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Talking of Cry Freedom, which was based on the lives of these two remarkable South Africans, Steve Biko, the founder of Black Consciousness and Donald Woods, who became his friend. One can look at this from two possible angles. I'm talking of its impact and its reception.

On the one hand it is a film that was made for an external audience that did not know very much about South African conditions. And I think it is true to say that it does influence the perceptions of a very wide cinema going public which would otherwise never have come by that kind of information. On the other hand we've probably not been very fair to a film that it is in fact not about Steve Biko but is about Donald Woods in his relationship with Steve Biko. So that in fact I guess one can make a case for Donald Woods in being the central figure because that is what it was intended to be.

On the other hand it is distorting to look at this particular figure as having been so central, so seminal, even in the evolution of the personality of someone like Steve Biko. He in fact was not. He was exceedingly antagonistic, he was actually part of the problem as this might have been seen. So there is a distortion there and there is a slight self-serving element as well. There is over sensationalization. The escape scene across the Caladone, which at the time he actually went into Lesotho, the Caladone river that borders Lesotho and South Africa was very, very dry and you walk across that particular area. Here it is made seriously heavy weather. Those kinds of distortions that obviously appeal to a Hollywood type and audience, target audience, reminding you in fact of the escape scene of the Von Trapp family in "Sound of Music", that's the formula. That is certainly twisting the facts.

PD: Film centers on Biko's relationship with whites.....

I think that is very very true. And if you at it as an American rather than a South African film you can understand why. It had to have a message, and a message for that matter that would appeal to the majority cinema going audience in this kind of country. It is the same audience that will not take kindly to say Malcolm X's go it alone attitude, and Biko was in fact the Malcolm X figure of South African politics. It is not to say that there was never a vision in Biko's

teachings of a common South Africanness. Nonetheless, the means to that end were clearly remarked upon by this young man as being... as requiring a situation in which blacks would be self-determining, would define the kinds of partnerships and kinds of relationships rather than be followers all the time, as was apt to be the attitude. In fact at the end of the day, the film does not avoid precisely the trap that Biko was teaching about. The tendency of white liberals to actually appropriate the struggle of black people and annunciate it in terms that are palatable to them. That's another distortion in that movie.

I was very much part of these ongoing debates in the 60's. In fact I was very much a resource person not being actually inside South Africa itself, but in Lesotho, Botswana as the case might be, just outside of South Africa itself. Which means that I had literature, I had access to all kinds of materials that my colleagues like Biko (phone rings) in the Black Consciousness movement then did not have.....

The Biko I knew, the Biko I was raised with, and the Biko with whom we all began what came to be known as the Black Consciousness movement, starting with a student movement that was then called South African Students Organization, had very well defined ideas about what needed to be done in the South Africa of the 60's. And this is a South Africa coming out of the pain, out of the pangs of Sharpeville. It is a South Africa in other words that is experiencing the traumas of an exceedingly repressive period, when you might recall the Mandelas are now in prison for life. Others are in house detention, and yet others are banished to remote areas, and those who have not been caught on time are in exile.

So a culture of fear is clearly in the offing in South Africa, you could actually kick it. And it was in that period that the white liberal in particular arose as a spokesperson for the black cause. The black people themselves were really in the stranglehold of intimidation, of fear. And out of this rose these remarkable young people including Biko. Who thought that it was absolutely necessary to reinject a sense of self, a sense of being in the black person, who was almost like a skeleton of his former self. And to do this you had to mass mobilize within the black community itself. You need -- to use the fashionable term in those days, to "conscientize" black people. You need 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 of talking of a liberation struggle. Certainly that the white liberal is standing in the way of the self-realization, of the self-definition.

Now that is what was so threatening to people like Donald Woods, who actually saw it as African chauvinism in reverse, as against Afrikaner chauvinism, when in fact what was threatening was the hegemony of the dominant white liberal Anglo-saxon culture was being challenged even by its wards like ourselves and so on. So that really is the real relationship if you like between on the one hand the nascent movement that came to be called Black Consciousness and the various formations, particularly the white liberal establishment of whom Donald Woods is a prime representative as editor of the East London Daily Dispatch, one of the most liberal of these kind of papers.

The relationship was polemical, the relationship was confrontational. There was never a point at which everyone was at ease and at peace with one another.

The one thing about Hollywood is who gets the lead, who gets to be the lead actor, O.K. And one presumes a lot of the crowd pull is going to be dependent upon that. And it is probably from that perspective that then you begin to have an established actor. Nine out of ten times these are white actors. And so therefore 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. Now that already begins to be a distortion because you really never have an inner vision into what is happening. All the black actors, even the most commendable amongst them are no more than stereotypes. If you look differently at even the most recent ? it featured people like Marlon Brando, and uh, I can't recall.....Donald Sutherland. That was the..... "A Dry, White Season."

You find someone like Zakes Mokae, who could easily in any other convention carry a whole film on his shoulder. He's a remarkable actor, he's experienced. He has a certain name recognition but he does not fulfill all the requirements of stardom in Hollywood. So what he ends up as is a very stereotypical cardboard figure, a mysterious figure who comes and goes. Who can never be arrested, he's more spirit than substance. And that in itself is a romance with

African reality. You never get to the root of the particular thing. And then you have a white star to whom people in the ghettos bring the most mundane problems, which in the day to day life in the ghettos are solved by neighbors, this time being brought to the white hero of the movie. My husband runs away from me, my husband beats me up being solved by white people. And all of this of course must take into cognizance the conventions of Hollywood, the racism that has been the hallmark of this whole thing and of course the expectations now that are almost like fixed that we are going to go and watch this for this reason and that reason.

The kinds of solutions that in fact are offered by these films are themselves very very simplistic, but they're conventional. They're conventional as much in the Western literature as in Western cinematography as well. You only have to think of E.M. Forster's "A Passage to India" and that possibility of fraternity at the end which holds promise to a future dispensation of black and white cooperation to know what I'm talking about. But this has been the convention of the happy ending, they live happily ever after, and that whole.....(Interrupted)

The convention of the ending in Hollywood which is then superimposed over the South African situation often gives rise (interrupted)

We are accustomed from Hollywood films to a neatly packaged ending, often in the tradition of 'they live happily ever after'. Or a neat resolution of a particularly very very complex problem. And in fact it's a predetermined ending all the time that is itself predetermined itself by an ideological inclination of the filmmaker, black and white in love, you know the Defiant Ones come together. Now you superimpose a situation like that over a South African problematic where people are really up in arms, you oversimplify, you distort, you make believe that there is a much simpler solution to this complex problem than there really is and politically this does a lot of devastation because always then are 'a solution is just around the corner, a solution is simple.' And that is really a further distortion. But it is also to make it palatable to the audience that is the target audience, who really want to be flattered into believing that really they aren't such evil embodiments after all of what it is you are really trying to fight. That there is a meeting point even where you don't realistically on the ground really don't see a meeting point.

In E.M. Forster's "Passage to India" in fact, I think if I were to end that novel myself, I would have the Indian rider as he gallops away from his English counterpart actually telling in several four letter words where he simply belongs. That would have been the reality of the Indian situation in colonial times and not the buddy buddy stuff that passes for an ending.

PD:

It's really very very related. That is the political problem I am talking about. Even though you might say these movies raise South African issues with an audience which before couldn't have cared less, the danger lie in the manner in which the problems are raised. Incidentally, in two of the most, the best selling movies of recent times, Cry Freedom and A Dry, White Season, the central issue is a book, how to get a book out of South Africa, becomes the whole problematic around which the film revolves. And this is trivializing the problem of apartheid, insofar as the black people there are actually concerned. We continue to write books under apartheid. We continue with no great deal of oversensationalization to that particular extent. There are other very serious problems that you could reflect upon.

Problems of a life threatening situation, whereby the very act of writing is an act that can lead to death. Problems of missing people, not just missing pages. So when you do come to simplify and when you do come to use your imagery in order to captivate a given audience, you to considerable injustice to a struggle that is about more than just soporifics, and is about very very bread and butter, life and death issues. And these do not always come across. It seems like if De Klerk arises tomorrow and says apartheid is dead then the problem is over. We know that apartheid without some corpses that are always missing. So in the end you end up with a rearrangement of the furniture in the same old decrepit room, or at best you end up with an easing up of the chains. Now black people are not fighting to make their chains more comfortable, they are fighting to have them off. And you never get this sense then of the magnitude of the problem, of the real thrust of the problem, and the real life threatening situation that is at stake. Over and above the fact that this is a bad system because you cannot publish books, because you are censored and so on. These may be problems with a

certain element amongst the populations. But I am arguing that there are fundamental problems that are never truly reflected in these situations because they're not particularly palatable, they're not particularly easy to show without penetrating into the life processes of the black people themselves. And then you would have to discard a white actor because a white actor or actress cannot penetrate into those areas in order to truly capture the gravity of the apartheid situation.

These are films of conscience. It's as though someone has to assuage their bad consciences at someone else's expense. (mic noise) In the manner in which they seem to lean over in some unnatural way to prove in fact that you do have sensitive and sensitized and very caring white people in this thing. I mean that can never be in dispute. There are. It's the magnitude and the manner in which this is actually made to become an end in itself. And that begins to smack of some programmatic sort of push behind the filmmaker's thing. And I think it is also true that it takes away, it really takes away, as I was arguing earlier, from the real import and the magnitude of the problem, when you are going to see 1) mainly the black person as merely a victim who later is going to be helped by the hero. But it also means that you are dealing with another common stereotype.

Black as victim also entails the notion of black as impotent. Whereas the reality of the situation is that the South African underprivileged and oppressed have been fighters. It is precisely because they have such a lengthy history of resistance, over three hundred years, that you can begin to talk of an unfolding culture of liberation which is at this point in time supplanting apartheid culture. Now when you are patronizing and always having some patriarchal figure who is invariably white, you I think distort the reality of what is truly happening. But what you also do, and films are a powerful medium of reprogramming, is that you begin to influence negatively the very very perceptions of those people who are almost at the verge of grasping their future in their own hands, and know instinctively so. But then they looked at themselves through this powerful image and begin to wonder whether in fact they will need to await salvation from some party fighting in the Gulf War to turn their attention to South Africa.

These are the real political kind of dangers and perhaps even unintended agendas of some of these movies that distort the

situation in this manner. By deflecting it and showing solutions coming from what Black Consciousness knew precisely, that black people were on their own, that there was never going to be a solution coming from the mountain or from across the river. That black people would have to learn to swim themselves. There was not going to be a lifesaver. And if they didn't learn to swim they would drown. And this is precisely what did not seem to go too well with certain elements who always wanted to define who the black person was and then to do things for that black person. It's an old South African tradition. People like Alan Paton, "Cry, the Beloved Country" were not innocent of that tradition, nor were people way back in the 19th century. It's an old colonial tradition as we pretty much well know. So it all dovetails into a modernization of an ancient colonial problem.

PD:

Actually I was quite struck by the difference in the ending of the film version and the book "Dry, White Season." I was reminded of a controversy that arose from Ibsen's "A Doll's House" because the ending of the play itself was simply too radical for the audience of its time. And so one expected that if anything, the very radical extreme action of a given situation would be moderated, modified somehow in an ending. And yet the opposite seems to be what happens in "A Dry, White Season" when Stanley who until then has been this ubiquitous figure, almost devoid of feeling in fact, coming and going like the wind, almost as spirit, suddenly becomes alive, suddenly becomes a live figure. We have only seen this in the film once before when he comes dead drunk into the house on Christmas Day because, the woman on whom the film should have been focusing anyhow, the wife of the man whom Ben Du Toit is trying to help, has died finally -- comes alive. The only other time he comes alive is then when he takes out his gun to shoot the murderer of Ben Du Toit whom he has known. And this really seems to be out of character in terms of the kinds of formula that we have been talking about now. And really it seems to be a very progressive if realistic one. The vengeance motif is almost always around there. And it is only someone like Alex La Guma in "Time of the Butcherbird" who is that forthright about it, and then you find it in this movie. I found that very remarkable, in fact a step forward.

The ending of "A Dry, White Season" is actually in the radical tradition of the ANC's armed struggle even. The closest you can find is Alex La Guma's "Time of the Butcherbird" in which a previously

dispossessed African, also unjustly imprisoned, comes back to regain what was his, land and all. He's not just a helpless victim, he is a fighter as well. And this is precisely what Stanley ends up being, a fighter, a fighter for very fundamental rights. But even more remarkably, a fighter for humanity. Because we should not forget, it was a white body who in fact has been shot, who has been killed. That makes it far more I think remarkable than anything else we have encountered up to that point, whether in South African film or literature or theatre.

PD: Mapantsula?

"Mapantsula" in South African film represents another and perhaps even more radical departure to the extent that we have a black hero around whom the whole movie revolves. What's more, he's not your hero in the traditional sense, he's actually an anti-hero in some respects. He comes from the most element, and the most criminal element, and the most alienated element in South African society, called the Tsotsi -- who mugs his own people, whose internalized violence and turns it against those weaker than himself. Twenty years previously, Biko, Black Consciousness and everybody else has been preaching against suicidal violence, misdirected violence. Conscientizing black people. All the poets of this period, Mongane Serote in particular in "My Black Brothers in the Streets" is once again appealing very very directly as the supreme Tsotsi of them all himself against all these particular tendencies.

The turning point then is 1976 when the resources of the whole community pulled together, including this once anti-social element, the Tsotsis, who then actually begins to police the community. When the students say their parents, their father, should not take all their monies on a Friday to drink it all and come back empty handed, it is the Tsotsis who are going to stand out there and police the process. And when students say there is going to be a work stoppage, a strike, it is the tsotsi element who then become the..... So 1976 radicalizes, the chickens have come home to roost and "Mapantsula" is a typical exemplification I think of this process of new conscientization, and this process of redirection. Many of them at that point in time are going to be found in the military camps of the ANC as cadres in Umkonto We Sizwe. So it is truly a remarkable transformation of consciousness at that point in time, of political consciousness in South Africa.

The gangsters of the 50's, of whom -- who are the prototypes really, were a very very different element altogether. They I think represent the anti-social element at its height. These were people who could come and close a party by the simple experience of saying "stand up, go away, it's over." People like Miriam Makeba grew up in that era as young singers, when a group of tsotsis could come and say party's over, we're taking the lead singer to go and sleep with her tonight. They were really the scourges of the black community, very very much so. It wasn't in the 60's, because they weren't even half as colorful as the gang of the 60's, but they're twice as brutalized by a system of government that has been even much more repressive. (interruption)

The social climate in the 60's really changes in the sense that on the one thing you have forced removals from those areas from where black people had certain freehold rights as well. And there is further ghettoization of the whole process into what has now become known as Soweto. This is a 60's phenomenon. And the outshoot of that is further alienation. And the tsotsi who comes out of that is an even meaner fellow, if that is possible, than the tsotsi of the 50's. He mugs almost at the drop of a hat, and he's really even more so than the man of the 50's the scourge of the community. There isn't even a Robin Hood type figure as you might have found from time to time in the 50's. And this is manifest for example in my novel "Children of Soweto" when I represent a character like Bra P, who is now become a socially respectable person, because there was always the Robin Hood element in him. So throughout that process of deepening repression you don't have a serious social crisis that accentuates the problem, that accentuates alienation, that accentuates violence. And once again it has to take another 15 years or so before you can have a reversal of this process, this is '76.

But that has been prepared for, as I've tried to argue, by a series of leadership workshops even, conducted amongst the youth by people like Steve Biko, myself, and others -- constantly talking about the responses of the young. Constantly hammering the fact that a society that destroys its women, a society that destroys its youth, is a society without a future, and probably a society that deserves to be destroyed itself. And that lesson obviously sinks, and of course the apartheid regime has always been exceedingly helpful, even if inadvertently in the manner in which it proves that they probably hold the power of life and death for these elements who thought

they could rule it over others. So at the end of the day it is inevitable that the enemy, where lines are so clearly demarcated and drawn should in fact be confronted by all the forces at the community's and society's disposal. '76 is truly a watershed in the history of South Africa, certainly in the history of struggle.

"The Gods Must Be Crazy" was one I reviewed a while ago for some California magazine. Various people have told me how amusing and my response has been, we really must have a retarded sense of humor to find something as blatantly racist as "The Gods Must Be Crazy" even half amusing. It panders on the worst stereotypes that you ever thought of (mic noise) in terms of particularly using.....

"The Gods Must Be Crazy" is supposed to be humour, right. But I think there is a difference between laughing at people and laughing at a situation, or for that matter laughing with people. This one is humor in the racist sense, because it panders on the worst stereotypes and it uses the Bushman, who is not even your average noble savage, but is really, in the context of the film, is really a semi-human, a sub-human species, definitely a retarded species as well. (Interruption)

And what is very politically objectionable about "The Gods Must Be Crazy" is that you are presented with a representation of the native level of sophistication and attainment or lack thereof in South Africa. And this is precisely why the South African government could countenance funding that film to the extent that it did, because it also seems to dovetail into their cherished notion that black people are still at a very low level of attainment. Certainly you can't even begin to think of them governing a complex industrial society like South Africa when they think that there is something magical like an empty bottle of Coca-Cola. So it's really not just fun, you know, funny 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. It is politically very very I think... Politically I think it is very objectionable for these various reasons because it certainly does represent blacks as being fixated at that level.

"Shaka Zulu" the film is for the same reasons as "The Gods Must Be Crazy" just as objectionable. There is no lack of manuscripts for example that may have been used for "Shaka Zulu" including one by Mazisi Zunene, "Emperor Shaka the Great" and another by Thomas

Mafolo, "Shaka." That these would have dispensed with any of the stereotypes on which the other ones peddles. The situation of the isangoma or the isanusi once again situates black culture, black civilization within a superstitious dispensation. And in fact, some of these so-called isangomas and isanuisis and inyangas, these are the traditional medicine people, were very very militant in effect. They were the ones because they had the gift of foresight, they were the visionaries, they were the wise people, who actually encouraged militant resistance against land dispossession from whites. So they have never been the darlings of any white representation at any rate.

Shaka himself, who comes across as I say, as defeated by these other Africans, as a nation builder of even greater stature than Napoleon Bonaparte. Incidentally they were contemporaries. And Shaka ruled over an empire going right into the equator. Much larger than Napoleon Bonaparte could have dreamt of. And this great nation builder, this great empire builder comes out as no more than some blood thirsty, blood lusting savage native, once again. And this again, is truly insulting to a people, a civilization that at the same stage compared just as favorably as any other civilization you can think of.

But it is part of the processes of inferiorization. You have to internalize, you have to let the victim internalize this about himself. At the same time the victor internalize a sense of invincibility about him. It is reinforcing to him, but it is demoralizing to the other. And it serves the status quo better than anything you could ever devise.

You know an earlier Shaka Zulu featured Gatsha Buthelezi as one of the actors there. There was great pride you know in this nation builder, once again being placed in the fore of African history. People thought less about the Eurocentric perspective that is being brought to bear. And it becomes even more manifest that watching it is a far more Afrocentric perspective, the insiders view of what is happening there to really have a flesh and blood character that rings true to life. Shaka never does. I mean he's just a force, he just some savage primordial force in that kind of movie. And the Shaka of history was anything but that, from the sources and oral traditions and in written traditions by these various people.

I would be curious myself to find out what the perceptions of Inkatha to the Shaka Zulu of that movie truly are. And I wouldn't be surprised in fact if they were buying into all of this themselves.

Because anything that smacks of free advertisement for the glorious, for the once glorious Zulu is bang-on in these days and with these personalities who wants to recreate a myth of Zulu nation that should once again live autonomously as of old, regardless of the realities of the modern South Africa which is unitary, which is non-racial, which has certainly dispensed with any tribal elements ages ago. So it is almost like turning the clock backwards and becomes a self fulfilling prophesy in so many ways. And once again these images are more than mere images, they really sink into the hearts and minds and become the living reality for many people.

When I was growing up I can recall instances where we would behave according to the latest movie which we had seen. I can recall a phase, we were talking about the gangsters of the 50's, when most of us dressed up like Richard Widmark in "Street With No Name". You know with all those Macintoshes and the turned up in that fashion, so we could plan imaginery bank robberies on the boss of this outfit. All these barbarians under my command and so on. And there were actually gangs that were formed who lived up to those kinds of realities, those kinds of perceptions. As you know, South African and African culture in general is a theatrical culture, it's a very....theatre and life are indistinguishable in a traditional sort of sense. So I think probably we were more impressionable, we were more impressionable in many ways than many people, because the dichotomy between the fictional and the real is one that does not exist that much. So it is possible that these movies are doing even greater damage to their apartheid victimized viewers than they probably do out here.

The other movie "Zulu", made in 1964 featured a young Buthelezi, not yet as powerful but certainly as ambitious as he's ever been. Who has always claimed that he never insinuated himself to power, but was a royal descendent from Cetswayo. Now he gets an opportunity in "Zulu" to act Cetswayo himself. And just the visual impact of it is such a process of legitimization and a step outward that then begins to translate to viewers, particularly, as a process whereby at least once the white person has done justice and made Umtwana (sp?) himself, the Prince, he is royal descent, play his own ancestors. And it places him on a pedestal with the King himself. Not just in a movie, but outside of the movie house. And actually he relished it, that particular role, that he has never stopped talking about. And in fact it clearly has been part of his power building mechanism all along to do that.

And so, even Shaka Zulu may not be altogether unwelcome to the extent that it draws attention to the autonomous nature of the Zulu nation that then plays bang into the secessionist ambitions of someone like Gatsha Buthelezi in his no-go sort of turf with the rest of the liberation movement.

In later times, but particularly in the late 70's, in the late 80's, you are having a process, a difficult process of legitimization of what are called the Bantustans. You are wanting a South African government to truly prove that what are Bantustans are in fact a recognition of areas of autonomy that existed in pre-conquest times as well. So at that point in time if you can, you reissue or support the issuance of movies once again, of relics, that glorify the Zulu nation. Shaka Zulu is going to be one of those. But this imparts a certain sense of minority nationalism, tribalism, if you like, because everyone then is outdoing everyone else in terms of their little enclave, their little corners they must protect, they must defend.

Then you have all kinds of..... it doesn't come out in film as much as it does in for example in the art of the imbongi? the court poet. Who, whether he is Matanzima's or Mangope's, he's now being made to sing like the sycophant that he never was in tradition. To sing the praises of this all conquering Bantustan leader. So it has repercussions on the politics of Bantustanism and their entrenchment of power by all these not so legitimate kings who fancy themselves thus. And everyone of them who comes to be known as Chief, perhaps with the exception of one or two, is a Chief by decree only. But the image of the chief has come to stay with Shaka Zulu and so on. The image of the Kingdom that once were have come to stay once again. And all of this is truly reinforcing to the Bantustan policies, and the self imaging that that gives.

In the earlier "Zulu" Buthelezi understands better than his rivals or peers, what his own political agenda is. He's an astute man. Not even his worst enemy can fault him on not being a particularly bright person. He has built a career almost second to none. I remember him as a young high school student when he would come to address our speech days at St. Christopher's in Swaziland and Waterford in those days. The kind of charismatic, enigmatic man he was, but always also with a train of followers, well groomed, who worshipped this kind of leader.

It is much later I think, that with the anthropologists who are advising the South African government, and a host of other people, a light dawns on the South African government about how they themselves could exploit the medium of film, could support films that project a certain flattering image of the black person, or glorify whatever it is that is policy on them. It is only in the later years that they begin to understand what real (.....?) they might gain from film. And they then begin to finance things like "Gods Must Be Crazy" and "Shaka Zulu" and so on. I dare say there is considerable innocence in the filmmaker of Zulu of the '64. I would really like to argue that according to the best lights of the time, he is really just motivated by the desire to show a particularly good movie as might have motivated the makers of "King Solomon's Mines" and so on.

The point though is that it is the scripts themselves, it is the perspective themselves that are just as poisonous then as they are today. We just understand this process better now. I dare say, when I watched King Solomon's Mines as a younger boy, I was struck even then by the image of a sangoma, once again, called Gagul, who is actually portrayed in the most objectionable terms. She's slimy, she droops saliva and all of that sort of thing. She is the only freedom fighter in the entire movie. She is the only one who will stop the exploitation of her country's resources by these newcomers. And from that point in time I get a very different image of what these movies purport to do on the one hand, and their real impact they actually have on the other hand.

This truism becomes very obvious in a context such as South Africa, because of the polarization of races, because we are going through a social, a political upheaval that is all too clear to see. But I think the debate in American film today is not altogether different, that what the black filmmaker is seeing here, and those who would align themselves with filmmaking within these marginalized communities, realize that there is actually little neutrality about art. That only in positions of power want to keep art like politics, as neutral as possible. For then it maintains them in their positions of unquestioned dominance. But in South Africa this truism is all too obvious except to the truly bigoted.

The point I'm making which I think is self-evident.... can also be articulated in these terms. I think as artists, whether as a writer or as a filmmaker or as a musician, we all begin from a certain perspective, it's ideological. We all begin from the perspective of

certain values that we espouse, which we wish to propose. Sometimes we wish to oppose other values, but one way or another we want to announce a particular perception, a particular world view. And to that extent then, I think an artist is committed way before the artist stands behind a camera or sits on a typewriter.

And what the artist produces, opposes, affirms, or negates certain dominant values. I think only those who were satisfied with the status quo, only those who have vested interests in the status quo, see it as otherwise. Because then they want to project the canon. They want to project the classic as the immutable law of art. As the product to end all products. But what really is at stake are the values promulgated therefore, or unchallenged therein. And it's only when you begin to question the dominance, the hegemonic thrust of all these things, that you begin to say politics and art do not mix. But that itself is a political position.

PD: (the theme of South Africa's wealth in films)

And no better illustration than King Solomon's Mines. Because the whole movie is based on the search for wealth. It's almost like go west young man. And it's important for them to claim territory. To claim territory that's almost virgin territory as far as they are concerned. Except in King Solomon's Mines, this one obstacle, this woman, this witch in fact called Gagul. Gagul realizes that it is the wealth of the nation that these people have come to steal. She's a freedom fighter to that extent. Gagul is the only one who realizes that the mining magnates have no real legitimate claims to the soils of Kimberly or Johannesburg or the whole Witwatersrand. And therefore you must picture Gagul as the most iniquitous, insidious influence, savage, barbaric, degenerate and all of that, rather than the true heroine that she is. You come closer.....(interruption)

And it is in fact the character there that recognizes the true motives, the real motives of the invader, the settler. In terms of robbing the country of its raw materials. It is precisely her realization and farsightedness in this regard that makes her an enemy to the exploiter. The only person there who gets very encomiastic sorts of descriptions is a guy called Umbopa. Allan Quartermain one of the characters, even stands beside him and both are towering, and there is a kind of self-congratulatory conversation going around. And one of them says "we are men you and I." He's of course being rewarded for being a collaborator, that is truly what he is. He's a sell-out, he's

a person who really should be..... had someone else been writing it from the perspective of a liberation ethic for example, been condemned and denounced as the witch. He truly is the witch. The one who takes away the society's resources, that is the classical traditional definition of the witch, and not the other way around.

And however kindly you look at other people, "Cry, The Beloved Country" is another movie, well heralded along this regard. You get the same traps the maker of this movie and the author fall. In terms of the two brothers, one is a priest called Kumalo, who goes to this city of evil, to go and look for his son, and the other is his brother who is also in this. And his brother is a political figure. He's made to speak with a large voice, but in derogatory terms he is described as the Bull. He is slightly less than human, where Kumalo oozes with the milk of humanity as it were. And yet the only character with which African readers and African viewers of that film can relate is John Kumalo the brother, the politician. The guy who can actually rouse the whole of Alexandra with his voice. And impress upon them the sense of injustice they are living under. So it's those things that all of them play into. Their extremely patriarchal white business inclined capitalist dispensation under which we have all lived in South Africa. They reinforce the same relationships, the same exploitative relationships of parent and ward, the same relationships of master and servant in one way or another. And I think that is very formulaic of South African films.