced in 1978, advertising agencies were well aware that many communications difficulties would need to be addressed when the time came to produce commercials for ‘less educated’ black audiences. Peter Hume (1977; 1979) at the time a director of research and planning for the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency, had pointed out:

At the moment there’s a gross underinvestment in the black market which not only has the greatest growth potential but probably has the greatest educational needs in many products (‘Black is Beautiful’. Financial Mail, 5 October 1979:61).

However, those marketers who a decade later continued to see educational needs or ethnic diversity of urban blacks as insurmountable were possibly making a mistake. For example, Hugh Lendrum, executive director of the South African Society of Marketers, could not have been entirely justified when he re-stated a well-worn excuse with regard to the problems of achieving advertising excellence in South Africa:

SA can’t be judged on the same basis as New York or London. We have such an ethnic diversity in this country that any product designed to appeal to all segments must be advertised blandly (Advertising Supplement, Financial Mail, 28 June 1985:60).

Even in a generally less sophisticated scenario than that of the dominant Western culture, there always remains much scope for creativity to be applied to the task of developing brilliant, innovative and stimulating communications. Mass communications are common denominator communications, and in terms of the stage of South Africa’s industrial and economic base at the time, advertisers might have been well-advised to concentrate on developing mass marketing approaches, as had been the case in the 1950s in the advanced industrial states. The later marketing concepts from the advanced industrial states, based on market segmentation and lifestyle approaches, might be seen as being possibly anachronistic to the requirements of setting up a suitable dialectic between product development and consumer expectations. The inception of such a dialectic could
possibly also have been conducive to South Africa also becoming an exporting nation of manufactured goods, through the raising of standards.

Also, it was a mistake to believe that advertising should not be simple, or that simplicity is necessarily blandness. For all its questionable purposes, the Bureau for Information’s ‘Squirrels’ campaign (discussed in the previous chapter) nevertheless represented a modest creative breakthrough. Without being ‘bland’ or pathetically unsophisticated, ‘Squirrels’ managed to communicate with images which, though neutral, were culturally common to all South Africans. But that ‘campaign’ still consisted of only one advertisement. Properly speaking, an advertising campaign when it is presented to the client, should already consist of not less than three print advertisements or several print or billboard advertisements, and a television commercial. Each rendition, a different version of the same basic message. Subsequently, a campaign can be continued with the publication at regular intervals of further single advertisements (be these TV commercials, radio commercials, press advertisements, magazine advertisements, or billboards), based on the same campaign theme. If an advertising concept does not lend to its own reproduction in several advertisements, then it is most likely that the concept itself is a somehow flawed articulation of what in advertising practice is called the ‘strategy’ (O’Toole, 1981).

Simplicity is a prerequisite for advertising in the advanced industrial economies as well, though for different reasons. Highly contested marketing situations result in intensive media environments, with advertisements competing with each other for the attention of audiences who quite often find them very irritating. Audiences tend to mentally switch off or ignore the messages. Advertisements therefore have to be ‘very simple’ in order to communicate in a subliminal or almost irresistible manner, with an immediacy requiring little cognitive effort on the part of audiences. Thus, advertisements in the advanced industrial democracies are mostly constructed with careful precision so as to primarily denote the selected main benefit of the product in very succinct, telegraphic and
unambiguous terms\textsuperscript{169}. Though very simple, this type of advertising nonetheless has good impact by ensuring that individual advertisements are always, what in advertising practice terms is called ‘relevant and unexpected’.

Advertising agencies in the major centres have worked hard to cultivate their audiences’ interest in their advertising through such long-running campaigns, consisting of many separate advertisements structured around the same basic theme, ‘repetition with variation’ (Bogart, 1986:207-231). Advertisements have actually educated audiences to understand a formalist visual language (Lois, 1979). Such campaigns construct their own systems of logic to which target audiences (which in due course might sometimes become an entire nation) are gradually introduced by successive advertisements. A good example of this type of simplicity is to be found in the concept of a long running British campaign for Heineken beer, (see also discussion of Heineken campaign in Chapter 2), based on the unlikely proposition that ‘Heineken Refreshes The Parts That Other Beers Cannot Reach’ (see Mayle, 1983). One of the numerous outstanding examples from this campaign, was a billboard featuring J.R. Ewing ‘before’ and ‘after’ he had downed a mug of Heineken. In the ‘before’ image one senses devilry in J.R.’s expression, in the ‘after’ image there is a halo above his head! This advertisement works entirely through visual communication. The key to the mechanism of a campaign which allows for the production of messages that communicate in such lucid terms, will not be found in any ‘sophisticated British humour’, but in an ingenious simplicity with which the original strategic recommendation comes to be realised in the underlying concept. In principle, this type of communication could certainly work extremely well for all audiences in South Africa.

\textsuperscript{169} Some advertisements are structured round a system of closure which requires audience participation. But such advertisements most likely belong to long-running campaign series which have ‘educated’ or established their own rules within audience awareness (see Mayle, 1983). In this respect Judith Williamson’s examination of absence in certain types of advertisement is very perceptive, but due to the problematic manner of assembling her research sample she does not pay much attention to the very important fact that some of these advertisements (such as Benson & Hedges) are part of such long running campaigns (See Williamson, 1978:77-79).
In the past, some of those advertisements aimed at sophisticated whites and believed to have been of a very high creative standard, may have suffered from some serious shortcomings.\textsuperscript{170} Though on rare occasions it is strategically justified to design and place advertisements for a very small target market, even one person, it is quite unfounded to regard advertisements consisting of ‘smart wit’ or ‘insider jokes’ aimed exclusively at elite white audiences (sometimes unconsciously the advertising fraternity itself) to be of a very high standard. Such advertisements, (although by the 1980s, more rare in South Africa), amounted to occasional narcissistic and insipid advertising that was not pinned to any sound long-term strategic base for their product brands. Through a confusion with techniques usually employed for positioning luxury goods, inexperience might sometimes have led to an oversight of genuine discipline in such advertising.\textsuperscript{171}

In spite of the fact that many local advertising agencies and their clients placed much importance upon affiliation to multinational advertising agency networks,\textsuperscript{172} it seems that they may sometimes have not been readily able to interpret the decontextualised advertising methodology from abroad. In the past, circa late 1970s or early 1980s, some South African art directors would simply lift advertising concepts from New York award books and then artificially graft them on to half-baked local marketing strategies. As these concepts had not developed out of an organic need to solve any South African marketing problem, they were unlikely to produce very effective advertising, and they would certainly not produce truly great advertising by any country’s standards. The reason for this shortcoming is that unless such advertising concepts are experienced \textit{practically}, i.e. within the contexts where they have originated, very detailed marketing information about their original intended purposes and meaning is needed. The ‘stunning’ overseas advertisements which were sometimes superficially imitated, represented solutions to communication problems isolated from marketing strategies indigenous to


\textsuperscript{171} Although the tendency to confuse these methods apparently also exists in the advanced industrial centres (Leiss, Kline & Jhally, 1985), whenever product advertising becomes too divorced from its mainsprings (“reason why”) it tends to lose the confidence of the consumer (see Wight, 1972)

their particular contexts. Good advertising from whatever source, can indeed provide fruitful inspiration if its dynamics can be analysed at a deeper level, from where they might well be helpful in showing the way to an original solution to a local marketing problem.

One of the reasons for the conceptual weakness of South African advertising during the 1970s was perhaps the dominant role of art directors as conceptualisers at some of the less established agencies. The proper procedure, is for copywriters and art directors to be paired to work together permanently as teams. This procedure was established by the late Bill Bernbach in New York at the end of the 1950s, and revolutionised the advertising industry world-wide, leading to a dramatic improvement in standards (Mayer, 1958). Currently, this procedure is invariably followed by all major advertising agencies throughout the world. By the end of the 1970s, this was also becoming the norm at the larger South African agencies. Generally, a writer and art director work together from a carefully researched brief that has already focused market research findings into a strategy. They execute this strategy by coming up with an ‘advertising concept’ (Crompton, 1979).

**Positive Effects of Structural Reform Processes**

Contrary to a belief held by many advertising practitioners, that creativity was going to suffer because of the recession (mid-1985ff) and imposition of government sales tax on advertising, the years 1987ff in fact saw advertising creativity placed on a more disciplined and demographically sensitive footing. A perusal through the last decade or so of the issues of any popular magazine, will reveal that the standard of advertising in South Africa was steadily improving. This improvement was not impeded by the recession during the 1980s, or by the drain of local and overseas ‘experts’ who were formerly attracted to work in South Africa. 

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One of the reasons for improvement might have been that South African advertising agencies, through affiliation to international agency networks, were gradually gaining a more thorough understanding of advertising methodology and techniques. But there are also some indications that the improving standards might have resulted from the beneficial effects of ‘reform’ in terms of long term underlying structural economic processes, coupled with a recession. Recession helped focus the minds of advertisers. For example, after 1980, the OK Bazaars department store chain changed its positioning, and recognised black consumers as the main de facto market of its stores in the central business districts: “Shop where South Africa shops”, with advertisements depicting both black and white consumers in the streets. Its subsequent slogan, “OK is Everything, Everything is OK”, seems to have encompassed a fear of alienating white consumers, and an attempt to draw them back from other stores like John Orrs and Stuttafords that had belatedly decentralised to suburban regional shopping centres to retain white patronage. John Orrs city outlets catered for affluent whites and tended to alienate blacks who, by the late 1970s, constituted the bulk of central city shoppers. OK’s I 987/88 campaign, “Where you get cheap prices, not cheap talk”, seems to have been underpinned by two dynamics: first is a response to supermarket competitors whose managing directors were addressing the camera claiming ‘cheaper prices’; and second, to reassure black consumers that they would not be treated rudely (as they had been at some upmarket stores).

During the 1980s, several advertising agencies in South Africa showed new potential. Two agencies in particular seemed to have been leading the way with more systematic and disciplined creative approaches. Ogilvy & Mather/Rightford Searle Tripp, under the helm of Bob Rightford have continually maintained a high level of creativity in their campaigns. Also, the work of D’Arcy MacManus & Benton Bowels, under the direction of Willie Sonnenberg, at times was giving the impression that the development of a distinctive local creative advertising culture might be not be too far beyond grasp. There was also some good work by other South African agencies, though sometimes less sustained. Reg Lascaris’s ‘TBWA’ affiliated agency, was trying to develop and apply locally a distinctive creative style originally initiated by John Hegarty at the London offices of ‘TBWA’ during the 1970s, and they have continued to be reasonably successful in this respect. An agency by the name of ‘Kuper Hands’, had also sometimes succeeded in producing excellent campaigns consisting of two or three advertisements, but these seldom had the energy to be produced in longer running campaign series.
Another advertising agency called ‘Partnership’, produced some excellent ‘one off print advertisements up until the mid-1980s. What must have been one of the most outstandingly imaginative advertisements of the decade was a double page magazine spread featuring a realistically illustrated bohemian-looking mouse couple on the night of their honeymoon. Mrs. Mouse was sitting on her suitcase looking a little disenchanted, while Mr. Mouse was having little success in using a power drill to cut a hole through a skirting board painted with a major brand of paint: the headline said, “Takes life’s little knocks beautifully”. Even without one fully understanding the meaning of this headline, the advertisement visually communicated the durability of the paint with a humour and grace that is not likely to have been lost on many urban dwellers. ‘Partnership’ do not seem to have realised the promise of their youth by producing more print advertisements of this high standard. However, ‘Partnership’ have also been responsible for the production of many of the TV commercials for Castle Lager (on which the case study in following chapter is based). A fine example of the Castle Lager commercials produced by ‘Partnership’ is \textit{Homecoming} (1990), a consumer product advertisement which at the same time contains a powerful ideological message of post-apartheid reconciliation.

In its heyday the work of ‘Grey, Phillips, Mundel and Blake’ (The Grey Group), had from time to time showed glimmerings of the advent of what perhaps might have been indigenous South African advertising rhetoric. During the 1970s and early 1980s this agency virtually dominated the South African advertising scene.\footnote{See ‘Behind the Grey Group’, Supplement to \textit{Financial Mail} 19 February 1982; ‘The Grey Group - Corporate Statement’, Supplement to \textit{Financial Mail}, 27 May 1983.} At that stage ‘Grey’ mainly drew their inspiration from New York advertising, rather than London which became more dominant in world advertising during the 1980s. Under the leadership of its co-founder, Darryl Phillips, ‘Grey’ were a very confident advertising agency that produced many memorable advertisements. These advertisements are particularly characterised by their hard-hitting quality.

However, ‘Grey’ too failed to quite master the discipline of energetic advertising campaigns that are able to position products on long-term strategic bases with successive
advertisements. For instance, the campaign for Nedbank: ‘When You’re Serious About Money’, was based on this very simple and hard-hitting statement. Judging from the many years the campaign ran, this statement was obviously not considered to be ‘too bland’ by ‘sophisticated’ whites. ‘When You’re Serious about money’ is also a statement that could undeniably have been uttered by virtually every black South African. However, the utterer of this statement (that the campaign had established in the public mind), was a white middle aged male appealing to other white middle aged males, and no effective attempt was made to broaden this appeal out of a potentially stale chauvinism. There was a distinct lack of panache and variation in the successive executions of ‘When You’re Serious About Money’. 176 ‘Grey’ thus failed to do justice to a very solid concept, so its true potential was never fully realised. It seems that the haemorrhaging suffered by ‘Grey’ as a result of Darryl Phillips’ departure from South Africa, led to the loss of Nedbank as well as several other important clients. 177 After some apparent indecision and uncertainty, the new agency that acquired the Nedbank account seems to have had the good sense to retain the basic concept, ‘When You’re Serious About Money’, in some form or other. However, by the mid 1990s this advertising concept seemed to have been abandoned altogether, probably to the detriment of the strong image Nedbank had previously occupied in white public awareness.

Before the 1990s, no fully-fledged advertising agencies in South Africa were black-owned or directed. The first such agency called ‘HerdBuoys’ came into being in the traditional way -- as a result of a breakaway by a group of young executives (who

176 In fact the way the concept was mostly applied by Grey was, ‘It makes you think, doesn’t it. When you’re serious about money’. It would appear that both Grey and Nedbank believed the success of the advertising lay primarily in the ‘It makes you think doesn’t it’s part of the slogan (Financial Mail, Advertising Supplement, 14 July 1989:60). It is my opinion that success of the advertising actually derived from the resonance in public awareness of ‘if you’re serious about money’, and here, in this simple statement, lay the real potential for construction a long running campaign.

177 The Nedbank move seems to have been triggered by a clash of interests caused by Grey Phillips’ acquisition of the Allied account. It had been expected that Nedbank would move to Ogilvy & Mather. In actual fact Nedbank stayed within the Grey group, by going to Grey Perspectives, on condition that Grey was dropped from the name and the new agency became Stamm Miller & Associates (Financial Mail, Advertising Supplement, 14 July 1985: 60)
happened to be black), from another agency, ‘Ogilvy & Mather/Rightford Searle Tripp’.

According to MD, Peter Vundla:

‘HerdBuoys’ is founded on the premise that blacks are the dominant consumers in SA, as well as its major political players whose impact on this part of the continent is yet to be fully understood by marketers (Advertising Supplement, Financial Mail, 7 June 1991: 68).

With its first major account, National Sorghum Breweries, ‘HerdBuoys’ was destined to have great expectations resting upon its shoulders. (See later in this chapter, ‘Training Blacks in Advertising’.)

In concluding The Trouble With Advertising (1981:214-5), John O’Toole, executive chairman of the American advertising agency ‘Foote, Cone and Belding’, assessed the South African advertising scene in relation to other centres where his multinational company has offices. He made the following interesting comments:

South African advertising has not yet reached the state of the art -- if you’ll forgive the phrase -- achieved in other English-speaking countries, but it’s moving fast. And then, South Africa is not, strictly speaking, an English-speaking country. There is another official language, Afrikaans. In addition, there are seven Bantu dialects, each incomprehensible to those who speak another. The language problems make those faced in Canada seem simple. In print advertising, they necessitate several versions of an ad, depending on whether the publication is printed in English, Afrikaans or Bantu. This is costly but achievable... Television came to South Africa early in 1976. At present English and Afrikaans programming appear on alternate nights. I think it is important that the Bantu dialects somehow be accommodated, that the enormous black populations be brought into the consumer market, thereby creating the kind of mass production of quality goods at low prices that has raised the standard of living in every other country where it’s been realised. ‘When that happens, South Africa could be one of the world’s great advertising centres. More important, some of its serious problems might be on the way to solution.

Here, one can still hear a tail-end echo of O’Dowd (1964): the suggestion that South Africa’s political problems could and would largely be solved through a naturally occurring economic growth. Also, O’Toole perhaps seems a little affirmative of
apartheid, probably unwittingly, as a result of not being fully informed about the situation: this is especially apparent in his somewhat vague conception of what he calls ‘Bantu dialects’, and by what seems might be his lack of awareness about the extensive understanding of the English language by urban blacks at the time. Nevertheless, by indicating that the means to solving South Africa’s problems lie primarily with an internally driven economic growth, ‘mass production of quality goods at low prices’, O’Toole’s (1981) prescription might perhaps provide a pragmatic or inspiring element lacking in O’Dowd.

In the 1990s, it seems that the total output of good advertising in South Africa is still not sustained or consistent enough to trigger off a local ‘creative revolution’. On the one hand, the reasons for this weakness are to be found in the complex communication problems faced by advertisers, which could not be properly addressed while apartheid reigned. These communications problems tended to exhaust rather than concentrate the limited talent available. But ultimately, the most important structural factor limiting the refinement of advertising communications in South Africa is the relatively low intensity of economic activity and limited competition between different products and services. Vibrant industrial production and economic activity is the motor of advertising refinement. Refinement in advertising methods is closely linked to the existence of an industrial base that produces an abundance of similar goods. Through the use of ‘comparative advertising’ (which compares the features of products to those of competitors) advertising agencies can play a very important role in educating consumers to be more discerning, and thus to foster the development of better products. But this was never likely to be achieved in an atmosphere of ‘Bantu dialects’ and ‘separate nations’.

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178 In 1981 (when O’Toole first published his book) South Africa still enjoyed a fair degree of acceptance within international economic and strategic relations. As Foote, Cone and Belding continued to operate in South Africa through the sanctions period, it is not too surprising that a disinvestment era edition of The Trouble With Advertising (1985) omits all mention of South Africa.

Comparative advertising uses a ‘reason why’ approach focusing more on the specification of the product than lifestyles, and consequently also stereotypes of the consumer (Leiss, Kline & Jhally 1986:210). In ideological terms, comparative advertising is not fundamentally so much affirmative of petty bourgeois social existence, as of the capacity of the monopoly capitalist mode of industrial production for continued technological refinement and progress. Comparative advertising is intrinsic to the development of an appropriate cultural climate within a local market, for the purpose of fostering product development in export quality goods. This process can be further enhanced if locally manufactured goods have to compete in their own markets with similar imported goods that are also being advertised comparatively. Manufacturers are forced to constantly innovate their products, as well as to honour whatever advantages they claim for their products (see Reeves, 1961).\footnote{This is certainly not to suggest that South African goods would be able to gain an edge in all product categories through this method, but it might be quite possible for a significant range of local products to become internationally viable.}

In view of the logical advantages of an educated consumer culture, it is strange that comparative advertisements, mentioning names of competitors, are still not permissible in South Africa. Even advertisements implicitly comparative are not fully accepted. Efforts to change this state of affairs invariably run into opposition from entrenched interests claiming to work in the best interest of the public.

The fact that for decades marketers, including advertising agencies, had difficulty in conceptualising the South African market, has led to a delayed emergence or permanent cancellation of a consumer culture appropriate to the strategic needs of South African economic development. Over the years, this marketing dichotomy entrenched the problems of communicating an advertising message to a cross-section of the population. Along with the requirements of apartheid ideology, some marketers had maintained that no such thing as a South African market existed -- that instead, many separate markets existed within a single geographical entity. In fact, despite a prolonged period of ‘separate development’, the South African market seems to have basically consisted of a
The urban sector was made up of whites, coloureds, Indians and urban blacks all living by more or less Western standards. The rural sector is comprised almost exclusively of blacks living by continental African standards (Sinclair, 1985:56-68). But apartheid ideology seems to have clouded marketing conceptions. Consequently, there was persistence in the interpretation of the marketing situation in terms of primarily a ‘white market’ dominating total consumer spending. The existence of a so called ‘black market’ was only formally recognised in the sixties. While the, ‘coloured’ and ‘Indian’ markets, (for many years ignored), were being considered important marketing elements and usually grouped with the white market as a single unit by the 1980s. However, responses to the ‘black market’, that had rapidly grown to the stage where it clearly outstripped white consumption in many product categories, continued to be equivocal. This equivocation was certainly apartheid influenced. Through the 1970s and the 1980s the tendency amongst marketers often continued to be one of predicting sales to the white market first and then seeing what incremental exploitation of the ‘black market’ would bring (Sinclair, 1985:60).

It has already been suggested that reform as a structural process, through changes brought to beat upon the composition of the South African consumer market; has influenced advertising in a more organic and far reaching manner than reform as a political discourse. In the case of the marketing situation of ‘fast moving’ consumer goods, there seems to have been some degree of unanimity amongst marketers about the noticeable impact of some of the structurally related reforms that had occurred. My understanding of reform as a structural process, is that it consists of the effects of some economic growth, though more limited than what might have been envisaged by O’Dowd (1964). One of the distinctive features of this growth seems to have been the transformation of existing industries through their inexorable absorption by monopoly capitalism. Verwoerdian apartheid, (i.e. total residential and social separation of ‘the races’), was subjected to the integrative demands of this economic development, which could not be resisted or reversed (see Lipton, 1986). This process led to the very important Riekerth & Wiehahn Commissions of Inquiry discussed in an earlier chapter. Concomitant changes in labour relations and urbanisation policy, as well as concessions which came in the wake of the
Soweto riots of 1976, (to facilitate restructuring and placate world opinion), were working their way through the social formation. The more far reaching concessions, such as in the areas of urbanisation, job reservation and labour reforms, seem to have come about more out of unavoidable necessity than for the purposes of co-option. The distinctive feature of genuine structural reform, is that rather than being a co-optive process, it has tended to lag behind in addressing structural problems. But even this slow attrition did nevertheless translate itself into a rising standard of living of mainly urban blacks, and gradually increased their importance as consumers. The following reform milestones can be singled out as having made particular contributions to the overall changing structure of the consumer market in the 1980s:

1) Recognition of permanent residence for all urban blacks. Apartheid had previously denied permanent residence in ‘white’ South Africa to blacks who did not hold Section 10 rights (see Hindson, 1987.)
2) 99 year leasehold property rights for blacks in ‘white’ South Africa.
3) Elimination of racial job reservation in most employment categories (1979ff).
4) Increased wages for blacks (1975ff)
6) Open (to all races) trading rights in city centres (denied ‘non-whites prior to 1984).
7) Declaration of a limited number of ‘grey (residential) areas’ (open to all races) in places previously reserved for whites only (October 1988ff).

As a result of these reforms, a large core group of urban blacks had established themselves, in the sense that they felt residentially more secure, and had more disposable income to spend on consumer goods and more expensive durables such as furniture, and electrical appliances. By the mid- 1980, this development had set in motion a growing incongruence between reality and the way the dominant white marketing profession continued to view the marketing situation.

Marketers openly conceded that their marketing language for describing target groups and many of the marketing tools in use, including the South African Advertising Research Foundation system (SAARF), and its highly influential ‘All Media Products Survey’ reports (AMPS), were:

rooted in the historical structure that encouraged separate marketing views to be taken of the four race groups ... that entrenched the gaps that restricted the educational and job advancement potential of the non-white
group to the extent that they had distinctly different purchasing habits, patterns and product aspirations (Sinclair, 1985:64).

It would seem that expression of events engendered by reform as a structural process upon the economic ‘base’, were to some extent being resisted by residual or reactionary elements in the ‘superstructures’. The practice of conceiving the urbanised population in terms of a ‘white market’ and a ‘black market’, dovetailed with the SABC’s policy of ethnic reinforcement. According to Mtutuzel Matshoba, black author and advertising employee:

I do experience guilt about reinforcing the system, by being involved in planning advertisements aimed solely at the black market The Star, 18 February, 1986:13).

A separate media mentality perpetuated separate advertising for the same products, even in cases where middle class black consumers shared fairly similar orientations towards these products as whites. On this basis, ethnic racial stereotypes could be sustained. But it should not be automatically assumed that separate marketing strategies were always purely an apartheid phenomenon. During the 1970s and 1980s, more finite ‘market segmentation’ than merely on a class basis became an increasingly popular practice amongst marketers internationally. In line with the maturing of the economies of the advanced industrial states into their post-industrial stages, there has been a general movement away from the integrative mass marketing approaches of the 1950s and 1960s. However, the marketing situation in South Africa was a different one from the USA or Europe, where industrial bases and markets were at far more mature stages of development. Techniques such as ‘psychographics’ or ‘lifestyle’ marketing enable superannuated products, (which have exhausted their possibilities for further regular technical refinements), to continue to be competitive. In advanced industrial countries, the problem tends to be one of insufficient consumption in relation to the abundance of similar consumer goods in each category. In South Africa, the problem has been, and continues to be, one of too many potential consumers and insufficient goods and services. On the surface, apartheid appears to have resulted in the hoarding of wealth by whites and the ‘new’ coloured and Indian middle classes, and thus impeding or reversing the flow of wealth to the black working classes. But in reality, what remained of the country’s wealth was locked in the coffers of powerful corporate groups, as is the case in nil other capitalist countries. In South Africa, any discourse of capital or state stimulated growth of middle class occupations, (geared to the purpose of obscuring class struggle), lagged well behind what had been achieved in the advanced industrial states. This disadvantage is considerably determined by the fact of the colonial origins of the South African state, and subservience of the South African economy to these more advanced industrial states.

A good example of a “reason why” mass marketing approach concept that achieved remarkable results in the ‘ethnically and culturally diverse’ South African market, is the one for the coffee creamer, ‘Cremora’: “It’s not inside, it’s on top” (of the fridge). This commercial focused on the fact that ‘Cremora’ is a powdered coffee creamer that does not require refrigeration. ‘Cremora’ was therefore positioned against fresh milk. In fact,
this concept was originated in the United States, but had never been used there by the manufactures of ‘Cremora’ (Borden), because it was considered to be unsound to position a coffee creamer against milk in the context of a score of other coffee creamers sharing exactly, this generic benefit.\footnote{There are instances in the annals of advertising history where a generic product benefit, never before claimed by competitors, produced outstanding results (Hopkins, 1927). However, by the 1970s or 1980s, in a sophisticated advertising milieu such as the United States, a generic product benefit could no longer be regarded as a viable option, even if creatively coupled in execution with an appropriate popular personality (O’Toole, 1981).} However, in the South African market, where coffee creamers were at that stage not very well known, this dramatisation of Cremora’s USP in relation to milk, apparently helped shift the product from zero to 56% of the white consumers. But in the dominant black market, where the slogan was not used, because it was thought the humour would not translate well, ‘Cremora’ achieved 80% market share. The slogan was not used in the Afrikaans market either. According to stereotypical preconceptions, Afrikaans advertisements were designed around the homely farm value approach of the Jan Spies ‘coffee expert’ commercials. But research showed that 78% of Afrikaners and 56% of Blacks knew the “it’s not inside, it’s on top” slogan.\footnote{Advertising Supplement, \textit{Financial Mail}, 21 August 1987:44.}

During the 1980s, reform as a gradual structural process made it increasingly possible in many product categories, to create only one advertising campaign that could serve for both blacks and whites. If such advertisements required actors or actresses, probably non-ethnic petty bourgeois blacks, possibly together with whites, would be used. This was becoming the norm in beer and soft-drink commercials, but the media situation was still far from ideal, as the SABC only began dc-restricting channels at the end of the 1980s (see below). Black and white consumers used the same products and could be reached by commonly \textit{used} media, and it had been shown by market researchers that upwardly mobile consumers in South Africa held fairly similar aspirations regardless of race (Corder, 1986:14-17). However, throughout the 1980s developments in the area of non-racial advertising were still in their infancy, and struggling to get off the ground.
The South African advertising industry was not only exclusively white-owned but also considerably foreign-owned by corporations of the advanced industrial states (Sinclair, 1985). Until a certain stage, circa latter 1980s, this situation might in some cases have given rise to too much delegated responsibility. Thus practitioners employed locally, seem to have sometimes still been feeling their way on how to come to terms with an effective non-racial marketing approach in South Africa (e.g. See Tim Bester, quoted in Chapter 4). There were still problems of uncertainty, hesitancy, sometimes lack of insight or unwillingness to take risks. During this period, there was an increasing tendency for advertising agencies and client marketing departments to recruit more blacks to fill executive positions. As might be expected, this tendency seems to have been more pronounced amongst the advertising agencies and client marketing departments handling fast moving consumer goods for which black consumption had overtaken that of whites -- margarine, soft drinks, beer, soap, washing powder etc.

Separate advertising, (especially when it was directed at urban blacks), had sometimes caused problems for products. If different advertising strategies were being used for the same products, ‘audience overlap’ between black and white media, exposed different target audiences to conflicting claims or positioning, with regard to the same products (McLean, 1983; Sinclair, 1985). Perceptions of ‘coherent brand images’ for such products could thus become impaired. So in addition to any desire for desegregation, (political discourse of reform), there were also some good reasons in terms of sound marketing practice for having a single strategy for all consumers of a brand (whenever this was possible in terms of structural processes of reform). A further marketing-derived imperative for the client company was the fact that one advertisement for all sections of the target market could save a lot of money in production and media costs.

But it must be emphasised that there was a lack of any coherent conception on how to respond to these relatively more gradual effects that reform as a structural process was having on the South African consumer market. The following statement indicates that the marketing and advertising professions were experiencing some sort of inertia:
That the community is complex, culturally and socially divided cannot be questioned, but that marketing potential and media consumption spans these differences and is largely monadic is a concept, believed by many, but too infrequently practised (Sinclair, 1985:60).

The 1980s still seem to have been a watershed period in terms of the effects of structural processes of reform. Due the political uncertainty of the period, theoretical realisation of any proper relationship between these processes and the political and ideological objectives of reform, tended to be indecisive. Thus the various inherent contradictions which existed between reform as a longer term structural process, and the manner in which reform was being applied as strategy or political discourse in the P.W. Botha era, could not be addressed. Such theorisation seems to have been generally lacking on the part of the advertising industry, and of South African monopoly capital -- as was demonstrated by the relatively timid acceptance of the introduction of a universally ethnic TV2/3 in 1982. What was needed at that time was a united front to oppose the continued practice of media restrictions on multi-racial or non-racial advertising by the government, the SABC, and other media owners.

Some marketers continued to maintain a contrasting view that saw any movement towards integrated, non-ethnic marketing approaches, as flawed. Johan Huyser, managing director of ‘The Agency’ continued to argue:

We differ completely from the popular View that a consumer is a consumer irrespective of race, colour and background ... This is nonsense. The black market is separate. Even the Afrikaans and English markets are separate ... If you don’t talk to the black man in his own idiom you won’t reach him (Advertising Supplement, Financial Mail, August 21, 1987:26).

The variety of ethnically orientated private sector publications which sprang up side by side with TV2/3 to cater for different black audiences\(^\text{183}\), somewhat mirrored the growth of lifestyle positioned magazines in the advanced industrial states during the 1980s. This

phenomenon might not necessarily have been fully justified in terms of the development of the South African consumer market at that stage. The ‘Young & Rubicam’ advertising agency, which had been conducting a considerable amount of research on black consumers, even questioned the necessity of having two black television channels (*The Star*, 27 June 1987). But during the apartheid era, South Africa was a country where hegemony was mostly forged in a crucible where the business sector concentrated on the task of making quick profits rather than confronting government with plans about long-term social solutions. Besides, such plans might have required putting a lot more of their money on the line. Had economic sanctions and the loss of support in the West not resulted in the alienation of local monopoly capital from P.W. Botha and his policies, the crises of the 1980s might have been followed by another essentially conservative Afrikaner Nationalist dominated renewal. Thus, in spite of the fact that it was widely criticised at the time by media activists, the inherent promise of propaganda such as ‘Together We’ll Build A Better Future’ (previous chapter) had to be lived up to in the course of events which followed. This perhaps goes to show that one should after all not underestimate the power of advertising.

From a materialist perspective it appears that the marketing practice of conceiving the Westernised urban sector of the overall market in terms of a ‘sophisticated’ white market and an ethnically diverse black market, automatically entrenched the ethnic varieties of racial stereotyping, instead of allowing free movement to non-racial black middle class stereotypes. The structural processes at work were towards greater market uniformity, that is, non-racial advertising depicting blacks, (or blacks together with whites), in non-ethnic middle class stereotypes. There was a growing awareness and response to this reality. Yet at the same time, residual racial discriminatory practices from earlier eras, were institutionalised within marketing, advertising and broadcasting practices. This is what underpinned the various forms of racial stereotyping in South Africa during the 1980s.

Though cultural and ethnic differences in South Africa cannot be denied, the cancer of apartheid entrenched these within institutional structures. In the case of advertising, this
initially required the creation of separate campaigns to different racial groups for the same products. Such campaigns usually differed in marketing strategy and in execution concepts. ‘Exposure’ had to be ‘isolated’ by the careful use of separate media, (which were not intended to overlap, but which in practice often did). Later, as the structure of the market began to change, apartheid continued to perpetuate separate communications and inhibited experimentation in non-racial approaches when these might have been possible. It would be short-sighted to limit my examination of racial stereotyping solely to the portrayal of models and their roles in advertisements. Racial stereotyping in South Africa must be considered more broadly, as the manner of communication to separate groups. At first, the effect of this procedure was to sharpen up, to develop, and to reinforce racial or ethnic differences. But later, especially in the area of fast moving consumer goods, different marketing strategies for blacks and whites were often no longer justifiable even in terms of sound marketing practice. Once segmentation could be effected non-racially, along class lines, so-called consumerisation of blacks through aspirational advertising became truly possible. By the 1990s, the resultant stereotypes tended to he predominantly non-racial blat middle class stereotyping, or the occasional non-ethnic ‘proud to be black’ genre. It thus became feasible in many product categories to create only one advertising campaign for blacks and whites as a commonality of product and media usage exists (soft drinks, beer, margarine, chocolate bars, petrol etc.). It has already been pointed out above, that some market researchers believed that upwardly mobile people in South Africa had many similar aspirations regardless of race (Corder, 1986)\textsuperscript{184}.

At first, even such advertising campaigns, based on an ‘integrated’ non-racial strategy, were still considered to require some slight modifications to cater for the nuances’ of black consumers (McLean, 1983). This further seems to confirm that rather than being part of any short-term conspiratorially motivated or co-optive reformist discourse (Frederikse, 1986), so called ‘capitalist consumerisation of the psyche’, which in South Africa principally entails transition to non-racial black middle class stereotypes, had been

occurring organically all along. Even with ‘nuances’ these advertisements retained a single strategy and executional concept for all -- lending to a coherent brand image. In cases where slight modifications were still being made for black audiences, given the sensitivity of the South African situation, it might have been argued that in principle, such differences had pejorative stereotyping implications. But any pejorativeness was of a far milder form, and evidence suggests blacks did not take very great exception to it (McLean, 1983). Blacks are said to have been sensitive if different marketing strategies were aimed at them, in particular it was believed that a product designed for blacks rather than whites was inferior, and therefore regarded with suspicion and resentment. Also, it might sometimes have been suspected that premium production was first sold to whites, while any surplus, deteriorating residue or inferior stock, was sold to blacks through retail outlets in the townships.185

**Training Blacks in Advertising**

During the 1980s, there was an increasing tendency for advertising agencies to recruit more blacks to fill executive positions, an indication that some form of transition was indeed taking place. Problems of uncertainty, hesitancy, sometimes lack of insight or unwillingness to take risks, remained however. Most of the black recruits were at that stage intended to help whites create advertisement specifically directed at the black market. Len van Zyl, managing director of ‘Linsay Smithers/FCB’ had pointed out:

> The biggest challenge of South African advertising is to develop black creative talent. Already the consumer market is significantly blacker than it was a few years ago. But we are still using blacks to adapt creative approaches instead of originating them. Too often we still take our lead from overseas *(Financial Mail, Advertising Supplement, 28 June 1985:96)*,
The following remarks from some of the few more senior black advertising people perhaps further illustrates the situation. Peter Vundla (at the time still at ‘VZ, Ogilvy and Mather’) had pointed out:

The agencies often don’t involve their black staff at the beginning. They present them with a completed package and ask; ‘do you think this will go down well with blacks?’ (‘Black Advertising - Can anybody hear me?’, Financial Mail, 29 April 1983:573).

To this, Horace Mpanza of ‘Lintas’, pointedly added:

Very few ad agencies have made the effort to train blacks. What they must do is give them a solid grounding in advertising first, and then let them concentrate on black advertising (bid).

What South African capitalists probably urgently needed, (but perhaps failed to fully appreciate during the P.W. Botha era), was .for blacks who were already appropriately interpellated vis-a-vis the consumption ethic, to be recruited to work in advertising agencies so that their form of socialisation could be transmitted more broadly to the ‘black market’. Even with the limited numbers of blacks recruited by agencies, there were still problems of finding ‘the right communication buttons to push’. Research showed that while younger blacks reacted negatively to pejoratively stereotyped roles such as labourers, they did not respond very favourably to patently unrealistic or inappropriate black middle class situations, such as water-skiing or hang-gliding, to which some black advertising practitioners were aspiring. Eric Mafuna, sociologist and former ‘J Walter Thompson’ research director, who had set himself up as a black marketing guru, believed that a major problem with some sophisticated blacks in advertising was that they had lost touch with the mainstream of black consumers:

They think that it has to be white to work. They feel that it has to be big to be good and forget that it is the little insights which lead to the big idea (ibid.).

As has been pointed out in Chapter 5 (in respect of Nick Tredoux), when assessing such statements one must always be conscious of underlying rhetorical intentions sometimes
designed to canvass clients to the claimed qualities of some particular advertising-related expertise being touted. The selling point or competitive factor that might have persuaded prospective marketing clients to hire Mafuna rather than services offered by other ‘experts’ seems to have been its apparent sensitivity for sociological factors:

Our make-up is different because of sociological factors. We relate to different environments and our motivations are different. A black man is driven by a far greater need for status because this society deprives him of it - communicators have to be aware of this and other factors which make the black man a unique consumer (Financial Mail, 28 October 1979:397).

In fact, the problem of fine-tuning advertisements appropriately to the motivations of their target audiences, applies all over the world, including London and New York. Though university graduates are usually recruited as researchers or account executives, for writers and art-directors, advertising agencies at the centres of advanced capitalism tend to prefer to draw on people from the ‘working classes’ who can communicate back to their own kind (re-interpellate). Jerry Della Femina, one of America’s most famous copywriters and a central figure in the advertising creative revolution in the sixties and seventies, points this matter out in the following words:

It doesn’t hurt to be born Italian or Jewish in the streets of the city of New York... You can’t buy experience. The copywriter is in disgrace today if he was born in a suburb of Boston, of a fairly well-to-do family (Della Femina, 1970; Fox, 1984).

Before they become ad men many of the best writers and art directors were either delivering milk or something similar. Della Femina, whose family were traditionally longshoremen, came into contact with advertising agencies during a period when his father was working as a printer for a New York newspaper. Another contemporary American advertising great, George Lois, is the son of a florist (Lois, 1979).

The process of inducting blacks into advertising has apparently been hampered in South Africa, by a shortage of young blacks who have studied art. While a school matric with art as a subject is required for entrance into technikon art courses, few black schools
teach the subject. This has restricted an advertising career mainly to blacks who have attended private schools. Advertising agencies in the 1980s were trying to redress these problems. By 1987, the ‘Ogilvy & Mather/ Rightford Searle Tripp’ advertising agency had committed itself to training eight blacks a year. According to Bob Rightford:

There is no shortage of raw material. It is just a matter of training them. If we don’t, the decline in standards will quickly become much more evident (Advertising Supplement, Financial Mail. 21 August 1987:14).

On the other hand, Louis Wilsenach believed:

We can’t force blacks into advertising. Thirty years ago there were no Afrikaners in advertising because it was an unknown career to them -- the same with blacks today. We don’t need to make special efforts to attract them. It will happen naturally (ibid.).

Before advertising agencies in South Africa could begin producing non-racial advertisements that communicated effectively with their average consumers, trained blacks in sufficient numbers were needed inside advertising agencies so that a cultural-class interaction could in the first place begin right there, within the advertising production processes. Non-racial advertising can obviously be a force for bringing cultures closer together wherever they are still distantly apart. In a South African context, given the material and psychic deprivations of apartheid, this potential of advertising to facilitate a form of cultural production that is non-overtly apartheid based, needs careful critical appraisal. It has been variously noted in this thesis that such cultural production does on the surface appear to have some favourable implications. But it must also be recognised, that ideological aspects of product advertising, (even if developing contingently to capitalism), cannot be accepted unchallenged from a cultural studies perspective. Anything that amounts to a ‘consumerisation of the psyche’, cannot be assessed without regard to the negative implications indicated by critical theories about the relationship between advertising and capitalism, as outlined in Chapter 2. However, at the same time, it should also be taken into account that the South African economy differs from those of the Western democracies, from where many of the theories upon
which the cultural studies critique of advertising are derived. As pointed out in Chapter 2, Williams (1980), did not entirely dismiss the fact that consumption within limits is a satisfactory activity. If the alternative to consumption in South Africa is bare subsistence, surely different criteria need to be applied? Though non-racial black middle class stereotyping undoubtedly forms part of a capitalist discourse in the long term; in the short term, it does permit immediate psychological relief to black media audiences.

In conclusion, advertising by monopoly capitalist corporations will certainly never make Mercedes Benz motor cars affordable to all workers, so far it has not even been able to make ordinary consumer goods more plentiful or more affordable. But one should not dismiss the role of this extending middle class ideology in eroding apartheid. Structural processes of reform, dependent on economic transition and growth, have provided the underlying basis for ‘consumerisation of the psyche’ of blacks, through product advertising. These processes preceded political imperatives for black middle class co-option during the 1980s. In the normal course of events, the ideological role of consumer product advertising most probably develops contingently to the monopoly phase in capitalist economic development. During the P.W. Botha era, the government’s political imperatives were actually contradictory to the effects of structural reform processes upon advertising. On the part of the business sector as a whole, its political imperatives with regard to advertising seem to have been less than certain. It is extremely difficult to make any accurate generalised statements on the basis of the empirical research sample which has been within the financial and practical capabilities of this project to process. As will he seen in Chapter 7, Castle Lager advertising after 1984 adopted a communication strategy that was clearly reformist, to an extent that became almost antagonistic with government policy. Chapter 8 will show that another product, Rama Margarine, adopted what seems to have been a more pragmatic approach, probing apartheid restriction whenever it was possible to get more exposure for advertising rands.

In the de Klerk era, (1989-1994), political imperatives of reform on the part of both the private sector and the government became potentially more streamlined with underlying structural processes. But due to a legacy of economic sanctions, international economic
downturns, and at the time, still conflicting interests in the transition to democracy, during the first half of the 1990s underlying structural processes were at a relative hiatus. After the 1994 democratic elections the new government launched a ‘Reconstruction and Development Program’ (RDP), but in addition to this source of stimulation, it seems that internal economic growth or structural processes of reform still needed more assistance through the creation of more local and international investment capital projects.
Chapter 7

How the ‘Other’ was Invited to Stay:

Marx has referred to religion as ‘the opium for the masses’ According to Leiss, Kline & Jhally (1986:3), in the twentieth century a discourse ‘through and about objects’ has overtaken many aspects of socialisation previously performed by institutions such as religion or the family. Mass media, in conjunction with the institution of advertising, play a primary role in the dissemination of this powerful new influence. If this be the case, commonalities in the manner in which advertisements position the particular consumer product, beer, throughout the world, give some indication about where its ideological significance might reside Advertising images of the consumption of beer seem to create a common sense perception that beer is a beneficial and nourishing male-orientated drink. The drinking of beer is perceived as consistent with productivity: a legitimate or socially acceptable leisure-time or after-work recreational release. Though by no means as potent as an ‘opium for the masses’, the psychological role of the advertising and consumption of beer might be regarded to be one of an important palliative, amongst others, which have kept and continue to keep, the working class or petite bourgeoisie male work forces reasonably contented.

The decision to anchor this research on a study of the history reel of a beer advertising campaign is thus not an arbitrary one. There are also several reasons why the choice of the advertising for the Castle Lager brand seems a particularly good one. It is an indigenous beer which has for many years been perceived as a dominant South African brand, almost as much as ‘Guinness’ connotes Ireland. The owners of the Castle Lager

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186 According to Althusser (1971:126) Marx had also noted that English workers need beer while French proletarians need wine.

187 Though probably unnecessary, a distinction needs to be made here for readers who might not be fully familiar with the term ‘history reel’. The fact that many of the commercials on the Castle Lager history reel are based on a ‘historical’ theme does not bear any relationship to the term ‘history reel’. The term ‘history reel’ refers exclusively to advertising production history.
brand name, South African Breweries (SAB), maintained a virtual monopoly in the manufacture and marketing of beer in South Africa. SAB did not originally contest apartheid advertising\footnote{Advertisements affected by the apartheid-related SABC-TV broadcasting dispensation of the time and/or apartheid influenced marketing conceptions.}, but after the mid-1980s, they began to play a key role in what became policy on the part of most of the large South African business corporations to naturalise the depiction of social interaction between blacks and whites in their advertising campaigns. The manner in which the Castle Lager advertising campaign unfolds is complex, but also very interesting. As will be outlined below, there are several types of English language Castle Lager commercials. Prior to the inclusion of blacks, many of these commercials had already sought to engage the undercurrents of an incipient South African mythology, particularly the commercials which re-enact supposed events in the development of the beer during the turn of the century. As reform gathered pace around the mid-1980s, one sees these commercials reconsidering or reinterpreting their earlier conception that had represented a past which neither depicted social interaction between blacks and whites, or even the presence of blacks.

One of the most important aspects of television advertising in relation to the 1980s reform period, began at the historical moment when blacks were publicly welcomed into South Africa’s predominantly English-speaking bourgeois or petite bourgeois world. It is contended that beer advertising (i.e. across all brands) assumed a significant political role by taking the lead in articulating new stereotypes which projected or nurtured an ideal type of integrated new middle class (and working class). The ethnic or tentative ‘ethnic middle class’ varieties of media racial stereotyping, which in retrospect seem slow-changing or relatively static, were overtaken by more dynamic integrationist non-ethnic black middle class stereotypes\footnote{During the 1980s the government was still trying to reconcile the contradictory implications of ‘black middle classes’ and earlier apartheid forms based on ethnicity by stating that such black middle classes should be amongst the nations of South Africa. According to P.W. Botha, free enterprise was away to create black middle classes amongst the nations of South Africa, and thereby lay the foundation for resisting communism (see chapter 4)}. From 1987 onwards, such integrationist non-ethnic black middle class stereotypes had become very visible in commercials.
The English language Castle Lager history reel consists of a total of 39 commercials for the period 1978 to 1991. The absence of ethnic language beer commercials in the research sample should not be perceived as a flaw. The \textit{League Soccer} commercials (1988/1990) and \textit{Soccer Match of the Day} (1992), which are part of the history reel, provide documentation of black people of more ethnic or working class typology. Though admittedly a commercial such as \textit{League Soccer} (1988/90), by having more ethnographic content than is normally the case, lacks some of the qualities of black stereotypes wholly created by capital’s media articulators during the period of apartheid and its reform. Commercials shot in studios, or which feature only actors or models selected from casting or modelling agencies, are obviously more evident of the \textit{wilful} stereotyping practices prevalent at the time within relations of media production. On the other hand, commercials utilising shots that include action contextualised in largely uncontrived crowd scenes in a soccer stadium, might be considered to possess some degree of ethnographic content (see Heider, 1976; Banks, 1992).

The primary focus of the present research is changing forms of \textit{racial} stereotyping. It must however be recognised that the tendency to position beer as an exclusively male product, (and the consequent under-representation of women in beer advertisements), also needs to be investigated further. In spite of the fact that capitalist economies are supposed to have moved into post-Fordist stages, it seems that cultural production relating to the consumption of beer is still mostly linked to the previously attributed relationship between men and the means of production (be these located in industry or the service sector). Where women are occasionally depicted in Castle Lager commercials, their stereotyping is noted in the research.

\textbf{Different Types of Castle Lager Commercials}

It might be useful to note here that the commercials on the English version of the Castle Lager history reel can be placed into at least three groups. One might in fact say that there have actually been up to \textit{five} different English language Castle Lager advertising campaigns, some running concurrently. At the same time it should be noted that there are
many overlapping ideas and concepts which make the various Castle Lager sub-campaigns mutually reinforcing.

First, is the main Castle Lager campaign which started in 1978, with the ‘Historical Commercials’. It will be discussed below that with the Joggers commercial in 1987, this main campaign series branches off into a lackadaisical or slapstick series of commercials. This conceptual transition uses the Charles Glass Society idea as connecting link with the earlier ‘historical’ commercials.\textsuperscript{190} The six 1989 Changing the Label...commercials, although ostensibly a special occasion/product announcement series, in terms of execution, style, and form, link strongly into the main post-1987 lackadaisical or slapstick concepts which emphasise camaraderie between blacks and whites, so they are listed together for this study. I prefer to see the slapstick or lackadaisical series as a branching off from the historical campaign, as a second phase of the main campaign rather than a second type of campaign.

Second, are the occasional Sports Sponsorship Commercials interspersed during the period under study, beginning with the 1981 Currie Cup Cricket commercial. (Most of the post-1987 sports commercials also refer the Charles Glass Society.) Initially, English language Castle Lager commercials featured Currie Cup Cricket. After the introduction of TV4, (1987), there seems to have been a bottoming out to include soccer sponsorship, starting with League Soccer (1988). In terms of capitalist accommodation\textsuperscript{191}, with the reform of apartheid the media representation of black soccer in the late 1980s seems to have surfaced to occupy a working class position, possibly bearing some parallels to the social location of white soccer in the 1960s and 1970s, (The Cricketing Greats (1984-5)

\textsuperscript{190} There was a further historical Charles Glass commercial in 1991 after a lapse of about five years.

\textsuperscript{191} By capitalist accommodation I refer to the integration of working classes and proletariat into hegemony through the extension of consumption. Judith Williamson (1978: 13), with reference to post World War II Britain says: “But in our society, while the real distinctions between people are created by their role in the process of production, as workers, it is the products of their own work that are used in the false categories invoked by advertising, that obscure the real structure of society by replacing class with distinctions made by the consumption of particular goods.
commercial -- see below -- might be seen to straddle both the historical and sports sponsorship groups.)

Third, are the *special occasion* or *topical* commercials which seem to echo concurrent political events in the march to democracy in South Africa. It is not easy to say if these commercials were reifying or ‘taming the struggle’, in the sense that they might have been appropriating it to a dominant political discourse of the state (Marcuse, 1964; Williams, 1973:3-16). The forms of representation in these commercials were appropriating unfolding political events according to predominant capital’s tentative projection of what a proper social order for the country might be. The depicted social order was a somewhat idealised one, but in terms of the recent past it would in reality have constituted a degree of reform that was perhaps revolutionary. Thus, arguably, these commercials in fact contributed to the struggle’, or towards an illusive ideal, (which at that stage was believed to be beyond the capabilities of an Afrikaner *bureaucracy*), where ‘the struggle’ and reform emanating from the state could possibly merge. *Winston Ngozi* (1985), *Reunion* (1989) and *Homecoming* (1990), which have strong political undertones, seem to represent this what one may call ‘idealistic strain’. I do not believe it would be a sound assessment to associate these Castle Lager *commercials*, or those of the lighthearted lackadaisical genre, with government-inspired ‘Total Strategy’.192 Rather than tacitly ‘conspiratorial’ with government strategy, the content of these commercials, (see their analysis below), indicates that they were symptomatic of the growing schism between English-dominated capital and the Afrikaner Nationalist Party dominated administration of the state.

The 1979, *Dumpy* commercial, which consists of only two shots, is a bit of an odd man out on the history reel. This is a new product announcement commercial which does not belong to any of the Castle Lager campaign genres or displays any interlinking themes. But it is interesting from a gender perspective. It features what appears to be a tired husband, settling down to drink some beer in front of the TV, possibly after a

192 *Total Strategy* was discussed in the introduction to this thesis.
‘productive’ day at work, as he still seems to be dressed in working clothes (Shot 1). There is a sadistic wife stereotype, whose voice is heard, but who never fully appears in any of the frames, save for her hand which places a full oversized 500 ml. dumpy bottle of beer next to an empty 340 ml. dumpy on a coffee table near to her husband (Shot 1). We are aware from her voice that she is watching him while he pours beer over himself, from the new and larger dumpy bottle which he has not been warned about. This manner of dramatisation is a good example of what advertisers regard as a ‘lateral’ or ‘creative’ approach to communicating the benefits of a product which in itself is not particularly exciting. Dumpy is also interesting from the point of view of realist cinema, as it is constructed from essentially one shot. The distinguishing feature in the construction of most commercials, is their rapid montage of successive cuts or dissolves of many very short duration shots. A second shot cut at the end of Dumpy is a pack shot showing the 340 ml. and new 500 ml. bottles shot against a backlit white translucent perspex infinity curve.

First Phase: The Historical Series

One of the primary objectives of the advertisers of Castle Lager in the first phase of their campaign, seems to have been to position the beer as one of early origins and unique South African pedigree. The advertising concept of these commercials mostly draws on the nostalgia aspects of late 19th and early 20th century Transvaal. These, commercials proceed to tell the Castle Lager /Charles Glass story by instalments: i.e. various tales about the early origins of the beer are related by successive commercials. It should be noted that until 1984, ‘the past’ portrayed by the English language Castle Lager historical commercials, showed a predominantly Eurocentric and Anglo-Saxon South Africa.

Initially, in 1978, the commercials referred to ‘the creative brewer’ who first came up with the special recipe for Castle Lager. The first commercial on the history reel, Time Tested, (1978), makes no mention of either Charles Glass or the purported 1895 date of the first successful brewing of Castle Lager. The following three commercials Brewmaster 1895 (1978), Apprentice (1978) and Beerwagon (1979), all mention the date
when Castle Lager was launched. This slight uncertainty at the beginning of the campaign, arouses a degree of scepticism as to the full authenticity of the Charles Glass story. Also, the actor who plays the part of ‘Charles Glass’, is featured in two 1978 commercials (Brewmaster 1895 and Apprentice), but the purported historical character who goes by the name ‘Charles Glass’, is only introduced the following year in Beerwagon (1979). Charles Glass subsequently becomes a key figure in the purported history of Castle Lager. He is portrayed as the person supposed to have originally come up with the recipe for Castle Lager -- ‘a somewhat bitter, somewhat dry, but never sweet’ taste. The term ‘somewhat bitter, somewhat dry, but never sweet’, (which First Rand Show (1983) tells us belongs to “a beer most suited to South African tastes”), suggests the continual angst experienced at various levels of society in the formation of the state or what one may call ‘the South African condition’, in a sense a reification of struggle.

Something that has not been directly alluded to in any of the advertising for Castle Lager, is the significant timing of the purported birth of Castle Lager, 1895. It was at about this time (1895-6), that mine owners realised that a very serious contradiction had found its way into the capitalist development of the Transvaal (Van Onselen 1982:63). Any further expansion in the large and very profitable liquor industry would have been at the expense of the very motor of capitalism, the mining industry. Van Onselen (1982:63-96) suggests that mining Randlords had initially supported the distilling and marketing of poor quality spirits as a means of furthering the exploitation of African, (especially Mozambican) mine workers. However, with the advent of more sophisticated (deep level) mining methods, alcoholism was believed to having a detrimental, effect on productivity. It appears that government structures only responded with prohibitionist legislation after the powerful mining lobby sided with those who had been advocating it. However, prohibition was only effectively enforced with the imposition of martial law at the end of the war with Great Britain.193 The scenes featured in the Gold Prospectors commercial of 1986, (see below) are cast in the very arena of this issue, but allusions to prohibition (if

193 Under Milner’s administration the passing into law of Ordinance 32 of 1902 prevented the distillation of any spirits for commercial gain in the Transvaal. When bars reopened in January 1902 they had to operate within restricted hours and provide a meal ‘for any alcohol served. Liquor licences came under the control of the Imperial Liquor Commissioner (Van Onselen, 1982:92).
any), would have to be read in the MVO’s words: ‘... a beer to satisfy a goldminer’s thirst’.

The idea of personifying the brewer as Charles Glass adds depth and interest to the Castle Lager advertising campaign. Through the intertwining of the product with some of the social history of early South Africa, various ‘myths’ are created about Castle Lager. This ‘historical’ approach is no doubt suggested by the underlying concept encapsulated in the slogan ‘the taste that’s stood the test of time’. And, of course, there may well be some truth in the fact that the brand name Castle Lager has been around a long time. An important principle of advertising procedure, (and other forms of rhetoric or propaganda), is to always tell the ‘truth’, by using the half of the truth, which facilitates ‘selling strategy’ (Trott, 1979).

Another distinguishing feature of Castle Lager commercials ate coherent story lines which endow the quality of mini dramas with denouement. Even where an interruption in unity of time or place occurs in the sequence, the action always transcends to the new characters or context. This is especially true of the historical commercials where a transition takes place from the ‘past’ into contemporary pub scenes; the action prevails into new contexts and to new characters because the commercials are articulating the ‘test of time’ concept.

Also, the storylines of most of the Castle Lager historical commercials are structured around a common theme. They begin with shots of purported aspects of early manufacturing processes or marketing strategies of the beer, followed by shots of historical and/or contemporary scenes of its consumption. The following commercials seem to follow this pattern: Time Tested (1978); Brewmaster 1895 (1978); Apprentice (1978); Beerwagon (1979); Boxing (1981); First Rand Show (1983); Cricketing Greats (1984); Train (1984); Gentlemen of the Press (1985), to a lesser extent as the display of consumption is not a public one; Gold Prospectors (1986); and Charles Glass (1991).
Structured Absences

A point worth noting about the historical reconstruction in Castle Lager commercials is the non-inclusion of blacks until 1984. Save for a very short duration shot of a black person in the 60 second version of *First Rand Show*, (1983), blacks were absent, (even as passersby in street scenes), until *Train* (1984). While the absence of black patrons in shots which depicted contemporary pub scenes for the late 1970s or early 1980s is correct in terms of ethnographic reconstruction of the apartheid era, the complete absence of blacks in the representation of street scenes for during the turn of the century, is difficult to sustain.

It would not be an unfair observation that most of the early English language Castle Lager commercials (1978-1984), including those of the historical *Charles Class* series, followed the principle of ‘structured absences’ (as defined in Tomaselli RE et al, 1989:157). In virtually all of these commercials, no blacks were featured, not even as onlookers. By being devoid, of any stereotyping of blacks, these early commercials are what one might call ‘ethnically pure’, in terms of apartheid ideology. But the relative or complete absence of social interaction between whites and blacks makes ethnographic reconstruction of the ‘past’ supposedly portrayed, inaccurate. This is particularly evident in *Time Tested* (1978); *Brewmaster 1895* (1978); *Apprentice* (1978); *Beerwagon* (1979); *Boxing* (1981), 60 second & 30 second versions; definitely in *First Rand Show*, 30 second version, (1983); and both the 60 and 30 second versions of *Gentlemen of the Press* (1985). (The 60 second version of *First Rand Show* (1983) does have a very short duration shot with a black person in it.) The earlier of these commercials were probably produced or conceived during the late B.J. Vorster era, prior to any overt measures to reform social apartheid194. Reform actively got under way during the course of the administration of P.W. Botha, who had taken over in 1978. However, indications of an

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194 Television was only introduced in South Africa in 1975, with the first advertising commercials being broadcast in 1978 (See Tomaselli RE et al., 1989). The decision to introduce television during the Vorster era, along with other important moves towards addressing structural requirements in the economy might be seen as the beginnings of political reform (see Chapter 3)
emergent new form of social representation only become evident in Castle Lager commercials from 1983 or 1984 onwards.

It seems that the *Train* commercial of 1984 may signal an important turning point. This contention is reinforced by the fact that the two earlier commercials on the history reel blacks barely feature at all. This absence is in spite of the fact that the historically reconstructed situations in which the action takes place strongly call for some presence of blacks.

**Boxing (1981)**

The 1981 *Boxing* commercial features a boxing match at the turn of the century between Australian Willy Docherty, and American King McCoy. It is a good example of a commercial which in terms of accurate historical reconstruction of the period, might have been expected to show some blacks, but it failed to do so. There are two similar versions of *Boxing*: a 60 second version and a 30 second version edited mostly from the same shots as the 60 second version, but with fewer shots. Shots 1-20 of *Boxing* (60 second version) feature the boxing bout being staged outdoors, shots 21-25, feature after-the-boxing-match festivities hosted by Charles Glass in a pub, while from shots 25-28, there is a transition to a modern day contemporary pub scene.

The boxing bout takes place in a ring set outdoors in an open space, near what appears to be a warehouse (Shot 7&13). It is these scenes in particular which might have been expected to show some black faces in the background, especially Shots 1-2, Shot 5, Shot 10, Shot 17. The MVO says: “There was great excitement in old Johannesburg when Australian Willy Docherty climbed into the ring with world champion King McCoy of the USA...” But this ‘great excitement’ is limited to whites only. No blacks are shown anywhere amongst the onlookers, or in the background of an event quite likely to have attracted their interest or curiosity.
The after-match pub shots also do not show any blacks, (as pub employees or as patrons), but in this case this absence probably is not necessarily inconsistent with work and social relations for the period depicted. Also, no blacks are shown in the third and last part of the commercial, (Shots 25-28), which features a transition in time to a contemporary pub scene, but here quite certainly the absence is not inconsistent with an actual pub situation under the state apartheid circa 1981.195

First Rand Show (1983)

No new commercials were produced for Castle Lager in 1982, but the two 1983 commercials, (60 second and 30 second versions), where Charles Glass is supposed to have entered his first beer competition at the 1907 Rand Show, might surely have been expected to include some blacks. When the 60-second version of this commercial is viewed in slow motion, one does in fact see a shot of a young black man tending a donkey (Shot 9). The production of a commercial such as this one clearly involves a carefully planned and, judging by the large number of extras, a lavishly expensive reconstruction of a ‘past’ Castle Lager event. However short duration Shot 9 might be, (1.28 seconds), the presence of this black person would most likely have been included at storyboard stage and its impact carefully considered when the concept was being presented to the client (before the commercial was shot). But it should also be noted that no blacks are visible in any of the crowd shots showing people in the Rand Show grounds (e.g. Shots 5, 7, 10, 15, 17, 19, 21, 22).

The manner in which this young black man in Shot 9 comes across, does not necessarily dilute the essentially Eurocentric and Anglo-Saxon nature of the reconstruction of the 1907 Rand Show context. He is dolled up in a fancy suit, with a frilly white shirt. This black lad seems to be as much an exhibit as the little donkey he is with. On the one hand, his presence in one of the Rand Show tents bears some resemblance to 19th century

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195 Segregated restaurants and pubs (whose origins can be traced to the Separate Amenities Act of 1953) were still known to exist in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and often continued to be the norm even after the mid-1980s.
London freak shows, where strange human beings from far corners of the Empire, would be displayed. Yet on the other hand, this suggestion is dispelled by the strong aspects of affirmative paternalism in the image of the young black man in the presence of a master who has taken the trouble to dress him in smart gentlemanly attire. The immediate context suggests that the black lad presumably would have been a farmhand in real life. Dressed up in the gentlemanly uniform of the coloniser, his image bears some relationship to the object of Roland Barthes’ (1973:126-8) criticism of the image of a young black man on the cover of a Paris Match magazine. In mise-en-scène terms, there is also some resemblance in composition between this shot (Shot 9), and Shot 34 near the end of *Train* (1984), which will be discussed later on. Within the world encompassed by the camera frame, the young black man is positioned to the extreme right, with his body remaining partly outside the right frame border throughout the duration of the shot. In the 30-second version of *First Rand Show*, these few frames of this almost subliminal duration shot are completely excised.

This rather tentative short duration shot with the young black, man (Shot 9), in *First Rand Show* is strongly confirmed in the *Train* commercial of the following year. *Train* (1984) features a black person in a significant role. However, the following year *Gentleman of the Press* (1985), reverted back to structured absences. *Gentlemen of the Press* (1985) is discussed before *Train* (1984) in order to conclude the section which deals specifically with commercials where structured absences persisted. *Train*, (1984), which was broadcast the previous year, had makes a powerful reformist statement and seems to be the signal of an official change of policy on the part of SAB. (*Train* will be discussed below under *New Policy*.)

*Gentlemen of the Press* (1985)

It is perhaps surprising that this first commercial of 1985, reverts back to the earlier pattern of excluding blacks. It is based on a supposed event when Charles Glass invited the *Gentlemen of the Press* to sample and criticise his beer. In the outdoor shots, where the journalists are shown arriving at Charles Glass’s brewery offices (Shots 1 & 2), and
where the coachman waits outside (Shots 16, 22), no blacks are apparent. Through the
duration of Shot 1, a long shpt (taken from a distance or covering a wide angle) of the
brewery offices, with the coach arriving from right of frame, two men walk from right to
left near the verandah of the building carrying barrels on their shoulders. The heads of
these men are obscured by the barrels so they cannot be positively identified, but in terms
of the mise-en-scéne of the commercial, they come across as white manual labourers. No
blacks are depicted in pejorative roles such as servants, cleaners or tea boys at the
brewery offices. Charles Glass’s underlings are a white assistant (Shot 3. 5, 21), and
‘Wilkins’. a white bookkeeper (Shots 4, 18, 20, 21). It would have been quite logical for
Charles Glass’s black colleague from the Train commercial of 1984, (to be discussed
below under New Policy), to make his appearance again at the brewery offices, thus
confirming that he was indeed involved in the brewing business at a management level.
Also, had the theme of turn of the century black middle class participation been
continued, one might even have expected to see a black journalist in Gentlemen of the
Press. But it is only much later, in 1991, in a clearly revisionist ‘Charles Glass’ historical
commercial, that a black colleague, (possibly the black gentleman from the 1984 Train
commercial), again makes his appearance (Shot 3), to help Charles Glass stable his horse
as he arrives at the brewery (see below).

The apparent regression back to structured absences in Gentlemen of the Press, after an
unambiguously reformist statement in the earlier Train (1984), could have several
explanations. It could be indicative of a backlash by Nationalist government officials
upon the SABC. This might have been triggered off by a sense of unease from
conservative viewers, resulting in complaints and criticism upon the SABC’s Acceptance
Board for ‘reforming too fast’. But this is only a speculative explanation, and many other
reasons may exist. Whatever the reasons, it is theoretically consistent that, if Train is seen
as an emergent form (see below), there should be a certain degree of tentativeness until
this form becomes established or dominant -- by the time of Joggers (1987).

The 1984 Train commercial had in any case made quite a powerful reformist statement.
Also, the 1984 Cricketing Greats commercial which is based on black and white stills
and includes a photograph of West Indian Sylvester Clark, (see below) was broadcast again in 1985. (The 1985 version of *Cricketing Greats* has a very slight variation in the list of names of great South African cricketers which are cited during the banjo accompanied song.) This commercial suggests apartheid-free sport. Though not particularly challenging in the manner in which the suggestion domes, (the close up portrait shot of Sylvester Clark is not contextualised by any shots of him in action playing with the South Africans), by signifying nonracial sport, the appearance of this black cricketer does at least keep the antiapartheid lamp burning (see below).

**Marketing Considerations?**

In addition to the politically motivated procedures and broadcasting structures of the SABC during the pre-reformed apartheid era, which vigorously corralled marketing strategy into separate approaches for different language groups, it is quite probable that the marketers of Castle Lager might have rationalised their initial approach in terms of their conception of generic product characteristics affecting the marketing situation of beer. Thus, what theoretically-informed critics read as ‘structured absences’, to many practitioners, in terms of interpellation within their professional frame of reference, would haven fallen within the domain of common sense. The pre-1984 Castle Lager marketing procedure seems to resemble that of products such as OMO washing powder (a Unilever product) which until the mid-1990s continued with the use of different media and the production of separate advertisements for different racial groups. The marketers of OMO believed this approach to be essential to the nature of their product and its marketing situation.196

Before the introduction of TV2/3, apartheid related broadcasting restrictions made it quite difficult to advertise to blacks through the medium of television. There are no signs in Castle Lager commercials prior to the introduction of TV2/3; to indicate that any marketing dynamic to target black beer drinkers in the TV1 commercials was being

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196 Interview with OMO Brand Manager, Lever Brothers, Durban, 1995.
frustrated. In this respect, the early Castle Lager commercials differ from some of the early TV1 Rama margarine commercials. The manner of construction of the early TV1 English language Rama margarine commercials, (prior to the introduction of TV2/3), suggests large numbers of urban black users of Rama were intentionally taken into consideration. Rama commercials of this period were based on jingles; a creative framework which facilitated the linking together of a small number of shots featuring blacks in commercials, with a greater number of shots featuring whites. This sort of expediency suggests that prior to the introduction of TV2/3, it was possible for large clients such as Unilever, (marketers of Rama), to negotiate some limited degree of accommodation within SABC apartheid broadcasting restrictions in order to reach their black urban consumers with TV1. In spite of this, (though admittedly) limited room for manoeuvre, the Castle Lager history reel indicates that SAB, one of the biggest advertisers in South Africa, did not at that stage use its leverage to follow such a route. Any evaluation of this observation should however be tempered with the fact that, unlike most of the Rama commercials, Castle Lager commercials are characterised by their strong story Lines, and have never been based on jingles. Creatively it would probably have been very difficult for the advertisers of Castle Lager to address blacks in a TV1 commercial, (within whatever negotiable limits were available in the practical application of SABC apartheid broadcasting policy), and at the same time maintain the coherent storyline quality of the individual Castle Lager commercials.

After the introduction of TV2 in 1982, (subsequently extended to TV2/3 in the same year) a comprehensive array of ethnic commercials were produced and broadcast for Castle Lager -- Zulu, Xhosa, Tswana, South Sotho, Ndebele, North Sotho and these continued in full swing until 1986. The first sign to suggest that dedication to this policy was beginning to waver is the brief depiction of a black person in the First Rand Show

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197 By 1979 the All Media Products Survey (AMPS) had revealed that 850 000 blacks, roughly 8% of the total adult black population already viewed ‘white’ TV each week and that blacks owned about 50,000 TV sets, even though only 15%-20% of all urban blacks had electricity at that stage (Financial Mail, October 5, 1979:61).

198 Up until the early 1990s TV2 continued to broadcast in Zulu, Xhosa, Swazi and Ndebele, while TV3 broadcast in Tswana, North Sotho and South Sotho. Some of these languages are linguistically quite similar. In 1992 TV2/3 was integrated with TV4 to become (contemporary community values) CCV-TV.
(1983) which was discussed above. The *Train* commercial of the following year, confirmed that an important change in policy had indeed taken place. In 1986, one saw a drastic reduction in the diversity of ethnic language commercials broadcast for Castle Lager. Whereas until 1986, the languages used were Zulu, Xhosa, Tswana, South Sotho, Ndebele and North ‘Sotho, by 1987, after the introduction of TV4, only Zulu and South Sotho continued to be used in the ethnic commercials.\textsuperscript{199}

New Policy

The featuring of blacks in English language Castle Lager commercials from 1984 onwards, was probably more than merely marketing expedience. Though such accommodation may have been in keeping with changing marketing conceptions in South Africa, (Sinclair, 1985:56-68), the timing and certain aspects of the content of the commercials, suggest a more far-reaching policy change on the part of the marketers of Castle Lager. From a review of the Castle Lager history reel, it appears that from 1984 onwards the commercials no longer reflected an apartheid society, nor did they try to merely accommodate urban middle class blacks in the key branding of the product. The new Castle Lager advertisements went out of their way to portray an integrated society that was well ahead of its time.

It is possible to discern two opposed strains of ideology underlying the initial Castle Lager commercials, and those of the post-1984 period. However, the transition from one ideological position to the other, is not an abrupt one. The first intimation of change appeared in the 60-second version of the *First Rand Show* commercial of 1983, and this first sign was strongly confirmed in the *Train* commercial of 1984. The two *Gentlemen of the Press* (1985) commercials which followed, regressed into earlier forms. But the new tendency became firmly established by 1986/7, after the broadcast of *Gold Prospectors* and *Joggers*. Raymond Williams’s concept (1977:121-7) of dominant, residual, and

\textsuperscript{199} List of commercials broadcast for alcoholic beverages (all languages) on SABC-TV, for the period 1985-1990. See Ornico List in Volume II, Appendix 10.
emergent forms, suggests this manner of cultural transformation is not unparalleled in the social history of other countries. The commercials which maintained structured absences were dominant/residual, and consistent with ideological requirements for the furthering of ‘separate development’. Castle Lager commercials made from 1984 onwards which depicted social interaction between whites and blacks at management level or general interracial camaraderie in the workplace or during leisure time activities, were emergent: ahead of their time, and consistent with the ideological requirements for achieving an integrated society. This new development was not only evident in the Castle Lager commercials, but encompassed most SAB brands: Lion Lager, Carling Black Label, Hansa.

*Train (1984)*

The *Train* commercial of 1984 belongs to the historical Charles Glass/nostalgia series. This commercial features the purported first railing of a consignment of Castle Lager to the coast. By showing a black man actively involved in this enterprise, this commercial gives some powerful intimations about the future plans of South African capital in regard to the re-direction of social change. During this period, action and images in this, (and other commercials especially from the leading companies of English-dominated capital), seemed to be opening up the road to a more integrated society -- there appeared to have been a growing commitment to prise apart what might be called the bricked up walls of apartheid consciousness.

Quite possibly, *Train* (1984) is no more ethnographically accurate in its representation (of work and social relations in late 19th century Witwatersrand), than earlier Castle commercials which omitted blacks altogether. At the end of the 19th Century, the small numbers of black petty-bourgeoisie in the Transvaal were not forging partnerships with white people -- there is little evidence that such social relations existed (Bundy, 1979:240-216). While a class of black ‘gentlemen’ may have existed, it is unlikely that they had the same social status as the white upper classes. Nevertheless, the mere fact that this commercial shows a black person doing work together with whites, places the
social context a little more realistically in South Africa than was the case with the previous Castle Lager commercials.

The racial stereotyping of the black man in *Train*, (1984), is quite peculiar. He is dressed no differently from his white counterparts -- fine black suit, waist coat and bowler hat. In the process of loading the beer onto a train, this black man is shown carrying a small barrel of *Castle* on his shoulders (Shot 8). When the frames of this shot are examined in slow motion, one clearly sees the barrel being passed onto the shoulders of the black man by a similarly dressed white man, Charles Glass himself. An important part of the overall meaning signified by the commercial, (and particularly in this shot), is that at the turn of the century, no apartheid or job reservation existed (in the Transvaal). Later on in this commercial, the well-attired black man momentarily makes his appearance in the right hand of the frame, when the beer has just arrived at its destination and is being tasted for approval by Charles Glass (Shot 34). In this shot the black gentleman is shown to be drinking and toasting together with the other Castle Lager pioneers. It should be noted that in the composition of the frames of this shot, (34), the black gentleman is still at the outer edges of the frame-depicted world -- he is looking in from right frame border. Yet when compounded with the visual narrative of the earlier shots, through his dress, actions, and demeanour, he is clearly established as being part of the management/gentlemanly class. He is socially an equal with the whites around him, and a fellow participant and contributor in the endeavour just completed.

This commercial creates an interesting timewarp. It is debatable how historically accurate the representation of this man as a black member of the gentlemanly/management class is.\(^{200}\) What is essentially proposed, is that the type of non-racist equality which beer advertising came to promote during the later 1980s and early 1990s, had already been in existence at the turn of the century. A myth is thus created or reinforced to the effect that

\(^{200}\) While a small black professional middle class (whose interests the South African National Native Congress, formed in 1912, represented in its early years) did exist in South Africa at the turn of the century, the members of this class did not enjoy the same status as ordinary white citizens, let alone middle class whites. Blacks in the Cape Colony did have the vote, but this privilege was limited to the Cape Colony and to a small group of blacks who were able to meet the necessary property and educational qualifications (Lodge, 1987:1-3).
the proposed capitalist democracy, (in the way of which apartheid was supposed to be standing), had in fact existed in the distant past. The 1984 *Train* commercial, is a post ‘New Constitution’ P.W. Botha era commercial. Coloureds and Indians had been accommodated in the Tricameral Parliament, but blacks were still excluded from meaningful political participation. The appearance of a well-to-do black man in this reconstruction of the past can therefore possibly also be taken as a signal ‘of things to come’ for blacks.\(^{201}\)

Nevertheless, while in this 1984 commercial the stereotyping of the black gentleman appears to be perfectly middle class, in mise-en-scene terms, his positioning within the frame does not yet acquire the level of dominance allotted to blacks in some later Castle Lager commercials, to be discussed below. When one examines the Castle Lager history reel, it is possible to discern some degree of chronologically ascending order in the frame dominance allotted to blacks. This ascendance can be observed through commercials such as *Joggers* (1987), *Musicians* (1987), *Soccer* (1987), the *Label Change* series of commercials (1989), *Canoe Race* (1989), *Reunion* (1989), *Homecoming* (1990) or *Soccer Match of the Day* (1992). In some shots of these latter commercials, blacks become relatively more dominant within the frame than whites.

**Cricketing Greats (1984)**

A second commercial produced in 1984, apartheid but not as overtly as *Train*. *Cricketing Greats*, also challenges *Cricketing Greats* is constructed around a montage of shots of old monochrome still photographs of great cricketers from past to the contemporary period.\(^{202}\) Amongst these ‘greats’, the photograph of West Indian cricketer, Sylvester

\(^{201}\) In the early 1980’s, during the period leading up to and after the elections for the Tricameral Parliament, it had been contemplated in the English-speaking press, that blacks might in due course be accommodated within a fourth chamber of parliament. In 1984 the government stated that the question of African ‘participation’ would be next on the agenda and mooted a National Statutory Council for Africans (Saunders et al.1992: 468)

\(^{202}\) The old photographs seem to be quite authentic, thus this commercial is essentially rendered in black and white. ‘Cricketing Greats’ (1984/5) is the only commercial on the Castle Lager history reel for the period under study that is not in full colour. Only the final shot (37), a pack shot, transforms itself from
Clark (Shot 31), is shown towards the end of the commercial. The policy of excluding black sportsmen and multiracial teams from visiting South Africa had been strictly applied during the Verwoerd era, and was continued through the Vorster era. By 1984, the reformist P.W. Botha administration was keen to reverse this policy, something easier said than done. Some people in South Africa still needed to be released from the confusing hold of earlier layers of ideology, and images such as that of Sylvester Clark (a member of a rebel cricket tour) in *Cricketing Greats*, might have had a reassuring effect on most middle class white South African TV viewers. However, world events had moved well beyond previous eras when white South African governments were able to staunchly reject multiracial international sports teams as provocative. Conversely, by the 1980s, South Africa was banned from participating in many international sporting events and the P.W. Botha government and its Department of Foreign Affairs were finding it extremely difficult to persuade foreign governments to allow their sportsmen or sportswomen, of whatever racial background, to play sport in South Africa.

Except for the 1985 *Gentlemen of the Press* commercial which does not show any blacks, all commercials subsequent to *Train*, (1984), show an increasing frequency of blacks interacting with whites. In retrospect, it is possible that this appearance of a black

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black and white into colour, as the MVO is saying: “I wouldn’t miss it, would you?”. The use of black and white or sepia, simply as a device to represent scenes from the past, is not resorted to in the Castle Lager historical commercials.

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203 In other societies where black people have been subjected to discrimination, it is in the field of sport and culture that they have managed to make substantial inroads. However, in South Africa, the government and sports administrators, who controlled all official sport, had applied a policy of excluding the nonwhite population from participating in representative sport. Until the 1960s, few non-white sportspersons had reached international class in the white overseas countries, and these countries understood that visiting teams to South Africa should be all-white. But a real problem arose with the “D’Oliveira affair” in 1968, when the English cricketing authorities found it impossible to exclude a South African-born Coloured cricketer from the M.C.C. team to tour South Africa. The response of the South African government was to ban the whole team. This incident alerted the sporting public in Britain and other parts of the world to the full implications of continuing to exchange visits with apartheid sporting bodies. It thus became possible for anti-apartheid groups to co-ordinate the imposition of a successful sports boycott of South Africa. By the 1970s and 1980s, South African sport had become starved of competition at the level of international standard. The rebel tours were an attempt to break out of this isolation and possibly bring about a lifting of the sports boycott. Large sums of money were put up to lure foreign sportsmen to compete in South Africa. Most who succumbed to this enticement were usually at the end of their careers, except for certain West Indians who subsequently suffered considerable career damage. (See “International Boycott of Apartheid Sport”, Paper prepared for the United Nations Unit on Apartheid, http://www.org.za/ancdocs/history/aam/abdul2.html)
participant in *Train* (1984) (and other advertising commercials produced by South African corporate capital at the time), signalled a sea-change in state policy. The much vaunted English-speaking/Afrikaner capital alliance was being put to the test. Civil society at its white bourgeois levels was increasingly coming under the ideological influences of the South African left, world opinion, and the ANC. The Afrikaner dominated white Nationalist government and ancillary bureaucratic structures, were reluctant to come to terms with some of the inevitable implications of reform (Friedman. 1987).

**Gold Prospectors (1986)**

This commercial seems to possess a terrible honesty and self-recriminatory quality which its producers were unlikely to have been unaware of. With the possible exception of Shot 9 in *First Rand Show* (1983), *Gold Prospectors* is the only English language Castle Lager commercial which shows pejoratively stereotyped blacks. This commercial redresses the structured absences in many of the previous historical Castle Lager commercials in a manner which does not seem to be inconsistent with the actual relations of production in the mining industry at the turn of the century (Van Onselen, 1982:33).

In the first part of this commercial, (Shots 1-8), Charles Glass is depicted going about the mining digs to do research amongst white miners to establish their desired taste in a beer. The black mine workers who are featured in Shots 4,5,6,7, are depicted in pejorative roles and their drinking requirements are shown to be completely overlooked in this quest to formulate the ‘taste to quench a miner’s thirst’, as might quite likely have been the case.

*Gold Prospectors* is thus probably more accurate than ‘Train’ in respect of ethnographic reconstruction of black/white labour relations at the turn of the century. The black workers are shown as ‘faceless’ people (Shots 5 & 7). The camera never once settles long enough on a black face to make any facial characteristics visible. The black mine workers come across as empty human shells deprived of personalities. They move about dispirited
in the background, pushing trolleys or carrying pickaxes. When a black miner does walk towards camera, he is looking down and his face is underexposed (Shot 6). His demeanour suggests the sullen, docile and subdued mood of a slave.

Emergent Form becomes Established: The Light Hearted Series

Inhibitions to socially integrated imagery in Castle Lager commercials seem to have completely fallen away from 1987 onwards. But language restrictions for the different SABC-TV channels still remained in place to ensure that separately and ethnically designated black audiences (Mersham 1985) were presented from getting exposure to non-ethnic English language commercials, at least while they were watching TV2/3.²⁰⁴

It is probable that the underlying light-hearted, lackadaisical, theme which characterises many of the Castle Lager commercials of this period was trying to address a yearning for escapism. This interpretation would seem particularly appropriate for Joggers (1987), Musicians (1987), and (table) Soccer (1987). All three of these commercials had been broadcast in a period which had seen a widening of the fractures in South African society. The mid-1980s township revolt led to the collapse of the system of Black Local Authorities, clearly spelling out a rejection by the black majority of the reformist initiatives of the P.W. Botha regime (Nusas, 1985:32). Also, 1986 had seen a shift in the balance of power within the state in favour of a militarist tendency (Swilling, 1987:19). The reformist faction had until then been in ascendance: The subsequent ascendency of the militarist camp ushered in a period of severe political repression under the 1986 National State of Emergency and successive states of emergency in 1987, 1988 and 1989.

Castle Lager Song: Alternative National Anthem?

It was in 1987 that a Castle Lager song was first introduced, with the Joggers commercial: “When we drink Castle, we fill with admiration; for Charles’s brewing class

²⁰⁴ Channel switching is believed to have resulted in black viewers spending at least one-third of their time watching TV1 (Financial Mail, 12 March 1952: 1212)
which Won fame across the nation. When we drink Castle, we draw our inspiration, from Charles’s brew and how it grew a mile high reputation”. It will be noticed that the first part of the song uses the words ‘across the nation’. These words had strong political implications at the time. White and black Castle Lager drinking comrades were shown singing together and then cheering large icon-like portraits of Charles Glass with their raised beer glasses. At that stage, the National Party government and Afrikaner-dominated capital still envisaged ‘a constellation of states’ consisting of separate nations.

The song is used in the following commercials: Joggers (1987), Musicians (1987), (table) Soccer (1987), League Soccer (1988), Reunion (1989), the slightly altered version of Reunion (1990), the slightly altered version of Joggers (1990), and the slightly altered version of League Soccer (1990).

**Joggers (1987)**

The 1987 Joggers commercial features a healthy mixture of black and white runners (Shots 3, 4, 5). There is little hint of race or ethnicity in the stereotyping of blacks in this commercial. This is a class-based commercial and the participants are clearly all middle class. The fact that they are running together in an upmarket suburb suggests that the participants might be living an early manifestation of what in the late 1980s came to be called ‘grey areas’. Possibly in order to rebut any objections from the SABC’s Acceptance Board in terms of the Group Areas Act, a black runner is shown exiting from a small white motor car to join the group as they are about to reach the pub (Shot 4). But this conclusion remains ambiguous, as the black runner is also ‘cheating’ by joining the other runners after they have almost reached their destination. This act is thus consistent with the lighthearted camaraderie intrinsically part of the campaign concept holding together this sub-genre: it isn’t winning or losing that is important to members of the ‘Charles Glass Society’, but how much time is allowed for drinking Castle Lager. Thus, as the MVO says, ‘those who have got the exercise down to a fine art seldom have to run further than around the corner’! Clearly, the producers were able to successfully negotiate the broadcast of this commercial, in spite of the fact that the social discourse it suggested was in contradiction with ‘official’ state policy at the time-- the Group Areas Act was
still on the statute book, and was still being enforced by the National Party government administration under P.W. Botha.
Charles Glass Society: Naturalising the Presence of the Other

_Joggers_ and the series of commercials to be discussed below constitute a conceptual branching off from the original historically-based campaign which had introduced Charles Glass. Continuity with the original branding was maintained through the hyper-conceit of the invention of the ‘Charles Class Society’. The key unifying theme of the branching-off campaign is that the primary activities portrayed, whether jogging, canoeing, baseball, etc., are actually secondary to consuming Castle lager. In the commercials which follow, the ‘Charles Glass Society’ becomes a vehicle for naturalising the presence of the ‘other’ (blacks) within English-speaking white middle class society. The Charles Glass Society becomes an integrated society. Whether black or white, members all have something very important in common -- they drink Castle Lager. The ‘Charles Class Society’ is thus a metaphor (or euphemism?) for the market (or potential market) of Castle Lager beer drinkers.

Subtle Variations in Stereotyping

The stereotyping of blacks in commercials falling into the three groups identified does have some subtle variations. In some commercials, such as _Joggers_ (1987 & 1990), _Musicians_ (1987), (table) _Soccer_ (1987), _Canoe Race_ (1989), _Baseball_ (1990) and _Homecoming_ (1990), (to be discussed below), there are no longer any visible class or cultural differences. Thus darker skin tones sometimes tend to go almost unnoticed, (or rather received in a different manner), as the connotations have become entirely different. What seems to come across is that regardless of skin colour, people of the same class find it is easier to relate to each other than people of the same skin colour but of different class.

It might be noted that _Homecoming_ (1990) which will be discussed below, is a topical, serious occasion commercial, which differs conceptually from the slapstick quality of the campaign theme of _Joggers_ (1987 & 1990), _Musicians_ (1987), (table) _Soccer_ (1987), _Canoe Race_ (1989), etc. The stereotyping of ‘George’ in _Homecoming_ is also completely
class-related and non-ethnic. On the other hand, in the sport sponsorship commercials *League Soccer* (1988) and the similar league *Soccer* (1990), cultural differences and ethnicity are still quite visible. In *Soccer - Match of the Day* (1992) ethnicity seems to be falling by the wayside, while class mannerisms (working class), arc very strongly visible (see below).

**Musicians (1987)**

A further good example of the light-hearted slapstick genre of Castle commercials, is *Musicians* (1987). This commercial shows blacks and whites meeting together for a jam session (Shot 1). Both black and white musicians are fairly sophisticated in this commercial (Shots 6, 12, 14). The male voice over tells us that: “When fellows of the Charles Glass Society get together for a (pause) session, it is vitally important that they are heard to make all the right noises...”. The participants are all in a rather slapstick/lackadaisical mood (Shots 1, 5, 6, 8). This ‘mood’ (first suggested in ‘Joggers’), becomes a type of sub-style which recurs again in later commercials. The fact that these guys are more interested in drinking Castle Lager than making serious music comes across when it turns out that the case for a double base that one ‘musician’ had arrived with, contains cans of Castle Lager (Shot 24)--perhaps signifying that to its devotees, Castle Lager is synonymous with music.

Another interesting feature, is that in an apartheid context, we are able to infer from Shot 1, (in which we see one of the black musicians alighting from a taxi), and from Shot 5, (which establishes one of the white musicians as host), that the black musicians are guests in a white group area. As in the case of the black runners in *Joggers* (1987), the black musicians, at the time this commercial was broadcast, would not have been allowed to live in the area in which they are depicted. However, at no stage in the commercial do they look awkward or uncomfortable. On the contrary, they appear carefree and uninhibited, as much at home in the environment in which they are depicted, as their white friends. Both in this commercial, as well as in *Joggers* (1987), the marketers of Castle Lager appear to have been preparing for a future reality that big corporations such
as SAB possibly already foresaw as inevitable: the collapse of apartheid and its pillars, among them, the Group Areas Act.

It should also be noted that two young white women are featured in this commercial. They appear to be either girlfriends or wives who are standing outside the house, supposedly watering the garden, as the musicians are arriving. In like slapstick manner, the women pretend to be appalled by the irregular behaviour of the musicians (Shot 19). Up to this point, women had been largely absent from Castle Lager commercials -- even more so than blacks, who clearly began to feature in the English language version from 1984 onwards. It thus appears that sexist apartheid in the supposedly male-dominated world of beer drinking had been even more stringent than racist apartheid.

*Soccer (1987)*

The *Soccer* commercial of 1987, actually features a game of *table soccer* being played in a pub. This commercial should not be confused with the two more serious league soccer commercials, *League Soccer* (1988) and its similar but shorter version *Soccer* (1990), or with *Soccer Match of the Day* (1992). The 1987 *Soccer* commercial is based on the slapstick/ lackadaisical campaign theme (discussed above): participants are always engaged in an apparent main activity which in fact is subsidiary, (or an excuse for), beer drinking. The voice over spells this out: “To fellows of the Charles Glass society, it is not important whether you win or lose at soccer or even how you play the game -- it is how much time you allow for a certain somewhat dry, somewhat bitter, never sweet refreshment”. It has been pointed cut above that the theme of these commercials was probably trying to address an underlying yearning for escapism in a deeply divided social context.

In *Soccer* (1987), black and white males in more or less equal numbers are visible in the pub (Shots 1, 3, 5, 13, 15, 20, 22, 25). There is also a pool game in progress (Shots 1, 7, 22, 25). All are middle class and a very jovial and happy atmosphere prevails, which is characteristic of the slapstick sub-genre to which this commercial belongs. A plaster is
applied to the forehead of a white ‘soccer’ player by one of his black counterparts to cover a mock injury (Shot 23). This act emphasises camaraderie and a level of social interaction devoid of racism. The stereotyping is similar in this commercial to the stereotyping in Joggers (1987 & 1990), and Musicians (1987). Shot 23 probably has deeper connotations. It is the white table soccer contestant pointing to the right hand side of his temple, who calls for the black contestant to apply the plaster. In the political context of the time, the significance of this act lies in the fact that the white contestant requests the plaster or healing medium from the black contestant.

**Canoe Race (1989)**

The 1989 Canoe Race commercial shows a non-racial class-based discourse similar to that which was portrayed in the 1987 Joggers, Musicians and (table) Soccer commercials. The lackadaisical tomfoolery does not become apparent until near the end of this commercial (Shot 23), however. The black canoeists are not too distinguishable from their white counterparts. All are of the same age group, the black guys share virtually the same manners and apparent zest for outdoor sport as the whites (see especially Shots 6, 13, 14, 18). What the viewer is made more aware of than skin colour, is class: all are powerfully stereotyped as young, upwardly mobiles. There is nothing in any way pejorative about the mannerisms of the black canoeists. Also, if the shots are averaged out, in mise-en-scene terms these yuppie blacks are given a fair share of frame dominance (see Shots 13, 14, 18). That cautious entry into the frame noted above in respect of group shots, (e.g. Shot 34) in Train (1984), and also in the composition of Shot 9 in First Rand Show (1983), is no longer in evidence. The black participants seem imbued with a certain confidence, optimism, and ‘clean-cut’ quality one associates with training and employment at white-collar level by well-established business corporations. But there is a twist in the tale. What actually happens in this commercial, after much prior preparation and a voice-over (male South African English-speaking accent), which sets the scene with anxiety provoking comments about ‘the mighty waters of the Makabusa’, it turns out that the canoeists paddle to a quiet spot to drink Castle Lager (Shot 23). This commercial is thus part of the slapstick genre. As in Baseball (1990), the underlying idea
closely resembles one which was being used for the advertising of ‘Bacardi Rum’ in the UK at the end of the 1970s by the ‘Kirkwood Company’ advertising agency -- magazines featured a paused soccer match on a sunset tropical beach with a bar set in a little bamboo hut, the headline read: “When Arnie Brings out the Bacardi, half time lasts the rest of the afternoon”.

**Changing the Label**

1989 marked the broadcast of no less than six English language commercials to announce some minor changes in the Castle Lager label. In terms of South African advertising, it is rather extraordinary that an advertiser should go to such lengths to announce a change in label design, especially when the new label seems to be more of a routine updating than a major change. Rama margarine and OMO washing powder both modernised their labels during the decade tinder review but this event passed by more quietly. The Changing the Label campaign is interesting from an advertising point of view, for its opportunistic exploitation of the label change occasion to breathe further life into the mainstream Castle Lager campaign, which at that stage had evolved to the *Charles Glass Society* featuring contemporary rather than historical themes.

In a reform context, one can possibly also read a symbolic meaning in the *Changing the Label* ritual -- the key branding of the beer was shedding its old skin so that its new non-racial target market conception could be realised (unblemished by the past). Circumstances have not permitted for the logging of more than two *Changing the Label* commercials, *Garage* and *Art Gallery*. As *Art Gallery* incorporates elements from the preceding five *Changing the Label* commercials, the two commercials which have been logged will for present purposes, suffice.

There were only two *Changing the Label* commercials, *Divers* and *Garage*, which did not feature whites and blacks interacting together at a social level. (*Diving Club* featured only whites, while *Garage* featured only blacks.) In the remaining commercials, the people shown to be taking part in group efforts at designing submissions to the label
change competition are depicted as if they are all equals living in a democratic and non-racial society. These commercials all show rather sophisticated black and white middle class entrants to the competition.

All *Changing the Label* commercials link with the *Charles Glass Society* theme. Also, the campaign is closely related to the slapstick or lackadaisical theme, with most of the aspirant label designers more interested in drinking the beer than designing the label.

**Garage (1989)**

This commercial depicts a group of black males relaxing at a braai (barbecue) party which seems to be taking place in a fairly up-market black township setting. Shot 1 shows the guests arriving for what turns out to be a barbecue or braai party (Shots 2, 3, 5, 8). It initially seems to be early morning (Shot 1, 2, 3, 4), and there is dense haze, (possibly from pollution from house fires), which makes the background indistinct (Shot 1). The MVO tells us: “These fellows of the Charles Glass Society haven’t bothered to enter Castle Lager’s ‘We’re Changing the Label not the Beer’ competition ... or have they?”

The party is taking place in front of the drive-in garage of the house. The host seems to become momentarily weary, possibly from the morning glare, as he covers his eyes with a copy of the *Sowetan* newspaper which he is reading (Shot 4). The paper slowly slides down from his eyes, and by Shot 7, (after a few sips of beer in Shot 6), he seems wide awake, with a mischievous glint in his eye. The host is a middle-aged slightly corpulent man, who is casually dressed in white shorts and short-sleeved shirt. His stereotyping seems to be that of a street-wise successful businessman, during his hours of leisure and relaxation. The camera cuts to Shot 8, where he has jumped up from his apparent lethargy and is flipping down the swing-over garage door (Shots 8-9). Upon the garage door is painted ‘this township group’s’ most original contribution to the Castle Lager new label design competition (Shot 10).
The stereotyping of these guys is relatively middle class, and shows no signs of pejorativeness. Most of the guys depicted show little trace of ethnicity. However, their manner of depiction is intended not to make them look quite as sophisticated as in the case of blacks depicted in some of the other Castle Lager commercials of this period, e.g. *Canoe Race* (1989), *Homecoming* (1990). But it must be borne in mind that the action is taking place in a relatively informal setting, so dress codes might be expected to be quite relaxed. *Garage*, it seems, is intended to take the spotlight (so to speak) of the Castle Lager campaign into life at another level of the social, formation. As part of the *Changing the Label* series, the all black *Garage* counterbalances the all white *Diving Club*, which depicts what appears to be a crazy bunch of varsity students who plan to enter the competition with an aqualung bottle with a *Castle* Label stuck on it.

*Art Gallery* (1989)

This finale commercial is one which shows the opening of a museum or art gallery exhibition, where all the designs featured in the preceding *Changing the Label* commercials are displayed. Some of the characters from the five earlier commercials are guests. The entry from a black township which incorporated a Ndebele wall mural pattern painted on a flip-over garage door because of its size and unusual pattern, is quite prominent on the art gallery wall (Shots 1,2,3). Possibly, the signification here might to be that capitalist democracy potentially affords equality and accommodation to those who are enterprising enough to compete.

*Sports Sponsorship: ‘Broadening the Key Branding’*

While lighthearted or lackadaisical commercials such as *Joggers* (1987), *Musicians* (1987), the ‘changing the label’ series (1989), *Canoe Race* (1989) or *Baseball* (1990), all accommodated the depiction of middle class blacks, it will be noted below (and in Appendix IB. Volume II), that no attempt was made to depict middle class blacks in social interaction with whites in any *Currie Cup Cricket* commercial. Possibly, it would have presented some creative difficulties at that stage to, realistically condense reformist
ideology with the manner of South African English speaking social realism that had already been established in the depiction of Currie Cup Cricket commercials. However, League Soccer (as a sport with a predominant black following and also some white participation), came to be used as an advertising instrument for not only broadening the key branding of Castle Lager to include ‘less sophisticated ends of the market’, but with the introduction of TV4, also as an ideological means for beginning to draw the black working classes and white middle classes closer.

*SAB Currie Cup (1981)*

This was the first sport sponsorship Castle Lager commercial. It features bowler Vincent van der Byl in action in what appears to a practice session. In this commercial, a few frames of a telephoto panning shot (where the camera lens is focused on the cricket action), vaguely reveals two or three black field workers seated upon a stand in the background (Shot 2). The camera pans past the stands while following the action on the field without stopping. The few spectators on the stands are in any case always outside of the depth of field of the camera lens. When analyzed in slow motion, it is possible to identify the presence of two or three out-of-focus black field workers sitting on one of the stands. It appears that this piece of genuine ethnographic content may have entered at the time of filming without the intention (or full awareness), of the person directing the camera. The figures in the background of these frames are too out-of-focus to be identified at normal speed, and it is debatable whether these frames could have had any subliminal ideological effect on the TV1 audiences. Whereas the brief appearance of the young black man in Shot 9 of the First Rand Show commercial must be seen as an intended, and a politically relevant emergent form, these out of focus figures in the background of Shot 2 in SAB Currie Cup, do not seem to bear any significance in terms of apartheid reform on the Castle Lager history reel.

*(Cricketing Greats (1984), which falls both in the historical and sports series, has already been discussed under New Policy.)*
Currie Cup Cricket (1989)

In the 1989 Currie Cup Cricket commercial, women are again featured, as was the case with the 1987 Musicians commercial. The camera cuts from the main action to show women spectators clad in shorts or adjusting their bikini tops, holding them in the frame for several voyeuristic seconds. In the first such sequence, the ball has been hit for six and falls into the lap of two vivacious young women spectators (Shots 14, 15, 17). The second time round the camera cuts from the cricket action (Shot 18) to an elderly’ male voyeur stereotype with binoculars (Shot 19), and then to his object of interest: one of the two woman spectators who caught the ball in Shot 15, and who now is adjusting her bikini top (Shot 20). There is also some interaction taking place between the two women and a male spectator in their own age group at left of frame (Shots 17 & 20).

Women spectators obviously are not inconsistent with cricket matches, but their particular emphasis in this beer commercial seems to indicate changing social mores. The 1981 SAB Currie Cup commercial did not depict any women spectators. In that commercial, there seem to be very few spectators on the stands, suggesting that it was filmed during a practice session (see above).

Broadening the Key Branding

From 1987 onwards, Castle Lager commercials were increasingly conceived around events which could facilitate the portrayal of social interaction between middle class blacks and whites -- jogging, canoe races, reunions, baseball and musical events. But there also appeared to be a shift in the English language Castle Lager commercials aimed at broadening the key branding to accommodate so called ‘less sophisticated ends of the market’. These changes also seem to dovetail with changes in the structure of SABC-TV broadcasting. The introduction of TV4 suggests that the SABC may have been
responding to pressures from marketers who were demanding a less restrictive approach in programming for urban blacks\textsuperscript{205}.

Soccer was already being used in the ethnic commercials for Castle Lager. According to the ‘Ornico List’,\textsuperscript{206} a commercial named \textit{League Soccer} was broadcast in February 1985 to Zulu, Xhosa, Tswana, South Sotho, Ndebele and North Sotho audiences. This commercial was possibly an ethnic language precursor of the English language \textit{League Soccer} (1988), and the very similar \textit{Soccer} (1990), commercials. At this point, the \textit{Charles Glass Society} undergoes more dramatic broadening as the English language Castle Lager commercials move ‘downmarket’ to include soccer sponsorship. In \textit{League Soccer} (1988), the MVO says “To fellows of the \textit{Charles Glass Society} only one thing rivals the thrills and skills of the Castle League. And that’s that ice cold Castle Lager waiting to meet you at the end of the game”. This commercial features predominantly working class or ethnic black stereotypes, and it is thus quite clearly pointed out that they too are included as members of the \textit{Charles Glass Society}.

Although Castle Lager was still involved with white soccer sponsorship’ in the 1970s, (white soccer had a fair amount of white following in the 1950s and 1960s), this involvement was never featured in the early English language Castle Lager TV commercials. The positioning of soccer as a ‘downmarket’ or ‘black market’ sport is dramatically illustrated in the advertising for Rama margarine. In 1986, a Rama commercial featuring a white family watching a rugby match was broadcast on TV1 and a very similar ethnic commercial was broadcast on TV2/3 featuring a black family watching a game of soccer. It appears that the English language Castle Lager commercials directed at the ‘white market’, initially concentrated on \textit{Currie Cup Cricket}, while soccer was only being featured in ethnic Castle Lager commercials directed at

\textsuperscript{205} TV4 which had been introduced early in 1987 to compete with MNET, a. privately-owned pay service using SABC transmitters, consistently screened multiracial programmes (Benson, The Cosby’s, The Jefferson’s etc.), and may to some extent also have been intended to make up for the shortcoming of TV2/3 in respect of English-speaking urban blacks (Tomaselli, KG 1986b).

\textsuperscript{206} ‘Ornico’ is one of several organisations which track television commercials across all brands according to product category.
blacks. Thus, in the second half of the 1980s, an intentional and accelerated merging seems to be taking place between two ends of the class structure in Castle Lager’s cultural production.

League Soccer (1988)

The 1988 League Soccer commercial differs from the sport-orientated commercials, which are light-hearted. League Soccer (1988), does not ‘belong to the same campaign theme and therefore does not exhibit any elements of the slapstick or lackadaisical sub-genre identified previously. This is serious soccer. It is nevertheless linked to the main campaign through references to the Charles Glass Society by the MVO, and through the singing of a soccer variation of the Castle Lager song ‘...across the Nation’. The commercial is structured around cuts between shots of highpoints of the game on the field, spectators on the stands, and shots of people all over the country who are either watching the game on TV or listening to radio commentary. Some of these shots seem to have an ethnographic quality. To some extent this commercial seems be constructed out of documentary footage taken at soccer matches.

Mostly black players and spectators are shown, but white soccer players, (especially goalkeepers); can also be made out in the shots showing the players in the two teams on the field (Shots 9, 11, 15, 16, 29, 34, 35). Also, in the home (or perhaps club) scene, one white man can barely be made out among a mostly black TV soccer audience (Shots 14 & 17). The black spectators in the stands are mostly working class. The class/ethnicity ratio of the stereotypes does sometimes appear to vary slightly from setting to setting (even to some extent between the different groups of spectators on the various stands). For instance, the spectators on the stands in Shot 5, seem rougher and their selection of clothes lacks any of the traces of designer styling which seem to be making their appearance in Shot 30. This would suggest that Shot 30 might have been filmed at a more expensive or exclusive stand, where the spectators were wealthier and more ‘middle class than those in Shot 5.
The home or club-house featured in Shots 14, 17 and 18, is clearly luxurious, and the people around the table are refined, though not of the sophisticated upper black middle classes such as some of the characters featured in other Castle Lager commercials, such as *Musicians* (1987), *Canoe Race* (1989), or *Homecoming* (1990). On the whole, most of the people featured in *League Soccer* (1988), seem to have been documented realistically. The crowd shots of people in the different stands in the soccer stadium possibly have an ethnographic quality. Thus, the images in *League Soccer* (1988), are relatively neutral in the sense that the commercial is not peopled with stereotypes screaming reformist ideology. The images do not seem to have been intended to be either affirmative or pejorative. Compared to ‘George’ in *Homecoming*, the guys in *Canoe Race*, or *Musicians*, most of the people in *League Soccer* come across more as impoverished. But as they are in a soccer stadium with other blacks, the situation does not impose any pejorative racial connotations, as might have been the case with regard to the black miners in the 1986 *Gold Prospectors* historical commercial.

A further league soccer commercial was broadcast in 1990 but goes under the name of just ‘Soccer on the history reel. This 1990 commercial is visually similar to the *League Soccer* broadcast in 1988, only shorter. The audio part of the two versions does differ, though the pace is similar. Both commercials use versions of the song with the words, ‘... across the nation’.

*Soccer Match of the Day* (1992)

The 1992 *Soccer - Match of the Day* commercial, is interesting from the point of view that it features interaction and rapport between whites and blacks at a more working class level. These are all soccer people, but the white guy is possibly a little more refined than the blacks, though he is trying hard to imitate and to be like’ his fellow ‘working class’ black soccer team mates (Shots 1,16,33). They all sit together at a table drinking Castle Lager, discussing ‘the match of the day’ -- they are shown to be rather rough mannered and aggressive. When he isn’t trying to be like them, their white counterpart seems respectful, attentive and relatively subdued (Shot 1 & 33).
The commercial features what must be a soccer club, setting where an aftermatch post-mortem is taking place. There is some degree of hostility and defensiveness from the main black character, ‘Victor’, as his team has (again) lost the game (Shot 13). He is taunted by one of his black friends sitting at the table, who says to hint “Victor you look like the loser’.

The technique used is to cut from the discussion between sips of Castle Lager, to the key features of the game (flashbacks). The black soccer team members or supporters are not the ignorant labourer stereotype. They are tough guys. What comes across clearly, is that it is not colour but class that counts. These black soccer players or club members could just as easily be ‘heavies’ from Liverpool, Glasgow or maybe Turin. It is their soccer culture which comes across very strongly.

**Topical Commercial With More Direct Political Undertones**

The third type of Castle Lager commercial, in terms of the previously stated classification adopted for this case study, are the special occasion or topical commercial. At the time when these commercials were originally broadcast, they seemed to echo current political events in the march to democracy in South Africa.

*Winston Ngozi (1985)*

The final 1985 commercial was one featuring jazz artist Winston Ngozi. This commercial is in English and features only blacks. It claims to recall a 1968 event when Winston Ngozi and his fellow musicians are supposed to have been voted ‘Castle Jazz Musicians of the Year’. The technique used is to open on a newspaper cutting of a report of the event, with the photograph of Ngozi and his fellow musicians (Shot 1). This shot is

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207 No commercial by the name ‘Winston Ngozi’, as it IS named on the Castle Lager history reel, is listed on the ‘Ornico’ list for 1985, but a Castle Lager commercial named “Jazz” is listed as having’ been broadcast to Zulu, Xhosa, Tswana, South Sotho and Ndebele audiences in 1986.
followed by a complex dissolve to Winston Ngozi and his band, playing a jazz sequence at what seems to be some backstreet venue (Shot 2). The remainder of the shots (3 - 13) are skillfully edited in tempo with the jazz being played. A ‘male voice-over speaking in African-accentuated English says the following words: ‘today it is good to know that things of quality can survive, like the music of Winston Ngozi and the taste for Castle Lager...’ The suggestion or myth is that Winston Ngozi and his music *survived* the tougher days of apartheid, and that even in ‘those hard times, (Ballantine, 1989: 40-41), Castle was there to nurture these oppressed musicians. The product attributes of Castle Lager are thus linked with the larger struggle against apartheid.

*Reunion (1989)*

The denouement of the 1989 *Reunion* commercial comes together in the singing of the Castle Lager song or anthem, by black and white guests at the reunion. This song’s politically-weighted words ‘... *across the Nation*, echo the English-speaking corporate sector’s conception of a unitary state, which seems to have been quite close to that of the ANC. It was at odds with earlier apartheid-driven ideology still prevalent during the P.W. Botha era, which envisaged a ‘constellation of states’ consisting of ‘many nations’.

As the musical instruments which feature in the commercial (double base Shot 13, piano Shot 21) begin to play in accompaniment, the singing starts and all present begin to rise from their seats. Towards the end of the commercial, as the song reaches a crescendo, the camera moves slowly from the back of the hall to the front, above the heads of the singers (Shot 24). This is an objective shot which at the’ same time is highly’ emotive, The camera, which is probably transported along an overhead cable, gives a bird’s eye view which at the time microscopically analyses the intense expressions on the faces below. To add further emphasis to the intended connotations, Shot 24 is immediately followed by a cut to a more visceral shot, where the camera tracks through the hall at head and shoulders level to the anthem singers (Shot 25).
On a first level of meaning, the proceedings depicted in this commercial might amount to an ordinary reunion of former employees of a company. But at a deeper level, the reunion between black and white South African nations, consequent to negotiations with the ANC, is also being echoed. There is no consciousness of race in the hall. ‘Black guests may in actual fact be slightly in the majority and also generally more dominant, in mise-en-scene terms (Shot 2). A large instrument case for the double base, which was last seen in ‘Musicians’ (1987), again features in this commercial. On this occasion, when the double base case is opened, it does in actual fact contain a string instrument (Shot 5), rather than Castle Lager, to the visible disappointment of the black singer and master of ceremonies, Shot 5 thus refers to Shot 33 of the earlier commercial, ‘Musicians’ (1987), and to the sub-genre where the primary event was actually secondary. This ‘twist’ acknowledges the earlier commercial and relates it to that campaign, as if to say “yes, this is a serious occasion, but we have known and will know, of lighter-hearted days”. The musicians in Reunion (1989) actually play fine music: in accompaniment to the singing of ‘Across the Nation...’ by all the participants at this reunion. Everyone cheers “Charles!” in unison (Shot 26 & 27). In terms of the gradual and cumulative erudition of the Castle Lager commercials, Charles Glass may here be meant to signify the friendly ally Capital who helped bring down apartheid.

A similar commercial, also going by the name of Reunion, was broadcast in 1990. The song in this version of the commercial is shorter and the shots are fewer. Most of the key shots have however been retained.

**Homecoming (1990)**

When a commercial such as the 1990 Homecoming (2 versions, 60 seconds & 45 seconds) is analyzed in the post-democratic elections era, it is difficult in retrospect to re-assess its full ideological meaning. Homecoming was very appropriately conceived and named. This was the first Castle Lager commercial made to be broadcast to a predominantly white upmarket audience, where a black person is the protagonist and star. It continued to be broadcast during the period 1991-1992, when many black exiles were
coming home under the terms laid out in the unfolding negotiations between the Afrikaner Nationalist government and the ANC. The commercial opens with a pub scene. The protagonist, ‘George’, a black man in his late twenties, is having a few last drinks with his friends (Shot 1), who then see him off on a train (Shots 3-10). George has two white friends and two black friends. The interaction amongst the group is completely relaxed and devoid of racial divisions. George’s closest friend is a white guy of about the same age, ‘Mike’. George leaves on what is supposed to be a five-year sojourn.

In terms of the editing of the commercial, we in fact never see George getting off the train at his original destination. There is a dissolve which links Shot 10 and Shot 11: at the end of Shot 11, George’s face, (with pensive expression), becomes superimposed over the leaving train with his friends running after him along the platform. As Shot 11 fades in over Shot, 10, the sub title ‘Five years later’, becomes superimposed at the bottom of the frame. We now see that George is travelling in the opposite direction to Shot 10.

There is some degree of ambiguity as to whether or not the initial shots of Homecoming are meant to represent a vision from George’s memory, or even a dream induced by the longing for a type of warmth and friendship he had never actually experienced in South African society under apartheid. This possibility is suggested by the fact that he is never shown getting off at his original destination. Also, even before the group has quite left the pub (Shot 1-2), a background song starts up and is saying: “It’s been five years since I hit the road”.

George gets off this train and walks through the same station from where he had left. There is a feeling of isolation, loneliness and trepidation (Shots 12-15). It is a dark night and it is chilly (we can infer this from his overcoat). While there apparently was a group of friends to see George off, there is no one to meet him when he arrives, hence the feeling of isolation. Shots 12-15 could also be taken to connote the effects of apartheid upon the subjectivities of the oppressed. But when he enters the old pub again, he spots Mike and the rest of his friends who are still there waiting for him (Shots 15-26).
The mournful expression on Mike’s face during Shots 6 and 8 of the departure scene, signifies a bond between George and Mike that is far more profound than any we have hitherto encountered in commercials where blacks and whites are seen socialising together. In Shot 18 of the homecoming scene in the pub, Mike is the first person to notice George’s arrival. His face lights up with joy and in the corresponding shot, George seems reassured that he has returned not to the strange dark world that we saw in Shots 12 to 15, but to a world of warmth and friendship. In the same way that George is reassured, the viewing audience is also reassured that after decades of apartheid, blacks and whites can do more than simply tolerate each other, they can also build meaningful relationships with each other.

Also, it is particularly interesting to note the personality of ‘George’. While this is not an outdoor sport commercial, such as Joggers and Canoe Race, the perhaps more artistically-inclined George, (he carries a guitar case), also lacks any hint of parochialism (e.g. Shots 5, 18, 21, 24). George is every bit as suave and sophisticated and in many respects similar, to his white friend ‘Mike’ (Shot 5 & 6). He is just as much second or third generation middle class as his white friend — that anonymous black ‘gentleman’, who in the 1984 ‘Train’ commercial helped Charles Glass load the first barrel of Castle to be railed to the coast, might have been George’s grandfather! There is no hint of boorishness in George’s manners or speech. He is simply flawless.

The circumstances portrayed in this commercial are idyllic to say the least. The commercial depicts a level of social interaction between black and white one would only dream of in a prosperous post-apartheid South Africa. In fact, even if the social context being portrayed was taking place in one of the more wealthy democracies such as the United States, it would amount more to an ideological statement than a reflection of reality (Jhally & Lewis, 1992). Nevertheless, this commercial can possibly be seen to build on the spirit of the time. The period between 1990, (when the ANC was unbanned), and early 1992, was as a time of hope and optimism for both the National Party government and the broad-based liberal left-wing opposition. Repressive laws such as the
Group Areas Act and the 1912 Land Act had been lifted, and there had also been several rounds of successful talks between the government and the ANC.

**Charles Class (1991)**

Although *Charles Glass* (1991) is part of the historical series of commercials it is discussed here as it is clearly intended as a post-apartheid (post *Homecoming*) commercial, which appropriately revises and updates the initial versions of the historical campaign.

This remake of the story about how Charles Glass came to create Castle lager, is similar to the first such commercials of the late 1970s. Ethnographic veracity is a little stronger in this later version of Castle Lager’s early history. The structured absences have now been rectified. As Charles Glass arrives at the brewery in his carriage, he is met by his black colleague or assistant who attends to the horse (Shot 3). The manufacturing process, of perfecting the Castle Lager taste, is shown again (Shots 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11). But the concept and verbal copy spoken by the MVO has now become more refined and concise since the late 1970s. What differs most, is the consumption moment which comes after the display of the ‘manufacturing process’: in the transition to what is meant to be a 1991 contemporary pub scene, (Shots 13, 15, 16, 17), blacks and whites (all middle class), are shown drinking together. In the previous historical commercials, blacks had never been featured in any of the transitions to contemporary pub scenes. Blacks and whites now toast together to a very large full colour poster of a portrait of the mythical hero of South African beer drinkers, Charles Glass (Shot 20). It seems that this commercial was needed in order to ‘rewrite’ the previous versions of the birth of Castle Lager for a post-apartheid era. One can note that this rewriting is done in subtle, plausible, and understated manner: the black assistant is shown helping Charles Glass with his horse. It would have been a mistake for the makers of this commercial to show a black person leaning over a vat of beer with Charles Glass, because their intentions would have been too obvious.
**Conclusion**

Television advertising for Castle Lager during the period of reform encompasses a complex communication strategy. The systematic examination of the Castle Lager English language history reel revealed that several types commercials were used at different times to selectively beam the ideology of the Castle Lager campaign into different levels of the social formation. Castle Lager advertising has always been directed particularly at men and continues to largely ignore women.

For research purposes, different types of commercials which seem to belong to specific campaigns, were identified and grouped together. Except for *Dumpy* (1979), all Castle Lager commercials have some interrelating or overlapping themes. The main campaign originally centred on the historical series of commercials which outlined the early origins and South African pedigree of the beer. It was shown how this campaign shifted from its initial Eurocentricity, to a dramatic acknowledgement of black South Africans in *Train* (1984). *Gold Prospectors* (1986) further set the record straight regarding the contribution of black labour in relation to the economic development of early of South Africa.

The *Charles Glass Society* idea derives quite naturally from the historical series and was used to facilitate the transformation of the main campaign into a second phase. The commercials of the second phase are set in the contemporary period and depict social interaction between whites and blacks at a middle class level. These commercials are characterised by their light-hearted lackadaisical, quality.

The English language Castle Lager television advertising also encompassed sports sponsorship commercials. These commercials initially focused on *Currie Cup Cricket* which has a broadly white following in South Africa. No attempt was made to make a reformist *Currie Cup Cricket* commercial featuring social interaction between black and whites. Instead, in keeping with imperatives of reform- enlightened marketing principles (Sinclair, 1985). *League Soccer* in 1988 began a re-adjustment of the key branding to also encompass a sport which has a broadly black working class following in South Africa.
The soccer commercials do depict images of social interaction between blacks and whites, but whites are very much in the minority in such scenes.

Also, some commercials were identified as ‘special occasion’ commercials which seemed to echo or implicitly identify with contemporary political events in the painful march to democracy. Both the ‘special occasion’ and the lighthearted genre of commercials depict affirmative black stereotypes in which, joggers, musicians, table soccer players, canoeists and baseball players, black and white associates at a reunion, or black and white friends at a homecoming (all members of the Charles Glass Society), are happily and harmoniously interacting with each other as social equals. These highly idealised and romanticised images were possibly intended by the makers of Castle Lager to reassure white viewers that a post-apartheid future was not something they had to fear. While, on the one hand, the commercials may be criticised for being exceedingly unrealistic, on the other hand, their overtly optimistic content balances and/or counters the deeply pessimistic myth of the *swart gevaar*, (the fear among conservative whites of being outnumbered or ‘swamped’ by the black majority). In choosing to depict a post-apartheid scenario in terms that were positive, the marketers of Castle Lager were possibly winning white support for democratic social change. At the same time these commercials were probably also gradually achieving a more favourable impression of the underlying capitalist structure amongst politicised blacks.
Chapter 8

Trying to Hit Them Where They Live: Rama, 1978-94

Television is a very effective medium for advertising ‘fast moving’, low-interest, inexpensive goods that do not require any major purchasing decision (Crompton, 1979:93-4). It is also the only medium for demonstrating the various applications of a product to large audiences (Crompton, 1979:97). However, some of the major product categories that are successfully advertised on television (margarines and soap powders inclusive) have a poor reputation as far as their viability for ‘creative’ advertising is concerned. A possible explanation for this might be found in the fact that companies manufacturing such products are usually sophisticated marketing-driven organisations and therefore have established procedures which are based on records of past successful results. Advertising agencies are well aware that a genre of predominantly research-based ‘safe’ advertisements is well-entrenched in these categories, and that the scope for their input is largely limited to the ‘execution’ of advertising strategies already mostly decided upon by the client company. The end result usually falls within the tried and tested formats of testimonial advertising or jingles.

A ‘jingle’ is a form of advertising which consists of the product message being sung in relation to music. Sometimes the tunes of popular hit songs might be appropriated for this purpose. Though there are exceptions, commercials based on jingles do not usually augur well for creative or innovative advertising. The more creative advertising agencies tend to view straight jingles derisively -- ‘if you have nothing to say then you better sing it”. Most of the commercials on the Rama history reel rely on jingles. The Rugby’ and Soccer commercials of 1986 are an exception, while the Housewife I & II (1987-89) interview series might be seen as a variation of the testimonial advertising format.

The development of the Rama campaign history differs in several respects from that of Castle Lager, which was discussed in the previous chapter. Although a brand leader in the margarine field, Rama is no doubt a smaller product in terms of its sales and its
advertising budget than is Castle Lager. The number of English language Castle Lager commercials produced for the period 1978-1991 were more than double the combined output of Rama commercials in English, Afrikaans and ethnic black languages inclusive. While the marketers of Castle Lager seem to have been lavish in their advertising expenditure, the marketers of Rama seem to have been more budget conscious. It was pointed out in the previous chapter, that the Castle Lager commercials are self-contained mini-dramas with denouement. The occasionally used Castle Lager drinking song, rather than being a straight jingle, verges on being an alternative national anthem. Unlike Castle Lager, production values are not initially so consistently high in some of the early Rama commercials; but from 1991 onwards Rama commercials do show a consistent improvement in standards. These facts suggest that the Rama campaign history might be a good example of budget-driven marketing pragmatism during an era when apartheid broadcasting severely added to the, complications of reaching a difficult target market effectively. Also, the case study on the Rama TV advertising history complements the previous case study on the English language Castle Lager TV advertising history in two important respects. Firstly, unlike Castle Lager which is targeted at men, Rama advertising is focused principally on women. Secondly, the Rama history reel includes ethnic language commercials for TV2/3. The ethnic Rama commercials are similar to, or adaptations, of TV1 Rama commercials. The Rama case study thus affords the opportunity for comparison between the TV1 and TV2/3 versions of a commercial,

According to the Rama brand manager, the marketers of Rama had retained separate brand offices for the two different packaged forms of Rama until about 1986. One brand office was responsible for the foil wrapped ‘brick’ version made primarily for black consumers and the other brand office for the more expensive plastic ‘tub’ version made primarily for white consumers. However, with the only exception of Better Taste Rama (1984), the commercials actually produced show a consistency between their communications to the so called ‘black markets’ and ‘white markets’. The campaign history does seem to show some lack of consistency in its overall inability to place Rama

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208 Interview with brand manager of Rama at Unifoods, Durban, 2 June 1995.
on a long term strategic footing, through being able to articulate the product benefit in a single unique selling proposition (Reeves, 1961).

Only two African languages were used for ethnic Rama commercials, Zulu and South Sotho. Most of the ethnic commercials were in Zulu. Only one Afrikaans version of a Rama commercial was ever made: *Hurrah Ma, It’s Rama* (1991). In fact, in the various stages of the history reel where separate advertising has been practised, most of the ethnic language Rama commercials for black audiences share the same concepts as the parallel ‘white’ audience versions. Excepting for the use of black actors, these commercials are all quite similar in structure and content. It will be seen below that this rule holds true for *Just one bite and you know its right* (1979-82), *Slipping and sliding* (1986), *Rugby/Soccer* (1986), partly for the *Housewife I* and *Housewife II* series (1987-89), and for *Hurrah Ma, it’s Rama* (1991). Where there are close-ups consisting of appetite appeal or various product applications shots (which do not feature any people), the TV1 and TV2/3 versions tend to share the same such shots. Remarkably, in the commercials ‘Just one bite and You Know its Right’ (1979-80 & 1981-1982) and ‘Slipping and Sliding’ (1986), where the TV1 version seems to have been targeted at both whites and blacks, a considerable number of the exact same people shots featuring the same white or black models or actors are shared in both the TV1 and TV2/3 versions.

It should be noted’ that the outline of the ‘Rama Campaign History and Development’ outline, (given to the researcher by the brand manager of Rama), lists the first Rama television commercial as the 1977-1983 *Tongue Tip Test*, (see Vol. II, Appendix 2A). It is possible that this periodisation of Rama commercials might also include the stages of conception, planning, production and broadcast. This may account for the 1977-1983 listing of the first commercial on the history reel (*Tongue Tip Test*), while TV advertising only started in 1978.
Brief Overview of Four Phases of Rama TV Advertising

An examination of the Rama advertising commercial history reel shows that it is possible to distinguish four phases of development in the format of Rama television commercials. There can be little doubt that the first three phases (1978-1992) show signs of the dialectic between various aspects of reformist discourse and underlying developments in SABC-TV broadcasting policy (Ch.4). The fourth phase (1994-) seems to have been in line with other major corporate sector responses vis-a-vis post-apartheid democratisation in their marketing strategies.

The first phase of Rama commercials, especially prior to the introduction of the ethnic channels, TV2/3, seem to be good examples of commercials trying to breach apartheid rigor ‘more in the course of, achieving marketing objectives, than for the sake of adopting a political stance’. On the other hand, during same early period of television advertising, Castle Lager seems to have followed a marketing approach which resulted in the production of commercials which were not inconsistent with apartheid media relations. However, while Rama continued until 1992 in what seems to have been a functional or pragmatic approach, from 1984 onwards Castle Lager began to dramatically realign their marketing stance in a direction that contested apartheid. Prior to the introduction of TV2/3, it appears that it was possible for Rama to negotiate some limited leeway through SABC-TV apartheid restrictions, if the design of a commercial adhered to a certain format. In certain respects some of the resulting commercials seem to have suffered from a limited degree of incoherence, but despite their flaws were probably functional for the communication objectives on hand.

The second and longest phase (1982-91), comes after TV2/3 were introduced. During this period the marketers of Rama adapted to an approach based on separate commercials for different groups. Besides pragmatism, the fact that some of the early ethnic Rama commercials are perfunctory copies of their TV1 versions, possibly indicates a lack of enthusiasm for the apartheid broadcasting dispensation. From 1982 until 1991, the Rama case study provides some opportunities for direct comparison between stereotypes of
whites in the TVL version of a commercial and the equivalent black stereotypes in TV2/3 version/s. In the case of Rama, (once the principle of separate commercials became established), the underlying concept and structure in each of the separate commercials for different groups usually remained the same, (regardless of the fact that the different commercials usually promoted the brick version for blacks and the tub version for whites). The languages used for the ethnic stations were different from those used in the TV1 commercials, though as has been pointed out above there was some overlapping of actors or actresses in some commercials until 1986. The same black actors or actresses were always used for a Zulu and South Sotho version (e.g. *Hurrah Ma, it’s Rama*, 1991), in fact these were the exact same commercials with different voice overs and different sub-titling in the closing shot.

A third and very brief phase comes in 1992, when Rama marketing policy returned to the use of a single English language commercial targeted at whites as well as blacks. This commercial *Everybody is loving it* bears some slight structural resemblance to the initial (pre-TV2/3) Rama commercial, *Tongue Tip Test* (1978). *Everybody is loving it* is also structured with separate sequences, some of which feature whites and some of which feature blacks. In the 1992 single commercial approach, blacks are featured more prominently than in the original single commercial approach of 1978. Whites are nevertheless still considerably more prominent in terms of the number of shots allotted to them.

The fourth phase (1994- ) comes with the remake of *Just one bite, anti you know you ‘re right*. This new commercial is the highest budget and most sophisticated Rama commercial on the history reel, and further develops the *Just one bite, and you know you’re right* concept of 1979-82. The 1994- commercial goes a step further by trying to demonstrate the actual benefits of the claimed nourishing aspects of Rama: people are shown to become energised and invigorated after eating the product. Initially, this commercial had been intended for use only on CCV-TV, as the marketers of Rama had by 1994 stopped using TV1. In this ‘new South Africa’ commercial, an approach is

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209 Interview with Rama brand manager, Unifoods, Durban, 2 June 1995
used which predominantly features middle class blacks to reach the whole TV market. This commercial is a good example of corporate sector responses to post-apartheid democratisation which were characterised by greater emphasis on Africanisation in their media images.

**First Phase: Negotiating An Integrated Target Market During Apartheid**

Prior to the introduction of TV2/3, the marketers of products such as Rama margarine, dependent on sales to urban blacks, were sometimes motivated to design the structure their TV1 commercials so they could appeal also to blacks. Analysis of some of the early commercials on the Rama history reel clearly shows this to be the case. As was pointed out in a previous chapter, the ‘All Media Products Survey’ (AMPS) had revealed that by 1979, 850,000 blacks, roughly 8% of the total population already watched ‘white’ TV each week. The idea underlying the construction of the first Rama commercial, *Tongue Tip Test*, seems to be responsive to such research findings.

**Tongue Tip Test (1977-1983)**

*Tongue Tip Test* features a ‘Rama Soft Man’ who is dressed in blue jeans and a yellow anorak top bearing the ‘Rama Soft’ logo. The Rama Soft Man seeks out people in the street, offers them a tongue tip test’ from a tub of Rama, and awaits their responses. This scenario seems to have facilitated an approach where blacks and whites could to some extent, even in terms of apartheid broadcasting restrictions, be legitimately featured together even in the same frame of a TV1 commercial. The commercial is structured in what resembles an approach consistent with a *cinéma vérité* style of documentary’ film making, with the action taking place in an outdoor context, where blacks and whites were still legally permitted to use the same city streets and pavements during apartheid. Thus, in this case, some of the pitfalls encountered in two later Rama commercials, *Just one bite and you know its right* (1979-80) and *Slipping and Sliding* (1986), have been avoided. These two commercials, which will be discussed in more detail below, tried to
use TV1 to appeal also to blacks but were not based on any idea that made the cuffing to different shots logically consistent in terms of the context.

The people depicted in *Tongue Tip Test* form a sort of marketer’s conception of a demographic cross-section of South African society in the late 1970s. The universe depicted is a vision of consumer society. Rural blacks who might at that stage have fallen outside the scope of the Rama target market for television are not taken into account. The people depicted are both young and old, white and black. Whites are favoured numerically: out of a total of 30 shots blacks are featured taking the ‘tongue tip test’ in just 6 shots (Shots 5, 7, 15, 17, 23, 28), while whites are featured taking the test in 13 shots (Shots 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22, 25, 26, 30). (At that stage, still in the early period of the introduction of television, the much higher proportion of whites might arguably have been in recognition of the fact that a larger proportion of television set owners/TV1 viewers were whites.) The remaining 11 shots are either of the Rama Man spinning round in the street with the Rama tub in hand, or various types of pack shots.

No elderly black people or coloureds feature in this commercial. But an Indian man who appears to be a flower seller is depicted (Shots 5 & 17), which is unusual. Although South Africans of Indian ancestry form a distinct minority group (see Tomaselli RE, 1983), they tend to be under-represented (in terms of economic significance as well as demography) in television commercials. This Indian flower seller is actually the first person approached for the ‘tongue tip test’. His depiction is not inconsistent with what one might call an Indian male working class or incipient petty bourgeois stereotype. He is wearing a long-sleeved tartan shin and has longish hair with broad side burns and a mustache (Shots S & 17). His casting somehow has an air of authenticity, as one gets the feeling that he might actually be a flower seller in real life.

The commercial uses a ‘jingle’ to help link together the different shots which might otherwise tend towards unrelated jumpcuts. In this type of commercial, the quality of the relationship or resonance between the words and music, and the cutting of the visual images, depends on the artistry and craft which have gone into its writing and execution.
As was pointed out above, the outdoor approach used in *Tongue Tip Test* suggests that the shots which follow might be *cinema vérité*. But this is unlikely. Although some shots have an air of authenticity others seem to be staged. The *mise-en-scene* of the situations depicted in Shots 10, 12, 15, 16, 28 is somewhat exaggerated: these are not likely encounters in a day in the life of a ‘Rama Soft Man’ seeking out respondents through city streets. Also, it would require difficult persuasion and legal formalities to use so many people ‘off the street’ in a television commercial. It is possible that some shots could be actuality or *cinema vérité* (e.g. Shots 5, 17, 7, 8, 9, 11). The spontaneity of some of the respondents gives this impression, but this aspect could also have been staged. If some of the shots are in fact *cinema vérité*, publication release negotiations with the persons featured should have taken place after the shots were filmed not before.

In addition to Shots 5 & 17 of the Indian man, Shots 7, 15 and 28 are of particular interest from a racial stereotyping point of view. Shot 7 features a very well-dressed black woman in her mid or late thirties. This woman is well-groomed and very chic, there is no sign of pejorativeness in her stereotyping. Though her short unstraightened hair and dress might be slightly out of style for the 1990s, she would quite probably still pass favourably as member of the black upper middle class in a TV commercial.

Shot 15 features the Rama man running after a black cyclist. This cyclist is not a ‘delivery boy’. He is riding a racing bike and is very athletic and dressed in cycle racing attire. The use, of this black athlete stereotype (a member of the proletariat who has somehow been able to break out of the humdrum of immediate needs, and engage in recreational activity) was probably supposed to hook the aspirational interest of blacks in the 1970s, while also suggesting supposed health attributes of a vitamin-enriched product, such as Rama. The bicycle is a cultural implement which has played an important transitional role in the lives of urban communities in developing countries. In its relative symbolic meaning, the racing bike might possibly be interpreted as a rather refined version of the ordinary bicycle used for essential transport. The signification of the racing bike works quite differently from crude delivery bikes. Delivery bikes would
have had strong connotations that the black cyclist was bound to the service of a white master, a situation more commonly associated with black males during this period. Humble as it may seem, the racing bike signifies independence, arrival at a more spiritual level of existence, beyond basic needs. This stereotype of an athletically-inclined black cyclist is not completely improbable. Dining the 1960s and 1970s black males riding racing bikes for sport could occasionally be seen on urban South African streets.

The final stereotypical depiction which is of interest first appears in Shot 28, in the section of the commercial which in terms of editing structure seems to be repeating emphatic moments of earlier shots (but this principle is not firmly adhered to, as there are also some people in this section who were not featured before). Shot 28 features a black ‘playboy’. This man is wearing a light coloured suit, a white straw basher with red band, and is carrying a large transistor radio over his shoulder. Reminiscent of a Sophiatown genre, Sunday well-dressed Johannesburg black, this stereotype can be considered to be incipiently pejorative. This depiction seems to be underpinned by urban black subculture which was current in the 1950s,’60s and ‘70s, in what was formerly the PWV area (Pretoria, Witwatersrand, Vaal triangle). Possibly the projection of this identity had spontaneously originated out of frustrated middle class aspirations. The 1980s saw this stereotype recede or be redefined and transformed, possibly due to the rejection of its pathos by black radicals, or possibly through a psychological re-alignment afforded by the ‘new black middle class’ ideology from the media communications of the business sector.

One can conclude that ‘Tongue Tip Test’ clearly differs from the commercials which were broadcast for Castle Lager for this period. Black ‘consumers’ are targeted in the marketing strategy for the early TV1 Rama commercials, therefore black actors/models representing the various idiosyncrasies of the interpellating social formation are featured from the very beginning of TV1 advertising for Rama. There are, therefore, no blatantly obvious ‘structured absences’ in the visual narrative, although the overall narrative is reflective of apartheid social relations. In terms of the structure of the narrative of Tongue Tip Test (which is relatively fragmented in form), the blacks depicted do not have the
momentous significance of the solitary black gentleman who made his entry in the Castle Lager *Train* commercial of 1984. The early Castle Lager commercials, the historical campaign in particular, were not only very coherent individually but also strongly cumulative as a total communication. On the other hand, although the *Rama Campaign History and Development* outline (see Appendix 2A, Vol. II) talks of ‘campaign’ and ‘USP’, the Rama advertisers are characterised by their inability to find or articulate a viable Rama USP. Thus, the term USP as it is used in Appendix 2a (see Vol. II) is erroneous (Reeves, 1961). This shortcoming results in a lack of campaign continuity over the period 1978-1994. The communications about Rama are thus relatively disparate and lacking mutual reinforcement. Although this problem might not be particularly of interest to this study, as a marketing problem *per se*, it does bear significance to the overall social and ideological impact of Rama advertising. The ancillary cultural content of an advertising campaign that places the product on a long-term strategic footing is bound to be more memorable and therefore more impactful and influential.

*Tongue Tip Test* was a ‘one off commercial in the sense that there were no variations or successive commercials based on the same idea (Probably the same product claims were at the time being supported on radio, magazines or billboards.) There is a limited similarity underlying the strategy of a campaign produced about four years later, the 1987/1989 *Housewives I & II*, in so far as these commercials were also based upon a Rama taste test: the latter conducted on supposedly previously uncanvassed members of the public in a supermarket (to be discussed below).

With the exception of the 1984 *Better Taste Rama* commercial, the commercials which followed after the 1977-1983 *Tongue Tip Test* were not lone commercials but formed part of series of two or more. These were either further commercials based on the same concept (only in the case of *Housewife I & II*), or ethnic versions of the same commercial. The two last commercials on the history reel *Everybody is loving it* (1992) and *Just one bite and you know you’re right* (1994) are again lone commercials.
*Just one bite and you know you’re right* (1979-80)

The TV1 version of *Just One Bite* ... was apparently current during the period 1978-80, before the 1982 introduction of the ethnic channels, TV2/3. It was designed particularly to promote the brick version of Rama, which is considerably cheaper than the tub version of the product, and more popular amongst black consumers. If these circumstances are taken into account, together with the structure and content of this commercial, one can surmise that as was the case with *Tongue Tip Test* (1977-83) this commercial was conceptualised so that it would also cater for urban black TV1 viewers. *Just one bite* ... is composed of a series of separate vignettes. Most of the vignettes feature whites (Shots 1, 2, 5, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22), but blacks are not completely overlooked (Shots 4,16). The ratio of shots depicting blacks must obviously be inconsistent with the ratio of black consumers of the product, and probably also with the ratio of black TV viewers. Were it not for the difficult strictures imposed by SABC broadcasting policy, the proportion of shots featuring blacks would most likely have been more evenly balanced. Yet even this limited inclusion of blacks, probably a concession negotiated with the SABC acceptance board, deals a severe blow to the illusion of an all white society, which might have been achieved by their ‘structured absence’.

In *Tongue Tip Test* (1978), the action took place outdoors with the cuts to separate shots of different people being linked together by the presence of the ‘Rama Soft Man’, as well as aesthetically by the jingle. On the other hand, *Just one bite* (1979-80) shows the product being used in what must be a series of home situations. Many of the people shots are close ups with little of the context being depicted. The logical consistency of the separate vignettes of blacks and whites is somewhat unsatisfactory because the order of the shots nevertheless establishes unresolved relationships of time and place, a problem which we again encounter in *Slipping and Sliding* (1986) -- see below.
Second Phase: Adapting To The TV2/3 Scenario.

After the introduction of TV2/3 ‘ethnic’ Rama commercials similar to the TV1 versions were made and broadcast. These ethnic commercials vary in quality. They will be briefly summed up in the paragraph below before being discussed separately in greater detail.

*Just one bite and you know you’re right* (1981-82) and the ethnic version of *Slipping and Sliding* (1986), which are composed of separate vignettes, seem to be rather perfunctory versions of their white TV1 counterparts. In the case of *Rugby/Soccer* (1986), based on a different format which adheres to unity of time and place, some attention is paid towards the construction of social realism. However, the black nuclear family featured in *Soccer* (1986) might be criticised on the basis that the home situation depicted was in reality of the time more exceptional than the norm (Bertelsen, 1985). The Better Taste Rama commercial of 1984 targets the Rama tub exclusively at the white market and there is no TV2/3 counterpart of this commercial. Better Taste Rama is also the most complete example of ‘structured absence’ on the Rama history reel. Although separate brand offices apparently existed for the marketing Rama until 1986, ‘Better Taste Rama’ is, as far as can be made out, the only commercial on the history reel where the advertising has actually gone in a totally separate direction. The commercials of the Housewife I & II (1987-89) campaigns follow a straightforward supermarket interview format. Although this approach is possibly patronising and irritating to television viewers, the filmic representation of a product sampling situation affords consistency of time and place, thus limiting certain executional difficulties. As several Housewife commercials were made, including TV2/3 versions, they are a good source for examples of both gender and racial depictions in the latter part of the 1980s. Hurrah Ma, It’s Rama (1991) is a further example of a TV1 commercial with ethnic TV2/3 counterparts. Although structured absences are in principle consistent with Hurrah Ma, It’s Rama (1991), the manner of representation and stereotyping of the black family in the TV2/3 version is implicitly already indicative of the coming of democracy and black liberation (see below).
Just one bite and you know you're right (1981-1982), Zulu

This is the first ethnic Rama commercial. It provides an opportunity for comparison between two early examples of SABC-TV advertising to differently designated audiences. Just one bite ... promotes Rama packaged in brick form, as is the case with the TV1 version. This commercial is listed on the Rama: Campaign History and Development outline as having been current for the period 1981-82, which roughly coincides with the introduction of TV2.

Save for some slight adaptations, this TV2. Zulu version, of the commercial is very similar to the TV1 commercial. It is basically the same commercial. Once again, the commercial features both blacks and whites. Some shots of the TV1 commercial which featured whites have been retained and are used in the same sequential order in both versions (Shots 2, 5, 17). The shots from the TV1 commercial which featured blacks have also been retained (Shots 4 & 16) and are also used in the same sequential order as in the TV1 version. Black models have replaced key opening and closing shots (Shots 1, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22). The basic difference from the TV1 version is that the jingle and the announcer’s voice-over are rendered in Zulu, and that the woman in the opening and closing shot has been replaced with a black model.

This similarity in structure, content, and sequence of the shots, possibly suggests that the producers may have believed that many black viewers of this commercial would have already seen the TV1 version. It is not unlikely that the intention might have been ‘to extend and reinforce black impressions about Rama, while not giving rise to any conflicting ideas or any suggestion of prejudice of any sort’. It has been noted that blacks were believed to be apprehensive when products were advertised to them in a strikingly different manner, sometimes believing that the same product might be of inferior quality when sold at black outlets (Sinclair, 1985: 62). But one also gets an impression of tight budgeting, and possibly some degree of inexperience on the part of the producers. While it must be conceded that the minimal rearrangement of the TV1 version of the
commercial into a Zulu TV2 version is not entirely impractical, it also gives the impression of being just barely adequate.

Again, as in the TV1 version, a rather self-conscious style of lighting of the people shots is used in the TV2 version of Just one bite -. (This, of course, is inevitable as most of the shots in the TV2 version are the exact same shots from the TV1 version.) This lighting seems unrealistic and more akin to fashion photography than to margarine advertising. Possibly, it is attributable to the fact that these are early examples of South African television advertising. Some of the early directors of television commercials came from advertising still photography and tended to light their indoor shots in a manner resembling the styles of studio strobe lighting of the period. The dark shadows, without detail, suggest a fashion photography or possibly a cinema noire genre that most probably is not particularly conducive to the selling of margarine. Also, the people featured come across as photographic models rather than actors. The people shots are of short duration and too fragmented for any characterisation or dramatic development to take place. They seem to be filmed against a White infinity curve as a background, while more natural lighting and styling was in fact called for. Margarine in South Africa had generally been positioned as a healthy alternative to butter, which calls for a styling of the shots to connote that the product is wholesome and natural (in addition to taste attributes, etc.). This wholesome quality does come across better in most of the other Rama commercials.

In both versions of Just one bite..., the following shots are of particular interest in terms of stereotyping: Shot 1 and Shot 2 are in the first instance relevant from a gender point of view. In both commercials, the women in Shot 1 have been photographed in an obviously sexist manner (see Key, 1972; 1976), and they have been directed to appear less conscious and less in control of their gastronomic rapture than the man in Shot 2. In the TV2 version the level of the sexist stereotyping in Shot 1 is possibly aggravated by racial prejudice: the sexist depiction of the black woman is more blatant, suggesting that a prevailing irresponsibility at the execution stage might have been less inhibited.

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210 Greater intemperance in the representation of the black woman might have been due to presumptions that black audiences were less likely to be able to articulate complaints. Also, the greater degree of sexist
Interestingly the same white man is used in Shot 2 in both versions of the commercial. In
the ethnic version the editing of the white man (Shot 2), about to bite a roll, immediately
in succession to the black woman (Shot 1) inescapably relates these two people, thus
undermining apartheid.

Both versions of the commercial follow the same sequence with Shot 4 showing a
bespectacled black school girl eating a slice of bread, followed by a bespectacled white
boy eating a slice of bread in Shot 5. The logic underlying this editing (of shots of both
the white boy and of the black girl eating slices of plain white bread) seems to be
intended to code a structure of meaning which will be decoded on two levels. It dispels
any suggestion (in the context of the opening shots of rolls with sumptuous toppings) that
the young black girl might be impoverished. Also, it tends to democratise consumption as
both these children are similarly stereotyped as young and smart. The spectacles denote
poor eyesight, but can also connote habitual reading habits and learning.

In both versions of the commercial Shot 16 shows the same chubby, down-to-earth,
friendly-looking, working class black woman. She is about to put into her mouth a boiled
carrot at the end of a fork. With respect to the criticism mentioned above, this example is
very much an advertising photographer’s shot rather than that of a cinematographer. It is
a very posed shot, which has been literally etched with light, and the *mise-en-scéne* is
artificial and unnatural to an actual eating situation. This seems an example of advertising
media production taking a real person and converting her into a crude stereotype. On the
surface, the stereotype seems slightly ethnic, but neither overtly pejorative nor
affirmative. Her stereotyping seems affirmative in the sense that her expression displays
her simplicity and innate goodness. From a certain point of view (Williamson, 1978), this
stereotype might be read as incipiently pejorative, in the sense that we know the innocent
persona of this black woman has been taken away from her and itself turned into a
commodity. She is economically powerless to question her subjection thus and the
(mis)appropriation of her image as bait to ensnare more of her class into the spiral of
exploitation implicit in the manner in which the black model or actress has been directed, suggests an
imbalance in white/black power relations of the period.
middle class materialism. On the other hand it might be argued that this woman would have been quite proud of her appearance in a TV commercial, and that the experience would have been quite flattering to her when she was recognised and commented upon by her friends.

It is quite interesting to compare the stereotyping of the fair-haired middle aged white man who is braaiing (barbecuing) in Shot 21 of the TV1 version, with the equivalent black stereotype in Shot 21 of the ethnic version. The white man in the TV1 version fits into a working class ‘English-speaking Afrikaner’ stereotype. With his right hand he is holding a roasted potato on the tip of a braai fork. With his left hand he makes a hand gesture by bringing the tips of his thumb and forefinger together in a circle, which he holds in front of his face. Presumably, the intention of this gesture is to signify that Rama is ‘just perfect’. The equivalent black male model in the ethnic version is also middle aged, but he seems a little more elaborately dressed-up for the part. He is wearing a blue and white striped apron. He smiles with delight while juggling a roast potato on his right. He gives a thumbs up sign with his left hand (for Rama presumably). He has a beard, and seems to fall into what was earlier defined in this thesis as the ethnic middle class stereotyping category.


This was a one off commercial made in English for TV1 which was apparently intended to promote the ‘easy to spread’ tub version of Rama exclusively to whites. It differs from the previous Rama commercials in that it features only whites without a single black person being depicted. Better Taste Rama (1984) bears some similarity to the early Castle Lager commercials which depicted a turn of the century Eurocentric Johannesburg. But instead, Better Taste Rama fantasises what is supposed to be a contemporary scene peopled by a strange breed of Americano-Eurocentric upper middle class English-speaking white South Africans. The mise-en-scéne consists of a styling, forms of dress,

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211 In terms of the South African context, see Chapter 2, some circumspection is needed with regard to this First World critical position.
and stereotyping of some the whites portrayed, which suggests aspects an American soap opera such as Dallas. Also, the jingle which holds together the montage of images is sung in English with an American-influenced accent.

The background marketing history of Rama possibly throws some light into why the principle of structured absences so strongly applies. This commercial, Better Taste Rama, is listed as a re-launch for Rama Soft (see Appendix 2A, Vol.11). The initial launch of Rama Soft seems to have been in the pre-television advertising era, during 1975-1976. According to information given in the Rome, Campaign History and Development outline (Appendix 2a, Vol. II), the original campaign had: “incorporated into the ‘Rama for natural fresh taste’ claim, with emphasis on the perceived USP of easy spreading by use of bread/spread situation”. The 1977-1983 Tongue Tip Test commercial apparently emphasised Rama as the best tasting/finest quality tub margarine, and had specifically taken blacks into account as part of its target market (i.e. in the TV1 commercial). However, it is quite probable that it had been realised that the tub version was not particularly taking off with blacks, because they continued to prefer the cheaper brick version. A decision might have been made on the part of the marketers of Rama to concentrate their resources into the making of an all white re-launch commercial for the soft, easy to spread tub version of the product. If analyzed critically the resulting commercial, though pleasant enough to watch, seems somewhat idealised and unrealistic. The fact that the guests at the banquet are all whites might not at first sight appear to be inconsistent with social relations during the apartheid era. However, this view is not necessarily ethnographically accurate. The whites depicted seem to be upper middle class English-speaking whites. In reality, this group tended to invite a few special black friends to their parties. Also, aspects of the episode depicted do not reflect the generally accepted structure or division of labour of South African society, as all catering staff are whites (Shots 6, 10, 12, 17, 18, 19). Some of the waiters have Latino or Spanish appearance, dark straight hair, which is consistent with the American soap opera styling. Even the

212 It is also possible that some of the technological developments incorporated into the manufacture of the easy to spread Rama came from the United States arm of Vandenbergs. This might partly explain the American nuance in the creative conceptualisation.
swing in Shots 4 and 8 (which depict a blond-haired young woman in a white dress) has its chains painted white. These white swing chains on either side of the young woman were probably intended by the stylist suggest purity. An idealised conception of what life might have been like in South Africa, if it could have been lived in terms of an American soap opera is thus portrayed. But the commercial is perfectly serious with no conscious attempt at incorporating any elements of satire or self-introspection into the text, which might have raised, it to a higher plane of meaning in terms of advertising idiom by making it more relevant.

The commercial opens with a shot of Rama packs (tubs) on a table amidst conspicuous consumption items, such as olives and crayfish (Shots 1-3), which suggest American affluence (or the dream or illusion of it). The tub lids are supposed to fly open by themselves, but viewed in slow motion can be seen to be supported by a piece of wire or spring at the back of each lid. The initial people shots are fragmentary, in the sense that people depicted are not shown again and no significant social interaction takes place (Shots 4, 5, 8, 9). However, later shots comprise several cute little cameos, which try to show the consumption of Rama in the course of ‘slice of life’ situations cris-crossing through the latter part of the commercial. The action or melodrama depicted in the earlier of these shots continues to develop in later shots (Shots 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30).

Although blacks are absent from this TV1 commercial and no equivalent versions were made for TV2/3, it is still possible to make some comment with regard to racial stereotyping. The guests at this banquet are predominantly fair-skinned, fair-haired Aryans (e.g. Shots 4, 5, 8, 10, 25, 28). On the other hand, though obviously also Europeans, dark-haired people are more easily to be found amongst the catering staff (e.g. Shots 10, 12, 19, 24, 27). This is not to say that the catering staff all have dark complexions, as a rather attractive fair-skinned young lady, who appears to be a waitress, features quite prominently in the editing structure of this commercial (Shots 7, 21, 29).
Rugby/Soccer (1986)

This is a pair of commercials made in English and in Zulu. The concept is the same for both versions -- a middle class home with the male members of a nuclear family watching sport on television. In the TV1 version the sport is rugby (Shot 1), while in the TV2 version it is soccer (Shot 1). In both versions, the characters involved are seated in almost exactly the same manner in front of a television set. The same idea: the woman walking past with a tray and interrupting their vision, has been used in the same place in both commercials. Unlike most of the other commercials on the history reel, where the audio part consists of a jingle, in Rugby and in Soccer the audio consists of the respective match commentaries and the voices of the respective male voice overs (MVO).

There are some styling differences apparent between the two homes. In Rugby, the white woman of the house is carrying a silver tray with bread rolls and a tub of Rama (Shot 3). In Soccer the black woman of the house is carrying a plastic tray and bread rolls with a brick of Rama (Shot 3). Although the structural layout of the two homes is quite similar, the black home (Shots 3, 15) is visibly less modern than the white home (also Shot 3, 15). The lighting of the black home in ‘Soccer’ is darker, suggesting that the black family cannot afford to spend as much on electricity, and therefore have fewer lights. Also, the pictures on the walls of the black home are smaller, and the furniture seems more old-fashioned (Shot 3). The overall impression is of a poorer home.

In other respects, the TV2 commercial is very similar to the white TV1 version. It is also based on a nuclear middle class family. But in the Zulu version, (Shot 1), there are four sons, instead of the three in the TV1 version, (Shot 1). This difference is, again, probably consistent with market research data showing black families to be generally larger than white families. However, for most urban blacks in 1986, such a middle class nuclear family unit would have been exceptional (Bertelsen. 1985). Group Areas restrictions denied urban blacks the right to own property outside the ‘homelands’, and mostly designated them temporary residents if they were living in townships located in what was termed ‘white’ South Africa (see Hindson, 1987).
However, in this instance, the fact that the TV1 Rugby version features only whites and the TV2 Soccer version features only blacks cannot be said to constitute a ‘structured absence’. In terms of the state of apartheid zoning prevalent in 1986, the intimate home situation around which the commercials were structured did not necessarily call for any racially integrated presence. In this respect, the depictions are ethnographically consistent. If the representation of people in the context where the product is being consumed (used) is consistent in terms of ethnography, the fact that blacks and whites might not appear together in a commercial need not necessarily amount to a structured absence. (‘Structured absences’ nevertheless pertain at the underlying level of broadcasting dispensation.)

In itself, the fact that soccer has been selected in place of rugby as the sport for the black family to be watching is not easy to criticise as an instance of pejorative racial stereotyping. It was a commonly known fact in South Africa at the time that blacks mostly followed soccer, and market research data showing soccer to be more popular amongst blacks would have supported this decision. It is nevertheless very predictable and ‘safe’ to show blacks interested in soccer and whites interested in rugby. A more imaginative or creative approach might have been to challenge common sense perceptions and reverse the stereotypes.

*Slipping and Sliding* (1986)

There was a second set of commercials for Rama in 1986, one version in English for TV1 and a quite similar one in Zulu for TV2. These commercials are constructed around a rhyming jingle which uses the idea of *Slipping and Sliding.* *Slipping and Sliding* possibly refers to the movement of small melting chunks margarine on hot food (as some of the visuals suggest) or to the spreadability of Rama.

It may be noted that in *Rugby/Soccer* (1986). *Hurrah Ma, it’s Rama,* (1991), and especially in the *Housewife I & II* series (1987-89), there is clear unity of time and place. Each of these commercials thus amounts to a fully self-contained mini-story, as was the
case with Castle Lager commercials. On the other hand, *Just One Bite* (1979-92) and *Slipping and Sliding* (1986) are based on a compound of separate vignettes, which can be confusing in instances when the editing neither cleanly relates or separates sequential shots in terms of the action taking place. It will be seen below that by the time of *Everybody Is Loving It* (1992), and *Just one bite and you know you’re right* (1994), this problem was overcome. By that stage the separate scenes or vignettes consist of more than one shot and are therefore self-contained. The refinement of the later commercials probably came through greater expertise, but also the application of a more relaxed broadcasting policy by the SABC might also have played an important part.

Both versions of *Slipping and Sliding* (1986) are constructed out of a series of shots which constitute Rama ‘consumption moments’. The ethnic TV2 version is very similar to the TV1 version. Surprisingly, the initial opening sequence of the TV1 version, which features whites, is retained in the TV2 version. Content differs where shots of ‘equivalent’ blacks are used in the place of some shots which feature whites in the TV1 commercial. Shot 16 (in both versions) is particularly interesting in this respect. In the TV1 version this shot shows a little girl in a yellow dress standing on her toes in order to reach for a jar of biscuits. It is a very homely scene and this little girl has a Labrador retriever by her side. The TV2 version uses the same brightly-lit kitchen as the TV1 version. A little black girl is shown in the place of the little white girl. Instead of a yellow dress she is wearing yellow dungarees. Instead of sandals she is wearing blue canvas takkies. In this version we never quite see what the little black girl is reaching up for -- the jar of biscuits from the TV1 version is still on the shelf, but to the left of her, by upper left frame corner. There is no labrador retriever by the little black girl’s side.

The variations in the clothing of the two little girls, and the other aspects of the *mise-en-scène* noted above, indicates that the makers of these commercials have made some attempt at constructing difference between the two cultures. The order of this ‘difference’ is probably couched somewhere between actual ethnographic veracity, the framework of the production team’s interpellation within their institutional practices, and the terms of their conception of the ‘other’s’ culture.
Most of the ‘appetite appeal’ or ‘various product uses’ shots are shared in common between the two versions of *Slipping and Sliding* (as are some shots of the people featured). It was, of course, never intended that the same people should see both versions together in quick succession, and thus be able to remember and analyse aspects in common. (Though both versions are listed as 1986 commercials, which means that they might possibly have been broadcast on the different channels on the same day.) When the two versions are viewed together there is a problem of disbelief, which is exacerbated by the fact that the same kitchen has repeatedly been used in the filming of both versions, (compare especially: TV1 version Shots 16, 18, 19 with TV2 version Shots 16, 18, 19). In both versions of the commercial, Shot 18, which features an elderly black woman is obviously edited from the same footage. The resulting narrative is confusing if one views the two commercials in succession. In the TV1 version, the preceding narrative from Shot 16, and what follows from Shot 19 onwards, suggests that the elderly lady is a domestic servant. In the TV2 version, the narrative suggests that she is a grandmother. Shot 19 in the ethnic version of the commercial, shows a young black woman who appears to be the lady of the house. She is in the same kitchen which was being used by a white woman in Shot 19 of the TV1 commercial. In this version, the table surface in the frame foreground is covered by a red and white tablecloth. In the TV1 version, it was a white tablecloth. The exact same Defy stove can be made out in the background of this shot in both versions.

The fact that there are shots which show blacks in the TV1 version, and shots which show whites in the TV2 version, suggests that these commercials undermine apartheid, albeit perhaps in the course of trying to establish credibility for the product amongst blacks.
**Housewife I (1987)**

The next series of commercials are structured around interviews of housewives in a supermarket. The superimposed copy at the bottom of the frame of Shot 1 in each of these commercials reads ‘Ormonde Shopping Centre’, (Johannesburg), suggesting documentary authenticity. The concept is based on a comparative test between ‘old’ Rama and ‘new’ Rama. There are several versions of the concept, including ethnic ones .for .TV2/3. The four commercials of the 1987 campaign will be referred to below as *Housewife Ia, Ib, 1c and 1d*

The *Housewife* series are the only Rama commercials on the history reel where any of the people represented actually talk *to* the camera. Also, the *Housewife* series (and *Rugby/Soccer*) are the only commercials on the history not subject to the tyranny of the jingle format.

According to the brand manager of Rama, the *Housewife I* campaign of 1987 (and *Housewife II* of 1989) were based on a concept which had been used by Vandenbergs in Europe. The campaign is viewed with some suspicion within the marketing department of Vandenbergs in Durban, as brand share seems to have suffered during the period while it was current.\(^{213}\) However, too many other variables are involved which can affect the sales of a product, so it is not possible to establish definitively that the adversity suffered by Rama at the market place was due specifically to the *Housewife I & II* commercials.

In the opening shots of the first TV1 commercial of this series (*Housewife Ia, 1987*) no blacks are featured amongst the people surrounding the housewife being interviewed. If the frames are examined in slow motion, black shoppers can, however, be made out in the crowd in the more distant and out-of-focus background (Shot 2).

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\(^{213}\) Interview with Rama brand manager, Unifoods, Durban, 2 June 1995)
The young white woman in *Housewife Ia* is quite pretty with dark brown hair to just above her shoulders. She is wearing a white frock and has lots of rings on the fingers of her right hand. She has a rather gullible expression on her face as she answers the interviewer’s questions about her margarine preferences. The stereotyping of this woman (Shots 2, 4, 8, 10, & 14) perhaps is an example of the tendency Ogilvy (1986) tells advertisers to avoid when he warns that ‘the consumer is not a moron, she is your wife’. This pejorative stereotyping also applies to some of the onlooking housewives (Shot 5). The producers of this commercial were probably not fully aware that their direction might have been offensive to some members of their target audience.

It may be noted that in the *Housewife Ia* commercial, the onlookers surrounding the protagonist housewife and interviewer were all white women. The *Housewife Ib* commercial is a further TV1 version of the same idea: a comparison test between ‘new’ Rama and old Rama. The interviewer is the same man (as in *Housewife Ia*) who speaks a somewhat commercialised Afrikaans-tinged English. The second housewife is also white. She has light brown hair, whereas the housewife in the first commercial had black hair. She is not stereotyped quite as dumb, nor does she pretend to be as moronic, as the housewife (or woman) in the previous commercial. One suspects that the second version has possibly been directed so that it will be more persuasive to women, than interesting to men. Also, there is quite an attractive shot of two small children in *Housewife Ib* (Shots 2 & 6), which tends to give the commercial more family orientated ‘feel’ than the previous one. The interview/test has been boned down and made shorter and more succinct. Also, the ‘look’ of the commercial is immediately noticeable as different, as a warm tone filter has been placed over the camera lens, or adjustments have been made at the processing or printing stages.

The most important difference in *Housewife Ib* is that a close-up featuring an elderly white woman together with a young black woman onlooker has been included (Shot 4).

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214 The accent of the interviewer suggests itself to have been forged in the course of employment in the service sector, and is itself indicative of upward class mobility and processes of deracination amongst Afrikaners.
Also, in Shots 3 & 7 there is a middle aged black woman in the extreme right of the frame, close behind the white housewife’s head.\textsuperscript{215} From comparing the two commercials the indications are that these \textit{inclusions} have been a carefully planned and calculated act, and that \textit{Housewife Ib} may to some extent be a revision of \textit{Housewife Ia}. The framing of Shot 4 is carefully composed with the elderly white woman placed on the left, but looking to the right with her face almost in profile. Her lighter coloured face thus leads the eye to the black woman’s darker face, which is looking in (from slightly behind) in the right half of the frame (Shot 4). The black woman’s face balances or grounds the composition so that neither face is unequivocally dominant. It is inferred from the editing that they are both looking very intensely towards the protagonist housewife (last shown in Shot 3, but not included in Shot 4). They are either waiting to see, or to hear the protagonist housewife’s response to ‘New Rama’. The elderly white woman’s face is overdressed with powder and heavily applied lipstick and mascara to her eyebrows and eyelashes (Shot 4) -- what we see here is an example of an extreme stereotype, a caricature, possibly the local, casting agency’s conception a supermarket junkie’. The young black woman onlooker is not sophisticated, but rather ethnic-looking. Her hair is bushed but not straightened and she is wearing purple lipstick (Shot 4).

The third commercial, \textit{Housewife Ic}, seems to be the ethnic equivalent of \textit{Housewife Ia}, and was made in Zulu. The young black woman in this commercial comes across as charmingly innocent and naive (Shots 2, 5, 7, 9). In many ways, she is similar to the young white woman interviewed in \textit{Housewife Ia}, though, in this instance, the gullibility aspect doesn’t seem to be emphasised quite as much in the black version. It is interesting to note that the young black woman is closely flanked by several white women in this commercial (Shots 5, 6, 7, 9), who empathise with her. They come across almost as comrades in the travails of housewives, which Rama supposedly is likely to ameliorate.

The fourth commercial, \textit{Housewife Id} is also in Zulu, but it involves a black housewife and what appears to be the rest her family, This rendition of the ‘Housewife’ concept was

\textsuperscript{215} Unfortunately this middle-aged black woman is not quite visible in the stills in Appendix 2B due to the high contrast of the reproduction process.
only made in Zulu, there was no TV1 equivalent. In this commercial two black children are included. They spartanly dressed, in as far as their clothes are clean and neat, not expensive looking, nor particularly new, or stylish (Shots 1, 2, 5, 7). The man has an amicable face (Shots 4 & 9) and is considerably bald. He is adorned to look above the ordinary working class, but not too middle class. He seems like someone who has *made it* to management level through years of honest sweat and patient angst (Shot 1). His wife is simple looking, honest and humble, but very much a lady (Shots 1 & 8). One interesting and perhaps redeeming factor which distinguishes this commercial from other Rama commercials, is that in depicting a black nuclear family with only two children, slavish adherence to market research data, (and to white preconceptions), about blacks desiring larger families has somehow been avoided.

*Housewife II* (1989)

The 1989 *Housewife II* campaign consists of four commercials designed around a similar supermarket interview scenario as *Housewife I* campaign. These further interviews are based on the world shattering proposition: ‘Even people who usually disagree, do agree that Rama is South Africa’s favourite taste’. The first such commercial, *Housewife IIa*, is a TV1 version which features a white mother with a vivacious young daughter in her early teens. There is no black ethnic equivalent version of this commercial. The second commercial in the sub series, *Housewife IIb*, features a newly married white couple. While the third commercial, *Housewife IIc* is the TV2/3 version of the second one, and features a young black married couple going through the same taste test sequence. The fourth commercial, *Housewife IId*, is also directed at blacks and features two young black women, who appear to be twins, Logged transcripts of these four commercials of the *Housewife II* campaign are **not included** in Appendix 2b, Volume II, because most of the important stereotyping issues deriving from this format of advertising commercial have already been covered in the discussion of the *Housewife I* series. Also, the time lapse of two years, from 1987 to 1989, does not, in this instance, reflect any important development in the forms of representation.
**Hurrah Ma, It’s Rama (1991)**

The *Hurrah Ma, It’s Rama* series consists of four commercials: an English version and an Afrikaans version for TV1; and a Zulu version for TV2 and a South Sotho version for TV3. The exact same commercial with the same actors is used for both the English and Afrikaans versions, and the same commercial with the same actors is used for both the Zulu and South Sotho versions. These commercials show the product in a ‘slice of life’ situation. With the help of Rama, a mother fulfils her role in relation to her children and her husband, and thus receives their approbation. The interaction which takes place between the family members in the English/Afrikaans version, and the South Sotho/Zulu versions is very similar.

The black and the white people do almost the same things in the different equivalent versions of the commercial. There is also a remarkable similarity in body language and gestures between the white and the black versions. For example, in both the white and the black version Shot 1 opens with very similar poignant moments between a mother and her young daughter. In Shot 9 of the white version, the little boy kisses his mother as a form of thanking her, and in Shot S of the black version the little boy also kisses his mother thanks. In Shot 12, in both versions, mother and father have their heads close together. In Shot 22 of the white version, dad gives mom a little red flower. While in Shot 19, in the black version, dad gives mom a little red flower.

The main cultural difference between the two commercials is revealed when one compares Shot 19 in the white version, with its equivalent. Shot 21, in the black version. The white family portrayed consists of mother, father, son and *one* young daughter, while the black family consists of mother, father, son and *three* young daughters. The black man portrayed in the ethnic commercial comes across as very refined black middle class, though he appears somehow as slightly conservative -ethnic, with the suggestion of an almost Latin-European quality. He is suavely dressed, in an open necked pink shirt, and has a well-groomed mustache and a slight beard (Shot 10). The black mother is also immaculately dressed with a Yellow top and gold necklace (Shot 8).
The lighting in the *Hurrah Ma It’s Rama* commercials is far cry from the lighting of some of the earlier commercials discussed (*Just one bite and you know you ’re right* – 1979-82 *Slipping and Sliding* - 1986). The lighting is now far more natural and less self-conscious on the part of the cinematographer.\(^{216}\) The frames are brighter, (but with soft lighting), and there is always fill-in lighting, which gives full detail in shadow areas. These commercials are also characterised ‘by very precise and tightly framed shots. The camera follows the movements of the actors with exceptional fluidity at such close quarters, especially in the case of the TV1 version. The camera work in the TV2/3 version comes close to imitating the precision of the TV1 version, but doesn’t quite reach the same level of mastery.

One final and quite important observation is that no attempt ‘has been made to style any inferiority in the structure of the *mise-en-scène* or in the stereotyping of the characters in the black version of *Hurrah Ma, It’s Rama*. This has not been the case with the other Rama commercials discussed so far. But on the contrary, every attempt has been made in *Hurrah Ma It’s Rama* to portray the black family as free, as happy and as fulfilled, and as much in control of their lives as the whites. In this respect, the connotations seem indicative of the coming of democracy and black liberation. The reason for such a conclusion here, is that the producers of this commercials were by 1991 quite likely to be responding to what they perceived to be the irrevocable expectations of their target market. On the other hand, margarine commercials such as for *Sunshine D*\(^{217}\) (Bertelsen, 1985) or the 1986 *Soccer* commercial for Rama, clearly belong to a different era. Although ‘the myth of the black nuclear family’ might have been perpetuated by the earlier commercials, cultural/standard of living differences believed to have been appropriate or consistent by their producers, were nevertheless structured into the text, As Bertelsen at the time had put it. ‘But where is the \white man? He is everywhere, but

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\(^{216}\) That is, rather than reflecting the technique and style of any filmmaker, the lighting is more consistent with the requirements for a margarine advertisement.

\(^{217}\) See also discussion of Bertelsen’s (1985) critique of the *Sunshine D* commercial in the Introduction to the thesis.
unseen. His approving, normative gaze must be understood. For he is, in all this, the constitutive principle, the creator’ (Bertelsen, 1985:8).

**Third Phase: Still Separate But Closer**

The third phase consists of only one commercial in English. It represents a return to the single commercial approach. This commercial embraces the earlier technique of featuring blacks and whites in separate shots. But the technique has been refined, so that the separate shots constitute self-contained scenes which relate blacks or whites to the product.

*Everybody is loving it* (1992)

This commercial shows a growing mastery over the jingle-based form by the producers of Rama commercials. *Hurrah Ma, It’s Rama* was based on a jingle but each version focused on a single family, and there was unity of time and place, so problems of incoherence were unlikely. *Everybody is loving it* consists of 6 short scenes, but coherence is retained as each scene ranges from 2 to 4 shots. Each scene consists of a self-contained mini commercial, which together go to make up the larger commercial. The fragmentation suffered, particularly in *Just one bite and you know you ’re right* (1979-82) and *Shipping and Sliding* (1986), has thus been overcome. A less restrictive policy on the part of the SABC after 1988, might have also been conducive to the evolution and refinement of this format (Chapter 4).

*Everybody is loving it* is constructed out of a total of 21 shots. Whites feature in 13 of these shots (4 scenes), while blacks feature in 5 shots (2 scenes). There are 3 packshots, including a packshot ending, which conventionally applies to the structure of virtually all commercials on the Rama history reel. The order of sequence of the shots is as follows. Shots 1-3 feature a young white couple in their bedroom with their baby. Shot 4 is a pack shot. Shots 5-7 feature a white or racially integrated nuclear family, (the man seems to have a rather dark complexion), having breakfast in their kitchen. Shots 8-10 feature a
black child with her mother - from morning breakfast till she is dropped off at school. Shot 11 is a pack shot. Shots 12-14 features a young white couple from when they are sitting together picnicking by a lake, to when they walk out together through the leaves. Shots 15-18 feature a white father and son fishing together. Shots 19-20 feature a young black man who has just graduated and is met by his glamorous girlfriend as he floats down the steps. Shot 21 is a final Rama packshot/still life composition with bread rolls, fruit etc.

Both blacks and whites featured in this commercial seem to be comfortably middle class. However, it is significant that the whites portrayed are engaged in activities which seem to have less sense of direction: they are changing nappies (Shots 1-3), or relaxing at the breakfast table (Shots 5-7), or a white couple picnicking by a lake (Shots 12-14), or a father and son engaged in a leisurely pursuit such as fishing (Shots 15-18). On the other hand, it may be noted that both scenes which feature blacks (Shots 8-10 and Shots 19-21) are concerned with education.

The young black girl in Shot 8 seems quite intelligent -- she is wearing thin gold-rimmed glasses. Her light brown skin has a warm healthy complexion indicating a healthy diet and general good health. Shot 8 shows that this young girl is being prepared for her day at school by a caring mother. It is easier to make out specific details in Shot 8, because this shot is not quite as soft-focus as those intimate indoor shots which had featured whites in this commercial (Shots 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7). A possible reading of this might be that Shot 8 is telling the target audience that black children are now entitled to a stable and secure home environment, while the softer focus rendition of scenes featuring young white family life suggest that this is an already established fact which no longer needs to be emphasised. The connotation of these aspects of art direction and photography might be that whites were by 1992 fading out of the picture, so to speak, while blacks were coming more into focus economically and politically. (If so, it is not here contended that such nuances were actually planned or part of the brief. Rather, in terms of the broader ideological interpellation of the practitioners themselves at the time, such nuances would have entered the text intuitively at later stages in the execution.) It is possible to make out that the black mother is wearing an expensive dress, gold earrings, gold wristwatch, and a pearl necklace. In Shot 10, when the little girl is left at the school by her mother, we see that it is an integrated school. Her mother cares about her and gives pocket money for the day.
From the expression upon his face the young black man who has just graduated (Shots 19-20), seems to be a very focused and determined young man. The glamorous young black woman who meets him (Shot 20) is very fashionably and appropriately dressed for someone bright and exciting in her age group.

**Fourth phase: Post Apartheid Rama.**

The final commercial on the history reel is also a single commercial in English that is intended for both black and white audiences. It is indicative of a fourth phase because it represents a dramatic reversal in who is conceived as the target audience. A new world is depicted were middle class blacks predominate and whites are a somewhat subservient minority.

*Just one bite and you know you’re right (1994-)*

The overall signification of this commercial is one of a state of greater Africanisation than has been depicted in any other commercial on the Rama history-reel (or on the Castle Lager history-reel which was examined in the previous chapter). Indeed, in *Soccer Match of the day* (1992) Castle Lager had featured a lone white soccer player surrounded by black soccer players in an after the match club scene. But the soccer world was a special context where blacks were generally known and acknowledged to be dominant. *Just one bite and you know you’re right* (1994) suggests that the world view portrayed is not a special case, but the new reality in South Africa. Admittedly, as the Rama commercial was completed in 1994, it is not entirely unproblematic to make a comparison with the 1992 Castle Lager commercial here. Nevertheless, in the context of what appears to have been a cautious and pragmatic campaign history for Rama, the approach of *Just one bite, and you know you’re right* (1994) represents a bold step for the marketers of Rama. This commercial unequivocally reads that the target market that matters for Rama in 1994 is no longer conceived as white middle class, but middle class blacks with perhaps a white or two thrown in.
This is the most expensively made commercial on the Rama history reel. It is expensive due to slick production values in terms of camera work, styling and editing. Production costs were apparently also high because the content was rigorously researched at various stages of production.\textsuperscript{218} And yet, in spite of the claimed strong market research basis, one still gets the feeling that this commercial represents a radical departure from previous policy. There seems to be a grey area as to whether or not this new South Africa commercial is adopting a political stance ahead of immediate marketing requirements on the ground. One could possibly argue that the earlier commercials were unable to come fully to terms with marketing requirements (see Chapter 6). On the other hand, one might possibly argue that \textit{Just one bite and you know you’re right} (1994) also indicates a change in the Vandenberg/Unilever policy in line with contextual democratic developments on the political front.

The representation of whites in this commercial can with certainty be said to be numerically less dominant than in earlier Rama commercials. The commercial is comprised of 35 shots, with a white man being featured in only 2 shots. This commercial seems to entail a reversal of the ‘token black’ syndrome which was an issue in the media of the USA in the 1960s and 1970s: the white man in \textit{Just one bite and you know you’re right} (1994) appears to be a ‘token white’. In both of the shots in which the white man features, he is shown together with his fellow black office workers in a city street during lunch time (Shots 5 & 9). Blacks feature in all 24 people shots, the rest of the shots are product applications close-ups, pack shots, or, a ‘graphic communication’ dissolve sequence in the case of the transforming sunflower. There are some white children in the background in the playground scene (Shot 11), but they are clearly not intended as a subject of interest, as they are quite out-of-focus.

\textit{It might be noted that the men lying on their backs as part of the transforming sunflower-to-packshot graphic (Shots 18-21) seem to be white men, thus preempting any possible implication that}

\textsuperscript{218} Interview with Rama Brand Manager, Durban, 2 June 1995.
blacks were used in a pejorative manner. (In the era leading to democratic elections and subsequently there was a tendency, more pronounced in some commercials, less so in others, to depict whites in self flagellatory roles.)

The action in *Just one bite and you know you’re right* (1994) takes place through five clearly defined scenes:

First scene shows two black youngsters doing a rap/gumboot dance in a street with a colourful street painting on a background wall (Shots 1-4). These black kids are well-nourished and dressed in the latest gear. They seem self-confident, free of constraints from need or oppression. But the connotations from their clothes suggest that they are locked into a future predetermined by consumption.

The second scene (Shots 5-9) appears to feature a group of office workers in a Johannesburg street during their lunch break. The white office worker tends to come across a little less self-confident than his fellow black office workers (Shots 5 & 9). He seems to be the outsider who wants be within the action. All three are grinning, but the white man is grinning harder. Also the white man lifts his knees higher than the rest in the gumboot dance. And yet, it is also possible to read an emergent non-racialism in this depiction: in his response to the transforming gumboot rhythm, the white man seems to be beginning to lose his white self-consciousness.

It is also interesting to note certain styling aspects of the stall selling boiled mealies (Shot 9), and the ‘so contented in self-employment’ black woman who leans out of the stall (left of the frame) and waves to the men dancing. This aspect of the mise-en-scene denotes the informal business sector. The stall has a curved yellow corrugated plastic

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219 For instance two commercials for the Vodacom cellular phone service circa 1995-7, which in creative terms to put it mildly ranged from pathetic to absolutely crass, were described in the following positive terms: “Perhaps a good indicator of this (of the industry ‘waking up’ and changing for the better) is the emergence of a specifically new South Africa humour in adverts such as Lindsay Smithers’ highly successful ‘Yebo gogo’ Vodacom advert which makes laughing stock of an arrogant and ignorant white bagel” (Mail & Guardian, February 7 to 13 1977)
roof, consisting of vacuum moulded mealie shapes, and this same merchandising material is also attached to the sides of the stall. If analysed in terms of myth, the application of this sophisticated packaging design concept, (to what ethnographic veracity would have required to be a rudimentary rough-and-ready stall), is meant to fuse or short-circuit the actual divide between informal trading and big time business glamour. A rather optimistic purchase of the Third World Destiny scenario discussed in Chapter 3.

The third scene features several black mothers in a playground with their children. (The black children are visible with the backs of their heads to camera, in the lower part of the frame, in Shot 11.) These women are obviously very well-dressed and well-groomed. Free from the need to work, (presumably by virtue of the economic power democratic developments have bestowed upon their husbands, suggested in the previous scene), they can devote time to bringing up their children. The fact that no ‘token white mother’ has been supplied in this shot can be read in several ways. Possibly, the absent ‘the token white’ mother has had to leave her children in a crèche and go off to work to supplement the reduced wages of her ‘token white’ husband. However, the perfunctory presence of a white mother, following the white office worker in the previous scene, might have gone towards reducing this commercial to more pedestrian standards of execution. Such weaknesses undermined in the earlier Just one bite, and you know you ‘re right (1981-83) and Slipping and Sliding (1986).

The fourth scene features a workman atop a huge actuality billboard, which is designed in the form of a slice of bread with a bite missing at the top right hand corner (Shots 23 & 24). The slogan Just one bite and you know you’re right is written in black script across the giant slice. This man is meant to represent the black working class. But somehow this is a more contented and happy working class than one generally found to be the case in South Africa in 1994. This scene is reminiscent of a certain photograph by Marc Riboud of a happy-go-lucky French workman atop the Eiffel Tower (Riboud, 1991:62), the black worker shares a Charlie Chaplinesque quality.
The fifth scene depicts a very upmarket and trendy/hip left-wing black family in their stylish home. The stereotyping of the man of the house seems to be post-apartheid black middle class. He is very relaxed, and possibly has a cosmopolitan air about him, as his posture and stances seem to suggest that he has travelled or lived abroad (Shots 25, 27, 28). The lady of the house is a beautiful young black woman with plated hair. From what can be seen of her in a head and shoulders framing (Shot 29), she seems quite elegantly dressed. The layout of the kitchen, furniture, utensils, and so on, is trendy and upmarket. A relaxed attitude about wealth is connoted (Shot 28), these are not newly-rich black middle classes. Again, the nuclear family depicted is quite a large one -- there seem to be three children, a young son, a young daughter, and a baby.

It was pointed out above with regard to Soccer (1986), that the depiction of such black nuclear families in advertisements has been criticised as constituting a myth (Bertelsen. 1985). In the mid-1990s post-apartheid era such a black nuclear family situation would still probably only be applicable to a relatively small percentage of the black population. However, the persistent depiction of such nuclear families in Rama commercials, Soccer (1986), Housewife Id (1987), Hurrah At/a. It’s Rama (1991), and Just one bite, and you know you’re right (1994), suggests these to be the norm. Eve Bertelsen’s 1985 critique, which was rendered during the apartheid era, aimed at demonstrating how commercials such as that for Sunshine D margarine were creating a myth which concealed the harsh reality under which black family life was actually lived. In a post-apartheid era, legislation contributing to the fragmentation of black family life has been repealed, but this problem (if such it is) is not likely to be remedied in the short term. The Rama commercials listed above might indeed be contributing ‘to the myth of the black nuclear family’. However, the previous certainty of the critical position, (which identified the interlocking of this myth with 1980s apartheid ideology), no longer exists. Deconstructing ideology in a post-apartheid era in South Africa, (or in a post-Marxist era in the First World communication studies), is no longer quite as popular or as simple an enterprise as it once used to be. Arguably, commercials which depict black nuclear families might be consistent with future government family planning strategies and projects aimed at re-
directing ingrained cultural norms which had developed or become distorted in response to an apartheid context.

With regard to family depiction in Rama commercials, one further point might be mentioned. Having circumvented many aspects of pejorative racial stereotyping, the marketers of Rama might perhaps be faulted for their persistence, (with the exception of *Housewife Id*), in depicting blacks as having much larger families than whites. Possibly, this shortcoming is due to a perception that such depiction will be read as a sign of virility by the their black target audiences, a connotation that will subconsciously be affixed to vitamin-enriched Rama. However, perhaps the black predilection to large families might itself be a stereotypical conception, a white preconception (supported by crude analysis of market research data). Perhaps an instance of ‘common sense ... continually transforming itself with scientific ideas’ (Gramsci, 1971:326).

**Conclusion**

It has already been pointed out that Castle Lager commercials were not only coherent and self-contained as individual pieces of communication, but through integration and repetition of many common themes, were also strongly cumulative as a total communication. On the other hand, this case study on the Rama history-reel shows conclusively that successive phases of Rama television advertising failed to carry over common themes, and were thus relatively disparate and lacking in mutual reinforcement.

It is also apparent from this case study, that the course taken in the development of advertising commercials for Rama in relation to reform differs from that taken by Castle Lager. As suggested at the beginning of this chapter, the approach of the marketers of Rama mostly seems to have been more pragmatically based than overtly contestational of apartheid social relations. Bearing in mind that it has only been possible to examine the English language Castle Lager commercials, while the smaller Rama history-reel has been inclusive of ethnic commercials, it is still possible to confidently state the following essential differences in approach.
The Rama commercials prior to the introduction of TV2/3 also targeted blacks. Though disproportionately few, the black people depicted in these commercials can be seen as an example of ‘pragmatic contestation’ of apartheid: marketing objectives were responding to an underlying structural process. On the other hand, the early Castle Lager commercials (up until 1983) were not yet contesting apartheid: neither in response to organic structural processes affecting the marketing situation, nor through more politically-inclined motivations. The early Castle Lager commercials ‘structured the absence’ of blacks and evidently were quite Eurocentric.

It was outlined how the format of Rama commercials underwent four distinct phases of development. The first three phases seem to have been negotiating organic structural responses to reform, in relation to underlying developments in the SABCTV broadcasting dispensation. The fourth phase (1994) adopts a more proactive ideological stance, which seems to update the positioning of the product Rama as well as the corporate image of its manufacturers vis-a-vis post-apartheid democratisation. It might be recalled that this latter discourse, consisting of what might be called ‘more proactive ideological elements’, had already made its appearance at a much earlier stage (1984) in the Castle Lager commercials. As early as 1983, an incipient change was coming about in the Castle Lager commercials. The manner in which blacks were introduced into English language Castle Lager commercials, and aspects of their subsequent depiction seems to be ideologically challenging and goading the prevailing government reform conceptions of the times.

In the few cases where English language Rama commercials feature blacks after the introduction to TV2/3, these black people continue to be very few and they are depicted in separate shots (*Slipping and Sliding*, 1986). In shots where blacks and whites do come together in the same frame in a TV1 commercial (*Housewife 1b*. 1987), the socialising is quite perfunctory to a supermarket situation. One might try to argue that the product situation of a margarine differs from that of a beer, and therefore did not warrant (or offer opportunities for) the depiction of greater social interaction between blacks and whites.
But this argument is clearly contested by the fact in the 1994 post-apartheid scenario, the advertisers of Rama margarine had no difficulty in conceiving a situation which depicted a white office worker doing a gumboot rap dance with blacks (Shots 5-9, *Just one bite and you know you’re right*, 1994-), a scenario which would not have been ethnographically any more implausible had it been depicted earlier, say, about the second half of the 1980s. This last commercial on the Rama history-reel (1994-) might be seen to take us beyond ‘reform’ and the intended 1978-1992 timespan of this thesis. However, this coming-of-democracy commercial is quite valuable to the research. In relation to the preceding commercials, it is represents a dramatic re-alignment in the communications of a major international corporation.

General Conclusion
Chapter 1 clarified the definition of the concept of stereotype, the relationship of stereotypes to ideology, and the nature of racial stereotyping. A study on stereotypes by Perkins (1979) was applied to investigate the possible role certain forms of stereotyping may play in the process Althusser (1971) refers to as ‘interpellation’. The nature of ‘racial’ stereotyping was also examined. It was observed that in First World contexts racial stereotyping is normally presumed to be pejorative, while in an apartheid context in South Africa, the term has also referred to forms of representation derived from ethnicity. Several categories of South African racial stereotyping were proposed in order to explicate the complexity of this situation during the period of reform. The definitive movement or change in racial stereotyping across these categories was from residual influences based in earlier formative ethnic eras, to a logical, but variously impeded, bourgeois unfoldment. This impediment was not only political but also closely tied to economic growth.

Chapter 2 was based on a review of critical approaches to the study of advertising, particularly those which are theoretically-informed. Post-World War II social critiques from First World advanced industrial states suggest that some tri-partite relationship exists between power, democracy and consumption. It was thus proposed that consumption might be conceived as a means of hegemony, and that apropos to this conception the relationship between stereotyping and consumer advertising in a consumer democracy situation might be found in the role that advertising plays as a facilitator of consumption. It was suggested that the aggregate or archetypical human stereotype communicated by advertising in an advanced industrial democracy situation is a positive, laudatory, petty bourgeois stereotype, not readily noticeable as a stereotype, but intended so that audiences can readily identify with its forms.

Theoretically-informed critiques also claim that through the processes of facilitating the marketing and distribution of manufactured goods, consumer advertising plays an additional role of underpinning the capitalist system, in both material and ideological terms. An important characteristic of the different critical approaches derived from Marx are their implications about the nature of ideological role of modern advertising. Some
critiques tend to fall back into the cliché of ‘capitalism as a ruling class conspiracy’, while other critiques have tended to reify the system, suggesting that it has a logic of its own, independent from collective actions of human agents. Most promising for the analysis of advertising in society are middle ground approaches, such as that deriving from the Culturalist approach of Williams ([1960] 1980).

It was observed that unlike in the case of Europe, consumer advertising during the post-World War II period in South Africa was certainly not advancing a consumer democracy in any broadly-based sense of the term. Thus, the final part of Chapter 2, tried to fathom how an essentially First World critique applied to a situation such as South Africa during the 1980s, where the majority of the population had only limited access to consumer goods and services, and where whatever ‘pacification’ such goods and services might have bestowed was bound to have been limited. It was suggested that if a pacificatory aspect of hegemony is the normal ideological role of consumer advertising in First World contexts, the forms of racial stereotyping, and their order of transition during the 1980s period of reform, might be seen to have been mediating a restricted aspect of consumption as a means of hegemony.

Chapter 3 assessed the forms of racial stereotyping in South Africa within broader terms of the political economy of apartheid during the Cold War. Particular attention was given to the relationship between reform processes in South Africa and larger contextual dynamics of this country’s location within the Western sphere of influence during a period of potential armed conflict between Nato and the Warsaw Pact. It was pointed out that the South African state variously adjusted to change in the key factors affecting it during the post-World War II period. If viewed over a period of time, some aspects of black/white relations and attenuating cultural forms that were once taken for granted became increasingly less tenable.

stereotyping during the P.W. Botha reformist period was explained in terms of the history of apartheid and the struggle for continued white settler hegemony, particularly Afrikaner, in the face of structural economic processes leading towards a state more democratically-inclusive of the black labour force and black consumer market. It was suggested that what might be termed a national dichotomy existed between a settler state and a tentative state of the indigenous inhabitants. The ambiguous nature of the South African state depended upon Western strategic interests for its continued validation. The nature of the reform of apartheid in South Africa during the 1980s was examined. It was pointed out that reform contained an inherent contradiction for the government which was supposed to be applying it: the disempowerment of Afrikanerdom and the empowerment of blacks. By 1984, this matter inevitably led to a rupture in the public rapprochement which had come about between English-dominated and Afrikaner capital during the earlier part of the 1980s.

The unfolding of SABC-TV broadcasting design and regulations had a direct and powerful influence on the forms of South African racial stereotyping in advertisements, and for this reason the categories of South African racial stereotyping were not fully explained until Chapter 4. This chapter examined the categories of South African racial stereotyping in relation to a broadcasting system that had been designed to further communications in support of apartheid. Some instances of pejorative racial stereotyping, similar to its First Word forms, were found to have existed in earlier commercials broadcast on TV1. However, there was a broad awareness in communications practices in the 1980s that relations between whites and blacks in South Africa should be represented in a positive light (Fourie, 1982; Louw, 1985), and therefore overtly negative forms of black depiction (that might have been interpreted as indicative of conflict, from either within South Africa or abroad), were mostly avoided. It was also suggested that pejorative racial stereotyping is fundamentally inconsistent with the conception of apartheid as ‘separate development’, which had been posited by HF. Verwoerd as an alternative to any ‘affirmative action’ or incorporation of the indigenous black population ever having to take place within the settler state. It had instead been intended’ that the
indigenous population should achieve self-realisation within their ‘homelands’ or Bantustans.

However, the unfolding of apartheid television broadcasting design was only fully realised during the P.W. Botha reformist era, with the introduction of the TV2 and TV3 channels in 1982. These channels were primarily supposed to mediate urban life to the black labour force living in black townships surrounding the major urban centres, and to make this population available to advertisers as a consumer market (Tomaselli RE et al, 1989). This objective, however, was subject to reconciliation with another, fundamentally contradictory objective of Afrikaner Nationalist government policy: a requirement that urban black population groups should continue to be socialised in terms of different ethnic groups that could be identified with the different black homelands. The racial stereotyping category of ‘ethnic black middle classes’ arises out of this dichotomous need for a further development of the indigenous population as consumers while at the same time adhering to different blacks national identities. The stringent application of the vernacular requirement in all programming on the TV2/3 channels, including advertising commercials, was intended to help realise this goal. SABC-TV restrictions were presented as being consistent with the cultural topography of South Africa, and therefore necessary in order to protect cultural diversity (Mersham, 1985). Although this argument was not entirely unfounded, through urbanisation and integration in a capitalist economy the indigenous population groups, as work force and as consumers, were at the same time locked into processes whereby their ethnic identities or differences were being diminished.

By the 1980s black consumption exceeded white consumption in many product categories, and in some instances SABC-TV broadcasting restrictions were proving to be an obstacle to marketers who wanted to reach their whole market with a single commercial. The introduction of the TV4 channel in 1984 possibly indicates that such ‘organic’ marketing needs were to some extent being accommodated by the SABC, although the language requirements for TV2 and TV3 continued to be stringently enforced. It is important to note the fact that underlying organic tendencies existed during
the 1980s for the production of integrated television commercials, inclusive of blacks depicted in progressively more middle class roles. The issue of black middle class accommodation in television commercials becomes somewhat confused, because, besides the fact of an underlying organic tendency towards the depiction of blacks in progressively more middle class terms, the government and military during the 1980s were applying a concept of ‘Total Strategy’ which called for selective black middle class co-option. In the events that followed during the 1980s, the co-optive black local government infrastructures which had been introduced were attacked by black opponents to the government and rejected by the black population as a whole. However, the issue was further complicated by calls to the government in the earlier part of the 1980s by the advertising industry for the use of advertising to further the reform process. These calls were consistent with a renewed confidence in the advertising industry internationally, and an increasing emphasis in further business expansion in the areas of political and public service advertising.

The question of a possible co-optive use of advertising in terms of reform strategy bears much relevance in respect of the debates about the nature of the ideological role of consumer product advertising (Sinclair, 1987), which, as pointed out above, is a distinctive feature of theoretically-informed advertising criticism. This issue has therefore needed careful attention. Chapter 5 specifically examined the calls for political and public services advertising and some of the advertising campaigns that followed. The conclusion was that the P.W. Botha government did at times use political advertising quite effectively, especially in the campaign to persuade conservative whites to accept a tricameral parliamentary dispensation in 1983, but this advent was mostly consistent with international growth in political advertising during this period. On the whole, the government did not seem to be over-enthusiastic about the use of advertising. In fact, the advertising industry in South Africa suffered a severe blow when consumer advertising became subject to government taxation in 1984. Also, there is no evidence to suggest connivance between the government and the business sector for the formulation of any overall reformist communication strategy, that might have affected the forms of black depiction and stereotyping in product advertising.
With a view to further explicating the nature of the ideological processes in consumer advertising in South Africa during the period of reform, Chapter 6 paid particular attention to production practices and to the state of the advertising industry at the time. It was pointed out that the primary obligation for producers of advertisements is that such advertisements should ‘sell’ the intended products or services as effectively as possible. The ideological dimension of consumer advertising usually comes about contingently, as practical difficulties exist for the intentional structuring of ideological content in such messages. An examination was made from secondary sources, and from the researcher’s own personal experiences, about how particular ‘stereotypes’ come to be utilised during the procedure of creating advertisements. It was also found that differing opinions existed within the industry about the possibility of advertising goods to a single integrated market in South Africa. Some practitioners seem to have believed that marketing potential and media consumption was largely monadic and could, span cultural differences and social divisions (Sinclair, 1985). Others differed with what was becoming a popular view that ‘a consumer was a consumer’, irrespective of race, and continued to claim that the black market was separate and that even the Afrikaans and English markets were separate. While consumer advertising was probably the communication a medium most likely to have facilitated the emergence of a common South African idiom, it seems that residual apartheid influences (not only within SABC-TV regulations, but also entrenched within the marketing profession) were holding this back. In this respect, it was noted that advertising agencies had experienced problems in communicating effectively to the black consumer, and that this difficulty was likely to be solved with the training of more blacks as copywriters and art directors. The conclusions of Chapter 6 were that structural processes dependent on economic growth were providing an underlying basis for a transition from an ethnic to a more middle class depiction in advertising. The government’s political imperatives were in some respect clearly contradictory to such underlying structural reform processes. On the pert of the business sector as a whole, its political imperatives also seemed at times to have been somewhat ambivalent.
It was pointed out in the introduction to this thesis that the empirical sample surveyed, though in some respects quite substantial, amounts to a relatively minimal research sample for the purpose of making of generally applicable statements. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the effort which is required in the preparation of this research material, I remain convinced that the use of history reels of television commercials, that have been systematically catalogued and numbered in terms of ‘shots’, is essential. This method might be further refined, in terms of content analysis, and through the use of a larger research sample, that investigates a broader range of product categories. Although it is quite difficult to make accurate generalised statements on the basis of the present research sample, some degree of clarification has been achieved in two areas. Firstly, there is confirmation that the order racial stereotyping of the indigenous population was progressively more middle class, and that by the 1990s a form of commercials was emerging that tended to represent a single integrated middle class. Secondly, with regard to the order of black depiction in television commercials as ideology, contrary to what might have been suggested by some critiques during the 1980s (Frederikse, 1986), there is little or no evidence in the research sample to suggest that the forms of black depiction were congruent with or in any way can be identified with ‘Total Strategy’. This seems to confirm conclusions, drawn from contextual and institutional analysis in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, that a serious lack of consensus existed between the government and English-dominated capital and the advertising industry. The case study based on the history reel of the English language commercials for Castle Lager in Chapter 7, clearly shows that after 1984 a communication strategy was adopted that was antagonistic to official government policy. South African beer advertising in the second half of the 1980s, especially that of Castle Lager, is probably unique in terms of the advertising history of any substantially industrialised country in West. Thus, the caveat that the ideological dimension of consumer advertising mostly occurs incidentally, needs some circumspection in respect of Castle Lager advertising after 1984. With regard to what was termed as a state of ‘national dichotomy’ in Chapter 3, Castle Lager advertising campaigns after 1984 probably came closest to articulating a new, all-inclusive, South African national identity. On the other hand, the case study for Rama margarine showed what might be described as a ‘pragmatic’ approach. Apartheid restrictiveness seems to
have sometimes been probed in the course of attaining a maximum return from a commercial. The changing forms of Rama commercials seem to be closely related to broadcasting developments within SABC-TV, while the final commercial (1994) clearly indicates the new political realignments taking place in South Africa.
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NB: Appendix is available in print as Volume II (260 pages)