

# **Deconstructing political myths in television advertisements of major South African political parties during elections campaigns: A critical analysis study**

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## DECLARATION

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I declare that ***Deconstructing Political Myths in Television Advertisements of Major South African Political Parties During Elections Campaign: A Critical Discourse Analysis Study*** is my own work and that all the sources that I have either used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: **30 June 2021**

## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my grandfather Rev. Mopailo Thomas Thatelo who sow the seeds of education in my early life. Those bookshelves and wooden boxes full of books that you left behind have not gone unnoticed. Robala ka kgotso Motaung o re kgantshetse ditsela.

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## ABSTRACT

This study argues that political television advertisements possess underlying political myths. These political myths are narratives that use different discursive practices such as verbal and visual texts to construct political narratives that either legitimise and/or delegitimise a particular political discourse. This, therefore, makes political myths ideological rather than a mere narrative. Moreover, this study argues that political myths are not mere fictional and/or imaginative narratives. Underlying political myths are presented in political television advertisements of the three main South African political parties, namely: the ANC, DA and the EFF. The political television advertisements under scrutiny were used in 2014, 2016 and 2019 national, provincial and local government elections campaigns. The main contribution of this particular study is that it is the first study of its kind to explore underlying political myths in political television advertisements of South Africa's main political parties.

To interrogate underlying political myths found in the political television advertisements, this study employed different research methods of the critical discourse analysis, namely: a three-dimensional model of discourse, PDA, DMA, CMA, DHC, SSA and MCDA. The above-mentioned research methods are inherently qualitative, critical and reveal underlying discursive practices used mainly to construct underlying political myths that legitimise and/or delegitimise a particular political discourse.

Among study findings identified include that the ANC political television advertisements use different discursive practices of visual and verbal texts essentially to construct underlying political myths to ideologically legitimise the significance of the party as a liberator or the “saviour” of black people from the oppressive colonial and apartheid South Africa. Underlying the saviour myth, South Africans particularly blacks live in poverty and underdevelopment regardless of the political gains of 1994. Furthermore, because of the endemic corruption and factions within the ranks of the ANC, the party has lost integrity

and suffered severe reputational damage among South Africans. None of the selected ANC political advertisements uses discursive practices to construct conspiracy myths.

Like the ANC, the DA's selected political television advertisements use discursive practices to ideologically construct exceptional myth, master myth, transformational myth, unity myth, solidarity myth, counter and conspiracy myth. The counter myth is used primarily to delegitimise the significance of the ANC in post-1994 South Africa. Moreover, the DA uses political myth to legitimise a narrative of national unity and exceptional myth while the party is involved in scandals among others of racism and marginalisation of black people in its ranks. Opposition among others to economic empowerment of black people in South Africa. None of the DA political television advertisements uses the golden age myth.

The selected EFF political television advertisements use conspiracy myth, counter myth, "us" and "them" myth, solidarity myth, transformational myth, and master myth. Like the DA, the EFF uses counter myth and conspiracy myths essentially to delegitimise the significance of the ANC-led government. Although the EFF is critical of the ANC, the party is involved in various scandals of corruption, hate speech and money laundering.

**Keywords:** Critical discourse analysis theory; critical discourse research method; elections campaigns; political myth; South African political parties; political television advertisements; verbal text; visual text.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

|        |                                                                                         |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AA     | Affirmative Action                                                                      |
| ACDP   | African Christian Democratic Party                                                      |
| ACHPR  | African Charter on Human and People's Rights                                            |
| ADEC   | African Democratic Change                                                               |
| ANC    | African National Congress                                                               |
| ANCWL  | African National Congress Women's League                                                |
| ANCYL  | ANC Youth League                                                                        |
| APLA   | Azanian People's Liberation Army                                                        |
| AU     | African Union                                                                           |
| AZAPO  | Azanian People's Organisation                                                           |
| BEE    | Black Economic Empowerment                                                              |
| BIT    | Bilateral Investment Treaties                                                           |
| BLF    | Black First Land First                                                                  |
| CDA    | Critical Discourse Analysis                                                             |
| CEDAW  | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination and Violence Against Women |
| CIL    | Customary International Law                                                             |
| CMA    | Critical Metaphor Analysis                                                              |
| COPE   | Congress of the People                                                                  |
| COSATU | Congress of the South African Trade Unions                                              |

|         |                                                                          |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CPC     | Coloured People's Congress                                               |
| DA      | Democratic Alliance                                                      |
| DHA     | Discourse Historical Analysis                                            |
| DMA     | Discourse Mythology Analysis                                             |
| DP      | Democratic Party                                                         |
| DWCP    | Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities                 |
| EFF     | Economic Freedom Fighters                                                |
| EWC     | Expropriation of Land Without Compensation                               |
| FA      | Federal Alliance                                                         |
| FFP     | Freedom Front Plus                                                       |
| FRELIMO | <i>Frente de Liberatacao de Mocambique</i> (Mozambique Liberation Front) |
| ICASA   | Independent Communication Authority of South Africa                      |
| ID      | Independent Democrats                                                    |
| IEC     | Independent Electoral Commission                                         |
| IFP     | Inkatha Freedom Party                                                    |
| IP      | Independent Party                                                        |
| IPID    | Independent Police Investigative Directorate                             |
| MDA     | Multimodal Discourse Analysis                                            |
| MDM     | Mass Democratic Movement                                                 |
| MK      | <i>Umkhonto we Sizwe</i> : A People's Army (The Spear of the Nation)     |
| NDM     | National Democratic Movement                                             |
| NNP     | New National Party                                                       |

|       |                                          |
|-------|------------------------------------------|
| NP    | National Party                           |
| PAC   | Pan African Congress                     |
| PDA   | Political Discourse Analysis             |
| PFP   | Popular Front Party                      |
| PFP   | Progressive Federal Party                |
| PP    | Progressive Party                        |
| PRP   | Progressive Reform Party                 |
| RDP   | Reconstruction Development Program       |
| RET   | Radical Economic Transformation          |
| SABC  | South African Broadcasting Cooperation   |
| SACD  | South African Congress of Democrats      |
| SACPC | South African Coloured People's Congress |
| SACP  | South African Communist Party            |
| SACTU | South African Congress of Trade Unions   |
| SADC  | Southern Africa Development Cooperation  |
| SAHRC | South African Human Rights Commission    |
| SAIC  | South African Indian Congress            |
| SANNC | South African Native National Congress   |
| SAPS  | South African Police Service             |
| UDF   | United Democratic Front                  |
| UDM   | United Democratic Movement               |
| UK    | United Kingdom                           |
| UN    | United Nations                           |
| UP    | United Party                             |
| USA   | United States of America                 |
| US    | United States                            |

|      |                                                                        |
|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| VOC  | <i>Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie</i><br>(Dutch East India Company) |
| WEGE | Women Empowerment and Gender Equality                                  |
| WMC  | White Monopoly Capital                                                 |

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## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study sought to interrogate the underlying political myths found in the verbal and visual texts of the political television advertisements used by South Africa's major three political parties, namely the African National Congress (ANC), Democratic Alliance (DA) and the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) during 2014, 2016 and 2019 national, provincial and local government elections campaigns. Central to this study is that political messages are presented using verbal and visual texts of the selected political television advertisements. These verbal and visual texts use different discursive practices in the form of linguistic features and symbolic language while visual texts use a visual metaphor, camera angles, camera movement, objects and colours among others mainly to convey political messages. These discursive practices are subliminal and ideological mainly to legitimise and/or to delegitimise a political discourse.

The chapter provides the following sections: the context of the study, background, the conceptual and theoretical framework of the study with a specific focus on political myth and CDA, the main research problem statement, main research question, main research objectives and the contribution, as well as limitations of the study, are outlined.

### **1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Political advertising is a distinctive form of persuasion used during election campaigns to promote a political party and/or a political candidate. Political advertising uses different advertising techniques and strategies primarily to set political agenda in the public sphere, to shape a public opinion, to set propaganda

and more importantly to persuade electorates to participate in the elections. The significance of political advertising is essential to encourage greater participation in the democratic process, therefore, to strengthen democracy in the society (Fourie, 2008).

Political advertising uses different forms that include billboards, newspapers, radio, posters, t-shirts, flyers, pamphlets, television advertising and the internet, among others. In the 21st century, political candidates and/or political parties increasingly use an integrated approach of political advertising that involves the use of different social networking sites such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter just to mention a few. These social networking sites are used mainly to facilitate greater instant voter access, persuasion, greater publicity, participation and interaction with mass audiences regardless of the geographic location, time and distance (Kaid & Postenicu, 2005:266-270). Although the internet is an integral tool of political advertising, it is however beyond the scope of this study.

Historically, political advertising in South Africa dates to the first general elections of 1910,<sup>1</sup> (du Preez, 1988:28). In those early years, voting was limited to the educated, white males and those who owned property. Women and black people, in general, were excluded from the elections process. Then, political advertising was carried out through public meetings and newspaper editorials. In the run-up to the first South African democratic elections of 1994, political advertising was mainly through streetlamp posters, print newspapers and radio to promote political parties and their political promises (Teer-Tomasselli, 2005 & 2006). However, political advertising especially on television became official for the first time in South Africa, in the run-up to the 2009 national and provincial elections after the Independent Communication Authority of South Africa (ICASA) made a ruling in favour of television political advertising in 2008 (Chiumbu & Ciaglia, 2015:149-165). While in the United States

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<sup>1</sup> The first general elections after South Africa has been declared the Union of South Africa made up of the Cape Colony, Natal, Orange Free State and Transvaal on the 31 May 1910 (du Preez, 1988).

of America (USA), advertising political messages on television came with the advent of television technology in the 1950s. Then political advertising became a competitive phenomenon, which required creative ideas on how to grab audience attention and influence audience attitudes towards a political candidate (Kaid, 1981:250-251).

US political advertising then was considered as a communication tool by which political parties or political candidates buy space and/or time in the mainstream traditional media such as radio, newspapers and television mainly to expose audiences to the political candidates and a political issue such as growing the economy, housing for the poor, access to public health and education. Sometimes, political messages include international trade or international political issues that directly affected the US such as economic and security interests (Kotler & Andresen, 1991:58).

Then, political advertisements were seen mainly as news-making of a political party and/or a political candidate associated with a political issue rather than an advertisement (Schnur, 1999:11). While others viewed political advertising primarily as a mere source of entertainment of “moving images”, a device designed to arouse audience attention and to influence voter attitudes, beliefs and behaviour about a specific political candidate, rather than an electoral campaign tool (Kern, 1989:4-5; Holtz-Bacha & Kaid,1995: 2). The notion of entertainment in the political advertisement was common in 1952 during the US presidential election wherein an animated commercial, *“I like Ike for President”* of a Republican candidate, Dewey Eisenhower was used. The commercial used the animation and solo-music genres popular in the late 1940s after World War II (Killmeier & Christiansen, 2011).

In Ghana, West Africa, the first political television advertisement was broadcast in 1979 by the Popular Front Party (PFP). Then, the PFP election campaign advertisement ran with the slogan, *“They will come back”* for about a month before the actual July 1979 elections, broadcasted only on Ghana Television, the only television station at the time. With the liberalisation of Ghana media in the 1990s,



political parties increasingly used both public and private broadcasting media facilities such as radio, print, television and now social media (Brock, 2001:24; Tietaah, 2013:203-210). At the turn of the 21st century, political advertising on television is widely used for election campaigns, which requires greater creativity on how to grab audience attention and influence attitudes towards voting for a political candidate.

Elections in South Africa are held mainly for the National Assembly, Provincial Legislatures and Municipal Councils. Elections follow a five-year cycle with national and provincial held simultaneously while local government elections or municipal elections are held two years after the former. The South African Electoral Act 73 of 1998 makes a provision mainly for political parties rather than individual political candidates to contest for national and provincial elections.

However, at the time of writing this study, the above Electoral Act was under review by both the Constitutional Court, civic society and political parties mainly the ANC and the EFF. The civil society group the New Nation Movement, for instance, brought the Electoral Act to the Constitutional Court arguing that the Act in question undermines the rights of individuals to contest for elections without a party representation (Feltham, 2020). While the ANC and the EFF political parties consider: 1) synchronising of the national, provincial and local government elections on the same day, 2) a constituency representation at the national and provincial government, rather than a political party representation based (Cele, 2020; Kotze, 2020). Considering the Electoral Act, this study, therefore, focused on advertising political parties rather than political candidates. On the contrary, the electoral system of the US is based primarily on the advertisement of an individual political candidate of a specific political party, Republican or Democratic.

This study focuses exclusively on the political television advertisements of the South African main political parties, namely the ANC, DA and EFF. The following sub-sections present a brief historical context of the selected political parties.

### 1.2.1 Historical Overview of South Africa's main political parties

The political history of South Africa can be narrated from the early contact between Europeans of Dutch and German descent, who were brought into South Africa by the *Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* (VOC) commonly known as the Dutch East India Company, which first settled in the Cape of Good Hope in the mid-17th century. Their settlements were amongst the San people of the southern coast of South Africa. The early European (Afrikaner) settlers were left to fend for themselves with little or no assistance from the VOC, and thus to survive, they were compelled by circumstances to steal the Khoi and the San livestock and plunder land by force from the indigenous people of the Cape (Mashele & Qobo, 2014:19). By 1803, South African politics took another developmental turn when Britain took control of the Cape Colony from the Dutch. The British, like the Dutch, brutally occupied the land of the Xhosa,<sup>2</sup> people and forcibly stole thousands of heads of cattle and sheep from them in the southern parts of South Africa (Thompson 2014:35). The occupation of the European settlers in South Africa becomes increasingly imminent in the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910 between the English and the Afrikaner minorities. This Union was meant to unify the colonies of Cape of Good Hope, Natal, Free Orange State and the Transvaal. On the other hand, the Union sought total control of South Africa, to the exclusion of the natives.

The political developments of 1910 led to the formation of the black political organisation named the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) in 1912. Later, this organisation evolved into the African National Congress (ANC). The founding of the SANNC was primarily against the exclusion of black Africans (the

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<sup>2</sup> An African indigenous ethnic group living largely in the Eastern Cape and Western Cape Provinces as well as in other parts of South Africa.

majority) from the Union Government, the land acquisition by white settlers and forms of white supremacy (Holland, 2012:29; Mashele & Qobo, 2014:34). From 1910 to 1948, the Union Government of South Africa enacted several discriminatory and segregation laws aimed at black South Africans. The most notable, of the time, was the Native Land Act of 1913, which dispossessed and prohibited black South Africans from land ownership beyond tribal lines. As South Africa was industrializing during World War II, because of the earlier discovery of diamond and gold, black South Africans were increasingly employed in the manufacturing industries and gold mines of Johannesburg. At the same time, many were subjected to poor employment conditions, such as lower wages compared to unskilled White Afrikaner labourers who earned better wages. In protest of poor conditions of employment, many black labourers joined trade unions demanding better working conditions (Thompson, 2014).

Although the ANC successfully transitioned in 1994 from the white minority-led government to a black majority. The party has been embroiled in poor service delivery, factionalism within the party, corruption, the decline of electoral support and the inability to grow the South African economy (Haffajee, 2021). In post-1994 South Africa, the ANC has seen breakaway political parties such as African Democratic Change (ADEC), Congress of the People (COPE), Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and United Democratic Movement (UDM) (Mjo, 2018). Chapter Seven of this study presents in greater details challenges that the ANC led government is faced with.

The modern-day DA was The Progressive Party (PP) was an all-white liberal party founded in 1959 by the breakaway members of the United Party (UP). Since 1975, DA has changed party name from Progressive Party to Progressive Reform Party (PRP), and Progressive Federal Party (PFP) in 1977. In 1989, the PFP merged with other parties, namely; the Independent Party (IP) and the National Democratic Movement (NDM) to form the Democratic Party (DP). After the 1999 general elections, the DP become an official opposition party in South Africa. In 2000, the

DP changed its name to Democratic Alliance (DA) after a merger with opposition parties with the Federal Alliance (FA) and the New National Party (NNP) (Maloka, 2001). Since the 2009 national elections, the DA is the governing party of the City of Cape Town and Western Cape Province (Dixon, 2009).

Although DA has made significant growth since 2004, by becoming the official opposition party at national government, a governing party in the Western Cape and Gauteng Metropolitan municipalities such as the City of Tshwane, City of Joburg and Ekurhuleni Metro (Khumalo & Mahlati, 2021). The party went through internal dynamics of such as racism among others, that led to the formation of breakaway political parties such as the Good (Nombembe, 2018) and the ActionSA (De Klerk, 2020). Chapter Seven of this study presents at length challenges faced by the DA political party in post-1994 South Africa.

The EFF is a breakaway political party of the ANC, formed in July 2013 after the suspension of the then ANC Youth League executive. Among suspended members are president Mr Julius Malema, the spokesperson Mr Floyd Shivambu, and the late general secretary Mr Sindiso Magaqa. The above members were suspended among others, the calling for “puppet regime” change in Botswana, unfavourably comparing leadership style of the former president Jacob Zuma to that of former president Thabo Mbeki, insulting a BBC white journalist, the nationalisation of mines, banks and acquisition of land without compensation stance (Bauer, 2012). This rhetoric was regarded as sawing divisions with the ANC and bringing the party into disrepute. Since its formation in 2013, the EFF has become the third-largest political party after the ANC and DA in both houses, the South African National Assembly and Provinces. In the 2021 local government elections, the party received 10% of the vote up from 8% in 2016 (Masuabi & Masungwini, 2021). Regardless of its successes since its founding, the EFF had a breakaway that led to the formation of Black First Land First (BLF) after the former member of parliament Mr Andile Mngxitama was expelled from the party in 2015 (Simelane, 2016).

Like the ANC and DA, Chapter Seven of this thesis presents at length a discussion on the underlying socio-economic conditions of the EFF in post-1994 South Africa.

With the above in mind, this study, therefore, argues that political messages in political television advertisements are constructed using discursive practices (or discourses) and are presented in verbal and visual texts. Discursive practices of political messages are thus subliminal, ideological and have underlying political myths essential to appeal to the electorates. Therefore, political myths function primarily to legitimise and/or delegitimise a political discourse. The main purpose of this study, therefore, is to interrogate underlying political myths in the verbal and visual texts of the selected political television advertisements using a qualitative content analysis research method of critical discourse analysis (CDA).

While the section above has provided a brief background of the study, the next section focuses on the conceptual framework of the study.

### **1.3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF POLITICAL ADVERTISING**

Political advertising is an element of political marketing, essentially a promotional tool of political communication aimed at selling a political candidate and/or the political party to a target of electorates. Political advertising as a promotional tool involves a communication process by which political parties and/or political candidates buy a space in the mainstream media such as television, radio and newspapers. This is mainly to expose voters to the intended political messages to influence their attitudes, beliefs and behaviour to favour a specific political candidate and/or political party (Kaid 1981:250). The aspect of purchase or payment of space in the mass media such as television essentially give political parties and /or political candidates the right to determine and control production techniques of the verbal and visual texts of the political advertisement.

The verbal and visual texts are critical concepts of this study and form the basis of the unit of analysis (see Chapter Five). Kaid and Johnson (2001) describe verbal texts as linguistic characteristics or features presented in spoken and written texts, using a set of words or vocabulary, metaphors, style and symbols used primarily to communicate political messages, political issues and political slogans of a political party. These verbal texts are mainly conceived by political candidates and/or political parties in political television advertisements. In addition, Kress (1994:25-26), Janks (1997:334-337; 2005: 100-102) and Locke (2004:81-87) point out that there is more to verbal texts rather than being a mere collection of words and argue that underlying verbal texts are critical features such as “genre”, “lexicalisation”, “cohesion devices”, “transitivity”, “nominalisation” and “modality”.

From a CDA perspective, the above features of verbal texts are discursive practices that legitimise and/or delegitimise a political discourse. Genre is essential for classifying specific conventions or patterns into a common and/or unique set of characteristics in the verbal text that are produced (Kress1994:25). The use of genre as a tool of CDA is essential in this study, in that, it provides the researcher with the ability to classify specific and/or common aspects of the verbal texts into a type of characters. While lexicalisation is concerned with the selection or choice of wording, the use of many words for the same phenomenon, for renaming, repetition, euphemism and metaphors among others to convey a verbal text (Janks, 2005:101). Therefore, lexicalisation is a discursive practice used mainly to legitimise and/or delegitimise a discourse conveyed using a verbal text. Cohesion suggests linkages of different aspects of the verbal text to form a meaningful whole. Cohesion is a discursive practice that uses aspects such as conjunctions, adverbs, pronouns, auxiliaries to form a comprehensive and to establish a coordinated relationship within a discourse (Locke, 2004:61).

Transitivity is another discursive practice of verbal text. Transitivity is defined as the underlying property of a verbal text that uses language essentially to construct mental pictures of reality, feelings, individual reflection, lived experiences, human acts such

as the use of active voice, sensing, suggesting, thinking perceiving and human behaviour such as sleeping, talking and smiling among others (Janks, 1997:336). In other words, transitivity essentially means specifying different types of processes that are recognised in the verbal text such as language and the underlying structures by which they are expressed. Nominalisation is another discursive practice that involves the process where a verb or adjectives are changed into nouns. In this process, a noun is reduced in the sense that some of the meanings such as tense, timing and subject in a sentence get lost, without the participant or tense and the agent. For example, in a case that involves “African heads of state” is nominalised rather to “African leaders” or “African rulers” (Maposa, 2015:64) and a case where for example “a white woman was raped” for example in Cape Town” is nominalised to “A rape occurred in Cape Town”. Central to nominalisation as a discursive practise is essentially to delegitimise the significance of the subject and legitimises the significance of the verb, the gruesome act of rape in the verbal text.

The last feature of the verbal text is modality. Modality is a discursive practice that functions mainly as channels or medium that represents reality and credibility in the verbal text (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006:155). In the context of verbal text, modality refers to the degree of certainty or uncertainty with which a statement is endorsed by the use of different modal auxiliaries such as “certainly”, “may”, “possibly”, “seems”, “kind of”, “sort of”, and “perhaps” among others to suggest varying degrees of strength (Locke, 2004:82-83). The significance of modalities as a discursive practice in the context of verbal texts essentially legitimises or delegitimises a political discourse.

It is worth emphasising that the above features of the verbal texts are ideological and subjective mainly meant to establish and maintain unequal power relations. Moreover, to legitimise and/or delegitimise the discourse of injustices and inequality as well as to construct and convey the underlying ideological meaning of the verbal text (Wodak, 2001).

In addition to the verbal text, is the visual text that forms the basis of this study. Foss (2005:141) defines visual text as a mass-media text that uses images as modes of communication essentially to communicate a message as experienced by audiences. Like verbal texts, visual texts are modalities intended to construct an ideological argument that primarily seeks to legitimise or delegitimise a set of social or political order (Foss, 2005:141-142). The visual text includes modal features such as visual objects, colour, movement, body posture, facial expression as well as pictorial codes such as camera angles, camera movement, settings and lighting (Zittl, 2008). These visual textual features are discursive practices that are essential for the creation of representation, interactional and compositional.

Representation involves underlying interpretation where the meaning of the visual texts are produced and exchanged from an ideological perspective (Hall, 1997:10, Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006:29). This makes representation subjective and essentially involves a form of interpretation where media portray a group or community, experiences and ideas from an ideological perspective. Interaction is another function of a visual text that depicts actors or participants as actively involved in the acts of communication such as speaking, listening, writing and reading, walking and running among others (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006:37). The significance of the interactional function of the visual text is primarily concerned with the interpersonal depiction of the visual text. Therefore, visual texts use discursive practices of interactional function mainly to legitimise and/or delegitimise a discourse presented in both verbal and visual texts.

While the compositional function of the visual text is mainly concerned with how visual images are composed. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006:30) and Kaid and Johnson (2001:26), the compositional function of the video text involves video styling techniques such as camera angles, camera movement, camera shots or frames, settings, lighting, and symbolic attributes among others. In a study that examines the production of political advertisements for the U.S presidential elections campaigns, Biocca (1991) identified the following common video production techniques such as



camera primary movement, secondary movement and tertiary movement in political television advertisements. He argues that these video production techniques are structural, subtle and ideological codes of discursive practices. They are used mainly to legitimise and/or delegitimise a discourse during the production of political television advertisements.

There are significant benefits and limitations underlying political television advertisements. Among the benefits of political advertisement is mainly to foster and enhance the culture of democracy, that is, it communicates efficiently democratic values to the electorates, it provides a greater representation of political parties, encourages greater access or political participation, and enhances political competition (Fourie, 2013: 300). However, limitations of political television advertising entail lack of access specifically to those who do not have television owing to economic reasons, inability to buy television and lack of access to electricity in their communities. In addition, political advertising mainly negative political advertising could potentially discourage electorates from participating in any election process and practically lead to political disengagement (Ansolabehere, Iyengar & Valentino, 1994).

Another key operational concept of this study is elections. Elections are defined as a process by which political parties and/or political leaders are selected by members of the public –electorates (Pomper,1967:14). Political parties and/or political leaders essentially stand as a public representative at a national, provincial or local government level. For the electorates, elections mean the time when all eligible voters exercise their constitutional right as citizens to elect political parties and/ or political leaders of their choice as their constituencies will be represented in all three spheres of government, namely; national, provincial and local government (Pomper,1967).

Now that the above section explained the key concepts of the study, the next section focuses on the theoretical framework of the study.

## 1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study uses political myth and critical discourse analysis (CDA) as the main theoretical framework. Chapter Three of this study discusses a theory of political myth while Chapter Four discusses a theory of CDA.

Chapter Three, argue that political myths are not objective, rather they are subjective and ideological. These political narratives are presented using media texts, namely, verbal and visual texts. This study argues that there are different types of political myths, namely: the master myth, “us” and “them”, golden age myth, conspiracy myth, hero myth or saviour myth, and solidarity myth. Moreover, the study posits that these different types of political myths are presented subliminally in the verbal and visual texts of political television advertisements. The main function of these different types of political myths mainly is to legitimise and/or delegitimise underlying political discourse.

Chapter Four presents the second theoretical framework, CDA. CDA is mainly concerned with underlying dynamics of power, knowledge and ideology produced by discursive practices in the verbal and visual texts of media such as political television advertisements. CDA as a theoretical framework argues that different discursive practices are not objective rather, they are ideological, that is, they possess inherent biases. These discursive practices are critical to this study in that they explain how and why certain discourses are produced, legitimised and/or delegitimised (van Dijk, 1998).

On the other hand, this study argues that CDA is a research method that can be used primarily to explore hidden meanings of the discursive practices, to unearth underlying social practices, power dynamics and inequalities among others in verbal and visual texts of political television advertisements. Therefore, for this study, CDA

is used mainly to interrogate how underlying discursive practices are constructed in the form of political myth mainly to legitimise and/or delegitimise a political discourse.

The next section presents a discussion on the main research problem statement.

## **1.5 MAIN RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT**

In Africa, political parties and political candidates use 33% of radio, 21% of posters, 16% of television, 9% of newspapers, 5% of social media and 13% of face-to-face interactions with political party officials mainly for political advertising purposes (Ezegwu, Etukudo & Akpan, 2014). The preceding figures indicate that political advertising messages in Africa are disseminated mainly through traditional media of radio and posters. Compared to the West, there is a significantly lower usage of television as a medium for political advertising in Africa. This problem is caused by, among others, the high cost of advertising on television in private media. Many public broadcasters in Africa are owned by the state or the governing political party and a lack of liberal broadcasting regulatory framework discourages smaller and opposition parties from using state broadcasting facilities (Chiumbu & Ciaglia, 2016).

Another problem for this study is that previous studies of political television advertisements focused mainly on the experiences of progressive and liberal Western democratic societies, with advanced mass media technology, a progressive and liberal broadcasting regulatory framework. The problem with these previous studies is that they have ignored unique challenges of the developing world, particularly Africa, where politicians perceive private media “as an enemy of government” and “agents of the neo-liberal democracy” (Kasoma, 1995:540). These agents are seen to support Western institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (Kasoma, 2013:105-107). It is for this reason that opposition political parties are deprived of space in both public and private media, accusing opposition political parties of promoting Western imperial interests (Pitts,

2007). Furthermore, governments amend constitutions and craft new legislation mainly to deprive media freedom to harass and interfere with journalists in their work (Ugangu, 215). Many political parties mainly opposition parties in Africa have limited budgets and knowledge on the significance of political television advertisements (Chibuwe, 2013).

Another problem for this study is that radio remains a primary platform of political advertising than television in many parts of Africa. Therefore, there are few studies known specifically about political advertising on television in Africa. Although political television advertising was legislated in South Africa in 2008 and used for the first time in 2009, there is little knowledge on qualitative content analysis with a specific focus on the textual analysis of political television commercials in South Africa. Moreover, there is little knowledge about functions and underlying political myths in political television advertisements, particularly in post-1994 South Africa,<sup>3</sup>.

It is against this backdrop, therefore, that the main aim of this study was to interrogate using CDA underlying political myths in the political television advertisements of the three main South African political parties, the ANC, DA and EFF used during 2014, 2016 and 2019 national, provincial and local government elections.

## **1.6 MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The main objectives of this study are:

- To identify underlying political myths used in the selected political television advertisements.

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<sup>3</sup> This study uses the term post-1994 South Africa, rather than post-apartheid South Africa in protest to the popular notion that apartheid was an event that effectively started in 1948 when the National Party (NP) won elections to become a governing party and ended in 1994, when the ANC become a democratically elected government.

- To determine how discursive practices in the visual and verbal texts are presented in the selected political television advertisements to construct underlying political myths.
- To interrogate using the CDA underlying political myths used in the verbal and visual texts of the selected political television advertisements.
- To compare whether there are similarities and/or differences of political myths in the selected political television advertisements.
- To present (or propose) the understanding of political myths in the South African political television advertisements.

The below section presents the main research question of the study.

## **1.7 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study is guided by the following overarching research questions:

- What are the underlying political myths in the selected political television advertisements?
- To what extent do discursive practices of visual and verbal texts of the selected political television advertisements construct underlying political myths?
- To what extent do underlying discursive practices in the political myth are ideologically used to legitimise and/or delegitimise a political discourse?
- What are the similarities and/or differences of political myth in the selected political television advertisements?
- What is the understanding of political myths in the South African political television advertisements?

## **1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study makes a significant contribution to the political communication landscape of South Africa, for the following reasons: Firstly, political television advertisement is a new phenomenon in South Africa used in the national, provincial and local government elections. Secondly, this study is the first study of its kind in South Africa that focuses exclusively on political myths used by political parties in post-1994 South Africa. Thirdly, rather than identifying and interpreting political myths in the political television advertisements, this study critiques underlying political myths used by South Africa's main political parties: the ANC, DA and EFF during election campaigns of 2014, 2016 and 2019. Fourthly, this study uses a qualitative research design that uses CDA as a research method and a theoretical framework, while studies of Sindane (2010), Tyali and Mukhudwana (2020) are quantitative content analysis studies. Fifthly, another significant contribution of this specific study is that the study is interdisciplinary that cuts across political communication with a specific focus on political television advertisements, cultural studies and television studies. Lastly, and important, this study contributes towards an understanding of political myths within the context of South African political television advertisements.

The next section presents the limitations of the study.

## **1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

However, there are several limitations to this study. Firstly, there is limited literature specifically on the political myths of South African political parties in post-1994. Available studies of Thompson (1985), for example, only present a historical narrative of the South African political myth with a specific focus on colonial-apartheid films rather than political television advertisements used by the National Party (NP) government for campaigning general elections. Therefore, this study has to borrow literature from European and North American studies mainly the United States' use

of political myth during elections campaigning. At the time of the writing of this dissertation, the selected political parties were preparing for South Africa's 2021 local government elections. Therefore, the 2021 local government elections fall beyond the scope of this study.

The last section of this chapter provides the chapter layout of the study.

## **1.10 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY**

This study is divided into eight chapters, including the present chapter. Chapter Two: Nature of Myth introduces a historical perspective on the nature of the concept of myth. Moreover, this chapter presents a discussion on different theories of myth, namely: the functional theory, structural theory, semiotic theory, rational theory, psychological theory, counter-myth theory, and the Afrocentric theory. These theories are critical to this study as they lay a foundation for the theoretical underpinnings of the concept myth.

While Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework of Political Myth introduces a discussion on the nature of the concept and the underpinning theories of political myth. The chapter draws heavily on the secondary work of Bottici and Challand (2006), Edelman (1974), Stone (2001), Floods (2002) and Tudor (1972) among others.

Chapter Four: Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA): Theory and Methodology describe the nature of the CDA as a theoretical approach and a research method that can be used in the analysis of the verbal and visual texts of the sampled political television advertisements of the South African main political parties, the ANC, DA and EFF. The chapter further identified different research methods of the CDA that can be used in the analysis of underlying political myths found in the verbal and visual texts of the selected political television advertisements.

Chapter Five: Research Methodology presents this study with a comprehensive research strategy such as research design, data collection methods, data analysis and time dimension of the study, just to mention a few. Chapter Six provides the study with the presentation of data from the selected political television advertisements while Chapter Seven of this thesis presents a critical analysis of the identified data and unit of analysis of the verbal and visual texts of the selected advertisements using the CDA. Chapter Eight conclude the study.

The next chapter introduces the overall nature of the concept and theoretical underpinnings of the concept of myth.





## **CHAPTER TWO: THE NATURE OF THE CONCEPT MYTH**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The below sections of this study view the concept of myth mainly as narratives or stories that narrate a particular social and/or political order of the society. The chapter further locates the understanding of the concept of myth from a historical perspective from the 17th, 18th and 19<sup>th</sup>-century scholars. This discussion is essential to this study in that it presents one with the evolutionary perspective of the concept of myth mainly from different historical periods.

The opening of this chapter is a presentation of the classical perspective of myth and a discussion on the nature of the concept of myth. This is followed by a discussion on different theories of myth, namely, the functional, structural, semiotic, rational, psychological, and counter-theory. It is worth pointing out that the above theories, namely, functional, structural and semiotic theories of myth are rooted in the structural perspective. Thus, the significance of structuralism in this study, primarily reveals how the underlying structures in the form of words and /or visual images are constituted, produced and the resultant messages. The key to structuralism is that there is a significant relationship between myth and the social, cultural, political and economic structures in the overall society. This, therefore, structuralism objects to the assumption that myth is socially, politically and economically divorced from the immediate environment. Other related theories are rational, psychological and counter myth theories.

In addition to the preceding theoretical framework, this chapter argues that the study of myth holds significance in the postcolonial discourse of the Afrocentric approach. The Afrocentric approach is critical, in that, it provides a counterargument to the established and dominant Eurocentric approach or the Western approach has a monopoly over other cultures particularly the African and/or Asian cultures or the

South cultures. Therefore, central to this chapter is that myth as a theoretical concept must be located from an Afrocentric perspective rather than a Eurocentric perspective.

## **2.2 CLASSICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE CONCEPT MYTH**

The study of myth can be located in the 1700s by the following number of scholars, namely: Christian Heyne (1729-1812), Johann Herder (1744-1803), Bernard de Fontenelle (1657-1757), David Hume (1711-1776), Karl Moritz (1756-1793), Karl Muller (1797-1840) and James Frazer (1854-1941). These scholars played a critical role in theorising and shaping contemporary understanding of the concept of myth.

The study of myth originates with a German philosopher Christian Heyne, a pioneer in formalising European classical studies from a historical, philosophical, research and scientific perspective rather than from a general perspective (Graf,1993:9). He laid the foundation of studying myth from a historic and philosophical perspective rather than from a fictional phenomenon that dates to the prehistoric times of natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods and volcanic eruptions just to mention a few. According to Graf (1993:11), Heyne did not understand myth, as a religious belief, rather he understood myth as a historical phenomenon by which people could recount actual events of natural disasters that occurred in the past rather than events that will occur in the future. With this understanding of myth, the idea that myth is a narrative was born. For this reason, Heyne made a significant contribution to the study of myth, by recognising that prehistoric societies had an adoration to their natural environment including their “gods” as heroes and heroines of their clans and tribes. Therefore, the conceptualisation of the myth is narrative and “heroic”.

Another scholar worth considering is Johann Herder (1744-1803). He argues that there is a significant relationship between myth and language. This is because of the significant use of creativity that manifests in the form of poetry and literature in the

language. According to Graf (1993: 11-12) unlike Heyne, Herder views myth as a combination of language, poetry and religion as one rather than separated aspects. He argues that ancient people needed to express religious views from a spiritual and fictional perspective using creative language rather than a description of actual events that occurred in the past or will occur in the future.

Bernard de Fontenelle (1657-1757) is another scholar worth considering. He views myth as a collection of “fables, dreams and absurdities” (Graf, 1993:12). Fontenelle’s view of myth is problematic in that he strictly views myth mainly as an irrational collection of fiction and dreams rather than a rational phenomenon of narratives. Based on this observation, it is worth pointing out that Fontenelle’s view of myth as an irrational narrative contributed to the body of knowledge that view myth as a mere fiction rather than an actual and rational narrative of events that occurred in the past or set to occur in future.

Another influential scholar of the 18th century is Karl Moritz (1756-1793). Moritz holds that myth originates in the creative aspects of language such as poetry and arts, rather than in religion (Graf, 1993:12). Unlike Fontenelle, Moritz argues the fact that myth uses language mainly for creative purposes. Therefore, there is a significant amount of rationality to myth rather than fiction.

The 19<sup>th</sup>-century scholar of myth Karl Muller (1797-1840) contributed to the study of myth primarily by noting the significance of interpretation of myth (Graf,1993:22). In my interpretation of myth, Muller points out that there is a difference between the “ideal myth” and “real myth”. The “ideal myth” suggests human imagination of the world while the “real myth” suggests a physical, material, lived experience and historical world that everyone is familiar with. Thus, it is on this basis that Muller brought new experiences and/or perspectives to the study of myth, mainly the notion of interpretation of the “real myth” stresses that every historical period gave rise to new myths (Graf,1993:23). It is worth pointing out that Muller’s emphasis on “interpretation” primarily the creation of the underlying meaning, laid the foundation

for the modern understanding of myth. Therefore, his contribution to the studies of myth is critical to this particular study.

The above discussion provided a brief historical perspective on understanding myth from classical scholars of the past three centuries. This brief historical perspective of myth is essential to this study as it locates early understanding of the concept of myth and how it evolved over the centuries

## **2.3 MYTH**

The concept of myth originates with the Greeks, *mythos* that suggests a “word” or a “story” synonymous with *logos* and *epos*, therefore, *mythology* is a storyteller. However, early scholars of myth, Bascom (1965), Blumenberg (1979), Douglas (1970), and Schoptlin (1997) present different views about the concept of myth.

For Bascom (1965:4), myth is a verbal narrative that primarily presents an “oral recitation of tales, told by a word of mouth from one generation to another about what happened in the past”. The problem with Bascom’s (1965) understanding of myth is that: First, he only views myth as a verbal and a historical account of the past events rather than on the current as well as future narratives. Second, he views myth mainly as a verbal narrative about animals, human attributes, deities, cultural heroes and natural environmental features such as mountains, oceans, trees, rains, and the sky, among others (Bascom, 1965). Third, he regards myth mainly as a fictional perspective rather than an actual perspective that has affected the lives of people either positively or negatively. Fourth, he argues that myth embodies narratives, mainly of religious dogmas, rituals and/or the sacredness of the ancestors and/or legends. These myths are often associated with theology and/or cultural rituals rather than politics, which is central to this study. Lastly, he views myths mainly as narratives concerned about the past primitive life and folktales that hold no significance to modern or future life.

Like Bascom (1965), Douglas's (1970) views about myth are problematic. Firstly, they view myths mainly "as acts of ritual" narratives about how "social cults and cultural rituals" are carried out (Douglas,1970:39). They point out, that rituals are essentially established institutions by which acts or practices, cultural beliefs are carried out and are transmitted from one generation to another, without anyone knowing who created them. These myths in many cases make valued statements about the origins of the world, societies, institutions, gods, their relationship with mortals, and everything on which human existence depends.

Secondly, the problem with Douglas's (1970) view of myth is that they do not consider the underlying context under which myths are produced. Another problem is that they focus primarily on the significance of verbal narratives of myth rather than on visual narratives of myth. They do not point out if political, social and economic conditions change, and if the myth is to survive, how will myth adapt to the ever-changing circumstances without losing its originality when retelling them and how myth will adapt to new conditions.

In addition, Schopflin (1997) notes that myths play a critical role in society in that they present society with a common cultural vocabulary or narrative, they unite and argue about the importance of a group or society, group identity and association. The problem with Schopflin (1997) is that his views on myth are only limited to the symbolic aspect of myth, rather than viewing myth as an actual narrative that tells stories about the events that occurred in the past, current and future events. His obsession with myth as a symbol is mainly concerned with the symbolic aspect of veneration of rituals rather than the actual language. Lastly, Schopflin's (1997) perspective of myth is mainly concerned with imaginative and spiritual and/or the celestial (heavenly) narrative rather than with the actual stories about the past, present and future.

Although Douglas (1996) and Schopflin's (1997) limitations are that myths are mainly verbal narratives without considering the importance of visual aspects of narratives. Their main premise of myth is that myths construct a socially, culturally and politically cohesive society rather than a fragmented society.

Unlike the above scholars, Blumenberg (1979:42-43) hold relevant and significant views of myth to this particular study. Firstly, he argues that myths are not religions, rituals, or sacred practices, rather myths are rational narratives to the overall society using providing rational answers to the questions and social and economic issues affecting the overall society. Secondly, Blumenberg (1979:75) stresses that human beings need myths mainly for "significance" primarily to establish a relationship between "representation" and the underlying social, political and economic "reality". The aspect of "significance" is critical in that it helps audiences to make sense of the world and explains the functional difference between science and myth. Thirdly, Blumenberg (1979) views the aspect of "significance" as a critical aspect that helps to reduce the world's complexity by making sense of the world and explaining the functional difference between science and myth. Science explains the phenomena in universal terms while myth brings a complex phenomenon closer to the overall human understanding. Lastly, myths are inter-relational born out of a web of relationships that are continually reproduced, reinterpreted and retransmitted (Blumenberg, 1979). This is what makes myths survive and adapt consistently to the ever-changing and different environments.

Based on the above, it is worth pointing out that Blumenberg's (1979) main views about myth emphasise how myth makes sense of the world essentially by constructing a narrative that society could identify with. In other words, without myths, people cannot make sense of the world. Blumenberg's (1979) assumptions on myth make a significant contribution to this study.

Lastly, O'Shaughnessy (2004:88) describe myth as a story or event that heightens key social, political and economic values within the society. The significance of a

myth is primarily to present a set of approved patterns of behaviour and a particular set of values, paradigm scenarios or experiences that appeal to members of the society. Moreover, myths provide the society with a coherent structure of a set of collective beliefs, ideas, values, lived experiences and understandings among others. From this perspective, myths are said to be creating primarily the social order and reinforcing social cohesion and maintaining functional unity by presenting and justifying established traditional order.

Against this backdrop, a working definition for the concept of myth, for this specific study, views myth mainly as socio-political and cultural narratives presented using oral and visual narratives mainly to construct and transmit a set of established beliefs, values and history about legends and heroes shared by the overall society.

The next section of this chapter presents different classical perspectives of myth.

## **2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF MYTH**

This study identified the following theories of myth, namely: the functional theory, structural theory, semiotic theory, rational theory, psychological theory, counter myth theory and Afrocentric theory to myth. These theories are critical to this study as they lay a foundation of critical analysis of political myth in later chapters of this study.

### **2.4.1 Functional theory of myth**

The first theoretical approach under consideration in this study is the functional theory of myth. The functional theory of myth is based on the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century social anthropologist scholar Bronislaw Malinowski (1884-1942). Malinowski's (1926:79) functionalist perspective of myth, is that, myth functions mainly to keep the society as a coherent organism of the "whole" an interdependent, interconnected and



organised society rather than an individual and/or fragmented society. Moreover, myth seeks to hold the society together as an organised and centralised system that mainly seeks to control established social behaviour rather than individual behaviour. This is achieved using mythical narratives that legitimise and/or delegitimise existing cultural, historical, political and socio-economic systems.

However, limitations of Malinowski's (1926) functional view of myth is concerned mainly with the advancement of group interests rather than individual interests. Under his approach, individuals are expected to conform to the established group norms rather than individual ideals.

Another aspect of the functional approach to myth is that myths are not only meant to present explanations, rather are meant to either legitimise and/or delegitimise a particular way of life (Strenski 1987: xvii). The significance of legitimisation and/or delegitimation of the society within the context of myth is primarily to justify and/or validate a particular discourse within the overall society, thus as a group.

Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) is another key French scholar of a functionalist approach. Durkheim (1995:34-37) argues that "myth is a ritual that creates symmetrically connected modes of thought and beliefs within the society". What it means is that functionalism is primarily concerned about the creation of an integrated society using a set of beliefs, values and rituals that create a united society rather than a fragmented society. Functionalist approach particularly to the study of myth, essentially legitimises a certain set of controlled attitudes, beliefs, practices and values that keeps the society integrated rather than fragmented, sometimes delegitimises and opposes social and political norms that do not subscribe to the overall norms.

It is worth noting that functionalist theory to myth is not spared from criticism. Graham, Papa and McPherson (1997), Hirokawa (1985), Propp and Nelson (1996), and Poole

(1990), however, point out that there are underlying weaknesses of the functionalist theory: Firstly, Graham, Papa and McPherson (1997), Hirokawa (1985), Poole (1990:238) reject a narrow view of the functionalist perspective that argues that society is narrow and lacks diversity. They argue that society is fragmented and socially, historically and/or generationally diversified rather than homogenous. Under such circumstances, myth can sometimes be irrelevant to a particular generation, shaped by a particular set of socio-economic and political systems that are different from the earlier generation. Secondly, the functional perspective to myth emphasises primarily the issue of social control. According to Propp and Nelson (1996:59), this view is naive, in that individual societies can resist any form of social control, owing to accumulated economic, educational (critical) and political power. Accumulation of advanced formal education, finance and wealth contribute significantly to possible resistance, which ultimately delegitimises such established myth as irrelevant. Thirdly, functional myth suffers from the illusion of utopian and homogenous societies, whereby individuals could easily be controlled sometimes forced to establish and maintain social cohesion without realising social realities such as racial differences, language and religious diversities and varying economic as well political views (Strenski,1987).

The next section is the second theoretical discussion on the structural theory of myth.

#### **2.4.2 Structural theory of myth**

The second theory of myth is the structural theory. The word structure is derived from the Latin word “*structura*”, which means a construct is historically confined to engineering, architecture and design studies. Later after the 17th century, the word “*structura*” was extended to commercial and social-science studies. “*Structura*” considers different parts as a whole and how they interlink with one another (Glusksmann,1974:15).

Structuralism originated in France during the 1950s. Structuralism, according to O'Sullivan, Hartley, Saunders, Montgomery and Fiske (1994:225) is an “intellectual enterprise that emphasises that things cannot be understood in isolation” rather language must be understood mainly within the larger context of the structure that they are part of. In other words, structuralism points out that human communication behaviour is understood within the broader overall system, relations, forms, and structures that make meaning possible in a particular cultural context. What the above means is that structuralism focuses mainly on how human behaviour is determined by interrelated cultural, social and psychological structures. Structuralism is a counter to the functional perspective that argues that language can be understood in isolation rather than from the overall part of the whole.

Theoretical premises of structural approach to myth is associated with the early scholars, namely: Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), Claude Levi-Strauss (1908-2009), and Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914). The structural approach originates from a semiological perspective that proposes that “*semiologie*” (in the French language) or semiology can be studied from a linguistic perspective, which involves the study of arbitrary signs. He proposes that each sign comprises of the three structural semiotic components, namely, “the signifier”, “the referent” and “the signified” (Leeds-Hurwitz 1993:23). The first structural component is the *signifier*, a visible and explicit sign such as a word or an object, a flag, a building and clothing for instance. The second structural component is *referent* primarily a word, a concept or an idea to which a sign is referring; for example, the word “book” refers to an object made out of paper with multiple pages, with written texts and sometimes contains visual images to illustrate a particular point. The *signified* is the third structural component of semiology, which is invisible and immaterial. What it means, is that the signified involves interpretation, meaning is attached to the sign, for example, a flag through its combination of different colours can be interpreted as a national flag of a specific country. It is worth pointing out that signs be it verbal or visual from this perspective are arbitrary, their underlying meaning is divorced from the social, political and economic environment.

The second leading scholar of structuralism is Levi-Strauss (1968). Inspired by De Saussure (1966), Levi-Strauss (1968) analysed the myth of the primitive societies and concluded that each society has its own set of beliefs and practices which are grounded primarily from a particular set of rules based on fundamental binary opposition such as life versus death, health versus illness, strength versus weakness, nature versus culture among others. Therefore, structuralism essentially seeks to get to the bottom of and expose underlying structures of opposition with the purpose of questioning underlying beliefs and/or behaviour. Key to structuralism focuses primarily on the texts and the grammatical structures of the text, concluding that the structure of a text determines its meaning and the readers fixed interpretation. If a text is structured in a particular way, a reader will attach a specific meaning that focuses not only on the surface of the content of myth but also on the underlying social and political rules as well as codes that contribute towards the production of meaning.

In a nutshell, Levi-Strauss' (1968) work is mainly concerned with identifying deep and underlying structures of meaning in the narrative using taking the characters, settings and actions into account. Levi-Strauss (1968:122) stresses that because myth is viewed as a whole, its underlying meaning is not produced in compartments that reside in isolated elements rather it is produced as a whole. The main benefits of the structuralism approach are mainly to collect and analyse underlying hidden meanings of communication mainly grammatical rules, structures and laws of language within a particular social, political and/or economic environment.

The third primary scholar of structuralism is Charles Sanders Peirce, an American philosopher, views structuralism from the semiotic perspective that is different from De Saussure's view of semiology. Peirce defines "semiotic" as the "general theory of signs" (Peirce, 1991:25) By theory of sign means that Peirce is concerned about the subject matter or an area of a particular interest, which is believed to hold key to such notions as understanding, inference, interpretation, knowledge, and thought among others. Peirce's approach to semiotic is important in that it concerns itself with the

structural classification of signs in terms of purpose and function. By the classification of signs, Peirce (1991:17) distinguishes between three groups of signs, namely, the “*Firstness*”, “*Secondness*” and “*Thirdness*”.

The “*Firstness*” of a sign suggests that the sign is literal or arbitrary (Peirce, 1991:45). The literal signs, for instance, could be a pictorial image of a dog, a lion and a mountain are recognized in literal terms as real dogs, lions and mountains. From this perspective, Peirce (1991) point out underlying meaning is not attached to the literal signs. Unlike the “*Firstness*”, the “*Secondness*” of a sign suggests that a high degree of meaning and interpretation is attached to the sign, therefore, an indexical sign. The indexical sign suggests that a sign is dependent on another sign to convey a meaning (Peirce, 1991:46). For example, a visual sign of smoke suggests the presence of fire. The third view of Peirce’s semiotic is the “*Thirdness*”, which suggests that a sign possess underlying symbolic representation (Peirce, 1991:48). That is, such signs hold an inherent symbolic meaning. For example, a red cross sign in the social context represents a symbolic sign of health emergency services such as paramedics or a health institution such as a hospital.

The key to the structuralism approach in the context of myth is to deconstruct, underlying structures and layers of the structured narratives of myth, legends, heroes, social taboos, archetypes, power structures and control of the mythical texts. Furthermore, how these structures dictate and direct the functioning of the society, directs its behaviour of an individual or a group as social beings and the collective unconsciousness of society. Therefore, structuralism focuses primarily on the underlying structures of myth.

In summary, the above-mentioned scholars of De Saussure (1966), Levi-Strauss (1968), and Peirce (1991) briefly point out the following main elements of a structural approach to myth, that is: Firstly, structuralism is concerned primarily with the isolation of various underlying structures of myth. Secondly, different structures of myths are compared against different contexts or settings of myths. Thirdly, the

identification of myth possesses multiple structural layers of meaning, different versions of myths, underlying meaning and discrepancies between other myths. Lastly, the structural approach is focused on texts and the grammatical structures of texts, including that the structures of a text determine the underlying fixed meaning and the readers fixed interpretation. Most important about the structural approach is that each structural aspect in the text is treated as isolated and authentic or relevant to its specific setting rather than a relational and/or co-existential aspect that is integrated or related to the overall whole. In the social context, structuralism argues that society, social behaviour and the overall society are structured according to specific sets of fixed rules to achieve a particular goal.

Moreover, Bourdieu (1998) points out that the structural approach to myth has shortcomings that view the society as a fragmented and isolated structure. Moreover, another post-structuralist, Fairclough (2001) argues that linguistics in the structuralist tradition argues that the meaning of discourse is only contained and/or limited in a statement. Fairclough (2001:23-25) points out how social rules precede the statement and draw the boundaries that dictate how a statement should be made or what is allowed in a discourse. Meaning, on the other hand, is not contained within a statement; rather the meaning of a statement is derived from myth, social rules, knowledge, and social opinions among others of the overall society. Therefore, social process in a post-structural perspective essentially produces social subjects, rather than structural texts producing social and/or political subjects.

Regardless of the above shortcomings, Tudor (1972:56) argues that the structural approach to myth suggests that there is an underlying interrelationship between the context under which myth is produced. These include the content, structure of the text, laws and rules governing the narrative of the myth as well as the creation of arbitrary meanings based on symbols and motifs. He maintains that underlying structures organises rules and units into meaningful systems generated by the human mind itself and not by mere perceptions.

Therefore, the key to post-structuralism is to employ different qualitative content analysis research methods, to interrogate, deconstruct and lay bare underlying structures about the nature of, the workings of, power and possibilities of myth. On the other hand, the underlying structure directs and supports individual thinking, behaviours and values as well as the functioning of the society.

The next section focuses on the semiotic theory of myth.

### **2.4.3 The semiotic theory of myth**

The semiotic theory of myth is the third theoretical approach to the study of myth. A key scholar of semiology is Roland Barthes (1915-1980) in his seminal work of *Mythologies* (1973) he draws inspiration from De Saussurian semiology. According to Barthes (1973), myth is constructed from a semiology of languages and a secondary sign system built upon the primary sign system language; the linguistic sign which consists of a signifier and a signified. By the signifier (denotative), Barthes (1973) suggests that myth is an observable physical form of sound, word, images and/or pictures. While the signified (connotative) is unobservable, it is a mental concept, knowledge, past experiences, memory, facts, ideas and decisions that the signifier refers to. Lastly, the sign holds the manifest first order of meaning, which is obvious to everyone whereas a sign holds an underlying latent meaning, the second-order meaning.

Therefore, myth is the second-order meaning of a semiological system where a sign possesses an underlying meaning; it becomes the signified of the mythical system; it has a deeper meaning while holding the original meaning of the myth. Therefore, Barthes (1973: 118) points out that meaning keeps its original value, “but it keeps its life, from which the form of the myth draws its nourishment”. This suggests that the mythical signifier is observable while the signified is ambiguous. The mythical signified, on the other hand, is key to the analysis of myth and its inherent function is

essentially to “distort, and not to make disappearance” (Barthes, 1973:121) of the original myth.

The semiotic approach to the study of myth is thus significant to this study, in that: First, it draws on the significant aspects of Barthes’s semiological perspectives of the denotative, connotative and underlying ideological meanings. These different layers of meanings are significant in the deconstruction of the underlying ideological and obvious meanings of myth. Secondly, the semiotic approach makes this study inductive. Thirdly, this approach emphasises a significant relationship and/or connection between the signifier (denotative) and the signified (connotative) ideological or social meanings.

Although the semiotic approach to myth is significant, it has the following shortcomings. Heath (1981:56), Hodge and Kress (1988:10), Lapsley and Westlake (1988:56-57), van Leeuwen (2005) point out the following limitations of the semiotic approach to myth: Firstly, the traditional semiotics is fragmented, isolated and parcelled out among various fields of study of the social sciences. Secondly, semiotic dimensions such as codes, signs, interpretations, subjects, and texts cannot be studied in isolation. Thirdly, traditional semiotic undermines the relationship between the subject and the text as well as the significance of the social environment to which the social meaning is derived. van Leeuwen (2005) argues that traditional semiotics is not interrelated to the social environment and needs to adapt their practices and understanding of how communication is related to other social practices.

The next section focuses on the fourth theory of myth, the rational theory.

#### **2.4.4 Rational theory of myth**

The fourth theoretical approach to the study of myth is the rational theory of myth. The rational theory of myth originates in the 18th century by the German philosopher



Immanuel Kant. In the 20th century, his work is used by Raymond Boudon (1989) mainly concerned about ideas and reasoning. The rational theory of myth is concerned with the explanation and interpretation of myth. This perspective views the narrator of myth as an intellectual, capable of reasoning, creating metaphors, and symbols essential in helping audiences to understand. The discussion demonstrates that myth is a rational phenomenon.

On the other hand, rational myths are narratives about supernatural beings such as ancestors, gods and goddesses, heroes and heroines that are fundamental in shaping the worldview of audiences. With this understanding, rational myth functions mainly to legitimise and/or to delegitimise existing cultural, political and socio-economic systems within the society (Boudon,1989:13).

The last aspect of the rational myth is persuasive. That is, rational myth argues that myths use persuasive language using linguistic features such as grammar and symbolic features such as metaphors. According to Boudon (1989:170), the use of myth from a rational perspective is essentially meant to persuade audiences to see and believe a particular issue from a different perspective. Although rational myth is effective in terms of being persuasive, it is worth noting that not all persuasive messages will resonate with every nationality, race, ethnicity, gender, family, and profession.

#### **2.4.5 Psychological theory of myth**

The fifth theory of myth is the psychological theory. The psychological theory of myth is associated with the scholarly work of Freud (1856-1939). In his work, Freud developed a psychoanalytic theory mainly concerned with the interpretation of dreams defined as a disguised fulfilment of the suppressed or repressed “wishful feelings”, whereby satisfaction of such feelings is not always fulfilled (Csapo,

2005:66). His theory provides insights into the relationship between the conscious and the unconscious mind.

With the above in mind, Freud (Csapo, 2005) argues that myth is primarily a psychological phenomenon that focuses mainly on the underlying inner self. The unconscious thoughts are translated into the manifest content in the form of dreams. Firstly, dreams are unconscious and manifested in visual images, symbols and verbal statements. Secondly, latent thoughts with common characteristics manifest themselves in dreams, are joined together so that one visual image expresses several latent thoughts. Thirdly, latent thoughts are distorted by the process of secondary elaboration, the object of which is to combine the immediate results of a dream work into a single and coherent whole. Lastly, underlying latent symbols appearing in dreams occurs in myth.

Freud (Graf, 1993: 36) argues that myth holds much significance within the context of psychoanalysis perspective; myths like dreams are products of fantasy. Myths are not feelings, rather are a collective product of the repressed life. Myths do not deal with generalities, but rather a story that consists of statements about concrete events and person/groups of persons. Myth evokes pictures/images rather than abstract concepts. Although myth is not a piece of abstract thinking, stories that possess the beginning, the middle and the end of the narrative about the material world in which the mythmaker finds himself.

In light of the above, according to the psychological perspective of myth, myth can be explained as an externalisation of the unconscious through the manifest media such as stories, visual images and different forms of art. Although the psychological theory of myth is significant, it is worth noting that it is not in the interest of this study to analyse how the audience responds to their exposure to myth.

#### **2.4.6 Counter theory of myth**

The sixth theory of myth is the counter myth. Counter myth is defined as a conscious feeling of dissent and a deliberate action mainly to oppose the established dominant myth (Reid, 2011:25; Sheridan-Rabideaum, 2001:441) In other words, counter myth is concerned mainly with understanding the position of the dominant myth and underlying ideologies of the dominant myth. Within the premise of a dominant myth, there is an underlying production of oppositional discourse, largely produced by media audiences that make significant opposition to the dominant myth.

The formation or the creation of the counter myth is primarily based on the feeling of dissent, and/or the feeling of opposition evoked largely by the injustices or the unfairness of a dominant myth. Once this opposition is established, counter myth is consciously constructed to uncover perceived social injustices contained in the dominant myth and as such provide an alternative myth. Counter myth is made possible by a feeling of collective dissent among a certain group within a political, and socio-economic environment towards a certain dominant myth. Essentially, the difference between the dominant and counter myth is that the dominant myth thrives primarily on the ideal society while denying a total representation of the actual society. On the contrary, counter myth exposes the underlying injustices and reality hidden by the dominant myth. Moreover, Lincoln (1989: 49) points out that a dominant myth is used primarily by those who seek to demystify and preserve exploitative patterns of social relations than by those who seek to reform radically. Key to counter myth does not operate as a kind of a social norm, it is not involved in the maintenance of socio-cultural structures, frameworks and/or institutions in the same manner as the dominant myth. Essentially, it is about bringing change and openly contesting the credibility of a dominant myth. It is about calling the status of the established dominant myth into question. This makes it difficult for the dominant myth to continually reconstruct social norms and to sustain itself (Lincoln, 1989:25-26).

Lincoln (1989:37) points out that the dominant myth mainly functions to legitimise and justify the position of the powerful myth in society. The dominant myth exclusively belongs to a particular dominant section of the society that essentially maintains socio-economic and political power over the marginalised masses of the society (ibid). The key to counter myth is that the society is not homogeneous, rather is heterogeneous, broad and complex which results in counter thoughts and views.

Moreover, Barthes (1977) and Fiske (1982) argue that the dominant myth is under constant critique. Barthes (1977:25) argues that “no myths are universal”; that means myths vary and are heterogeneous. On the contrary, Fiske (2011:90) notes that societies are heterogeneous as there are underlying subcultures of different discourses such as artists, activists, professionals and scholars on various issues of gender, environment, politics, economics, and health, among others. All these subgroups, essentially critique and/or counter the dominant myth of socio-economic and political issues within the society, therefore, a counter myth.

Under these circumstances, Barthes (1977), Fiske (2011) and Lincoln (1989) argue that no society is homogeneous, rather societies are diverse, complex and result in counter views on particular socio-economic and political issues. Key to the counter approach to myth dismisses the view that myth is homogenous, dominant and universal.

In the study of counter myth by Sheridan-Rabideau (2001:441), counter myth functions primarily as an ideology and a social activist that essentially seeks to critique competing dominant myths and attempt to establish an alternative counter myth. The counter myth is essentially concerned with opposing and/or critiquing underlying ideological and power relations of the dominant myth and constructing alternative or counter myth.

The foregoing discussion has provided an extensive theoretical framework on the nature of myth and underlying different types of the theories of myth, namely: functional theory of myth, structural theory of myth, semiotic theory of myth, rational theory of myth, the psychological approach of myth, and counter-theory of myth as well as underlying assumptions of myth. These theoretical approaches in a nutshell posit that myth is a functional, structural, ideological, and fictional idea and consciously constructed mainly to shape societies' behaviour, create social realities and lived experiences of individuals. Furthermore, the above theoretical discussion postulates that myth essentially legitimises and/or delegitimises a particular social or political order within the society. On the other hand, the counter myth primarily protests or opposes the underlying dominant myth in the overall society. As such, the above theoretical approaches are essential for this particular study. They present the study with critical areas of focus in the study of myth. At the same time, they present biases of the Eurocentric views.

The next section presents a discussion on the shortcomings of the above Eurocentric views of myth.

## **2.5 CRITIQUES OF THE EUROCENTRIC APPROACH TO MYTH**

The shortcomings of the aforementioned theoretical approaches of myth are based strictly on the Eurocentric ontologies rather than on diverse and multicultural approaches that recognise other non-Euro-American ontologies, anthropologies (views of man), theories of knowing (how knowledge of reality is obtained) and the underlying axiologies (norms and values) (Odhiambo, 2010: 66). Thus, it is important to point out that there are significant distinctions between the Afrocentric and Western assumptions or ontologies on myth. Africans stress the importance of community while the West emphasises the attributes of individualism as the most important attribute. Africans stress the importance of spirituality while the West values material entities, divination versus verification, magic versus technology, close to concrete reality versus abstract and removed from reality, emotional versus

intellectual, more intuitive versus reflective, past-oriented versus future-oriented, more protective and close, versus more critical and open, consensus versus competition (van der Walt, 1997:81-82).

With the above differences between the two perspectives in mind, this study uses the following African philosophers, namely: Samir Amin (1988), Molefi Asante (1987), John Mbiti (1975), Paulin Houtondji (1983) and Abinal Quijono (2007), mainly to critique the dominant Eurocentric perspective of myth from an Afrocentric philosophical perspective. The Afrocentric perspective to myth is essential to this chapter, in that, it presents a critical view of the dominant Eurocentric philosophy as privileged, moral and universal. The perspective interrogates underlying Eurocentric biases towards the Afrocentric ontologies. The African perspective of myth is interdisciplinary as it borrows from the African American, the African diaspora and African perspectives of myth.

### **2.5.1 Samir Amin: Afrocentric perspective of myth**

In the primary work *Eurocentrism* (1988), Samir Amin (1931-2018), a post-colonial Egyptian political economist scholar, defines the Eurocentric approach as an established myth in the world history by which Europe position herself as an “exclusive, unique, superior and a global political player” which legitimises her authority and sovereignty to other continents of the Global South such as Africa, Asia and Latin America. Underlying Amin’s (1988) critique of the myth from a Eurocentric perspective is that the European civilisation is at the centre of the universe while undermining other cultures’ civilisations. What it means is that Eurocentric myth makes shallow claims that Euro-American culture is superior while non-European cultures are inferior.

Key to Samir’s (1988) premises of Eurocentric perspective to myth is the following Firstly, underlying the Eurocentric myth is the ideology and practice of domination

and exclusion based on the assumptions that all “relevance and value” are mainly centred around the European culture rather than non-European cultures. This myth suggests that non-European cultures are at the margins and therefore inferior to the global order (Karenga, 2002:42-47). Secondly, the European myth claim that the Euro-American civilisation originates in the early civilisation of Greek art, literature, philosophy and writings rather than in the civilisation of the Nubian and Egyptian. Amin (1988) argues that it is inaccurate for Europe to claim this civilisation as only hers, as Plato a renowned Greek philosopher had lived in Egypt before and learned much of the Egyptian beliefs, cultures and justice, which he later adapted to the Greek society, therefore, had a significant influence to the Greek culture. Amin (1988), moreover, points out that the birth of Christian religious civilisation was born under the Roman Empire which significantly borrowed its civilisation from the Egyptians and the Greeks. Since the Roman Empire was a large empire that stretches from Europe, the Mediterranean, North Africa including Egypt, Palestine, Asia Minor and Syria, the Romans borrowed cultures from the Arabs, the African Nubians, Judaism and Islamic religious beliefs such as the immortality of the soul and the belief in one God.

Later, the Greco-Roman Christian religion made a significant expansion to other parts of Europe and North America. At the end of the Medieval Era in 1492, the destruction of the Aztec Empire in Central America by the Spanish, the slave trade which enhanced the industrialisation of the West between 1600 and 1900s, that later heightened the capitalist system by which Europe colonised the Global South economically, politically and socially (Parkes, 1988; Blaut, 1992). The above historical developments of Western Europe in the past 600 years left Europe as the centre stage of the global power. On the contrary, it exposes the arrogance, imperialism and the myth of universalism of Europe to non-European societies, which primarily reduces these societies to marginal and peripheral conditions. The myth of Eurocentrism further reveals the underlying discourse of capitalism, chauvinism, civilisation, racism, prejudice and xenophobia inherent in the European culture, which has been perpetuated against non-European societies for hundreds of years. Amin (1988:105-106) laments that Eurocentric epistemology is replete with the myth that

non-Europeans particularly Africans are backward, primitive, inferior and devoid of any intellectual knowledge, philosophy or culture. Therefore, Africans could neither be integrated nor share equal status with the Europeans. Lastly, Amin (1988) argues that it is crucial to critique Eurocentric epistemologies that were devised primarily to discredit the very existentiality of Africans as human beings, their cultures and lived experiences.

### **2.5.2 Molefi Asante: Afrocentric perspective of myth**

In the seminal work, entitled *The Afrocentric Idea* (1987), an African American scholar Molefi Asante (1942-) critique the Eurocentric view of myth conceptualised by Western scholars such as Levi-Straus (1968) whose views on myth are derived mainly from a structuralism approach, which is concerned about constraining the structures of the individual mind and the society. He maintains that the static structuralism of the Western frames does not inform dynamic and possibilities to accommodate non-Western views.

To counter the dominant Eurocentric myth, Asante (1971, 1980, 1987, 1988, 2002, 2007) argue that there are significant weaknesses of the Eurocentric perspective towards the theory of myth. They argue that Eurocentrism is unable to present a comprehensive and underlying functioning of the connection between the African spirituality and the Western material life, a relationship between the African past, present and the future, the individualistic Western view and the overall communal African view. Westerners view myth mainly as an individual, fictional or folk narrative rather than a communal and/or overall society's narrative essentially meant to entertain, warn, teach, connect people with their spirituality and their past, their ancestors and/or legends. Asante (1987) maintains that the key to the Eurocentric perspective of myth is mainly hegemonic, intended to push other cultures to the periphery, thereby dislocating African ontologies. Asante (1987:96) notes that the Eurocentric myth about non-Europeans particularly black people is largely about, dehumanisation, denigration, marginalisation, poverty, underdevelopment,



suppression, slavery, racism, and trivialising of African people as inferior and insignificant who have no substance in the Western civilisation. This is evidenced by the classical Euro-American scholars of 1500 and 1700 such as Theophrastus Von Hohenheim (1493-1541), Lucille Vanini (1585-1619), Francois Bernier (1625-1688), Carl Von Linnaeus (1707-1778) and Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) just to mention a few.

The 1500 and 1700 Euro-American scholars Von Hohenheim, for instance, held that black people are primitive people whose origin is separated from Europeans while Vanini posits that Ethiopians (African) ancestors are monkeys. Therefore, the myth of black people being monkeys was conceived then. The French physician, Bernier classified humans into four races, namely; Europeans, Africans, Orientals and Lapps mainly based on skin colour rather than on the fact that they are human beings. Like Vanini, Von Linnaeus identified four racial groups, namely; Homo Europaeus, Homo Asiaticus, Homo Afer (African), and Homo Americanus (Native Americans). With these racial classifications, Linnaeus maintains that they possess different attributes of intelligence. He describes Homo Europeans as white with hair flowing “abundantly, gentle, acute, inventive, covered with close vestments and governed by customs” (Montagu, 1974:46). While, Homo Africans are “black, lazy, women with breasts that could give milk abundantly, negligent and governed by caprice” (Ani, 1994:281). Thomas Jefferson a renowned former U.S president described black people as smelling bad and physically unattractive, requiring less sleep, dumb and cowards, being incapable of feeling grief and, essentially suggesting that black people are expected to be overworked (DeGruy, 2005 & West, 2002). Jefferson’s view of black people is ironic. He expects black people to sleep less and be overworked, yet they are deemed to be too lazy.

In protest to the above and unfortunate Eurocentric myths, Asante (1987), DeGruy (2005) and West (2002) lament that the above Eurocentric myths about black people are racist claims that have no scientific basis, rather intended to promote white superiority while dehumanising black people. In addition, Hountondi (1996:49)

laments that the above Eurocentric myths respond indifferently to the injustices of colonialism, apartheid and exploitation as they justify these colonial acts of injustice, in the disguise of “Europe’s mission to civilize” the primitive without remorse nor guilt (Ani, 1994: 246). Asante (1987) and Ani (1994) further submit that the above Eurocentric myths demonstrate the Western arrogance of the mono-culture rather than multiculturalism that recognises the significance of other non-European races.

Underlying the hegemony of Eurocentrism is the notion of the universality of Europe that essentially views European culture, economy, political and social system, at the centre rather than at the periphery. Asante (2007:68-77) and Karenga (2006:103-105) lament that the notion of universality is essentially a disguise of hegemonic Europe. It is a deliberate effort to reject the recognition of the African thought, undermines the classical African history of the ancient Kemet of the Egyptian civilisation and the Nile Valley cultural complex as a basis and the origin for all civilisation rather than the Greeks and Romans as a starting point of European civilisation.

Contrary to the Eurocentric hegemony and the underlying myth, Asante (2007) proposes that the position of the African perspective on the global stage should be studied through the lenses of an Afrocentric perspective. Afrocentricity as a noun is defined as a manner of thought and action that primarily centralises the interests, values and perspectives of the African rather than of the European (Asante, 2001:3). Furthermore, he insists that Afrocentricity essentially centralises the African knowledge and a historical perspective rather than the European knowledge and history (Asante, 2009: 2). While the proponent of the approach, Karenga (2002) views Afrocentricity primarily as an intellectual movement, a political view and/or a historical evolution that underscores the significance of the African culture and achievements. Chukuwuokolo (2009:32) stresses that the centrality of Africans or “African centeredness” means “Africans should be given their intellectual pride as the originators of civilisation”. The above definitions agree on one thing, that is, all forms of African ontologies be placed at the centre of African thought and the African lived

experiences. Moreover, Mazama (2003:5) insists that Afrocentricity is an academic paradigm essentially an organising principle, a set of beliefs, a set of scientific habits, shared disciplines in terms of methods, concepts, techniques and procedures among others. The significance of the Afrocentric paradigm is essential to conscientise African people about their own culture, lived experiences and history among others.

Different from the Eurocentric myth of self-importance, elitism and hegemony, Asante (2002, 2007), Diop (1974) and Karenga (2002) note that the Afrocentric myth follows the narrative genre of African dehumanisation, hardship, marginalisation, poverty, destitution, brutality and human suffering of African people in the hands of the Euro-American oppressors. For the past 500 years, the Euro-American oppressors have achieved this using economic, political and social exclusion of black people and perpetuate violence and repression towards Africans in the form of slavery, colonialism and apartheid. As such, it is against this backdrop that the Afrocentric perspective presents a counter-narrative to the dominant Eurocentric myth, by revealing a narrative genre of accomplishment, heroism and the success of black people rather than narratives replete with the unfortunate state of African people (Karenga, 2002:45). For instance, Diop (1974:84) presents a precolonial narrative of ancient African kingdoms of Benin, Ghana, Mali, and Nubia where there were significant positive qualities of the military might of the African people. In these narratives, soldiers of the ancient African kingdoms were depicted as giants, dark-skinned, masculine and hard working. While men and women were responsible for building a civilisation of their kingdoms through arts and crafts, fortresses and military equipment such as golden chariots. These positive human qualities of hard work, masculinity, strength, physical stamina and power were common during slavery, the civil rights movement and anti-colonialism/ liberation movements.

It is against this backdrop, Asante (1980, 1987, 2007), Mazama (2003) and Karenga (2002) emphasise that it is essential to recognise the significance of the Afrocentric perspective. They argue that the perspective establishes the centrality of the ancient

Kemet of the Egyptian civilisation as the point of departure rather than the European civilisation as points of departure.

The next section focuses on the scholarly work of John Mbiti's view of myth from an African perspective rather than from a Eurocentric perspective.

### **2.5.3 John Mbiti: African perspective of myth**

Although the scholarly work of John Mbiti (1931-2019) a Kenyan born Christian religious philosopher and writer does not present a critique to the Eurocentric view rather presents a comprehensive view of an Afrocentric ontology (knowledge) toward the concept myth. In his work, *Introduction to African Religion*, Mbiti views myth as an art of storytelling handed down from one generation to another used mainly to communicate and educate societies in particular African societies on traditional and religious matters (Mbiti, 1975:42). African myths are mainly handed down orally while some are records of actual historical events and are essentially created by people's imagination (Mbiti,1975:42-45).

According to Mbiti (1975), myth from the Afrocentric context serves varying purposes, mainly to teach, to entertain, to wear, to stimulate the imagination of the listener. Some are told primarily as a commentary on people's lives at a particular period rather than to dehumanise African people's lived experiences. Therefore, these myths are essential in that they provide a particular way of explaining certain things from an African perspective rather than from a Western perspective, such as how death came into the world, how different languages and people in Africa came into being among others. As such these myths are significant in that they speak to the centrality of African knowledge in storytelling and narrating lived experiences.

Moreover, Mbiti (1975: 82) views myths primarily as a means to communicate and form the basis for explaining a uniquely African phenomenon such as African

language, culture, religion, and social arrangement within the African society, which is uniquely African rather than European. Mbiti (1975) and Diob (1974) note that since time immemorial in precolonial African societies, myths were essentially effective means of circulating ideas from one place to another, and from one generation to another and has covered many themes and ideas, carved on wood, clay, ivory and stone, while some were represented in arts and crafts while others are retained in dances, rituals and ceremonies.

The fourth scholar of the Afrocentric perspective of myth is Paulin Hountondji.

#### **2.5.4 Paulin Hountondji: Afrocentric perspective of myth**

This section provides criticism on the Eurocentric perspective of myth by Paulin Houtondji (1942-) an African philosopher from Benin, West Africa. In his work, *African Philosophy: Myth and Reality*, Hountondji (1996:90-98) criticises the west for conceptualising negative myths about the Afrocentric philosophy and by laying double standards, which views the Indian and Chinese philosophies as established and distinctive traditional philosophers. However, the African philosophy rather than being qualified with the West is seen rather as inferior, undesirable and unacceptable to the Western philosophy. Hountondji (1996) maintains that Eurocentric ethnophilosopher such as Wilhelm Hegel (1770-1831) a leading German philosopher constructed negative views that essentially dehumanised African people and their ontologies. He views African philosophy mainly as a “collective of unthinking”, “unconscious system” and “spontaneous” beliefs without the foresight to which all Africans adhere (Hegel, 1956: 91). He argues that these myths are essentially a collective system of thoughts common to all Africans or at least to all members of the past, present and future of African ethnic groups that cannot think critically, rather everyone agrees with everybody (Hegel, 1956).

The Eurocentric myth about Africa further asserts that African philosophy has contributed little to nothing to human civilisation. This means the west view African philosophy merely as collective mythologies that do not exist in reality, fiction rather than a theory. Therefore, to Hegel's (1956:93) view of Africa as "undeveloped" and "unhistorical", a burden of Europe, to which he compared it with the land of childhood, where African people, in particular, Black people exhibit traits of the "natural man in his completely wild and untamed state" of a primitive society rather than a civilised society. The Eurocentric myths are deliberate and essentially meant to exalt Europe self-affirmation in opposition to the other races that attempt to present a philosophical base of the denigration of non-whites race, particularly Africans as inferior, feeble-minded, savage, and primitive (Hegel, 1956). The use of Eurocentric myths against Africa suggest that Africans are not equal to Europeans, rather they are subjects in the hierarchy of human beings and there is a disparity between the quality of the mind of a superior European and that of an African. Therefore, this refers to a "primitive mentality" which is largely attributed to non-Western people and cultures, characterises as a mode of apprehension which identifies people, the notion of causality and the conception of time, features primarily to the Western logic rather than non-Westerners.

On the other hand, Hountondji (1996:57-62) laments African scholars such as John Mbiti (1975) have similarly contributed and supported the Eurocentric myth towards marginalising and discrediting the African thought. He criticised many African scholars for not questioning basic assumptions about Western thought. For example, Mbiti's (1975) philosophical assumptions are criticised for asserting that African philosophy does not recognise the significant aspect of the future, rather it focuses mainly on the present and the historical past. He argues that scholars such as Leopold Senghore (1964), Kwame Nkrumah (1970) and Isidore Okpewho (1983) just to mention a few, are influenced mainly by European myths. For instance, when considering the work of a Nigerian theorist of myth, Isidore Okpewho (1983:45-67) attempts to write about the creation of myth within the Nigerian tribal context of the Ijo people, only to be entangled by the Western structuralist approach of Levi-Strauss in an attempt to analyse the myth of the Ijo tribe. As indicated in the preceding

sections, it is important to point out that the Western approach of structuralism is essentially constraining, as it is static and significantly tied to Western frames and cannot inform non-Western structure to analyse myth (Asante, 1987: 97). In addition, Hountondji (1996) laments that Okpewho's (1983) studies have, however, failed to locate the African centrality and his work is written primarily for the European public rather than for the African public.

The last section presents a critique of the Eurocentric myth by considering the work of Anibal Quijano.

### **2.5.5 Abinal Quijano: Afrocentric perspective of myth**

Although Abinal Quijano (1930-2018) is a Peruvian sociology scholar in South America, his scholarly work holds significant relevance to the discourse of the Global South and in particular to the Afrocentric approach, as he critiques the myth of the Eurocentric perspective over non-Europeans. In his work entitled, *Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality* (2007) and *Coloniality of Power and Eurocentrism in Latin America* (2000), Quijano (2007) argues that epistemological constructs of modernity and knowledge of non-European societies is a manifestation of Eurocentric myth rather than objective and lived experiences of non-Europeans. Quijano (2000:221) laments a historical era between the 17th century and the 19th century, wherein Western Europe has systematically conceptualised myths of non-European societies such as Indians of South America and North America, Africans, Arabs and Asians primarily as an inferior race of people. These early European myths claim that non-Europeans are essentially objects and/or tools rather than human beings, useful for cultural, economic, social, sexual and violent exploitation and discrimination. Moreover, these myths were used primarily to legitimise the European domination and exploitation in the form of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, colonialism, apartheid and other forms of human rights violation based on racial segregation. Furthermore, the European myth regarded non-Europeans as irrational objects and a race of people that do not possess any form of rational knowledge essentially a primitive

race with a “backward mentality” (Hegel, 1956:93). Regrettably, the above-mentioned myths about non-Europeans are widely held by many Europeans to this very day.

It is worth pointing out that the above-mentioned myths were established and dominated the discourse of non-European societies. On the other hand, these acts of exploitation and human right violation essentially perpetrated and justified to civilise and modernise irrational and uncivilised non-European primitive societies. Quijano (2007) argues that this form of modernity was hegemonic and essentially meant that non-Europeans cannot move towards the state of modernity rather they will remain primitive, irrational and uncivilised. Furthermore, the Eurocentric myths of modernity suggest the emancipation from immaturity using a rational reason that affords humanity the possibility of new development (Quijano, 2007). It is important to point out that the imposition of modernity mainly to non-Europeans would not have been possible using peaceful, civil and conciliatory deals. Instead, Quijano (2007: 169) stresses it could only be possible using “violence, repression and sometimes the eager to exterminate” non-Europeans as race, knowledge and cultural practices.

After considering the above scholars of Asante (1987), Mbiti (1975), Hountodji (1996), Amin (1988, 2009) and Quijano’s (2000) critique of the Eurocentric approach to myth, essentially identified the following three critical areas, which are: First, underlying the Eurocentric perspective essentially sought to deprive non-Europeans, the legitimacy and the recognition in the global economic, political and social order. Second, the Eurocentric views of myth essentially harness the displacement of the African knowledge and cultural practices by imposing the so-called liberal and/or neo-liberal progressive global values. Third, and more importantly, the Eurocentric myth primarily sought to dehumanise non-Europeans, particularly Africans to objects of exploitation rather than equal human beings. Lastly, the above critiques reveal the insufficient understanding of the Afrocentric ontologies in favour of the perceived universal Eurocentric perspectives. It is important to point out that heavy reliance on the Eurocentric perspectives on the nature of myth particularly within the context of



Africa or South Africa to be specific, poses significant shortcomings to locate the African centrality in the verbal and visual texts. Moreover, Asante (2007) argues without the Afrocentric perspective, the imposition of Europe as a universal perspective will continue to hinder cultural understanding, on the other hand, demean humanity, particularly black people.

The foregoing discussion has located the significance of the Afrocentric perspective to myth. However, it is worth noting that the body of the Afrocentric perspective in the context of myth and/or the analysis of myth through the lenses of the Afrocentric perspective is beyond the scope of this study. It is, therefore, worth noting that central to this specific study is the analysis of underlying political myths rather than general myths in political television advertisements.

## **2.6 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has provided a comprehensive and in-depth discussion on the theoretical, conceptual analysis and origin of the myth. The chapter provided a discussion on the origins of myth by considering European classical scholars from different centuries, that is; the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. These historical perspectives of myth are essential to this study in that they present an evolutionary narrative of myth. This chapter further identified different theoretical approaches of myth namely, the functional theory, structural theory, semiotic theory, rational theory, psychological theory and counter myth theory. This study argues that although these theories are relevant and dominant in the study of myth, they are structuralist, while the rational, psychological and counter myth theories belong to the post-structuralist approaches.

This study further argues that although these theoretical approaches are relevant, they are Eurocentric in nature rather than Afrocentric. This study located the work of post-colonial scholars such as Samir (1988, 2009), Asante (1981, 1987, 2007), Mbiti

(1975), Hountondji (1995) and Quijano (2000, 2007) among others, mainly as critiques of the hegemonic Eurocentric approach to the study of myth. These scholars argue that Eurocentric myths directed mainly at African people are unscientific, unfounded and/or based largely on prejudice rather than facts. Therefore, Eurocentric myths about African people are not credible rather are based on dehumanising African people as objects of prejudice rather than equals.

Although the foregoing discussion has briefly provided theoretical underpinnings of the Afrocentric perspective, it is however not in the interest of this study to analyse general myths from an Afrocentric perspective. This study mainly focuses on political myths and is analysed using CDA rather than the Afrocentric theoretical framework and research methods.

The next chapter focuses on the main theory of the study, the political myth



## **CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF POLITICAL MYTH**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter Two of this study focused exclusively on the theoretical framework of the concept myth. The chapter provided a discussion on the definitions of the concept of myth, the historical perspectives on the concept of myth, 1700the s to 1900s scholars of political myths and a discussion on different theories of myth, namely: the functional theory, structural theory, semiotic theory, rational theory, psychological theory, counter theory and the Afrocentric theory. The chapter concluded that the Afrocentric perspective presents a counter-narrative to the Eurocentric perspective of myth. It is however beyond the scope of this study to analyse neither general myths nor political myths from an Afrocentric perspective.

The present chapter postulates that myth is a broader subject that covers virtually all fields of studies in the social sciences from anthropology, arts, communication, history, languages, literature, linguistics, philosophy, politics, sociology and religious studies. However, this study, view myth specifically from a political perspective rather than from a general perspective.

The following chapter is divided into three different sections that seek to present insight into the nature of political myth. The first section of the chapter presents a review of the existing literature on political myth with a focus on political television advertisements. The role of the literature review is to demonstrate the researcher's knowledge about a particular field of study, the main primary and secondary scholars, previous studies on the issue under scrutiny, the ability to critique shortcomings of the scholars in question and theories (Randolph, 2009). It is for this reason, therefore, that this chapter uses a range of literature on political myths mainly to map out scholarly fields that have a bearing on the main research question and sub-questions of this study.

The second section presents a theoretical discussion on the nature of political myth, its definitions, underlying theoretical underpinnings and shortcomings of the theory under scrutiny.

The last section presents underlying key concepts or the hallmarks of political myths. Since political myth is a broad subject that covers various areas of social sciences such as language studies, history, religious studies, literature and sociology among others, this chapter identified key constituents or hallmarks of political myths that provides this study with specific areas or criteria that can be used in the analysis of political myths.

### **3.2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

Political myth as a theoretical phenomenon has been studied from different scholarly works. This study considers the philosophical work of Cassirer (1973) and Sorel (1975). The foundational work of Cassirer (1973:260-265), entitled *The Myth of The State*, considers political myth as an “absurd, abnormal, irrational form of knowledge, a reflection of a primitive state of mind” and a “ludicrous narrative” that should not be considered for academic purposes. What it means is that political myth is not a rational and credible political narrative essential for the overall society. Based on the above limitations, this study does not subscribe to Cassirer’s (1973) early views of political myth.

Similarly, the philosophical work of Sorel (1975) entitled *Reflection on Violence*, claims that political myth is based on the narrative of the “destructive and chaotic society” rather than on narratives about an orderly society. Sorel (1975:89) speaks of the significance of the “general strike” perpetuated largely by the poor rather than the maintenance of the political and social order. Key to his main ideas of the narrative of the “general strike”, he is in favour of the “chaotic society” perpetuated

mainly by the poor against the rich. He accuses the rich of focusing mainly on their sense of “self-worth, self-image and self-preservation” rather than engaging in rational political debates that address economic, political and social injustices affecting the poor (Sorel, 1975:100). The work of Sorel (1975) thus justifies the significance of political violence carried out by the marginalised in societies and the role of political myth mainly in fostering political and social cohesion as well as mobilizing the disenfranchised masses.

However, the secondary work of Bottici (2007:151-202) criticises Cassirer (1973) and Sorel (1975), lamenting that the above scholars of political myth undermine the importance of politics in society. He rejects Sorel’s (1975) views of political myth arguing that it “attracts little attention in the academic debates” as it is only concerned with violence, rather than a constructive political discourse that either fosters social cohesion or counter-narrative to the established political status quo. In the same vein, this study rejects early studies of Cassirer (1973) and Sorel (1975) of political myth, therefore, maintaining that political myths play a critical role in the society rather than mere destructive and/or divisive narratives that have no relevance to the contemporary political conditions of South Africa.

This study also reviewed the secondary works of Friedrich and Brzezinski (1965), Tudor (1972), Floods (2002) and Bottici (2007). This literature provides this study with relevant theoretical aspects of political myth. Friedrich and Brzezinski (1965:48) view political myth as mere “tales”. The problem with the view of “tales” essentially reduces political myth to mere fiction, rather than the actual political narratives that occurred in the past, present and/or future. The notion of “tales” further suggests that political myth does not play a critical role in the overall political discourse and society.

The secondary work of Tudor (1972:19) on the other hand view political myth as an “interpretation of myth”. By “interpretation of myth”, Tudor suggests that the role of politics is merely to interpret myth from a political perspective. That means, without politics, myth does not hold significance. On the contrary, without myth, politics

cannot be interpreted. It is worth pointing out, regardless of Tudor's (1972) limitation, his work remains significant to this study mainly because of the aspect of interpretation to politics using myths. Therefore, he essentially stresses that the presence of myth in politics functions primarily to interpret politics.

Another secondary scholar worth considering is Floods (2002). His work plays a critical role in this study in that he views political myth as a "political narrative" (Floods, 2002:5) that tells stories about the society's political past, present and future events. Political narratives, therefore, hold significant relevance to the political society. While Bottici (2007:38) argues that narratives of political myth are not just mere narratives; they however hold a particular "significance in the political community".

With the above in mind, it is worth pointing out that the above previous studies on political myth form the basis for this study. These studies view political myth as "political narratives" about the past, present and future events, that are "interpreted" primarily to create underlying meaning about politics and more important to present "significance" to the political society (Friedrich & Brzezinski, 1965; Tudor, 1972; Floods, 2002; Bottici, 2007).

In addition, this study reviews previous studies (empirical studies) of the political myth of Ashraf (2012), Boyle (1999), Czapiewski (2016), Lynggaard (2017), Tanasoiu (2015), Kocer and Yalkm (2016) and focuses on the use of political myths in political television advertisements. The study of Ashraf (2012) for instance, argues that political myths are ideological techniques presented in the form of varying verbal and visual rhetorical styles. These ideological techniques are rhetorical styles employed mainly to communicate underlying political myths of the Al-Qaida terrorist networks. The problem with Ashraf's (2012) study is that it focuses exclusively on underlying ideologies of rhetoric rather than on other components or hallmarks of political myth such as strategic communication of political myth, the strategic use of narratives in the political myth, populism, propaganda, the use of political language and genre.

Because of the significant lack of these hallmarks of political myth, this study expands on the work of Ashraf (2012) and argues in favour of the use of the above-mentioned hallmarks or components of political myth.

Concerning the component of the rhetoric of political myths, it is important to note that although the study of Boyle (1999) is an old study, it, however, remains relevant to this study. Boyle (1999) presents this study with different types of political myths, namely: the “master myth”, the myth of “us-and-them”, “heroic myth” and “pseudo myth” of Nimmo and Combs (1980) in the political television advertisements of the US elections campaigns. The limitation however of Boyle’s (1999) study, focuses mainly on the underlying political myths presented in the verbal texts rather than on the visual texts and/or a combination of the verbal and visual texts of the political television advertisements.

Moreover, Boyle (1999) like Friedrich and Brzezinski’s (1965) study, has another limitation, as it views political myths as fictions rather than an actual narrative of political events that occurred in the past, present and/or the future. It is against this limitation that this study disregards Boyle’s (1999) view of political myth as fiction, rather than an actual and strategic narrative of political events that occurred in the past and present as well as future events.

On the other hand, the study of Lynggaard (2017) is critical to this study in that it focuses on the main functions of political myth. The study focuses mainly on the emotional appeal of the political myths used in the campaign of the Pan-European Union of cultural and political identity. The problem with Lynggaard’s (2017) study, however, is that it leaves out other different functions of rhetorical appeals used mainly in political myths of political television advertisements.

To overcome the above limitations, the study rather considers the work of previous scholars such as Esch (2010), Johnson and Kaid (2002), Fourie and Froneman



(2003), Sala (2010), West and Carey (2006) and argues that political myths could be used to evoke different rhetorical appeal. For example, Esch (2010) asserts that political myth could be used to rhetorically appeal to information issues. While Fourie and Froneman (2003) contend that political myth could be used to appeal to policy issues about politics. Sala (2010) notes that political myth can be used to evoke a nostalgic appeal among political audiences. West and Carey (2006) observed the fact that political myths are used to narrate historical heroic American political figures. These political narratives present ethical and/or moral lessons to the overall American society. Lastly, Johnson and Kaid's (2002) analysis of political television advertisements in the US elections campaigns since the 1950s uses different types of political myths in the political advertisements mainly to appeal to the U.S political audiences.

Concerning the theoretical framework of political myth, the study by Czapiewski (2016) involved an analysis of underlying discursive practices of political myths of "Thatcherism",<sup>4</sup> which sought to advance British nationalism that is primarily anti-Scotland and seeks to divide Scotland from the United Kingdom (UK). The main problem with Czapiewski's (2016) study is a lack of a theoretical framework of the overall political myth. To address this limitation, this study employs the study of Schmitt (2018) to present a theoretical foundation of political myth and argues that political myths are subjective narratives, rather than objective. Therefore, narratives of political myth are strategic and subjective.

The previous studies of Tanasoiu (2015), Kocer and Yalkm (2016) are relevant to this study in that they analyse different types of political myths in political television advertisements used during the presidential elections of Turkey and Romania.

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<sup>4</sup> Refers to the former British Conservative Prime Minister Mrs. Margaret Thatcher's political and economic policies. She was the first woman in British politics to serve as a Prime Minister from 1979 to 1990.

However, none of the above studies uses CDA as a theory and a research method. For instance, the study of Kocer and Yalkm (2016) uses a discourse analysis method – essentially a structuralist approach rather than a post-structuralist approach relevant to this study. Therefore, the fact that these studies did not use CDA makes these studies, not critical studies.

Based on the above limitations, this study uses CDA as a theory and a research method, which makes this study a critical study. Although the above empirical studies are overseas-based studies with a specific focus on the European Union, Romania, Scotland, Turkey, and the United States of America (USA) possessing the above-mentioned weaknesses, they remain significant to this study in that they present the study under scrutiny with the necessary theoretical framework of political myth.

To further strengthen the theoretical framework of political myth, this study considers additional previous studies of Hallahan, Holtzhausen, van Ruler, Vercic and Sriramesh (2007), Esch (2010), Schimitt (2018), Miskimmon, O'Loughlin and Roselle (2013), Kranert (2018), Kissas (2013), Koccer and Yalkm (2016), Lynggaard (2017), West and Carey (2006), Zhong and Zhang (2016), Chilton (2004), Zglobiu (2017), Sala (2010), West and Carey (2006), Viala-Gaudefroy (2015), Kenzhekanova and Dalelbekkyzy (2014), Filimon (2012), Moffitt and Tormey (2014), Mbete (2014), Stoica (2017), Collins (2015), O'Shaughnessy (2004), Kibris (2019), Kissas (2013) and Reid (2011). These previous studies present this study with critical hallmarks and/or frames within which the broader theoretical framework of political myth could be analysed, namely: strategic narratives of political myth (Esch, 2010; Schimitt, 2018; Miskimmon, *et al* 2013), political language (Zglobiu, 2017), rhetoric (Koccer & Yalk, 2016; Lynggaard, 2017; Sala, 2010; West & Carey, 2006); ideology (Esch, 2010; Kranert, 2018; & Kissas, 2013), strategic communication (Hallahan *et al*, 2007), national identity (Viala-Gaudefroy, 2015), political discourse (Kenzhekanova & Dalelbekkyzy, 2014), populism (Mbete, 2014), propaganda (Collins, 2012) and genre (Boyle, 1999; Kissas, 2013 & Reid, 2011).

For this study, the above previous studies have provided this study with key building blocks or hallmarks necessary for the theoretical foundation of the political myth. These hallmarks are critical in the analysis of political myths within the context of political television advertisements. Moreover, the above previous studies made a valuable contribution by providing this study with valuable tools essential for the analysis of verbal and visual texts of political myth in the political television advertisements, rather than only the analysis of verbal rhetoric.

Now that the above previous studies focused mainly on international studies, thus it is worth considering studies of Bank (1999:461-477), Cornevin (1980), Thompson (1985) and Reid (2017) that focus primarily on political myths within the South Africa context. The studies by Thompson (1985) laid a crucial foundation of political myths in South Africa. However, they are historical, focusing mainly on political myths of the apartheid era specifically in films, and not in television elections commercials, used by the National Party (NP) government as propaganda to campaign for general elections. Moreover, none of these studies interrogates underlying ideologies of political myth, rather they subliminally glorify the apartheid myth (Cornevin, 1980:32). A more recent South African study of political myth is that of Reid (2017) that focuses mainly on political mythmaking of the ANC editorial policy, rather than on political myth in political television advertisements.

It is, therefore, against this backdrop that this study focuses on research in political myth mainly within the context of the South African political communication landscape, by focusing mainly on the use of the underlying political myth of the South African main political parties within the context of political television advertisements.

The literature cited in the preceding paragraphs is critical to this study in that this study is located in political communication as a core field of media and communication studies. Thus, an interdisciplinary study, which has brought together scholars from different theoretical approaches such as film theory, political marketing communication, political public relations and political theory, research traditions such

as quantitative and qualitative research design and academic disciplines such as media, communication studies and political science. Political communication is defined as a broad and interdisciplinary field of study, involved in the strategic process of the construction, transmission and reception of political messages in which language and symbols are employed by political actors-political leaders, political parties and the media is used to have a direct or indirect impact on the persuasion of the public to change the attitudes and individual behaviour that have a bearing on the public policy of the nation (Denton & Kuypers, 2008:30; Kaid, 1996:448). What stands out from the above definition is the strategic use of different verbal and visual rhetoric by politicians and media organisations, to persuade and influence political audiences and/or members of the public in favour of a political view.

With the above in mind, this study uses a CDA, analysis underlying political myths of the selected South African political parties of the political television advertisements.

The below section presents a theoretical framework of political myth.

### **3.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF POLITICAL MYTH**

In Chapter Two, key scholars of myth, Bascom (1965), Blumenberg (1979), Malinowski (1992) and Schopflin (1997) dealt with the concept of myth broadly and without specifications. However, this study noted that historically the significance of myth has often been underestimated in society as they equate myth with religion and magic of the primitive societies without any relevance to modern societies. It is, therefore, against these limitations that this study focuses on political myth rather than a general concept of myth.

As mentioned in the previous section of the literature review, the purpose of this study focuses on the views of Friedrich and Brzezinski (1965), Tudor (1972), Floods (2002) and Bottici (2007), regarding political myth in the context of political environment. For

Friedrich and Brzezinski (1965:5-7), political myth is mainly concerned with “tales” which can be seen as either fiction or stories of political events. This study subscribes to the notion of actual stories of political events that occurred in the past and present. Although Friedrich and Brzezinski’s (1965) definition of political myth emphasises the aspect of stories that occurred only in the past and present, without recognition of the future. For this study, future political events also play a significant role in the creation of political myths.

Tudor (1972:13) advances the argument even further. He concedes that political myths are essential “myths made up of politics not just any other myths”. Furthermore, he stresses that these myths are constantly “interpreted myth-making” through the process of recreation, reproduction and restoration for future purposes (Tudor, 1972:13-17). The process of myth-making (essentially means the recreation, reproduction and restoration) of political myths suggests that there is a creation of the underlying ideological meaning in the process. Key to this definition is the significant aspect of interpretation of the meaning or the underlying creation of the meaning of the political myths.

On the other hand, Flood (2002:41) emphasises that political myth is “a set of political narratives”, mainly about political events that occurred in the past, present and the future by which the narrator (a political actor) intends to make meaningful debates with political audience. As such, Flood’s (2002) definition makes a valuable contribution to this study by stressing the importance of “narratives”<sup>5</sup> that are presented in political myth. Moreover, he emphasises that political myth needs to be viewed mainly as “models of authority” (Flood, 2002:41), rather than narratives that amuse audiences. This view suggests that narratives of political myths are not objective, rather they are subjective, as such political myths are ideological, By

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<sup>5</sup> Section 3.3.1 present a theoretical discussion on the significance of narratives within the context of political myth.

ideology, Kellner and Durham (2001:6) note that it is mainly concerned with the creation of the underlying meaning in the texts that have “distinct biases, interests and embedded values that reflects mainly the producer’s point of view” rather than political ideas. It is on this basis that political myths are ideological and constructed by political actors (political leaders and political parties) essentially to convey a particular point of view.

The above theoretical perspectives of Friedrich and Brzezinski (1965), Tudor (1972) and Flood (2002) make a valuable contribution to this study in that they reveal that political myths are mainly narratives based on politics. Political myths are therefore narratives that speak to political issues of the past, present and the possible future and more importantly, they possess underlying ideological meaning.

Another aspect that is critical to the nature of political myth is the political language<sup>6</sup>. According to Edelman (1974:1), the language of politics evokes “a set of mythic beliefs in subtle ways”. This implies that myths about politics are heavily embedded in the language of politics using symbols, history, past, present and future iconic political figures. Therefore, without political language, political myths are unlikely to prevail nor be created. For this study, it is worth noting that myth is studied mainly from politics, thus a political myth. However, Edelman (1974) points out that political myth is essentially about how language is used subliminally to convey a political message and/or to legitimise a particular political view. Since political language plays a critical role in the construction of a political myth, meaning is thus created and shared. Felkins and Goldman (1993: 448) postulate that without a specific context of political language, underlying meaning can neither be produced nor be reproduced.

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<sup>6</sup> Section 3.3.3 present a theoretical discussion on the significance of political language within the context of political myth.

Another key aspect of the political myth is the production aspect of myth, which essentially posits that political myths are produced under uncertain social, political and economic circumstances that increase a greater need for societies to tell stories that make sense to political audiences (Mullins, 1972:510). Under such political circumstances, Giddens (1990:2) notes that political myth functions mainly to provide audiences with a “sense of security and continuity of self-identity”. The production of political myth occurs largely under difficult and trying circumstances, rather than under stable political conditions mainly to fulfil a particular sense of security. The above view rejects the notion that myths in this case political myths are isolated and produced in a vacuum.

Bouchard (2013) points out key stages involved in the production of political myths, namely: diffusion, ritualization and sacralisation. The diffusion stage of political myth suggests that political actors, academics, cultural elites and intellectuals are actively involved in the construction of narratives of political myths and giving them a structure that resonates with the collective representation of the society (Bouchard, 2013: 137). The second stage of political mythmaking is ritualization, a constructed narrative of political myth is shared by the overall society (Bouchard, 2013: 145). The last stage is the sacredness of political myth. Bouchard (2013:137-152) notes that the sacredness of political myth is achieved using “providing a coherent definition of a myth issue”, “adapting political myth to different political meanings” of the society, “to reproduce and reinterpret existing political myths” and “to attach symbolic meaning to a particular political myth”. These stages of political myths are significant in that they help the overall political society to recognise, understand, connect and more important to share a common political myth within the overall political society. It is on this basis that Blumenberg’s (1979:75) primary work emphasises the power of the “significance” primarily the ability of the political myth to connect and be shared with the overall political society.

In light of the above theoretical discussion of political myth, this study provides the following working definition of political myth taken mainly from the theoretical

underpinnings of Blumenberg, (1975); Edelman (1974), Flood (2002), Friedrich and Brzezinski (1965), and Tudor (1972). That is, political myth is an ideological narrative that is political, constructed using political language to create political stories that either occurred in the past, present and/or are recreated for the future to be recognised and shared by the overall political society. Key to the foregoing definition of political myth is the emphasis on the ideological narratives (rather than fictional tales) that provide narratives of political events that occurred either in the past, present or future. These political myths are created mainly to produce and promote a particular political narrative that is issue-based essentially to appeal to a political event that is shared largely by the overall society.

However, not every scholar shares these views of political myth. For instance, Barash, (2000:123-124) and Bookbinder (1987:122-123) argue that political myth is a “fictionalisation of politics”, rather than an ideological narrative of politics. By fictionalisation of politics, scholars under discussion claim that political myth functions mainly, to 1) suppress all the aspects of the “truth” in favour of maintaining the status quo in the society, 2) to evoke emotions of the masses, and 3) the ability to shift focus away from one core problem of a political issue to another political issue.

The fictionalisation view of political myth however has underlying problems for this study. Lincoln (1989:24) warns that fictionalisation of political myth means “discrediting the significance” and “reduces political myth” to a mere collection of political stories and words regardless of whether credible or not. Based on the above significant problem of the fictionalisation function of political myth, this study rejects fictionalisation as the underlying function of political myth. Another problem is that political myths are not produced under homogenous and universal political societies. They are however subjected to criticism and dissent by different political communities within the society. Chapter Two provided a discussion on the theory of counter myth whereby Reid (2011) and Sheridan-Radeau (2001) dispute the view that political myths are universal and/or homogenous. They argue that societies are made up of



extreme and opposing social, political and economic contradictions. Therefore, myths of politics are most likely to be subjected to criticism and/or opposition.

Now that the above section has provided theoretical underpinnings of political myth, the next section presents the underlying functions of political myth.

### **3.3.1 Functions of political myth**

Political myths in the political texts are not objective, rather they are subjective and possess particular underlying functions. According to Girardet (1997:55), functions of political myth are mainly; fictionalisation, explanatory and mobilization function of politics. Although the previous section of this chapter criticised the fictionalisation as an aspect of political myth, Girardet (1997:55) argues that fiction is the main function of political myth mainly concerned with the construction of “forms of narratives embedded within a particular power structure of the society” and are placed in a particular political narrative context.

The second key function of political myth is the explanatory function. The explanatory function provides a coherent framework of interpretation of the past, present and future of the society. The explanatory function of political myth essentially “forges principal archetypes” by which the overall society and individual members become anchored into the daily normative routine or vision (Stoica, 2014: 107). Furthermore, the explanatory functions primarily to organise and stabilize societies, as such it fulfils the significant master myth of politics.

The third function of political myth is the mobilisation function. With the mobilisation function, political actors’ main intention is to capture audience attention and persuade

the masses using the use of different verbal and visual rhetoric,<sup>7</sup> essentially to evoke political desires, hopes and ideals over particular economic, political and social issues (Stoica, 2014: 108). These verbal and visual rhetoric are not innocent structures, rather they are deliberate, ideological and instrumental mainly for information dissemination and influencing public opinion towards a particular political direction (Thatelo, 2016: 47).

The foregoing section has presented a discussion on the main functions of political myth. Chapter Seven of this study will determine whether the above functions of political myths are available in the sampled political television advertisements.

The next section presents a discussion on different types of political myths.

### **3.3.2 Types of political myth**

It is worth considering the last aspect of the theoretical framework of political myth, different types of political myth. Sala (2016: 527-529) points out that there are two distinct categories of political myths, mainly the primary and derivative myths. By primary myth, Sala (2016) explains that they are “basic-myths” mainly concerned with basic stories about the formation for example, of a particular political community and/or a political party as well as any other political issue.

In contrast, the derivative myth is a secondary myth, mainly concerned with stories that provide reasons for “how and why a particular group of people or community live according to certain norms” (Sala, 2016:527). The derivative myths are the most common types of political myths that have been significantly used in the literature of

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<sup>7</sup> Section 3.3.4 present a discussion on the relationship between political myth and rhetoric's.

political myth by different scholars, such as Floods (2002), Sala (2016: 527-528), Nimmo and Combs (1980:27-33), Smith (1999:56-57), Gamble and Wright (2009:20-30). These scholars identified different types of derivative myth, namely: the “foundational myth” often called “master myth”, “heroic myth”, “exceptionalism myth”, “transformation myth”, “solidarity myth”, “us and them myth” and “the unity myth”.

The “foundational myth” is historical, mainly concerned with the recounting of narratives of how and why a particular political community was formed (Sala, 2016:527). While the “heroic myth” is concerned with the representation of popular historical figures, who have contributed positively or negatively to their societies (Nimmo & Combs, 1980:33). The “exceptionalism myth” suggests a unique and distinctive feature either of a nation-state, a racial group, a society or a political community (Smith, 1999: 56-57). The “transformation myth” are narratives concerned with social, political and economic changes that took place throughout history within a particular society (Gamble & Wright, 2009: 23).

In contrast, the “solidarity myth” is concerned mainly with forging solidarity, a shared political community, nation-building, national sacrifice and responsibility as well as individuals or a community that “strive for the same ideals”, “hope for a better common future”, and/or “a return of the lost glorious times” (Girardet, 1997: 134; Sala, 2016:527; Schopflin, 1997:28). At the core of the “unity myth” is the society pulling together to steer a collective, a coherent action and to avoid a broken society characterised by divisions (Nimmo & Combs, 1980:29).

In addition, Girardet (1997:21-35, 53-74, 101-110, 134-140) point out additional four types of political myths, namely: the “conspiracy”, “golden age”, “saviour” and “unity myth” employed mainly to grab audience attention.

The first type of Girardet (1997) political myth is conspiracy myth. Conspiracy myth is a highly inaccurate assumption that an event of some magnitude is causally linked

to the secret plan of a few individuals, who belong to a covert organisation meant to lead the world to control the world against the general will of the people (Girardet, 1997: 21-35). At the core of the conspiracy, myth is a secretive character that represents an inaccurate assumption that does not represent reality.

The second type of political myth is the golden age myth. The golden age myth is legendary and related mainly to the image for example of political and economic stability, where there is economic growth, lower levels of unemployment, poverty and underdevelopment, business success, significant wealth creation using economic opportunities and good quality of life (Girardet, 1997:58). It is important to point out that the golden age myth is not only concerned about the narrative of the good historical past, rather, it also undermines or discredits the contemporary political system of the governing political party or a political leader (Girardet, 1997) when used largely by an opposition political party or political candidate.

The last two types of political myths of Girardet (1997) are the saviour myth and the unity myth synonymous with the “heroic” and “solidarity” myth. Girardet (1997) observed that the above types of political myths are critical and used largely by European populist political parties. These political myths are critical to this study in that they present it with underpinnings of the overall theory of political myth.

Flood (2002:33) infers that the different types of political myth are significant in that they use different types of narratives, that mainly speaks to “the origin” of the society, the “founding fathers”, the “exploitation” largely of the marginalised people and the “heroes and heroines” of a particular society. Of critical importance is that ideological presentation of narratives of political myth is not expressed only verbally, rather they are also represented in visual images such as paintings, posters and sculptured monuments which primarily narrate a particular historical era of a particular society (Flood, 2002: 41).

Chapter Seven of this study will determine whether the above different types of political myths are available in the sampled political television advertisements.

While the foregoing section has provided a theoretical discussion on different types of political myths, the following section presents underlying constituents or hallmarks of political myths.

### **3.4 KEY HALLMARKS OF POLITICAL MYTH**

The following section identifies different hallmarks or constituents of political myth derived mainly from various previous studies of political myth, namely: Esch (2010), Miskimmon, *et al* (2013) and Schmitt (2018) whose work focuses specifically on strategic narratives of political myth. While previous studies of Hallahan, *et al* (2007), Zhong and Zhang (2016), focused on the strategic communication aspect of political myth. Chilton (2004), Zglobiu (2017) and Edelman (1967) (although an old study, however, hold significant relevance to this study) focus on the significance of political language in the context of political myth. The previous studies of Kocer and Yalk (2016), Lynggaard (2017), Sala (2016, 2010), West and Carey (2006) admit that the key to political myth is the significance of the underlying rhetoric of political myth. Kissas (2013) and Kranert (2018) present a discussion on the importance of the underlying ideology of political myth.

While Viala-Gaudefroy (2015) provides a discussion on how political myth shapes national identities, Kenzhekanova and Dalelbekkyzy (2014) note that political myth and political discourse are mutual and inclusive, rather than exclusive. Moffitt and Tormey (2014), Mbete (2014) and Stoica (2017) note that the underlying political myth is populism. Collins (2015), O'Shaughnessy (2004) and Kibris (2019) buttress that there is a significant relationship between propaganda and political myth. Lastly, Boyle (1999) and Kissas (2013) argues that different types of political myths are essentially made up of different genres.

### 3.4.1 Strategic narratives of political myth

The first hallmark of political myth is strategic narrative. By narrative, Bottici and Challand (2006:320), and Bottici (2007:131-133) contend that what makes myth political, are the narratives. This means that underlying myth subtly influences politics using a political language that employs the use of stories, metaphors, synonyms, and symbols to evoke a set of meanings (Edelman, 1974). These narratives are shared, rather than fragmented within the overall political environment. Moreover, the above narratives possess the following various underlying attributes:

Firstly, narratives are intended mainly to address a particular political condition rather than a social condition within the society. The study of Esch (2010: 359-361) entitled *Legitimizing the "War on Terror": Political Myth in Official-Level Rhetoric*, present a distinction between narrative stories and political myth. She notes that narratives are stories that explain "how the world works and offers to resolve a particular political problem" (Esch, 2010) in contrast, political myth emphasises the significance of the "determination to act" rather than providing a "description" of a political issue that shapes political experiences (Sorel,1975: 54).

Secondly, narratives of political myth are produced mainly to create a particular set of common social and/or political identities among members of the society. Therefore, political myth functions primarily to identify with a particular society (Bottici, 2007). It is on this basis that political myth creates common and shared identities of the society, with which individual societies identify.

Thirdly, narratives of political myth create "significance". By significance, Blumenberg (1979:67) posit the bringing of "events and narratives closer to the individuals so that they could feel (experience) the event", to make sense of it and to relate it to a particular form, rather than to keep it as an abstract narrative that no one could relate

with. Bottici and Challand (2006: 319) point out that these events of political myths are meant to connect and be shared by a group of people affected by political conditions.

Fourthly, using a careful selection of words, narratives are used primarily to construct different types of political myth mainly to tell stories about “foundational myth” often called “master myth”, “heroic myth”, “exceptionalism myth”, “transformational myth”, “solidarity myth” and the “us and them” myth (Sala, 2016: 527-528, Nimmo & Combs, 1980:27-33, Smith, 1999:56-57, Gamble & Wright, 2009:89-98).

Lastly, Bottici (2007:132) points out that narratives of political myth are produced under different consequences. They are consciously learned and/or unconsciously over a long period, through experience and/or exposure, sometimes using verbal and visual images such as arts, speech, rituals, songs, icons, objects, gestures, paintings, film and advertisements. It is, therefore, under these circumstances that narratives of political myth can influence individuals and/or social perceptions. Moreover, narratives of political myth are essentially disseminated using both, traditional media, social media and are transmitted explicitly and/or implicitly (Bottici, 2007:133).

Although this section provided a discussion on the concept narratives, it addresses narratives from a general perspective rather than from a strategic perspective. Freedman (2006:22) defines strategic narrative as a “presentation of a compelling storyline that explains and describes political events persuasively”. What it means is that strategic narratives are deliberately constructed and reinforced by political actors primarily to achieve political objectives. On the other hand, to appeal to emotions it is more important to persuade audiences using linguistic features such as metaphors and historical analogies among others.

Based on the above definition, there are different dimensions of strategic narrative. The study of Miskimmon *et al* (2013) admit that strategic narrative is a theoretical framework that possesses underlying dimensions of narratives. The underlying dimensions of narratives structures are the structure of strategic narratives, types of strategic narratives, formation/production of narratives, media role in terms of projections, reception of strategic narratives and the persuasive nature of strategic narratives.

The first dimension is the structure of the strategic narrative. Miskimmon *et al* (2013:45) concede that a structure of a narrative is created primarily by “political actors, using events, plot, settings and time”. It is, therefore, important to conclude that without these underlying structural elements, a narrative will not be effective nor impactful to the intended audiences. The second dimension is different types of strategic narrative. Miskimmon *et al* (2013:46) report that different types of strategic narratives namely international, national and political issue narratives. This study, is mainly concerned about national and issue narrative politics are employed strategically, primarily to distinguish between narratives of political actors, political issues and the context or setting under which political issues are made. The third dimension of the strategic narrative is the formation or production of a strategic narrative that primarily emphasises “the legitimising political actors in creating a strategic narrative” (Miskimmon *et al.*, 2013:47). This dimension of strategic narrative means that political actors actively apply their minds primarily to legitimise and/or delegitimise a particular political issue affecting society. This is achieved using a selection of a particular set of linguistic features such as metaphor, grammar, pronouns; events, political season and settings among others to create a strategic narrative. Fourthly, is the dimension of media as a key player in the creation of strategic narratives. According to Miskimmon *et al.*, (2013:47) media plays a critical role in terms of how political actors project a particular political issue and how they want media audiences to receive these mediated political narratives. Lastly, strategic narratives are meant to persuade political audiences (Miskimmon *et al.*, 2013:47).



With the above dimensions in mind of strategic narratives, Freedman (2006: 10) infers that strategic narratives are not spontaneous, rather they are deliberately created by political actors primarily to persuade political audiences. The foregoing dimensions of strategic narratives show that political myths are subjected to multiple adjustments and not a single or individual political actor is responsible for the creation of strategic political myth. Moreover, the above dimensions of strategic narratives of political myths are actualised through different sources to meet the needs of audiences.

However, the study of Schmitt (2018: 487-511) argues that there are underlying weaknesses related to strategic narratives they do not present analysis on how political myths are received by audiences rather emphasises only the creation of content that captures audience attention. Therefore, this study, emphasis is on the role of strategic narratives in the context of political myth argues that narratives are not general narratives rather are strategic narratives. It is worth noting it is beyond the scope of this study to analyse how political audiences respond to strategic narratives.

Thus far, this section of the chapter has presented a discussion on the nature of the concept of strategic narratives in the context of political myth. This section has argued that narratives are significantly strategic rather than general.

The next section provides a discussion on the significance of strategic communication in the context of political myth.

### 3.4.2 Political myth as a strategic communication

The second hallmark of political myth is strategic communication. Political myth is a strategic phenomenon of communication. Strategy is defined as decisions concerned with organisations setting out long-term goals and objectives, adoption of a course of action as well as allocation of resources (Robbins, 1990: 10). This definition is mainly concerned with strategic decisions. These strategic decisions are either political and/or commercial and focused mainly on short-term and long-term goals of the organisation as well as allocation of organisational resources. Moreover, strategic communication involves decisions on how organisations communicate with their defined organisational stakeholders be it internally or externally.

The strategic aspect of communication – strategic communication, Hallahan *et al* (2007:5) defines it as a “purposeful use of communication on decisions of what, when, where and how an organisation should communicate with its defined stakeholders”. What it means is that strategic communication is mainly concerned with how organisations communicate with their defined stakeholders. Thus, strategic communication covers a range of applications to organisational communication, namely: management communication, marketing communication, public relations and political communication (Hallahan *et al.*, 2007:6-7).

However, in the discipline of political communication, strategic communication is applied to different research areas such as representation (Hall, 2013), social semiotics (Halliday 1978, Hodge & Kress 1988, Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, van Leeuwen 2005), verbal and visual rhetoric (Foss, 2005), political advertising (Kaid, 2011), political myth (Bottici, 2007; Floods, 2002; Nimmo & Combs, 1980; Tudor 1972), agenda-setting (McNair, 2011), political public relations (Stromback & Kioussis, 2011), political marketing (O’Shaughnessy, 2004) and political branding (Needham & Smith, 2015), among others. This means strategic communication is interdisciplinary and could be applied to multiple fields of communication studies. In light of the above, strategic communication, therefore, remains relevant to this study.

In the context of political myth, in their study Zhong and Zhang (2016: 51-68) analyse how the Chinese government uses political myth strategically to communicate the rhetoric of the future of China. In this context, political actors are involved in the creation of the underlying meaning in the political text. The creation of the underlying meaning in the political text is critical for this study because for Barthes (1977) meaning is made up of two primary semiological layers, namely, the “denotative” and “connotative” meanings. The denotative are arbitrary, explicit, literal, objective, and manifest in nature (Barthes, 1977: 44-45). Conversely, connotative meaning carries a second-order message which is hidden, latent, ideological, overt, and subjective. Moreover, connotative meaning is plural and coexist with other social, political, cultural and economic environmental factors under which the text is produced (Barthes,1977:48).

The relevance of strategic communication to this study is that communication is “strategic and purposeful, as well as provide meaning of production and reception” (Zhong & Zhang, 2016:53) among political actors and audiences. Like a strategic narrative, strategic communication clearly defines the goals and objectives of the political myth. This study argues that it is achieved using employing different rhetorical appeals such as careful selection of political actors to convey political narratives, and narrative tactics such as repetitions, metaphors, historical analogies and other carefully selected linguistic features identified and conveyed to audiences. Chapter Seven of this study will determine whether the above underlying aspects of strategic communication of political myth are available in the selected political television advertisements of the political parties.

The below section of this chapter focuses on political myth as a political language.

### 3.4.3 Political myth and political language

Political language is the third hallmark of political myth. As indicated in the previous sections of this chapter, what makes myth political is the language of politics. The work of Edelman (1988,1974,1971 & 1967) observed that there is a significant mutual relationship between language and politics, rather than a distinct phenomenon between the two, language and politics. He argues that language performs a crucial function by creating shared political meaning and perceptions as well as reassuring members of the public. He maintains that “language does not mirror an objective reality” rather language is subjective, it “organises meaningful perceptions taken from a complex world” (Edelman,1988:64). What this means is that language is a political environment that is more than just a carrier of political messages.

In addition, Balandier (2000) notes that politics in the language is located in three fields, namely, the intellectual work, mass media and the overall language. Although Balandier (2000) acknowledges that both media and intellectual fields are critical, these linguistic aspects of language are more critical in that they convey underlying ideologies in the form of “grammar, metaphors, symbols, rites, collective national and/or communal values” (Balandier, 2000:66). All these are carried through language within a political context. Moreover, Edelman (1971:65) add that the above-mentioned linguistic aspects are subliminal rather than explicit; they primarily convey a particular set of underlying meaning using metaphors, synonyms and symbols to present a particular set of ideology. By ideology in the context of political myth, Bottici (2007:186-200) and Flood (2002:42) do not necessarily refer to a particular set of political ideas such as capitalism, democracy or socialism that dictate or justify political or social actions of the overall society. Rather ideology in this particular context is mainly concerned with the creation of the underlying meaning in the verbal and visual texts that have “distinct biases, interests and embedded values that reflects the producer’s point of view” rather than of the audiences (Kellner & Durham, 2001:6). Therefore, political myths are deliberate, are conveyed either explicitly or

implicitly, consciously to disguise abstract ideas, this understanding, makes ideologies in the context of political myth subjective rather than objective.

Linguistic aspects are therefore ideological as they perform unifying functions to establish among the others, solidarity among members of society or community using narratives of political myth. On the other hand, these linguistic aspects particularly those that are used in the context of politics, are rooted in a political language. They are employed primarily to inform, persuade members of the public about specific political issues and to make an opinion about a course of action and evoke a subtle “set of mythic beliefs” (Edelman, 1974:65). This means that political language possesses an underlying myth that is primarily based on a political discourse related to a person, situation, thing or practices that are political.

The use of linguistic aspects such as metaphors in political myth is significant to this study in that it provides political audiences with a representation of the political environment. Chilton (2004:22) points out the underlying function of metaphors in the political language essentially serves to attach meaning to a complex set of observations and/or perceptions to which people respond. The study of Zglobiu (2017:114-121) identified that Romanian political actors use metaphors in their political discourse, namely: “the unity myth” and “a shared political destiny under the European family of the democratic nations”, that is, the master myth of the European Union (EU). He argues that metaphors are a significant linguistic aspect of political language used in the Romanian political discourse. On the other hand, metaphors are used primarily to enable political actors to reach a common understanding with political audiences. Chapter Seven of this study will determine how the underlying political language is used in political myth in the selected political television advertisements of the three political parties.

The below section focuses on the fourth constituent of political myth, rhetoric.

#### **3.4.4 Political myth and rhetoric**

The fourth hallmark of political myth is rhetoric. According to Foss (2004:5), rhetoric is defined as a “human set of symbols expressed in explicit and implicit modes of communication, meant to communicate, inform, persuade, influence and evoke action among political audience”. The foregoing definition suggests that rhetoric are presented in a verbal and visual text. Verbal rhetoric includes speech, words, vocabulary, and metaphor. Speech is a verbal mode of communication essential to convey voice and sound such as high and low pitch, intonations, stress and speed. The speaker uses speech to articulate a set collection of words, organised in aspects of grammar, sequencing of words, sentences and a careful selection of words (van Dijk, 1993:171). On the contrary, the speaker uses speech to articulate underlying emotions such as anger, humour, fear and sadness among others.

The aspect of verbal rhetoric is fundamental to this study, in that, the speaker of political myth consciously selects particular words and attaches certain emotions to convey underlying political myth to the identified audiences mainly to appeal. According to Jackson and Stockwell (2011:30), words as aspects of verbal rhetoric are described as a “structured sequence of letters used in the speech”. As pointed out earlier, this structured sequencing of words is governed by a particular set of grammar and vocabulary – the selection of key concepts that has specific meaning and value. Like speech, words and vocabulary play a significant role as rhetoric to appeal to audiences. Another aspect of verbal rhetoric is the symbolic use of language such as metaphor. Metaphors are expressed in speech and derived from the “domains of knowledge and human experiences” based on human experiences and cognitive frames (Chilton, 2004:22). These human experiences are derived from daily interaction with society while cognitive domains are based on knowledge and are significantly abstract, unstructured and subjective sometimes difficult to relate to. It is worth emphasising that the above speech, words, vocabulary, and metaphor, are fundamental aspects of the verbal rhetoric employed deliberately, rather than

unconsciously by the speaker primarily to appeal to audiences and to represent a particular underlying ideological meaning within a narrative of a political myth.

Rhetoric is also conveyed using visual rhetoric – a form of communication that uses images to create essential underlying meaning and arguments (Foss, 2005: 78). Visuals within the context of rhetoric involve images such as artwork, dance, dress code, housing structure, objects and human beings. According to Foss (2005), these visual images are not innocent, but subjective, and they are (1) symbolic, (2) they inherently possess underlying meaning and (3) are presented to audiences primarily to appeal to emotions and/or change of behaviour and (4) more importantly are ideological. Visual rhetoric is critical in the context of political myth in that they convey political myth in a symbolic form, and they create essential meanings to persuade political audiences.

With the above in mind, it is important to point out that there is a significant symbiotic relationship between rhetoric and political myth which essentially appeal to audiences. This study admits that political myth uses verbal and visual rhetoric, primarily to appeal emotionally (Kocer & Yalk, 2016, Lynggaard, 2017), to present information (Sala, 2010), to create a fantasy and/or nostalgic appeal (West & Carey, 2006), and to evoke fear (Esch, 2010).

By emotional appeal, Lynggaard (2017) analyses how the European Union politics reproduce political myth to emotionally appeal rhetorically among political audiences. In addition, studies of Johnson and Kaid (2002:22), Fourie and Froneman (2003:193) revealed that political advertisers use political myths rhetorically to appeal emotionally, to evoke different emotions among audiences as well to legitimise political issues. While Hallin (1984) and Hallin (1991) argues that sometimes political myth uses verbal and visual rhetoric to arouse emotions of outrage and condemnation, particularly on issues such as a war. Thus, verbal and visual rhetoric is used primarily to delegitimise or demonise, for instance, US involvement in the

Vietnam and Iraqi Wars. On the other hand, it reminds audiences of the tragic historical past because of irrational political decisions among others.

The information appeal suggests that verbal and visual rhetoric uses detailed and factual information which is primarily rational (Sala, 2010). Moreover, Sala (2010:10) points out that the EU political myth appeals cognitively and rationally using graphical presentation such as figures, graphs, images of renowned political icons and speeches to essentially appeal to political audiences. These informative devices are used primarily to legitimise the relevance and the significance of the authority of the European Union among its audiences (Sala, 2010:10). The political myth employs the rhetoric of information appeal to either legitimise or discredit a political issue.

Brierley (2002: 166) defines fantasy appeal as the ability to evoke feelings of change, hope and a promising future for society. Political myth uses a master myth to construct the rhetoric of the fantasy appeal; for example, for nation-building, a mature democracy, good governance and none-racialism. On the other hand, Brierley (2002:167) argues that rhetoric does not only evoke fantasies, sometimes rhetoric evokes nostalgia to remind audiences of the historical past such as national achievements. The study of West and Carey (2006) illustrates how the former US President George Bush's narratives remind him of his childhood cowboy life after the September 11, 2001 attack on the World Trade Centre in New York City and Pentagon, Washington D.C. by using the American Old West Cowboy narratives such as "Wanted, Dead or Alive", "An enemy that likes to hide, we are going to smoke him out<sup>8</sup> of his holes and get him running and bring him to justice"; "We're hunting him down, he can run but he can't hide" referring to the Afghanistan Al-Qaida terrorist network organisation leader Osama Bin Laden. The above extracts are rhetorical and remind American society of the hard and ruthless cowboy life in the Midwest and Texas, as well as how an enemy is treated when is within the midst

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<sup>8</sup> To smoke someone out is an idiom that means to force someone or an animal out of hiding.



(Gustainis,1989:43). It is, therefore, worth pointing out that use of the above nostalgic appeal is used ideologically to legitimise a shared historical past of the society affected largely by civil strife.

The rhetorical appeal of fear can be described as a negative emotion accompanied by a perceived potential threat to the personal life of an individual audience (Stiff & Mongeau, 2003:165). Political myth uses the rhetoric of fear to manipulate audiences to change their behaviour or attitude towards a particular behaviour. In the study of Kaid and Johnson (2001:56), the fear appeal is rhetorically used by political parties in television elections campaign commercials, essentially to make voters fear the negative consequences that could result should a rival political party be elected. In the context of political myth, the study of Esch (2010:381-382) demonstrates how former US President Bush employed the “us” and “them” type of political myth essentially to evoke fear among his audience post-9/11. He uses the binaries of “civilization” versus “Barbarism” that means America is a civilised and innocent society that is under siege by barbaric Muslims who are “cruel”, “full of hatred”, “hate all civilisation and the culture of progress”, they are “devious and ruthless” who have “declared war over America” (Esh, 2010:382). The fear appeal is thus evoked by negative rhetoric.

The next section presents a discussion on the fifth constituent of political myth and ideology.

### **3.4.5 Political myth and ideology**

The fifth hallmark of political myth is ideology critical to this study. Lemon (1996:209) describes ideology as a “set of ideas, attitudes, values, belief systems or interpretive and conceptual frameworks held by members” of a particular social group. These set of ideas, beliefs, attitudes, values, and principles are significantly shared by a particular group or a society. The view of ideology is problematic, in that ideology is

seen from a neutral perspective, rather than from a subjective perspective. The view of ideology claims that all groups in the society have shared similar ideologies and that all ideologies are equal. Because of the underlying neutral stance of ideology, this view is therefore not useful for this study.

To resolve this concern, Thompson (1990:3-4) observes that the concept of ideology is used in two fundamentally different ways. Firstly, ideology is used as a descriptive concept, concerned with a set or a structure of “system of thought”, a “system of belief”, and a “symbolic practice” which pertains primarily to social action and identity. Secondly, ideology is used as a critical concept. Thompson (1990:4) points out that a critical conception of ideology is mainly concerned with the creation and transmission of the underlying meanings and ideas of the mythical texts. Therefore, for Thompson (1990:7), ideology is primarily concerned with the creation of the underlying “meaning” of the text. With this understanding, this study subscribes to the second aspect of ideology which is concerned mainly with the creation of the underlying meaning of political myth.

With the above in mind, this study argues that the creation of underlying ideological meaning in media texts such as political television advertisements is primarily concerned with “distinct biases, interests, embedded values, reproducing the point of view of the producers and often the values of the dominant social group” (Kellner & Durham 2001:6). That means the production of a media text is subjective rather than objective and is influenced by producers’ biases, interests, attitudes and values among others. In addition, Hodge and Kress (1988:4) contend that the significance of ideological meaning in the context of political myth presents a set of rules prescribing the conditions for production and reception of meanings, by which media text is intended. This view suggests that meaning is determined and shared by a group in society. Therefore, ideology in this context is concerned primarily with the creation of political meaning and the establishment of the domination of the social and political reality.

Moreover, the study of Thompson (1990:60-65) identifies five underlying strategies and/or techniques of ideology relevant to this study, namely: legitimisation, dissimulation, unification, fragmentation, and reification. It is important to emphasise that these ideological strategies are used subliminally rather than explicitly mainly to endorse a position of a political myth in a political television advertisement.

The first ideological strategy of Thompson (1990:61) is legitimisation functions mainly to establish and position a dominant myth either explicitly or subliminally in the verbal and visual text. The legitimisation of political myth is carried out using linguistic features, that is, a careful selection of words, use of adjectives, metaphors, synonyms, verbs among others. Chilton and Schaffner (1997:54) define legitimisation as an ideological strategy of political discourse by which political actors (i.e political parties and/or political candidates and/or government institutions) defend and justify their position of a particular political issue as well as past, present and future actions. The opposite of legitimisation is the delegitimation that rejects and denounces a political issue using linguistic features.

The previous studies of Kranert (2018) and Esch (2010) point out how political language uses ideology mainly to legitimise a political discourse. The study of Kranert (2018:1-21) demonstrates how the political myth of “Make America Great Again” in Donald Trump’s 2016 campaign and “Let’s take back control” in the pro-Brexit campaign,<sup>9</sup> illustrates how political-ideological strategies are used primarily to legitimise a particular political myth. Kranert (2018) argues that the legitimisation and/or delegitimation strategies are primary functions that construct economic, political and social realities as well as identities of the society.

On the other hand, the study of Esch (2010:357-391) argues that political myth is used strategically to legitimise a universal narrative of the American exceptionalism

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<sup>9</sup> Britain officially left the European Union as of 1 March, 2020.

versus barbarism, underlying the American exceptionalism myth, is that historically the U.S is different from Europe, mainly in terms of being the largest economy of the world, a liberal democratic society, the innovative and entrepreneurial society in the Western world, a leading nation in areas of science and technology, media and culture, as well as a leading promoter of liberal values that cannot be compared to other societies. These political myths are key to American exceptionalism (Esch, 2010: 366). On the other hand, the American exceptionalism political myth creates oppositional binaries of “good” versus “evil” mainly to distinguish American society from other uncivilised societies.

According to Esch (2010: 372-374), the construction of oppositional binaries is critical in that it provides a narrative that distinguishes between positive versus negative qualities such as justice vs injustice, freedom vs oppression, hate vs love are essential to legitimise the dominant political myth in the society. Lipset (1996:49) notes that these qualities distinguish the U.S from other countries, they make America a “providential nation”, “a better nation”, “a shining city on a hill”. Therefore, it is important to point out that a careful selection of linguistic features such as nouns, adverbs, metaphors, symbols and verbs, are essential in the creation of a strong cultural appeal and an impressive mythical narrative about America as well as to distinguish the US from other societies.

Although political myth has legitimised the US as an exceptional superpower, there are however underlying counter myths that argue that America as a developed country has socio-economic challenges similar to many developing societies. Some of the key socio-economic challenges facing the US are lack of social housing for the poor, crime in a form of gun violence, high substance abuse, high male incarceration particularly among black men, poverty among black and white people, high unemployment, inequality between the rich and poor, decreasing middle class, lack of access to quality public education and health care by many American families as well as high mortality and endemic structural racism that undermines founding values of a democracy (Stiglitz, 2013). The significance of the counter myth is primarily “to

delegitimize the established dominant myth” that primarily keeps the status quo intact (Reid, 2011).

The second ideological strategy of Thompson (1990:62) is dissimulation. Thompson (1990:62) views dissimulation as an ideological strategy that uses concealed and subtle lexical concepts to deflect attention from the dominant myth. The dissimulation strategy resonates with the counter myth in that it critiques the established dominant myth. Dissimulation strategy uses symbolic linguistic features such as metaphors, idioms and proverbs primarily to deflect attention from the established myth.

The third ideological strategy of Thompson (1990:63) is fragmentation. The fragmentation strategy uses political myth primarily to create divisions among individuals and groups within the society. The fragmentation ideological strategy uses binary constructs of language such as the “us” and “them” as well as the “otherness” rhetoric to divide the society. Such binary lexical can be expressed in the form of established political ideologies such as conservative versus progressive, Democrats versus Republicans, socialists versus capitalists among others.

The fourth ideological strategy of Thompson (1990:65-66) is reification. The reification ideological strategy suggests that myth is used primarily to establish a relationship in the society, it is natural and permanent. This myth is used ideologically, particularly in a divided society. Examples of a reification ideological strategy can be the use of lexical constructs such as nation-building, non-racism, peace, and unity, among others.

The study of Kissas (2013) presents empirical findings on how Greek elections campaigns, the Greek main political party, PASOK used Thompson’s (1990) ideological strategies to effect oppositional binaries of the political myth of the “us” and “them” mainly to dehumanise or marginalise Greek opposition political parties. Moreover, PASOK employs linguistic features ideologically to suggest that opposition

parties are “irresponsible”, “selfish”, and only concerned about themselves rather than the overall wellbeing of the Greek society. As such, opposition parties are “unreliable to govern Greece” (Kissas, 2013:4). Thus, these linguistic features are used ideologically to legitimise the narrative of the “us” and “them” primarily to create divisions within the society.

Chapter Seven of this study will reveal how the above underlying ideological strategies are used in the verbal and visual texts mainly to legitimise and/or delegitimise a particular political issue in the selected political television advertisements of the three political parties.

The next section focuses on the sixth constituent of political myth and national identity.

#### **3.4.6 Political myth and national identity**

The sixth key hallmark of political myth is national identity. Before one could discuss the relationship between political myth and national identity, it is important to describe the concept of national identity.

Miller (2005: 21-27), in describing the nature of national identity, emphasises the following five characteristics, which are: 1) a common belief and a commitment to recognise one another as a fellow citizen, 2) national identity that embodies historical continuity, 3) an "active identity" in which members of all nations represent groups of people that live and work together, 4) national identity links a group of people with a specific geographic area. Lastly, 5) national identity requires its members to adopt a "common culture". Based on the above characteristics, national identity can be seen as a group of people that share a sense of community mainly based on common characteristics rather than on biological characteristics. In addition, Smith (1999: 11-36) observes that national identity includes a sense of political community, belonging

to a common institution, one behavioural code for all its members, the specific territory where members belong and their identification of historical narratives among others.

Considering the above, national identity, therefore, is defined as a particular human population sharing a specific geographical and sovereign territory, a common historical narrative, memories and myth, public culture, essentially collective members of the society (Connor, 1978: 378).

Although the above discussion has provided a homogenous perspective of the nation, it is worth noting that nations are pluralistic while others are homogenous. However, pluralistic nations are mainly societies where there is more than one ethnic group, multiple languages, religions, races, and varying cultures. Regardless of the significant diverse population groups, such societies remain nation-states primarily based on aspirations of unity in terms of the social, political and economic culture as well as the sovereignty of the nation.

The study of Viala-Gaudefroy (2015:31-43) illustrates the relationship between political myth and national identity. She observed that the shared American myth of “democracy”, “economic freedom”, “universality”, “exceptionalism” and “God mission” are central to the American society, such that former U.S President George W. Bush used these national myths in his state of the nation address after the attack on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, essentially to remind American society of their established national identities, symbols and underlying values. Moreover, Viala-Gaudefroy (2015:38) asserts that President Bush’s speech should be seen in the light of demonstrating a symbiotic relationship between national identities and national myth.

Firstly, the American national myth of “democracy”, “economic freedom”, “universality”, “exceptionalism” and “God’s mission” is used primarily to resuscitate

shared national identities among the American society. Secondly, American national identities are anchored in the national myth of freedom and democracy among the others. Thirdly, the attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon constitute an attack on the American myth of democracy and freedom, thus an attack on the American national identity. More importantly, the above illustrates Blumensburg's (1985) aspect of "significance" in political myth, which essentially assists the society to comprehend shared national identities and national myth. However, it is important to note that it is not always common for political myth to establish and maintain a coherent society. Reid (2011) admits that in many situations political myths are "challenged, opposed and sometimes rejected" by certain sections of the society – mainly the disenfranchised members of the society. Therefore, national myths become weak and lose relevance.

The significance of this relationship between national myth and political myth will be determined in Chapter Seven of the analysis of the sampled political parties' advertisements whether the verbal and visual texts possess underlying national identities.

The next section of this chapter focuses on the seventh constituent of political myth, the relationship between political myth and discourse.

#### **3.4.7 Political myth as a political discourse**

The seventh hallmark of political myth in political discourse. Foucault (1977:49) – the primary scholar of discourse studies – defines discourse as any "regulated system of statements or language use which has evolved rules". Discourse does not only refer to the text and signs, rather it refers to a multitude of institutions such as law, medicine, education, military, economics, psychology and engineering among others where knowledge and power are produced. Knowledge essentially means what is the truth, a fact, time and space while power is mainly concerned with the subject of



who identifies with a particular position and uses a range of different strategies that legitimise the underlying power in the text. Discourse, therefore, is a form of social practice or activity that involves the use of language and visuals mainly for the production, circulation and interpretation of the text.

Given the above, Sonderling (1994), Branston and Stafford (2010) argues that “it is more appropriate to use the term discursive practices rather than discourse”. This means that discourse or discursive practices set up specific parameters and/or regulations for instance permissible statements about a topic and define what are, the appropriate terms of behaviour, regulate what can be said and what cannot be said and done. It is worth pointing out that discourse is not always dominant and hegemonic, rather sometimes it is counter or oppositional to the dominant discourse.

For this study, discourse is mainly concerned with the construction of underlying meaning that is understood and shared by a specific group of people. Moreover, discourse is a paradigm or a way of understanding a particular issue that is communicated through verbal and visuals of media texts that uses language mainly to organise knowledge, social and/or political power. Each group develops its concepts, jargon and methods of encoding and communicating a particular set of knowledge. This knowledge is thus shared among members of the group within a society. Therefore, discourse relies on a collective understanding of the issue at hand. This means that different social practices such as language are not isolated phenomena; rather they are cultural, economic, political and socially determined by the overall society’s environment. Moreover, de Cillia, Reisigl and Wodak (1999) identified three main dimensions of discourse, namely: the semantic dimensions of a discourse, the persuasive strategies and linguistic dimensions of discourse. The semantic dimension of discourse is concerned mainly with the underlying meaning in the language, such as words, sentences, phrases, and paragraphs among others (de Cillia *et al*,1999: 150-160). Semantics do not only focus on natural language utterances or acts but also focus on non-verbal behaviour such as gestures, pictures, music and films. All these communication aspects or discursive practices are

embedded in discourse and are subjected to a particular set of meanings, therefore, interpretation by audiences.

The second dimension of discourse is the persuasive dimension. It is strategic and primarily concerned with achieving a particular social, psychological and linguistic objective. The persuasive dimension in discourse uses a particular set of linguistic features mainly “to build a particular national identity”, “to establish alliances” essentially to enhance national solidarity and “to identify a particular group” while distancing and marginalising from the “others” (de Cillias *et al.*, 1999:155). Moreover, the persuasive strategies act to perpetuate, legitimise and justify discourses that maintain, support and reproduce a particular set of national identities. In that scheme, the “other” such as opposition political parties and immigrants for instance in the case of South Africa, a discourse the “other” is constructed to depict “them” as a threat to the society and/or to the national identity of the country (de Cillia *et al.*, 1999). Persuasive strategies use linguistic features of discourse mainly to justify, legitimise, defend and preserve the problematic narratives of controversial events in the national history, for example, the “stolen land” by white settlers in the case of South Africa.

The third dimension of discourse is the linguistic features of discourse. What it means is that linguistics focus on lexical units, argumentation schemes and syntactical means of expressing a discourse (de Cillia *et al.*, 1999). Under this dimension, particular attention is given to the linguistic features of discourse, such as the use of pronouns –“we”, “you” and/or “them”, the use of metonymy (the act of referring to something by the name of something else that is closely connected with it, for instance, Luthuli House ANC political party head offices referrers to the ANC political party), synecdoche (a word or phrase in which part of something is used to represent a whole, for example, instead of *Bafana-Bafana* a football national team, South Africa lost by two goals to Namibia), personification and their particular effect on discourse, and its persuasiveness among others are always by the strategies in action in the given discourse.

The above linguistic features are discursive practices- of discourse are deliberate and purposively used in a political language. According to Zglobiu (2017:110), political language generates a particular political discourse using a specialised vocabulary, stereotypes, specific argumentative rules and strategies as well as narratives. Political discourse relates to specialised knowledge of politics about the use of concepts such as persons, institutions, ideologies, histories, and contexts or settings among others that fall primarily outside the daily routine and orientates itself towards its founders, principles, images, symbols, progress, change and the perspectives. The above underlying aspects are discursive practices essentially used to narrate or construct a particular political discourse and to legitimise and/or delegitimise a particular political discourse and arguments; they are used to construct social and/or political reality, projects individuals and social identities as well as biases. Tudor (1972), Floods (2002), Lincoln (1989) and Charteris-Black (2009:97) point out that these discursive practices are “rational activities”, they are “mass media activities” mainly involved in the production phase of the visual and verbal texts, aimed at bringing about “political transfiguration” or political change. The area which is of particular relevance to this study is how political discursive practices use symbols, rites, collective values, beliefs, and emotions among others to construct a political myth essentially to legitimise and/or delegitimise (counter) a political discourse.

Another previous study of Filimon (2012:119) demonstrates how Romanian politicians use discursive practices in the form of words such as the “European family”, “European Union of democratic nations”, and “unity” among others essentially to legitimise the issue of Romania being a member of the EU. The study demonstrates the significant role of discursive practices in the construction of political discourse in the context of political myth. That is, without political discourse, myth lacks the political context or narrative.

The hallmark of political discourse and political myth is critical to this study. Chapter Seven of this study reveals how underlying discursive practices are used in the

construction of political myth in the context of verbal and visual texts of the selected political television advertisements of the political parties.

The next section focuses on the eighth component of political myth, which is political myth and populism.

### **3.4.8 Political myth and populism**

The eighth hallmark of political myth is populism. Populism is defined from different perspectives. This study however locates populism from a political communication perspective rather than from a pure political science perspective. Populism is generally defined as an ideological strategy that considers society to be ultimately separated into the homogenous but antagonistic group, the “pure people” versus “the elite” (Mudde, 2000: 542). This definition is concerned about the binaries between the “pure people” who constitutes the masses, the marginalised, the poor and the disenfranchised population of the society against the “elites” leaders of the society leaders of the political parties, government and commercial institutions.

However, these elites are established and legitimised by the state, by the constitution and the capitalist system. The “elites” are perceived by the “people” with a deep sense of distrust, “they are perceived as corrupt, less concerned about the society’s needs, only concerned about themselves and their close associates” (Taggart, 2004:8). What it means is that populism is essentially anti-elitism, anti-pluralism and ideological with the intent to appeal to the broader marginalised members of the society.

The problem of populism is that a populist is seen mainly as a true leader as opposed to an exploitative and/or corrupt elite (Moffitt & Tormey, 2014:12). Populism arises as a result of failed social, political and economic problems such as poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment in communities. This breakdown in the society is blamed on exploitation, manipulation and poor governance of state

resources that are meant to uplift the wellbeing of the society at large. Laclau (2005:36-37) emphasises that populism does not start at the top of the political structures, rather it usually starts from any place in the economic, political, social and government structures and/or systems, that has essentially failed the marginalised.

On the other hand, Canovan (2002:313) observes that populists usually distance themselves from the elites by strategically adopting a populist language by using a radical, simple and direct language that conveys a particular set of underlying ideologies that resonate largely with the marginalised, rather than the rich. In addition, a populist prefers “to engage in trivial and immediate issues” that primarily concerns the plight of the marginalised rather than issues that concern the elites (Moffitt & Tormey, 2014:392). With this understanding in mind, one can associate populist politics mainly with oppositional political parties as well as factional groups that have different ideologies within a political party. In other words, populists are mainly concerned with challenging established practices or conventions of politics, particularly those that disempower the poor rather than advance the socio-economic conditions of the elites. Furthermore, Muller (2016:80-89) provides three underlying characteristics of populism, namely: “anti-elitism”, “anti-pluralism” and “threatened nationalism” narratives.

“Anti-elitism” populism means that a populist leader expresses narratives of distrust towards the elites (Muller, 2016: 81). The anti-elitism is demonstrated by the Occupy the Wall Street movement in the US during the 2008/2009 Global Financial Crises. The Wall Street movement across the US expressed a total distrust of the corporate and financial leaders who led financial markets to collapse (Brandt, Reyna, Chambers, Crawford & Westherell, 2015). In contrast, the anti-pluralism populist uses narratives that consider themselves as the only representatives of the marginalised people. That is, the “true” representative of the people on issues such as immigration and anti-abortion (Muller, 2016:82). Anti-pluralism is demonstrated by populist narratives of the Brexit referendum whereby phrases such as “victory for real

people”, “a victory for ordinary people”, “a victory for decent people” were used mainly in support of Britain leaving the EU (van Prooijen & Krouwel, 2017).

Lastly, Muller (2016:87) describes nationalists as “populists who believe in the superiority of their own country” when their country is under significant threat from external forces such as immigration, political interference by foreign governments and/or religious extremists. While, Midlarsky (2011) argues that nationalist populists are likely to rise to power when countries are experiencing economic, political and social uncertainty such as high inflation and unemployment. In times of economic crisis, affected citizens are susceptible to nationalists’ populist figures such as political leaders and/or political parties. For instance, the nationalist-populist rhetoric of “Make America Great Again” by US President Donald Trump resonates mainly with American citizens who are economically struggling from the aftermath of the 2008/2009 financial crisis and have lost their houses and jobs.

Another previous study by van Zyl Hermann (2018) demonstrates a growing nationalist-populist sentiment among white minority South Africans called the Solidarity Movement, with the populist slogan “Make Afrikaners Great Again!”. This slogan is primarily aimed at reinvigorating the ethnic and racial identity politics of the white minority which is perceived to be under attack in post-1994 South Africa. The populist sentiments of the Solidarity Movement argue that increased national politics, public services and redress of racial policies increasingly favours black South Africans, rather than young white Afrikaners (van Zyl-Hermann, 2018:3).

Critiques of populism such as Akkerman (2003:147-159) dismisses populism as an outright threat to democratic values. Moreover, Fenster (1999:66-70) dismisses populism on the following grounds: Firstly, he argues that populism is racist and reactionary without a significant substance to society. Secondly, populism fails to locate a position by which politicians could organise people in a world divided by complex divisions based on class, race, gender and sexuality. Thirdly, populism fails to present a narrative on how people could move from one end of the social and

economic disadvantage to a more progressive and inclusive system. Lastly, Fenster (1999) concedes that the underlying strength of populism is that it strengthens democracy through its resistance techniques and challenges of the status quo as well as to present democracy with multiple and opposing discourses emanating largely from the marginalised.

The above discussion provided a discussion on populism from a general and a political perspective. However, of importance to this study is the role of populism in the context of political communication, a sub-discipline of communication. Jagers and Walgrave (2006:322) define populism as a “political communication strategy” by which political actors, political leaders and political parties use different communication techniques or styles “to align their interests with the marginalised people rather than the elites of the society”. The above definition emphasises the role communication plays in the context of populism is that communication appeals to the marginalised masses (Canovan, 2004: 242). Therefore, the aspect of communication is mainly concerned with narratives, that is, how a populist uses different communication styles primarily to appeal to the public by using words such as: “our people”, “the public”, “our fellow citizens”, “the voters”, “the taxpayers”, “the residents”, “the consumers” and “the population”. The use of such words by political actors essentially claims that “they care about the marginalised concerns”, “they want to defend the interests of the people” and they are alienated from the public, and are implicitly saying “I listen to you because I always talk about you!” (Jagers & Walgrave, 2006:322).

Another important aspect of populism is the intertextuality between the discourse of populism and political myth. The study of Stoica (2017:70) emphasises that there are different types of political myths; the “hero myth”, “unity myth”, “conspiracy myth”, and the “Golden Age myth” are used mainly to appeal to the marginalised people. Of the above different types of political myth, Stoica (2017) admits that the most effective type of political myth in the context of populism is the myth of “us” and “them” that primarily describes a struggle between the marginalised masses and the elites.

Conspiracy myth plays a critical role in populist politics. Conspiracy myth is antagonistic and uses populist politics primarily to make allegations of corruption, dehumanisation of nations, individuals and systems. For instance, in the run-up to the 2016 US presidential elections Donald Trump's populist rhetoric propagated a range of conspiracy myths such as climate change is a hoax perpetrated by the Chinese government, the former US president Barack Obama was not born in the US and therefore, he should have never been a US president. The intertextuality of populism and conspiracy myth essentially posits that the former US President Obama was elected because of the conspiracy myth (Stoica, 2017).

There is also a relationship between a hero myth/the saviour myth and populism. The study of Kelsey (2016:975) points out that there is intertextuality between populism and the hero myth in that, hero figures do not carry monolithic features or characteristics and values, rather they are dramatized and personified to reflect the core values and ideals of the societies in which their stories feature. The multiple forms that they display essentially mean that they could be warriors or pacifists, leaders or rebels, saints, rocket scientists, rock musicians and sports stars (Lule, 2001:83). The form that a hero or heroine takes is largely dependent on the context, as a hero or heroine is dependent largely on the world he is born into. According to Lule (2001:82), a heroic features the following characters which are: "born into humble circumstances", "initiates a journey of a conquest", he "faces battles and wins decisively and returns triumphantly. These characteristics are the basis in the construction of the underlying myth within the context of populism. Chapter Seven of this study will reveal how political myth uses populism in the verbal and visual texts of selected political television advertisements of the political parties.

Closely related to populism is the concept of propaganda. The next section of this chapter focuses on the eighth hallmark of political myth, which is propaganda.



### 3.4.9 Political myth and propaganda

Propaganda is defined as an “expression of opinions or actions performed deliberately by individuals or groups to influence opinions or actions of others aimed at a predetermined objective and through psychological manipulation” (Nicholas, Culbert & Welch, 2003: 34). The above definition emphasises the following aspects of propaganda, that is: 1) expression of opinions are conscious and deliberate rather than innocent, 2) individuals involved in propaganda are largely political actors that influence opinions and/or actions of the public, 3) to manipulate the public. Hence, Lasswell (1927:627) the founding father of propaganda describes propaganda as a “management of a collective of attitudes” using manipulation.

In addition, Marling (1989) points out that there are two types of political propaganda, namely: the direct approach and the indirect approach. A direct approach is an obvious and established propaganda in the public sphere; it explicitly carries public identity, it is manipulative, it is self-imposing and proclaimed mainly by government officials, political candidates and/or political parties to appeal primarily to audiences (Marlin, 1989:39). Moreover, the direct approach employs emotionally charged metaphors such as the “struggle for freedom”, “liberation fighters”, “evils of imperialism” and “defenders of democracy” (Lazarus, 2004: 615-617). Thus, the main function of the direct approach strategy is essentially meant for audiences to share camaraderie, euphoria and excitement.

Different from the direct approach, the indirect approach to propaganda is ideological and symbolic. It uses language implicitly using metaphors and carefully selects words to present a favourable image towards members of the public (Marlin, 1989:40). An indirect approach of propaganda is projected using rituals such as the commemoration of a particular historical figure, public holidays, political party annual conferences and style such as political party regalia, waving of flags (either of a political party or national flag) and songs, blaring of music, struggle songs to add on the overall effect of propaganda and to gain public support (Marlin, 1989). It is

important to point out that propaganda is effective when it is disguised and subliminal. Therefore, it becomes sophisticated, manipulative and ideological in the public domain (Walton, 1997:388). The scope of propaganda, therefore, includes agents, agenda and agencies that promote propaganda such as the military, church, sports, governments, political parties and schools.

Now that the nature of the concept of propaganda has been described at length, this study argues that there is a significant mutual relationship between propaganda and political myth. O'Shaughnessy (2004:88) describes political myth as a conceptual "lynchpin of propaganda". In other words, it is impossible to have propaganda without the underlying political myth. Baines and O'Shaughnessy (2014:3) maintain that the significance of propaganda in the context of political myth is to "create new myths, reinterpret old myths and give the myth a different interpretation". Therefore, propaganda in political myth uses a mixture of symbolic language and rhetoric mainly to persuade. It uses false signifiers to be accepted as facts while symbolism uses verbal and visual signs to convey a meaning which is beyond the obvious content and rhetoric. Therefore, the significance of a political myth is essential to construct or produce persuasive propaganda text (O'Shaughnessy, 2009: 55-76). Moreover, political myth in the context of propaganda functions primarily to justify, legitimise and normalise narratives using organising and reinforcing particular propaganda. Normalising a political myth essentially emphasises the importance of propaganda for example of "war", that is: make it legitimate for a country to go to war with another country, legitimise the heroic leaders of the past and present to strengthen the propaganda of war argument (Kibris, 2019:7). Propaganda uses political myth to appeal to the virtues of sacrifice and duty, primarily to appeal to men and women to sacrifice their lives, time and resources (such as money) for the betterment of their country (Collins,2012:16-17; Kibris, 2019: 1-15; O'Shaughnessy 2004: 87-103). Therefore, political myth helps propaganda to be effective and to endure longer once it has been created.

For instance, the previous study of O'Shaughnessy (2004: 94-95) argues that propaganda functions primarily to manufacture consent by recreating old and new political myths in the public sphere. Therefore, without propaganda, political myths cannot be recreated or sustained over a long period.

Moreover, Kibris (2019) point out that there is a significant relationship between political myth and propaganda. He identified that the Turkish foreign policy documents between 1930 and 1940 used different propaganda rhetoric such as "the superiority of the Turkish race", "being Turkish is a matter of blood, culture and conscience", "nostalgic poems about land Turan" then a country which Turkey wanted to conquer, "anti-communist sentiments directed towards the Soviet Union (SU)", mainly for enslaved Turkish kept in the SU territories. Other propaganda rhetoric used slogans such as "the Turkish race above everything and the Turkish race above any other race", "Turkish race above all others", "the Turkish race and Turkish nation which is rooted from our blood"; therefore, "Turks should not mix with other blood" (Kibris, 2019:7-9). This propaganda was created using political myth and the use of political language subliminally to communicate among others political "heroic leader", "solidarity", "utopia", and "symbols" (O'Shaughnessy, 2009:55-76).

Another study by Collins (2012:13-22) identified different propaganda tools used for different functions mainly to manipulate, to manage, to gain consent and influence attitudes of individual audiences to behave in a particular way desired by political elites such as arousing fear, change of attitudes, to legitimise and/or delegitimise a particular political issue or system. To achieve the above, propaganda uses deliberate and simplistic language intended mainly to persuade audiences. Propaganda is carried out by different figures or spin doctors, namely: political parties, political candidates, media editorials or opinions of intellectuals, government and media organisations or personnel aimed primarily to persuade members of the public on a particular political issue (Collins, 2015:645). On the other hand, counter myth is used mainly to discredit established propaganda such as the superiority of the white race versus blacks being an inferior race.

As pointed out in Chapter Two of this study, counter myth functions primarily to challenge and interrogate established propaganda (O'Shaughnessy, 2004:96). This is achieved using 1) the use of dialogue, (2) message content, (3) goal-directed structure, (4) one-sided argumentation, (5) persuasive dialogue, (6) justification of arguments, (7) the use of emotive language and (8) sometimes use quarrelling forms of debates<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> The (1) dialogue structure points out that propaganda has a form of a dialogue between two participants, namely: the proponent and respondent. The proponent primarily is a person who is representing a group, is an active participant, a speaker or a sender of political messages. While the respondent, constitute masses of audiences that receive messages. The relationship between the proponent and respondent in the context of propaganda is not always symmetrical, rather it is asymmetrical and involves negative and/or positive exchanges, questioning, criticisms between the respondent and the proponent (Walton,1997: 396).

The (2) propaganda message content is either verbal or visual and is expressed in different media of communication such as flags, music, theatrical performance that include drama, film and literature. In some cases, other forms of propaganda are conveyed by symbolic means such as statues, costumes and settings primarily to convey a particular set of political values of a lifestyle or a social class. These forms of communication settings are essential in terms of conveying propaganda to audiences (Walton 1997:397).

Propaganda (3) move mass audiences in a particular direction. The success or failure of propaganda depends on the level of arguments used in the context of discourse and should be judged concerning how well or badly it performs. Arguments should be used primarily to appeal to the emotions of the respondents or audiences (Walton, 1997: 398)

Propaganda is a (4) one-sided argument on a particular political issue. Propaganda does not look at all the alternatives. Neither is it an attempt to critically discuss an issue by openly considering all the arguments on both sides (Walton, 1997: 395-396).

Key to propaganda essentially is (5) to persuade the masses to take a particular action such as going to war, support or sympathise with a particular political issue, or to comply with action or accept and to oppose a certain line of action.

Propaganda is (6) justified by citing danger to the group and then stressing that the adoption of a point of view is needed to combat or guard against that danger. Thus, justification of propaganda is essentially similar to the justification of lying in ethics (Walton, 1997: 400). Propaganda is the use of a (7)

According to Walton (1997:383-413), the above tools are used mainly by political actors or spin doctors to disseminate propaganda to a particular group of political audiences.

There are, however, underlying weaknesses associated with the concept of propaganda. According to Marlin (1989:47) and Stanley (2015:41-44) the concept of propaganda on the one hand “is sincere” and on the other hand “is insincere”. The “sincerity” of propaganda is positive by favourably portraying a political issue. In contrast, the “insincerity” of propaganda addresses political issues unfavourably. The insincerity of propaganda primarily dehumanises, represents a threat to the safety and stability of society. Underlying the insincerity of propaganda is the manipulation of the debates. Moreover, the negative connotation attached to the concept of propaganda implies that such a discourse is both unethical and illogical. For instance, the claim that there are “farm murders” in South Africa is true (Le Roux, 2018). However, it is propaganda that sought to sow political fears and racial divisions within the South African society. This claim is inherently propaganda as it suggests that only white South African farmers are exposed to rural crime. It does not recognise that non-white South African farmers such as black, Indian and coloured farmers are also victims of all sorts of crime. The farm murder propaganda does not recognise the fact that South Africa as a whole, whether urban or rural, has an inherent social crisis of violent crime that affects everyone regardless of skin colour. The above claim is misleading particularly to those who are not familiar with the socio-economic conditions of South Africa. Propaganda communicates negative emotions; sometimes these emotions can either be true or false. Negative emotions evoke fear of life for white farmers, food shortages and so forth.

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emotionally charged language such as words and phrases that make the advocated viewpoint take on a highly positive stance and any opposed viewpoint take on a highly negative stance (Walton, 1997: 401). For example, the supporters of the advocated view may be called “freedom fighters” which supports the opposing viewpoint are called “terrorists”. Propaganda uses (8) quarrelling or dialogue structure, such as an emotionally charged discourse of hate language or speech (Walton, 1997:402).

The above section of this chapter described the relationship between propaganda and political myth. Chapter Seven of this study will determine how underlying propaganda is used in the political myth of the selected political parties' verbal and visual texts. The next section focuses on the last component of political myth, which is the intertextuality of genre and political myth.

#### **3.4.10 Political myth and genre**

The last hallmark of political myth is genre. Slotkin (1990:408) accentuates that there is a mutual relationship between myth and genre. Genre is thus defined as a collection of a set of rhetoric that shares a “distinct, a specialised and a unique common set of characteristics” that governs or rules the expression of rhetoric in a media text (Miller, 1984:156). What it means is that genre possess a unique set of characteristics that are shared and influences the production of rhetoric. Moreover, Bosma (2015:322) defines genre as a collection of media text with “common characteristics of verbal and visual styles, narratives, and themes”, which are recognised by the viewers. Key to the genre is one or more distinguishing characteristics, which are: themes and subject matter, lighting, setting, style of the camera and language codes of content, forms and conventions in a particular way, emotions or mood, technology, audience expectations, recognition and substance.

Genre suggests a way of narrating stories both visually and/or verbally and to make symbols to structure underlying systems of representations. Key to the genre is the underlying adjective of “unique, distinct and/or specialised” (van Leeuwen, 2005:122) set of characteristics that are used to narrate a particular type of a storyline either in film or in discourses. These genres also take the form of rhetorical settings, such as the central business district, township and/or settings. The representation of these settings is significant in that they identify with a type of political, social or economic issue. From a cinematic perspective, they become a mythic space whose geography

is determined by symbolic codes and narrative conventions of a certain story formula (Hodge & Kress, 1988:7).

Moreover, O'Shaughnessy and Stadler (2005:207-217) point out that there are distinguishing characteristics of the genre, which are: the theme and/or the subject matter, the use of style or codes of content and a form and/or convention in a particular way, expression of different emotions or moods, and the use of different techniques. These thematic genres are either political, social or economic.

With the above understanding of the concept genre, there must be a mutual relationship between genre and myth in terms of content and a form (Slotkin, 1990:8). Therefore, myth is a genre that conveys a particular narrative issue that is either political, social or economic, thus a political myth. That is, a genre in the context of a political myth emphasises aspects of political narratives, political heroes and heroines, political ceremonies, thus transforming these political narratives into the fiction of real ideologies (Slotkin, 1990:18). In addition, Briggs and Bauman (1992:145) emphasise that there is significant intertextuality, that is, a relationship between genre and political myth, particularly in the political sphere of society. Slotkin (1990:18) and Briggs and Bauman (1992:145) argue that the political genre subliminally employs different types of myths, namely: "master myth", the myth of "us" and "them", "heroic myth" and the "pseudo myth" (Nimmo & Combs, 1980), the "conspiracy", "the golden age", "the saviour" and "the unity myth" (Girardet, 1997), "exceptionalism myth", "transformational myth", and "solidarity myth" (Sala, 2016; Smith, 1999; Gamble & Wright, 2009) in political discourse. These types of political myths are employed specifically to serve varying functions such as fictionalisation, explanation and mobilisation of audience. Depending on their identified genre, these types of political myths are conveyed using narratives in the form of folktales, advertisements, drama, film and public meetings (Rose, 2007:34).

The previous studies of Boyle (1999:95) and Kisses (2013:97) buttress that the above four genres (types) of political myth, are commonly used in American politics mainly

to present a political television advertisement with a specific genre, mainly a genre of a political hero such as the former US President Barack Obama's early life as a baby, his leadership skills, personality, his early involvement in politics at the community level, his charismatic attributes, and lastly, his ascension to the US presidency. On the other hand, these studies demonstrate how the "us" and "them" genre of political myth is used mainly to narrate divisions between the Republicans and the Democrats. These divisions are essential in that they make provisions for the counter myth, opposition of political myth (Reid, 2011).

Chapter Seven will determine how underlying genres are used in the political myth of the selected political advertisements.

### **3.5 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this chapter was divided into three sections. The first section reviewed the literature on theoretical and empirical studies of political myth. The second section of this chapter provided a theoretical framework of political myth. Under this chapter, political myth is defined as the strategic narratives about political events of the past, present and possible future events that are political. This chapter argued that narratives of political myth are inherently subjective, rather than objective. That is, political myth is strategic, rhetorical, ideological, populist and propaganda.

Based on the above previous studies, this chapter concluded that there are several key hallmarks of political myths, namely: the strategic narratives of political myth, political myth as strategic communication, the use of political language, the rhetoric of political myth, the ideology of political myth, political myth and national identities, political myth as a political discourse, political myths is propaganda and underlying different genres of political myths.



Chapter Four of this study provides a discussion of the theoretical framework of CDA as a theoretical framework and a research methodology. It also covers different methods as key tools of CDA that can be used to interrogate the underlying political myth of the selected political television advertisements.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS: THEORY AND METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The critical discourse analysis (hereafter CDA) stems from a critical theory of language which primarily sees the use of language as a form of social practice. Social practices are tied to specific historical, social and economic contexts. They represent how existing social relations are produced and reproduced over a while, how they are contested and how their interests are served.

This chapter firstly presents a discussion on the historical background of the critical discourse analysis. Secondly, the chapter identifies and discusses different scholars of CDA, among others Fairclough (1992, 1995), Wodak (2000), van Dijk (1998), Hodge and Kress (1996) and van Leeuwen (2008). These scholars present this study with theoretical assumptions of CDA. Thirdly, like any other theory, the chapter provides underlying weaknesses of CDA.

Finally, the chapter argues that CDA is a multidisciplinary concept that has different research methods, namely: Three-Dimensional Model of Discourse (Fairclough, 1992), Political Discourse Analysis (henceforth, PDA) (van Dijk, 1998; Chilton, 2004; Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012), Discourse Mythology Analysis (henceforth, DMA) (Kesley, 2015), Critical Metaphor Analysis (henceforth, CMA) (Charteris-Black, 2004), Discourse Historical Approach (henceforth, DHA) (Wodak, 2001), Social Semiotic Analysis (henceforth, SSA) (Hodge & Kress, 1988; van Leeuwen, 2005) and Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth, MCDA) (O'Halloran, 2004; Machin, 2016; Machin & Mayr, 2012, Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). These analyses methods argue that a text be it verbal or visual in a discourse is significantly influenced by the immediate economic, social and political environment under which it is produced. Thus, for this study, the above research methods are essential for revealing

underlying discursive practices used in the construction of a discourse of the political myth in the selected political television advertisements.

## **4.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS (CDA)**

The 1970s saw the emergence of a form of discourse and text analysis that recognises the significant role of language in the structuring of power relations in society. Then much of the linguistic research focused on formal and functional aspects of language which constituted the linguistic competence of the speaker rather than circumstances under which language is produced. Then pioneers of CDA, namely: Labov (1972), Hymes (1972), Fowler, Hodge, Kress and Trew (1979), Kress and Hodge (1979), van Dijk (1985), Fairclough (1989) and Wodak (1989) observed that sociolinguistic scholars were mainly focused on the objective description of a language, primarily on the “what” aspect of language such as describing and explaining language variations, language changes and the structure of interaction, rather than the “why” and “how” aspects of language, with limited or no attention to the underlying context of language.

At the time, Kress (1993) and Fairclough (1989) argued that the social and historical context of the discourse as well as the process of events under which language is produced should not be ignored in linguistic analysis. Therefore, the above scholars called for an enquiry into the relationship between language and its underlying social and historical contexts which are primarily bound with the speaker’s thoughts. By the 1980s, critical linguists such as Hodge and Kress (1988) admitted that there is a significant relationship between language, the underlying ideology and the context, in which the speaker is positioned. Thus, Hodge and Kress’s (1988) views dispel the notion that language and its underlying meaning functions out of context.

These developments led to the theoretical foundation of Critical Linguistics (CL) which is based on the seminal work of Halliday (1978) entitled *Language as Social Semiotic* and *Introduction to Functional Grammar* (1985). In these seminal works, Halliday

(1978 & 1985) uses a systematic and functionalist linguistic analysis framework, which puts emphasis mainly on practical ways of analysing language in media texts, with a specific focus on the role of grammar in language rather than underlying ideologies of the language.

On the other hand, CDA was influenced by the Russian linguistic theorists, Bakhtin and Voloshinov (1973) in their theory of linguistic and ideology, view language properties such as grammar, metaphors, politeness, style of speech and vocabularies mainly as ideological and significantly influenced by the economic, political and social environment under which language is produced. These environments include among others, the social and economic class, religion, prevailing economics and politics, race, gender as well as culture. Based on the above, Bakhtin and Voloshinov (1973:18) conclude that because of the significant economic, political and social environment, language became a “social practice” rather than an “objective practice” divorced from the immediate environment.

Based on the significance of the social, political and economic environment under which language is produced, this makes CDA a post-structuralist approach rather than a traditional structuralist approach. According to Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999:125), the main shortcoming of the structuralist approach is only concerned with the structure of the linguistics features in the text rather than the overall environment under which the text is produced as well as the underlying ideological meaning of the text. The significance of a post-structuralist approach to CDA, further points out that language belongs to the critical theory and critical language, rather than to the structural and/or functional approach.

Now that the preceding section has outlined a brief historical development, the next section presents a theoretical framework of CDA.

### 4.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

The main premise of CDA as a theoretical framework is that in the verbal and visual texts of media there are underlying discourses. These discourses vary significantly and range from culture, economics, education, engineering, health, history, politics, social and religion among others. CDA argues that in discourse there are underlying power dynamics, knowledge and ideologies produced using different discursive practices in the verbal and visual texts. The underlying discursive practices of discourse are not objective rather they are subjective and ideological. Therefore, there are inherent biases. These discursive practices are critical to this particular study in that they explain how and why certain discourses are produced, legitimised and/or delegitimised (van Dijk, 1998).

The following theoretical discussion of CDA is grounded primarily from the scholarly work of Fairclough (1995), van Dijk (1985), Hodge and Kress (1996), Wodak (2000) and van Leeuwen (2008). These key scholars present this study with underlying theoretical underpinnings of the CDA as a theoretical framework. Fairclough (1995) argues that there is a significant mutual relationship between media text and its immediate economic, political and social context of discourse. He dismisses the view that a media text is produced out of context or in a vacuum. Thus, he defines CDA as a “systematically explored, and often opaque relationship of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts and (b) a wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes, to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power” (Fairclough, 1995:132). The above definition argues that a text is not isolated, rather is situated and produced within a particular social and historical context that influences the production and the underlying meaning. Furthermore, the above definition reveals that CDA is primarily concerned with unmasking overt and covert social order of the underlying meaning that brings to the fore different perspectives, “a deeper understanding of whose interests are being served” and “underlying power dynamics in the society” (Kress, 1993:172).

In addition, Fairclough (1995:13) points out that “language in a discourse is used as a social practice”, which means, language does not function in isolation, rather functions within a set of the cultural, social and psychological context of the overall society. Key to Fairclough’s (1992) views of CDA is a significant dialectical relationship between a text and varying external environments, namely: social, political and/or economic under which the verbal or visual text is produced. What it means, is that there are underlying connections between the inherent structures of a text (discursive practices) and its varying external contexts under which a text is produced. Therefore, the environment under which the text is produced plays a critical role in shaping a particular discourse.

With the above in mind, it is worth pointing out that there are inherent social practices within a discourse, formed largely by varying properties in a language such as vocabularies, metaphors, grammar, politeness and other conventions of speech and style just to mention a few. Fairclough (1992:37) maintains that these social practices are “ideological” in nature. Section 4.5.1 presents a discussion on Fairclough’s (1992) dialectical relationship model of a text and the context under which it is produced. It is therefore on this basis that this study analysis the underlying social, political and economic environment under which the inherent political myth of political television advertisements is produced.

Closely related to the work of Fairclough (1992) is the work of a linguistic scholar van Dijk (1998). According to van Dijk (1995:17-27), CDA is an issue-oriented approach rather than a paradigm-oriented approach. It is neither a school, nor a field of study, nor a sub-discipline of discourse analysis, but a critical approach towards studying a text rather than a multidisciplinary approach, an approach that can be conducted and combined with any other critical approach of discourse analysis, a sub-discipline in the humanities and social sciences.

The primary position of van Dijk (1995:18) to the CDA approach focuses mainly on underlying relations “between discourse, power abuse, dominance and inequality” as well as ways by which these underlying “inequalities are produced, reproduced or resisted by social group members through a text”. This means that language in a verbal text is not neutral and objective, rather it is subjective and/or ideological. The significance of CDA in a verbal text is mainly to reveal underlying power relations of language within a particular discourse. In addition, much of CDA deals with discursive practices that legitimise power structures, strategies of dominance and resistance in social relationships of class, gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, language, religion, age, and nationality, among others (van Dijk, 1995). Therefore, within the overall CDA framework, he provides a research method called PDA mainly to reveal implicit and hidden underlying power, dominance, ideologies and hegemonic structures embedded in a verbal text of political actors. Section 4.5.2 of this chapter provides a discussion on PDA as well as its analysis tools to analyse the underlying political discourse of a verbal and visual text.

Unlike van Dijk (1995), the work of Hodge and Kress (1996) maintains that within a post-structuralism paradigm, meaning does not reside primarily with the sign of a text, rather it resides within the various external environment under which a sign is produced. With this understanding, a text therefore cannot be studied in isolation rather it is studied based on varying environments under which it is produced.

In addition, Hodge and Kress (1996) note that it is important to recognise the underlying psychological and cognitive dimensions of the speaker when processing a discourse. That is, the aspect of the social, cognitive structures of the speaker or writer has a subjectivity mainly because of the social structures and processes which are formed primarily by their histories, identities and social or political belonging to the overall society. It is beyond the scope of this study to analyse how individuals generate and/or receive political discourse under scrutiny.

Closely related to the work of Hodge and Kress (1988) is the work of Wodak (2001). She points out the key to CDA is the significant concept of power, ideology and history. By power, Wodak (2001:10) argues that language does not hold power on its own, rather it is made powerful essentially by people who use it. Therefore, CDA analyses the language use of those in positions of power. Secondly, about power, Wodak (2001) notes that discursive practices in a text are negotiated, they are governed by differences in power relations that are encoded, determined by discourse and by genre. This often makes a text a place of contention and a struggle that reveals underlying different discourses and ideologies struggling for dominance. Thirdly, Wodak (2001) underscores the need for interdisciplinary work in CDA mainly to gain a proper understanding of how language functions in transmitting knowledge, and in organising power. Fourthly, and the most fundamental position of Wodak (2001) in CDA is that “discourse is structured by dominance, it is historically produced and interpreted, as well as situated at a particular time and space that are legitimised by ideologies”. What this means is that in the analysis of a discourse, the historical development of discursive practices should be emphasised.

Based on the above, Wodak (2001) provided an essential analysis method of DHA that could be used to analyse underlying discourse from a historical perspective. Section 4.5.5 presents the research method of DHA essential to deconstruct underlying power dynamics and historical aspects of discourse.

Another scholar worth considering is Van Leeuwen (2008) within the context of CDA. His work is mainly concerned with the representation of social practices in a discourse. van Leeuwen (2008:23) simply defines representation as a recognition of what is represented, what it resembles, and what it stands for. In addition, Hall (1997:10) describes representation as a semiotic aspect of interpretation which involves a “process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a particular group, using words, objects and images”. Hall (1997) is primarily concerned about what it stands for or what represents something. In other words, representation



is seen as a strategy by which media portrays social actors from a particular ideological perspective rather than from a general perspective.

On the other hand, representation is symbolic as it stands for something, essentially a mental representation primarily concerned with the portrayal and a description of a particular race, gender and identity particularly from a specific ideological point of view within a discourse (van Leeuwen, 2008: 48-49).

Based on the above nature of representation, van Leeuwen (2008) points out different elements of representation within the context of discourse, namely: the social actors, social actions, social practice, time, and space. All these elements of representation contribute towards the construction of legitimation within the context of discourse.

The foregoing discussion located critical positions of key scholars of CDA. It is therefore important to present underpinning theoretical concepts of CDA, namely: “analysis”, “critique”, “discourse”, “ideology”, “message”, “power”, “text” and “genre”. These theoretical concepts are derived from primary scholars of CDA, namely: Fairclough (1995), Hodge and Kress (1996), Wodak (2000), van Leeuwen (2008), van Dijk (1995). These scholars argue that these above-mentioned concepts are essential at unmasking and/or interrogating the underlying power relations in the text. The significance of these concepts makes this study a post-structuralist rather than a structuralist study.

Firstly, “message” as a key concept of the CDA is described as factual information or ideas, thoughts and feelings expressed by the communicator (Hodge & Kress, 1988). Messages, therefore, have a meaning which must be understood and interpreted, that explains a source, a goal, the context and the purpose.

The second key concept of the CDA is “text”. The concept text originates from a Latin word meaning “woven together” (Hodge & Kress, 1988: 5). Text in the context of CDA

essentially means any verbal and visual textual structure of messages. Verbal texts are presented in the form of speech, words, language, and written texts among others. While visual texts are presented in the media in the form of a photograph, advertisement, film, magazine, website, television programme, newspapers and books among others that contain various types of messages. Like messages, text produces different underlying meanings and representations (O'Shaughnessy & Stadler, 2005: 92). CDA argues that messages in verbal and visual texts are subjective and ideological, and therefore need to be analysed and critiqued.

The third concept is "critique", which originates from the Critical Theory (Habermas, 1987). Critical researchers argue against "naturalism or realist" (social practices, labels and programs that represent reality), "neutrality" (the assumption that the truth does not reflect any particular interest) and "rationalist" (individualism) view of the world (Hodge & Kress, 1996: 23; Fairclough, 1995:45). This, therefore, makes critical analysis not a neutral nor an objective approach rather a subjective approach essential to "explore hidden power relations between a discourse and a wider social environment". More importantly critical research functions primarily to "uncover unequal power relations, injustices, discrimination, and bias among others" in the society (Chilton, 2004). Moreover, Kincheloe and McLaren (1994:139-140) point out two significant aspects of "critical" that are key to the researcher, which is: (1) empowers the researcher with a set of skills to uncover hidden power relationships and inequalities embedded in the society. (2) Interpret and explain the relationships between the form (primarily "the structure of language" such as grammar, semantics and syntax of the language) and the function of a language (is mainly concerned with how people use language in different situations mainly to achieve a particular outcome). Given the significant relationship between the form and the function of language in different contexts, Fairclough (1992:150) asserts that there are underlying ideological effects on discourse that are established and negotiated in the process of articulation of the media text.

Given the above, for this study, the concept “critical” essentially means uncovering hidden ideologies and often unequal power relations among others in the form of injustices and discrimination presented in the media text using language.

The fourth key concept of CDA is “discourse”. Chapter Three provided a discussion on the nature of discourse. Foucault (1977:49) defines discourse as a “social construction of reality”, which determines the nature of specific knowledge and certain behaviour in a particular social environment. What this definition means is that discourse provides the society with a set of knowledge be it social, political or economic among others. This, therefore, makes discourse “a social practice, a social process and a social structure” by which media texts are produced (Hodge & Kress,1988:6). The aspect of social practice implies that there is a significant dialectical relationship between a text and discourse, that is, a particular text is not produced out of context, rather they are environmentally determined.

Discourse or discursive practices “systematically organise various sets of statements that give expression to the meanings and values of an institution” (Kress, 1985:6). What it means is that discourse is not an independent aspect of language, rather it is dependent on the embedded underlying environment, the social practices and therefore, create social meaning.

Gee (1996) argues that at the heart of discourse is the construction of knowledge and identities. That is, one needs to look at language beyond the single sentence level. For instance, the word “This” can be used at the start of a discussion to foreground the topic under discussion and to identify it as important to the speaker, whereas the word “That” could be used to background or marginalise a topic and place it as a subordinate position, from the speaker’s point of view. The preceding discussion demonstrates that language is ideological, it does not occur in isolation, rather language occurs in specific social contexts, between people, in particular places, under varying sets of circumstances, at a particular time, accompanied by particular semiotic signs such as gesture, dress code and symbols.

The fifth key concept of CDA is “ideology”. As pointed out in Chapter Three, ideology is generally defined as a set of ideas, systems and values that represent a particular set of the mental framework which is communicated, reproduced, constructed and negotiated using a particular set of language (Hodge & Kress, 1988:3). From a critical perspective, ideology is mainly seen as a “construction of perceived realities”, and a “false consciousness that represents the world” mainly by organising the world from a particular point of view (Hodge & Kress, 1996:6). In addition, ideologies are a particular way of representing and constructing the society, which reproduces unequal power relations such as domination and exploitation (Fairclough, 1995:75). Therefore, this leads to the notion that language is not neutral, but a highly constructed ideological text within a CDA framework.

The sixth concept of CDA is “power”. It is defined as “relations of difference and particularly about the effects of difference in social structures” (van Dijk, 1995:18). This means that power is about unequal power relationships between two or more varied or opposing structures. The language uses indexes to express the underlying power, its underlying contention and challenges. Therefore, power does not derive from language, but language is used to challenge underlying power, to subvert it, to alter distributions of power both in the short and the long term. Language provides a vehicle to differentiate dynamics of power within the hierarchical, social and political structure.

According to Wodak (2001), CDA is not only interested in analysing “opaque” or invisible structures but also transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language. In other words, CDA aims at investigating critically social inequality as it is expressed, constituted, legitimised and/or delegitimised mainly by language use in discourse. Therefore, this makes language a medium of domination and a social force. It serves mainly to legitimise relations of organised power; hence language is ideological (Wodak, 2000).

Based on the above nature of power, CDA is interested in how linguistic forms are used mainly in different expressions and in the manipulation of power. Therefore, power is signalled not only by grammatical forms within a text but also by individual control of a social occasion such as the genre of a text. As a result, CDA researchers are interested in the way discourse reproduces social domination and dynamics.

The seventh concept of CDA is “analysis”. The analysis is a key concept of CDA mainly concerned with the use of various analytical tools by which hidden ideologies, biases and unequal power relations in the verbal and visual texts are revealed. To achieve the above, this study uses a combination of multiple analyses methods of the CDA, namely: Three-Dimensional Model of a Discourse (Fairclough, 1992), DHA (Wodak, 2001), CMA (Charteris-Black, 2004), PDA (van Dijk, 1998; Chilton, 2004; Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012; Wodak, 2000), DMA (Kesley, 2015), SSA (Hodge & Kress, 1988; van Leeuwen, 2005) and MCDA (O'Halloran, 2004; Machin, 2016; Machin & Mayr, 2012, Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). These analyses methods are used mainly to uncover underlying discursive practices of political myth presented in the visual and verbal texts of elections campaign commercials.

The last key concept of the CDA is “genre”. According to Hodge and Kress (1988:7), a genre is a group of texts that essentially share a set of conventional characteristics, types and rules such as content, narrative structures, visual and verbal styles that are classified as textual types or genres. In the context of CDA, Kress (1993:90) argues that genre is a major vehicle for the transmission of a type of information. The aspect of the genre as modes of transmission is illustrated by the study of Enrique, Martinez, Antonio and Rodriguez (2017) that primarily focuses on the discursive practices of genres as an analytical concept of the CDA that analyses types of genres in the Mexican television elections commercials, forms in which sentences can be constructed according to specific spheres of communication depending on their socio-cultural functions

Before one could focus on different analyses methods of the CDA, the next section focuses on the underlying limitations of the CDA.

#### **4.4 CRITIQUES OF THE CDA**

There are several scholars, namely Widdowson (2004), Chilton (2005) and Blommaert (2005) who are critical of the CDA. In his work, Widdowson (2004) casts doubts on the different modes of analyses of the CDA. He points out that there is a gap between the text and the receiver in terms of the “interpretation” of the text and the creation of meaning. He argues that CDA does not address the effects of the text upon its readers, rather it is only concerned about the underlying features of the texts, the function of discourse, in which the receiver of the texts’ underlying assumptions are shaped by their knowledge and beliefs (Widdowson, 2004). Therefore, the gap between the two is that the text and the reader are problematic, as it isolates the reader from the text and sentences. Moreover, Widdowson (2004) contends that CDA is biased, unprincipled, unconventional, decontextualised of linguistic features, closer to impressionistic commentary, which ultimately supports interpretation and yields simplistic findings. Widdowson (2004:89) recommends, however, that CDA needs to adopt a critical attitude towards its purposes which must be replicable and apply consistent principles and systematic linguistic theory.

Another critic of CDA worth considering is Chilton (2005) who argues that CDA lacks a cognitive theory of language that could show how discourse affects social cognition. According to Chilton (2005: 23), the significance of a cognitive theory and conceptual metaphor theory mainly explains why a phenomenon, for instance, racism and prejudice occur in society. The importance of a cognitive theory, however, does not suggest that CDA is based on a scientific programme (Chilton, 2005). In addition, Blommaert (2005) expressed concern about the discursive production of inequality and the need for self-critique in the CDA. He argues that CDA pays significant attention to the texts in the West, rather than on developing societies. As such, CDA perpetuated Western universalism and neglects the political and social dynamics of

the developing world, where criticism of the key authorities in public can sometimes land one in prison or dead.

In response, to these criticisms, it is important to point out the following: Firstly, one needs to establish CDA as a relevant approach to social studies with a specific focus on the political sciences. Secondly, the contribution of studying and applying CDA to developing societies such as South Africa is critical. Thirdly, the relevance of CDA makes a significant contribution to the overall scholarship of political communication studies. Fourthly, CDA contributes towards critiquing both the visual and verbal texts as well as providing a framework for the analysis of a media text. Fifthly, CDA reveals how social and political facets of communication are embedded ideologically in the verbal and visual texts. Lastly, another strength of the CDA is that the approach is multidisciplinary as it uses different research methods such as the CMA, DHA, PDA, DMA, SSA and MCDA.

The scope of CDA has also extended towards real-world actions rather than merely a semiotic analysis of the structuralist approach. As indicated earlier in the chapter, from the work of Wodak (2000), the multidisciplinary aspect of CDA is not only concerned with linguistic features of the language but also includes other social theorists drawn on the analysis of political discourse, therefore, PDA. These sociological theories essentially enable analysts to critically interpret and explain discourse in the social constructs, helping to establish the identity of CDA as a critical discipline. On the other hand, CDA is faced with new challenges, such as focusing on the critical analysis of the entire process of discourse production, distribution, consumption and the degree to which this critical analysis could have effects on the producers.

The above discussion was on the nature of CDA as an interdisciplinary approach that sought a relationship in a discourse between the text and the social, political and economic environment. Moreover, it is important to point out that CDA underscored the importance of the critique in the social sciences with a specific focus on the

society's construction of power, the abuse of power, dominance, hegemony and inequality.

The next section is the last section of this chapter and focuses on different analysis methods of CDA.

#### **4.5 DIFFERENT ANALYSES METHODS OF CDA**

This study views political myth as a narrative that is essentially constructed using language, a political language embedded in political discourse, history, myth and represented in different modalities. Therefore, the following sections present a discussion on different analyses methods of the CDA, namely: Three-Dimensional Model of a Discourse (Fairclough, 1992), DHA (Wodak, 2001), CMA (Charteris-Black, 2004), PDA (van Dijk, 1998; Chilton, 2004 and Fairclough, 1992), DMA (Kesley, 2015), SSA (Hodge & Kress, 1988; van Leeuwen, 2005) and MCDA (O'Halloran, 2004; Machin, 2016; Machin & Mayr, 2012, Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001) Chapter Seven of this study uses a combination of the above analyses methods of CDA mainly to analyse underlying discourses or discursive practices of political myth in the verbal and visual texts of the main South African political television advertisements.

##### **4.5.1 Three-Dimensional Model of Discourse**

Chapter Three of this study pointed out that political myth is presented using verbal and visual texts. To analyse these texts, this study uses Norman Fairclough, Three-Dimensional method of analysis of the CDA. According to Fairclough (1992:4-10), the three-dimensional model of analysis consists of the following three dimensions, namely: 1) the description of a textual analysis (text), 2) interpretation of the production and reception (processing analysis) of a text, and 3) explanation of a wider economic, social and political conditions among others, that affects production and reception (social analysis) of a text. He argues that the three dimensions are not isolated, rather



are interrelated. As such, there is a significant dialectical relationship, a transdisciplinary approach and interrelatedness among these dimensions which are essentially tied together to the analysis of a text (Fairclough, 1992:10). The discursive practice dimensions of discourse are concerned with the “processes of a text production and interpretation, and finally, the social practice dimension that relates to the institutional and organisational circumstances of the discursive event and how that shapes the nature of the discursive practice” (Fairclough, 1995:4). Furthermore, he stresses that these dimensions do not function in isolation, rather they function in a particular context (economic, political and social context among others) and the underlying intertextuality that contributes towards the production and interpretation of the text (Fairclough,1995:98).

What these dimensions refer to, are the analysis of the verbal and visual texts presented in a discourse. This study involves analysis of verbal and visual texts in political discourse. The first dimension involves the analysis of a “text”, whether verbal or visual (Fairclough, 1992:4). The dimension of the text is concerned not only with linguistic features such as sentences and speech, but also visual images, sound, colour and musical background among others. The second dimension is concerned mainly with the “interpretation of the text”, that is, the production of the underlying meaning of the text (Fairclough,1992:5-6). Interpretation of the text is mainly concerned with how the text is produced, who produced the text and for what specific purpose, what is the underlying meaning and how it is received by audiences. Lastly, the third dimension of the text is linked to the underlying context of the social practices, namely, the historical and social process that influences the production and reception of the text messages. It is however worth pointing out that it is beyond the scope of this study to analyse audience reception of media texts.

Key to the above research method of the three-dimensional approach of Fairclough (1992:62): Firstly, is the significant relationship between the text and the environment under which it is produced. Secondly, is the description, interpretation and explanation of the text. Lastly, underlying the aspects of description, interpretation and explanation,

Janks (1997:330) assert that Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional approach is mainly interested in "how power is exercised in modern neo-capitalist societies, how domination and inequality are produced and reproduced in the discourse, how societies uphold their social structures and relations over time, and how relations between culture and social changes on the one hand as well as discursive change on the other". This illustrates a significant relationship between a text and the socio-political context of the discourse.

For this study, the above Fairclough (1992) analysis method of discourse is essential in that, in Chapter Seven the researcher will: Firstly, analyse verbal and visual texts underlying discursive features within the overall discourse of a political myth used in the elections campaign advertisements. Secondly, describe how specific choices of words and visual images are employed in the construction of the underlying ideological meaning. Thirdly, and more importantly is how the underlying environment influences the reproduction, legitimation and/or delegitimation of political myths in political television advertisements. Therefore, the Three-Dimensional Approach and subsequent analyses methods, namely: DPA, DMA, CMA, DHA, SSA and MCDA will be used inclusively and mutually rather than exclusively in the analysis of the overall discourse of political myths in the selected political television advertisements.

#### **4.5.2 Political Discourse Analysis (PDA)**

PDA is the second analysis method of CDA and is the work of Teun van Dijk. According to van Dijk (1998:11-15), PDA as an analysis method is mainly concerned with the analysis of "political discourse" in the political text produced overtly or explicitly by politicians. In other words, PDA is mainly concerned with analysing the nature, production and functions of political discourse in society. Chilton (2004), van Dijk (1998) and Fairclough (1992) identified key areas of analysis of politics in the political discourse. According to Chilton (2004:3-4), political discourse occurs at a micro and macro level of society.

At the micro-level of society, politics occurs between individuals, genders and social groups using acts of persuasion, argumentation and threats among others. However, at the macro level, politics occurs among political actors that is, politicians, political members of the parliament and political parties both at the local, national and international level as well as at citizen participation in the political process such as electoral voting. While van Dijk (1998:13) advocates that politics should be analysed specifically from key political actors namely political leaders and political parties. However, Fairclough (1992) disagrees arguing that politics are “socially constructed” and underlying analysis should extend beyond the individual and party politics. He maintains that politics encompasses a wide range of political issues such as social issues, gender equality, environmental issues, children issues, immigration issues, tax issues and consumer issues among others. Therefore, politics are “unstable, fluctuating and emergent” from grassroots social movements (Fairclough, 1995:33). He argues that these issues are in a sense not political, however, they should be recognised in the analysis of political discourse.

Based on the above significant social aspect of politics, Chilton (2004), Blommaert (2005), Pelinka (2007) and Edelman (1988) buttress that political discourse is not divorced from the external environment, particularly language. Chilton (2004:23) insists that there is a significant relationship between politics and language. Language is fundamental in political discourse in that it examines linkages between political thought and behaviour of political actors, as well as language practices of the political speaker. In addition, the study of Blommaert (1997) is concerned mainly with 1) the significance of language practices in a political context, 2) the interplay between language and politics which is inherently “dynamic, constitutive and reciprocal” in nature, and 3) the relationship between language and politics “had penetrated various domains of the study of language” (Blommaert, 1997:1-2). Furthermore, Pelinka (2007: 134-135) points out that language in a political science environment plays a critical role, in that, he examines the role that “language” and “policy” play for instance in the development of modern-day nation-states and national identity, as well as how language is used in mobilising political change in the society. On the contrary, Edelman (1988:104) emphasises that language in the political context is essential for

the creation of meaning as well as for the “construction of beliefs” about the political actors and events.

PDA does not present an objective analysis of political discourse, rather it provides a subjective and critical analysis in the overall CDA framework. van Dijk (1998:11) explains that the significance of the PDA is to critique the underlying role of discourse in the reproduction of political power, maintaining power, abuse of power, resisting power, ideology, hegemony and domination essentially by political discourse. This, therefore, makes PDA a critical approach to discourse analysis.

Wang, (2016:180) however, argues that although PDA presents researchers with a significant framework of critiquing political discourses, little is known about the political discursive practices that perpetuate a political system. She further points out that the analysis of political discourse is relevant to the sub-discipline of communication, political communication that is primarily a cross-disciplinary field of study concerned mainly with the communication needs of political sciences.

For this study, van Dijk (1998) identified different tools for analysing political discourse. Firstly, the genre is a key tool for classifying discursive practices such as unique style, lexical choices, jargon shared among prime ministers, cabinet ministers, members of parliament and other government officials. Political discourse includes other rituals unique to members of parliament, such as the opening of parliament, how ministers address the speaker of parliament and other members of the house for example.

The second tool of analysis in the political discourse is the political actors, namely: presidents, prime ministers, members of parliament, government, political parties both at the local, national and international levels of government. Politicians in political discourse are a group of people who are paid to carry out political activities, are elected and/or appointed as the central players, therefore, they are professional politicians (van Dijk, 1998:13).

The third tool of analysis in the political discourse involves political actions. Political actions are primarily action-oriented that involve governing, ruling, legislating, protesting, dissenting or voting political campaigns, voter education, debates in parliament and government stakeholder engagement (van Dijk, 1998:14). These political actions do not occur in isolation; rather they involve people such as citizens, voters, individuals such as members of pressure and issue groups, demonstrators and dissidents. All these individual groups and established political organisations and institutions are part of the political process and are actively involved in the action of political discourse. Many of these political actions are discursive practices found in political texts.

The last tool of PDA is a political context. Political discourse does not occur in a vacuum, rather within a particular context. The significance of a context is that it categorises a political discourse into different genres. Political participants and events shape the context of political discourse, among others. Political actors occupy a political constituency and events occur within a particular setting, time, place, circumstances, occasions, intentions, functions, goals and political implications.

These tools shall be used in Chapter Seven, mainly to analyse underlying political myths in the political television advertisements.

Now that the preceding sections have provided a comprehensive discussion on the nature of the analysis method of PDA, the next section presents a discussion on DMA.

#### **4.5.3 Discourse Mythology Analysis (DMA)**

DMA is a third analysis method of the CDA and a work of journalist scholar Daren Kelsey (2015). Key to DMA is the analysis of the discursive construction of mythology in the political text (Kelsey, 2015a & 2015b). Kelsey's (2015a:24) approach to DMA

draws inspiration largely from a combination of traditional approaches of the CDA, described in different sections of this chapter, namely: Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional model, Wodak's (2001) discourse-historical approach, Hodge and Kress (1988), as well as van Leeuwen's (2005) social semiotic analysis and CMA (Charteris-Black, 2004).

Key to DMA is the analysis of the ideology, discourse and myth within the text. Kelsey's (2015:43-49) study uses DMA to analyse the political myth of the Blitz,<sup>11</sup> using the following analysis tools, the context, disclaimers (self-positive presentation), generalising, hyperbole (excessive exaggeration of aspects within a text), meanings, ideologies, intertextuality, lexical choices, modality, metaphors and narratives among others. These analyses tools of DMA will be used in Chapter Seven of this study mainly to analyse the underlying political myths.

It will be inadequate to analyse political myth without considering the significant aspect of metaphor in the construction of political myth. Therefore, to address this concern, the next section focuses on the CDA method essential in the analysis of metaphor using CMA.

#### **4.5.4 Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA)**

This study adopted the fourth method of the CDA, the CMA as expounded by Charteris-Black (2004). Chapters Two and Three of this study pointed out that narratives employ various linguistic features mainly to construct underlying political myths. It is for this reason therefore that, this study employs CMA mainly to analyse the underlying linguistic feature of metaphor in the context of the political myth.

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<sup>11</sup> A story of Britain during the Second World War as retold in the British newspaper, defiance of the Nazi Germany.

The term metaphor originates from the Greek word *metaphor* which means “to transfer”, meaning from its literal meaning to an implied meaning (Chilton, 2004:56-57). A metaphor is a linguistic figure of speech by which a word or a phrase present an implied comparison between two different things, which have one common characteristic, for example, a car and the eagle share a common characteristic of speed (Edelman, 1967: 218).

Based on the above definition, Charteris-Black (2004) argues that metaphor is significant to the CMA framework, mainly to explore implicit intentions of the language users, their underlying ideologies and subliminal power relations within the context of a political myth. More fundamental to CMA is the underlying ideological and conceptual nature of metaphor that transmits a set of intended knowledge to the audiences. Charteris-Black (2004:1) maintains that metaphor is used by politicians mainly to legitimise and/or delegitimise a political discourse. This is achieved by speaking for instance with, “evidence, authority and truth” (Chilton, 2004:24). However, despite its significance, Hart (2008) laments that metaphor has however been neglected in the mainstream CDA.

For this particular study, the significance of the CMA in the analysis of the metaphor within the context of a political myth is mainly to communicate, identify, analyse and interpret underlying ideological and conceptual metaphors as well as reveal underlying intentions and ideologies of language (Charteris-Black, 2004). Within the context of political myth, Bottici (2007), Edelman (1971), Floods (2002) and Tudor (1972) concede that metaphor “prioritises the selected perceptions and ignores others, it helps one to concentrate upon desired consequences and help one to ignore unwanted, unthinkable or irrelevant premises and aftermaths” (Edelman, 1971:67-68). More importantly, a metaphor does this in a subtle way of highlighting essentially what the political audience wants to believe and avoiding what one does not wish to face. It is therefore on this basis, that metaphor is instrumental in shaping political support and opposition as well as creating a context by which political audiences make

decisions (Tudor, 1972:36-37). This means, metaphor constructs, legitimise and/or delegitimise a political issue symbolically. Furthermore, metaphor in the context of political myth simplifies political reality, political cause and effect as well as presents a distorted political perspective mainly to the benefit of the political speaker. On the other hand, metaphor in political myth is essentially meant to persuade political audiences using persuasive arguments (Charteris-Black, 2004).

Compared to manipulation, persuasion essentially means that political audiences “are free to believe or act as they please, depending on whether or not they accept the arguments” of the political speaker or actor (van Dijk, 1995:154). While manipulation and political audiences are passive and victims who are unable to understand the real intentions of the manipulator, rather than active audiences who are empowered to make individual decisions. With the above signs of metaphor, politicians use political language persuasively using conveying a particular picture of reality by being implicit rather than explicitly.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980:453-486) point out three significant types of metaphor, namely: the “orientational metaphor”, “ontological metaphor” and “structural metaphor”. The orientational metaphor evokes positive and negative linguistic political expression such as political stability, prosperity and economic growth of the society, In other words, the “upward mobility” of the society while the opposite is a “downward orientation” of the society such as a political, economic or social crisis, contraction, instability and poor governance suggest the use of negative metaphors. The second type of metaphor is the ontological metaphor. Lakoff and Johnson (1980:461) note that “ontological metaphor” functions primarily to communicate human understanding through lived experiences, the personification of political issues, and abstract political issues mainly to make them familiar and immediate to political audiences. Lastly, the “structural metaphor” refers to metaphors that are “structured in terms of one another” (ibid). For instance, arguments between two opposing political leaders or parties can be described as a battle or war of words between opposing politicians.



It is worth noting that the above types of metaphor in a media text are not only presented in linguistic form; they are also presented in visual texts. In a study of the U.S presidential television advertisement campaign, Kort-Butler (2020:628-648) pinpoints how crime is used as a metaphor in the visual images of political television advertisements from 1952 to 2016. In these advertisements, crime is labelled as a “failure” by depicting lawlessness such as fires in the streets, burning of buildings, street violence, protestors being dragged, sidewalks filled with litter, domestic violence depicting a man beating a woman, and drugs as “public enemy” among others (Kort-Butler, 2020:632). Furthermore, video production techniques used in political television advertisements such as gentle or scary music, the use of black and white colour, settings such as a house with a family, the youth and playground children. Bright lighting as opposed to darker lighting and candidates pictured at work, with their suit coats off and their sleeves pushed up, shaking hands with members of the community, talking and listening to members of the community are used to create a particular metaphor about the political candidate. The presentation of crime as a metaphor in both linguistic and visual text points to the fact that both verbal and visual metaphors are similar rather than different in most respects (Indurkha & Ojha, 2017).

While Machin and Niblock (2008) disagrees and argues that visual and verbal texts are different as visual texts are more direct and specific than words which can be vague and often be interpreted differently. Despite the above arguments or disagreements, this study concurs that metaphor, whether presented in visual or verbal texts, plays a critical role in the persuasion process of the audience’s engagement with mediated texts. Although the effects of metaphor on political audiences are beyond the scope of this study, what is key to this study is the recognition of the importance of metaphors presented in the verbal and visual texts.

Based on the above, this study employs CMA in Chapter Seven mainly to identify, analyse and interpret inherent metaphors used in political myth expressed in the verbal and visual text of the selected political television advertisements.

#### **4.5.5 Discourse Historical Approach (DHA)**

The fifth analysis method of CDA for this study is the DHA conceptualised by Martin Reisigl and Ruth Wodak (2017). One of the main premises of the DHA approach is to identify, analyse and interpret historical genres on an issue from different verbal and visual texts.

Moreover, Wodak (2001: 65) points out underlying three types of critiques in the DHA, namely: (1) the critique of the verbal and visual texts to uncover underlying discourses; (2) “socio-diagnostic” critique, which mainly uncover underlying persuasive and manipulative nature of certain discursive practices of a particular era or time; and (3) prognostic critique, which sought to observe the improvement of communication over the years. The above critiques are essential because they present this study with analysis tools of the historical discourses in the context of the political myth and political television advertisements.

The above three types of critique are applied by employing the following steps of DHA, which involves: Firstly, identifying the specific contents or topics of discourse, therefore genre. Secondly, investigating underlying discursive practices or strategies of the text. Lastly, examination of the linguistic characteristics and their underlying discursive strategies of the text (Reisigl & Wodak, 2017:193). The above methods of analysis are mainly concerned with the integration of all available historical information in the analysis and interpretation of different layers of a text (Reisigl & Wodak, 2017). This means the DHA researcher starts with the analysis of the content of a text, which is mostly linguistic, explores underlying discursive strategies and genres employed during a certain period. Wodak (2001) notes that historical discourses possess underlying discursive practices and can be researched using: 1) integration of all available information of the historical background and 2) exploration of particular types of discursive practices and underlying genres of discourses have been subjected to diachronic (underlying persuasive and manipulative nature of certain discursive practices changes over the years). And 3), the role of the researcher, is to identify

and/or observe all the underlying historical linguistic features, different historical genres and take note of changes in the discourse that has occurred throughout history. The above three focus areas are significant to this study mainly in the analysis of political myth from a historical discourse's perspective available in the verbal and visual texts of political television advertisements.

In a nutshell, key areas of analysis of DHA is essentially identifying; 1) underlying discursive practices of historical discourse, 2) the intertextual relationship of the verbal and visual texts, different historical genres, historical discourses, the linguistic and visual features and institutional frames of a specific historical context presented in the verbal and visual texts, and 3) a broader historical context by which discursive practices are essentially embedded in the verbal and visual texts. The DHA will be applied in Chapter Seven of this study mainly to analyse the underlying historical discourse of political myth in the selected political television advertisements.

The next section provides a discussion on the nature of the analysis method of SSA.

#### **4.5.6 Social Semiotic Analysis (SSA)**

Social semiotics analysis is the sixth analysis method of CDA. Social semiotics is the seminal work of Hodge and Kress (1988) and van Leeuwen (2005). The analysis method is both a theory and a research method of CDA. For this study, SSA is used primarily as a research method to deconstruct the manifest and latent ideological meanings of political myths in the verbal and visual texts. Social semiotics argues that underlying ideological meaning contributes towards the creation of the social and/or political-ideological meaning. Social semiotics systematically investigates how social semiotics "resources" (verbal and visual signs) are used to convey the underlying and overt, socio-cultural, political, historical and economic ideological meanings of the media text (Kress & van Leeuwen 1996).

In the review of the previous studies of Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), Jewitt (1997), Jewitt and Oyama (2004), Iedema (2004), and van Leeuwen (2005) focus specifically on the use of social semiotics as a research method in the analysis of visual and verbal texts of commercial advertisements rather than of political television advertisements. These studies identified different dimensions of social semiotics in the analysis of verbal and visual texts. These dimensions are genre, ideology, production techniques such as camera shots, camera movement, settings, verbal and visual narratives structures, grammar, cohesive devices, metaphor and rhetoric among others. The above-mentioned studies argue that verbal and visual texts of television media possess underlying manifest and latent ideological meaning. Therefore, this study uses the social semiotic dimensions of representation, rhetoric and ideology in the analysis of political myths presented in verbal and visual texts of the selected political television advertisements.

The last analysis method of CDA to be considered is MCDA.

#### **4.5.7 Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA)**

The last analysis method is the MCDA, O'Halloran (2004), Machin (2016), Machin and Mayr (2012), Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) argue that CDA has moved beyond language; it has taken on board other discourses that are significantly multimodal and visual. Therefore, MCDA is a relatively new approach of the CDA, "which has been described as one of the influential and visible branches of discourse analysis" O'Halloran (2004). Pioneers of MCDA are Kress and van Leeuwen (2001), O'Halloran (2004), Machin (2016), Machin and Mayr, 2012.

In their early work, they were involved in examining how visual texts and modalities such as political cartoons, symbols and music among others, are used by political actors mainly "to construct and contest the dominant social and political reality" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001:43). However, the assumption that modality represents a

degree of truth and/or credibility is problematic in that “what is true or credible to one’s social environment is not credible to another” (van Leeuwen, 2008:160). Therefore, the aspect of the social or political reality is subjective and relative, rather than objective.

In addition, Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) point out that texts are multimodal, they use different modalities of communication such as rhythm, intonation, facial expressions, gestures and body language among others, which are paralinguistic. It is essential to point out that these modes are distinct semiotic and used for expressing a set of meanings. that is, communication occurs primarily in more than one mode. Modality, therefore, refers to channels and/or mediums that represent underlying ideologies of the political realities within the media texts (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001:155). These modalities are therefore defined as a unique semiotic system that examines how a mode of expression affects and contextualises the exchange of meaning.

Their contribution to CDA includes the use of visual images as a form of modes in media texts such as newspapers, magazines, public relations material, advertisements and different books. They lament, however, that most of the work done in the CDA had focused largely on the verbal texts rather than on visual and musical texts. It is important to stress that these visual components of a text are organised and structured messages that are connected to both written and spoken components but not necessarily dependent on the verbal text (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001).

Against this backdrop, the main aim of MCDA is to investigate underlying meaning arising from the integrated use of semiotic resources mainly words and visual images in the text, as well as, how the two create underlying meaning (Machin & Mayr, 2012:31). MCDA is used to explore the way individual elements in images such as objects and settings can signify discourses in ways that might not be obvious at an initial viewing. Key to MCDA is the analysis and interpretation of the language used in conjunction with other semiotic resources, which are simultaneously used for the

creation of meaning. MCDA considers the function and meaning of visual images together with meaning arising from the integrated use of the semiotic resources. What it means, is that MCDA is mainly concerned with how language verbal texts and visual texts, images and other modes of communication combine to create the underlying meaning. MCDA essentially emphasises that images are equally as important as linguistic texts in terms of the creation of the underlying meaning (Machin, 2016:51). Images communicate ideas and values; they represent the underlying discourses they communicate.

#### **4.6 CONCLUSION**

This chapter provided an overall discussion on the CDA, arguing that CDA is a theoretical framework and research method essential in the analysis of the underlying discourse in the verbal and visual texts. From a theoretical perspective, this chapter identified the underpinning concept of the CDA, namely: critique, discourse, message, power, ideology, and text significance. These concepts are critical in the interrogation of the underlying ideological meaning of discourse. Moreover, the work of multiple scholars suggests that CDA is a broader and multidisciplinary approach that uses other research methods, namely: the three-dimensional model of discourse, PDA, CMA, DMA, DHA, SSA and MCDA. These research methods of the CDA are essential in the interrogation of the underlying discourse of political myth of the political television advertisements.

The next chapter outlines the research methodology framework that had been employed in this study.



## **CHAPTER FIVE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter of this study located the nature of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a theoretical framework and a research method. The main purpose of this chapter is to explain the methodological procedure on how to collect and interpret data to be used in this study. Since the study follows a critical approach of the qualitative content analysis, it uses a CDA as a research method in examining nine political television advertisements of the ANC, DA and EFF political parties used during 2014, 2016 and 2019 South African national, provincial and local government elections campaigns. This chapter uses the qualitative research design to demarcate the population of the study, the unit of analysis about the selected ANC, DA and EFF political television advertisements.

### **5.2 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PARADIGM**

There are two main paradigms in research, namely the qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. According to Bryman (2012:630), a paradigm is “a cluster of beliefs” that dictates research in a particular discipline and influences what to study, how research should be conducted, which research methods are appropriate and which process should be employed in doing research and how results should be interpreted.

This study employs a qualitative research paradigm rather than a quantitative research paradigm. A qualitative research paradigm is defined as a research paradigm concerned mainly with describing, observing, interpreting, and understanding words and/or human beings as social actors in their natural setting, rather than measuring statistical frequencies (Cresswell,1994:2). In other words, the qualitative research paradigm is more concerned with the analysis of words and human behaviour. This,



therefore, makes the qualitative research paradigm the opposite of the quantitative research paradigm, mainly concerned with the measurements of data using numbers, statistics and figures.

Qualitative research paradigms are inherently exploratory studies as they explore an unknown area of research that is based for example, on obtaining new insights. Descriptive studies in the qualitative research paradigm are described as characteristics of a phenomenon such as an in-depth description of a case study (Babbie & Mouton, 2012: 71-272). Although descriptive studies are qualitative, Davis (2012: 75-76) argues that “many researchers avoid labelling their studies as descriptive studies” because the basic qualitative description is not highly interpretative in the sense that a researcher would deliberately choose to describe an event conceptually and philosophically and facts rather than critical views of everyday life.

With the above in mind, a qualitative research paradigm is more relevant to this particular study for the following reasons: firstly, the researcher is an active participant in the selection of data of political television advertisements of the South African political parties (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006: 114-115). It is worth noting that without the active participation of the researcher, the study will not have data. Secondly, the researcher is actively involved in determining appropriate research methods and techniques used mainly to collect and analyse as well as to interpret data. Thirdly, because of the research design of the qualitative research paradigm, the researcher is constantly “adapting”, “evolving” and “changing” his or her data analysis methods in the process (du Plooy, 2009:51). Hence, Chapter Four identified and pointed out that this study uses different analysis methods of CDA namely: Three-Dimensional Model of Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1992), DHA (Wodak, 2001), CMA (Charteris-Black, 2004), PDA (van Dijk, 1998; Chilton, 2004; Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012; Wodak, 2001), DMA (Kesley, 2015), SSA (Hodge & Kress, 1988; van Leeuwen, 2005) and MCDA (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001, O’Halloran 2004, Machin 2016, Machin and Mayr, 2012).

These research analyses methods will be used interchangeably throughout Chapter Seven of this study in the analysis of the underlying discourses of political myths in the selected political television advertisements.

Fourthly, the qualitative research paradigm provides the researcher with the opportunity to probe various interrelated subject matters. Therefore, this makes qualitative studies “interdisciplinary, interpretive, political and theoretical in nature” (Bryman 2012:4). The rationale of employing a qualitative research paradigm, particularly for this study is essential to explore, interrogate and interpret underlying meanings of the political myths rather than to quantify.

Fifthly, with the qualitative research paradigm, the researcher is mainly concerned with underlying events of a context as they occur rather than with events occurring in a controlled environment such as laboratories (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006: 115). For this study, the researcher analyses verbal and visual texts using interpretation based on his or her observation of events rather than on calculations. In the context of this study, the researcher is mainly concerned about the underlying discourse of political myth in the political television advertisements during elections campaigns.

Lastly, based on the researchers’ observations, this study follows a qualitative tradition of inductive studies rather than deductive studies (Bryman 2012). Therefore, there is no universal reality in the qualitative research paradigm. The type of data suitable for the qualitative research paradigm is largely empirical data such as case studies, personal experiences, life stories, interviews, artefacts, cultural texts, historical, musical and visual texts among the others (Baddie & Mouton, 2012:270).

Now that the foregoing section of this chapter has pointed out the nature of the qualitative research paradigm, the next sub-sections of this chapter focuses on the philosophical assumptions of the qualitative and quantitative research paradigm, namely: ontology, epistemology, methodology and theoretical assumptions. However,

for this study, it is important to point out that this study focuses mainly on the philosophical assumptions that shape the qualitative research paradigm.

### **5.2.1 Ontological assumption**

The first philosophical assumption of the qualitative research paradigm is an ontological assumption. The concept of ontology originates in the Greek language. *Ontos* means “being or that which is” and *logos* means “the study of”, thus ontology is defined as the study concerned mainly with the nature “of being, existence or reality and knowledge” (Bezuidenhout, Davis & du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014: 23). What it means, is that ontology is mainly concerned with the nature of a phenomenon, the underlying nature of reality and knowledge among others of a phenomenon.

There are three distinct assumptions of ontology, namely: realists, nominalists and social construction positions (Bryman, 2012; Neuman, 2011 & Bezuidenhout *et al*, 2014). The realist sometimes called objectivism is concerned about the assumption that the world exists independently of humans and their interpretations of it (Neuman, 2011:89). This means the researcher of a qualitative research paradigm draws a distinction between the way the society is structured, the underlying meaning and the interpretation thereof. The second assumption of ontology is the nominalist assumption which claims that there is a real-world with material features such as economic, social and political relations, names, concepts and labels are used mainly to structure the social reality (Hart, 1991:24). The researcher of the qualitative research paradigm is therefore aware of the underlying structures that construct social realities in society. The third assumption of ontology is idealism which asserts that social reality is only constructed through the human mind and social meanings (Bryman, 2012:67). Thus, the role of ontology in the qualitative research paradigm is primarily to inform the researcher about prevailing social realities of the society, the underlying material of the society and underlying ideas that speak to the aspirations and inherent meaning of the society. These underlying assumptions are critical to this

study in that they point out to the researcher to interrogate the above-mentioned underlying structures of the society.

In addition to the above nature of ontology, Nieuwenhuis (2020:65) and Miller (2005:71-75) point out there are different ontological positions in the context of qualitative research paradigm, namely: post-positivism, interpretivism, critical theory, symbolic interaction, and postmodernism.

#### *5.2.1.1 Post-positivism*

The first position of ontology in the context of the qualitative research paradigm is post-positivism. The Post-positivism perspective essentially rejects and opposes the positivist assumptions that emphasise objectivity, complete realism and science (Miller.2005:36-37). This means the early positivist perspectives emphasis is placed largely on the scientific, analysis and mathematical statements that are seen as objective rather than on qualitative research that is mainly subjective.

The ontological position of post-positivism stresses that reality is multifaceted, subjective and mentally constructed by individuals rather than constructed in a vacuum (Nieuwenhuis, 2020:65). Post-positivist researchers argue that reality is not a fixed and objective entity, rather it is subjective and influenced mainly by underlying environmental factors such as individuals or community lived experiences, culture, gender, politics and economics among others. The significance of the post-positivist position in the qualitative research paradigm essentially are 1) approach research mainly from a subjective rather than from an objective point of view and 2) to comprehend that research participants or production of media texts are mainly influenced by the underlying social, political and economic environment.

Post-positivism follows a critical approach (to be discussed in section 5.2.1.4) that argues that “reality does not exist and cannot be perfectly understood” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:14). “Objectivity is recognised as an ideal that cannot be achieved; thus,

research is conducted with a greater subjectivity rather than objectivity” (Nieuwenhuis, 2020:65). This means post-positivism researchers in the qualitative research paradigm reject the emphasis on rational discovery through the scientific method, rejects objective knowledge, ideas of fixed and universal views of reality, but rather favours subjective views.

Given the significance of subjectivity rather than objectivity, this study views post-positivism as an essential position since it encourages the researcher to view deeper layers of the society, the inherent power structures and lived experiences of the society among others that are beyond the surface seen by everyone.

#### *5.2.1.2 Interpretivism*

Interpretivism is the second ontological position sometimes called constructivism as it emphasises mainly “on the ability of the individual to create meaning” (Berg, 2007: 27). Interpretivism is concerned mainly with the researcher’s subjective interpretation of the social and/or political environment under which the verbal and/or visual text of the study is produced, the researcher’s perception of the social context, and the understanding of the respondent’s or text perceptions rather than studying reality from an objective perspective. Therefore, the significance of interpretivism position within the qualitative research paradigm essentially explores, understands, explains and demystifies social reality through lived experiences of research participants. Although this study is not interpretative, rather a critical study, interpretivism requires the researcher to assign a set of meanings to data under scrutiny.

#### *5.2.1.3 Symbolic Interactionism*

Symbolic interaction is the third ontological position in the context of the qualitative research paradigm. It essentially sees reality as “symbolic and constructed” rather than objective (Bryman, 2012:7). Symbolic interaction argues that human actions or societies are not innocent and neutral, rather they are subjective and possess inherent meaning. Humans can read meaning into one another’s actions because of shared meaning such as language. Shared meaning essentially permits the interpretation of signs or actions attached to an event, object and produces various social realities (Berg, 2007:7). Therefore, for this study, the symbolic interaction in the context of the qualitative research paradigm is more concerned with assessing, deconstructing and interrogating underlying ideological meaning that people impose on objects, events and behaviours.

#### *5.2.1.4 Critical theory*

Critical theory is the fourth position of ontology in the context of a qualitative research paradigm. Critical theory is primarily a counterpoint to the early positivist and interpretative position, in that, it argues that both positivist and interpretative positions are “passive, contextual, subjective and relativist” (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007:26). Critical theory in the ontological tradition of qualitative research paradigm is concerned mainly with the interrogation of the underlying complex and dialectical relationships between the structure and human actions in society. It argues that “social structures do not constrain actions, rather enables social action, structures do not serve as a barrier to action, rather structures are essential in the production of the social action” (Giddens, 1984:70). Therefore, the key to critical theory is that social reality is an ongoing process of the construction of the social reality that focuses on the interrogation of the underlying structures of power relations.

In light of the above, the significance of the critical theory in the context of this study, that is, qualitative research paradigm mainly focuses on the interrogation and revealing of the underlying power structures and social relations in the media text of political television advertisements of different South African political parties.

Now that the foregoing section discussed ontological assumptions with their inherent traditions, the second assumption of the qualitative research paradigm is the epistemological assumption.

### **5.2.2 Epistemological assumption**

The second philosophical assumption of the qualitative research paradigm is the epistemological assumption. The concept epistemology originates with the Greek language, the Greek word “*episteme*” primarily means knowledge and “*logos*” means “the study, science or theory of” concerned with how things can be known (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:11). Therefore, epistemology means the study of knowledge, the nature of knowledge and the underlying different ways of knowing. The significance of epistemological assumption in the qualitative research paradigm essentially contributes towards the body of existing knowledge (Nieuwenhuis, 2020:73-74). That is, what counts as knowledge and what are the underlying limits of knowledge.

In the context of qualitative research, knowledge is subjective rather than objective. Therefore, subjective knowledge is produced mainly by a subjective and complex relationship between different elements of society. According to Miller (2005:28-30), epistemologists argue that qualitative findings cannot be universal and generalised to all historical and cultural contexts, rather they are subjective to the specific society. In addition, qualitative researchers argue that precise, systematic and theoretical answers to a complex human problem are not possible within the position of epistemology, rather, they assert that every cultural and historical situation is different and unique. Thus, epistemological tradition within the qualitative research paradigm

requires analysis that is uniquely defined, brings clarity on how people make meaning, and findings cannot be generalised. They however bring clarity on how people make meaning of a phenomenon in a specific context.

For this study, knowledge is subjective, there are intricate relationships and power relations underlying a text that need to be revealed in the political television advertisements of the main South African political parties.

The third assumption of the qualitative research paradigm is a methodological assumption.

### **5.2.3 Methodological assumption**

The third philosophical assumption of the qualitative research paradigm is the methodological assumption. The methodological assumption is synonymous with methods that are appropriate for data collection as well as data analysis primarily to generate knowledge about a phenomenon being studied (McQuail, 2000: 23-24). Furthermore, the methodological assumption in the context of the qualitative research paradigm presents guidelines and other research methods of the qualitative research paradigm mainly for solving research problems. Given the significance of methodological assumption, other studies or data require a mixed-method research approach of the qualitative and quantitative research paradigm. The relevant research method for this study is critical discourse analysis (CDA) which is critical in the interrogation of the underlying discourses of political myth in the selected political television advertisements.

The following section presents a discussion on the last philosophical assumption of the qualitative research paradigm, the theoretical assumption of the qualitative research paradigm.



#### **5.2.4 Theoretical assumption**

The last philosophical assumption of the qualitative research paradigm is the theoretical assumption. The theoretical assumption as a philosophical assumption essentially presents a theoretical direction to the qualitative research paradigm to a field of study. It is important to point out that theory is inseparable from research, that is, a theory is built on a solid theoretical foundation. Theory in the context of qualitative tradition is used mainly for describing and explaining certain phenomena, understanding underlying assumptions and implications of a theory as well as sophisticated ways of describing and explaining a phenomenon (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006: 11). The relevant theory is a political myth as indicated in Chapter Three and Chapter Four of this study. CDA as a theory presents the researcher with impetus on how to analyse and critique political myths.

Now that the foregoing section has briefly located philosophical assumptions of the qualitative research paradigm. These assumptions are critical in locating underlying traditions in the context of the qualitative research paradigm. The next section presents this study with the research design, that is, point out steps involved in the collection and analysis of the selected political television advertisements of the main South African political parties, the ANC, DA and EFF.

### **5.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The following sections of this chapter present this study with a research plan or steps involved on how this research is going to be conducted, that is, methods and techniques involved in the sampling, collection, analysis and interpretation of data. The unit of analysis in this study are mainly the verbal and visual texts selected specifically from political television advertisements that possess underlying political myth presented in the ANC, DA and EFF political parties used during 2014, 2016 and 2019 national, provincial and local government elections. Chapters Three and Four

argued that political myths are delivered using verbal and visual texts of political television advertisements.

This study selected data from a population of the 2009 to 2019 political television advertisements elections campaigns broadcasted in the SABC and the e-TV television channels. Therefore, the total population of the political television advertisements includes the following political parties' political television advertisements, namely: the ACDP, ANC, COPE, DA, FFP, ID, IFP and UDM. From the problem statement of this study, the target population of the study involves the entire population of political television advertisements from 2009 to 2019 South African local, provincial and national government elections campaigns to which the researcher intends to present research findings. Accessible population refers "to a particular section of the population that can be included in the study" (Bryman, 2012: 714). In this study, the researcher has access to the selected unit of analysis of the verbal and visual texts selected specifically from the political television advertisements that possess political myths of the ANC, DA and EFF political parties used during 2014, 2016 and 2019 national, provincial and local government elections.

The time dimension of this study is longitudinal. A longitudinal study is a study or data collected over an extended or long period such as two or more years (Babbie & Mouton 2012:92). Because this study involves studying the ANC, DA and EFF political television advertisements that occurred over five years, from 2014, 2016 to 2019, this, therefore, makes this study longitudinal rather than cross-sectional.

The primary method of reasoning for this study is inductive. According to du Plooy (2009:33), inductive reasoning is used in qualitative research to focus more on the "logic of exploring meaning-making processes as experienced by different mass-media messages". This means the role of a researcher is to observe, produce and reconstruct reality from the researcher's frame of reference since there is no universal reality (Bryman, 2012). The researcher plays a significant role in analysing and interpreting results of the political television advertisements taken from the three main

South African political parties, namely; the ANC, DA and EFF with particular emphasis on intuition-based knowledge, social and political process, terms of his or her own experiences in the field (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006; Babbie & Mouton, 2012).

This study adopted a qualitative research paradigm and embraced a non-probability sampling method. This study uses a purposive sampling method, a type of non-probability sampling method by which the unit of analysis is strategically selected so that the sample is relevant to the research question, to the main problem statement as well as to the research aims and objectives of the research as pointed out in Chapter One of this study (Bryman, 2012:188).

The sample size for this study involves a selection of three political television advertisements of the political parties, namely, the ANC, DA and EFF television election advertisements used in South Africa during the 2014 national elections, 2016 local government elections and 2019 national elections. The three political parties, namely the ANC, DA and EFF are sampled mainly because they are the main political parties in South Africa and they have more seats at the national assembly, provincial and local governments. The ANC is the governing political party, while the DA and the EFF are the main opposition political parties both at the national, provincial and local government. The following table presents a comprehensive selected sample of nine advertisements:

| <b>Political Parties</b> | <b>Date</b> | <b>Title of the political advertisement</b> | <b>Coded names</b> | <b>Running Time</b> | <b>Language</b> |
|--------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| ANC                      | 2014        | <i>2014 ANC Election Campaign</i>           | <i>ANC 2014</i>    | 60 seconds          | English         |
| DA                       | 2014        | <i>Mmusi Maimane 2014 DA Election TV Ad</i> | <i>DA 2014</i>     | 60 seconds          | English         |

|     |      |                                                          |                 |            |                                                       |
|-----|------|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| EFF | 2014 | <i>EFF Banned SABC TV Ad</i>                             | <i>EFF 2014</i> | 60 seconds | isiXhosa & English subtitles                          |
| ANC | 2016 | <i>Remember</i>                                          | <i>ANC2016</i>  | 60 seconds | English                                               |
| DA  | 2016 | <i>Vote For Change on 03 August 2016</i>                 | <i>DA 2016</i>  | 60 seconds | English                                               |
| EFF | 2016 | <i>Our Last Hope EFF 2016 Elections Advert</i>           | <i>EFF 2016</i> | 60 seconds | Sepedi, Sesotho, isiZulu, isiXhosa, English subtitles |
| ANC | 2019 | <i>Why are we voting ANC on May 8?</i>                   | <i>ANC2019</i>  | 60 seconds | English                                               |
| DA  | 2019 | <i>We have to walk the road together with a DA TV ad</i> | <i>DA 2019</i>  | 60 seconds | English                                               |
| EFF | 2019 | <i>EFF 2019 Official Advert</i>                          | <i>EFF 2019</i> | 60 seconds | English                                               |

Table 1: A sample of the selected political television advertisements.

Table 1 presents a comprehensive sample of the selected nine political television advertisements namely, the ANC, DA and EFF political parties used during 2014, 2016 and 2019 South African national, provincial and local government election campaigns. The sampled political television advertisements are coded, *2014 ANC Election Campaign* (coded ANC 2014), *Mmusi Maimane 2014 DA Election TV Ad* (coded DA

2014), *EFF Banned SABC TV Ad* (coded EFF 2014), *Remember* (coded ANC 2016), *Vote For Change on 03 August 2016* (coded DA 2016), *Our Last Hope EFF 2016 Elections Advert* (coded EFF 2016), *ANC New Down 2019* (coded ANC 2019), *We have to walk the road together DA TV ad* (coded DA 2019) and *EFF 2019 Official Advert* (coded EFF 2019). All the sampled advertisements run for 60 seconds and use the English language. In other scenes of the sampled advertisements, such as the 2014 EFF advertisement, *EFF Banned SABC TV Ad* the narrator uses isiXhosa language while accompanied by English subtitles. In the same advertisement, an isiXhosa song is used in the background, a language that the researcher is familiar with. In the 2016 EFF advertisement, *Our Last Hope EFF 2016 Elections Advert* different scenes uses multiple languages Sepedi, Sesotho, isiZulu and isiXhosa languages accompanied by English subtitles. In the 2019 ANC advertisement, entitled *ANC New Down 2019* the narrator uses English while different scenes use isiXhosa, Afrikaans and Sesotho languages without English subtitles. The researcher is competent in all three South African languages.

The selection of the sampled political television advertisements was based on the following criteria: Firstly, the selected advertisements must be an official advertisement of the political parties in question available on the official party website and broadcasted in both the SABC television channels of SABC 1, SABC 2 and SABC 3 as well as the e-TV. Secondly, the identified advertisements were selected on the basis that they resonate with the theoretical assumptions of the political myths as discussed in Chapter Three of this study. Lastly, the identified political advertisements were selected on the basis that, the three political parties present underlying socio-economic challenges facing post-1994 South Africa and therefore needs to be interrogated.

Having explained the research design, the next section outlines methods/techniques of data collection and methods/techniques of data analysis.

## 5.4 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

This study employed qualitative content analysis mainly to collect and analyse the following sampled primary data from political television advertisements of the ANC, DA and EFF political parties. These advertisements were used during 2014, 2016 and 2019 South African national, provincial and local government elections. According to Babbie and Mouton (2012:383), Krippendorff (2004:18) and Bryman (2012:312-314), qualitative content analysis as a data collection method is primarily concerned with the collection of data in the form of documents and texts as well as to present the analysis of data mainly by revealing the underlying meaning of the text, be it the verbal and/or visual texts. With the qualitative content analysis, they maintain that a text cannot be treated as arbitrary, rather texts are inherently subjective and possess underlying ideological meaning.

During the 2014 national and provincial election campaigns, the ANC used one political television campaign while DA used five political television advertisements and the EFF used one. In the 2016 local government election campaigns, the ANC used seven political television advertisements while DA used five elections campaign advertisements; the EFF used one. During the 2019 national and provincial election campaigns, the ANC used seven elections campaign advertisements, DA used four and the EFF used one.

The selection of the above-mentioned political television advertisement was mainly inspired by the study of Thatelo (2016) that focused specifically on the ANC political television advertisements of 2009 and 2014 national and provincial elections. In that study, Thatelo (2016) used social semiotic analysis of the verbal and visual rhetoric of the political advertisements, particularly on television. It is therefore for this reason that this particular study included advertisements of opposition political parties, the DA and EFF. Rather than focusing on the underlying rhetorical meaning of the political television advertisements, the researcher of this particular study is of the view that election advertisements on television possess underlying political myths. Therefore,

this study focuses exclusively on the underlying political myths of the selected political advertisements during the 2014, 2016 and 2019 national, provincial and local government elections of South Africa.

The researcher was exposed to 2014, 2016 and 2019 ANC, DA and EFF political television advertisements during the election campaigns in South Africa. The television elections commercials in question were aired on the SABC television channels 1, 2 and 3 and later uploaded to the political parties (ANC, DA and EFF) internet homepages and YouTube social media network. In the event the advertisements might be removed from the home pages in question, the researcher downloaded them in the form of YouTube video clips from the internet to his personal computer hard drive, with the use of a software called [SaveFrom.net.com](http://SaveFrom.net.com) so that they can be accessed in future.

In the initial stages of this study, the researcher attempted to conduct a comparative study between the South African political television advertisements and other African countries such as Kenya, Ghana and Nigeria political television advertisements. The researcher has the following two main limitations or weaknesses: Firstly, a significant lack of insight into African politics, political culture and the electoral system of the above-mentioned countries. The researcher has strongly trained in communication studies with an interest in political communication a sub-discipline of communication. The researcher is however not trained in African politics nor pure political science discipline that could prepare him to undertake studies of this nature in other countries within the region. Secondly, some of the political advertisements used in Ghana and Kenya are of a lower budget such that they use PowerPoint still images, without a mixture of primary, secondary and tertiary camera movements and techniques. The use of tertiary camera movements and techniques are significant to the researcher as they are highly ideological. Thirdly, as for a comparative study between the U.S and South African political television advertisements, U.S political television advertisements focuses specifically on the presidential candidate rather than political parties.

However, qualitative content analysis as a data collection method has its strengths and limitations. Webb, Campbell, Schwartz, Sechrest and Grove (2020:35) outline some of the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative content analysis. Among the key strengths of qualitative content analysis is the ability to collect longitudinal studies with ease; it does not require participants in the study. In the case of this study, the researcher is in control of collecting data from different periods, depending on his or her research problem statement, research question, unit of analysis, and sample size among others.

Furthermore, by using qualitative content analysis, the researcher is avoiding the difficult ethical regimes required by university bureaucrats or administrators. As such this study is a low-risk study and does not involve human beings as the units of analysis. The data collection method in question is flexible and can be applied to a wide variety of different kinds of unstructured textual analysis. Qualitative content analysis is cost-effective, and data were always accessible. This is relevant to this specific study in that the collected political television advertisements of the South African political parties, namely, the ANC, DA and the EFF are freely available online in political parties' homepages and YouTube webpages.

The weakness however of the qualitative content analysis is that it is ineffective for testing causal relationships between the mediated text and the audience such as the effect of the text on the audience (Webb *et al.* 2020:38). It is important to note it is beyond the scope of this study to analyse the effects of the selected political television advertisements on a group of political audiences. Other limitations of this data collection method relate to the subjectivity of the researcher and the inherent researcher's bias that is often unavoidable (Bryman 2012). However, there are ways and methods to minimise this subjectivity using ethical considerations that a researcher is subjected to.



## 5.5 CRITICAL APPROACH

This study used a critical approach of the qualitative research paradigm as the main research approach. The critical approach originates with critical studies of critical theory, critical literacy and critical applied linguistics among others (van Dijk, 1995). Therefore, the critical approach belongs to the post-structuralism and post-positivist paradigm rather than the positivist and structuralist traditions.

Key tenets of the critical approach are mainly to dig beneath the surface of a verbal and/or visual text and acknowledge that there is an underlying set of structures and relations in a text. These underlying structures are ideological, they reveal underlying power relations, exploitation, marginalisation and injustices among others of the class, gender and/or race (Locke, 2004: 25). Therefore, the main principle of the critical approach is primarily a revelation of the underlying structures of a text.

According to Locke (2004:24), the principle of revelation essentially endeavours to confront challenges and reveals underlying systems of rules, principles, binary oppositions and values that are ideological, historical, political and socially situated for critique. The significance of revelation as a principle of critical approach reveals underlying binary oppositions, uncertainties, challenges and creates the underlying meaning of the established traditional approaches. In addition, Locke (2004:25) argues that the key to the critical approach is that “human thoughts” and “facts” are not isolated from the overall society; rather they are socially and historically situated, mediated by power relations and ideologies. For instance, the underlying structure of language is subjective and ideological rather than objective. Language involves a careful selection of words, a structured set of grammatical rules and the use of figurative speech such as metaphors, idioms and proverbs are essentially deployed mainly to convey a particular set of ideological meaning that legitimises and/or delegitimises a particular status quo and privileges a particular group of people over the other.

It is noteworthy that meaning within the critical approach is critical rather than objective, concerned primarily with human experiences as they relate to gender, race and class among others (Jansen, 2020:23). The critical approach, however, laments the positivist perspective of objectivity as unsatisfactory because it focuses mainly on the surface appearance rather than the deeper and hidden ideological meaning of the text (Babbie & Mouton, 2012:33-34).

With the above in mind, the following section presents a discussion on how this study will analyse data for this study.

## **5.6 DATA ANALYSIS**

The process of data analysis in this study began with repeated viewing of the selected nine political television advertisements of the ANC, DA and EFF, followed by describing these advertisements. Thereafter, sensitised themes are synthesised from a literature review to interpret the content of the advertisements in question. During the interpretation of the selected advertisements, this study borrows from several different fields or disciplines such as economics, films and television studies (cinematic techniques), history, politics, and sociology to critique underlying ideological meanings of the verbal and visual texts using different analyses methods of CDA. Chapter Four of this study identified and discussed different analyses methods of the CDA meant to analyse underlying political myths of the sampled political television advertisements, namely: Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model of Discourse, DHA, MCDA, SSA, DMA and PDA. The use of different analyses methods of the CDA is essential to this study, in that: 1) It strengthens critical analysis of the sampled data of political television advertisements. 2) They enable the researcher to analyse political myth in the selected visual and verbal texts of the political television advertisements from different perspectives with minimum restrictions, thus they encourage flexibility. 3) More important different analyses methods inform the researcher about the type of data that needs to be analysed. 4) They interrogate underlying ideological meaning with ease. 5) Lastly because analyses methods vary significantly, they encourage intertextuality

from different disciplines such as history, social, political and linguistics as well as the verbal and visual texts of the political television advertisements.

## **5.7 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has provided an overview of the research process involved in the selection of the ANC, DA and EFF political television advertisements. It further explained and justified the use of CDA as a theory and a research method rooted in the critical approach. Furthermore, it demarcated the population and the sampling process of nine political television advertisements of the ANC, DA and EFF political parties used during 2014, 2016 and 2019 South African national, provincial and local government elections campaigns. Chapter Six is a presentation of data.



## **CHAPTER SIX: PRESENTATION OF DATA**

### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

In the problem statement of this study outlined in Chapter One, it was pointed out that there is a paucity of qualitative content analysis work dealing with textual (both verbal and visual) analysis of political television advertisements mainly in South Africa. Moreover, there is little knowledge about underlying political myths in political television advertisements, particularly in post-1994 South Africa. As such, it is against this backdrop that this chapter seeks to provide a descriptive narrative (as pointed out in Chapter Five) of the nine political television advertisements used by three main South African political parties, the ANC, DA and EFF.

The following chapter (Chapter Seven) interrogates using CDA's different analyses methods underlying political myths found in the ANC, DA and EFF political television advertisements during 2014, 2016 and 2019 national, provincial and local government elections.

The next section presents a narrative description of the sampled ANC, DA and EFF advertisements in chronological order.

### **6.2 THREE OF THE ANC ADVERTISEMENTS: NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION**

The next sections present a descriptive narrative of the ANC political parties.

### 6.2.1 The 2014 ANC Commercial

The *2014 ANC Commercial* is a 60-second (one-minute) advertisement used by the ANC in the fifth national and provincial election of a democratic South Africa. The political advertisement opens with a long camera shot of an African woman in an office building, wearing a business suit, standing against the window and looking over the city.

**-voiceover:**

*“So, they say this country is going backwards”*

The jump cut of a scene is followed by a long shot of a building in a shadow, dark grey clouds and a flock of birds flying in the dark and red sky. A jump cut of a new scene appears in a long camera shot depicting a scene of the morning rush in the inner city of Johannesburg in which people are walking to work while others are waiting for busses next to the closed shops. There is also a man of Indian descent, waiting for the store to open while refuse is lying around to be collected and the inner-city buses are passing by. This is followed by a medium close-up shot in an early morning bus, with mostly high school students (listening to music with earphones on). A jump cut from there is to a newspaper stall, with a black man reading a newspaper. Thereafter, a camera medium close-up shot depicts a scene of a woman shopkeeper watching television news with a concerned look on her face.

**-voiceover:**

*“Every day we hear one negative story or the other; they are always talking.”*

A jump cut from there shows a long shot of a stadium, followed by a close-up shot of a man inside the stadium. The man is looking impressed with the stadium. His scene

is followed by a long shot of a group of pedestrians watching television on the sidewalk in which the presidential inauguration of Nelson Mandela appears. This is immediately followed by a medium close-up shot of a scene of a woman giving birth.

**-voiceover:**

*“But they never talked about how we have moved forward, just yesterday we gave birth to democracy. Although they said we’re too young and inexperienced, we kept building.”*

After a scene of a woman giving birth, it is followed by a panoramic long shot depicting newly built government subsidy houses. This panorama is followed by a medium close-up shot in which a mother is helping her daughter with her homework. The camera jump cuts to a scene of a black family in their bedroom, with the wife and husband both sitting on the bed as he prepares to go work in the early morning. Directly after, the advertisement shows a medium shot of a white family having dinner together at a table. Next, there is a medium close-up shot of a Muslim sleeping on his grandfather’s chest. This is followed by a scene of the city lights in a long shot, with an old man who appears impressed with these lights. A close-up shot of the South African flag appears, along with the narration.

**-voiceover:**

*“While they were talking, we built a nation that we can all live in with freedom and equality. Now South Africa is in a better place than it was 20 years ago.”*

In the scene to follow, there is a panoramic view of a seaport, a long shot of ship captains, and a medium shot of construction workers at the construction site of an electric power plant. This is followed by a medium-long shot depicting health practitioners treating a patient’s eyes. This cuts directly to a group of university engineering students testing a robotic (unidentified) device. This scene is contrasted with another panoramic view; this time of primary school pupils playing on a soccer

field. The soccer field (in a rural setting), on which they are playing games, has a macro-sized image of the South African flag. A jump cut follows the camera to a scene of a primary school pupil in a library, where she is searching for books on a library shelf. Next is a scene of a high school student in a classroom with the following narration.

**-voiceover:**

*“And we will continue to do more, over the next five years we will invest more in infrastructure, give more families free access to healthcare and create six million more work opportunities.”*

A big close shot appears of an old man in the cornfields, followed by a long shot of people working on a farm. Finally, there is a black screen with the ANC. A logo depicting a spear, a wheel, a shield, an arm, and the flag depicting the ANC colours (black, yellow and green). There is a white text written at the top of the logo with the words “VOTE ANC.” and at the bottom of the logo, there is written text with the words “A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL” appears.

**-voiceover:**

*“Let us continue to build because together we move South Africa forward.  
Vote ANC. A better life for all.”*

The next section describes the ANC’s political television advertisement used in the 2016 local government elections.



### 6.2.2 ANC Advert 2016 – Remember

The *ANC Advert 2016 – Remember* is a minute and 30 seconds advertisement used by the ANC political party during the 2016 South African local government elections. The political television advertisement opens with a jump cut of silhouette lighting and a medium camera shot depicting the shoulder back of a woman with a background of glittering city lights.

**-voiceover:**

*“Remember where we started”*

The above scene is followed by a jump cut of a close-up shot depicting a door opening at a voting station, followed by a jump cut of a long camera shot depicting a woman opening the door; inside the room, there is a voting booth.

**-voiceover:**

*“When we voted for the very first time”*

The scene is followed by a close-up shot depicting a young man riding a bicycle while greeting a refuse collector worker riding on a refuse collecting truck.

**-voiceover:**

*“When you put batho pele and went back to basics.”*

The scene is followed by a long camera shot depicting a train pulling into a station, followed by a jump cut of a close-up camera shot of an electric bulb switching on, and a long camera shot of a little girl sitting in a lounge doing her school work. Jump-cut of

a medium shot of a grandmother looking happy at her granddaughter that there is electricity in the house.

**-voiceover:**

*“Do you remember when Ugogo, <sup>12</sup> packet away from the candles for the last time and the light came on?”*

The scene is followed by a medium camera close-up of a man sitting behind the steering wheel of a car, followed by a long camera shot of a panoramic view of a township neighbourhood with a tarred road and overhead electricity lines, and a car in the middle of the road.

**-voiceover:**

*“Driving on a new tared road”*

The camera jump cut followed by a long medium shot depicting a woman standing at the door of a house and a little running to her father.

**-voiceover:**

*“Receiving the RDP home”*

A camera jump cut to a scene of an Indian family, the daughter is happy, showing her parents bursary letter and is given a hug by her mother for receiving a government bursary.

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<sup>12</sup> isiZulu language for grandmother.

**-voiceover:**

*“That government bursary”*

A camera jump cuts to a scene of a man groomed in fashion clothing and a camera is panning right to a woman working on a computer device.

**-voiceover:**

*“Remember getting that first job”*

Followed by a long camera shot of three women walking away from the airplane wearing cabin assistance uniforms.

**-voiceover:**

*“And women reached for the sky”*

This is followed by a scene of a group of young people from different race groups walking the streets wrapped in the South African national flag. A scene of young men riding bicycles along the stadium facility, written in a banner “WELCOME TO ORLANDO STADIUM”. Followed by a scene of a young man riding a bicycle alongside a mural wall art depicting ANC stalwart figures of Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, Oliver Tambo, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, and Helen Joseph.

**-voiceover:**

*“Remember our long walk to freedom, remember Madiba, Tambo, Sisulu and uMamu Winnie”*

This is followed by a panoramic view of agricultural fields, people harvesting carrots, followed by a jump cut of a homestead in a village setting, followed by a panning camera movement of a long camera shot depicting an old house, with an ANC election campaign poster, an election date of 03 August 2016 and a young woman pondering at the election poster.

**-voiceover:**

*“Remember us and why we first voted”*

The above scene is followed by a medium-long shot of a young woman with an Afro-hair, wearing an ANC doek facing a crowd of people shouting *“Amandla!”*<sup>13</sup>. This scene is followed by a panoramic view of a camera long-shot depicting a crowd of multiracial people largely young people hoisting their fists, shouting *“A wethu!”*, With a concluding scene of a medium camera shot of a boy carried on shoulders hoisting his fist, followed by a jump cut of a written text, “Together Advancing People’s Power in every Community”. This was followed by the still image of the ANC logo, with a logo, a wheel, a shield and the flag of the ANC, underneath a written text of VOTE ANC 3 August 2016.

**-voiceover:**

*“We’ve come a long way, and we know much more still needs to be done, Vote ANC”*

The next section presents the third ANC advertisement used in the 2019 national and provincial elections.

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<sup>13</sup> isiZulu language for power.

### 6.2.3 Why we are voting ANC on May 8, 2019

The third ANC advertisement is 49 seconds political television advertisement entitled, *Why we are voting ANC on May 8, 2019*, used essentially for campaigning for the national and local government elections.

The opening scene is a long camera shot of a mountain, followed by a panoramic view depicting the city skyscrapers.

**-voiceover:**

*“A new dawn is breaking of our beautiful land”*

This is followed by a medium close-up camera shot depicting a foreground of a barricade in a pier and a background depicting the seawater. Then there is a jump cut of a medium close-up shot of a man wearing a safety industrial helmet.

**-voiceover:**

*“The ANC is on a path of renewal. A path that will see us continue from where our growth has stalled, with even more determination.”*

This is followed by a jump cut of an elderly woman walking down a busy street, a jump cut of a medium camera shot depicting a scene of an elderly woman seated in her lounge, wearing a doek.

**-voiceover:**

*“Yiyo lonto ndizaku qhubeka ndivotela iANC”,<sup>14</sup>*

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<sup>14</sup> isiXhosa language for, that is the reason I will continue voting for the ANC.

This is followed by a medium camera close-up shot of a man in the office surrounded by a bookshelf, a jump cut of a long camera shot depicting a man with an executive briefcase and holding a gown by his hand, a lawyer.

**-voiceover:**

*A path that addresses the mistake that was made. We are exposing and tackling corruption and state capture.*

The scene is followed by a close-up camera shot depicting a man looking through a window, secured with steel butlers.

**-voiceover:**

*“We are focusing our efforts on safe communities”,*

*“Dit is hoekom ek stem vir die ANC!”<sup>15</sup>.*

The scene is followed by a medium camera long shot of a man driving a forklift vehicle inside a warehouse surrounded by wood.

**-voiceover:**

*“And we are turning the tide on unemployment with more decent jobs.”*

*“That is why I am voting ANC”.*

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<sup>15</sup> The Afrikaans language, for that is why I vote for the ANC.

This is followed by a scene of a long medium camera shot depicting a student seated inside the library building surrounded by books.

**-voiceover:**

*“The promise of free education is now a reality”,*

*“And that is why I am voting for the ANC”.*

This is followed by a jump cut of a medium camera shot depicting a white farmer in his field.

**-voiceover:**

*“The future of our country lies in the hands of every single South African, Batho kaofela”,<sup>16</sup>*

This is accompanied by a jump cut of a close-up camera shot of faces of people of different races and a still image of VOTE ANC – let’s grow South Africa together.

The foregoing section described sampled advertisements of the ANC political party; the next sections focus on the sampled DA political television advertisements.

### **6.3 THREE OF THE DA ADVERTISEMENTS: NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION**

The next sections present a narrative description of the sampled advertisement of the DA political party in chronological order of each of the sampled advertisements.

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<sup>16</sup> Sesotho language for everybody.

### 6.3.1 Ayisafani2-DA TV ad 2014

*Ayisafani2-DA TV ad 2014* is the selected DA political television advertisement for the 2014 national and local government elections. The DA political party used a 44 seconds *Ayisafani2*,<sup>17</sup> *DA TV ad* for elections campaigns. In the run-up to the 2014 national and local government elections, the *Ayisafani2 DA TV ad* was banned by the Independent Communication Authority of South Africa (ICASA) for negative advertising (Chiumbu & Ciaglia, 2016). It is noteworthy that negative political advertisement is prohibited in South Africa by ICASA. According to Johnson-Cartee and Copeland (1996), one of the limitations of negative political advertising is essential to degrade the perceptions of an opponent as a result creates an unhealthy democratic society.

The opening scene of the advertisement is a medium close-up shot of the former DA leader Mr Mmusi Maimane talking to himself in front of the mirror.

#### **-voiceover:**

*“So, they try to silence us, but this is actually what they are afraid of.”*

Followed by a medium close-up camera shot of Maimane in the middle of the street, in the background is a long shot of township houses.

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<sup>17</sup> isiZulu language no longer the same.



**-voiceover:**

*“iDA ayisafani<sup>18!</sup>”*

This is followed by a panoramic view of a crowd of DA supporters wearing blue t-shirts with DA brand and posters written “together for jobs”, “together for change”, “we can win Gauteng 2014”.

**-voiceover:**

*“We are growing, we are strong, we can win. Millions of South Africans are uniting behind the party that can bring change, change that cut corruption, change that guarantee free higher education for qualifying matric, change that can create one million internships, millions of South Africans are voting for change that will create six million of real permanent jobs.”*

*“You can’t have a better life without a job!”*

This is followed by a medium-long shot of Maimane addressing a crowd of DA supporters, a jump cut of a medium shot of the crowd waving a South African flag.

**-voiceover:**

*“Nkosi sikelela iAfrika,<sup>19</sup>*

*Let us live and strive for freedom in South Africa our land. Change is coming! Amandla,<sup>20!</sup>”*

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<sup>18</sup> isiZulu language for DA is no longer the same.

<sup>19</sup> isiZulu language for God bless Africa.

<sup>20</sup> isiZulu language for power.

The closing of the advert is a still image written: “together for jobs VOTE DA” and the former Mayor of Cape Town, Patricia De Lelli, the former DA speaker Lindiwe Mazibuko, the then Premier of Western Cape Helen Zille, and the leader of DA Mmusi Maimane.

The next section focuses on the second advertisement of the DA political party.

### **6.3.2 Vote for Change on 03 August 2016-TV Ad**

*Vote for Change on 03 August 2016 –TV Ad* is the second political television advertisement of the DA selected for this particular study. The advertisement run for 58 seconds used by DA political party mainly for local government election campaigns. The opening scene is a close-up camera shot depicting a green South African Identity Book, thumb and marker, followed by a jump cut of a close-up camera shot depicting the waving of a South African national flag, followed by a medium close-up shot of DA supporters wearing DA branded blue t-shirts, with a DA logo, others wrapped up in South African national flag and DA party flag.

#### **-voiceover:**

*“In 2011 millions of voters throughout South Africa placed their trust in the hands of DA to govern their municipalities.”*

This is followed medium camera shot, depicting a scene wherein two men working as a refuse collector wearing the EPWP overalls, loading refuses into a refuse collector truck and by a medium shot of a single mother and a son, a jump cut of a medium shot of a wheelchair-bound woman.

**-voiceover:**

*“Since then, we have worked hard to make progress for the poor and most vulnerable”*

This is followed by a jump cut of a long camera shot of a panoramic view of a school facility, the sea and a mountain in the background, a medium camera close-up shot of a high school pupil inside the classroom and by a video image embedded with a written text matric pass rate increase in poor areas: 2009; 58%; 2015, 70%.

**-voiceover:**

*“Today where we govern, we deliver the best education in South Africa.”*

This is followed by a panoramic view of newly built social houses and hospitals.

**-voiceover:**

*“We are steadily transforming our communities, with new hospital and developments so that people may live in dignity.”*

This is followed by a video image embedded with written text, highest access to water 98.9%, the highest access to electricity 87.6%, highest access to sanitation 96.4%.

**-voiceover:**

*“Where we govern, poor residents receive free essential services than anywhere else.”.*

This is followed by a medium shot of two men working in the factory, with a written text embedded “unemployment 14.6% below the national average”.

**-voiceover:**

*“With the lowest unemployment in South Africa, we attract investment and create jobs. We know we have more to do. But where we govern, we are making progress to a better life.”*

This is followed by a close-up camera shot of a boy holding the DA flag, jump-cut into DA leader Mmusi Maimane is addressing the Parliament, and a transition using a jump cut into a medium-long camera shot of three women wearing overalls cleaning the street, followed by a medium camera shot of a group in the factory.

**voiceover:**

*“So, lend us your vote on the 03 August, vote for change that stops corruption, brings better services and creates jobs in your municipalities. Vote for change, Vote DA!”*

The next section presents a description of the last DA political television advertisement.

### **6.3.3 We Have To Walk The Road Together**

The last DA advertisement used in the 2019 national and provincial elections is a one-minute advertisement entitled *We Have To Walk The Road Together*. The opening camera shot is a panoramic long shot of the Johannesburg city skyscrapers, followed by a medium shot of a man and boy watching DA President Maimane on television addressing DA supporters.

**-voiceover:**

*“Fellow South Africans, the road ahead of us is going to be difficult. But we have to walk it together”.*

This is followed by a medium-long camera shot of multiracial South Africans, holding and shaking each other’s hands and holding the national flag.

**-voiceover:**

*“We may have different opinions, but we are not enemies. Black, white, coloured and Indians, we all share the same dream. One South Africa for all”.*

This is followed by a medium camera shot of multiracial South Africans holding their green identity book and ID card and a jump-cut of a medium close-up shot of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) Voting station poster. Followed by a medium camera shot of a woman casting her vote at the IEC voting station.

**-voiceover:**

*“The choice before us today is simple, either we choose corruption, more empty promises and go backwards or we can vote for a government that can move us forward, that can get things done and will put a job in every home”.*

This is followed by a close-up shot of a ballot sheet depicting political parties such as Congress of the People (COPE) and United Democratic Movement (UDM) and a cross mark is placed next to the DA political party and a jump cut of a medium-long shot of a man accompanied by his son to cast his vote.

**-voiceover:**

*“Today, we must do what is best for our country, today you have the power to vote for change. Let us give our children a better tomorrow. Let us live and strive for freedom in South Africa our land! Vote DA!”.*

The preceding sections described the DA political television advertisements.

The next section describes political television advertisements of the EFF political party.

#### **6.4 THREE OF THE EFF ADVERTISEMENTS: NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION**

The next sections present a narrative description of the sampled advertisements of the EFF political party in chronological order of the sampled advertisement.

##### **6.4.1 EFF Banned TV Ad by SABC**

The *EFF Banned TV Ad by SABC* is the sixth political television advertisement sampled for this thesis. The advertisements under discussion include the first election advertisement used by the EFF political party during the 2014 national and provincial elections. The advertisement is a 60 seconds long advertisement and was banned by the SABC. According to Chiumbu and Ciaglia (2016), the banning of the EFF television election campaign advertisement by the SABC in the run-up to the 2014 national elections was mainly for inciting violence, which is in contravention of the ICASA statutes.

The opening scene of the EFF advertisement opens with a close-up stationary camera shot of a woman describing the killing of his husband.

**-voiceover:**

*“I was heartbroken when my husband lost his life. He was shot and killed by the police while the whole world was watching. What has become of this world?”*

This is followed by a scene of a stationary still image of dead bodies lying on the ground, police armed with rifles standing in front of dead bodies and armed police vehicles at the back. There is a stationary image of a policeman firing a shot at a close range towards a man and a woman. Behind the policeman, there is a photographer taking photos of a civilian shot by police and a police vehicle. This is followed by a stationary image depicting cross signs of where people died, a rock hill and a written text in red, “Give Justice to Marikana” and by a still image depicting a face of a teenager with tears streaming down her face.

**-voiceover: A song**

*“Thina sizwe, Esimnyama,<sup>21</sup>”*

This is followed by a stationary medium close-up camera shot depicting the leader of the EFF political party saying the following:

*“South Africans, my name is Julius Sello Malema, I know your pain and suffering. Let us vote against the empty promises of the past 20 years. Vote for economic freedom in our lifetime. Let us restore the dignity of an African child. Vote EFF!”*

This is followed by a stationary image depicting the leader of the EFF political party, with a written text “Lets Stop Nkandla Corruption”, the logo of EFF political party

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<sup>21</sup> isiZulu language for we the Black nation.

depicting, the continent of Africa in green colour, a fist holding a spear in black colour, a mining shaft structure in yellow colour.

This is followed by a still image with a written text, increase social grants by 100%, child grant of R600 and old age grant of R2600, Vote EFF and the image of the EFF leader. This is followed by a stationary image of a written text, Destroy E-Tolls Physically! Now is the time for economic freedom.

The next section presents a description of the second advertisement of the EFF political party.

#### **6.4.2 Our Last Hope-EFF 2016 Elections Advert**

The second political television advertisement of the EFF political party selected for this thesis is entitled *Our Last Hope-EFF 2016 Elections Advert*. This election advertisement is a 60 seconds political advertisement.

The opening scene is a long camera shot of a woman working in the vegetable garden, followed by a jump cut of a medium camera shot narrating the following:

*“I have been farming vegetables for many years since the big supermarkets come into the area, it has been hard to sustain myself because they take all the business. I don’t know where hope will come from.”*

This is followed by a long camera shot of a man standing next to an SUV 4x4 vehicle, paying salaries to construction workers. In the background, there are housing structures under construction.

**-voiceover:**



*“We are tired of tenderpreneurs. They pay us little while they make lots of money. We need real jobs that will give us hope.”*

This is followed by an extreme close-up shot of a woman complaining about a lack of job opportunities.

*“It’s been a while since I have been looking for a job. It’s either they want sex from me or bribe money. I don’t know where my hope will come from”.*

This is followed by a long camera shot of men wearing red overalls, red security helmets, shields and steel bars employed mainly to demolish illegal shacks and by a long medium camera shot of a woman seating with her two children surrounded by the rubble of demolished shacks and the smoke at the background and her belongings at the background, lamenting that:

*“The red ants demolished my shack and took a roof off my children’s heads. I don’t know where my hope will come from”.*

This is followed by a panoramic view of a camera long shot depicting shacks and a medium camera shot depicting a group of mourners at the cemetery.

**-voiceover:**

*“If our people are not forced out of their homes, they are buried in congested cemeteries. Where will our hope come from?”*

A jump cut to a slide with a written text – vote for quality jobs, support for small business, no corruption, restoration of the land.

**-voiceover:**

*“Vote EFF! Our lack of hope for jobs and services delivery”*

**-background music:**

*“Sikhalela imisebenzi,<sup>22</sup> sikhalela izwelethu,<sup>23</sup>”.*

The last section of this chapter describes the EFF advertisement used in the 2019 national elections.

### **6.4.3 EFF 2019 election official advert**

In the 2019 national and provincial elections, the EFF used a 49 seconds advertisement, entitled *EFF 2019 Election Official Advert* to campaign for elections. The opening scene is a panoramic view of a long camera shot of the City of Johannesburg, followed by a long shot of a still image embedded in the smartphone cellophane device of the EFF executive leadership wearing graduation regalia.

**-voiceover:**

*“They said we will never make a difference. That our fight for free education will lead nowhere.”*

This is followed by a jump cut of a medium close-up shot depicting a security guard man, reading a newspaper with a news headline caption “Outsourcing of jobs finally falls!”

**-voiceover:**

*“Workers are now insourced with decent wages.”*

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<sup>22</sup> isiZulu language for we are concerned about jobs.

<sup>23</sup> isiZulu language for we are concerned about our nation.

This is followed by a medium camera shot of a television screen depicting protesters holding posters written: “Stop women abuse!”; “Protect our girls and children!”.

**-voiceover:**

*“We are a home to the marginalised voices seeking justice”*

This is followed by a medium-long shot of a young man forced into a half-opened coffin, with a leg of a white man kicking his arms, forcing him into a coffin and a medium shot depicting men seating under the tree listening to radio news.

**-voiceover:**

*“But anti-black racist, corrupt politicians, even the rich and the powerful, now have nowhere to hide.”*

This is followed by a long camera shot depicting a poster advertising The Soil Newspaper, with a caption *Land is Coming* and a jump cut of a medium-long camera shot depicting a white labour crop farmer driving a tractor wearing a blue overall, while a black farmer standing in the field, wearing khaki clothes and giving instructions to the white labourer.

**-voiceover:**

*“Our fight for the land is about giving dignity to black people.”*

This is followed by a panoramic view of a crowded stadium grandstand with the EFF supporters wearing red t-shirts.

*“We are the ones you have been waiting for.”*

This is followed by a medium shot of a stationary camera depicting an EFF leader wearing a suit, with a South African flag standing to his right and the EFF party flag standing to his left. In the background, there is a brown wooden bookcase with a collection of books.

**-voiceover:**

*“May the 8<sup>th</sup> vote for the only party that would make the difference. Vote for the EFF our land and jobs now!”*

## **6.5 CONCLUSION**

In line with the objectives of this study spelt out in Chapter One, this chapter provided a descriptive narrative of the sampled political television advertisements, namely: *The 2014 ANC Commercial, ANC Advert 2016- Remember, Why We Are Voting ANC on May 8, 2019, Ayisafani2- DA TV ad 2014, Vote for Change on 03 August 2016-TV Ad, We Have to Walk the Road Together, EFF Banned TV Ad by SABC, Our Last Hope- EFF 2016 Elections Advert and EFF 2019 Election Official Advert.*

Chapter Seven presents a critical analysis of the underlying political myths presented or embedded in the verbal and visual texts of the sampled political television advertisements. As indicated in Chapters Four and Five of this study, different analyses methods of CDA will be used in the analysis of the above selected political television advertisements.



## **CHAPTER SEVEN: DATA INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS**

### **7.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter interprets and analysis the data presented in Chapter Six. It interrogates underlying political myths presented in the selected ANC, DA and EFF political television advertisements used during 2014, 2016 and 2019 national, provincial and local government elections of South Africa. In the analysis of the selected data, this study addresses the main research question in Chapter One, mainly concerned with, identifying underlying political myths of the three selected political parties, namely; the ANC, DA and EFF in the political television advertisements used in 2014, 2016 and 2019 national, provincial and local government elections campaigns? Moreover, the following sections of this chapter seek to address the main research objectives of the study: 1) to identify underlying political myths used in the selected political television advertisements, 2) to determine how discursive practices in the visual and verbal texts are presented in the selected political television advertisements to construct underlying political myths, 3) to interrogate using the CDA underlying political myths used in the verbal and visual texts of the selected political television advertisements 4) to compare whether there are similarities and/or differences of political myths in the selected political television advertisements, and 5) to present (or propose) the role and/or understanding of political myths in the South African political television advertisements.

Chapter Three using previous studies, namely Boyle (1999), Floods (2002), Gamble and Wright (2009), Girardet (1997), Nimmo and Combs (1980), Sala (2016) and Smith (1999) identified different types of political myths, namely: the conspiracy myth, counter myth, the golden age myth, master myth, heroic or saviour myth, exceptionalism myth, transformational myth, solidarity myth, unity myth as well as the “us” and “them” myths.

Moreover, by drawing from previous studies of Hallahan, Holtzhausen, van Ruler, Vercic and Sriramesh (2007), Esch (2010), Schimitt (2018), Miskimmon *et al* (2013), Kranert (2018), Kissas (2013), Koccer and Yalk (2016), Lynggaard (2017), West and Carey (2006), Zhong and Zhang (2016), Chilton (2004), Zglobiu (2017), Sala (2010), West and Carey (2006), Viala-Gaudefroy (2015), Kenzhekanova and Dalelbekkyzy (2014), Filimon (2012), Moffitt and Tormey (2014), Mbete (2014), Stoica (2017), Collins (2015), O'Shaughnessy (2004), Kibris (2019), Kissas (2013) and Reid (2011) this study identified different hallmarks of political myths, namely: the :1) strategic narrative of political myth (Esch, 2010; Freedman, 2006; Miskimmon *at el*, 2013 & Schimitt, 2018), 2); political myth as a strategic communication (Hallahan *et al*, 2007; Zhong & Zhang, 2016), 3); political myth and political language (Chilton, 2004; Edelman, 1974 & Zglobiu, 2017), 4) political myth and rhetoric (Kocer & Yalk, 2016; Laynggaard, 2017; Stiff & Mongeau, 2003; West & Carey, 2006), 5) political myth and ideology (Esch, 2010; Kranet, 2018), 6) political myth and national identity (Viala-Gaudefroy, 2015), 7) political myth as a political discourse (Kenzhekanova & Daleibekkyzy, 2014; 8) political myth and populism (Brant *et al* 2015; Muller, 2016; Stoica, 2017), 7), 9) political myth and propaganda (O'Shaughnessy, 2004; Kibris, 2019; Collins, 2012), 10) political myth and genre (Boyle, 1999; Kissas, 2013).

The above hallmarks are essential as they have provided this study with key tenets by which underlying political myths in the selected political television advertisements could be interrogated. Considering the above, the next sections of this chapter analyses the selected political television advertisements coded as ANC2014, ANC2016, ANC 2019, DA 2014, DA 2016, DA 2019, EFF 2014, EFF 2016, and EFF 2019.

To achieve the above, this study uses different types of analyses methods of CDA, namely: Three-Dimensional Model of a Discourse, DHA, CMA, PDA, DMA, SSA and MCDA mainly to analyse underlying political myths in the verbal and visual texts of the selected political television advertisements.

## **7.2 ANALYSIS OF VERBAL AND VISUAL TEXTS OF POLITICAL MYTH**

The following sections present a critical analysis of the underlying political myths inherent in the verbal and visual texts from the selected political television advertisements. The underlying political myths are presented in the form of discursive practices of the selected political television advertisements of the ANC, DA and EFF. The analysis of verbal and visual texts of the political television advertisements are based on the identified hallmarks of the political myths discussed in Chapter Three of this study.

### **7.2.1 Strategic narrative of political myth**

Narratives of political myth are strategic. In Chapter Three, Freedman (2006: 22) defines strategic narrative as a “presentation of a compelling storyline that explains and describes political events persuasively”. What it means is that strategic narratives are subliminal rather than explicit and are deliberately constructed and reinforced by political actors primarily to achieve a political objective. To achieve this, and central to this study is that political advertisements under scrutiny use different discursive practices such as personal pronouns in verbal texts.

In the analysis of the selected ANC 2014, 2016 and 2019 advertisements, this study identified modalities of verbal texts constructed using discursive practices such as personal pronouns, namely: “*I*”, “*our*”, “*they*”, “*us*”, “*you*” and “*we*” essentially to legitimise and/or delegitimise a particular political discourse. In Chapter Four, modalities are described as discursive practices that function mainly as channels or media of communication that represents reality and credibility in the verbal and visual texts (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006:155).



*“But they never talked about how we have moved forward, just yesterday we gave birth to democracy. Although they said we were too young and inexperienced, we kept building. We’ve come a long way, and we know much more still needs to be done, Vote ANC.” - ANC2014*

The above voiceover emphasises the use of the discursive practice of the personal pronoun “we” to suggest the inclusion and/or exclusion of a political environment. In an inclusive political environment, the pronoun “we” mainly legitimises a political discourse of a positive political environment, where audiences and the speaker share the same ideology, belong together, are equal members of a political party, are citizens of the same country and are patriotic to their country (Bramley 2001:73).

On the contrary, the modal personal pronoun “we” suggest an exclusive political environment where political audiences are not included and are not seen as equals. Under the exclusive political environment, emphasis is on the discourse of a political party, a political candidate and/or government is essentially planning on what to deliver in the next term of office (Beard, 2000).

Based on the above, in the analysis of the ANC 2014 advertisement, the personal pronoun “we” ideologically suggest that since 1994. The ANC has always been under criticism either by opposition political parties in parliament, the conservative white minority who suffer from the nostalgic olden days of the apartheid era, racist whites who do not believe in black leadership, the business community, including the black middle class who are critical of the ANC-led government. Moreover, the modal personal pronoun “we” is used strategically to legitimise a historical and political discourse of the ANC alone rather than a collective has come a long way in the struggle against colonialism, apartheid and the eradication of inequality among black

South Africans, essentially “a dogma of the liberation struggle movement”,<sup>24</sup> (Dlamini, 2009). The use of the exclusive personal pronoun “we” primarily legitimises the political discourse of the ANC mandate of doing more in terms of service delivery.

At the heart of the personal pronoun “we”, strategically reveals the underlying use of the “us” and “them” type of political myth. Chapter Three describes the “us” and “them” type of political myth as a representation of the social binaries between the privileged group of the society versus the marginal members of the society, this is usually based on different political ideologies such as the liberalist versus the conservative, capitalist versus socialist among others (Nimmo & Combs, 1981:34). The “us” and “them” type of political myth is similar to the personal pronoun “we” versus “they” type of political narrative. The “we” versus “they” type of political narrative is used strategically mainly to convey various meanings to political audiences.

Moreover, the ANC 2014 advertisement uses the personal pronoun “they” strategically to distinguish the main political party from the opposition political parties (Brown & Gilman, 1960: 260-263).

It is important to emphasise that the identified personal pronouns thus far, are used ideologically. Chapter Three pointed out that ideology is mainly concerned with the

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<sup>24</sup> It is worth pointing out for the purposes of this study dispute the heroic liberation myth of the ANC and its relevance mainly in the post-1994 South Africa arguing that the ANC is presented with a new set of socio-economic challenges facing black people rather than fighting institutionalised and legislated regime of apartheid and colonial South Africa. In line with Zondi (2017), this study argues that liberation is inherently historical and suggests old ways of doing politics. The politics of the liberation movement are essentially archaic and follows obsolete traditions. These obsolete traditions include among others, collective leadership, consensus choice of leadership, comradeship and cadre deployment. All of the above underlying traditions are blamed for all sorts of problems and poor decisions of the ANC led government.

creation of the underlying “meaning” of either the verbal or visual text rather than underlying political ideologies (Thompson, 1990:7). The use of the personal pronoun “*they*” reveals underlying ideological meaning, identifying distinct biases, interests and embedded values of the dominant social group among others during the production of a verbal and/or visual text (Kellner & Durham, 2001:6; Bramley 2001:182). Therefore, the personal pronoun “*they*” is used in a negative political context, mainly to delegitimise the significance of the opposition political parties (Brown & Gilman, 1960: 260). In this particular context, the personal pronoun “*they*” is used ideologically mainly to distinguish the ANC from opposition parties such as the DA, EFF, FFP, UDM and more important to delegitimise the significance of the opposition political parties discourse that is critical of the ANC-led government. Moreover, it can be said that by using the underlying personal pronoun “*they*”, the ANC ideologically seeks to delegitimise the established white position of privilege and their power in the South African society and assume a black consciousness approach where blacks assert themselves, take their position and a rightful claim to their country, South Africa (Asante, 1987:12; Biko, 1978:22).

The ANC uses the personal pronoun “*they*” which is condescending or patronising opposition parties and everybody that is critical of the ANC. However, the problem with the underlying “us” and “them” political myth is that the ANC is somehow in denial or indifferent to the socio-economic difficulties of South Africa. At the time of this advertisement, opposition political parties were critical of the ANC led government on a range of issues such as crime, corruption, electricity, lack of service delivery both at local, provincial and national government, lack of economic growth, an increase of poverty, poor public health services and quality of public education, as well as immigration particularly border control and increase of undocumented immigrants residing in South Africa, among others (England, 2014).

*“Do you remember when Ugogo, packed away the candles for the last time and the light came on?”*

*“Remember us and why we first voted”*

*“A new dawn is breaking of our beautiful land”*

*“Yiyo lonto ndizaku (I will) qhubeka ndivotela iANC”*

*“Dit is hoekom ek (I) stem vir die ANC”*

*“The future of our country lies in the hands of every single South African, batho kaofela!” - ANC2016*

The ANC2016 and ANC2019, on the contrary, use personal pronouns strategically, namely: *“I”, “us”, “you”, “our”* and *“we”* repeatedly primarily to establish group identity of the ANC as a political party of the collective, a coalition and an alliance partners with labour organisations such as the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) and the South African Communist Party (SACP) (Chilton & Schaffner, 2002:148). The personal pronoun *“I”* on the other hand is used ideologically to construct a favourable image that emphasises the ANC’s responsibility rather than a group responsibility. The use of these personal pronouns, however, fail to recognise that within the ANC there are underlying dynamics of patronage, clientelism, corruption, gross abuse of office power and divisions in the form of factions (Jika, 2019; Tau, 2017 & Mukwedeya, 2015). These factions are likely to destroy rather than build the future of the ANC and South Africa.

Like the ANC, DA 2014, DA 2016 and DA 2019 political television advertisements use discursive practices of personal pronouns strategically namely: *“they”, “us”, “them”, “we”, “you”* and *“our”*.

*“So, they try to silence us, but this is actually what they are afraid of” –DA 2014*

The DA 2014 uses the personal pronoun *“they”* to strategically construct a discourse that primarily delegitimises the discourse of the ANC as a reputable governing political party and reduces the party as a dysfunctional and corrupt political party in government. At the time of this advertisement, the state broadcaster, the SABC had

banned the 2014 DA political television advertisement entitled *i-ANC Ayisafani* roughly translated as 'the ANC is no longer the same' (Sanderson, 2014). The advertisement was banned on the basis that it is a negative political advertisement that is prohibited by law in South Africa. Therefore, the DA with this advertisement was accused of having contravened prescripts of South Africa's media regulatory bodies such as ICASA as well as the regulatory statutory laws of the ICASA Act of 2000 and the Electronic Communications Act of 2005 (ICASA, 2014).

Secondly, in the advertisement, the then DA Gauteng Premier Candidate and DA national spokesperson Mr Mmusi Maimane were making critical claims that the ANC under the leadership of former President Jacob Zuma has increasingly become a corrupt political party. Then, the ANC President Zuma was embroiled in corruption scandals after scandals involving R200 million of the state money used in the upgrades of his private residence in Nkandla village. Because of these claims, the political advertisement argues that "*they*", the state broadcaster, the SABC attempted "*to silence us*". The use of the personal pronoun "*us*" is ideological and strategically emphasises their legitimacy present justification for challenging the status quo of South Africa.



Figure 7.1: A screenshot of a medium-long shot of Mr Maimane-DA 2014

In the visual text of figure 7.1, the DA 2014 political advertisement uses modalities of visual discursive practices such as a medium-long camera shot depicting Mr Maimane staged in a room with dark walls and wearing a black suit with a white shirt in front of a bathroom mirror. Against the darkroom walls, there is cameo lighting. Bordwell and Thompson (2004:191) define cameo lighting as an indexical sign mainly pointing and focusing attention to the subject in the visual image. The modality of a room with dark walls are semiotical and used ideologically essentially to legitimise a political discourse of a grim state and political uncertainty of political affairs of South Africa. The use of cameo lighting as a discursive practice is directed specifically to Mr Maimane, ideologically to emphasise his importance and seeks to create a fictional hero myth as a new leader of the opposition party. The depiction of Mr Maimane is a modality that suggests he is a leader involved in an act of wearing a black business suit (modality) ideologically suggests assuming a particularly critical role with determination. Standing in front of the mirror (modality) further suggests a self-reflection on how to face South Africa's socio-economic and political challenges. Therefore, the above discursive practices legitimise a new political discourse of transition mainly in a historically and predominantly white political party led by a black man. The ironies of transition in post-1994 South Africa.



Figure 7.2: A screenshot of a panoramic view of a crowd of DA supporters –DA 2014

While figure 7.2 taken from DA 2014 depicts a panoramic view of a crowd of DA supporters holding placards written *WE CAN WIN GAUTENG 2014*. The modal pronoun “we” is used strategically in the visual text to emphasise the significance of equality within the political party, regardless of race. The pronoun “we” used in figure 7.2 suggests a unity myth and solidarity myth which are types of political myth. At the time of this advertisement, DA was led by a former Western Cape Premier, Ms Hellen Zille. Under her leadership, DA had only 6% of black supporters and had elevated black people to senior positions within the party, such as Ms Lindiwe Mazibuko the former DA parliamentary speaker as well as Mr Maimane as the party national speaker and Gauteng Premier Candidate. (Smith, 2014).

*“We are growing, we are strong, we can win.” -DA 2014*

Moreover, the above voiceover of the DA 2014 uses the pronoun “we” strategically, mainly to emphasise inclusion between the DA members and the speaker, that is, the speaker and the member essentially share the same ideology, they belong together as equals rather than individuals.

The discursive practice “we” is used ideologically primarily to legitimise a narrative that the DA is a progressive party that accommodates every member regardless of race and class. However, the party is embroiled in racism scandals and internal factionalism based on racial lines among executive members, that is, between Ms Mazibuko and Ms Zille. According to Joubert (2014), the party is controlled by a “single, dominant and authoritarian personality” of Ms Zille rather than a collective. The prevailing culture of the party is, therefore, of intolerance, paranoia, fear, vengeful and malicious, essentially a subservient culture that satisfies the wishes of a leader, rather than of a collective (van Onselen, 2014). At the heart of factionalism within the DA political party, there is racism that later saw DA losing significant votes of mainly white Afrikaners supporters to the Freedom Front Plus (FFP). This move is because of the claims that the DA is not promoting the political interest of white South Africans like the ANC is concerned about the socio-economic interests of black people.

At the time of conducting this study, DA lost key black leaders, namely, Ms Lindiwe Mazibuko, Mr Mmusi Maimane, Ms Patricia De Lille, and Mr Herman Mashaba citing being “undermined by a backroom white leadership, the cabal that allegedly wanted to control them like puppets on a string” (Davis, 2020). On the other hand, the party uses “we” strategically to express underlying political hierarchy, power, solidarity and to affirm its position as an official opposition political party both at the national, provincial and local spheres of government.

*“You can’t have a better life without a job!” -DA 2014*

Unlike the ANC2014, the DA 2014 uses the discursive practice of personal pronoun “you” strategically mainly to involve audiences in the discourse, to create identity and alliance between the speaker and the audience (Bramley, 2001:148). Moreover, the discursive practice of the personal pronoun “you” is used primarily to connect with audiences, to share sentiments, empathy and lived experiences with audiences. Therefore, this makes “you” an inclusive personal pronoun rather than an exclusive personal pronoun.

However, the personal pronoun “you” is used ideologically as a counter to the ANC master myth of a “*Better Life For All*” as well as to delegitimise the established political discourse that suggests lives of black people in post-1994 South Africa has significantly improved, that is, free from poverty and underdevelopment. Reid (2001) and Sherida-Rabideau (2011) cited in Chapter Two describes counter myth as a myth that delegitimises, opposes and more importantly challenges the master myth of the ‘functioning democracy’ that was supposedly achieved in the so-called post-apartheid South Africa of 1994. The significance of a counter myth is mainly to present an oppositional narrative that primarily discredits and delegitimises the established master myth.





Figure 7:3: A screenshot depicts an extreme close-up camera shot of Mr Maimane-DA 2014

The counter myth is accompanied by the visual modality presented in figure 7.3 taken from DA 2014 that uses a discursive practice of extreme camera close-up shot (modality) that depicts Mr Maimane with a stern face, ideologically delegitimising the established master myth of a “Better Life For All” of the ANC-led government while people have no prospect of economic opportunities.

Like the banned DA 2014 advertisement, the EFF 2014 elections advertisement was prohibited from advertising for the same reasons, as the above DA 2014 advertisement that uses linguistic features that delegitimises the significance of the ANC-led government.



Figure 7.4: A stationary image depicting the police holding riffles and bodies of mine workers lying on the ground-EFF 2014

The above figure 7.4 is taken from the EFF 2014 advertisement depicting police holding riffles, a police vehicle in the background and the bodies of mine workers lying on the ground during the Marikana Massacre of August 16, 2012. In this tragic incident, 34 Lonmin Platinum mineworkers were killed by the South African Police Service (SAPS), primarily by the ANC led government while demanding a wage increase of R12 500. The accompanying visual text of figure 7.4, has the following verbal text:

*“I was heartbroken when my husband lost his life. He was shot and killed by the police while the whole world was watching. What has become of this world?” -*  
EFF 2014

The EFF 2014 uses linguistic grammar as discursive practices strategically such as active voice, subject, verb, nouns and pronouns among others, mainly to delegitimise the significance of the ANC led government. In the above voiceover, the EFF 2014 uses the tragic account of Marikana by ideologically structuring the linguistic grammar in the active voice, *“my husband”*, is a subject, *“was shot and killed”*, a verb suggesting

that the subject is a victim of murder mainly “*by the police*”, a noun suggesting the state security agency uses violence against unarmed and poor citizens when protesting over legitimate issues of pay increase while protecting the interests of the mining capitalists. According to Fairclough (1992), the use of the above language structure as modalities reveals underlying power structures and inequalities in the political discourse as well as legitimises the counter political discourse, which argues the state uses power mainly to effect violence against the defenceless poor. Therefore, the above use of government resources such as police officials, rifles and police vehicles are absolute visual modalities that use discursive practices that argue the government is responsible for the killing of the Marikana Lonmin Platinum mine workers. This brings the ANC-led government in a bad light.



Figure 7.5: A stationary image depicting a police officer firing a rifle at a close range towards a man and woman. -EFF 2014

The political discourse of state violence against citizens particularly the poor and black population is further revealed in figure 7.5. This figure depicts a long camera shot of a black and white visual image depicting a police officer firing a civilian with a rifle at a close range, an armoured police vehicle and the cameraman in the background. The use of black and white colour in figure 7.4 and 7.5 are visual modalities, they are

ideological and suggests a grim state of governance, despair and struggle under the ANC led government. The police violence meted on civilians is a historical discourse that originates in colonial and apartheid, South Africa. In post-1994 there has been a significant increase of police violence meted mainly to the civilian population. The Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID) reported that in 2017/2018, 436 civilians were killed while in 2018/2019 the number of civilians killed by police declined to 393. In 2017/2018, 201 civilians died in police custody while in 2018/2019, 214 civilians died in police custody (IPID Annual Report, 2020:45). Notable police violence towards civilians is the killing of the activist Mr Andries Tatane during basic service delivery protests in Ficksburg, Free State Province (Machete, 2011). The above-mentioned Marikana Massacre of 2012 left 34 mine workers killed in the hands of the police by using excessive force (McMichael, 2012). Death of a Mozambican immigrant, Mr Mido Macia who was tied on the back of a police vehicle and dragged around the township of Daveyton, east of Johannesburg in full view of residents mainly for illegal parking and causing traffic jams (Dlamini, 2013) just to name a few.

The above tragic incidents demonstrate that police brutality is systemic, institutionalised and protected by politicians and police leadership in post-1994 South Africa. For instance, in 2008 the then Deputy Minister of Safety and Security, Ms Susan Shabangu, instructed police officers to “kill these bastards (criminals) if they threaten you or the community. You must not worry about the regulations—that is my responsibility. Your responsibility is to serve and protect. I want no warning shots. You have one shot and it must be a kill shot.” (Evans, 2008). Moreover, in the aftermath of the Marikana massacre, the then national Police Commissioner Ms Riah Phiyega congratulated police officers for killing miners, citing their “actions represent the best of responsible policing” (Maromo, 2014). While in 2009 the then Minister of Police Mr Bheki Cele wanted the law to be changed primarily to allow police officers to “shoot to kill” criminals without worrying about “what happens after that” (Goldstone, 2009). Given the above, it can be argued that the EFF brought the above Marikana massacre ideologically mainly to remind black people particularly the poor and marginalised, that old apartheid habits of violent policing by the then South African Police (SAP) of harassing and brutalising black people in the townships have not changed. The old

habits die hard in the so-called post-apartheid South Africa. Therefore, the significance of the Marikana massacre as political discourse in elections campaigns is ideological and is intended to discredit and/or delegitimise the ability of the ANC-led government to provide security among South Africans, mainly the poor.

It is, therefore, for this reason, that Mbembe (2001:187) observed that the lives of black people in the so-called post-colonial societies such as South Africa can be equated with the noun “a thing”, rather than human beings. He describes a “thing” primarily as a colonised, a subject, a person who does not exist as a “self”, an object, a tool “useful when needed”, a race of people that could be dehumanised, killed, enslaved, jailed, humiliated and lynched with impunity (Mbembe, 2001:187-188). Moreover, the discursive use of “a thing” suggests that black people as a race are essentially a property of white institutions that only have a “value” for being exploited and abused rather than treated as equals (Sithole 2014). The discursive practices used in the above visual images subliminally delegitimises the significance and existence of black people in post-1994 South Africa. Thus, there is so much poverty and hopelessness in black communities.

The use of personal pronouns: “*I*”, “*our*”, “*they*”, “*us*”, “*you*” and “*we*” above resonates with Fairclough’s (1992) three-dimensional model of the discourse as discussed in Chapter Four. Moreover, the above revealed a significant dialectical relationship between a text and a wider socio-economic and political environment under which they were produced. In addition, the above demonstrates a strategic use of the narrative of visual and verbal texts of the selected political parties, revealing the use of MCDA. The significance of multimodality reveals how political reality is constructed in the verbal and visual texts. Lastly, the above discursive practices of the verbal and visual texts are used strategically mainly to legitimise and/or delegitimise political myths under scrutiny.

Now that the above section has described how verbal texts (language using linguistic features such as grammar and personal pronouns) and visual texts are used

strategically in the discourse of political myth, the next section focuses on the strategic communication aspect of political myth.

### **7.2.2 Political myth as a strategic communication**

In Chapter Three, strategic communication has been described as a deliberate communication that is intended to effect changes and to create a particular set of meanings that has a particular kind of implications in the interpretation (Hallahan *et al.*, 2007:23). The meaning is made up of two primary semiological layers, namely, the denotative and connotative. The denotative is arbitrary, explicit, literal, objective and overt (Barthes, 1977: 44-45) while the connotative meaning carries a second layer of meaning which is hidden, latent, ideological and subjective (Barthes, 1977:48). These different layers of meaning are essential to this study as they contribute to the interrogation of visual and verbal texts of political television advertisements.

*“We kept building, while they were talking, we built a nation that we can all live in with freedom and equality, now South Africa is in a better place than it was 20 years ago” -ANC2014*

This voiceover taken from the ANC2014 uses language strategically and ideologically to mainly suggest that the ANC has made significant achievements since 1994.



Figure 7.6: A screenshot of a panoramic view of government subsidy houses, commonly known as RDP houses. –ANC 2014

The above figure 7.6 depicts a panoramic view of social housing meant for poor South Africans. Increased housing access in South Africa is not only limited to the middle class and the rich, rather the poor have access to housing in the form of government social housing programmes commonly called the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) houses. The provision of RDP housing is significant to the ANC-led government, given the growing population of South Africa and the legacies of colonialism and apartheid which prohibited, for example, single-parent black women to own houses (Nolde, 1991:203-205, United Nations Centre Against Apartheid, 1978:12-13). Furthermore, the importance of RDP housing is demonstrated by government budget allocation towards social housing development of R34.8 billion in 2014 (Budget Review National Treasury, 2014). Therefore, the provision of government social housing is essential in South Africa as it contributes towards formal housing and discourages informal housing. At the time of this advertisement, Statistics South Africa (2016:29) survey from 2002 to 2014 identified that 80% of the South African household live informal households, which means, for every 10 South African households eight live in a formal dwelling. However, access to housing largely among the poor remains a struggle for many poor and the working-class South Africans.





Figure 7.7: A screenshot depicting a panoramic view of a seaport –ANC 2014



Figure 7.8: A screenshot of a medium shot of construction workers at the construction site of an electric power plant -ANC2014

Figures 7.7 and 7.8 depict a panoramic view of the seaport infrastructure and mega construction projects such as the national electricity power plant. The depiction of these visual panoramic views of economic infrastructure projects is strategic and



ideological. They legitimise a political discourse of exceptional myth that is South Africa is an exceptional country in Africa with a significant investment in economic infrastructures such as energy, road, rail, ports, public transport, bulk water and sanitation, hospitals, basic and higher education infrastructure as well as innovative projects such as the Square Kilometre Array and Meerkat telescopes. At the time of this advertisement, the then Minister of Finance Mr Pravin Gordhan announced that government and public agencies invested more than R1 trillion in infrastructure between 2009 and 2014 (South African Government, 2014). These economic infrastructure projects are meant to grow the South African economy, maximise productivity and access to other markets within the region as well as enhance economic integration within the continent.

However, there are significant challenges facing South African economic infrastructure, mainly corruption, deteriorating infrastructure, lack of maintenance, neglected infrastructure particularly at the municipal and provincial level, lack of skilled personnel mainly engineers and/or artisans, lack of maintenance budget, theft and vandalism among others. The problem of lack of skilled personnel is mainly encouraged by the ANC policy of “cadre deployment” in critical government institutions. Hence, there is a significant lack of knowledge of the extent of the infrastructure, the location and conditions of infrastructure assets have mainly contributed to underestimating maintenance budgets (Ntjatsane, 2017:15-17). On the other hand, the World Bank (2014) study reported that South Africa has placed priority largely on the development of the new infrastructure rather than on the maintenance of the existing infrastructure. The focus on new infrastructure development rather than maintenance could be that it generates a significant amount of money for “tenderpreneurs” as compared to the budget for maintenance.



Figure 7.9: A medium long shot depicting health specialists treating a patient eye. -ANC2014



Figure 7.10: A panoramic view of school children playing in school ground depicting the South African national flag -ANC 2014

Figures 7.9 and 7.10 depict increased access to social services such as public health and public education largely used by the working class, the poor and the infirm. This means about 7 in every 10 (71.4%) of the South African household reported to have gone to public clinics and hospitals as their first point of access when a household member is ill or injured. Conversely, 27.0% of households go to the private doctor,

private clinics or hospitals as their first point when ill or injured (Statistics South Africa, 2016:21)

Since 1994, South Africa has experienced increased secondary school educational attainment, at 68.2%. This is because of the implementation of the South African School Act of 1996 which makes it compulsory for children between the ages of seven and 15 to receive education either public or private. (Statistics South Africa, 2016:14).



Figure 7.11: A screenshot of a long camera shot depicting city lights in the foreground and tall buildings in the background-ANC2014

Figure 7.11 depicts a screenshot of a long camera shot depicting city lights in visual support of the text *“now South Africa is in a better place than it was twenty years ago”* -ANC2014. However, the image is part of the Constitutional Hill project that incorporates the Constitutional Court, the area is redolent with symbolic meaning and ripe for exploitation by mythologization. The “lights” shown in the photograph are actually of the three remaining staircase shafts of partially demolished short term “awaiting trial prisoners’ jail”. This facility was mainly used to house passbook offenders. Today they have been reconceptualised as “towers of light” (including the external flame of hope in one of the staircase shafts).

On the other hand, the visual image suggests that living conditions in South Africa are better than they were under colonial apartheid. Both the visual and verbal texts in the advertisements use discursive practices that ideologically suggest transformational myth and the master myth. The transformational myth and master myth legitimise a political discourse that claims since the ANC took over in 1994, the living conditions of black people have significantly improved than they were under colonial-apartheid South Africa. The claim that the lives of black people have improved under the ANC-led government is open for debate as it essentially undermines significant contribution made by the NP government in providing essential services such as township houses, schools, health facilities such as hospitals, roads, water, electricity connection, universities and colleges that were exclusively meant to satisfy socio-economic needs of black people regardless of the racial segregation at the time. According to Dlamini (2009:72), the ANC has succeeded in forging a new national narrative or master narrative that sets out to construct a reconfigured foundational narrative that the party has exclusively done so much for black people than any other government in South Africa. These master and transformational myths legitimise the political discourse that the ANC has succeeded in placing itself squarely and almost exclusively as the only movement that liberated black people from poverty and underdevelopment.

However, the above discursive practices used in the form of a claim do not acknowledge that despite the above achievements, there are underlying challenges facing the South African society, such as high levels of violent crime, racial tensions between blacks and whites, violent service delivery protests over poor government services such as the lack of water and/or electricity among others. To further counter the dominant narrative of that claim universal access to basic and public education: 3 million black South Africans between the ages of 25-64 have dropped out of primary school while 13.4 million in this category have dropped out of high school (Statistics South Africa, 2016:14). These are large numbers in real terms, exceeding populations of the neighbouring independent states, namely, Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, Swaziland and the islands of the sea such as the Comoros Islands. Without education,

the above 16 million people without basic education cannot compete nor live a better life in post-1994 South Africa.

It is therefore problematic to claim that “*South Africa is in a better place*” -ANC2014 today than it was in the past while many black people are without education and trapped in poverty as well as underdevelopment. The 1994 project only brought about political freedom, that is, freedom to participate in national, provincial and local government elections, rather than true economic freedom meant to improve the lives of people. While few black people benefited from the ANC social-economic reforms, many of the black middle class occupy positions of power, particularly in the public sector, rather than entrepreneurs with established enterprises that create economic opportunities for other black people. The so-called black middle class is essentially a group of black people with high purchasing power to consume rather than producers of goods and services that drives the South African economy.

Thus, the ANC led government since 1994 did not create nor built the economy, culture and economic institutions, particularly for black people like many post-Second World War countries. Instead, the party focused on easy solutions essentially replacing white people with black people in public institutions through the Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policies as well as Affirmative Actions (AA) legislations that benefit individuals rather than a group. The implementation of some of these policies remains a struggle in private white-owned enterprises, where black remain marginalised or used for window dressing purposes. Moreover, the party invested heavily in social reforms enshrined by the RDP policy framework. As such, it is without a doubt that the party has created a welfare state where the majority of black people depends on the government for their socio-economic needs, a system of perpetual poverty. Thus, black people in post-1994 South Africa, frankly speaking, do not have their economy. We are dependent on white enterprises virtually in food production, water and medicine including shelter. Whether this trend is sustainable is another topic, given alarming poverty levels among black people, unemployment and dwindling

numbers of taxpayers due to high unemployment, particularly among young people and ageing economic active citizens.

*“Millions of South Africans are uniting behind the party that can bring change, change that cut corruption, change that guarantee free higher education for qualifying matric, change that can create one million internships, millions of South Africans are voting for change that will create six million of real permanent jobs” -DA-2016*

The above voiceover suggests that the DA promises to end corruption, to provide increased free access to higher education, to create jobs for the young and the unemployed people.

Like the ANC, DA ideologically uses discursive practices to construct a master myth type of political myth to legitimise a political discourse that presents itself as a political party ready to govern and to improve the lives of South Africans. Moreover, DA the election manifesto of 2014 claims to be focusing largely on the concerns of the poor rather than the middle class and the wealthy whites. By claiming that 76% of the Western Cape budget is spent on poor communities, matric pass rates in the poorest schools in the Western Cape have increased from 56.9% to 73% and that 99.1% of households have access to piped water, 93.4% to electricity and 96.9% to sanitation. The manifesto also claimed that the city of Cape Town has “the smallest gap between rich and poor of any city in the country” (Mataboge, 2014).

To counter-argue DA manifesto claims: Firstly, the party is indifferent and/or complacent on the systemic and structural racism prevailing in South Africa. The party has been accused of tolerating white-on-black racism within the party and to the overall South African society. Secondly, DA leader Ms Zille is an advocate of colonialism, not sympathetic to the brutality, exploitation and hardships that it has brought among black South Africans as well as her indifference towards racism in

South Africa (Mataboge, 2014). Thirdly, on poverty alleviation, DA claim that is addressing the socio-economic disparities of black people, yet in the Western Cape, DA-led provincial government, the party has been accused of not addressing among others: lack of service delivery particularly in predominantly black communities and the stubborn youth unemployment in the Western Cape (DA is the devil...2014 & Koyana, 2014).

*“I know your pain and suffering. Let us vote against empty promises of the past 20 years”* -EFF 2014

The above banned EFF advertisement ideologically uses a counter political myth, to delegitimise the discourse of the ANC political gains narrative since 1994. In addition, in the voiceover, the leader of the EFF, Mr Julius Malema ideologically uses the personal pronoun “I” mainly to construct a favourable image of himself as a party leader and emphasize individual responsibility towards resolving the socio-economic plight of marginalised South Africans.

Although he strategically projects himself as a responsible leader and undermines the gains of South Africa since 1994, he fails to realise that South Africa under the ANC government has made significant social reforms aimed at uplifting black people in particular. At the time of this advertisement, several black South African households with a middle-class standard of living, that is, living in a formal house with essential amenities such as electricity as the main source of energy for lighting and cooking, a water tap and a flush toilet inside the house has improved significantly as a result of the RDP policies (Statistics South Africa, 2016:35).

Other social interventions meant for poverty alleviation are informed largely by the RDP policy, including 1) distribution of social security grants for pensioners. 2) The care dependency grant for parents who take care of a severely disabled child. 3) The child support grant is aimed at children below the age of 15 whose parents are either

unemployed or employed but earn below the minimum wage then of R1 450.33 per month.4) A disability grant for recipients between the ages of 18 and 60. 5) The war veterans grant for disabled recipients who fought for South Africa in the Second World War and the Korean War. Lastly, the foster child grants are intended for foster parents who are legally placed to take care of the children (South African Social Security Agency, 2015). Thus far, over 18 million people in South Africa rely on social grants. The main recipient of social grants by province is Kwa-Zulu Natal, followed by Eastern Cape and Limpopo, with 20% of households in these provinces primarily black families dependent on grants as their main source of income (South African Social Security Agency, 2015: 17). However, there have been concerns over the sustainability of social grants given the lack of economic growth, declining tax base and mismanagement of public funds owing to corruption just to mention a few (Sittlinger, Ndlovu, Webb & Valley, 2020). Other concerns largely based on public perceptions are that social grants make people lazy and dependent on the government, encourage teenage pregnancy and recipients misuse grant money (Ferreira, 2017).

*“When you put batho pele and went back to basics” -ANC2016*

The ANC2016 advertisement ideologically uses the South African government slogan of *batho pele* essentially means, prioritise people first in terms of rendering public services. The manifest meaning of the people first is used ideologically mainly to convince electorates that the ANC indeed cares about its electorates. However, the underlying latent meaning reveals the opposite of the *batho pele* principle. A lack of municipal services such as lack of water supply, electricity and housing among others is manifested by violent protests, where communities out of frustration resort to violent protests to gain local authorities' attention. This is by burning car tyres, barricading roads with rocks, sometimes destroying public infrastructures such as the burning of school buildings, libraries and primary health facilities. In the run-up to the 2016 local government elections, 70 incidents of service delivery protests largely in Gauteng, while the Eastern Cape recorded 24 incidents respectively (Service delivery set new



high...2016). Therefore, it is problematic for the ANC to claim that it prioritises *batho people*.

The next section analysis the underlying political language of political myth.

### **7.2.3 Political myth and political language**

This section of the chapter focuses on the underlying use of political language. Chapter Three described political language as a subjective language rather than an objective one that creates shared political meaning and perceptions (Edelman,1974:65). Furthermore, political language uses symbolic linguistic features such as grammar, metaphor, irony and simile among others (Balandier, 2000:66). These linguistic features are symbolic, subtle and seeking essentially to legitimise and/or delegitimise political-ideological messages as well as to persuade audiences (Sacristan, 2005:221). In addition, metaphor as a linguistic feature is essentially used in a political language mainly to convey underlying political ideologies in the text. It is worth pointing out that metaphor as a linguistic feature is presented in a text both verbally and visually. For this study, the underlying metaphor is interrogated using the CMA method. Chapter Four identified CMA as a research method essential for the analysis of the verbal and visual texts underlying metaphors in the discourse of political myth.



Figure 7.12: A screenshot depicting a newborn baby. -ANC2014

Figure 7.12 of the ANC2014 depicts a screenshot of a close-up shot of a newborn baby primarily a representation of a metaphor “*we gave birth to democracy*”. The use of the discursive practice of a metaphor to give birth usually means the new era of abundance and honour in life, a new beginning, new life, opportunities, prosperity and progress, and changes for the future. On the other hand, to “give birth” could also mean the beginning of anxieties, hardships, fear, problems, generally a negative situation coming to life (Mda, 2018:234).

In the discourse of politics, the metaphor “*we gave birth*” furthermore suggests the coming to an end of the old order, to the beginning of a new political order, a political transition from an authoritarian political order to a democratised political order. However, it is worth noting that South Africa did not “*give birth*” to a true political transition in 1994, rather it merely had what Huntington (1991:13) describes as a “backward legitimacy” of transition from one political system to another. Backward legitimacy essentially means legitimising a pre-existing colonial-apartheid authoritarian regime by insisting that it gave birth to a new dispensation of “*democracy*” while protecting, maintaining and legitimising the old colonial-apartheid

of white minority power intact. According to Giliomee (1995:93), the 1994 “democratic transition” was meant to protect mainly the interest of the “white system in South Africa” rather than to threaten or endanger their social and economic status as well their future aspirations.

The metaphor “*we gave birth*” is used ideologically mainly to legitimise a political discourse of the ANC as a heroic political party that freed South Africans from the oppression of apartheid and colonialism. Chapter Three described heroic myth as a prominent political figure such as human rights activist or a political party with historical credentials that have contributed to the political stability or unprecedented economic growth of the nation for instance (Nimmo & Combs, 1980:83). Moreover, the metaphor “*we gave birth*” is a discursive practice that constructs the transformational myth that legitimises the discourse of the ANC has democratised South Africa since 1994. The use of a metaphor in question ideologically conceals the fact that the ANC-led government on the other hand has for the longest time protected established economic and social interests of the white minorities. Therefore, the main purpose of the use of the metaphor in question is mainly to frame how audiences view and/or understand political issues by eliminating an alternative point of view that is deemed undesirable to the political speaker (Charteris-Black, 2011:31).

The political transition of 1994 could only be possible on the condition that white South African socio-economic interests were guaranteed to be protected rather than to bring true changes to the spatial and economic conditions of the two racial groups; black and white. At the time of these advertisements, Statistics South Africa (2014) reported that there is a significant increase of 15.8 million people living below the poverty line. While the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) (2014) reported that poverty among children,<sup>25</sup> has declined from 14.4 million to 10.4 million, which

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<sup>25</sup> South Africa defines children as individuals younger than 18 years.

remains significantly high considering that South Africa remains the most unequal society in the world. The SAHRC (2014) estimated that 64% of black people live in abject poverty while 41% of coloureds, 6% Indians and only 1% of whites live in poverty. These figures demonstrate that most black people are still confronted by legacies of the injustices of the colonial apartheid while the white minority live in obscene privilege secured by colonial-apartheid systems.

The above socio-economic pathologies of South Africa demonstrate further that despite political developments of 1994, South Africa only gained political transition without economic transition mainly among black people. Political freedom without economic freedom is meaningless for many black people. Therefore, Mashele and Qobo (2014:65) conclude that “a hungry person that is politically free is equally as good as an oppressed person, who has no freedom”.

Other metaphors used in the ANC2016 political advertisements include, “*packed away the candles for the last time*”, “*women reached for the sky*”, and “*long walk to freedom*”. While in the EFF 2019 political advertisement, the verb “*fight*” was used as a figure of speech in the political language.

The metaphor, “*packed away the candles for the last time*” is concerning and not true as it suggests that all South Africans have access to electricity. At the time of this advertisement, the General Household Survey of 2016 reported that only 84.2 % of South African households have access to electricity (Statistics South Africa, 2016). However, a significant number of households in informal settlements and remote rural communities still do not have access to electricity owing to illegal occupation of privately owned land and poorer household cannot afford high electricity tariffs (Mviko, 2019). Unreliable electricity supply dubbed “load-shedding” (electricity blackouts) owing to lack of maintenance of ageing electricity infrastructure is another factor contributing towards lack of access to electricity.

Since 2008, South Africa has been experiencing electricity blackouts owing to constraints in the supply and demand chain of energy. To alleviate South Africa's energy constraints, the government embarked on the construction of Eskom mega power stations Medupi and Kusile, each with a capacity of 4800 megawatts (Friedman, 2010). However, by 2021, South Africa is still experiencing the worst energy crisis which led to a loss of R160 billion in the economy. On the other hand, the two mega power stations were reported to be badly designed (Paton, 2019 & Jordaan, 2019).



Figure 7.13: A screenshot depicting a long shot of three airplane female employees walking away from the airplane in the background -ANC2016.

Figure 7.13 taken from the ANC2016 advertisement depicts a long shot of three black women walking away from the aircraft, suggesting that they work as cabin attendants and a captain or a pilot given their uniform, essentially a visual modality. The above visual metaphor corresponds with the verbal metaphor “*women reached for the sky*”, which essentially suggests that South African women, particularly black women, made a significant representation in different sectors of the economy including careers such as aviation and engineering that were exclusively dominated by men. These developments were made possible primarily by policies and legislation that favour gender equality and women empowerment.

Moreover, South Africa as a member of different international and regional blocks such as the Southern Africa Development Cooperation (SADC) and the African Union (AU) as well as other global multilateral institutions such as the United Nations (UN), recognises human rights issues on women both at international and at a national level. At the time of this advertisement, South Africa has acceded to numerous international human rights institutions, treaties and special procedures, namely, The Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action (United Nations, 1995), The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination and Violence Against Women (CEDAW, 1995), Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, 2003) and SADC Protocol on Gender and Development (SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, 1998).

At a national level, the South African Constitution through the Bill of Rights made a provision for a gender equality framework. Section 9 of the Constitution emphasises equal rights by all persons. The Constitution further stipulates that no one should be discriminated against based on their gender, race, class or sexual orientation (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). Under this Constitutional framework, the government enacted the following statutory laws, namely: Employment Equity Act of 1998, Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act of 1996, Domestic Violence Act of 1998, Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act of 2000 and Protection from Harassment Act of 2011, the Maintenance Act of 1998 and the Women Empowerment and Gender Equality (WEGE) Bill of 2013. In addition, to the above pieces of legislation, in 2009, the South African government established the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities. In 2014, the Department in question was incorporated within Presidency (Pilane, 2016). All these legislations are aimed at protecting and advancing the economic, social and political interests of women, rather than of black men.

However, regardless of the above resources mobilized and dedicated to women, a significant number of South African women, particularly black women, are victims of

poverty, discrimination and gender-based violence. At the time of this advertisement, Statistics South Africa (2016) reported that in 2015 a significant 57.2% of women mainly black live below the poverty line. While 21% of women between the ages of 18 and 65 have experienced physical violence by a male partner, 6% have experienced sexual violence by a male partner and 17% have experienced emotional violence by their partner, therefore, gender-based violence (Statistics South Africa, 2016:363). Regarding women empowerment, Statistics South Africa (2016:329) found that 47% of women are employed in formal sectors, primarily in an unionised environment while 79% of their male counterparts are employed in a formal sector. The above underlying challenges or drawbacks indicates that the ANC-led government has significant challenges to address the legacies of apartheid and colonialism, particularly on issues related to women.

On the contrary, the EFF uses metaphors in the form of a representational figure of speech in its 2019 election advertisement *“That our fight for free education will lead to nowhere”* and *“Our fight for land is about giving dignity to black people”*. The verb *“fight”* is connotative and ideological as it is used to suggest different meanings primarily to reveal the underlying struggle for landless black people. Firstly, the verb *“fight”* is used ideologically to suggest the struggle of black people to advance their socio-economic standing. Secondly, the verb *“fight”* ideologically suggests an attempt by young black people to change the underlying structural and systemic oppression that perpetuates their marginalisation in the mainstream economy. Thirdly, the verb *“fight”* suggests that black people need to work hard to change the oppressive legacies of colonial apartheid.





Figure 7.14: A panoramic view of congested informal settlement with shacks as the main structure of shelter, suggesting lack of land for formal housing -EFF 2016



Figure 7.15: A screenshot depicting a cemetery with men carrying a coffin with ropes, in the process of burying on top of the other coffin, suggesting lack of land for burial sites -EFF 2016.

Figure 7.14 depicts challenges of lack of land and housing owing to increased monthly rental charges, high levels of unemployment and lower wages that force the poor to illegally occupy vacant land to build informal shacks. On the contrary, figure 7.15 depicts families forced to bury their loved ones on top of each other to share a grave – a practice that goes against African culture and/or traditions. On the other hand, these structural inequalities that subject black people to poverty and



underdevelopment, essentially reduce black people into objects of poverty and undermine their sense of dignity as human beings.

The above visual presentation of figures 7.14 and 7.15 are used ideologically to represent a conspiracy myth type of political myth that sought to construct a narrative about underlying weakness, inefficiencies and lack of justice by the ANC-led government.



Figure 7.16: A screenshot depicting a black man wearing khaki clothes suggesting a farmer talking to a white man wearing blue overalls and driving a tractor, suggesting a farm labourer both are in the middle of an agricultural field -EFF 2019.

Figure 7.16 presents a call for the land to be given back to black people. It is against this backdrop that the EFF metaphorically call for *fighting* against the prevailing status quo in the hands of the ANC-led government and for individuals to work hard and improve their socio-economic conditions.

On the contrary, the metaphor “*fight*” suggests the use of transformational myth type of political myth mainly to bring about changes to the current status quo that oppresses and exclude the poor. Figure 7.16 symbolically suggests that land be distributed fairly

and equitably among the people of South Africa rather than the claim of reverse racism. However, the expropriation of land without compensation used by the EFF and the ANC should also be looked at critically, as ideological, radical and populist rhetoric intended to benefit mainly a few politically connected individuals rather than the overall South African masses who need land for housing and subsistence agricultural purposes.

The struggle for socio-economic freedom among black people is further represented by the personal pronoun “*our*” essentially to suggest solidarity, unity and pride among the marginalised and the oppressed, which the EFF claim to significantly subscribe to (Hambrecht, 2005:189-200). Therefore, the unity myth and solidarity are used mainly to suggest that the EFF is in solidarity with the poor as opposed to the ANC-led government that has lost focus, neglected the concerns and interests of the poor and marginalised blacks. Instead, the party is occupied with factions and the self-enrichment of comrades.

While the EFF uses a figurative language for “*fighting for change*” – transformational myth, the EFF and many ANC rural municipalities are accused of being involved in the VBS Mutual Bank scandals where pensions mainly of black people in Limpopo Province have lost millions of Rands worth of savings (van Wyk, 2018). It is alleged that municipalities siphoned public money to the VBS to be used for personal purposes. Therefore, the use of the above metaphor of “*fight*” in the political language refers to the master myth of political myth. These metaphors are used ideologically primarily to create a particular meaning among the electorates or audiences.

*“A new dawn is breaking into our beautiful land. The ANC is on a path of renewal. A path that will see us continue from where our growth has stalled, with even more determination” -ANC2019*

The above voiceover uses language ideologically using the metaphor “*a new dawn*”. The metaphor is used to suggest a transformational myth type of political myth by which the ANC under the leadership of President Cyril Ramaphosa seeks to clean up corruption within its ranks. This is mainly by removing ANC officials with serious allegations of corruption within the party and the state, as well as to try to build unity amid factions within the party. Moreover, Mr Ramaphosa sought to create a conducive investment climate, economic stability and productivity in South Africa as opposed to the former President Zuma’s faction of Radical Economic Transformation (RET) and Expropriation of Land Without Compensation (EWC). Although both the RET and EWC essentially present a counter-narrative to the established colonial and apartheid economic structures that have exploited and marginalised black people for centuries. It is however worth questioning, will this faction genuinely advance the economic, political and social interests of South Africa, mainly that of black people, or is only concerned about the populist and individual self-enrichment of the connected few politicians, rather than the overall society?

The metaphor in question is subliminal and counter to the difficult years commonly called “nine wasted years” of President Zuma’s corruption scandals, state capture and underperforming economy among others (Suttner, 2019). The “nine wasted years” is an understatement, South Africa under President Zuma, advanced to becoming a kleptocratic society. Kleptocracy is a political stereotype that characterises social crisis in many African post-colonial countries, of unethical and corrupt leaders who exercise political power through patronage to access state resources that are ultimately invested elsewhere in Europe rather than improving lives of people in Africa. In the context of South Africa, kleptocracy suggests a government led by corrupt leaders who use their power to exploit people and national resources primarily to enrich themselves, their families and friends to remain in political power (Southall, 2019 & Johnson, 2020).

At the time of this advertisement, the ANC was under scrutiny about questionable executive leaders such as the ANC Secretary-General Mr Ace Magashule’s

mismanagement of public funds while he was the Premier of the Free State Province (Cameron, 2019) including the Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr David Mabuza's reports of mismanagement of public funds while he was the Premier of Mpumalanga Province (Coman, 2019).

Like the metaphor "*the new dawn*" the metaphor "*renewal*" suggests that the ANC is determined to clean up corruption within its ranks, remove mediocrity among party officials and improve government performance by providing services to the people. On the other hand, the "*renewal*" metaphor is problematic, in that, the current ANC leadership that is critical of the former President Zuma era of corruption is the same ANC leadership that supported and defended President Zuma in several corruption scandals such as Nkandla (Areff, 2016, Hans, 2018) and opposed the motion of no confidence against him (Makinana, 2017). Moreover, it is the same ANC members who are implicated in all sorts of corruption scandals. Whether the ANC will root itself out of corruption, remains a pie in the sky.

Finally, in the analysis of the following visual images, this study uses MCDA identified in Chapter Four essentially to interpret and interrogate the underlying symbolic meaning of the visual political language used in the political branding of the ANC, DA and EFF.



Figure 7.17: A screenshot of the ANC logo-ANC 2019

Figure 7.17 is a screenshot depicting a medium close-up camera shot of the ANC logo. The ANC logo is a visual model that consists of symbolic visual features such as the ANC flag equal horizontal bands with gold, green and black bands, a wheel, a spear with a clenched fist and a shield with the acronym ANC positioned underneath a wheel and below the logo ANC slogan, A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL is written in black against the yellow and golden background. These visual modal features are symbolic, ideological and convey political messages. Yellow colour is associated with the sun, suggesting optimism, hope, the birth of a new nation, awakening, and liberal views among others (Seidman, 2007:40). Moreover, the yellow and golden background of the ANC logo features suggests that given South Africa's historical oppression of colonial-apartheid, the ANC political party favours liberal political views and stand for democracy, rather than oppression.

The horizontal black band symbolises the people of South Africa, particularly black people who for generations have fought against oppression in the form of colonialism and apartheid. The green band, on the other hand, symbolises land which for centuries has sustained the people of South Africa through agriculture, from which they were removed forcefully by colonial and apartheid governments. While the gold band represents the mineral wealth of South Africa which belong to all the people of South Africa regardless of class and race. The wheel and eight spokes represent the ANC with its alliance partners.

It is worth pointing out that in the 1950s the spokes under discussion were four rather than eight. Then, the four spokes represented alliance partners such as the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), South African Congress of Democrats (SACD), the South African Indian Congress (SAIC) and the South African Coloured People's Congress (SACPC). These alliance partners further, suggested a multiracial alliance, a symbolic representation of four nations, white, Indians, coloured and blacks. In contrast, the hub of the wheel symbolises the ANC, holding the alliance and the congress of the people together (Seidman, 2007:38).

From the 1980s, the spokes increased from four to become eight with the ANC remaining at the hub to represent the unity of the alliances. Then, the eight spokes represent the alliance partners with labour unions, the Cosatu, SACP, the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) which at the time were mainly anti-apartheid groups aligned with the ANC (Zvomuya, 2012). At the time of this advertisement, the remaining alliance partners with the ANC were Cosatu and the SACP. While the spear and the shield are symbolic and represent the ANC armed struggle against apartheid, the *Umkhonto weSizwe*, essentially the spear of the nation or the shield of the nation (Seidman, 2007:39). The symbolic use of the spear and the shield essentially suggests protection against enemies of the struggle. The significance of the use of the above symbolic political visual images represents the saviour myth of the ANC, a custodian of the “liberation” of blacks from colonialism and apartheid oppression, therefore, the heroic myth.

Although the ANC has stood for black people under the hands of the white minority, the party has increasingly lost moral basis among South Africans, mainly by failing to lead and its officials increasingly involved in opposing factions, rampant corruption and patronage that have weakened institutions of governance and the economy, rather than improving lives of millions of poor South Africans.



Figure 7.18: A screenshot of a DA logo-DA 2019

Figure 7.18 is a screenshot depicting a medium close-up shot of the DA logo. The DA logo is a visual mode depicting a new logo of a blue background, a rising sun over a colourful South African flag. The South African flag is displayed across the top and at the bottom of the page. The above new DA logo possesses different and underlying ideological meanings. Firstly, the launching of the new logo at the Constitutional Hill, Johannesburg, South Africa is ideological and suggest that the party is an alternative to the future of South Africa. Secondly, the new logo depicts a rising sun coloured in white. The sun is used as a metaphor to suggest rebirth, the awakening and more importantly, the party embraces the new South Africa. The sun suggests optimism, and is in white rather than yellow, ideologically to suggest purity, innocence at birth (the rising sun) and a blessing of the new party in post-1994 South Africa. Thirdly, the sun is depicted rising over a colourful South African flag to suggest the diversity of the South African people based on race, ethnicity, religion, languages and cultures among others, therefore, one diverse nation united, working together as one for the country's future (Jolobe, 2009:138-139 & Mkokeli, 2011). Lastly, the background of the logo is blue to suggest that DA is a liberal and democratic political party. On the other hand, blue is the colour of the ocean and the sky, as such, it evokes a sense of a stable South Africa with endless economic, political and social opportunities. It is worth

pointing out that the above political symbols of the rebranded DA are used as a means of political communication mainly intended to enhance a patriotic commitment to South Africa. Therefore, the above symbolic images of the DA logo are carefully selected and/or ideologically used primarily to represent the master myth and an exceptional myth.

The rebranding of the DA holds significant ideological meaning seeking to transform South Africa into a better society. However, there are key underlying challenges facing DA, among others: (1) to retain the loyal support, particularly among the black middle class, (2) attract members from competing parties including undecided electorates, (3) to convince black electorates that they are welcomed to the political party and (4) to share aspirations, frustrations and desperations of black electorates on education, health, economics, rural development and equal opportunities among others.



Figure 7.19: A screenshot depicting the EFF logo-EFF 2019

Figure 7.19 depicts the logo of the EFF. The logo is a mode that possesses underlying symbolic features, the map of the African continental map is in green colour, a clenched black fist holding a red spear, a golden star, a gold mine shaft, a written text



of “VOTE EFF – ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS” all written in gold and black colours and a medium camera shot of EFF leader Mr Julius Malema wearing a red shirt and a red beret bearing the above EFF logo. These visual and written texts are embedded against a red background.

The above visual features depicted in the logo of the EFF political party are essentially metaphors used to convey underlying ideological meaning. The African continental map suggests that the EFF identifies with African people and is committed to the radical transformation of African people from white oppression. The green colour represents the fertile land of Africa that should be returned to its rightful owners, essentially to people of African descent. The black clinched fist suggests that black people are in solidarity in the fight against all forms of oppression based on race. On the other hand, black is associated with anarchism, representing the absence of all oppressive structures. The spear is used symbolically to suggest defence rather than a shield, to a revolution mainly of the economically marginalised and oppressed fallen heroes. According to Mr Malema the colour red represents “the blood that has been shed by those who have died during the struggle for economic freedom” (5 Reasons why the EFF...2014). By struggle heroes for economic freedom, suggest 34 Lonmin Platinum mineworkers killed by the South African Police Service (SAPS) overpay increase and the Sharpeville massacre wherein 69 black people were killed by the police during a protest pass laws,<sup>26</sup>. The gold star suggests the nationalist political

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<sup>26</sup> The Sharpeville massacre occurred on 21 March 1960 at the police station of Sharpeville township, South of Johannesburg. On that day, about 10 000 protesters went to the police station of Sharpeville to protest pass laws that essentially sought to control the influx of Black people to the urban cities. Under the NP government, black people in urban areas were subjected to influx control measures. Individuals over the age of 16 were required to carry passbooks that contained identity cards, details of the employer and the authorisation letter from the Labour Bureau. In response to these restrictions, the PAC and the ANC organised a protest, where protesters offered themselves up for arrests for not carrying pass documents, while others were burning documents in question in front of the police. As the police presence was increasingly becoming significant, the number of protesters also increased.

ideology of the EFF political party. The shaft represents the mineral resources that shall be redistributed into the hands of black people. Mr Malema is depicted wearing a military-style red beret, which is symbolic and synonymous with leaders of revolutionary struggles such as Chez Guevara,<sup>27</sup> Fidel Castro,<sup>28</sup> and Thomas Sankara,<sup>29</sup> (Mbeti, 2014: 41).

As pointed out earlier, the above visual and written aspects of the text are embedded against a red background. The significant use of the red colour in the EFF logo is ideological, in that, it is associated with the historical French Revolution commonly called the “June Days uprising” of 1848 (Peacock, 1982: 34-42). Then, the Socialists adopted the red flag to represent “the blood of angry workers” assaulted by the French army. Ever since the colour red in a political context suggests radicalism and revolutionary politics. It remains a colour associated with socialism, communism, left-wing politics and anarchist politics, essentially legitimising radical changes in the social, political and economic order of the society. These radical changes in many

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What started as a peaceful demonstration ended up violent, police fired shot at unarmed protesters, 69 people were shot and killed at the back as they were fleeing, and 180 protesters were injured.

<sup>27</sup> Ernesto “Che” Guevara (1928-1967) was an Argentine Marxist, revolutionary, physician, author, guerrilla leader, diplomat and military theorist. As a young medical student, Dr Guevara travelled throughout South America and was radicalised by the poverty, hunger and disease he witnessed in Latin America (Kellner, 1989).

<sup>28</sup> Fidel Castro (1926-2016) was a Cuban revolutionary and a politician who served as the Prime Minister of Cuba from 1959-1976. From 1976 to 2008 he served as a president. His political ideology is mainly Marxist-Leninist (Bourne, 1986).

<sup>29</sup> Thomas Isidore Noel Sankara (1949-1987) was a Burkinabe military officer and a socialist revolutionary who served as the President of Burkina Faso from 1983 to 1987. A Marxist-Leninist and a pan-Africanist.

instances favour civil liberty, equality, democracy, secularisation and modernisation rather than the feudal and aristocratic system that oppresses the poor (Castelli, 2016).

The underlying meaning of the EFF logo is a counter myth seeking to delegitimise and disrupt the status quo that the ANC has created since 1994, that has kept many black people in extreme levels of poverty, inequality of wealth and income. These abnormalities favour a few black political elites, white monopolies, the middle class and the rich, rather than much of the poor black people are confined in far-flung rural areas and poverty-stricken urban South Africa. Critics of the EFF argue that although the party plays a critical role in the South African democracy essentially by revealing ANC failures, Mbembe (2014) cautions that the party remains an “inflammatory rhetoric and imagery that lacks political integrity to translate its messages into a legislation of change”. Mashele (2018) contends that EFF political messages are essentially “empty rhetoric” where complex issues of the economy such as banks, factories, land, and mines are reduced into mere election slogans.

On the other hand, van Onselen (2017) argues that the EFF is going through a political paradox, on the one hand, the party elections manifesto speaks of revolution, while on the other, the party seeking to win elections through a democratic process through a vote. While Kostopoulos (2016) observes that the EFF is a party that seeks “power over rationality”, a “utopian imaginary versus actual reality”. Other critics, du Toit (2020), Habbib (2020), Haffajee (2020), Magandla (2013) and Mashele (2018) among others, dismiss the EFF as a fascist, militaristic, racist and warned of the dangers it presents to race relations, social, political and economic stability in South Africa. With this in mind, is the EFF an alternative future to the political future of South Africa?

The next section focuses on the use of political myths as underlying rhetoric.

### 7.2.4 Political myth and rhetoric

Rhetoric is another central aspect of political myth. In Chapter Three, Foss (2004:5) describes political myth as rhetorical, that is, myth uses a particular set of symbols to express explicit and implicit verbal and visual modes of communication to communicate, inform, persuade, influence and evoke action among political audiences. This section uses the SSA research method mainly to interrogate underlying political myths used in the form of visual and verbal rhetoric.



Figure 7.20: A screenshot of a medium-long camera shot depicting a woman holding her children, in the background is the rubble of demolished shacks, while the foreground is her household belongings -EFF 2016.

Figure 7.20 is taken from the EFF political television advertisement of 2016 depicting a mother and her children seated in the rubble of a shack without a shelter. The key to the above visual image is the rhetorical representation of children. From a semiological perspective, the manifest meaning of the depiction of children and their mother suggests a family, for a woman having children is a manifestation of motherhood and/or femininity. On the other hand, children suggest the future of society.

However, Sherr (1999: 46) points out that there is underlying rhetorical latent meaning that represents children as a metaphor of different social and political constructs. For instance, children in a desperate state of poverty suggest a country in a poor state of the economy. For this study, women and children are used rhetorically to suggest poverty and economic insecurity in South Africa. The depiction of children in a desperate situation suggests a household headed mainly by a female is more likely to be poor compared to a family headed by a male figure (Statistic South Africa, 2016). Therefore, the woman is depicted as pleading for shelter mainly for her children and not for herself. The underlying latent meaning suggests a single black woman with children is a symbol of poverty and struggle.

The EFF rhetorically depicted the desperate state of a woman and children, mainly to counter the ANC master and heroic myth of a BETTER LIFE FOR ALL to suggest that the ANC has failed to provide basic services such as shelter to the poor. On the other hand, the EFF act as a caring political party that could provide shelter for such a family, therefore, a hero myth is a fictional function of political myth as pointed out in Chapter Three. Key to the rhetorical use of the above visual images is mainly a representation of the counter myth and conspiracy myth a type of political myth primarily aimed at damaging the reputation of the ANC and delegitimising its significance in post-1994 South Africa. The heroic myth of the EFF can be challenged as the party is embroiled in corruption scandals and party leaders living the high life and rarely intervene in the plight of the poor.



Figure 7.21: A screenshot depicting a medium shot of health professionals treating patients- ANC 2014.

Figure 7.21 of the 2014-ANC advertisement depicts a visual setting of a hospital with white medical staff treating patients, at the background the visual image is accompanied by a piece of French classical music. The composition of the background music is the snare drums, the cello, the violin and a French horn, all in high key tunes. The setting is used rhetorically mainly to suggest that South Africa is a developing country with a world-class health care system. The use of white people as medical health care practitioners rather than black people is also rhetorical and legitimises the narrative that South Africa is an advanced and progressive society in the developing world of Africa. White people traditionally are associated with sophistication, education, success and high quality of life. The use of the French horn at the high tune rhetorically: (1) signifies the important moment of the ANC-led government achievements. (2) suggests the European standard is mainly a western construct and (3) lastly, a moral appeal on the issues of access to quality health care. Therefore, the type of political myth used by this advertisement is an exceptional myth.

The above exceptional myth, however, can be challenged given that South African public health care is faced with critical challenges. At the time of this advertisement, over 8 million South Africans were HIV positive, tuberculosis was on the rise, widening

disparity between private and public health care sector, shortage of medical doctors and qualified nurses amid a growing population, immigration of health professionals owing to better working conditions and corruption within public health sector pose a risk to South Africa's health care system (Whiteside, 2014:166-169).



Figure 7. 22: A screenshot depicting a panoramic view of an African traditional rural village -ANC 2016.



Figure 7.23: A screenshot depicting a long shot of a yellow passenger vehicle stuck on the road while passengers and luggage are outside the car - DA 2016.

Figures 7.22 and 7.23 are visual images taken from the ANC and DA advertisements. Figure 7.22 depicts a panoramic view of a traditional rural African village with three rondavels (houses) built on the hilltop, surrounded by farmlands while figure 7.23 depicts a long shot of a broken yellow vehicle, commonly associated with taxi a means of public transport for many poor and working-class South Africans alongside the road



with passengers and luggage behind a broken vehicle. Both figure 7.22 and 7.23 are rhetorical. They both speak to the Afrocentric representation that reminds one South Africa possesses both worlds, advanced Eurocentric setting and the Afrocentric setting of tribal village life. Chapter Two described Afrocentrism as presenting characteristics that are unique to black people (Asante, 1987:39). These visual images rhetorically appeal to black electorates whether residing in rural or semi-urban communities to participate in the elections regardless of their socio-economic standing as well as the geographic location.



Figure 7.24: A screenshot depicting a medium shot of a white man wearing a khaki shirt with the ANC brand -ANC 2019.

Figure 7.24 depicts a medium shot of a white man wearing a khaki shirt with the ANC logo to suggest a white farmer. The construction of rhetoric with the above visual image is unusual as it rhetorically appeals to the white farmers to vote for the ANC regardless of the sensitive issue of land- expropriation of land without compensation. White people particularly farmers are generally viewed as racists, conservative and unlikely to support a progressive black political party such as the ANC. Moreover, the rhetoric is ideological as it delegitimises the myth that whites are generally against the ANC.



On the other hand, verbal texts of the advertisements under scrutiny are rhetorical. The EFF 2014 is highly rhetorical in that it uses Afrocentric expressions such as a historical Zulu struggle song *Thina sizwe esimnyama* means, we the black nation is popular among black South Africans. *Thina sizwe esimnyama* is an old struggle song, composed in 1952 by Mr Vuyisile Mini, a former unionist, *Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK)*,<sup>30</sup> activist, a singer and one of the first ANC members to be executed by the National Party (NP),<sup>31</sup> government in 1964. Mr Mini used *Thina sizwe* song as a national defiance campaign against white domination, essentially to reflect resentment over the occupation of land by European colonialists and a determination to repossess the land (Dontsa, 1990:53). Therefore, this song is used ideologically essentially to persuade and to evoke historical emotions of black people, oppressed by apartheid and colonialism.

It is, therefore, worth pointing out that the EFF 2014 political advertisement, is highly Afrocentric. Chapter Two pointed out that Afrocentric rhetoric provides the speaker with a cultural construction of the African perspective rather than the Eurocentric perspective (Mbiti, 1975:82). The Afrocentric rhetoric, therefore, presents a speaker with a communication style mainly to articulate meaning and more important to establish a relationship with audiences and identify with black electorates (Asante, 1987:39). Furthermore, the *Thina sizwe* struggle song is used ideologically mainly to remind black people of the historical pre-colonial Africa and to lament, that the land of African people was taken by force by European colonisers.

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<sup>30</sup> The *Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK)* is isiXhosa language for *The Spear of the Nation*, the ANC military wing commonly called the MK was founded by former President Nelson Mandela and launched on the 16th December 1961, mainly to fight against the oppressive white Afrikaner minority government.

<sup>31</sup> The National Party (NP) was a South African political party founded in 1915, a governing party from 1948 until 1994. The party was responsible for the formation of the discriminatory policies of apartheid, the establishment of the Republic of South Africa and the promotion of the Afrikaans culture. The NP lost the first democratic election to the ANC in 1994 and in 2005, the party was disbanded, and operated under the new name –the New National Party (NNP).

The EFF 2014, therefore, used *Thina sizwe* song mainly to evoke a nostalgic appeal. Chapter Three described the nostalgic appeal as the ability to remind audiences of their historical past (Brierley, 2002:167). In addition, the EFF 2014 used this rhetorical song ideologically, mainly to delegitimise the significance of the ANC political party in post-1994 South Africa claiming that it is a political party that does not care about the hardships of black people in post-1994 South Africa. On the other hand, it uses this rhetorical song to remind South Africans that the ANC is becoming a “monster” to its people – black people, an oppressive political party that has turned its back against black people into “objects” of oppression, “objects” of marginalisation just like the NP government (Mbembe, 2001:89). This is evident with increased appalling socio-economic conditions under which many black South Africans find themselves, increased poverty, unemployment and lack of service delivery in many parts of South Africa and increased informal settlements among others (Hatt, 2016). Therefore, the type of political myth used in this advertisement is a counter-political myth that primarily undermines the significance of the master and heroic myth of the ANC-led government. The type of discourse in these advertisements is inherently political that speaks to the socio-economic hardships of black people in post 1994-South Africa.

In contrast, the DA 2014 use the isiZulu verb *Ayisafani* as a rhetorical style essentially claiming that DA as a political party is no longer the same. What it means is that DA claims that it has changed, and its membership has changed from being an all-white political party to a party that represents all South Africans of different racial groups. The type of political myth used in this advertisement is a transformational myth, claiming that DA has changed yet the party remains significantly white. Although DA at the time of this advertisement was attracting black electorates, particularly in pro-ANC constituencies such as urban townships and the youth who are discouraged with the ANC, DA is leaning significantly towards the right, essentially opposing policies such as BEE and AA which sought to redress the imbalances of the past by empowering black people economically and socially (The DA wants to change BEE laws...2016). However, these policies are criticised for promoting political patronage and corruption using government tenders awarded to a few politically connected black elites in government as well as the appointment of incompetent, inexperienced and

often unqualified officials to positions of power. Therefore, it is the root cause of the lack of service delivery in many ANC rural and urban constituencies.

The below section analysis underlying ideologies of the political myth.

### **7.2.5 Political myth and the construction of (national) identities**

Political myth is critical in the construction either of individual or group identities such as national identities and/or national unity.



Figure 7.25 A screenshot depicting a long camera shot of a multitude of people of different races in the downtown street of the city of Johannesburg suggesting that the ANC is a political party of all South Africans regardless of race and creed -ANC2016.



Figure 7.26: A screenshot depicting a medium camera longshot of a black man and white man holding hands together, while at the background a multitude of South Africans of different races holding hands together and South African national flag to suggest that DA is a political party of all South Africans regardless of race and creed -DA 2019.

The above visual texts of figures 7.25 and 7.26 underscore the racial unity within political parties primarily what South Africa stand for. The verbal texts of the ANC and DA speaks to the construction of national identities:

*“We built a nation that we can all live in with freedom and equality.”-ANC2014*

*“Let us live and strive for freedom in South Africa our land.” -DA 2014*

*“The future of our country lies in the hands of every single South African.”-ANC2016*

*“Fellow South Africans, the road ahead of us is going to be difficult. But we have to walk it together.” -DA 2019*

*“We may have different opinions, but we are not enemies. Black, White, Coloured and Indians, we all share the same dream. One South Africa for all!” -DA 2019*

*“Let us give our children a better tomorrow. Let us live and strive for freedom in South Africa out Land!” -DA 2019*

The preceding verbal and visual texts use personal pronouns, “we”, “us”, and “our” ideologically to suggest an inclusive society, unity, solidarity, pride a master myth and an exceptional myth of the national identity, of a successful South African society with aspirations of national unity regardless of the diverse racial groups and cultures based on ethnicity, languages and religions. The above master myth and exceptional myth are disputable as South Africa is struggling in so many ways to attain a national unity and/or common national identity.

However, the following verbal voiceovers point out that there are underlying challenges of the nation-building project in South Africa.

*“You can’t have a better life without a job.” -DA 2014*

*“Vote for change that stops corruption, bring better services and create jobs in your municipalities.” -DA 2016*

*“The choice before us today is simple, either we choose corruption, more empty promises and go backwards.” -DA 2019*

*“Let us vote against empty promises of the past twenty years.” -EFF 2014*

*“We are tired of tenderpreneurs,<sup>32</sup>” -EFF 2016*

*“But anti-black racist, corrupt politicians, even the rich and powerful now have nowhere to hide.” -EFF 2019*

The above voiceovers or verbal texts from the DA and EFF political parties present counter-narratives to the established and dominant discourse of the national identity

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<sup>32</sup> A South African noun to describe mainly a person who uses their political connections to secure government contracts for personal advantage rather than for national advancement.



of equality. Transformational myth seeks to transform the established status quo in society.



Figure 7.27: A screenshot depicting a medium shot of a mother helping her daughter with schoolwork - ANC 2014



Figure 7.28: A screenshot depicting a medium camera shot depicting a boy lifting a clenched fist-ANC 2016.

The above visual images of figure 7.27 depict a girl doing schoolwork assisted by her mother or grandmother. Figure 7.28 depicts a boy sitting on the shoulders of his father, lifting a clenched fist. Unlike the above figure 7.20, above figure 7.27 and figure 7.28 use screenshots mainly to emphasise the significance of visual presentation of children to construct a narrative about the master myth of national unity. In addition, visual images of healthy and happy children in political television advertisements are used mainly as political symbols, embodying a symbol of a nation's future and a feeling of national optimism (Sherr, 1999). Such visual images suggest the ushering of a new era, a promising future, progress and potential for South Africa. The ANC political party uses visual images of children essentially to legitimise that South Africa is a young democracy and the country has a potential future.

The above figure 7.27 and figure 7.28 are however debatable as it is not always the case where children used in political television advertisements suggests the positive future of the country. According to Sherr (1999), visual images of children in political advertisements are sometimes used to depict a negative economic condition often extreme poverty and underdevelopment in the society.



Figure 7.29: A screenshot depicting a long camera shot of a boy sitting alone on the ground surrounded by dirt and a dilapidated building in the background -DA 2014.



Figure 7.30: A screenshot depicting a long medium camera shot of a group of children standing in front of a shack in the background -DA 2014



Figure 7.31: A screenshot depicting a boy riding a toy motorbike in the foreground, while in the background there is running water on the street, teenage girls walking barefoot and untarred street at the background -DA 2014.





Figure 7:32: A screenshot depicting a street with rocks, potholes, garbage, running water, a woman pulling wheelie garbage, a little girl standing on the sidewalk, a car parked on the sidewalk and shacks along the street -DA 2014.

Figures 7:30, 7:31 and 7:32 depict black children living in impoverished urban communities of South Africa. These figures are used rhetorically to suggest that there is no promising future for many young black people given their impoverished socio-economic conditions. Poverty by definition implies the state of one who lacks and/or does not have access to the usual or socially acceptable amount of money and/or essentials such as food, shelter, water, services, participation in decision making, denial of self-esteem, total exclusion to economic resources and subjected to environmental degradation just to mention a few (Alcock, 1997:3). While, Jacob Viner defines under-development as a society (country) that has a potential prospect of using available capital, labour and/or natural resources or otherwise productively mainly to support its population and improve the standard of living rather than lowering the standard of living (Spiegel, 1987). What it means is that there must be possibilities and potential for development; there must be unutilised resources lying around that can be used productively and more importantly to improve the socio-economic lives of people.

The DA used the above visual images mainly to present a counter-narrative towards the ANC master and/or exceptional narrative of “*Better Life for All*” while millions of South Africans are trapped in poverty and under-development. Moreover, with the above visual images, the DA argues that increased poverty and inequality within the society threatens and undermines every effort of national unity, security, peace, and stable society (Sen, 2008). In other words, nation-building and/or national identity cannot be achieved without addressing poverty and inequality among young black people. On the contrary, the visual images are used rhetorically to represent transformational myth mainly to suggest that DA can transform the lives of poor South Africans using improved service delivery.



Figure 7.33: A screenshot depicting a camera longshot of a young black man forced into a coffin by a white man - EFF 2019

The EFF, on the other hand, uses visual images essentially to present challenges of racial unity in South Africa. Figure 7.33 depicts a racist act perpetrated by a white man humiliating a young black man by forcing him into a coffin. This racist act is a historical phenomenon in South Africa, suggesting poor historical race relations, particularly between blacks and whites. At the time of these advertisements, South Africans were grappling with racial tensions incited largely by left-wing politics such as the Black

Land First (BLF), the EFF, and the pro-Zuma ANC faction made up of ANC branches from Kwa-Zulu Natal Province, Mpumalanga Province, Free State Province, North West Province, the ANC Youth League (ANCYL), and the ANC Women's League (ANCWL). These left-wing political groups make populist remarks arguing that White Monopoly Capital (WMC), has systematically and structurally kept Black South Africans under appalling socio-economic conditions,<sup>33</sup> (Malala, 2017 & Olifant, 2017). The left-wing politics accuse white domination of the South African economy as the main cause of poverty and underdevelopment among black people.

Poor race relations in South Africa is based on 1) racial classification (legacies of colonial apartheid) that remains deeply institutional and structural virtually in all sectors of the society. This is regardless of the political and social changes of 1994 when South Africa freed itself from the oppressive regime of white minority rule (Tamir & Budiman, 2019). 2) Although there is white poverty, poverty in South Africa remains exclusively a black experience. 3) Political parties are racialised based on history rather than on the issue. This is based, for example, on voter behaviour. Almost no black electorate could vote for a white minority party such as FFP. The same observation can be made with the EFF political party that almost no white person will vote for the EFF (Gottshalk, 2019).

In addition, racial tension 4) is moreover influenced by political leaders, for example, in political discourses of EWC, executive officials of the ANC and EFF political parties respectively such as Minister. Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma accused whites of having "looted and stolen land" (Mthethwa, 2017). The then South African Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa argues that whites have "destroyed the asset base of the African people" and thereby caused "the impoverishment of a black nation" (Sithole 2017). the Secretary-General of the ANC, Mr Ace Magashule (2018) claims that whites engaged in "the ruthless plunder of land and livestock" during colonial apartheid. By this, he

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<sup>33</sup> Section 7.2.9 present a background discussion on the WMC as a propaganda.

claims that whites committed “a full-blown colonial genocide’ against black people through their criminal and dispossession project”. While Mr Malema (leader of the EFF), rhetoric on white people is divisive and violent, as he promised “cutting the throats of whiteness” if they refuse to return the land, “whites committed genocide!”, “No white person is the rightful owner of land here in South Africa!” and “whites are the enemy who stole our land!” (Malema, 2018).

At the heart of South Africa’s racial difficulties is that white people are the captains of the industries, they control the economy of South Africa, while black people are excluded in economic decision-making, thus they are consumers rather than the producers of goods and services. This is what makes “the negroes (black) of *South Africa* powerless” in the face of white economic domination (Carmichael, 1966: 642). The fact that black people are powerless in the affairs of the economy they are forced to be dependent upon and to become subservient to white people. Another contributing factor to the racial challenges in South Africa is liberal democratic policies that favour for integration of different racial groups. Carmichael (1966: 645) argues instead of liberal policies integrating black people, they “simply serves to divide blacks *even further* by selecting a few *respectable* blacks and elevating them to antagonise the whole community for not being able to get to the same place”. This order, therefore, is maintained through institutionalised means of oppression that keeps the black people in its condition of dependence and inferiority.

It is worth noting that racial tension between 2016 and 2017 was significantly at an all-time high. According to the SAHRC (2017) report around that time, the use of “derogatory comments” against black people was “rife” in South Africa. For instance, the report cited “the use of the K-word (was) endemic” and incidents of racial discrimination took place significantly at schools, universities and in businesses. Moreover, such incidents were not limited to verbal abuse but often included physical violence, intimidation and being physically excluded or removed from the establishments such as restaurants. Therefore, the master myth of racial unity remains

ideal rather than real given the history of endemic structural oppression and discrimination based on race in South Africa.

On the other hand, counter myth reveals that the ANC-led government struggle with service delivery. A counter to the long-held ANC party slogan a “*Better Life for All*”, as people live in poverty, the corruption that steals from the poor, patronage, cronyism, impunity perpetrated by individuals and factions within the ranks of the ANC-led government (Nyathi & Khumalo, 2020). The results of low morale within the ANC-led government is manifested mainly with increased inequality and underdevelopment, particularly in black communities. Another major weakness under the ANC-led government includes a significant lack of investment in quality education mainly for black South Africans that could essentially move millions out of poverty and underdevelopment and help people to be self-reliant. Rather, the ANC has focused more on the number of students receiving public education rather than the underlying quality of public education.

Secondly, the ANC focused significantly on social welfare programmes such as social housing for the poor, access to basic social infrastructure such as water, electricity and roads, particularly in poorer communities among others. Although poverty alleviation intervention is critical given the South African history of marginalisation and segregation, South Africa requires a significant investment in human development that could help black people, in particular, to stand on their feet (self-reliant) and create enterprises for themselves, rather than on social welfare programmes. Because of poor and/or lack of education among black people, South Africa is struggling with high levels of unemployment, particularly among youth and the ANC-led government seems incapable to effect robust economic reforms. Again, this is because of the disagreeing based on political, economic ideologies and factions within the ANC political party.

The next section focuses on underlying political discourse within the context of political myth.

### 7.2.6 Political myth as a political discourse

Political discourse is the sixth hallmark of the political myth. In Chapter Three, the concept discourse is described as a social practice, a social process and a social structure under which a media text is produced (Hodge & Kress, 1988:6). Furthermore, O'Shaughnessy and Stadler (2005:150) describe discourse as a collective and shared meaning about a subject. The shared meaning essentially means the use of a shared language, words and sentences among others.

*“But they never talked about how we have moved forward, just yesterday we gave birth to democracy. Although they said we were too young and inexperienced, we kept building.” -ANC 2014*

For this analysis, the subject matter of political discourse is democracy. According to Dreijmanis (2000), democracy is defined here as a “way of governing a country” where citizens have equal opportunity to choose their public representatives, during free and fair elections. This means democracy is mainly based on fair competition between independent political parties over who can implement the best plans for the nation and/or the society. These plans are therefore assessed regularly during the elections by the electorates.

In addition, Kegan (1998) points out that, the key to democracy is the effective and credible institutions, citizens who understand underlying responsibilities and principles of democracy that have developed a character that is consistent with the democratic way of life and more importantly, is the high quality of leadership. Moreover, democracy is bolstered by supporting institutions, such as a free press and broadcasting service, an independent judiciary, and the rule of law among others (Graig & Enterline, 2014:170).

On the contrary, the above voiceover used the discourse of democracy ideologically using the metaphor *“just yesterday we gave birth to democracy”*, essentially to hide the inefficiencies of the ANC-led government. *“Yesterday”* is also used metaphorically essentially to suggest not so long, South Africa attained political freedom rather than a functioning democracy where socio-economic conditions of people have declined and reduced to poverty and unemployment. This is demonstrated by high levels of corruption particularly among ANC officials in government, therefore, a corrupt machine. For example, the former South African President Jacob Zuma has embroiled in a corruptions scandal of his private house in Nkandla Village, in KwaZulu-Natal Province, where there was a significant misappropriation of public funds at a tune of R250 million used in the construction of a private house of the individual with his family (Southall, 2014:58). Moreover, President Zuma has been accused of being captured by the Gupta family,<sup>34</sup> essentially giving his friends access to government resources with the sole purpose of controlling political institutions mainly for their economic advantage, rather than for the overall South African society (Hogg, 2014). On the other hand, there have been complaints about many of the ANC officials such as ministers at the National Assembly, Director Generals in government departments, Members of the Executive Committees (MEC), Premiers at the Provincial Government level and Executive Mayors of municipalities lacking competency skills and experiences required for their positions (De Swart, 2014). The outcome of the above-mentioned problem can be seen with the decline in the maintenance of infrastructure, lack and/or poor basic services in both urban and rural parts of South Africa, mismanagement of public funds, and high unemployment among young people. Because of this, politics is seen as a job that leads to achieving personal wealth rather than advancing the wellbeing of the nation.

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<sup>34</sup> Gupta family—a clan of Indian born businessmen known to wield substantial influence over South African politics. The family has been accused by activists and opposition politicians of stacking the leadership of powerful state companies, rigging bids in favor of suppliers it controls, and even helping orchestrate a planned \$70 billion nuclear-power deal with Russia, for which it could supply vast quantities of uranium - all while using an alliance with President Zuma to neuter law enforcement agencies that would otherwise shut down its efforts.

In addition, at the time of these advertisements, the South African economy was underperforming, such that the economy contracted by 0.6%, with an unemployment rate of 25% or 8.3 million people are out of work (Mbele, 2014). Service delivery protests had increased to 12 399 and 1 907 were violent, carried out largely by poorer communities across South Africa mainly over lack or poor services rendered by the local government despite the increased public expenditure of R44 billion (Dodds, 2014). These included lack of investment in economic infrastructures such as electricity, roads, railway and water contributed to the underperforming economy (England, 2014; Broga, 2014; Hedden & Cilliers, 2014).

However, where there is the implementation of this critical economic infrastructure remains significantly slow and inadequate. Educational attainment among individuals between the ages of 25 and 64 remains low in South Africa with only 12% of individuals who have some post-secondary school qualification. The black population still lags in terms of higher educational attainment compared to other population groups such as whites and Indians. While whites and Indians have the highest proportion of higher education graduates. There is still a large number of black individuals (3 million) who dropped out of school after having reached only some primary education level, while 13.4 million in this category between the age group (25–64) did not complete their secondary education (Statistics South Africa, 2016).

With the above inefficiencies under the ANC-led government, it is reasonable to conclude that South Africa is miles away from realising a truly functioning democracy that could move millions out of poverty and unemployment to become economically active citizens, rather than dependents on the state or recipients on state social security grants to earn a living. Moreover, it is worth pointing out that significantly high levels of poverty, illiteracy and lack of investment in public services undermine and/or threaten efforts of building a sustainable and functioning democracy. Therefore, the master myth claims of the ANC-led government of building a functioning democracy since 1994 is disputable given alarming figures of poverty and under-development mainly in the ANC voter constituencies.



The next section of this chapter focuses on the eight hallmarks of the political myth and populism.

### **7.2.7 Political myth and populism**

Populism is a critical hallmark of political myth. In Chapter Three, populism is described as political rhetoric that strategically distances itself away from the elites and associates significantly with the poor and the marginalised, rather than the rich and the privileged (Canovan, 2004:313). Therefore, populism is essentially about the binaries between the two groups, the masses, the marginalised, the poor, the disenfranchised versus, the elites, the rich and the privileged few of the society (Mudde, 2000:542). The poor accuse the elites as the main cause of their economic hardship such as poverty and under-development (Moffitt & Tormey, 2014:12). Therefore, the significance of populism in this study is that political actors such as political party advertisers use different communication styles mainly to align their political interests with the marginalised people rather than the elites of the society. In the selected political television advertisement of the DA and EFF, several voiceovers essentially represent populist representation.

The DA 2014 election campaign advertisement uses populist rhetoric to promise “*free higher education for qualifying matriculants (Grade 12 high school learners)*”. The populist rhetoric of free higher education in South Africa comes as a result of rising costs of study fees and a significant decline of government funding in higher education. The government has made significant interventions since 1994, primarily to enable access to higher education, particularly for students from disadvantaged backgrounds using student loans such as the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) and other government bursary schemes. However, over the years students have complained about accessing loans and/or bursary grants are not enough to cover study expenses at university (Makoni, 2014). Furthermore, there is corruption and

maladministration in the allocation of funds meant for students from poor households (Villette, 2014).

Therefore, in the 2016 advertisement, the DA claims it is concerned with the plight of the poor, *“Since then, we have worked hard to make progress for the poor and most vulnerable”*. This is a solidarity myth given the significant use of the personal pronoun *“we”* make a populist stance essentially rhetorical and serve to appeal to black electorates that have lost interest in the ANC. The use of a solidarity myth is debatable in that the DA remains a political party of the majority of white people, whose interests are mainly to promote and protect the economic and political interests of white people rather than the socio-economic interest of the poor and black people (Nkosi, 2018).



Figure 7.34: A screenshot depicting a long shot of a newspaper poster written, *Land Is Coming* –EFF 2019

*“We are home to the marginalised voices seeking justice. Our fight for land is about giving dignity to black people” -EFF 2019.*

Figure 7.34 visual text “land is coming” taken from the EFF 2019 advertisement demonstrates the underlying use of the transformational myth. A medium close-up shot of a face of a black man next to the above mentioned written visual text is ideological, suggesting that land belongs to black people, the rightful owners of the

African land that was stolen by white colonial settlers. The act of being behind the wheel is captured ideologically to suggest that redistribution of land needs urgent attention. Land must be allocated to young black people mainly to encourage participation in the economy and the future of South Africa. Chapter Three described transformational myths as narratives about social, political and economic changes that take place within the society (Gamble & Wright, 2009). Therefore, the identified transformational myth is used ideologically either to persuade electorates who are unhappy with the ANC economic reforms.

In the accompanying voiceover, the verbal text uses solidarity myth with the use of the personal pronoun “we” mainly to appeal to the plight of the poor blacks, who felt betrayed by the elite ANC government “them”. The above voiceover further reveals the underlying transformational myth suggesting that the political party seek to transform the South African society mainly to have access to the historically protected land mainly occupied by white people. The rhetorical verb to “*fight for land*” suggests that the EFF leader Mr Malema delegitimises the Constitution of South Africa, particularly on clauses that protect private property and the use of violent language that suggests acting inappropriately mainly in a political environment (Moffitt & Tormey, 2014:392). To address the injustices of apartheid and colonialism, the ANC-led government carefully negotiated a controversial Section 25 of the South African Constitution of 1996 which speaks to the expropriation and compensation of land, mainly not to scare off investors, to protect food security and to avoid mass migration of skilled farmers that could destroy domestic food security and collapse of the export earnings (Luke, 2015). Moreover, the limitations of this piece of legislation do not provide answers to if compensation is to be paid, how much should be paid and how should the amount be determined.

At the time of this advertisement, the discourse around the issue of land was faced with many obstacles and moved very slowly. Firstly, this could be owing to the historical principle of “Willing Buyer, Willing Seller” in the first ten years of the ANC-led government. The policy of the “Willing Buyer, Willing Seller” was based on the World

Bank policy guide of 30 % of agricultural land was to be transferred from white farmers to black farmers (Ntsebeza, 2004:90-93).

Secondly, the populist rhetoric of expropriation of land without compensation is radical and undermines South Africa's obligations in international law that touch on compensation and expropriation of private property, namely: Customary International Law (CIL); Bilateral Investment Treaties (BIT); The South African Development Community Treaty (SADC Treaty); and The African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR).

Since South Africa is a signatory to the above treaties, it is worth pointing out briefly what they entail. (1) CIL makes a provision for expropriation of private property. However, when it comes to property owned by foreign nationals, CIL imposes certain requirements such as expropriation must be for a public purpose and must not be discriminatory. (2) the expropriation must be lawful. This second requirement means that the expropriation must not breach principles of international law (Bennet & Strug, 2013:87).

The BIT is the second international treaty to which South Africa is a signatory. BIT makes a provision for the protection of private property such as land or property owned by a foreign national within South Africa. Furthermore, the BIT recognises the (1) right of the host country to expropriate foreign property subject to lawful expropriation mainly for public purposes on a non-discriminatory basis rather than on private purposes, (2) expropriation is based on payment (compensation) of the identified property and (3) the compensation is fair and of a market value (Soko & Qobo, 2018).

The third treaty that South Africa is a signatory to is the Southern African Development Community (SADC) treaty. The SADC treaty does not make explicit provision overregulation of expropriation. However, the SADC Tribunal makes a provision for

compensation, that is, compensation for expropriation of private property is a requirement according to the SADC law (SADC, 1998: 19).

Lastly, South Africa is a signatory of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR). Article 14 makes a provision for the "right to property". However, the African Charter cautions that the provision for land can be available on the 1) basis of the interest of the public need, 2) in the general interest of the community and more important in 3) accordance with the provisions of appropriate laws (African Charter on Human's and People's Rights on the Right of Women in Africa, 2003:5). Although the South African public is divided on the land issue, South Africa needs to observe its international responsibilities so that it could remain relevant to its international peers, uphold the rule of law and be competitive as well as a preferred investment destination in Africa. The downside however of the above populist transformational myth and solidarity myth mainly on the occupation of the private land without compensation could be devastating to the South African economy and destabilise the banking sector that holds land-based assets in the form of mortgages at the value of R1.6 trillion (Neves, 2021) and its reputation in the international affairs.

Another problem with the discourse around how the colonialists acquired land that belonged to the Khoi, the San and black people is the failure to acknowledge the underlying history of land acquisition rather than being dismissed as a fictional narrative. There is history that dates to 1855, with the then Transvaal government adopting Resolution 159 that essentially prohibited black people (1) from being recognised as citizens of South Africa and (2) from land ownership. This is followed by a series of similar discriminatory and segregation legislation that mainly sought to dispossess black people's land. The most notable one, was the Native Land Act of 1913 after the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910, with this Act seeking to dispossess and prohibit black people from all forms of land ownership. It is therefore hard to imagine how land expropriation could be legitimised when its underlying history is been marginalised by white capitalists. The act of undermining the historical land acquisition and land dispossession can be interpreted in the words of Sol Plaatje as

the “act of turning a South African native a pariah in the land of his birth rather than a slave” (Midgley, 2007:2-3).

The next section focuses on underlying propaganda in the political myth.

### 7.2.8 Political myth and propaganda

There is a relationship between political myth and propaganda. In *Chapter Three* of this study, it has been pointed out that there is a symbiotic relationship between propaganda and political myth. Propaganda is described as an expression of opinion or actions performed deliberately by an elite individual or group mainly to influence opinions or actions of the masses using psychological manipulation (Nicholas, Culbert & Welch, 2003:34). Within the context of political myth, O’Shaughnessy (2004) argues that without propaganda, political myth can neither be recreated nor sustained.



Figure 7.35: A screenshot depicting a longshot of a mural wall art of ANC stalwarts and young men cycling past the mural wall art.-ANC 2016

Figure 7.35 presents a visual presentation of underlying propaganda in the political myth of heroic myth.

*“Remember our long walk to freedom,*

*“Remember Madiba, Tambo, Sisulu and uMamau Winnie” -ANC 2016*

Figure 7.35 and the underlying voiceover selected from the *ANC Advert 2016-Remember* are inherently propaganda material and ideologically legitimising the hero myth of the political myth. The discourse historical analysis is essential for the analysis of the underlying propaganda mainly for the above-mentioned texts. The HCA is mainly to uncover underlying persuasive and manipulative discursive practices used in the verbal and visual texts (Wodak, 2001). The type of political myth used in the above voiceover is the heroic myth.

The above voiceover uses heroic myth ideologically using a metaphor *“our long walk to freedom”*. Firstly, as indicated in the previous section 7.2.3, the personal pronoun *“our”* is used ideologically mainly to suggest solidarity, unity and/or pride of the ANC in the fight against colonialism and apartheid (Helmbrecht, 2005:189-200). Moreover, the pronoun *“our”* serves as an invitation to audiences or ANC sympathisers that they have also been part of the struggle against the legacies of colonialism and apartheid (Beard, 2000:41). Secondly, *“our long walk to freedom”* is used metaphorically and/or ideologically to suggest that it was only the ANC political party that was involved in the struggle against apartheid and colonialism. This ideological view is very concerning as it undermines the critical role played by other political parties such as the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), Azanian People’s Organisation (AZAPO), the Socialist Party of Azania (SOPA) and other civic organisations such as the United Democratic Front (UDF) towards dismantling apartheid.

The heroic myth used in these verbal and visual texts is concerning as it ideologically legitimises only ANC leaders from the AmaXhosa ethnic group such as former South African President Mr Nelson Mandela (1991-1997) and former ANC president Oliver Tambo (1967-1991). These verbal and visual texts suggest that Mr Mandela and Mr Tambo are the only leaders who liberated Black South Africans from oppressive regimes of colonialism and apartheid. The recognition of the above-mentioned leaders

undermines the significance of the founding fathers of the ANC such as Rev. John Langalibalele Dube, Sefako Makgatho, Rev. Zacharias Richard Mahabane, Josiah Tshangana Gumede, and Pixley ka Isaka Seme just to mention a few. None of the above-mentioned men was of the Xhosa ethnicity. This is a generation of men from different parts of the then Union of South Africa,<sup>35</sup> and of different African tribes that formed the then South African Native National Congress (SANNC),<sup>36</sup> formed in 1912. The mandate of the SANNC then and throughout history has essentially been to fight against the exclusion of the black majority in the newly formed Union of South Africa.

Moreover, the use of Madiba, essentially Mandela's clan name, is concerning as it ideologically normalises AmaXhosa ethnic group as the only struggle fighters of the "liberation" of South Africa. On the other hand, it delegitimises the significance of other South African tribal groups such as AmaZulu, Basotho, Bapedi, Batswana, BaVenda and VaTshonga ethnic groups that contributed significantly towards the political freedom of South Africa. Privileging one tribal group – AmaXhosa over the other as the only custodian of the fight against colonialism and apartheid in South Africa amounts (1) to tribalism, (2) essentially undermines and violates the very Constitution of the ANC founded on the pillars of the Freedom Charter,<sup>37</sup>. Central to the Freedom Charter is a call for an ideal society that the people of South Africa want to have, mainly

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<sup>35</sup> The Union of South Africa came into effect in 1910, after the South African Act of 1909 which makes a provision for a unification of the British colonies of the Cape Colony (presently, the Northern Cape, Western Cape and the Eastern Cape Provinces) together with the Boer Republics of the Transvaal (presently, the Mpumalanga, Limpopo, Gauteng and the North-West Provinces) and the Orange Free State (presently the Free State Province). The unification of 1910 meant that South Africa will be in total control of the English and Afrikaner minorities. On 31 May 1961, South Africa became a Republic, which means an end to the British monarchy over South Africa.

<sup>36</sup> SANNC was renamed the ANC in 1923.

<sup>37</sup> The Freedom Charter was adopted in 1955 by the Congress of the People at Kliptown, Johannesburg. The Congress of the People was mainly formed by the ANC and its allies, the South African Indian Congress (SAIC), the South African Congress of Democrats (SACD) and the Coloured People's Congress (CPC). Since Black people were significantly marginalised by the White minority government, the Freedom Charter primarily called for democracy, human rights, land reform, labour rights and nationalisation of the South African wealth. In other words, the charter was the first organised statement in the history of Black South Africans to outline a political and constitutional vision of a free, democratic and non-racial South Africa.



democracy, human rights, land reform, labour rights and nationalisation of the South African wealth.

Although the Freedom Charter is critical to the ANC political party, the charter's two clauses claim that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white" and "Land shall be shared among those who work it". These two clauses are concerning and open for debate as they conspire and sentence black people to lifetime poverty and subjugation in post-1994 South Africa. They delegitimise the agency of black people who have been figuratively emancipated from legislated apartheid and colonial South Africa and legitimises a historical land theft mainly by white South Africans and protects their privileges. Therefore, Robert Sobukwe and Steve Biko rejected the Freedom Charter and described it as nothing but "a clique of foreigners deciding on the lives of a majority" (Biko, 2017:156).

It is worth pointing out the propaganda of normalising the ANC being the sole heroic liberator of South Africa from apartheid (1) is legitimised mainly by nationalism constructed under conditions of oppression and (2) the ANC is the only party that speaks the rhetoric on transformation and race-based inequality (Mashele & Qobo, 2014:184). By transformation, the ANC speaks about the inclusion of the previously marginalised South Africans into the mainstream economy.

However, the question remains, for how long will the younger generation in particular who were not even born during apartheid will hold on to the ANC myth of the custodian of the liberation struggle, while the party is inflicting self-destruction through factionalism, lack of and poor service delivery, rising poverty, unemployment, weak economy and corruption among its leaders?

Like the ANC, the DA 2016 uses propaganda to look good to its potential electorate.

*“Where we govern, poor residents receive essential services than anywhere else”*

*“With the lowest unemployment in South Africa”* -DA 2016

The above voiceover *“where we govern, poor residents receive essential services than anywhere else”* is disputable and questionable. If the DA is keen on the plight of the poor people as it claims, it could have started in the Western Cape Province where it governs by providing housing instead of shacks in predominantly black communities such as Khayelitsha, Langa, Home Farms, Lwandle, Imizamo Yethu, Phillipi, Somerset West, Strand and Hout Bay among others (Miller, 2016).

The claim, *“lowest unemployment in South Africa”* does not make sense. At the time of this advertisement, Statistics South Africa (2016) reported that unemployment in South Africa increased to 26.7% in the first quarter of 2016. When considering the "expanded" unemployment rate, that is, people who completely stopped looking for work, the unemployment rate is 36.3% the highest among South Africa's competitors, the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa),<sup>38</sup> (Holodny, 2016).

The next section focuses on the last hallmark of political myth, genre.

### **7.2.9 Political myth and genre**

Genre is the last hallmark of political myth. In Chapter Three, Slotkin (1990:18) and Briggs and Bauman (1992:145) argue that the political genre subliminally employs different types of political myths in the political discourse. The significance of genre in the context of political myths is to describe a collection of a particular set of media

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<sup>38</sup> Unemployment rate per country member of BRICKS in7 2016: Brazil-12.8%, India-5.56%, Russia-5.56%, China-4.54% (World Bank, 2016).

texts that are distinct, specialised and unique, mainly that shares a common set of characteristics of verbal and visual styles, narratives and themes, recognised by viewers (Bosma, 2015:322; Miller, 1984:156). Key to the genre is mainly to reveal a common set of characteristics presented in verbal and visual texts in the form of styles, narratives and themes. In the context of this study, genre constitutes types of political myths, discourses and/or discursive practices presented in political television advertisements under scrutiny.

In the selected ANC television advertisements, there are underlying genres of political myth, namely: 1) nation-building, 2) achievements 3) promises and 4) political issues. The selected ANC 2014 leads with the nation-building discourse of *“we built a nation that we can all live in with freedom and equality”* and *“let us continue to build”*. In the ANC 2019 advertisement, a similar pattern of nation-building genre is used, *“the future of our country lies in the hands of every single South African”*. While the ANC 2016 advertisement does not make emphasise nation-building, this could be the fact that the advertisement was meant for local government elections rather than national elections.

However, the fact that in the above two selected advertisements, emphasis is on nation-building, is an indication that the ANC-led government takes the discourse of national unity seriously. Moreover, the ANC has been accused by the opposition parties such as DA and FFP of implementing discriminatory policies such as the BEE and AA. These policies are regarded as reverse-racism as they favour black people over white people in post-1994 South Africa, therefore, reverse racism (Ngwenya, 2019).

The second genre of achievements is also used in the selected three advertisements in the ANC 2014 and ANC 2016 advertisements. While the ANC 2019 does not make emphasis on achievements, rather the advertisement acknowledges its mistakes under President Jacob Zuma’s administration and encourages voters regardless of its shortcomings to vote for the ANC political party. The 2014 and 2016 ANC political

advertisements underscore the gains of social service delivery such as electricity connection to disadvantaged communities, provision of social housing, study loans for university students, employment creation mainly in the public sector that favours black people and women, as well as a democratic system where citizens regardless of race elect a government of their choice.

The third genre under scrutiny make promises on investment in economic infrastructure, access to healthcare and job creation opportunities (2014 and 2016 ANC). However, the ANC 2016 does not make any promises instead focuses on achievements.

Lastly, on the genre of governance issues, the ANC 2019 advertisement uses metaphors ideologically such as *“the ANC is on a path of renewal”*, *“where our growth has stalled”*, *“address the mistakes that were made”*, *“we are exposing and tackling corruption”* essentially to acknowledge that the reputation of the party has become questionable given scandals after scandals of corruption and mismanagement of public funds by its members in government. Underlying genres in the selected three advertisements present different political myths mainly the master myth, exceptional myth, transformation myth and heroic or saviour myth.

The DA 2014 selected advertisements genre essentially raises concern over governance issues such as corruption under the ANC led government. On the contrary, the party focuses on promises of free higher education and employment opportunities for young graduates. The promise for free higher education is ideological, reactionary and seek to score political points of the 2015 FeesMustFall#,<sup>39</sup> nationwide student protest rather than informed by a DA policy on higher education.

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<sup>39</sup> In 2015, a year after the 2014 general elections, South African institutions of higher education the University of Cape Town and Rhodes University embarked on months of mass protests demanding the removal of the Cecil Rhodes statues on the university campuses, and a change of the name of Rhodes University—the *Rhodes-Must-Fall* campaign. The protests were followed by nationwide protests demanding the removal of all colonial and apartheid statutes (Munusamy 2015). The *Rhodes-Must-Fall*

The 2016 DA advertisement the genre however focused more on issues of political achievements such as increased access to education, improved municipal services and the ability to attract investments in the form of manufacturing and packaging industries in their respective municipalities, the building of new hospitals and other primary health care facilities. On the contrary, the DA 2019 does not use the genre of political promises and achievements, rather the party is mainly concerned about issues of governance and national unity. Therefore, the DA uses a combination of different genres of political myths such as the master myth, counter myth and heroic myth essentially championing the course of the poor and marginalised.

Lastly, the EFF 2014, 2016 and 2019 advertisements use a genre that focuses mainly on land acquisition without compensation rather than political achievements. The genre of the EFF 2014 advertisement essentially focuses on the failures and weaknesses of the ANC-led government. The EFF 2016 advertisement genre focuses on critiquing the ANC led government on political issues of rampant corruption within its ranks, lack of economic opportunities in the form of employment among young people, lack of land and housing. The EFF 2019 focuses on the genre of political achievements such as education, improved working conditions, marginalised, issues of racism, corruption and land. Therefore, the overall genre of the selected advertisement is essentially critical of the ANC-led government as well as the established underlying culture of tenderpreneurship, the main source of corruption within the ANC-led government where few connected friends of politicians have access to government contracts to render public services at inflated prices mainly to make excess profits for personal gain rather than for public benefit. The type of

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protest was followed by the *Fees-Must-Fall* protests, which started at the University of Witwatersrand and spread throughout South African institutions of higher learning after universities had announced they would raise tuition fees by up to 20 %, which means the academic exclusion of the majority of black students (Baloyi & Isaacs 2015).

underlying genres used by the EFF political advertisements are mainly conspiracy and counter-narratives of political myths. Moreover, the EFF uses heroic narratives to associate the party with the plight of the poor. Therefore, the underlying genre is that of heroic type of political myth.

The foregoing discussion of analysis has successfully applied theoretical discussion of political myth. The underlying types of political myths, namely: the conspiracy myth, counter myth, the golden age myth, master myth, heroic or saviour myth, exceptionalism myth, transformational myth, solidarity myth, unity myth as well as the “us” and “them” myth. These myths were used ideologically to either legitimise and/or delegitimise the significance of the political discourse and/or political party. Moreover, the above analyses revealed that political myth uses different forms of political language such as metaphor, linguistic features such as pronoun among others, to construct a political narrative. Communication strategies pronouns and metaphors to construct a political myth essentially to legitimise and/or delegitimise a political discourse.

### **7.3 CONCLUSION**

In line with the main research question of this study, this study identified political myths of the three political parties, namely; the ANC, DA and EFF used in 2014, 2016 and 2019 national, provincial and local government elections campaigns. The analysis of visual and verbal texts in the selected advertisements of the above political parties is informed mainly by the CDA analyses research methods, namely: Three-Dimensional Model of Discourse, PDA, DMA, CMA, DHA, SSA and MCDA. These analyses methods are critical in that they revealed underlying political myth and ideological meaning of the verbal and visual texts of the selected political television advertisements. Furthermore, using the above analyses methods, the study revealed that political myths are inherently strategic narratives that pursue a particular strategic communication, use a particular form of political language, are rhetorical and ideological, convey a particular national identity narrative, are populist, propaganda

and are classified according to certain patterns of the genre. This study described the above hallmarks of political myth.

Lastly, using the above analyses methods of CDA, the study revealed that the selected political parties advertisements (ANC 2014, 2016 and 2019; DA 2014, 2016 and 2019; EFF 2014, 2016 and 2019) employed different types of political myth, namely: conspiracy myth, counter myth, the golden age myth, master myth, heroic or saviour myth, exceptionalism myth, transformational myth, solidarity myth, unity myth as well as the “us” and “them” myth. The study argued that the uses of different types of political myths essentially legitimise and/or delegitimise a discourse in post-1994 South Africa. This is done mainly by the use of different strategic and discursive practices such as the use of linguistic features, namely, personal pronouns, symbolic language, metaphor and cinematic visual aspects such as camera shots, camera angles, careful selection of lighting, settings and colour primarily to convey a particular ideological meaning of a political myth.





## **CHAPTER EIGHT: CHAPTER SUMMARIES, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **8.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the overall conclusion of the study. The next section provides an overall summary of the study, revisiting the aims and objectives of the study, summaries of the findings, chapter summaries, the contribution and limitations, and recommendations of possible future research projects.

### **8.2 REVISITING AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

In concluding a research study, it is worth revisiting the main aim and objectives of the study. This is essential to ask oneself the extent to which the information that has been gathered during the investigation addressed the underlying aim and objectives of the study.

The main aim of this study was to interrogate using CDA underlying political myths in the political television advertisements of the three main South African political parties, the ANC, DA and EFF used during 2014, 2016 and 2019 national, provincial and local government elections.

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- To identify underlying political myths used in the selected political television advertisements.
- To determine how discursive practices in the visual and verbal texts are presented in the selected political television advertisements to construct underlying political myths.

- To interrogate using the CDA underlying political myths used in the verbal and visual texts of the selected political television advertisements.
- To compare whether there are similarities and/or differences of political myths in the selected political television advertisements.
- To present (or propose) the understanding of political myths in the South African political television advertisements.

### **8.3 CHAPTER SUMMARIES**

This study has eight chapters. Chapter One presented the overall introduction of the study. The chapter dwelt on issues of the background of the study, research problem, questions, key definitions, objectives and theoretical framework, justification of the study and limitations of the study. Chapter Two located the nature of the concept myth. Moreover, the chapter presented a discussion on different theories of myth, namely: the functional theory, structural theory, semiotic theory, rational theory, psychological theory, counter myth theory and the Afrocentric theory. The chapter argued that myth is a general concept that suggests narratives or stories could be studied from different perspectives without being specific. Therefore, for this study, myth is studied mainly from a political perspective rather than from a general perspective.

Chapter Three presented firstly the literature review to which underlying knowledge gaps requiring insight concerning issues of importance to the study were identified. Secondly, the theoretical framework of political myth, as well as different types of political myths, namely: the heroic myth, “us” and “them” myth, master myth, exceptional myth, transformational myth, golden age, counter myth, and conspiracy myth, were discussed. Previous studies identified different hallmarks of political myths, namely: strategic narratives of political myth, political myth as strategic communication, political myth and political language, the rhetoric of political myth, the ideology of political myth, political myth and national identities, political myth as a political discourse, political myth and propaganda, as well as underlying different

genres of political myth. These hallmarks present this study with essential areas of analysis of political myth.

Chapter Four presented a discussion on the nature of CDA as a theoretical approach and a research method. As a theory, CDA is mainly concerned with underlying discourses or discursive practices of the linguistic features, essentially the verbal texts as well as visual texts in the form of photos, images and other cinematic material.

On the other hand, the chapter identified different analyses research methods of the CDA, namely: the three-dimensional model of discourse, PDA, CMA, DMA, DHA, SSA and MCDA. The chapter argued that the analyses methods revealed underlying ideologies of discursive practices and interrogated underlying political myths of the verbal and visual texts of the sampled political television advertisements of the political parties, namely the ANC, DA and EFF.

Chapter Five outlined the study with a comprehensive research strategy while Chapter Six presented an objective presentation of data from the selected political television advertisements. Chapter Seven presented the study findings of the inherent political myths in the verbal and visual texts of the selected advertisements using the CDA research methods. Lastly, Chapter Eight presented summaries of findings and conclusions about the main research question, research problems, research aims and objectives, summaries of findings and conclusion.

## **8.4 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

The previous chapter analysed nine political television advertisements of the ANC, DA and EFF political parties. The following summary of research findings sought to answer the main research questions of the study. Identifying underlying political myths in the selected political television advertisements was using considering the scholarly work of Floods (2002), Sala (2016: 527-528), Nimmo and Combs (1980:27-33), Smith

(1999:56-57), Gamble and Wright (2009:20-30). This study revealed that different types of political myths, namely: conspiracy myth, exceptional myth, heroic myth, foundational myth, golden age myth, master myth, saviour myth, “us” and “them” myth, transformational myth and unity myth were used in the selected ANC, DA and EFF political television advertisements.

In the ANC 2014 political television advertisement, the results of this study revealed a significant use of the “us” and “them” myth, transformational myth, master myth, the hero myth and/or saviour myth as well as unity myth. The ANC 2016 political television advertisement revealed the use of foundational myth, the golden age myth, exceptional myth, heroic and/or saviour myth. The ANC 2019 political television advertisement used only the transformational myth, master myth, saviour myth and unity myth.

In the DA 2014 political television advertisement, the study found significant use of counter myth, conspiracy myth, master myth, unity or solidarity myth and transformational myth. The DA 2016 political television advertisement revealed the significant use of unity and/or solidarity myth. Moreover, the DA 2019 uses an exceptional myth, golden age myth, master myth and unity myth/solidarity myth. None of the DA advertisements used a heroic myth and the “us” and “them” myth.

Lastly, the EFF 2014 advertisement revealed that a counter myth and conspiracy myths were significantly used. While the EFF 2016 identified a significant use of conspiracy myth, transformational myth, master myth, unity and/or solidarity myths. The EFF 2019 revealed a significant use of the “us” and “them” myth, transformational myth and counter myth.

On the question of, to what extent discursive practices of visual and verbal texts of the selected political television advertisements construct underlying political myth?, this study found that the selected political advertisements used different discursive

practices in the verbal texts such as personal pronouns “*I*”, “*we*”, “*you*”, “*us*”, “*they*” and “*them*” to construct underlying political myths such as the “us” and “them” myth, the unity myth/solidarity myth, counter myth and conspiracy myth. Moreover, this study revealed that the above-mentioned verbal discursive practices are used ideologically essentially to legitimise and/or delegitimise the significance of the ANC political party in post-1994 South Africa.

On the other hand, this study revealed that visual discursive practices are used ideologically mainly to present the appalling state of socio-economic conditions of South Africa under the ANC-led government (the third objective of the study). Moreover, the study revealed that ANC and DA used underlying discursive practices in the form of logos and colours primarily to present the master myth, unity myth, transformational myth and exceptional myth. The EFF used underlying discursive practices of logo and colours to present a counter and conspiracy myths. The DA and EFF used visual discursive practices that are highly critical of the ANC-led government primarily to delegitimise or question its relevance in post-1994 South Africa. Therefore, EFF visual discursive practices present underlying counter myth and conspiracy myths.

On the question of whether there are similarities and/or differences of political myth in the selected political television advertisements, the study revealed that there are significant differences in how the selected political advertisements used political myths. For instance, the study revealed that compared to the EFF and DA, none of the selected ANC advertisements used a counter myth and conspiracy myths. While the DA and EFF used the “us” and “them” myth, none of the ANC used the “us” and “them” myth. Furthermore, none of the EFF advertisements used the golden age myth, exceptional myth and heroic myth or saviour myths compared to the ANC and the DA. None of the selected political advertisements used pseudo-myths.

On the question of the understanding of political myths in the South African political television advertisements is, firstly, despite the work of Thompson (1985) on political

myths in South Africa during apartheid, this specific study makes a significant contribution to post-1994-South Africa. This study is the first of its kind in South Africa to analyse political myths on political television advertisements using different research methods CDA. Secondly, this study revealed that political myths are not mere “fictional” or “tales” of narratives, rather they are highly ideological and present a political perspective about political parties. This, therefore, makes political myths highly meaning-making political narratives. Thirdly, the significant use of political myths such as counter myth, conspiracy myth, “us” and “them” myths, present and/or stimulate public debates by highlighting important political issues that are negatively affecting society. Fourthly, the use of political myths in political television advertisements essentially empowers electorates to make informed voting decisions on whom to vote for. Fifth, political myths in political television advertisements possibly motivate voters to participate in the electoral process, essentially to exercise their democratic right. Lastly, since political myths in political television advertisements generate public debates and shape public opinion they play a critical role in the strengthening of democracy in South Africa.

Now that a summary of findings has been presented, the next section of this study presents the limitations of the study.

## **8.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Several limitations were identified in this study. In reviewing the literature on political myth mainly in the context of political television advertisements, there is limited literature specifically on the South African elections and political myths. Therefore, the researcher had to borrow significantly literature from the US and Western Europe as well as Euro-Asian studies. Another limitation is that this study only focused on qualitative research design rather than mixed-method research essentially to present frequencies of the use of political myths in each political advertisement. This is because this study is significantly rooted in a critical approach that does not make provision for quantitative research design.

## **8.6 RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE STUDIES**

Since the study of political television advertisements is relatively new in the South African political communication landscape compared to the U.S, it is under-theorised, under-researched and under-documented. Therefore, more empirical studies need to be undertaken in the following areas of political television advertisements:

- Qualitative and/or quantitative content analysis studies of smaller opposition parties such as the FFP.
- Comparative qualitative content analysis of political parties' genre of political television advertisements mainly of local government elections.
- A qualitative content analysis of the visual and verbal metaphor of political parties in political television advertisements.
- Impact assessment studies of voter response to the political party television advertisements, thus political audience studies.
- Quantitative studies on South African political television advertisements.
- Mixed method approach studies in the analyses of political television advertisements.
- Comparative studies on political television advertisement between South Africa and other African countries, North America and Western Europe.

## **8.7 CONCLUSION**

This concluding chapter provided a discussion of the overall findings of the study. It summarised the findings based on the study's main research questions, aims and objectives, as well as underlying limitations of the study. Finally, it highlighted possible future research projects that could be tackled.





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10 February 2020

## RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE LETTER OF DECISION: NO RISK

Based on the review by the North-West University Arts Research Ethics Committee (NWU-AREC) on 10/02/2020, the NWU-AREC hereby clears your study as a no risk study. This implies that the NWU-AREC grants its permission that, provided the general conditions specified below are met, the study may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

**Study title: Deconstructing political myths in television advertisements of major South African political parties during elections campaigns: A critical discourse analysis study**  
**Principal Investigator/Study Supervisor/Researcher: Prof William Heuva**  
**Student: M.T. Thatelo**

**Ethics number:**

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| N | W | U | - | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5 | - | 2 | 0 | - | S | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Institution Study Number Year Status  
Status: S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation

**Application Type: Single Study**  
**Commencement date: 10/02/2020**

**Risk:**

**No Risk**

### General conditions:

*The following general terms and conditions will apply:*

- The commencement date indicates the first date that the study may be started.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility, the NWU-AREC reserves the right to:
  - request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the study;
  - to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research;
  - withdraw or postpone clearance if:
    - any unethical principles or practices of the study are revealed or suspected;
    - it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the NWU-AREC or that information has been false or misrepresented;
    - submission of the required amendments, or reporting of adverse events or incidents was not done in a timely manner and accurately; and/or
    - new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.
- NWU-AREC can be contacted for further information via [13128388@nwu.ac.za](mailto:13128388@nwu.ac.za) / 018 285 2301.

The NWU-AREC would like to remain at your service and wishes you well with your study. Please do not hesitate to contact the NWU-AREC for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely



Prof L.M. Fourie  
Acting Chairperson NWU-AREC