

In Darkest Hollywood: Cinema & Apartheid: Part 2

MONTAGE: State of Emergency, 1960. Newsreel of police crackdown, street demonstrations, arrests of African leaders

LEWIS NKOSI (V/O)

The 1960s, they really open up a new era of repression in South Africa. First of all, the political organizations are banned, they go underground. Our political leaders are in prison, and many people go into exile.

CUT TO:

NKOSI (O/C)

And then of course, the kind of cooperation that we were beginning to see at the end of the fifties between black and white, in terms of filmmaking, becomes virtually impossible.

CUT TO: Black film crew holding a clapper board.

DISSOLVE TO: Newsreel of Sharpeville Massacre.

NKOSI (V/O)

Following the Sharpeville Massacre and the slaughter of unarmed Africans by the police, the image that South Africa had carefully created, suffered a tremendous blow.

CUT TO:

NKOSI (O/C)

And then it became necessary for the South African government to enlist a number of white filmmakers to refurbish the image of apartheid, and to sell apartheid policies abroad.

CUT TO: Still of Antony Thomas

ANTONY THOMAS (V/O)

When I was twenty-one I was

working in Johannesburg, and I
made my first film.....

CUT TO:

THOMAS (O/C)

My first documentary was made
for the South African Department
of Information. It was a film called
"The Anatomy of Apartheid."

CUT TO: FILM CLIP - "ANATOMY OF APARTHEID" title sequence

CUT TO:

THOMAS (O/C)

At that time there were those of
us who were desperately hoping
to believe that there was a benevolent
aspect to apartheid.

CUT TO: FILM CLIP - "Anatomy of Apartheid": A black child walks
through a field, scoops up a melon, and delivers it to the hands of a
white farmer.

FARMER (V/O)

....to see the children well fed, the
people happy and trusting...

CUT TO:

ANTONY THOMAS (O/C)

My film, "Anatomy of Apartheid"
which was based on what I believed
then. That we were providing the blacks
the means of self-determination, was a
very pro-black film.

CUT TO: "ANATOMY OF APARTHEID": Black children playing and
swimming at an olympic size pool.

CUT TO:

BLACK SPOKESMAN (O/C)

These outside critics do not know what apartheid is and they refuse to find out.

CUT TO: "ANATOMY OF APARTHEID" -- A row of new homes, manicured lawns, new cars - father leaving home and driving away in his new car.

FILM NARRATOR (V/O)

"New homes mean new outlooks, new outlooks mean new aspirations and ambitions."

ANTONY THOMAS (V/O)

That film was a bit of extraordinary wishful thinking. But it gave me something that few other white South Africans had, it gave me free access to the townships.

CUT TO: "ANATOMY OF APARTHEID" -- Township scene, group of women and children drawing water from a pump.

THOMAS (O/C)

I was so shocked by all the things that I discovered during the process of making that film, that I went through a very complete political conversion.

CUT TO: "ANATOMY OF APARTHEID" -- man inside darkened shack

THOMAS (V/O)

When I was there, as a propagandist of the right, believing in what we were doing for black people. And finding through the evidence on the ground, that everything

CUT TO:

THOMAS (O/C)

that I stood for was crap. And that's a very violent thing to happen to a very self-assured twenty one year old. I don't think I've ever recovered from it.

CUT TO: "WILD SEASON" -- Bar room scene with Antony Thomas and a sailor.

ID: Antony Thomas in "Wild Season", 1967.

THOMAS (V/O)

I stopped as a filmmaker, and then went for a short while as an actor...

CUT TO: "WILD SEASON" - -Thomas challenges the sailor to arm-wrestle.

SAILOR

"Look sonny, why don't you crawl back to your nursery, this is a man's game."

THOMAS

"All right, you ready?"

SAILOR

"All right lollipop, I'll play for drinks...."

CUT TO:

ANTONY THOMAS (V/O)

...hoping once more to enter a territory that was politically neutral. And I remember a film I did called "Wild Season."

CUT TO: FILM CLIP: Fishing boats on the open sea.

THOMAS (V/O)

It was a completely nebulous adventure story with no political content at all.

CUT TO:

THOMAS (O/C)

But it is also a lie, and it is a dangerous lie.

CUT TO: "WILD SEASON" -- white woman pushing a vacuum cleaner across a rug.

THOMAS (V/O & O/C)

All the white characters lived in homes, where there no black servants present. One felt that one was contributing to a myth, one was contributing to a dangerous myth. That even something as neutral as a little adventure story, was in its way, misleading and dangerous.

CUT TO: "WILD SEASON" - Thomas standing on a wharf with his father.

FATHER

Then go back where you belong

CUT TO: Thomas reacting in shock to his father

THOMAS (V/O)

I left the country in '66.

CUT TO:

FATHER

This isn't your world.

CUT TO: Thomas walking off, suitcase in hand

CUT TO:

THOMAS (O/C)

Feature film has done more to form people's opinions than the documentary film, because a lot of the message is unconscious, is below the surface, is implicit and not explicit. And that's why I think propaganda really works.

FADE OUT

FADE IN: Two lovers embracing and kissing in the middle of a river.

WOMAN

Willie, Willie, you saved my life.
I am yours forever. Marry Me!

CUT TO:

ROSS DEVENISH (O/C)

The South African Film Industry was based on this concept that you could avoid apartheid, that you could make films in South Africa, which pretended in a way to be made somewhere else. Where the entire country was white.

ID: Ross Devenish, Film Director

CUT TO: FILM CLIP -- a white woman lying in a field of heather, singing an Afrikaans melody.

CUT TO:

DEVENISH (O/C)

Because it's actually saying that only white relationships are of value. It doesn't allow for the possibility of relationships across the color line. It doesn't allow for the exploration of realities of South Africa.

CUT TO: STILL of a younger Ross Devenish

DEVENISH (V/O)

And I suppose I fantasized from a very early age about making films in South Africa.

CUT TO: Movie set -- film crew shooting at a colonial fort

DISSOLVE TO: Police and police dogs keeping a crowd of demonstrators at bay.

DEVENISH (V/O)

As the years went by and I became aware of what South Africa was about, I began to realize the difficulties of making the kind of films I wanted to make, allowing for the political background.

CUT TO:

DEVENISH (O/C)

There had been so much intimidation of people, that the idea of making films that were actually opposed to the government, was something which was really quite difficult to conceive of.

DEVENISH (V/O)

And I suppose that an important thing that actually happened to me was meeting up with Athol Fugard the playwright.

CUT TO: Shot of Athol Fugard

ID: Athol Fugard, Actor-Director

DEVENISH (O/C)

He challenged me in my belief that the kind of films I wanted to make were impossible to make in South Africa.

CUT TO: "BOESMAN & LENA": a government official driving into a shanty town and confronting a group of squatters.

OFFICIAL

I've given you ample warning. Get your things together now and move. I'm not wasting any more time.

CUT TO: Faces of men, women, and children, reacting to the news

DEVENISH (V/O)

That is the primary basis of so many stories in South Africa. The intersection

between a human life and a government law.

CUT TO: Government bulldozer destroying tin shacks

DEVENISH (V/O)

People were having their lives totally battered, and they were being pushed off....

CUT TO:

DEVENISH (O/C)

....to go and live in totally inhospitable areas without any facilities -- water, food, housing, protection, shelter. And where the children were actually dying of malnutrition. So I felt it was important to actually show people, white South Africa, some of the consequences of the policies of the government that they had been voting for.

CUT TO: Shanty town residents watching their homes burn

DEVENISH (O/C)

The notion of trying to say anything that was would have been thought of as anti government was a source of great fear.....

CUT TO: Tracking shot down a row of tin shacks

DEVENISH (V/O)

I remember for the opening sequence of "Boesman & Lena", I set up a little tin village, and we got the bulldozer in, and a party of security police sat in their car with a very long lens, and they were taking photographs of us all the time. We didn't know what was going to happen.

CUT TO:

DEVENISH (O/C)

I suppose one of the realities of the South African situation is that you are dealing with a whole series of censorship. You are dealing with government censorship. You are also dealing with the censorship of the distributors, and you're dealing with the censorship of money. And in a sense all of those were being applied to what I was trying to do.

CUT TO: FILM CLIP -- "WILBY CONSPIRACY, 1974"; Michael Caine (Keogh) driving the getaway car, Sidney Poitier (Twala) in the back seat.

KEOGH

I'm sure this can all be straightened out.

WOMAN

Oh, yes, yes, yes, easily. By you going to prison for five years. Plus five for aiding a black in a criminal act.

SHACK TWALA

And for me a one-way ticket to the death block in Pretoria Central. It will go down in the records as just another suicide by a Kaffir.

KEOGH

What the bloody hell is a kaffir?

TWALA

A black man in South Africa.

KEOGH

Well there must be something we can do!

WOMAN

There is, and we're doing it!
Run like hell!

CUT TO:

LEWIS NKOSI (O/C)

It wasn't until the 1970s that
Hollywood paid any attention
to apartheid as a potential story
for film.

CUT TO: WILBY CONSPIRACY -- Car racing down a highway and
turning over into a ditch.

CUT TO:

ROD AMATEAU (V/O)

We were doing a love story between
two men of unlikely backgrounds.

CUT TO: Keogh and Shack Twala climbing out of the wreck.

KEOGH

That policeman was right. Never let
a kaffir drive your car.

TWALA

You were driving the car!

CUT TO:

HAROLD NEBENZAL (O/C)

It's a morality play which unfolds nilly-
willy. That's really what it is. We didn't
see it in cosmic, political, grandiose
proportions at all.

CUT TO:

ROD AMATEAU (O/C)

We went to it from a filmic, rather than
a geo-political experience.....

NEBENZAL (O/C)

It's probably more telling... in our way.

ID: SCREENWRITERS

CUT TO: WILBY CONSPIRACY - Nicole Williamson getting out of a police car and lighting a cigarette.

NEBENZAL (V/O)

Writing Nicole Williamson's part....

CUT TO:

NEBENZAL (O/C)

...he played the part of the South African security officer. I think this was the most challenging and the most entertaining part of the assignment -- was to create him. And he took to it like a duck to water.....

AMATEAU (V/O)

It was his natural character!

NEBENZAL (O/C)

That was he!

CUT TO:

AMATEAU (O/C)

Nicole Williamson came off as a person who was dedicated, not just for the salary he was getting, but he believed in the philosophical aspect of apartheid. And indeed he says, and we put it in his mouth.....

CUT TO: WILBY CONSPIRACY -- Nicole Williamson lecturing police official

WILLIAMSON

Three million whites surrounded by 18 million blacks? Listen, we built this country: every town, every factory, every farm, mine, and Christian church. And I protect it. And that's the way it's going to stay. Because no Zulu twenty years out of a tree is ever going to shove 50 cents in my hand and tell me there's a freighter in Cape Town harbor

waiting to ship me out of the land
that I built. Alrighty?

CUT TO:

AMATEAU (O/C)

And by strengthening that argument,
the anti-apartheid side is strengthened
as well, because they're not.....

NEBENZAL (V/O)

....fighting straw men.

AMATEAU (O/C)

....exactly, exactly.

CUT TO: WILBY CONSPIRACY -- aerial view of getaway car moving
through the city.

NEBENZAL (O/C)

I think we might back up a little bit.....

CUT TO: same shot but in reverse motion

NEBENZAL (O/C)

There were some really amusing
incidents that preceded the actual
photography.

CUT TO: WILBY CONSPIRACY -- Getaway car is stopped by police at a
road block, group of black suspects lined up against a wall.

NEBENZAL (V/O)

We had a lovely Englishwoman
in charge of wardrobe. She needed
information on South African Police uniforms.

CUT TO:

NEBENZAL (O/C)

So we asked her to go down to the South African
Consulate in London to talk to the people, but we
cautioned her, we said, for God sakes, don't
speak about "The Wilby Conspiracy."

CUT TO: WILBY CONSPIRACY-- Policeman questioning Keogh and woman.

POLICEMAN

Your identifications please. Are you enjoying your holiday?

KEOGH

Yes, very. I think your country is wonderful.

CUT TO:

NEBENZAL (O/C)

She went down there and said, "we're going to shoot a television segment, it plays in South Africa, and can you help us with South African Police Uniforms?"

CUT TO: WILBY CONSPIRACY- Policeman angrily questioning Shack Twala.

POLICEMAN

Do you have a pass?

TWALA

No.

POLICEMAN

No, constable!

CUT TO:

NEBENZAL (O/C)

And they were very nice. They said of course, they gave her stills, pictures, etcetera. She said "thank you very much." And as she walked out they said 'and good luck with The Wilby Conspiracy.'

CUT TO: WILBY -- Policeman slapping Shack Twala's face, hauling him out of the car, and handcuffing him.

CUT TO:

NEBENZAL (O/C)

As a matter of fact, South African,
let's call it "intelligence supervision"
of this picture never stopped.

CUT TO: WILBY -- Inside a police car, loaded with surveillance equipment.

BOSS AGENT (V/O)

There they go, major....

CUT TO: WILBY -- Keogh and Shack Twala driving

TWALA

They sent me to their schools...

NEBENZAL (V/O)

Sidney Poitier....

TWALA

....and instead of Mark and
Luke, I discovered Marx and
Lenin.....

NEBENZAL (V/O)

....the role he played was of a
thinking opponent to apartheid.

KEOGH

Are you a communist?

TWALA

Because I read Marx and Lenin?
I also read "Mien Kampf", the
Magna Carta, and "Winnie the Pooh".

KEOGH

So what the bloody hell are you, then?

TWALA

The most feared species in all Africa,
a Kaffir who cannot be broken.

CUT TO:

ROD AMATEAU (O/C)

We deliberately tried not to
propagandize, and we didn't want
to show the inhuman conditions and
all of that. We leave that to the
professionals.

CUT TO: WILBY CONSPIRACY - Nicole Williamson arriving at a rural
village, in pursuit of Twala and Caine.

AMATEAU (V/O)

Nicole Williamson as the South African
security officer, comes to this native compound....
in a scathingly sarcastic way, brutalizes the chief,
far more than if he had given him a whipping.

CUT TO: WILBY -- Williamson encounters the village chief.

WILLIAMSON

Should you be whipped with a sjambok...

CHIEF

I expect so, sir.

WILLIAMSON

Well you shalln't be, so for God's
sake stop sweating. Two brutal
insensitive officers from the Security
Bureau beat a lovely Bantu patriarch.
No, thank you very much. You'd be an
overnight martyr. We've got enough of
them as it is. Please think.....

NEBENZAL (V/O)

We had a man who played the
tribal chieftain, and a man of incredible
dignity if you remember. So, without
hitting people over the head, we were

able to make.....with good casting we
able to make a point, an anti-apartheid
point, without politicizing it.

CUT TO: WILBY - Williamson surrendering and handing his pistol to
Keogh.

WILLIAMSON

Thank you Mr. Keogh. What am I
going to do without you?

CUT TO:

AMATEAU (O/C)

When I finally turned to Harold, we
were in the office here on....our gracious
quarters on Sunset Boulevard, which is
roughly the size of that carpet. And uh,
I said, "Harold we got to kill this guy".

CUT TO: WILBY -- Williamson standing face to face with Caine

WILLIAMSON

My government will have me out
of here in six weeks!

CUT TO:

NEBENZAL (O/C)

In the final analysis, you could not
rationalize with total evil. And at one
point you got to pull out the gun and
pull the trigger. You have to kill the snake.

CUT TO: WILBY CONSPIRACY- Caine raises his pistol and shoots
Williamson between the eyes.

NEBENZAL (V/O)

Pointing out what they believed
was calumny.....

CUT TO:

NEBENZAL (O/C)

The South Africans came and
they said, 'if you insist on

distributing this picture in
South Africa, we not going
to show any of your films.'

CUT TO:

AMATEAU (O/C)

And they said openly, they said,
"look, you can't expect us to show
this picture and then show your
other pictures with the
enthusiasm we have in the past."

CUT TO:

NEBENZAL (O/C)

And so we were left sort of
sitting on the vine.

CUT TO: WILBY CONSPIRACY - Shack Twala dangling from a
helicopter in mid air.

PILOT

Their weight is pulling us down!

CUT TO: A group of African youth closing in and demolishing the
helicopter with their bare hands.

DISSOLVE TO: Newsreel footage of Soweto Uprising, 1976

ID: South African Newsreel, 1976

NEWSREEL NARRATOR (V/O)

"Soweto, Johannesburg's black sister city
of one million people has erupted in an
orgy of pillage and murder. Within 36
hours of the start of a march by ten
thousand pupils in protest of Afrikaans
as a medium of instruction, 29 people
were dead and 250 injured."

CUT TO: Newsreel footage -- students protesting, police on patrol and
news cameramen filming

CUT TO:

LEWIS NKOSI (O/C)

What makes the Soweto uprising different is that for the time you see the African, instead of being simply a victim, beginning to assume the role of the initiator of political action, both in the streets and on the screen.

CUT TO:

ANTONY THOMAS (O/C)

Towards the end of '76, I was getting a lot of distraught letters out of Soweto. From people who were saying, this thing is not..... this revolution if you like, is not being understood, it's not being reported correctly.

CUT TO: NEWSREEL - Soweto Uprising

NEWSREEL NARRATOR (V/O)

"What started as a peaceful protest degenerated into a rampage in which filthy elements are suspected to have become involved. The police refused to comment to S.A. Mirror, saying the matter was being investigated at a higher level."

ANTONY THOMAS (V/O)

My central feeling was that I must try to get back, and I must try to do a film about Soweto, which is a statement from the people of Soweto about themselves. And that was the starting point.

CUT TO: FILM CLIP - a black teacher taking Antony Thomas on a tour of a destroyed school.

ID: "SIX DAYS IN SOWETO" (1976)

TEACHER

This was my office until a few weeks after the 16th of June. And the police appeared at the top, just a little above the trees you see over there.

CUT TO: "SIX DAYS IN SOWETO" - Police firing and hitting unarmed students in the streets of Soweto.

THOMAS (V/O)

Since June last year, 229 have been killed, 2599 injured in Johannesburg's black townships. And these are the figures given by the South African Police. United Nations' estimates are of over a thousand dead.

CUT TO: Pan of Soweto graveyard

THOMAS (V/O)

In Soweto their graves are unmarked.

DISSOLVE TO: Pet cemetery, pan of gravestones

THOMAS (V/O)

Nine miles away in Boysens, a white district of Johannesburg, even a cat deserves a headstone

CUT TO:

ANTONY THOMAS (O/C)

Going back to South Africa, fifteen, sixteen years later to make that trilogy was a confrontation with South Africa and a confrontation with one's self. And one was looking at one's own roots. It was a very personal journey.

CUT TO:

ID: JAMIE UYS, DIRECTOR

JAMIE UYS (O/C)

For South Africans to make films about apartheid, it doesn't work for me, because we are in the scrum.

CUT TO: FILM CLIP - Man being chased by an ostrich, and diving into the bush.

UYS (V/O)

About apartheid I feel lost in a thicket, in a jungle. I can't see anything.

CUT TO: Jamie Uys behind a camera, filming a wild animal

UYS (V/O)

I was born 70 years ago....

CUT TO: Newsreel, 1920 - a white overseer berating a group of Africans.

UYS (V/O)

...and when I was a child, when I was young, the whole world was racist.

CUT TO:

UYS (O/C)

The white man looked down on the black man. We called the black man the white man's burden.

CUT TO: NEWSREEL - the white overseer is carried across a river by a native servant.

UYS (O/C)

When apartheid was mooted in this country, I was all for it.

CUT TO: NEWSREEL, Prime Minister Verwoerd addressing a cheering crowd of supporters.

VERWOERD

And the truth must eventually triumph, because there is no other way.....

UYS (V/O)

I thought it was a very good idea because I thought apartheid would give the black men his dignity back.

CUT TO: FILM CLIP - Tribesmen walking through the veldt

UYS (V/O)

I had made a movie called "Dingaka". I thought I was going to put no propaganda and no message into it.

CUT TO:

UYS (O/C)

Only after the film started showing and people started seeing pro-apartheid messages and anti-apartheid messages, that I began to see that there were messages that I had put in there without realizing -- in my own point of view and what I thought of things. Whether my views were anti- or pro-apartheid, I'm not even sure. Things are not as clear cut as they have become since.

CUT TO: Jamie Uys cutting film at an editing table

CUT TO: Aerial view of giraffes moving through the bush.

UYS (V/O)

I seem to be sad about the Africa I knew as a young child disappearing. Where the wild is still the wild, and the animals still roam free....

CUT TO:

UYS (O/C)

And the people who lived there, lived
as Africans, without our trappings, and
our hang-ups, and our problems.

CUT TO: FILM CLIP, GODS MUST BE CRAZY: a family of Bushmen
walking through the bush.

ID: GODS MUST BE CRAZY, 1979

"GODS" NARRATOR (V/O)

....and the slender and graceful little
Bushman of the deep Kalahari live
there quite contentedly, and in complete
harmony with their environment.

CUT TO: "GODS" clip:

NARRATOR (V/O)

They must be the most contented
people in the world. They have no
crime, no punishment, no violence,
no laws, no police, judges, rulers or
bosses....

CUT TO:

JAMIE UYS (O/C)

I came across these Bushmen, fell in
love with them, and that's when the
story started developing in my mind.
So when I wanted to make the movie,
I realized I had to go and find myself
a Bushman in the Kalahari.

CUT TO: group of Bushmen sitting in a circle and talking to a white
man taking notes

JOHN MARSHALL (V/O)

The first thing you have to understand is
that there's no such thing as a Bushman.
The people I knew in the 1950s, when I
first met them, are "Junt-wasi"

CUT TO:

ID: JOHN MARSHALL - Ethnographic Filmmaker

MARSHALL (O/C)

Bushman is a racial classification that has no meaning. It's only meaning is in its use by the people who make the classification. And in South Africa the use has been to exterminate and dispossess people who are classified as Bushmen.

CUT TO: Bushman with knapsack walking down road

MARSHALL

You dispossessed people. You took away their land. With it you took away all means of producing food to eat.

CUT TO: Bushmen living in a shantytown

CUT TO: Group of Bushmen waiting in line at the office of white administrators.

MARSHALL (V/O)

Everybody in fact was rounded up and lived in a slum, in a rural slum around the shining houses of the white officials in Bushmanland.

CUT TO:

JAMIE UYS (O/C)

When I was casting for "The Gods Must Be Crazy", I decided I had to see every Bushman in the whole world before I choose my leading man. I had heard that there were about 30,000 Bushmen still existent in the whole world.

CUT TO: Still of N'gao the Bushman

UYS(V/O)

I remember that even when we photographed him, we could see he had that charisma and that special magic.

CUT TO: "GODS" Clip: N'gao the Bushman hunting with bow and arrow.

"GODS" Narrator (V/O)

"When the family needs meat the hunter dips his arrow in a brew which acts as a tranquilizer. So when he shoots a buck, it only feels a sting and the arrow drops out."

CUT TO:

UYS (V/O)

And this one N'gao....his hunting ground straddled the border between Botswana and Namibia.

CUT TO:

MARSHALL (O/C)

N'gao never supported himself by hunting and gathering in his life, and when Uys discovered him, N'gao was working as a cook.

CUT TO:

JAMIE UYS (V/O)

And then I asked my interpreter to ask him would he come work for us, we would pay him and so on. The interpreter laughed and said, 'well that's not interpretable, because for one thing we don't have a word for working, working for someone. And payment we don't understand either.'

CUT TO: "GODS" clip: N'gao saying farewell to his white friends

WHITE #1

He says thank you and good-bye and hopes you have lots of children.

WHITE #2

Tell him thank you, I'll miss him.

CUT TO: White #2 hands N'gao a wad of money.

WHITE #1

He can't use that stuff. Bushmen don't know about money.

CUT TO:

JOHN MARSHALL (O/C)

N'gao was getting a fairly good salary when he was cooking for the children in the Tsumkwe school. And he only got 1,200 Rand... he got about 300 Rand a month at the school. And he only got 1,200 Rand for his appearance in the "Gods."

CUT TO: "GODS" clip: Farewell scene

WHITE #1

Bushmen don't need things.

WHITE #2

Take the money, it's the law

CUT TO: N'gao takes the money and walks back into the bush.

WHITE #2

He's going the wrong way, the Kalahari is that way.

WHITE #1

I'm going to miss the little bugger.

WHITE #2

Me too.

DISSOLVE TO: N'GAO -- years later, walking through his village in Namibia dressed in a tattered T-shirt.

CUT TO: N'GAO, star of "Gods Must Be Crazy" with his real family, sitting around a fire.

N'GAO (O/C)

Yes, that's what they did....they went around taking pictures of me. They came here with me to Tjum!kui. Then they took more pictures of me. Later they took me all the way to Johannesburg. When we arrived they told me to imitate what a Bushman does. That I would pretend to do the customs of the Bushmen, like wearing a loincloth.

CUT TO: Jamie Uys and crew handling and arranging the loincloth costumes.

N'GAO (V/O)

I didn't think it was right to do something that was not true. The right thing to do is show things as they are. I asked myself, "can this be true?"

CUT TO: G/N'GAO on location, dressed in a loincloth.

JOHN MARSHALL V/O

Uys made a fiction film. Now I think anybody can make any fiction film they want. The thing that bothers me most is that he goes and says that N'GAO really does live in the bush. He did that all over the world.

CUT TO: Newsreel footage of N'GAO on stage at a Japanese press conference

UYS (V/O)

We took him to Japan for promotion.

And from the moment we landed in Japan, he had these millions of people worshipping him.

CUT TO:

UYS (O/C)

But he took it in his stride. It didn't throw him, there was no culture shock.

CUT TO: Press conference, a crowd of photographers snapping pictures of N'GAO, wearing only his loincloth.

CUT TO: N'GAO in his hotel room, watching the event on television.

DISSOLVE TO: N'GAO, back in his village, talking to camera

N'GAO (V/O)

It would be better to get some real help, rather than getting a few shillings, even though it does help to feed my children. So I have thought about it, and I think that I would not want to keep doing this film work. I look at this work and I reject it.

DISSOLVE TO: FILM CLIP - "GODS MUST BE CRAZY" N'GAO the Bushman at the edge of a cliff, tosses a Coke bottle over the side and walks away....

DISSOLVE TO: N'GAO back in his village, walking through the bush in tattered T-shirt.

MBULELO MZAMANE (O/C)

What is very politically objectionable about "The Gods Must Be Crazy" is that you're presented with a representation of the native level of attainment and sophistication, or lack thereof, in South Africa.

CUT TO: "Gods Must Be Crazy" -

N'GAO gazing at a Coke bottle in wonderment.

MZAMANE (O/C)

Certainly you cannot even begin to think of them governing a complex industrial society like South Africa, when they still think there is something magical about an empty bottle of Coca-Cola.

CUT TO: "GODS MUST BE CRAZY" - A squad of African freedom fighters firing at a helicopter and missing every time

CUT TO:

JAMIE UYS (O/C)

That's why I keep on saying, politics and entertainment don't really mix for me, especially if you make comedy. Because you either have to take sides, or apologize for the one side and attack the other side.

CUT TO: "GODS MUST BE CRAZY" - black soldiers firing wildly at each other.

MFUNDI VUNDLA (V/O)

From a creative point of view everything is fair game.

CUT TO:

VUNDLA (O/C)

As a creative person, Jamie Uys has as much right to make fun of the liberation movement.

CUT TO:

UYS (O/C)

Your terrorist or your black soldier or freedom fighters were very amateurish and inefficient, which was true at that time.

CUT TO: "GODS...." Black soldiers shooting up a banana plantation. Soldier slipping on a banana peel.

VUNDLA (V/O)

The guerrillas look like bungling incompetents.....

CUT TO:

VUNDLA (O/C)

I bet you the Ministry of Law and Order didn't look at the guerrillas of the ANC or SWAPO in Namibia as bungling incompetents. You talk to them, they regarded those people in very serious terms. There was a major draft to fight those "incompetents".

CUT TO:

MBULELO MZAMANE (O/C)

So it's really not just fun, you know, funny ha ha ha. It's funny peculiar, and the peculiarities I think have to do with the political conditioning of an audience in this ostensibly neutral medium of satire and humor.

CUT TO: "GODS...." Guerrillas firing a mortar and blowing up a helicopter.

DISSOLVE TO: News footage, South African townships. Police firing tear gas at demonstrators; township youths firing guns; police beating protesters.

LEWIS NKOSI (V/O)

By the mid 1980s, television screens around the world were simply filled with images of unprecedented violence in South Africa, and the police reaction to it.

CUT TO:

NKOSI (O/C)

The South African government felt threatened and made an attempt to wipe out these images off the screen simply by imposing severe censorship on the gathering of news.

CUT TO: Movie crew filming protesting students

MFUNDI VUNDLA (V/O)

Here was another area of exploration for stories by Hollywood. Hollywood wanted a commercial story.....

CUT TO:

VUNDLA (O/C)

"Cry, Freedom" was a story like that, where there was a white man and a prominent African activist, Steven Biko.

CUT TO: Still of Biko lying dead in a coffin.

ANDRE BRINK (O/C)

I think it was the death of Biko, most probably the kind of publicity given to that by a person like Donald Woods, which really made the world aware on a new level, what was happening in South Africa. And Hollywood, mercenary minded, saw the money possibilities in that.

CUT TO: Movie crew filming "Cry Freedom" on a beach.

VOICE (V/O)

O.K. here we go....

CUT TO:

CLAPPER (O/C)

649, take 2....

CUT TO

RICHARD ATTENBOROUGH (O/C)
Action darling.

CUT TO:

WENDY WOODS
We may hate the bastards who run this
country, but it's still our home.

CUT TO:

DONALD WOODS
Wendy, you're the radical in the family.
What do you want to do? Just accept
what they did to Steve?

CUT TO:

RICHARD ATTENBOROUGH (V/O)
Well, I'd been interested in a subject
about South Africa for twenty to
twenty-five years I suppose. The
good thing about the Donald Woods-
Steve Biko story....

CUT TO:

ATTENBOROUGH (O/C)
It has the enormous advantage of dealing
with both a black situation and a white situation
within South Africa.

CUT TO: "CRY, FREEDOM": The first encounter between Biko and
Woods.

BIKO
A true liberal.

WOODS
It's not a title I'm ashamed of, though
I know you regard it with some contempt.

BIKO
I just think that a white liberal who clings

to all the advantages of his white world -- jobs, housing, education, Mercedes -- is perhaps not the person best qualified to tell blacks how they should react to apartheid.

WOODS

I wonder what sort of liberal you would make Mr. Biko, if you were the one who had the job, the house, and the Mercedes, and the whites lived in townships.

BIKO

It's a charming idea.

CUT TO:

MBULELO MZAMANE (V/O)

The one thing about Hollywood is who gets to be the lead actor.

CUT TO:

MZAMANE (O/C)

The conventions of Hollywood, but also a long tradition of racism demands almost, that you look through the eyes of a white star, a white hero.

CUT TO: "CRY, FREEDOM": Student activists and Donald Woods discussing politics around a kitchen table

MAPETLA MOHAPE

The best you want for us is to be allowed to sit at your table, using your silver and your china. And if we can learn to use it like you do, then you will kindly let us stay. We want to wipe the whole table clean. It's an African table, and we will sit at it in our own right.

CUT TO:

JOHN MATSHIKIZA(V/O)

I played Mapetla Mohape, who was one of the leading members of the South African student's movement in the late 60s, early 70s.

CUT TO:

MATSHIKIZA(O/C)

When I was offered the part I was optimistic, but obviously discovered upon reading the script that Mapetla, like all the other black characters in the film were reduced to something very minor, very thin -- characters whom you don't get a three dimensional idea of at all.

CUT TO: "CRY, FREEDOM": Donald Woods walking through the news room, followed by Mohape.

MATSHIKIZA(V/O)

When Donald Woods steps into the center of the frame, the struggle of the black people, which is the most significant struggle in South Africa.....

CUT TO:

MATSHIKIZA(O/C)

appears to become something that can only be resolved by - yet again- leadership of a member of the white community.

CUT TO: "CRY, FREEDOM": Woods introducing black apprentices to news room staff.

WOODS

Ken, this is Tenji Umkizo and Mapetla Mohape. I'm glad to say that yesterday the Board approved their appointments to the staff. I want you to brief them on our copy rules. Would you take them upstairs to see Bob? Tell him

to give them their assignments for tomorrow.

UMKIZO

Thanks Mr. Woods.

WOODS

Right.

CUT TO:

MATSHIKIZA(V/O)

So, Donald Woods is therefore appearing to make one of the boldest moves in the whole movie. In other words he is allowing these people access to a medium which will allow them to articulate themselves for the first time.

WOODS

We're going to cover the real black news. Things we've never reported.

CUT TO:

MATSHIKIZA (O/C)

The idea that Donald Woods introduced the possibility of black people being involved in journalism at all is not just wrong, but outrageous. Considering the fact that there have been black journalists and black newspapers articulating in all of the black South African languages, as well as in English and in Afrikans, since early in the nineteenth century.

CUT TO: The filming of "CRY, FREEDOM": Richard Attenborough directing Denzel Washington as Steve Biko.

ATTENBOROUGH

Action!

BIKO

This is the biggest illegal gathering I've ever seen!

CUT TO: Cheering crowds

CUT TO: "CRY, FREEDOM": Biko speaking

BIKO

We have to teach our children black history. Tell them about our black heroes. Our black culture. So they don't face the white man believing they are inferior.

CUT TO:

MBULELO MZAMANE (O/C)

The Biko I knew, the Biko I was raised with, and the Biko with whom we began what came to be known as the Black Consciousness Movement, had very well defined ideas about what needed to be done in the South Africa of the 60s.

CUT TO: Newsfilm: Dr. Nthato Motlana addressing crowd

MOTLANA

Somebody said, "there is no greater force in this whole world than an idea whose time has arrived, an idea whose time has arrived." And that idea, ladies and gentlemen, is Black Consciousness.....

CUT TO:

MZAMANE (O/C)

You needed to mass mobilize within the black community itself. You needed to lift them out of their arsenal of complexes and fears and remind them that they come from a long tradition of heroism, a long tradition of struggle. That they can say pretty much what's

in their mind, without needing anybody else to do that. And that until they can stand on their own, there is not much point in talking of a liberation struggle. Certainly that the white liberal is standing in the way of this self-realization, of this self-definition.

CUT TO: Richard Attenborough filming on location

CUT TO:

ATTENBOROUGH (O/C)

There are some people who actually abhor the whole question of white liberals, such as myself, really getting involved. And part of the B.C.M. credo was that blacks must deal with the matter themselves. Well now, I buy that absolutely. I go along with that totally.

CUT TO: Attenborough and crew sizing up a location. A montage showing white crew members working.

JOHN MATSHIKIZA (V/O)

The actual construction of the film, the detailed construction -- the writing of the script, the direction, to the design, to every important background element -- was not that distant to the structure of apartheid.

CUT TO: Richard Attenborough standing on podium and talking to crew on a walkie-talkie

ATTENBOROUGH (O/C)

The important thing is that Joe here, who's standing here, that Joe is able to sync his arm movements, which are important, with the word 'now'. So he just needs to be led up to it, that's all.

CUT TO:

MBULELO MZAMANE (O/C)

At the end of the day, the film does not avoid precisely the trap that Biko was teaching about: the tendency for white liberals to actually appropriate the struggle of black people and enunciate it in terms that are palatable to them.

CUT TO: Attenborough on podium

ATTENBOROUGH

Excellent. Then why doesn't Steve explain that, and the only difference being the last one. The first two are yells of anger, the last one is "we are here". And he'll put his arm up and they'll all go potty and throw up their posters and everything else.

WALKIE-TALKIE

Uh, that's national pride as opposed to anger, o.k.....

CUT TO: African leader addressing huge crowd, and raising his fist in the air.

LEADER

One, two, three, now!

ATTENBOROUGH

Very good!

LEADER

One, two, three, now!

DISSOLVE TO: White camera crew filming army troops advancing on township protesters.

LEWIS NKOSI (V/O)

Hollywood had discovered the story of apartheid. But one begins to sense a conflict of perspective

between the white filmmakers and the black activists.

CUT TO:

EUZHAN PALCY (O/C)

As a black filmmaker my first responsibility was to make a film about the situation in South Africa, but I wanted to make it from a black point of view. But it was impossible, because the people who actually have got the money to produce films, they aren't interested in films with black leads. So I had to find another solution to circumvent this problem. So I started to read books about South Africa written by South African writers, and I found that one from Andre Brink, which actually gave me the opportunity to deal with black characters and white characters.

CUT TO:

ANDRE BRINK (O/C)

The real genesis of "Dry, White Season" was in about '75, '76, when prior to the Soweto uprising there was a whole series of deaths in detention.

CUT TO: "DRY, WHITE SEASON": Black man lying in a coffin

BRINK (V/O)

That really set me off. I got deeply involved.

CUT TO:

EUZHAN PALCY (O/C)

When Andre Brink wrote that book, it was at this time a very revolutionary thing to do.

CUT TO:

BRINK (O/C)

That created a lot of security police interest in me. They saw me as a renegade, as a traitor.

CUT TO: "DRY, WHITE SEASON": Security police raiding Ben DuToit's house.

SECURITY POLICEMAN

I didn't know you were an author, Meneer Du Toit.

DUTOIT

Just tell me what you're looking for. I have nothing to hide.

CUT TO:

ANDRE BRINK (O/C)

It became more and more necessary, especially in the course of the 80s, to make more and more people in the world aware of the full horror of apartheid. Especially because people had become so used to it, everyone could denounce apartheid without thinking twice about it.

CUT TO: MUSIC VIDEO: Rock stars singing an anti-apartheid song

SINGER

I said, I.... I....ain't gonna play Sun City..... no, no, no,.....

BRINK (O/C)

People seeing the same kind of thing all the time tend to become immune to it. But a story, whether visual or written operates on a different level altogether. It demands of a spectator or a reader to get identified with the personalities involved.

CUT TO: "DRY, WHITE SEASON": Stanley driving Ben DuToit in his taxi

DUTOIT

Then you're Zulu.....

STANLEY

Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, I'm African that's all.

DUTOIT

Me too. My father had a farm. I grew up like any African boy, in the bush. Ate African porridge, no shoes except.....

STANLEY

Bad food... no vote.... carry passbook.... Robben Island jail..... careful Lonnie.

CUT TO:

ZAKES MOKAE (O/C)

It's an experience, it's an emotional experience. You know the country, you know the people, you know what it is, and then you have this pain, you know.

CUT TO:

EUZHAN PALCY (O/C)

There's a difference when you are outside and you feel things, and when you are in it, like the black South Africans are in it.

CUT TO: Pan of a South African shantytown.

PALCY (V/O)

When I went to South Africa, I experienced it with my eyes, with my personal eyes. Because that's why I wanted to go before writing the script. Because I needed to feel the emotion in the country, with the very people who are in it.

CUT TO: Traveling shot through shantytown.

PALCY (V/O)

I met people -- men, women, children,
who have been tortured.....

CUT TO:

PALCY (O/C)

They showed me their bodies. I saw
them, I talked to them. They explained
in detail to me, what they exactly
did to them.

CUT TO: "DRY, WHITE SEASON": torture scene -- black man on a rack,
screaming. A black clerk discovers the scene.

SECURITY MAN

Don't ever open that door without knocking!

CUT TO: Clerk describing scene to DuToit and Stanley.

CLERK

I heard that he died that day.

STANLEY

They call it the airplane. Their
favorite game.

CUT TO:

EUZHAN PALCY (O/C)

What I discovered, what I saw
with my eye, what I heard. I
mean that made me just enraged.

CUT TO: "DRY, WHITE SEASON": Stanley discovering a row of bodies
in a morgue.

ZAKES MOKAE (V/O)

These things happened. There's
nothing that's not true in this
picture.

CUT TO:

MOKAE (O/C)

And I know from experiences, I know
what it is to be in a cell and to be
beaten up.

CUT TO: "DRY, WHITE SEASON": Black clerk is shot point blank by a
Security man.

CUT TO:

ANDRE BRINK (O/C)

There had been quite a number of
books, films, articles, on the South
African situation in which every
single time the protagonist who
fights against apartheid gets killed
or becomes a victim of the struggle.
And she felt, perhaps rightly, that
this might gradually convey the
message: 'don't rock the boat,
because you can only end up a
victim.'

CUT TO:

EUZHAN PALCY (O/C)

People had already made films about
white liberals, you know, doing what
they did. I didn't want to do that. So
I took the novel, without betraying
this fantastic book, and just moved
the focus.

CUT TO: "DRY, WHITE SEASON"

DUTOIT

You better be careful.

STANLEY

All I can do is to keep them from
watching me. But when they want
to catch me, I'll be caught. If
they want to kill me, I'll be dead.

Until then they're in for a hell of a ride.

CUT TO:

MFUNDI VUNDLA (O/C)

We're of the view that I'm not a victim, I'm trying to change the condition of oppression. I don't want to be looked at as a victim. Because I don't want to be pitied. I want to be supported as someone who's fighting for human rights, but I don't want to be pitied. Because once you pity me, already you assume that you are superior than me. And I won't tolerate that.

CUT TO: "DRY, WHITE SEASON": Stanley stalking the Security policeman.

MBULELO MZAMANE (V/O)

He's not just a helpless victim, he's a fighter himself. And this is precisely what Stanley ends up being, a fighter for very, very fundamental rights. But even more remarkably, a fighter for humanity.

Stanley draws a gun, shoots dead the Security policeman and drives away.

DISSOLVE TO: Newsfilm: South African township protests of the 80s.

OLIVER SCHMITZ (V/O)

The images that one sees internationally from South Africa have been so dominated by the news image, you develop stereotypes and very strong one image pictures of certain situations or characters.

CUT TO:

SCHMITZ (O/C)

One of the prime motivations in my mind in starting the project was looking at that footage on television and thinking, what is it like to be one of those people? What if one takes the life story of one of those people out of the crowd and looks at it in detail?

CUT TO: "MAPANTSULA": Protesters throwing stones at police vehicles.

DISSOLVE TO:

THOMAS MOGOTLANE (O/C)

We were making a black character. Not a white character to be supported by the black, but now this black character who is in the lead.

CUT TO:

MFUNDI VUNDLA (O/C)

The director of the movie, who is a white man, Oliver Schmitz, thanks God had the sensitivity and insight to realize that he will have to collaborate with an African scriptwriter to try and get some truth into this

CUT TO: "MAPANTSULA": black character 'Panic' in his township.

VUNDLA (V/O)

And which tells a South African story from the perspective of a black South African.

CUT TO:

MOGOTLANE (O/C)

So I felt it would be wonderful writing something about myself. Writing something about my situation, my

people, that would be authentic and true. Down to the point. Not to let somebody write something about me, meanwhile he doesn't know me, anything about me.

CUT TO: "MAPANTSULA": Panic and friends reading newspaper classified ads.

FRIEND

Maybe I should get a job, you know.

PANIC

You can't get it in there.

FRIEND

Really? There are lots and lots of jobs there.

PANIC

O.K. get into the queue. When you will want more money what will they say? They'll kick you out and say next!

FRIEND

O.K., O.K.....

PANIC

O.K.....why are you complaining. Nothing has changed.

CUT TO:

OLIVER SCHMITZ (O/C)

It always throws me completely when people say, how can you as a white South African make a story like this about a black South African. Because I don't see that distinction. I'm trying to do something for the largest possible audience of South Africans.

CUT TO:

THOMAS MOGOTLANE (O/C)

We talked about it. We talked lengthily about filmmaking. And I told him, look, I have never written films before. And I don't know how they are written, but I have an idea of how to write and to act and at that. And he said, o.k. I'll give you books. You read books and you'll know. As long as you have the story in your head, put it right, then you've got a script, and we can shoot it and make a film.

CUT TO: "MAPANTSULA": Panic following white woman down a street and eyeing her purse.

MFUNDI VUNDLA (V/O)

The symbol of the gangster is very important as a figure of protest, because you see.....

CUT TO:

VUNDLA (O/C)

When we grew up, there were people who were prominent in society.

CUT TO: "MAPANTSULA": Panic's cohort snatches the women's and he gives chase.

CUT TO:

VUNDLA (O/C)

But of course the gangster, what struck you was that, you know, he didn't have to work for the white man. He didn't have to work for the white man.

CUT TO: "MAPANTSULA": Panic opens the door to his house.

MOGOTLANE (V/O)

Growing up in a township, you grow up with all these people, the gangsters...

CUT TO:

MOGOTLANE (O/C)

And unless you have gone to school or you can show your papers or your CV, then you don't have anywhere to go. So instead, we go on stealing.

CUT TO: "MAPANTSULA": Panic following a white businessman through a crowded street.

OLIVER SCHMITZ (V/O)

There are a lot of gangsters, and what's interesting is their defiance, their open defiance to the society. It's just that it's a defiance that is non-political.

CUT TO:

THOMAS MOGOTLANE (O/C)

You may not know politics much, but you know where the money comes from. Like most of the people tell you, if you want to get money, go to the white man, he has money. Go to town and steal in town.

CUT TO: "MAPANTSULA": Panic robs the white businessman at knife point and steals his wallet.

CUT TO:

MOGOTLANE (O/C)

It's a protest. A white man has the money, and he has cheated us. See what I mean. In other words we are trying to repossess, -- like most of the world is repossessing -- what is rightfully ours.

CUT TO: "MAPANTSULA": Panic is chased through the township by soldiers and caught.

SOLDIER 1

Just shoot him straight where he stands.

SOLDIER 2

You fuckin' bastard.....

CUT TO:

MOGOTLANE (O/C)

He didn't know anything about politics, and he wasn't going to take part in it, until accidentally he found himself in politics now, after he got arrested.

CUT TO: "MAPANTSULA": Panic in jail, is lead away to his cell, which is full of political prisoners.

MFUNDI VUNDLA (V/O)

It catches up with him, he gets arrested. And when he gets arrested, he ends up meeting political prisoners.....

CUT TO:

VUNDLA (O/C)

And a struggle goes on in terms of consciousness in his rapport with these prisoners. And he ends up a better man after that contact.

CUT TO: "MAPANTSULA": Panic is beaten and punched by security police.

VUNDLA (V/O)

It's a tradition to show the helpless African, who's a victim, and cannot address himself out of the condition he finds himself in.

CUT TO:

VUNDLA (O/C)

Certainly there's another reality of South Africa, which is my reality. Certainly my reality of people in my generation who took things into their own hands.

DISSOLVE TO: "MAPANTSULA": Panic throws a brick through a plate glass window, shattering it into a thousand pieces.

DISSOLVE TO: Movie set - white South African crew preparing to film.

DIRECTOR

Roll camera!

ASSISTANT

One... take 2.... and marker....

CLAPPER

Marker.....

DIRECTOR

And action on camera.

CUT TO: Movie set. Black assistant pulling cables.

CUT TO:

LEWIS NKOSI (V/O)

Although everyone agrees that apartheid is very dead....

CUT TO:

NKOSI (O/C)

...the struggle for political and cultural autonomy will have been in vain if the black majority continues to be represented only by even well-meaning whites.

CUT TO: Movie set. Crew setting up a shot.

DIRECTOR

Let's watch the background, please.
Rehearsal only.

CUT TO:

VUNDLA (V/O)

Sooner or later South Africa is going
to become a democratic society.

CUT TO:

VUNDLA (O/C)

Taking into account the industrial
infrastructure there, as it regards
motion picture production, that
there's enormous potential there
for the kind of movies, or the kind
of stories we want to tell.

CUT TO: MONTAGE -- traveling shots of townships, screenwriter
Vundla sitting at a computer screen, typing on a script.

CUT TO:

VUNDLA (O/C)

And I know that's my mission as a
creative person. That it looks like
now, for once, there is a chance
that I'll be able to tell my story
from an African perspective, away
from the oppressive constraints of
the Hollywood marketplace.

CUT TO: Movie posters in Johannesburg: Rambo, Donald Duck, Charles
Bronson, Eddie Murphy.

CUT TO:

LEWIS NKOSI (O/C)

What we need is to recover our own
voice, and we need to create our own
images of who we are and what we
want to become.

CUT TO: Black cinema operator taking tickets at a township cinema.
Faces of children gazing at a movie screen. A cinema projector
rolling. Zoom in to black. FADE OUT.

END CREDITS

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