

# **IDEOLOGY AND MYTH IN SOUTH AFRICAN TELEVISION: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF SABC CHANNEL BRAND IDENTITIES**

by

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## DECLARATION

Student number: 21284254

I declare that *Ideology and myth in South African television: a critical analysis of SABC television channel brand identities* is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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Ms W Botha

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Date

“There are many different kinds of metaphors in which our thinking about cultural change takes place. These metaphors themselves change. Those which grip our imagination, and, for a time, govern our thinking about scenarios and possibilities of cultural transformation, give way to new metaphors, which make us think about these difficult questions in new terms” (Stuart Hall 1996f:287).

## SUMMARY

**Title:** Ideology and myth in South African television: a critical analysis of SABC channel brand identities  
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### Summary:

This dissertation investigates the brand identities of the South African Broadcasting Corporation television channels SABC1, SABC2 and SABC3 during the first decade of the 2000s (from 2000 to 2009). The study explores the manifestation and dissemination of dominant political ideologies and myths by the SABC television channels and their respective brand identities.

It is argued that SABC television channels are structured and organised according to specific brand ideologies that match dominant political ideologies prevalent in South Africa. This is evident from the manner in which these channels have been organised, defined and redefined over the past years, and also from the self-promotional visual imagery shown by the television channels. The visual brand identities of each channel create the elements that make up each channel's visual vocabulary, and each visual vocabulary in turn contributes to notions of 'South Africanness' and definitions of South African identity.

The study also explores the main concepts of ideology theory as a critical discursive practice to assist in a better understanding of the power relations in the SABC and its channel brands in particular. Some developments and changes in the SABC brand identities and the organisation of its television channels are studied from a historical perspective and correlated with ideology theory. In order to do this, the study also draws from semiotic theory.

The author notes the semiotic quality of a brand and argues that the process of branding, the process of semiosis and the process of the dissemination of political ideologies bear structural resemblance. Basic definitions and key concepts of branding and corporate identity contribute to an enhanced understanding of the visual brand identities of the SABC television channels. An exploration of the elements specific to television channel branding helps to determine the signs, codes and meanings in SABC television channel branding.

**Key terms:**

Branding; capitalist materialism; conspicuous leisure; corporate identity; corporate image; family; hegemony; idents; Ideological State Apparatus; myth; nationalism; political ideology; populism; rainbow nation; South African ideology; SABC1; SABC2; SABC3; television channel branding; youth resistance.

## OPSOMMING

**Titel:** Ideology and myth in South African television: a critical analysis of SABC channel brand identities

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**Graad:** Magister Artium (Visuele Studies)

### Opsomming:

Hierdie verhandeling ondersoek die handelsmerk identiteite van die South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) televisie kanale SABC1, SABC2 en SABC3 gedurende die eerste dekade van die jare 2000 (van 2000 tot 2009). Die studie verken die verskyning en verspreiding van dominante politieke ideologieë en mites deur die SABC televisie kanale en hul onderskeie handelsmerk identiteite.

Die verhandeling redeneer dat SABC televisiekanale saamgestel is en georganiseer is volgens spesifieke handelsmerk ideologieë wat ooreenstem met heersende dominante politieke ideologieë in Suid Afrika. Dit is duidelik volgens die manier waarop hierdie kanale georganiseer, gedefinieer en herdefinieer is in die verlede, asook die manier waarop visuele beeldspraak vertoon word op televisie vir die kanale se eie reklame doeleindes. Die visuele handelsmerk identiteite van elke kanaal skep die bestanddele waaruit elke kanaal se visuele woordeskat bestaan, en elke taalskat dra weer by tot 'n begrip van 'Suid-Afrikaansheid' en dra dus by tot definisies van Suid-Afrikaanse identiteit.

Hierdie studie verken ook die vernaamste idees van ideologieteorie as 'n kritiese diskoers om 'n bydrae te lewer tot insig in die magsverhoudings in die SABC en sy televisie kanaal handelsmerke in besonder. Sommige ontwikkelings en veranderinge in die SABC handelsmerk identiteite en die samestelling of indeling van die televisiekanale word besigtig vanuit 'n historiese uitgangspunt en wederkerig betrek tot ideologieteorie. Die studie maak ook gebruik van semiotiese kennisleer. Die outeur neem kennis van die semiotiese eienskap van 'n handelsmerk en redeneer ook dat die proses van han-

delsmerk toevoeging, die proses van semiose en die proses van politieke ideologie verspreiding strukturele ooreenkomste dra.

Basiese definisies en sleutelbegrippe van handelsmerk-toevoeging en korporatiewe identiteit dra by tot 'n verrykte begrip van die SABC visuele handelsmerk identiteite. Die verkenning van elemente spesifiek kenmerkend van handelsmerk toevoeging van televisie kanale verleen bystand om die tekens, kodes en betekenis in SABC televisie-kanaal handelsmerk identiteite te bepaal.

**Sleutelbegrippe:**

Aansienlike vryetydsbesteding; familie; handelsmerktoevoeging; hegemonie; idente; Ideologiese Staatsmasjien; jeugweestandsbeweging; kapitalistiese materialisme; korporatiewe identiteit; maatskappybeeld; mite; nasionalisme; politieke ideologie; populisme; reënboognasie; SABC1; SABC2; SABC3; Suid-Afrikaanse ideologie; televisie-kanaal handelsmerke en identiteite.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AMPS:</b>	All Media and Products Survey
<b>ANC:</b>	African National Congress
<b>BBC:</b>	British Broadcasting Corporation
<b>BEE:</b>	Black Economic Empowerment
<b>Bop-TV:</b>	Bophuthatswana television
<b>CCCS:</b>	Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (University of Birmingham)
<b>CCV-TV:</b>	Contemporary Community Values television
<b>DStv:</b>	Digital satellite television
<b>DVD:</b>	Digital Video Disk
<b>IBA:</b>	Independent Broadcast Authority
<b>ICASA:</b>	Independent Communications Authority of South Africa
<b>ISA:</b>	Ideological State Apparatus
<b>LSM:</b>	Living Standards Measure
<b>M-Net:</b>	Media Network television
<b>NEPAD:</b>	New Partnership for Africa's Development
<b>NNTV:</b>	National Network Television
<b>NP:</b>	National Party
<b>PVR:</b>	Personal Video Recorder
<b>RSA:</b>	Repressive State Apparatus
<b>SAARF:</b>	South African Advertising Research Foundation
<b>SABC:</b>	South African Broadcasting Corporation
<b>TAMS:</b>	Television Audience Measurement Survey
<b>TV:</b>	Television
<b>TSS:</b>	Top Sport Surplus television channel