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Department of African Languages

School of Literature, Language and Media

Popular African Language Art Literature(s): Cinematic Perceptions on Black African Middleclassness in South African Television Series – A Myth or Reality?

By Sive Mxokozeli

1241727

This research report is submitted for the fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

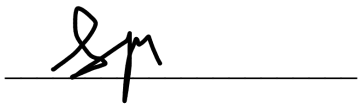
Master of Arts in African Languages and Linguistics

Supervised by: Professor I. J. Mhlambi

2021

Declaration

I declare that this research report is my own work. It has not been submitted for any other degree for examination at another institution.



Sive Mxokozeli

28 day of July 2021

Abstract

The aim of the study is to examine South African soap opera narratives as sites for the construction and negotiation of black African middleclass representations in South Africa. The research focuses on South African soap opera texts: *Generations* (1994); *Scandal!* (2008); *The Queen* (2017); *Legacy* (2020). The study draws from these popular television series cinematic perceptions that have been produced to be consumed by the racially black South African community. Moreover, it evaluates, across time, the ways in which black African middleclassness has been portrayed in the soaps. The study examines the constructions of femininity, masculinity and their positionalities as characterizations in the context of South Africa in the post- apartheid dispensation. Arguably, televisual texts presenting black images do not align themselves to key liberal modes that symbolize an African renaissance that is free from the affirmation of underlying racist motives of representation. Where these texts are guarded by white capital supremacist unchanging structural ideologies of imperialism, soap opera narratives, too, assume an important role around black African middleclassness in South African representations, which serves to construct and reinforce questionable black African middleclass stereotypes and prejudices in the 'new' democratic dispensation.

Keywords: Black African middleclassness; characterization; representation; stereotypes; prejudices; 'othered'; otherness; whiteness

Dedication(s)

I dedicate this research compilation to my old self – the rural child that made a dream come to life – I am ineffably proud.

Acknowledgments

My academic-mother, Professor Innocentia Jabulisile Mhlambi – The odyssey has been long. Some days filled with demotivation and others with your inspiring passion for research, and at most your exceptional academic frequency that allowed me to pursue this topic as a research subject. Many thanks, to you Prof.

Table of Contents **Page no.:**

Declaration ……...1

Abstract ……...2

Dedication(s) ……...3

Acknowledgments ……....4

Chapter 1: Setting the Black African Middleclass Scene in South African Soaps

1.1 Introduction ……10
1.2 Aim and Argument of Study ……13
1.3 Background of Soaps ……15
1.4 Rationale ……16
1.5 Research Questions ……22
1.5.1 Main Question ...……22
1.5.2 Subsidiary Related Question(s) ……..22
1.6 Synopsis of Soaps ……23
1.6.1 *Generations* (1994), and *Generations: The Legacy* (2014) ……23
1.6.2 *Scandal!* (2008) ……...26
1.6.3 *The Queen* (2016) ……26
1.6.4 *Legacy* (2020) ……..27
1.7 Literature Review ……28
1.7.1 Turn of the 20th Century Black Renaissance Scholarship ……29
1.7.1.1 Black African Intellectualls ……29
1.7.1.2 Colonial Films ……32
1.7.1.3 African Cultural Modernity and the Black Identity ……33
1.7.2 Reactions to Colonial Modernity from an Anthropological Perspective ……34
1.7.3 The New African Movement: The Intellectual Class ……37
1.7.4 Politcs of the Black Middling Stratum ……41
1.7.5 Film and Television from Colonial Time to Post-Apartheid: The Ride of Apartheid Filmmaking Processes Through The A-Sceme and B-Scheme Government Subsidies……45
1.8 Theoretical Framework ……..51
1.8.1 Representation of the 'Othered' in South African Filmic Narratives ……51
1.8.2 South African Soap Opera Narrative Form ……57
1.8.2.1 Narrative Imagery and Memory ……..57
1.8.2.2 Narrative-Time and Imagination ……58
1.8.2.3 Post-Structuralist Theory ……60

1.9 Methodology ……64
1.9.1 Visual Analysis ……...64
1.9.2 Textual Analysis ……67
1.9.3 Research Paradigm and Design ……..67
1.9.4 Sampling ……68
1.9.4.1 *Cluster Random Sampling* ……..68
1.9.5 Process of Analysis ……69
1.10 Overview of Chapters ……...70

Chapter 2: A Context in the Emergence of *Generations* (1994): South African Soap Operas Depicting Socio-Historical and Political-Economic Epochs

2.1 Introduction ……..74

2.2 Continuing Contingencies in Neoliberal Policy on Television ……76

2.3 Television and National Identity in South Africa ……..81

2.4 Reflections on Television and the Neoliberalism(s) of South Africa ……83

2.5 The Politics of *Generations* and Film Producer: Mfundi Vundla ……85

2.6 The Political Context of Change, Transition, the New National Identity, and the Politics of *Generations* (1994) ……..88

2.7 Entry of Black Women on Television Soap ……89

2.8 Analysis of *Generations* (1994) ……89

2.8.1 A Notoriously Troubled Young Black Middleclass Woman – The Character: Karabo Moroka on *Generations* (1994) ……92

2.8.2 South African Black Middleclass *Jezebels* on *Generations* (1994) – The Characters: Queen Moroka, Priscilla Moroka, Hilda Letlalo, Ntsiki Lukhele, and Kgomotso ……106

2.8.2.1 *Queen Moroka* ……106

2.8.2.2 *Priscilla Moroka* ……110

2.8.2.3 *Ntsiki Lukhele* ……..115

2.8.2.4 *Hilda Letlalo* ……...122

2.8.2.5 *Kgomotso* ……129

2.8.3 Modern Township *Mammies* in 'New' South Africa's *Generations* (1994) – The Characters: Nontombi Mthembu and Matlakala Sebobe ……133

2.9 Black African Middleclass Modern *Mammies, Jezebels,* and *Troubled- Tragic Mullato* Conceptual Images Presented on South African Television Soap Operas ……..141

2.10 Nollywood: Representations of Women in Nigerian Dramas and Film Videos – On the African Region – *Presentation of a Dark African Woman* …….145

2.10.1 Representation of Women in Nollywood ……147

2.11 The South-south Relations: The Construction of Women by Brazillian Film & Television Dramas and Impacts on Society in Brazil – *Controlled Women's Sexualities*……...148

2.12 Bollywood: The Conceptualization of Women in Indian Filmic Texts- *Women as Audiences in India* …….152

2.13 Conclusion …….153

Chapter 3: Black Criminal Accomplices: Interrogating Domestic Culture(s) Depicted in Black South African Middleclass Soap Opera Series – *The Queen* (2016)

3.1 Introduction …….157

3.2 The '*Othered'* in South African Middleclass Soaps …….160

3.3 Middleclass Consumer Culture in South African Black Popular Art Texts ……162

3.4 Production, Production Politics, and the Political Economy of Producing *The Queen* (2016) ……..164

3.4.1 Television Soaps in the Second Decade of Democracy in South Africa ……..166

3.4.2 DStv's Commisioning Editorial Policy …….167

3.4.3 Popularity of Soap Operas and Dramas in Second Decade of Democracy ……...170

3.5 Entry of Criminate Black Male Middleclass African Stereotypes on Television Soaps……...171

3.6 Analysis of *The Queen* (2016) ……172

3.6.1 Visual Social Semiotics …….172

3.6.2 The Black African Middleclass Tom as Opprobrium'd Kgosi in South African Soap Opera – *The Queen* (2016) ……175

3.6.2.1 The Novelistic Tom Resemblance in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* presented in *The Queen* (2016)……...176

3.6.2.2 The Cinematic/ Filmic Tom ……186

3.6.3 Frameworking as Residual Representaion of the Minstrel Coon, and Uncle Remus – The Coon as Black African Middleclass Character Construction(s) Evident in the Character Brutus Khoza in *The Queen* (2016) ……190

3.6.3.1 The Minstrel Coon ……..191

3.6.3.2 The Coon- Uncle Remus ……195

3.6.3.3 The Black African Middleclass Coon ……198

3.6.4 The Black African Middleclass Brute ……200

3.7 Conclusion ……...206

3.7.1 Understanding Masculinities Present in *The Queen* (2016) ……..206

Chapter 4: Seeing Black African Middleclassness Through "Whiteness": A Comparative Study of *Scandal!* (2008) and *Legacy* (2020)

4.1 Introduction ……208

4.2 White Hegemony Contending as "Blackness" ……212

4.3 The Contexts Presented by *Scandal!* (2008) and *Legacy* (2020) ……215

4.4 The Pervasiveness of Whiteness in South African Soap Operas ……216

4.5 Production, Production Politics, and the Political Economy of Producing *Scandal!* and *Legacy* ……220

4.6 Seeing the Gaze: "Whiteness" – An Analysis ……...223

4.6.1 "Black-Bitch" African Middleclass Female Construction(s) and "Whiteness on South Africa ……..224

4.6.1.1 Dintle Nyathi and Layla McKenzie – Female Characters on *Scandal!* ……..224

4.6.1.2 Dineo Price and Felicity Price – Female Characters on *Legacy* ……226

4.6.1.3 Focalized White Female(d) Gaze: A Persistent Sanitized Underdevelopment of the Black African Middleclass "Black-Bitch" Rhetoric- The Characters Dintle, Layla, Dineo, and Felicity……227

4.6.1.3 a) *"Whiteness" presented as an underdeveloped characterization of Dintle Nyathi, and a wronged white character Layla McKenzie* ……227

4.6.1.3 b) *"Whiteness" presented as a sexualized, deceitful trophy wife characterized as Dineo Price, benchmarked by white character Felicity Price* ……..236

4.6.1.3 c) *Rivalry between Felicity and Dineo* ……243

4.6.1.3 d) Findings ……..245

4.6.2 Black African Fragile Middleclass Masculinities and "Whiteness" on South African Soaps……246

4.6.2.1 Chumani Langa and Mthunzi Mayiza – Male Characters on *Scandal!* ……..247

4.6.2.2 Msizi Zulu and Sebastian Price – Male Characters on *Legacy* ……...247

4.6.2.3 White Male Heteronormativity as Determinant of Black African Middleclass Masculinity: The Characters Chumani, Mthunzi, Msizi and Sebastian ……..248

4.6.2.3 a) *"Whiteness" presented as characterized by Hyper-masculine Mthunzi* ……...249

4.6.2.3 b) *"Whiteness" presented as characterized by Hypo-masculine Chumani* ……254

4.6.2.3 c) *"Whiteness" presented as a power-hungry politically inclined characterization Msizi*…….259

4.6.2.3 d) *"Whiteness"privileged as a preferred heteronormative construction Sebastian* …...265

4.6.2.3 e) Findings ……..270

4.7 Conclusion ……...271

Chapter 5: Closing the Black African Middleclass Scene as Valorized Myths in Popular South African Soaps: A Conclusion

5.1 Summary of Chapters ……272

5.2 Discussion ……273

5.2.1 A Mythical White History of Black Images as Current Popular Art Texts in South Africa……...275

5.2.2 A Black Soap Opera Commodity of Empire ……275

5.3 Shortcomings of Research ……276

Filmography ……..277

References ……..278

Chapter 1

1.1 Setting the Black African Middleclass Scene in South African Soaps

This study examines South African soap opera narratives as sites where the construction and negotiation of black African middleclass representation(s) are oriented. The examination focuses on South African soap operas namely: South African Broadcasting Corporation's - *Generations* (1994 until the fall out in 2014) and *Generations: The Legacy* (2014 until present) on SABC 1; e.tv's *Scandal!* (2008 until present); DSTV's Mzansi Magic, *The Queen* (2017 until present) and M-Net's *Legacy* (2020 which continues to endure airtime). The study further draws from popular television series as texts that are produced in and for the black South African target market. Moreover, the study evaluates, across time, the manner in which Black African middleclassness has been portrayed in South African soap operas. Television texts are popular art forms which contribute to the worlds in which we relate and translate as a South African society. Arguably, television texts presenting black images are not aligning themselves to key liberal modes that symbolize an African renaissance that is free from the affirmation of underlying racist motives of representation. These texts are guarded by white capital supremacist unchanging structural ideologies of imperialism. However, soap opera narratives assume an important role around black African middleclassness in South African representations, which serves to construct and reinforce questionable black African realities in the new democratic dispensation. Black African middleclass representation has been a topic of scrutiny in many parts of the black diaspora, and in South Africa. Iqani (2017), speaks of a middleclass in Africa that is consumed by material possessions and greed-lead individuals, which to its disadvantage adapted a western idea of what the essence of embodying being middleclass has carried on to lead false lives that are read as troublesome. Her observations are apt as this is precisely the arena for local South African black

soap operas. The middleclass is depicted in negative terms: they are vilified, they are portrayed as heading dysfunctional families; they belong to gang syndicates and thus involved in violence, betrayal, blackmailing, manipulation, extortion etc. These attributes cut across the texts which are the focus of this study. Universalistic themes of soaps, generally, ought not be emulated *en mass* to the South African television experiences as the soap opera genre's problems of prejudice, stereotyping, and attributes of connotatively negative association to black African middleclassness, as these are problems of the African diaspora and the international/global media(s). However, the significance of such a demographic has stagnated because of negative connotations associated with this class. South African soap operas are transcultural and transnational as they happen in chronological sequence of events which allows them to represent many societies. Soap operas are believed to depict current times, and that they condense a world-wide appeal that intrigues members of many cultures. Williams (1992), says "Soap opera is commercial, but it is also a popular art form that has grown from the wellspring of culture and folk story and therefore appeals across time, cultures, and even classes" (p. 2). Therefore, soap opera is an essential platform where culture, identities, and many ideologies become constructed representations of imaginations that serve to share lived narratives.

The motive for this study is that soap opera is an incontestably popular genre, thus making it a site to study emerging forms of identities, ideological constructions, and culture. Geraghty (1996: 88) observes that "in Britain in the early 1990s the two programmes which constantly vied for the number one place in the ratings were both soaps". The status quo is considerably akin to South Africa today where soap operas like, *The Queen, Generations: The Legacy* (which will later be referred to as just *Generations*), *Scandal!* and *Legacy* endure popularity. Further, soap opera has riveting subject matter. Soap opera "deal[s] with everyday people and situations"

(Marx, 2007: 1), which encourage audience engagement. Audiences identify with soap opera because they have a prolonged story plot, and the chosen South African soaps for the study continue to endure air play. The South African soap opera narratives studied will accordingly be specific to South African context. Like the foundational aspects of comic illustration, and art form in South Africa, representations found in soap opera as mere entertainment cannot be divorced from its effective societal implications. On the deliberation of legitimism of the African middleclass, as an affluent class, its significance on television began as an 'aspirational' dialogue for the then newly elected African National Congress (ANC) governments' "nation-building" campaign in 1994. And now that South Africa has situated its constitution based on democracy, and scholars have analyzed certain unbecoming representations of the black middleclass population in general all over the world; it is according to afford this thesis a motion-picture perspective and examine the somewhat-distorted discourse on black African middleclass in the case of South Africa.

The idea of this thesis relies on Harrow's (1999) observation that even though colonialism could be overthrown, the change it officiates did not mean much when it came to intentionally dominant forces if the colonial domination's pervasiveness of any sort continues. This is where the point of departure lies; black African middleclass representations are the utmost depiction of how this population socializes due to consumer relations.

1.2 Aim and Argument of Study

The study aims to explore how soap opera narrative structures consolidate themselves with black African middleclassness characterizations i.e. family values, loyalty, and ways in which this class maneuvers in spaces where individuals had represented the 'othered' – South African politics and their questioned moral capabilities; the class's entrepreneurial endeavors as

corporate individuals and the ways in which power is exercised. Many themes on middleclassness in South African telenovelas/ television series (soap operas) storylines in the new democratic dispensation remain stagnant because of the seemingly preyed on stereotypes and prejudices by South African 'creatives. Middleclassness, according to Sonja Arensky-Laden, is the ability to possess upward mobility with occupying spaces where middleclass individuals are "…well educated and well employed." (Narunsky- Laden, 2010: 69). This sensibility is somewhat the value of identifying with this class. Veblen (1899), says "The institution of leisure class [upper-middleclass] is the outgrowth of an early discrimination between employments, according to which some employments are worthy and others unworthy. Under this ancient distinction the worthy employments are those which may be classed as exploit; unworthy are those necessary everyday employments into which no appreciable element of exploit enters." (p. 5). As much as Veblen's idea is fixed because this not the reality for every middleclass individual white or black, the media and the consequent texts present such narratives as though it is a universal characteristic of the middleclass, in general. Black African middleclass South Africans, on television texts, still present the Veblian ideology of the middleclass which perpetuated by media texts in South Africa.

Hypothetically, there is an existing inability to re-present and/or reflect on black African middleclass socialization in South Africa. The problem varies from this class's constructed culture(s) which are problematic due to their partial truth. This then suggests that the ways in which these constructions are imagined is not aligning to the real social experiences of this class. Moreover, the latter in turn provides that these texts have a negative effect on the black African middleclass image presented to the South African audiences. Misarticulated quotidian lives- whether stereotyped, prejudiced and/or discriminated against particularly in the making and

consumption of texts derives from the held view that soap operas "…should not … [adopt] a unilineal process…" (Binsbergen and Geschiere, 2005: 15) that target uniform re-presentations of black people in South Africa. This suggests since television soap operas are sequential (Marx, 2007), they depict socialization across time and mobility – texts should then rather be open to the decolonization and deconstruction of narrative structures towards delivering sufficient and efficient texts for their target markets. Black African middleclass South Africans have diverse and relational underpinnings that require not only one narrative form, but also an alternative form of addressing and approaching (Barber, 1987) when narratives are created. And of course the question would be 'then why not explore the alternative?' but ultimately as we feed in from texts, the ideas, racial stereotypes which confine black progressive ideology can be subtly executed and that is the case with the soaps that are studied.

1.3 Background of Soaps

South Africa bares one of Africa's largest commercial audio-visual entertainment spaces, presumably, second to Nigeria. Television series, whether reality shows, documentary programmes, and soap opera drama's- which are the subject of the investigation in this research, consume most of the airtime on South African Networks. *Generations (1994/2014)*, *Scandal (2008)*, *The Queen (2017)*, and *Legacy (2020)* are soap opera series that represent black African middleclassness, which assumes that as household names/brands, these shows become everyday topic in society. These names are found on social media #hashtags, morning office-arrival conversations. These shows assume positions in the top ten watched shows in South Africa. In a May 2019 report on the https://www.thesouthafrican.com/lifestyle/south-africas-most-watched-tv-shows-soapies-ratings/ states that these programmes in April 2019, collectively, have a viewership of 15.6 million. Scandal comes first place, and most viewed on the e.tv channel with a viewing

of 5.9 million, The Queen too sits in first place on the DStv channel with viewing of 1.3 million. Generations/ the sequel Generations: The Legacy sits at number two to *Uzalo (2015)* (a new drama series with a viewing of 9.08) on the Public broadcaster list with 8.4 million views. Generations should therefore be afforded the opportunity to be examined after much longevity as it is the oldest long running show which still maintains second place nationally. Therefore, these are shows that over two decades where generation *y* – the millennials have consumed much of these texts in one way or another. This is interesting because the ways in which middleclassness is organized on television and could be amassed to many of the images of representing middleclassness on social media- but this is a topic for the future. Moreover, these shows, to some degree, holds reference to many south Africans who strive to maintain and reach for higher ends of the middleclass spectrum. However, the question that arises when South Africa is celebrated for its varied cultures and cosmopolitan societies is that: Do the depictions on television soap operas provide enough representation on black African middleclassness in South Africa?

1.4 Rationale

The motivation for this study on soap operas in South Africa arises from the manner in which soap operas participate as reflections of black African middleclass social life. The study anticipates investigating these narratives to see whether they are dedicated toward the polity of "nation- building" which is instilled and referred to as championed by the ruling government in South Africa. This study wants to establish how these soap opera texts contribute to the ways in which the black African middleclass is imagined. Mhlambi has developed ideas from Barber (1987), wherein she indicates that popular arts and culture in Africa provide a solution to the "aesthetic conundrum" (Dhlomo, 1977 in Mhambi, 2012: 98) of a broad-ranging admixture of

traditional and European sensibilities which need specific focus when articulated in texts presenting the African in an African diasporic sense. However, Mhlambi speaks to the quotidian lives as presented in texts as she says films that "employ African aesthetic as… pivotal axis through which… neo-liberal, post- apartheid ideologies and representations can be mediated." depict a radical shift from the "hegemonizing socialist discourses" (2012: 102). Mhlambi, further questions whether such texts are used as "false consciousness" as observed in Fabian (1997), where a deployment of popular discourses in mainstream cultural productions without necessary evaluation of texts is an effort toward conscientizing and reflecting on the black African lives? Plausible as Mhlambi's idea is on representations of social lives in South Africa, there lays a deeper understanding to be explored, of the black African middleclass and the ways in which television soap operas create and imagine this class which this research seeks to explore. This is key to the subject of this research as the middleclass in South Africa is comprised in multi-fold; and the studied texts present these attributes of trans culturalism in South African societies. Barbers model speaks to this focused idea of making certain that in order for conceivable presentations of black South Africans to be produced we need to accept that there is no uniform standard framework, but to refrain from using ideologies that have existed in Hollywood cinema, which are still existing in mainstream television, and that perpetuate colonial ideologies similar to the reality during colonial America. Mhlambi continues to state that this model facilitates oral and written forms, and the elitist and popular genres; to introduce them into relationship with one another and states that these varied cultures exist [in South Africa] and within the country's socio-historical context. Barber's model as Mhlambi states transcends literary boundaries because of the ability to "explore a wide range of cultural products as the case of the 'rainbow nation', South Africa. The model also focuses on a range of discourses at the disposal of

producers and audiences which are recreated to articulate the concerns of the people, to which Mhlambi also draws, from Hannerz (1987) who states that Barbers model considers artists, writers, and academics as engaged in a conversation. Therefore, television soap opera texts resemble these features, and this is explicit in the modified contemporary television dramas (as was in the first progressive-'black' screen productions). Moreover, the gravity of Barber's model is that film in South Africa should embrace its varied cultures, to which the film industry must adapt and allow for an open framework of telling stories of society. This framework is important in explaining how fluidity should be practiced when representing the 'black image' in South Africa on television. Furthermore, Mhlambi refers to this eclectic culture as creolized. This creolization constructs 'aspirational' narratives that reflect changing socio-economic patterns in post-apartheid African society. These images were presented on *Ifa LakwaMthethwa* (The inheritance of the Mthethwa people) and *HlalaKwabafileyo* (Remain with the dead) which, in her book, Mhlambi aims to demonstrate how the two series draw from the neo-liberal policies and popular discourses found in contemporary creolized culture to construct 'aspirational' narratives (as was defined by Vundla and McCarthy, producers of *Generations* and *Gaz' Lam II* respectively). The study recognizes the advancements that Mhlambi puts forward, that South African black film have since then adopted, to some degree, some of the observations Barber's makes regarding the Nigerian travelling theatre whose performances are episodic in nature and rely on oral literature which presents social lives in Nigeria. My work will show how such creolization are unable to produce images and texts that fulfil the desires of black audiences, wholly. Furthermore, this explains why the film industry is unable to offer positive representations of the black African middleclass. The study argues that such inabilities fail to offer counter-storylines to traditionally inherited conventions, which could have been signaled by

the pivotal use of genres from oral popular discourse and progressive black image constructions in general.

The next category of scholarship this study draws from is the work of Bakhtin's (1981) and Lefebvre's (1987) studies of ordinary people and their everyday experiences. Bhaktin suggests that society comprises of knowledge which presents a "highly distinctive concept of language." (1981: xviii). He continues to say that this idea exists because distinct interpretations of resistance and scuffle amidst existence present ideologies that move away from the norm as they seek to keep things apart, and even more ideas that work to keep 'others' together. This idea presents itself in South African soap opera whereby curtain themes such as dysfunctional, destructive black African middleclass characterizations. Soap operas in South Africa have moved to problematize black African middleclassness to misogynistic, racially associated ideas that maintain that the black African middleclass in South Africa could possibly be an existing disaster. These plots are the 'topic of the day', '#hashtag worthy', with endless cliff-hangers that only serve to provide entertainment that reinforces negative stereotypes and predisposed advanced sensibilities that derive from colonial times, and surprisingly have residual elements in South African soaps at present. This activity stems back to the colonial, missionary enterprise (Posel, 2010) because of the class's socio-economic ambitions that the white monopoly capital refuse to acknowledge that there exists a middleclass that exercises its agency and works as hard as any other competent racially, socio-economically, and is deviance-free. Post-apartheid, neo-liberal ideologies in television programmes, just like the co-option policy of the late apartheid era, focused on the black middleclass and its patterns of conspicuous consumption to forge new ways of fashioning mainstream black identities.

Lefebvre and Levich (1987) speaks to the way societal structures, whether natural and/or constructed, together with people allow for a myriad of functions to take place in society. This idea often challenges fixed "totalities". Lefebvre continues to say analysis on “social reality has come up with some residue resisting analysis, and the sum of such realities [is] seemed irreducible by human thought [becomes] a matter for infinite analysis...” (1987: 7). Therefore, to this topic on the functions of soap operas in South Africa, black African middleclassness representations to some extent suggest fixed prime examples of this class which should not exist. Moreover, what Lefebvre suggests is that because society comprises of a broad-ranging class structure and sub-class structures their representations should not be limited to “totalities” that, in this case, limit the ways in which the black African middleclass is imagined in creative culture.

Smith (2007) speaks about “a culture of corruption in Nigeria” where he argues that this Nigerian culture is pervasive: “The very expression ‘the Nigerian factor’ suggests that Nigerians have concluded that corruption is so endemic that it defines the nation” (p. 8). Uslaner (2010) suggests that even though this behavior, to some degree, might exist within elite communities of Nigeria it is unduly to claim this idea exists as a standard in Nigeria as there exists too much literature that is counter narrative to these claims. Therefore, culture in Nigeria, too, is under scrutiny due to the ways in which the black African middling strata is under siege by mainstream media texts. And here social lives are created and imagined in texts, prejudicially. Uslaner, to the topic of this examination on soap opera representations of the black African middleclass in South Africa, helps us narrate an alternative ideology for the black African middleclass across the diaspora. Moreover, these ideas suggest to what has been said above that fixed notions and representation constitute a biased ideology.

Mastro and Stern (2003) are concerned with the representation of race in Television commercials; the reading, as Cohen (1992) suggests, when examining textual eminence of any portrayal it is necessary that texts are implicit as cultural worthy of the individuals related with them. And here African- American blacks, whites, and Latinos are all distinctly characterized. Studies propose that racial/ethnic minorities all over the world appear most regularly in minor or background roles and group settings on mainstream texts (Taylor & Stern, 1997; Wilkes & Valencia, 1985); to which it is stereotypical to denounce characters as less likely to be pictured as parents or spouses (Coltrane & Messineo, 2000); and to being less likely to give orders. Furthermore, this suggests that the investigation on racial representation in commercials in America follows a similar epistemological examination on the representations of the black African middleclass in soap operas in South Africa. Moreover, Mastro and Stern of the idea that as fixed the representations are, they need a far more deeper understanding than just what is read from the quality of these texts. I also add that examining other textual platforms such as drama's on television adds to this much needed study on the middleclass belonging to the African diaspora.

The study aims to benefit from the contribution towards the Pan-Africanist philosophy. The extent to which its contribution ranges is the motion-picture perspective into the development of alternative African language film studies in Cinema and Television. African language texts present a variety just as it draws from the eclectic cultures when the oral and written forms are explored; and these texts have assumed a major role in Popular Culture studies. Investigating how South African soap operas negotiate and re-present black bodies, within South Africa is as insightful toward an inspection of the nation's democratic dispensation and its properties.

To continue the knowledge development on African indigenous literature into the post two decades and a-half experiencing democracy in South Africa, Mhlambi's (2012) and Barbers's (1987) works as a basis point into African Languages motion-picture investigation/s in South Africa is fitting. And additional to their suggestion to bring about such knowledge as she had touched on the topic, into the presupposed deductions and colonial connotative ideologies on black African image, it is where the examination for our 'maturing' democracy varies its scope. Following this section are the theories that guide the investigation.

1.5 Research Questions

1.5.1 Main Question

How do soap opera narratives consolidate themselves within black African middleclassness representations in soap opera dramas in the new South African democratic dispensation?

1.5.2 Subsidiary Related Question/s

- What influences do post-1994 soap opera class structure characterizations have on audiences?
- How do soap operas connect narrative, identity, 'otherness' in representing: time, memory, and imagination, as these affect black middleclass representation?
- How do soap opera in South Africa engage/ or negotiate struggles related to gender roles and hegemonic orders of identity representation as struggle where identities?
- To what extent do the soap operas engage black history and black experiences in their representations?
- How has the history of film making in South Africa impacted on the representations in black African middleclass soap opera texts?

A history of black African, and South African, images has been a cause to lost cultures due to coloniality and more recently Apartheid. These distorted images carry with them ideologies which run the risk of reinforcing myths that, arguably, can be perceived as reality. South African black middleclass television soap operas exhibit these qualities and require examination. Moreover, the need to uncover racial prejudiceness and stereotypes by television's popular art texts allos for a perspective into the perpetuated misconceptualization of black African middleclass South African realities in society. The use of narrative, textual, semiot, and content analysis will be employed to examine the texts *Generation, The Queen, Scandal!* and Legacy.

1.6 Synopsis of Soaps

1.6.1 *Generations (1994),* and *Generations: The Legacy (2014)*

The first broadcast of Generations in 1994 on February 3rd (Sunday Times, 2004), was welcomed by the general South African population. The show is publicized as a soap opera and it airs daily (20h00 on SABC 1). Mfundi Vundla is the creator of Generations and Generations: The Legacy and the executive producer. The setting of both Generations's prequel and sequel revolves around the advertising industry in Johannesburg, South Africa- with a storyline that celebrates the dreams and aspirations of South Africans. Some of the key characters on Generations from late 1990's to the early 2000's are the soap's veterans Sophie Ndaba who plays the character of Queen Moroka the receptionist at Ezweni Communications, and Connie Ferguson (Karabo Moroka), and respectable actors such as Leleti Khumalo (the lead actor in *Yesterday* and *Sarafina*, and was nominated for an Oscar in 2005), who plays the character Busi. Protagonists include the characters Karabo and Tau Mogale (Rapulana Seiphemo). There is also Ntombi (Sonia Mbele); actor Vusi Kunene, the felonious kingpin Jack Mabaso. Linda Sokhulu plays a reformed prostitute, Cleo; Mike Mvelase, the character with strong, silent attributes plays

Khaphela and the menacing 'Ngamla' Sibusiso Dhlomo (Menzi Ngubane). The characters in Generations are changed on the cast from time to time which is expected to happen regularly in production. The characters also reflect the transforming South African society, as the black bourgeoisie- middleclass is becoming more imbedded in the South African society. Generations and Generations: The Legacy seek to portray the emerging rich black people who form part of the eclectic middling strata. The soap opera is said to reflect the changing South African 'realities' nowadays. Contention, deceit and blackmailing flanked by siblings, friends and adversaries alike are common. Insecurity, scheming and tension are the order-of-the-day as the plot unfolds. Romance stimulates relationships between rivalries. Murderous actions take place, where violence, monetary deals, drug syndicates, and fraudulence inspires the plot. Even more so now that the show has adapted into presenting politicians and township experiences that intertwine and pose gestures of the black African middleclass experience on Generations: The Legacy, it remains successful.

The SABC1 (one of the South African Broadcasting Corporation's) website: http://www.sabc1.co.za/sabc/home/sabc1/shows/details?id=c4b9d096-1f71-4c32-8bf7-cbb9850608d9, suggests that *Generations- The Legacy*, is about inspiring a dialogue around "the transfer of wealth, knowledge and culture". The SABC claims that Generations The Legacy will address this issue in ways that are interesting narratives for the shows audiences. "Now is the time to establish family legacies that move our country forward," claimed show creator, Mfundi Vundla. *Generations– The Legacy* picks the drama's rich narration 2 years into the future, where Connie Ferguson carries on to play Karabo Moroka and Rapulana Seiphemo as Tau Mogale. These two iconic figures in Generations as a power couple return to the merciless media business landscape; and thiss time around they re-enter to establish the legacy of Paul Moroka, the

storylines business visionary who built the first African-owned media enterprise. New to Karabo, her husband Tau runs a parallel mission of establishing a legacy of his own. Moreover, the sequel continues with narratives of cunning without boundaries. Tau's sister Tshidi (Letoya Makhene), a trophy wife of the gangster, Gaddaffi (Vuyo Dabula) who is Tau's arch enemy, conspires with her husband's efforts to ruin the Paul Moroka legacy. *Generations-The Legacy* is said to be "…the witch's brew of narratives of ambition. A drama set in a world where virtue and evil are in a stellar battle for supremacy". The new cast includes the following has: JT Medupi who plays the role of Jonathan; Musa Ngema as Mazwi; Kopano Zimba as Mary; Manaka Ranaka as Lucy – a very feisty Alexandria township shebeen queen; Andisiwe Dweba plays the role of Getty; Lebogang Mthunzi as Angela; Moopi Mothibedi as Smanga who has an interesting role of playing a brother who ends up having child with Mazwi's (his own brother's) wife later on in the series; Thulisile Phongolo plays the character Namhla; Ronnie Nyakale plays Cosmo a character who seems to be an ex-convict and is also a 1st hand man to Gaddaffi; Asanda Foji plays Simphiwe and Ivy Nkutha plays the role of Gog'Flo – an aged woman who is always baffled by the actions of her children and grandchildren who stay with her in Alex.

Mfundi Vundla says: These people we see (in Generations) are the vanguard of the first generation of the African bourgeoisie in the making. It's a process, it's happening. Society is transforming and the bourgeoisie is becoming more and more entrenched. They are the torchbearers of a transforming society…and our characters reflect this. Generations is a fantasy world of upper middle-class black South Africans in the advertising industry (Shota, 2005). Mabanga (2002) suggests that the concept of *Generations* has an obvious element of fantasy and escape in its storyline. He continues to say "[s]trangely, this element seems to be trashed for being unreal and misrepresenting the values of the black middle class. [sic]".

1.6.2 *Scandal! (2008)*

Produced under Ochre Moving Pictures *Scandla!* (2008) is a series highlighting Johannesburg's eclectic cultures as one of South Africa's economic hubs. A storyline on *Scandal!* revolves around the media industry in Johannesburg, but the interactions between family members who are part of the Hlanga prominent family in the series do not seem to be getting along since the death of Siseko Langa (played by actor Hlomla Dandala) who heads the family. Here the storyline locates the Langa family as a wealthy established family that mourns the death of the father of the family, Siseko Langa, to whom the only son Chumani Langa (played by Ayanda Daweti) happens to be gay. The conservative mother Boniswa Langa (played by Lusanda Mbane) refuses to acknowledge her sons sexuality whilst on the other end her daughter is involved with a scheming son in-law-to-be who understands his opportunity to be part of the Langa family as way to satisfy his greed when the mother in law, Boniswa Langa, makes him acting CEO of the family corporation. However, storylines of a disloyal son in law, scheming with ex-wife Yvonne Thebe (played by Kgomotso Christopher) of Siseko Langa boils to endless mistrust and consequent murders of siblings who are caught in the act. This upper-middleclass narrative continues in to other storylines in the series where a young black woman Dintle Nyathi (played by Mapaseka Koetle) in Johannesburg who are presented as opportunists when working in the company restaurant and to some extent falls in love with executive member who by all means tries to satisfy her material needs but she keeps steadfast in her mission to maintain her "blessee" life intact.

1.6.3 *The Queen (2016)*

Created and executive produced by Connie and Shona Ferguson who own Ferguson Films, *The Queen* (2016) revolves around a middleclass ideology of the inheritance of a black drug cartel.

The show is set in Thembisa, a township in Johannesburg. The storyline follows the lives of two families convoluted in a life of crime and luxury. Two family leaders, Harriet and Gracious are often confronted at odds with the police and the community. When husband of the successful businesswoman, Harriet Khoza discovers her dreadful secrets and she is left with no choice but to do the unthinkable- where she murdered her husband and can't be forgiven by neither of Mzi Khoza's (played by veteran actor Treasure Shabalala) brother Brutus (Themb Ndaba) nor stepson to Harriet, Shaka Khoza (played by Sthembiso Khoza). The drug syndicate operations are camouflaged with a logistics company that is owned by the Khoza's. The two protagonists Harriet (played by the Connie Ferguson) and Gracious (played by Rami Chuene) portray business mogul women who sometimes must agree to disagree because of being service providers to Russians who control drug hubs around the world. Issues of inheritance jump aboard when the Khoza's are without a male-head to lead the family, to which is a position that Harriet continuously fights for. Uncontrollable murders of siblings and family members who deviate from family business motives are highlighted. The unrest happens even when Uncle Brutus tries to overthrow the entire Khoza ship cartel as he believes that he should have been second in succession from his brother to be the family head. Harriet stumbles in keeping the family's financial situation where discomforting financial situations arise. Struggles for power surface; family deceits take place. Even storylines on romance, hetero/ homosexual romances take place under the dramatic instances that the narrative unfolds.

1.6.4 *Legacy (2020)*

The 2020 M-Net 101 debut soap on DStv, *Legacy* is a relatively new text. The drama telenovela is produced by Phatutshedzo Makwarela and Gwydion Benyon who are veterans of South African television and collectors of SAFTA's (South African Film and Television Awards). The

plot of the series revolves around a wealthy family, the Prices and their Legacy Investments company worth billions. The founder and C.E.O. of the company is a post- middle age Sebastian Price who is married to a second wife- Dineo Price from Soweto. The story's struggles for power and wealth between ex-wife Angelique and current wife along with their children is the main plot of the text. The eldest child is Felicity who along with Angelique who are so eager to be benefiters of Sebastian's wealth when he is murdered soon into the film by Felicities fling and Sebastian driver. However, as Dineo has a kind heart she is pressured to change page as she fights eager for her husband's legacy.

1.7 Literature Review

The literature review is organized in the following manner: The Turn of the 20th Century Black Renaissance Scholarship is where scholarship during the inception of modernity into Africa critiqued the ways in which the Afro- Cosmopolitanism was initiated. Here the paper discusses the way intellectuals had derived, from the New Negro, ways in which the New African could adapt and organize themselves around this neo- socialization which was inevitable. The review also looks at Reactions to Colonial Modernity from an Anthropological Perspective, where a number of scholars have voiced out what it means for Africa to be modernized, and in what ways images have to allow for the same kind of separation from traditional notions of textual segregation. The New African Movement: The intellectual Class category, discusses the manner in which this class which is of par relevance to the study, have taken upon their responsibility to ensure that leading Africa into modernization had been done so in ways more than just adapting from America the ways of the New African- American. This is the contextualization of modernization by the intellectual class. In the sub-category: Politics of the Black Middling Stratum, the paper explores the typical example of how the politics during colonial times and

apartheid for black middleclass people/s experience was envisaged. Film and Television from Colonial time to Post- apartheid is the exploration of how the A- scheme and B-scheme frameworks of filmic production operations were handled by officials and how those had given a distorted foundation for filmic culture in South Africa.

1.7.1 Turn of the 20th Century Black Renaissance Scholarship

1.7.1.1 Black African Intellectuals

Balseiro and Masilela (2003), suggest "film is an expression of the modernist experience" (2003:58) hence soap opera in television is a popular art genre. Soap opera resembles a film culture of the modernist experience in South Africa. The 'modernist experience' as it is adapted into modern art form presents soap opera texts as representations of social lives. The 'New African' was first described in the newspaper *Umteteleli wa Bantu* (The Mouthpiece of the Native Peoples) (Balseiro and Masilela, 2003) where the newspaper speaks about Solomon T. Plaatje's (one of the founders of The New African Movement which will be discussed below) efforts in documenting one of his achievements of the New Negro in the United States. Here the New African Movement, were impressed by what the New Negros had achieved in the United States within the short period of their emancipation in 1865 (Balseiro and Masilela, 2003). Therefore, the New Negro in America resembled, not only racially, the struggles of colonialism and in the manner in which this populace regained their dignity and agency alongside having maneuvered their own financial autonomy as a black African American community. As pertinent those activities, they had influenced the New African because South African intellectuals had learned a way to forge black South African modernity. The manifested double consciousness of the past and the future akin to the New African and the New Negro resemble a Machinean Anglo-African identity with binary sensibilities that resemble modernity alongside

traditionalism, which generates an awareness of the positions occupied by black people and black experiences within the modernizing terrain of South Africa. This creation of the 'new' was then interrogated by these intellectuals so as to understand the kind of renaissance the New African had anticipated to step in-to. This suggests that The New African Movement had learnt that "in America, no people make greater study of the Negro than the Negro himself." (Cressy, 1911). The understanding is that The New African Movement facilitated the negotiation of the politics of representation during the turn of the twentieth century era, and here the same reflection on soap operas in South Africa post- 1994 applies. Moreover, Masilela suggests that Solomon Plaastje's idea of regeneration is inseparable from what the New Negros had achieved within United States' modernity hence his essay in 1904 *Negro Question* where he analyzes the chronological, national, metaphysical, and spiritual circumstances and empathies that create solidarity between African-Americans and Africans (Masilela, 1996) and suggests that the New African should adopt the ways in which the New Negro has managed to advance themselves as society. W. E. B. Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) as stated in Balseiro and Masilela (2003), emphasizes that "the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line" (Du Bois, 1989) which they had already established that it needs interrogation. This suggests that these scholars were responding to something that was happening at an ideological, political, and cultural level.

As the South African Native National Congress (which later became the African National Congress) was founded a call for cooperation and progress among the African people was proposed, foreseeing that a political party would manifesto such ideas (Balseiro and Masilela, 2003) was, according to Masilela enunciated in Pixley ka Isaka Seme's land mark essay, in which he states:

> Yes, the regeneration of Africa belongs to this new and powerful period! By this term, regeneration, I wish to be understood to mean *the entrance into new life*, embracing the diverse phase of a higher, complex existence. The basic factor, which assures their regeneration, *resides in the awakened race- consciousness.* This gives them a clear perception of their elemental needs and of their underdeveloped powers.
>
> Pixley ka Isaka Seme (1906)

Historical connections and the cultural and intellectual attractions among black people all over the world, suggest a reason as to why New Africans in South Africa would be enthralled with the achievements and the cultural ingenuity of the New Negro in America (Masilela 1996). To this idea, Plaatje presented film form to the New Africans as a pedagogical apparatus compatible with a Christian civilizational kind of modernity when interpreted. This was to introduce Africans of social responsibilities necessitated in the construction of modernity in South Africa which to the effect much of South Africa's black *'kholwa'* (the believer), had adopted a missionary kind of modernized civilization.

Similar to Plaatjes motives toward New Africanness as Balseiro and Masilela (2003) suggest, H. I. E Dhlomo had clearly employed film for purposes of reflection on the philosophy of history of the *ding an sich* (the thing in itself), rather than looking at it in a Kantian mode (moral compass) not whether it is right or wrong but whether the action fulfills the duty. Therefore, television alongside these presiding initiatives with soap opera as genre should adapt to these efforts as agencies that reflect on black lives in South Africa. Political justification as to the absence of serious film criticism by African intellectuals to this day is insufficient. Perhaps it was the condition of the time that dictated that African film criticism could emerge only from an encounter with films made by Africans themselves.

1.7.1.2 Colonial films

During apartheid and the post-apartheid dispensation exists instances where a distorted construction of history presented itself to the world, to which Frantz Fanon writes about the ways in which history as reference is "one fundamental refrain of colonial and settler-colonial discourse" (Frantz Fanon, 1963 in Nayar, 2015: 163). Fanon and Nayar are speaking to the very systemic construction, suggesting that distorted images are a colonial effect. Furthermore, the negative representation which presents stereotyped 'entertainment' associated with the black African middleclass across the diaspora, is evidently not a concern that only has come to arise in South Africa, even during democracy. This section aims to highlight the instances to which such negative images of the black middleclass were negotiated in South Africa.

The early development of the cinema, globally, as James Tharp (2010) claims, happened together with the elevation of European imperialism. Many of the misconceptions concerning Third World peoples is consequent from primarily "a long parade of lazy Mexicans, shifty Arabs, savage Africans, and exotic Asiatics that have disgraced our movie screens." (Tharp, 2010:1). These images have since been exaggerated, explicitly throughout the colonial era, and still thrive/d in soap opera texts in South Africa which this research aims to investigate, specifically the African black middleclass. Furthermore, Robert Stam (1986) suggests that, Africa was (has been) portrayed as a land inhabited by cannibals in the Lubin comedy *Rastus in Zululand* (1910). Similar to the latter statement, Mexicans were reduced to 'greasers' in films like *Tony the Greaser* (1911) and *The Greasers Revenge* (1914), and slavery was idealized, and the slaves degraded, in *The Birth of a Nation* (1915) (Stam, 1986). Stam carries on to say that amongst others, hundreds of Hollywood westerns "turned history on its head by making the Native Americans appear to be intruders on what was originally their land" (Stam, 1986: 5), which

provided a typical perspective through which to view the entire non-white world. And that these films were created by Hollywood mainstream producers around black constructions which excluded the existence of these intellectuals as though these identities are non-existent. Moreover, these films aimed to take away from the sophistication of the argument brought by these African scholars. Seemingly, the problem is the person with some degree of colored skin. Evermore, these constructions have been extended to talk to 'different' black Africans now occupying the middling class stratum and what is important to underscore is how the very original images of the 'othered' black race are recycled for black people who have moved up social and economic ladders as though their identities are transfixed in time and space. This scholarship therefore assists in understanding the politics of representation that took place. This suggests that at this time a type of an African holding upward mobility resonance toward self-refinement, which had already formed and was explicit in their socialization in society where this type of African was anticipated to be modeled for global competence.

1.7.1.3 African Cultural Modernity and the Black Identity

The relationship of the believable content in popular visual culture on consumers and the concept of identity remain fixed in South Africa. Black African middleclass representations in South African soap operas sustain an untrusted terrorizing black African identity. The objective here is not to put forward that this study employs audience research, but as a substitute that the content of soap opera is investigated in order to arrive at a thoughtful understanding on the significance and subsequent messages created by such modern art texts. This imagining together with the potential influence that such messages may possibly relay on receivers of the product remains unchallenged and thus not investigated in South Africa. At an attempt to expose texts and interpret connotation, the approach will be hermeneutic - hermeneutics at this stage are not only

to be implicit in terms of the fictional, but are also of visual explanation (Marx, 2007). This points toward the fundamental understanding, for both spectator and inventor, which is important for interpretation. Therefore, modernity in South Africa and the ways in which it is presented should allow for analysis so as to adhere to the cosmopolitan decolonial epoch in which the black African middleclass South African seeks to find an identity complete from whiteness.

South African soap opera is a subject which has not been extensively researched, let alone the subject matter: black middleclass representations on South African soap opera. Innocentia J. Mhlambi in her *African Language Literatures: New Perspectives on IsiZulu and Popular Black Television Series* (2012), speaks on black representations, ought to not depict what is presented but an 'other' to the hermeneutic of the ideologized black identity in popular art culture. Magriet Pitout (1996, 1998), Viola Milton (2005, 2008), Hannelie Marx (2007) and Katie Khan's (1999) audience-based studies drawn on content and audience suggest that audience participation is influential. Mhlambi (2012) did a specific reception study on Yizo Yizo's "heightened violence" which informs arguments in the following chapters, even though reception study itself is not the theoretical area in which the project is located. Miki Flockeman (2000), also a South African author, adds to the thoughtfulness of South African audiences' response to soap opera. Therefore, audiences can receive information as true which along with propagandist ideas generates perceptions on black middleclassness according to the coerced stereotyped narratives in South African soap operas.

1.7.2 Reactions to Colonial Modernity from an Anthropological Perspective

John and Jean Comaroff suggest that explicit images of racism and depictions of colonial legacy, as methods of empire have been replaced by decolonial ideology in the mainstream media across time (Comaroff and Comaroff, 1992). This means that legacies of empire have kept at a

periphery, and so done in popular culture where post-structuralist ideologies surface and aim to debunk colonial ideologies. The latter supposes that racism as a social condition at the moment is of minimal exposure when it comes to audio-visual texts like soap operas in South Africa, where racial undertones are found embedded in identity and class structures. Furthermore, racisms underlying residues have not been addressed in the mass mediated spaces of South Africa and this section serves to outline the initial depictions of colonialism and how these representations played a role in constructing a black African middleclass since the days of empire.

Colonial discrepancies of representation- stereotyping and prejudice everywhere, have run far deep than they are suggested by the rigidities visible on soap opera texts. These were white and black men, who because of their 'co-habitual' nature, interacted and had similar sensibilities. This means that the environment was relational, but class and racial difference were the determinants which singled out whom, how, and for what reason an interaction would be taking place. Moreover, Beidelman (1982), suggests that the [black middleclass] in Africa, continues to remain between a displaced peasantry, an intensifying working class, and the lower echelons of an escalating British bourgeoisie in South Africa. Comaroff and Comaroff (1992), further state that the latter introduced our very own petty bourgeoisie morality that has adopted by new 'Black Christians', the 'civilized' and now elite Africans who had a limited relation to white missionaries. This association began initiating class structures so as to separate the 'better African' form 'the less better African' – a class structure which sustained certain access which the 'less better' was deprived, which although not discussed here would account for the existing gap between the rich and poor in Africa especially black Africans in South Africa. Masilela (1996), highlights that intriguing texts on missionary interaction with the natives had, by the late 19th century, become an established European genre, taking its place beside popular travel and

exploration written texts, with which it shared features of intent and style (Pratt, 1985). Indeed, this was a literature of the imperial frontline which was a colonizing discourse that stimulated the Western imagination of radical 'otherness' – a black middleclass. Furthermore, amongst others, was a 'new' black African middleclass, which simultaneously was brought under intellectual control. What distinguished the reports of missionaries from more self-effacing travel narratives was their personalized, heroic form; for, as soldiers of the spiritual empire, their biographies - their battles with the forces of darkness - linked individual achievement to the conquests of civilization (Comaroff and Comaroff, 1988). However, there remains a predisposition in historical sociology to liken processes of domination with perceptible political and economic coercion. And yet, as Comgan and Sayer (1985) cited in (Comaroff and Comaroff, 1988) have noted, the rise of the modern national - and, by extension, the modern empire was, in vital respects, an ideological project. This was 'cultural revolution' in which legitimate modes of control were consolidated through 'rituals and routines of rule'. This is not to deny the prominence of 'concrete' political and economic forces that acted as 'missioned' mediators who behaved as buffers of colonial rule to which they were drivers. It is to stress that those forces were - from the very start, right down to the last instance - inseparably material and cultural, practical and symbolic.

Colonially, the black middleclass were clearly a "dominated fraction of the dominant class" (Bourdieu, 1984:421), "the ruled among the rulers" (Comaroff and Comaroff, 1992:184) and this was generated by an exacerbated idea that majority of the black middleclass regarded themselves, and their compatriots (white people), as "friends and protectors of the natives" (Wilson, 1976) to which proletariats had identified with the most. Thus, in observing the colonial process through their black middleclass experience, focus is on the subject middleclass, which is

located in forms and socialization patterns that provoke ambiguities of their own social situation. The missionaries had also set a prevailing standard for the black middleclass as this class had adopted Western characterization and to some extent re-produced 'colored-duplicates' whom were members of the clergy men of England and business men who were articulate and resolute in participating, occupationally, in their defined roles as men of stature whom at instances were regarded as threatening the mission. This happens amidst missionary writings that now provide proof that all their deliberations of images and ideology, of dreams and schemes, voices among the colonizers, as they debated the manner in which natives should be controlled so as to create a history in an era which already has become devastation to the African. This revealed the pressures of empire which brought about reaction, alongside the inconsistencies of colonialism, alongside, which missionaries were coining an Africa ruled by empire. This was an ideal Anglicized class structure. This scholarship brings about an understanding of how colonialism worked in creating class structures; the fashioning of the modernization of Africans; and how the social class structures worked during the missionary period. Here, class structures became fodder to later forms of racial capitalism where now Victorian standards are no longer realized, the promises: progression, civilization, rationality and sophistication, are no longer realized. These suggest the negative manner in that images were represented which not only affected the educated black African middle class, but the entire black population. For an approach to understanding opposing platforms, and counter colonialist movements – The New African Movement, of the 1900s had played a huge role in decolonizing the post-colonial era in South Africa toward an idea acquainted with the concept of Negritude.

1.7.3 The New African Movement: The Intellectual Class

In South Africa, as film culture was introduced so was The New African Movement. Balseiro and Masilela (2003) state that "film is an expression of the modernist experience" (2003:58) and hence suggests that soap opera in television is a popular art genre. Therefore, this proposes reasons as to why a New African Movement is established. Solomon T. Plaatje's idea of regeneration as a stalwart of the New African Movement is inseparable from what the New Negros had achieved within United States' modernity where empathies that create shared aims between African Americans and Africans consolidate one another (Masilela, 1996). Furthermore, historical encounters are significant because the New African Movement which emerged post the Anglo Boer War of 1899-1902 was perpetuating an idea in African society about a 'New Africa', and a 'New South African' - a middleclass African. This suggests that at this time a type of an African holding upward mobility resonance toward self-refinement had been established and was deliberate in its existence within society.

Jordan Ngubane, R. V. Selope Thema, Allan Kirka Soga, H. I. E Dhlomo, Gerard Sekoto, and Rueben Caluza are, amongst others, intellectuals that founded and lived as compatriots within the New African Movement perimeters. These 'New Africans' were mindful of the ways and socialization patterns of the New Negro in America, because, indeed as Masilela claims, the New Negro had taken over the imagination of the New African (Masilela, 1996). These scholars speak of how the New African Movement depended on the African- American Renaissance due to the similarities in social reform commonalities, which African intellectuals perceived was what the African was needing at the time. Therefore, the African Renaissance example can be used for fashioning the New African Movement.

Further, the dawn into the 1800's African intelligentsia surrounding King William's Town and Alice (towns of Eastern Cape Province) in the then Cape Colony, namely: Walter Rubusana,

Elijah Makiwane, Pambani Mzimba, John Tengo Jabavu, and others are said to have deliberated the issue on how to espouse the lessons of the New Negro modernist experience into the Lovedale Literary Society and in the Native Educational Association. Here, both organizations were formed to express the African's determination to participate fully in the making of modernity (Masilela, 2003). Therefore, intellectuals played a very integral role in making sure that the inception of the black African middleclass in South Africa was one that had been conscious of the history and the possible outcomes of modernization. Relevant to this argument, Solomon T. Plaatje presented film form to the New Africans as a pedagogical tool which would be compatible with the Christian civilization which prevailed as Africans were introduced into modernity. Therefore, the black African middleclass in South Africa could challenge white oppression by constructing counter-narratives. It is here that H. I. E Dhlomo in Steadman (1990) had clearly employed film for purposes of reflection on how history was constructed. Furthermore, the Sophiatown Renaissance scholars started to observe film as an artistic object. And to the latter, Bloke Modisane in Goldsmith (2002) and Visser (1976) suggests that active participation in forming a critical dialogue with the reading public, partly explains the founding principles of the Sophiatown Renaissance which were so passionately embraced by its audience to present social lives that black South Africans resonated with. Between Solomon T Plaatje and Bloke Modisane's efforts to using film as a form of agency, scholarship suggests that the earliest cohort of New African intellects, to use film as a pedagogical instrument as in the preceding generations like Modisane of the intellectual New African Movement, were articulating film as part of popular culture and entertainment, and film mutually recycled the African American experience as a benchmark. This extends that the intervention into imagined constructions and

representation of the black African middleclass has been ongoing since the turn of the 20th century and in the past.

A political theme of the 1950s where the last intellectual cohort of founders of The New African Movement believed what Masilela (1996) suggests, that perhaps they were the most recent generation of scholars in South Africa to contribute unreservedly, and possibly uncritical, to the ideology of 'enlightenment'- which alluded to the Defiance Campaign of 1952. New African political leaders: Albert Luthuli, Nelson Mandela, Robert Resha, and Oliver Tambo, had instigated the Defiance campaign trusting that rationality would conquest over irrationality without the need to resort to force- which had all together brought about the Sharpville massacre of 1960. One of the scriptwriters of *Come Back, Africa* (1960) Lewis Nkosi in Attridge and Jolly (1998), suggests that the creation of this film was part of the racial solidarity that had made credible the establishment of the 'Congress of the People' (ANC presently) and the combined drafting of the Freedom Charter in the year 1955. Moreover, it is no wonder that *Come back, Africa* is still relevant to the history of South African film.

Apartheid was encompassed by white films with a superficial coating of blackness (Harrow, 1997). The films during this time have proven invaluable for capturing the social and cultural history of Africans at the height of the construction of modernity. On the other hand, films such as: *Come Back, Africa* (1960) and *Jim Comes to Jo'burg* (1949) *Cry the Beloved Country* (1951) are about Africans in which Africans themselves played a role in the writing of the screenplay. This adds to the moments in the history of South African cinema where the African middling class had insisted in working with propagandist film production houses with the intention to dilute presiding ideology to work toward the emancipation of the image of black people. Moreover, Fanon suggests "In Africa, the native literature of the last twenty years is not a

national literature but a Negro literature… This historical necessity in which the men of African culture find themselves to racialize their claims and to speak more of African culture than of national culture will tend to lead them up a blind alley." (1961: 14). This means that the latter films were the beginnings of engagement with black lives in a realistic kind of a form. The concentration was not necessarily on black African middleclass it was also on ordinary black lives that are affected by the political economy of the time.

Nkosi followed in the footsteps of Solomon T. Plaatje to use film as a pedagogical instrument which upholds tradition and had been articulated by Xhosa intellectuals in the 1880s around John Tengo Jabavu's *Imvo Zabantsundu* (The Black Peoples Perspective). Masilela (2004), says that the tradition of employing film to teach Africans began with the New African intellectual Elijah Makiwane, arguably the principal inspirer of this Xhosa cultural Renaissance. And for both intellectuals, Nkosi and Makiwane, as for the African intelligentsia, generally, modernity was principal to the continued existence of African people. Film was undoubtedly a part of this kind of survival where intellectuals had laid foundation against propagandist ideologies about black image constructions in film practice for the future in South Africa, which in turn helps in understanding the later kinds of representation problems experienced in television. Therefore, the highlights of this movement help in understanding how the black African middleclass activities were involved in intellectual brokering. This is the film culture that introduced ways to teach black people about progress and self-refashioning.

1.7.4 Politics of the Black Middling Stratum

La Hausse (1992), identifies how threads of being black and a middling strata citizen was not only a threat to the Manichean standards of modernity, but rather remained a threat for the black people themselves because defying the odds as a black middleclass or upwardly aspirational

middleclass South African; meant that one would encounter systematic obstacles like permits, group areas Act etc. La Hausse carries on saying this aspect played quiet well to apartheid policies because it meant black middleclass aspirations could be killed easily and be revamped when that state wanted to in the 1980s, and now, only to present them as a troubled class.

La Hausse (1992), speaks of individuals like Elias Khuzwayo who were of no doubt associated with the powers which he sought and projects that he had set for himself - a black African middleclass identity, whose life was rooted both in popular culture assumptions of a modern African and in the shared historical experience of the *amakholwa* (believers)- which is a term referring to one of the indigenous social categories which describe in cultural terms processes of social differentiation in the region, and this one was specifically associated with the black middling strata of Natal, the small masses of landowners, clergymen, lawyers, clerks, messengers, interpreters, teachers, traders and artisans born in two worlds. As "civilized", "progressive" and, most importantly, "respectable" members of colonial society who had left the "backward" cultural and social organization of pre-capitalist Zulu society behind them, the *kholwa* faithfully believed in the "promise of Queen Victoria". Social and economic spaces occupied, manipulated and exploited by Khuzwayo were precisely spaces which in historical terms have been shared by African middleclass elite in South Africa (La Hausse, 1992). Khuzwayo interplayed and was a key stakeholder in a world of economic and symbolic brokers. He mediated between different forms of authority; between literate and oral forms of knowledge and interpreters of modernism in a world of traditionalism (cf. Stock, 1983: 527 cited in La Hausse, 1992). La Hausse (1992) carries on saying, because of the nomadic and fraudulent career of Elias Khuzwayo presents a significant study in disappointment and at another level, holds a mirror up to his times and the aspirations of members of Natal's fractured African

middleclasses. Therefore, La Hausse (1992) helps in understanding what went wrong with the New African intellectual ideal. Because now just like Elias Khuzwayo film in South Africa has a range of "copy-cats" which are survivalists who use existing models of respectability, sophistication, and representation as ways to survive because of political change. Therefore, the idea of the "picaresque" as in La Hausse (1992), and its transcending development into more overtly collaborationist ways, as one possibly important way in which members of a fractured African middleclass attempted to resolve the structurally dependent position within a colonial political economy. This further suggests that black people who appeared to be sophisticated could not be trusted. For Khuzwayo, it meant manipulating notions of Christian respectability- as he had an occupation that presented to the education of the natives, inverting a work ethic and reworking the "myth of the ladder"- and even in this he resembled an African that pursued security in order to make his way in the world. This also highlights how the idea that these individuals did not stop being thieves and conman, but later on happened to be sell-outs of their own people to political powers of the time as they had formed mistrust between realities and appearances. This was also the height of Khuzwayo's moral ambiguity which was an element of the African black middleclass at the time. The key understanding in Khuzwayo, and similar individuals resides precisely in a recognition of how their appropriation of particular roles and the creation of certain kinds of self-imagery derived in important ways from popular culture which when it comes to analysis, representation platforms remain distorted to this day. The drawn attention on the interaction between self and society at a moment when traditional concepts of self were being questioned, defended and redefined (Bjornson, 1979: 19) as Khuzwayo's life was the epitome of the black experience which on television has a higher chance of being misinterpreted without challenge. These ways of interaction in the context of

South Africa, seem to have been a largely unrecognized but identifiable in much of histories response of troops of individuals during a period characterized by massive social change, economic repression and intense renegotiation of identity. In this case, unusual representation of the New Africa in the early years of Apartheid- the life of Elias Khuzwayo, have significant historical sentiments that should be told in truth. The following section investigates the era of apartheid through to the transitional and post-apartheid era so as to explore cinema during and after Apartheid.

1.7.5 Film and Television from Colonial time to Post-Apartheid: The rise of Apartheid Filmmaking processes through the A-Scheme and B-Scheme Government Subsidies

While there are moments and events that outline points in history signifying change or the potential for change, there are ways beyond time in which, in the experience of life in South Africa, the many 'episodes', sequential in occurrence, of history overlap. This means that there is no clear division between the apartheid era and post- apartheid democracy. This section will therefore track the experience of film and television seeking to establish whether the 'post-apartheid' term of the pre-1980s which spoke of a reach beyond apartheid and described the actions and movements toward it; the 'transitional period' of the late '80s and 'into the 90s, the historical "in between" in the political processes initiated and developed toward the first democratic elections in 1994; and now the topic of "democracy". None of the periods in South Africa's history are clearly demarcated, and timelines of these pasts intertwine and are thus entangle with the present.

Apartheid contained white films with a shallow coating of African blackness which was a misrepresentation of black African people. The 'black film industry' emerged with an introduction of a variance of state film subsidy in 1972– 1973. Here the 'B-Scheme subsidy'

which was to bridge the scarcity of black films; to distinguish it from the general or 'A-Scheme subsidy' introduced in 1956 to produce white films (Paleker, 2010). Paleker states that A-Scheme subsidy was created by the apartheid government to develop a 'national' film industry, with a predominant focus on Afrikaans-language films. Paleker continues to say B-Scheme subsidy, on the other hand, was introduced at the bidding of white filmmakers who saw an opportunity to make money by producing African-language films, which were severely neglected before the 70s, starring Africans for mass African audiences (Paleker, 2010) which weren't much as these films barely depicted lives of the majority race in true reality. At surface value, the B-Scheme subsidy was introduced for the apartheid government to subsidize white entrepreneurs, who often were not filmmakers (Tomaselli, 1989 in Paleker, 2010) and, as a result, the film products of this subsidy can be viewed as the joint production of the National Party government and white individual citizens of apartheid South Africa who maximized the opportunity. Paleker (2010), suggests that majority of the films were either explicitly or implicitly supported, or promoted various aspects of apartheid ideology. For example, the homeland policy and the associated binary between the rural and urban was an 'abused' theme in such films and many of these themes were, evidently, to maintain a certain rhetoric which was not favorable for the black African in South Africa.

Upon the introduction of television in South Africa in 1976, a Commission of Inquiry was instituted in 1977 to investigate all subsidies awarded by government to produce films. This Commission led to amendments in both the general and B-Scheme (which were referred to as Bantu Film Industry) subsidies. According to the SA Film Weekly, 'the Board deems the existence of an independent Bantu film industry justified and in fact necessary, and concludes that this industry requires greater financial and technical assistance than is extended to it at

present' (SA Film Weekly, 17 June 1977, 2) even though the concern remained that films especially those produced in South Africa for the South African market was that texts had to present the South African real black image so as at allow the black population to reflect upon their way of social cohesions. State control was even less likely with films produced under the B-Scheme, because of government negligence and possible corruption which could have never been associated to deviance due to racial association. This meant that the black African middleclass in South Africa still remained at odds when their representation was enquired. These challenges meant that the black African middleclass sensibilities were ignored to the extent that none of the New African Movement black middleclass nationals of the time could have been able to partake in producing plausible films as pedagogical means or even means to begin to construct an African modernity that exemplified texts that had not been tempered with because of them somewhat posing threat to the apartheid state.

In many of the B-Scheme films, African traditions, myths and cultural symbols were frequently used. Cultural activities such as stick fighting and cultural symbols such as shields and water spirits, *sangomas* and *muti* appear in many of the films. Although the white B-Scheme filmmakers argue that they drew on such cultural signifiers purely for entertainment purposes, it is important to understand that the representations of African culture are shallow at best and very offensive at worst. The fact that many of the films present Africans as susceptible fools of sangoma's ignores the complex history of sangoma's in African cultures. B-Scheme cinematic representations of this facet of African culture draw on, stereotype and often also parody what is essentially an important aspect of the African worldview and belief. African people make a distinction between (evil) witchdoctors and (therapeutic) sangoma's, many of the B-Scheme films are ignorant of this distinction. While some filmmakers appear to have adhered to the

directive to provide 'ethnic' heroes for Africans, many others appear to have ignored it completely and, in striving for profit, seem to have provided watered-down versions of Hollywood heroes, villains and settings, drawing on violence to make their films more 'entertaining', and therefore more marketable to black audiences.

Moreover, film director Simon Sabela had his own rendition of the black African middleclass image, and this was explicit in u*Deliwe* (1978). Sabela worked for Heyn's Films – a white-owned company which was a propaganda tool for the Information Department. Sabela's films in Litheko Modisane's *Renegade Reels* (2013) are described to be comprised of a "distinct black sensibility" (2013: 13) because his work stood out as he was closer to the subjects for whom he was producing the films. Reconstructions of 'black' encounters within urban modernity in the 1970's were captured, and Modisane continues to say films like uDeliwe raise questions where critical value in public engagements on black identities is constructed. Therefore, this rendition of black African middleclass experiences in black communities was significant and distinct. Even more, films such as: *Come Back, Africa* (1960) and *Jim Comes to Jo'burg* (1949) *Cry the Beloved Country* (1951) are about Africans in which Africans themselves played a role in the writing of the screenplay, although they were intervention by American filmmakers such as Donald Swanson (Director of *Jim Comes to Jo'burg*), Lionel Rogosin (Producer, Director, and screenplay and novel writer of *Cry the Beloved Country*) and Alan Paton (screenplay writer of *Come Back, Africa*). Here these interventions problematized the existence of normalized distorted images of black people and the significance of black filmmakers in these earlier films laid foundations to the ways in which black images can be constructed.

The measuring and assimilation of Africans into white culture was endorsed by the co-option policy (Tomaselli, 1989) which was not only to introduce the cosmopolitan society but continued

the inaccurate ideological narrative preoccupation with black middleclassness in South Africa (Laden, 1997). Tomaselli in Guy (1991) argues that "…images of oppositional filmmakers have proved susceptible to co-option by the repressive agencies of the state" (p.g., 66). Here television producers who employed the television platform as a state tool for propaganda created programmes targeted at the black African middleclass. This happened after the tri-partite parliament which consisted of white, Indian, and coloreds which were an alliance that had gone to exclude black people. This means that the omission of black people from parliament was all-in-one according to the motives of the co-option policy and had aimed to make this tri-partite representation visible on television by engaging in a number of exercises that had to do with the co-option policy. Therefore, for the first time the black African middleclass was co-opted formally by the co-option policy. However, the co-option policy fostered the creation of films for black African middleclass viewers and the value systems associated with them (Tomaselli, 1989: 29). This helps to understand the way the manipulation of what black African middleclassness should look like and be perceived. These are constructions that have overlapped into the post-Apartheid democratic South Africa, on to film products examined in this research- *Generations*, *Scandal!*, *The Queen*, and *Legacy* are dedicated to black middleclass representation, black middleclassness, and black sensibilities. Therefore, these later constructions can be said to have depended on earlier constructions that already existed in filmic texts as creations of newer kinds of black middleclass constructions that were also problematic as they were not reflecting the history of black African middleclass distinctions.

A significant dimension of South African history is the manner in which the white governments established a way in which they could capitalize from the respectability of the African middleclass, recognizing this as the basis for the forging of conservative alliances against radical

elements and protest from below. This gathered more momentum in the 1970s; the increasing complexity of the economy, which changed the racial division of labor and in turn increased the pace of black upward advance into occupational spheres previously dominated by whites, themselves upwardly mobile (Crankshaw, 2002). Through the counter revolutionary forces of the NP government which had largescale capital, the liberation movement gained traction, largescale capital too, alongside progressive elements within the white community played a major role in forging the democratic transition which accepted the fundamentals of the market economy (Southall, 2014). This was an obvious defeat for the much more radical wing of the ANC; however, this was to then be entangled in the pretense that the implementation of national democratic phase was expected to herald a transition to socialism. Though as Roger Southall (2014), suggests that the latter the national democratic phase was to provide the foundations for a 'middleclass democracy' under the leadership of a 'party- state bourgeoisie'

Moreover, upward social mobility of the black African 'new' middleclass was a grand experience for anyone who was of the black African descent, especially by mid 1980s. The term 'new middleclass' was first coined by C.W. Mills (2002) in his study of the post-war white-collar working class in America, this was to theorize the shift from production to more service and management-oriented jobs, and the consequent social changes (Walkowitz, 2012). Black Africans were witnessed in positions as lawyers, bankers, entrepreneurs and most were educated individuals who were able to converse with their white counterparts. This extreme change in socio-economic relations was a foot in for most of the political horizon that was to succeed in the 1990s. These 'white-collar workers' were seen in contrast to business owners and 'free' professionals (Mills, 1946, 2002), and their agency was contingent, 'without a will of their own, siding with the prevailing forces in society' (Burawoy et al., 2012: 158). In a sense it might seem

liberal, in position, that the nature of series in the early to mid- 1990s, as well as the innovative form, was creating powerful statements- given that the state was polarized and brutalized.

The late stages of the apartheid into post- apartheid era had coincided with revolutionary interventions and this is because humanism ensured that the successes of innovation and intervention in the representation of South African identities to South Africans at that time had groundbreaking momentum and that this ideology was maintained. South Africans were no longer identified on the basis of established categories, often of dichotomous oppositions to each other- black to white, workers from bosses- but opted for the human, collective commonplaceness of all South Africans, through a miscellaneous array of identities, was being exposed in a way that had never been attempted in televisual representation. It is imperative to continue to uncover the framing of these media in South Africa within interrogations of identity. The contest lies in the creation of a national cinema that accomplishes a complex interrelationship between refuting the singularized categorizations of identity enforced by apartheid, and opening up assortments of identity from within the in-between blurred spaces that have not yet been explored, and recognizing and articulating difference.

The soaps identified in this dissertation, have more information on how the entire organization of the television narrativization sense of South Africa was in storylines in early post-Apartheid to the more contemporary texts of the second decade of democracy. A long running television soaps like ‘Generations’ which had then rebranded in to ‘Generations the Legacy’ from 1990s, vitally, helps a project like this outline major changes (if any) so as to locate where and how the soap opera genre then had realized/ acknowledged a patriotic South African narrative and how, as contemporary aired productions like ‘*Scandal*’, ‘*The Queen’*, and most recently ‘*Legacy*’ whom altogether endure air play, such texts have portrayed the black African middleclass. The

context in which modern literature texts and media operate in South Africa at most feed from societal perceptions and re-prejudiced and re-stereotyped agendas much as racial ideologies of the past are found in capsule sums that are somewhat preserved for maintaining power positions in the socio-economic South African plain. A- Scheme, especially B-Scheme- like texts and apprehension should not be existing but when an identified problematic stance of soap operas in South Africa is discovered then examination counts as enquiry. Following is the review of literature that speaks about black African middleclass representations.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

In this section we aim to uncover the theoretical components that will help investigate this project. The categories that are found under this section are: Representation of the 'Othered' in South African Film Narratives, here the main purpose is to understand the components in theories of representation that assist in deconstructing filmic texts. The second is South African Narrative Forms, where theories of narrative form that help the research account for the ways in which narratives are constructed in South African soap operas. Here the correlation between time, memory and imagination helps in understanding that what exists in soap opera texts derive from held views and notions within the black African middleclass.

1.8.1 Representation of the 'Othered' in South African Filmic Narratives

Stuart Hall refers to representation as a societal driver that facilitates the connection of meaning and language to culture (1977). Hall continues to say that representation therefore assumes a role essential to the processes in which interpretation is produced and exchanged. Therefore, "practices of representation always implicate the positions from which we speak or write, [and these are] positions of enunciation" (Hall, 1989: 704). Furthermore, Stuart Hall suggests that

language, signs and images are always symbolic in every manner when presented. Identity, then, as a construct always under 'production' can never be complete as every other element of representation is always in process, "…and is always constituted within, not outside, representation." (1989: 704). Here, theories of representation as suggested by (Hall, 1976, 1989, 1977) namely, the **reflective approach**, **intentional approach** and **constructionist approach** helps us in understanding the texts which this research aims to investigate. The reflective approach suggests that meaning lies in the object, person, and idea or event in the real world, which means that the textual representation reflects on the true meaning as it already exists in the world. To the latter, to critically analyze texts and their representational motivation, the intentional approach is key to understanding where the speaker, author, producer, director, writer imposes his/her meaning of the world in which they exist. And because the extent to which an investigation in to the kinds of ways representation is exercised in the construction of black middleclass images in South African soap operas, the constructionist approach is employed because of the understanding that things do not exist by themselves and hence should not be 'fixed' in their existence and interpretation. This also suggest that we construct meaning by means of representational systems – concepts and signs, hence the constructionist approach to meaning is pivotal in explaining the kinds of frameworks which are employed in South African soap operas.

To these theories of representation and the context of the investigation into black African middleclassness, Bell Hooks suggests that "many black people are convinced that our lives are not complex and are therefore unworthy of sophisticated critical analysis and reflection. Even those …committed to the black liberation struggle, who feel [they] have decolonized [their] minds, often find it hard to 'speak' our experience." (1992: 2). She refers to the instigated

frivolous images, that are distorted in analysis but entertaining to the, sometimes, unaware audience that Keyan Tomaselli (1989) refers to as victims, who are incapable of individual, nonconforming responses to the film texts they watch. This suggests that audiences have since become negligent, not by choice but because of a normalized idea of distorted representation which exists in the case of South African soap operas that presents the black African middleclass negatively. The latter, as well, applies to the challenge faced by producers of television soap operas who are black African middleclass but entertain this held idea of negative stereotyping of a demographic to which they belong. Moreover, Hooks adds that black intellectuals even artists are "challenged to rethink" in their mission to "looking at new ways to write and talk about race and representation, working to transform the image." (1992:2). This reason suggests that this is because texts have not distanced themselves from ideas like those of apartheid propaganda schemes that kept the racially oppressed in harsh regulated circumstance. What seems to be of par relevance to this study is that literature has insufficiently investigated the ways in which film texts generate imagined realities together with how these texts negotiate themselves around genres like soap opera in South Africa where the black African middleclass is represented. The representations of the 'othered' black African middleclass in South African soap opera, together with narrative formation of these literature texts depict African cultural modernity. Black African middleclass images are able to be undressed from a diversity of dissimilar perspectives and this, also informs the variation of distinct but intertwining theoretical frameworks provided by deconstructive theories of representation which help us explore how South African soap operas negotiate themselves around black African middleclassness in South Africa.

As South Africa's democracy is 'adulting' so too has its society, reaching shifts amidst its political, economic and cultural paradigms. Through these paradigm shifts new histories and

identities are being created and to this idea, Coombes suggests that "new stories of 'home' and 'nation' are created in "the public sphere during startling periods of political and social transformation…" (2003: 1). Furthermore, paradigm modifications are also demonstrated in the production of meaning and representation, and the construction of identities in popular visual culture especially in soap opera. André Brink (1998) suggests that the socio-political shift in South Africa inevitably brought with its new aesthetic responses and though it didn't limit the imagination it certainly prioritized other themes. Considering what Brink says is true, it follows that some themes tend to repeat themselves in the narratives found in the post-1994 period. Therefore, these shifts in society should be acknowledged, and intellectually so, to position representations of the 'othered' black African middleclass in alternative retrospect to the normalized ideology in South African soap operas.

Black images on film texts, influenced by Black Film Theory and criticism, provide way to explore film historiography while at the same time instilling an Afrocentric historical consciousness that reveals the commonality to the construction of black images as a shared diasporic experience. When exploring the politics of representation within a 'black' dominated space it is ideal to treat the black South African race, entirely, as a subject of examination in this thesis. Furthermore, the question of black images in South African cinema tradition has permeated to black television and has also affected post-apartheid dramas. This observation is reached after considering the basic discourse of Black Film Theory and criticism: the power of black expression, the resilience of black cultural traditions which Yearwood and Gates (1987) refer to as foresight into the future through sensitivity of a past coupled with an almost intuitive awareness of the present. These afore mentioned threads that link up the internationalization of the 'black experience' define the South African televisual role in black experience which also

challenge an aesthetic model to take an Afrocentric approach in works of art produced by black people throughout the world.

As a commodity, the soap opera apparatus in South Africa is historically allied to the racialized configurations of monopoly capitalism. Modisane (2013), states that the National film and Video Foundation has attempted in some way to address the disparities of the Film industry. However, the industry and its apparatus maintain the legacy of racial, class, and gender inequalities. This speaks to patronage and ownership, together with the access to better redefined and reimagined black images on television in South Africa. At a textual level, film content arouses concerns around modern-day social and political interrogations, which may drive it to spaces of central political engagement and the peripheral topics of potential counter-discourses, such as the topic of black middleclass representation in the current democratic dispensation of South Africa. I therefore argue for the preferment that black African middleclassness is comprised of one archetype which is the demographic which is the black (racially) and of African descent; that from this archetype there are two significantly dichotomous interrelated spheres of this class: the Novo-rich (elite) black African middleclass and the working black African middle class.

Production politics for television in relation to the broader theoretical underpinnings of black film criticism, both from Third Cinema and Black Film Theory assist in gathering justifiable limitation and extensions to televisual consumption together with the frameworks that guide these, and can extend to the topic of whether South African television soap operas depicting black middleclassness can help in addressing socialization in the Republic. The impetus behind drawing on these germane filmic approaches firstly stems from the realization that at the level of black experience, black people from all over the world share commonalties with regard to racial politics, cultural politics, aesthetics, identity, class politics etc. The correlation between Third

Cinema and Black Film is directly informed by positional similarities. According to Loft cited in Smith (1997), "…what makes Third Cinema a viable alternative to Western Cinema is not exclusively the racial makeup of the filmmaker, a film's aesthetic character, or a films' intended audience, but rather a films political orientation within the hegemonic structures of post colonialism." When a filmic text contributes ideologically to the advancement of black people, as patriotic as that stance may be, within a context of systematic denial, the achievement of this political objective ought to count as a criterion of evaluation on a par with any essentialist criterion. Both Third Cinema and Black Film Theory as Smith (1997) suggests, "challenge, disrupt, and redirect the pervasive influence of Hollywood's master's narratives" (p.g., 93). According to Yearwood (2000) Black film aesthetics is the key epistemological activity that is relevant not only as a form of scholarship, but for its central role in articulating and exploring paradigms that offer a more incisive grasp of film in relation to the black expressive tradition. Theory formulation in black film studies should reflect the socio-historical and political-economic conditions of the black experience. By this association this means that it should provide concepts, tools and strategies for initiating and maintaining a struggle against the way the black world is marginalized and shaped by forces beyond its control i.e. production politics and financial constraints (pp.:3). This view is also supported by Harding who notes that theory should explore ways to win over, defeat, and even neutralize those forces arrayed against its emancipation, growth, or development. South African Black Television fails at this, in a way so multi-facetedly overt that it finds itself close to an isolation of exterior influences- with regard to the autonomy of productions and at a surface level the representation of black people for a television produced for this race, repeatedly re-stereotypes its blackness to the kind of ideological framework the apartheid time had subjected the majorities to.

1.8.2 South African Soap Opera Narrative Form

1.8.2.1 Narrative Imagery and Memory

In Helannie Marx (2007), Harriet Klein suggests that narrative is a story, a connecting of actions, events and activities into structures of meaning (2001). Further Klein says that the narrative "designates and systematizes" (2001: 163). To this systemization, Klien continues to state that these thematic narratives "are culturally determined… [and] [n]arratives tend to have core structural features such as an introduction or preamble, permission to speak, overview, main body of narration, including divisions into episodes, conclusions, and codas" (Klein 2001: 163). Marx (2007) suggests that soap opera, as a television genre, incorporates both imagery and dialogue and therefore soap opera is a combination of the visual image and the linguistic. Narrative is, usually, regarded as essentially linguistic; and here a broader definition is that, according to Brockmeier and Carbaugh (2001) "[a]n understanding of narrative not primarily as a linguistic entity but, in a more general sense, as the ability 'to tell a story'… The medium can be language as well as imagery, sound, spatial construction, or a combination thereof" (p.g.: 248). Further, memory and identity are pivotal theories for the purposes of this study. The notion that both narrative and identity are constructed, or rather always 'under construction' is central to this study. Unarguably, memory plays an integral role in the construction of all narratives because narrating an event memory is contributory in the manner in which the story is relayed. Therefore, the latter suggests that the way something is remembered and the way it is narrated will affect the constructed identity afterwards. This happens due to the systemized and designated frameworks that are assumed to be plausible, in South African soap operas. This then helps us in understanding how memory and identity interchangeably construct the ways in which the black African middleclass in South African soap operas could possibly be fixated in time

epochs that do not serve to promote and deconstruct the 'black image' on televisual texts. Soap opera narratives, precisely South African soap opera narrative, presumably, fulfil the role of the 'othered' to more traditional narratives. The latter suggests that in South Africa colonial images and narratives have found a place in the new democratic dispensation. These narratives facilitate the production of positions where the negotiation of surviving notions about the black African middleclass identity can be explored.

1.8.2.2 Narrative-Time and Imagination

Brockmeier and Carbaugh (2001) on Ricouer's (1996) conception of the philosophical theory in the narrative fabric of time funderstand that narrative-time as the "temporal order of meaning that emerges in the narrative process" (p.g.: 271). Brockmeier and Carbaugh posits that the primary chronological order of a life story is interpreted alongside two "temporal axes" (Marx, 2007: 21): "One axis is linked to a coordinate directed from the present to the past, and the other one links to a coordinate from the past to the present" (2001: 272). The readers of black African middleclass South African soap operas, therefore, participate in reading the show of the personified imagination, which in the same way is conscious of the body which is located precisely where one's (audience) own body is sitting (Marx, 2007). The latter is involved in the idea that the body which is the audience presents and participates in bigger public sphere; and that this interaction between the viewer and the text enables a signifying process which cannot be thought of as distinct from the processes of imagination and the body in relation to narrative formation. Therefore the concept of narrative-time in South African soap operas assists the investigation in determining how across time the relevance of history and imagination suggests to the reader of the text (and myself as a researcher) that narrative interpretation draws from histories that are imagined to construct certain characterizations in local soap operas. History,

traditionally, is observed as an independent and impartial description of 'the preceding'. However, as this notion tends to streamline history, Villela-Petit offers a more inclusive perspective of antiquity. According to her history comprises of two facets (Villela-Petit, 1989). On one hand is an account of past events which historians aim to provide. On the other is the actual history, that in which we, "as suffering and acting human beings, are involved" (Villela-Petit, 1989: 33). Villela-Petit's understanding that history is not merely an objective account of the past suggests that the definition of history, and its resolutions, should be considered. Villela-Petit (1989: 35) states: "the quest for meaning is closely allied to the question of history". To this notion (Marx, 2007) suggests that this is the case if one is to perceive history together with the context of identity because "…the national identity of a people, for example, largely depends on their consensual view of the past, or more accurately, their specific "history"" (p.g.: 23). Moreover, this identification with history is relevant to black African middleclass people/s in South Africa and is therefore important in understanding certain elements in soap opera texts that distort the image of this class structure.

The post-structuralist theories of Luce Irigaray (1985, 1991) are pivotal here since the author does not regard the 'othered' as a damaging concept but rather as preoccupied with the potential to craft distinct rather than opposing identities. Authors commenting on Irigaray- Margaret Whitford (1991), Karen Green (2002) and Carolyn Burke and G. C. Gill (1993) are also considered here because they sustain that identity is of a distinct characterization and thus it should be treated and addressed in such a manner. Soap operas possess storylines that are continuous and due to their continuity, they have prolonged narrative structures. Harriet Klein (2001) suggests that images in soap operas depict a linking action, and events that have been adapted into meaning forms. Though this is the case, Klein (2001) further states that soap opera

narrative structures should be culturally determined because soap opera is somewhat a reflection on society to which then South African soap opera must present exactly that rather than assuming ideologies which add to the held negative perspectives about the black African middleclass. Even though the latter is precise, ideas of constructing narratives in certain cultures i.e. black African middleclass as modern culture should be repeatedly revisited as narrative plausibility relies on newly (as popular narrative) deconstructed storylines which present the black African middleclass with the understanding that its broad-ranging make up signifies aspirational associations to persons existing within this demographic. Narratives show a primary role in any text that uses gesture, images and language to transfer stories. It can be found in a variety of genres, including myth, tragedy and telenovelas. However, it is often the most taken-for-granted aspect of the television programme because it serves a latent function. In modern history, television has become the principle storyteller (Kozloff, 1987: 67 in Iverson and Goldin-Meadow, 1997). It has thus become a critical point of study. According to Sarah Kozloff (cited in Wigston, 1991: 70), in order to comprehend what television texts are relaying, it is necessary to evaluate it piece by piece. Even to the fact that narratives are complex, it means that the field can be studied in various ways.

1.8.2.3 Post-Structuralist Theory

This section focuses on the theoretical disposition of the proposed study. This section highlights the key tenets of Popular Culture in Africa. The purpose for deploying such theory is to better understand the representations of black identities i.e. Black African middleclass, culture, and the ways in which they are depicted by African filmmakers. African feminist theory is appropriate for popular African culture and feminist film studies because it accommodates the African cineaste. African filmmakers who adapt alternative perspectives to Hollywood take charge of

both the ‘gaze and the voice’ in telling their stories (Diawara, 2010) but a specific gaze for the middling strata of South Africa seems to have and endless ‘fixed’ preoccupation on negative representation of the black African middleclass which this dissertation seeks to examine. Further, Poststructuralist critical theories which are the essence of deconstructive, feminist, reader-oriented, semiologically ontological criticisms (Cornis-Pope, 1990) have contributed significantly to the practice of critical analysis, foregrounding the complex semiological interpretations as interrelating proponents between text and interpreter. This suggests that these signs, some explicit and some embedded in text can be understood not as elements of a prescribed script or directive, but as elements that can be further understood for their intention and alternative critical study. This provides that these theories supplement an enough “interpretation of interpretation” (Cornis-Pope, 1990: 245). This is the critical concentration on "the modalities of production and of reception of meaning and of value prior to their establishment- the implication being that this establishment is problematic enough to require an autonomous discipline of critical investigation to consider its possibility and its status" (de Man, 1986: 7 in Cornis-Pope, 1990). Besides scrutinizing the “master narratives” on which literature and criticism have depended, this theoretical-pragmatic mode of criticism could problematize interpretation itself, spotlighting the complex processes that articulate "the field of language with the knowledge of the world in general” (Hirsch, 1967). This theory is advanced from the work of structuralist narrative theorists such as Claud Levi- Strauss (1978).

Levi- Strauss used structural anthropology in *Myth and Meaning* (1978) where he explores the role of myths where he discusses how myths play an integral role Native American tribe (Landers, 2005). He contended that myths are often premised on binaries, good/evil, civilized/uncivilized (Lévi Strauss, 1978: 27). Lander (2005) states that Lévi-Strauss (1978) was

concerned with the unhesitating value of mythical beliefs, and how these beliefs sink into ideological constructs in a society. Furthermore, Lévi-Strauss argues that when readers or audiences are absorbed in their lived experiences, they possess the inability to objectively identify the function/role of such myths because they appear to be normal. Thus, he stressed the significance of critiquing myths in order to recognize their latent function (Prinsloo, 2009: 237). Arguably, television is an up-to-the-minute purveyor of mythic structures that need to be deconstructed in such a manner (De Anda, 2009). The purpose of mythical, stereotypical, prejudice thoughts is always to "…work from the awareness of opposition towards mediation" (Dundes, 1997: 40). This is the opposition to dominant forces of ideology which serve as a purpose of critiquing which in turn works toward the interpreted suggestions of hegemonic holds that are criticized by deconstructionist motives of mediation. Lévi-Strauss's theory is a handy way of breaking down the 'obvious', the 'everyday' and the opaque, and of recovering the mythical- stereotypical connotations under the surface of television programming; and in this case, the negotiation of black African middleclassness in South African television. Lévi-Strauss seeks to interpret patterns that underlie literature texts. He achieves this through a 'paradigmatic' analytic schema which he argues subsists in two oppositions (Dundes, 1997: 40 in Herzfeld, 1987). Also, unlike Vladimir Propp (1968) who suggested that the aim of narrative analysis is not to value how texts are presented, but rather to present the underlying 'laws' within narrative structure. Propp states that this was first identified in the Russian Formalist, Vladimir Propp's book *Morphologies of Folktales* published in 1928, and later translated to English in 1958. And here, Propp reports on his study of hundreds of Russian folktales, through which he discovered a 'sequential structure', emerge. Propp sustained that while the folktales differed, the structure of the narrative and the character types remained constant (Propp, 1968: 22; Prinsloo, 1992: 69;

Dundes, 1997). Therefore, Propp established the dormant framework of narrative structure which he suggested follows a chronological sequence, which he argued remain uniform in all tales (Propp, 1968: 22). However, Lévi-Strauss contended that the linear approach could disrupt the ability to critically know the underlying message. Therefore, to approach any study of narrative/s, he emphasized that one has to refrain from employing formalist tradition, and approach texts "as one would an orchestra score; making sense out of disorder" (Levi-Strauss, 1978: 11-12 in Landers, 2005: 13). Thus, while African feminists acknowledge their solidarity with the Pan- African movements, they recognize that the specific realities on the African continent call for different emphasis in the application of feminist Popular Art Culture principles. Numerous African literary filmmaker's scholars in Africa and the Diaspora (Mhlambi, Baber, Tomaslli, Hooks, Hall) are associated with African popular art culture thought and their concerns are to be fighting the oppressive system that has seemed to penetrate contemporary times. One of the reasons behind this is that feminism is understood to be a Western idea modified to account for the social systematic issues faced by the Africans living in Africa.

Feminist critical popular culture film theories have multiplied since the 1960's in an effort to address the representation of Africans in film. Different varieties of feminism have been produced and developed in diverse cultural and historical contexts. Therefore, no single feminist theory can claim to speak for all Africans at all times since Africans are 'fractured by power differences along lines of class, race, and sexual orientations: and black Africans can no longer line up so easily with "other oppressed groups" (Thornhan 1999:10). Nonetheless, all forms of feminism are united by their shared political stance for the emancipation of African's resources for the well-being of society. What moves all feminists is the desire to improve the conditions of

Africans in society and its' mediated spaces (Cirksena and Cuklanz, 1992). Directors and writers need to be affirmed to creatively express African concerns.

1.9 Methodology

The universal nature of television makes it a challenging subject to research; even the influence of television on viewers is difficult to determine, because television, too, comprises many intertwining components of modern life that interrelate with one another in ways profound and at times indistinct. The purpose of this study is to reveal some of the meanings found in South African soap operas portraying black African middleclass constructions and presentations. To examine the density of soap operas, various research methods have been employed. Visual and Textual analysis methods are principally used for this study.

1.9.1 Visual Analysis

The ways in which images are organized- diagrams, photographs, audio-visuals, and even maps is said to constitute objects of knowledge working as an "externalized retina" (Lynch, 1988). This supposes that the purpose of visual analysis is to comprehend the visual choices the artist makes in creating a text. Further, these analyses address artwork elements which are visual attributes such as color, line i.e. the detail within a specific given shot in a scene. Jonathan E. Schroeder (2004) speaks to A.D. Coleman's (1998) "lens culture", and suggests that the lens, in its continuous nature, creates vision in ways that go unnoticed and acknowledged. McCauley (1997: 63) states that "…photographs are representations due to the fact that they inform us much about the photographer and the technologies employed to produce the text, which in turn gives us information on the intended uses, as these will constitute the events or things they depict." Therefore, the making of images and making sense of such images is what visual

analysis is employed for. And in this case the investigation into black African middleclass representations on South African soap operas, visual analysis is key to understanding how images have been formed. Marcus Banks (2001) as he appreciates examples over abstract theory to undress images, his approach connects visual research to broader issues of image culture. "[T]he production of images by social researchers cannot be understood apart from the consumption of images…" (p.g.: 177). This suggests that personal knowledge and experiences influence our capability to see. He further states that our perceptual and cognitive skills provide the basis of description- what pictures show, people, animals, spatial arrangements, and colors. This further knowledge provides deeper description and meaning (in Mondada, 2009). Therefore, the question of visual analysis that arises in this section is aligned along: "What is the image made up of, that is, what is there in the image?" (Mondada, 2009: 66). Banks employs journalistic questions of analysis: "Who produced the image, when and why? Even the circulation of texts: In what ways do audiences use these texts? What functions do the texts serve? And what do the readers of the texts see in them?" (Schroeder, 2006: 82). Terrence Wright (1999) agrees to this approach when analyzing [soap opera] texts as he describes visual analysis as "…looking through, looking at, and looking behind…" (1999). Wright suggests that these elements resemble realist, formalist and expression approaches. Moreover, Visual interpretation requires analysis of both "internal and external narrative" (Mondada, 2009 in Knoblauch et al., 2013), this is what is within the text and what possibly lies outside of the textual context that informs the production of texts. Therefore, visual analysis is there in place and employed by this investigation to confirm negative stereotypes on black African middleclassness and the culture of visual exploitation that exists in soap opera texts in South Africa.

Gillian Rose (2001) suggests that images have several sites of interpretation, the manner in which they are constructed, including production; and these should not leave out the image itself, and the audiences that consume these images. Rose suggests that semiotics, content analysis, psychoanalysis all preserve sites for the study of signs and symbols and what the studied signs signify which assists the researcher to examine beyond surface senses of actions and events in society so as to uncover the intended instead of compliance to superficial zed soap opera texts. The meaning of elements, actions, representations, and portrayals of characters in the soap operas chosen for this study will be established by employing visual analysis to deconstruct images. The typical definition of semiology is the study of signs and symbols. The greater meaning of semiotics is the methods of analyzing language. It is used in finding out how all sign systems work, explores the logic behind communication and gives us a clearer understanding of the semiotics methods and what communication means (O'shaughness and Stadler, 2012). Content analysis reads image production and consumption as based on the good eye and interpretation. Whereas, Psychoanalysis suggest a "male gaze, mirror stage, queer looks, sexual fetishism, Lacan- which are usually employed by psychoanalytically inclined creative producers" (Rose, 2001: 203). Moreover, Rose claims that when considering images, they are to be understood as powerful and seductive presentations, and these elements are critically employed (2001).

Soap operas are essentially narratives with long storylines, and therefore narratology and/or narrative theory will also be used for study. Moreover, narrative theory deals with the way narrative is structured and how in that construction meaning is made. Kozloff (1992) states that there exist two components to narrative theory which are "the story, that is, 'what happens to whom,' and the discourse, that is, 'how the story is told'" (p. 69). Therefore, the methodology in

this research derives from visual and textual analyses theories that help in deconstructing produced texts i.e. soap operas are audio-visual products that require such analyses to establish their true meaning/s.

1.9.2 Textual Analysis

And Bennette (2005) in (2008) suggests that a text- based approach allows for meaning to be read from texts in ways that reflect values and assumptions by the researcher and not the audience. Morris (1996) and Bennette (2005) suggest that any substitution of "textual analysis" for "actual" engagement by means of products of mass culture in the course of examining everyday lives unescapably results in cultural inferences being imposed upon the actions of individuals by the researcher. However, textual analysis allows for the exploration of everyday practices of participation in popular culture and the contexts in which its meanings are made, prioritizing the perspectives and experiences of the research subjects rather than those of the researcher (Pillow, 2015). Further Berger (1999) and Walser (1993) state that textual analysis provides creative perception into soap opera meaning and pleasures that stand in place as signifiers of signs that exist texts.

1.9.3 Research Paradigm and Design

The social constructionist paradigm adopted by this research project is because constructionism is characterized by the standard that society and its circumstances in the world are not inadvertent courses but are rather constructed. Therefore, reality is constructed through mutual interpretations which are relative to cultural contexts (Holstein and Gubrium, 2004; Neuman, 2011; Schwandt, 2000) and this is the case on soap operas. It is important to acknowledge that (Neuman, 2011 in Onuh, 2017), perceives interpretivism as the paradigm under constructionism.

Social constructionism has been a method of analysis in qualitative research. However, this can become limitation as it can lead to the methodology becoming extremely miscellaneous and verbose which consequential can be wilting the studies epistemological bearings (Holstein and Gubrium, 2011: 341). Schwandt (2000: 199-200) suggests that the most grave exercise in constructionism is to overcome the monotonous balance between descriptive and normative approaches because although there may be erratic perspectives on post-structuralist feminism in Africa, it is important to adopt an approach that is able to be prescribed within its relative context while being theoretically sound at the same time.

1.9.4 Sampling

1.9.4.1 *Cluster Random Sampling*

Simply put, as Wilson (2010) claims, cluster sampling is dividing a research population into clusters or groups where a random sample is taken to be used in the final sample. This type of sampling is beneficial for research where subjects are fragmented over large geographical areas (Davis, 2005), and even more where subjects are found across a myriad of sample points such as the large scope scenes presented in the television soaps. Cluster sampling then, for the purpose of this research, suggests that the selection of black African middleclass subjects presented in South African television soap opera texts have been processed into clusters ideally – black African middleclass male and female characters in the soaps. Here, the cluster is the black African middleclass, and the random selection of scenes and/or picture framings provide the research with the sampling which is studied for the context of the study where black African male and female characters are presented in the texts. Ten episodes of each series collected from January 2008 to December 2020 will be examined. Episodes will be examined to determine concepts or ideas addressed so as to establish how South African soap operas negotiate themselves around

black African middle-class characters that are represented. Families and major characters, episode analysis, narrative analysis, semiotics analysis, themes will be thoroughly read.

Narrative analysis is modeled consequent to a study by Deming (1985). Deming (1985) advanced a narrative methodology by Chatman (1978) which s/he then streamlined. The result of this method is "a model with four major components: the real author, the implied author, the discourse (events, characters, setting, dialogue, visual information, and sound), the real audience and the implied audience" (p. 55). Deming affirms that the author is the production team that creates the media product which in the case of soap operas it is: the producer, director, writers, editors, cinematographers, etc.; the implied author is the camera eye that roves over the scene allowing the viewer to see what it wants to show; the implied audience is the audience that is planned or hoped for by the production team; and the real audience is the actual audience who watches the program.

1.9.5 Process of Analysis

A sample of soap opera episodes will be collected. Episodes will be watched, and notes taken. Then latter will be used for further examination and evaluation. Analysis of the episodes will be done once notes have been taken for all three series. Scene shots will be used as signifiers of the complete texts. A synopsis of the interaction within the frame will be analyzed. The process will then establish patterns and themes that prevail in the telenovelas- even relevant dialogue is marked for later usage. Once themes and patterns have been identified, specific scenes that represent these patterns are chosen as examples to be used in the chapters about each series. This is because sometimes characterological dialogue reveals motive and founding nature of soaps. A scene-by-scene analysis is done. The series: the date the episode was aired; and other germane data will be recorded for analysis. The information detailed will include major players, where the

action occurred, unusual clothing, and behavior of the characters. Also, to note is the way characters interact with one another in the drama series- whether these interactions are positive or negative; and whether any conflict exists. A cognizance of the connotation will be arrived at from what the study offers as findings. The study aims to work to interpret the meanings of *The Queen*, *Generations/ Generations: The Legacy*, and *Scandal!* together with *Legacy*. Soap operas are a fluid medium in which nothing is static. Storylines and characterizations are always moving forward.

1.10 Overview of chapters

The soap opera texts selected for this research intend to explore representations of black African middleclassness on South African television series in the post- apartheid dispensation. The chapters are categorized into three chapters with the fourth being the summary and discussion chapter. Continuing from the first chapter, chapter two discusses how in the context of South Africa, overtime, certain black character constructions and conceptualization(s) have come to take center stage in depicting the black African middleclass. This includes soap opera traditions and how certain key themes in the text suggest misrepresentation(s) as argued by this thesis. The focus of this chapter revolves around the contextual emergence of *Generations (1994)* and how writers and producers in the development of content have perhaps lacked the seriousness to refrain from using irrelevant frameworks to tell soap opera stories in South Africa as per the South African context. Context and time play an important role when creating stories as they suggest a kind of conceptualization which resultantly can be assumed to be 'the order of the day' or in terms of content creation representations can be assumed to be the truth within the socialization of the black African middleclass. Here context and/or time (epochs) highlight the moral of the argument, where texts (soap operas) are used to exemplify such moments, and the

narrative is structured in this manner so as to refer back to the text as textual analysis is applied. Drawing on Barber's model, the research intends to make a reiteration on the topic of context and how African contexts in popular art forms need to adhere to their specific times and socio-economic stories. With this understanding we get to understand the "implied reading strategy" (Mhlambi, 2012:16) in texts. Here we explore Black African middleclass women on South African television soap operas as they have a misrepresented stance, as imagined constructions of reality that contribute to the characteristics of middleclassness. In Chapter three, I discuss how criminated character constructions in the soap opera text *The Queen* (2016) have prevailed as popular art text constructions. The family makeup of the text *The Queen* presents themes of reunion between families and relatives; of illegal 'othered' industry business associated with the black middleclass family setting; and themes of inheritance within the 'othered's' conceptualization of criminate industries within black middleclass popular art texts. These meta-themes continue to make-up bulk of overall themes selected as ideologies associated with criminal and/or illegal acts in the drama series genre in South Africa. The premise of the chapter is to debunk the criminal relationships imagined in the popular art text *The Queen.* Here, the main mission is to surface the characterological stereotypes presented by Donal Bogle's (2001) work of black African American male representations. To this body of work, the research aims to extend the established black male character stereotypes- Toms, Coons, and Brutes, from the American episteme to an active black African middleclass conceptualization which existed in Hollywood's traditional black filmic representations. These images constitute ideologically limited false exaggerations of the African middleclass as invested in criminality. In the fourth chapter, I intend to investigate black African middleclassness as regulated by "whiteness", and "whiteness" as a continued process of eroding African black middleclassness in the context of

South Africa as witnessed in the soap opera texts *Scandal! (2008)* and *Legacy (2020)*. Here, as whiteness assumes central ideology of cinematic conceptualizations, the textual- visual comparative study aims to highlight the instances in soap opera texts where texts have fallen short in representing black South African middleclassness as demise due to "whiteness" as a standard for what is acceptable and normative identity power politics, where "whiteness" insists as a benchmarking and determining product and preserver of notions on and about the black 'othered' in popular television soaps. This therefore means that "whiteness" is relentless in ascertaining that black African middleclassness is forever in question which ultimately exhibits a sense of ignorance. The purpose of this chapter is to highlight the structures and the activeness of a predominantly inescapable and scarcely hypothesized form of ignorance, namely "white ignorance" associated with white power which prevails in soap opera texts in South Africa where racially white characters in the texts *Legacy* and *Scandal!* determine and benchmark black characters. White ignorance has the advantage of gesturing theoretical considerations with appallingly outdated, conventionally stoic intellectual frameworks which exist in popular television soap opera texts, where veracity, inaccuracy, actualities, and fact, are encircled with satirical epitaphs attributed to black African middleclassness. The expression "white ignorance" infers the possibility of conflicting ideas and knowledge, where a distinction would be lost claims to truth that are evidently inconsistent or competing discourses represented in televisual texts in the South African landscape. Therefore, exploring "ignorance" is key to reformulating knowledge that will provide some truths and inaccuracies of the televisual framework(s) in post–apartheid South Africa.

Chapter 2

A Context in the Emergence of *Generations (1994)*: South African Soap Operas Depicting Socio- Historical and Political-Economic Epochs

2.1 Introduction

Black African middleclass women on South African television soap operas have a misrepresented stance, as imagined constructions of reality that contribute to the characteristics of middleclassness. Black African middleclassness is attributed to existing 'positive' upwardly mobile social positionalities of individuals who are, racially, black and of African descent. However, the latter cannot be argued for the representations of African women falling into this category. A popular art text, *Generations (1994),* - emerged in South Africa when a need to represent a new elite African middleclass had presented itself in the early 1990s. This means that a new social class along with the emergence of democracy in 1994, was put onto the spotlight. However, a new black African middleclass woman, too, re-entered and was re-introduced onto the mainstream media of a newly formed alternative mainstream - the nouveau rich black mainstream of the new black political elite orientation. This chapter's preoccupation with the black African middleclass woman image on soap opera texts alludes to, firstly, motives of exploring inconsistencies that surface as effects of gender stereotypical, and racial prejudices which then become contingencies presented by television soap operas in South Africa. Secondly, the chapter explores ideologies of a cosmopolitan black South African middleclass citizen, as sequential developments of neoliberalism(s) by the new 'hegemonic ideology' governing South African policy and how these neoliberal gravitations are constructed in South Africa's first soap opera, *Generation (1994).* Michel Foucault's approach in understanding societal re-presentations, such as popular television texts, highlights the relationship between power and

knowledge. He suggests the importance of comprehending banal images: "What we have to do with banal facts is to discover – or try to discover – which specific and perhaps original problem is connected with them" (in Abu- Lughod, 1997: 113). Moreover, the text *Generations* offers a nouveau rich black African middleclass setting as social reality in the context of South Africa, and these images need to be explored.

Generations's (1994) purpose, this chapter suggests, intends to assume the role of a government apparatus as a driver of neoliberal ideology of 'nation building' that had since been proposed by the newly elected African National Congress government in the year 1994. This New African middleclass depicted in this South African soap opera text coincided with the film premier, at the time when democracy was introduced, 1994. Therefore, its constructions of black African middleclassness are suggestive of its role as an enforcement agent of the government propaganda, similar to the manner in which television was used as state apparatus during apartheid. During the apartheid period, television was used to bring about certain ideologies that perpetuated a falsified black middleclass, especially with regards to African women. These false images existed in popular media texts in South Africa and the diaspora and were underlined by racism and patriarchal value systems. This chapter aims to explore how the post- apartheid terrain of South Africa, since 1994, has used the soap opera genre as driver of ideology at political contexts/ instances, i.e. the inception of democracy and reintroduction of a black African middleclass in South African popular imagination. To the subject topic of this chapter, the new South African black middleclass woman on television soap opera texts is hardly ever shifting from an ameliorated, sugarcoated, middleclass woman's characterization oscillating from a somewhat African woman who is hardly ready to be a New South African to a co- opted figure, tasteful to the racial traditional voyeuristic middleclass white male gaze. Moreover,

women on *Generations* have generated a quotable steadfastness for prejudiced and stereotyped women in society – problematic women's (*Abafazi abayingxaki*) which seems to be an argument within patriarchal spaces that still thrive in society.

The 'Black African middleclass' rhetoric, throughout the diaspora, is located and exists within imperative peripheries that are associated with being socially and morally depraved in their existence. The black middleclass in South Africa, the African continent, and in the diaspora is normatively linked to corruption, materialism, socialized into greed and hyper-consumption patterns within the global spaces of capitalism so much as to distinctively mark them out as a 'new' social class. This is to say that even in popular media the preoccupation remains firm in the class-perspective of the socio-economic organization of this class. Prevailing, is insufficiency, if not lacking in existence, of attention drawn towards the imagined representations on television soap operas in South Africa on black African middleclassness together with the relationship between the distribution of knowledge and power. Therefore, feminist criticism undresses the gendered articulation of *Generations (1994)* while exploring how popular art texts in the post- apartheid dispensation have been used in South Africa as drivers of contingencies underlying the new post- 1994 hegemonic ideology.

2.2 Continuing Contingencies in Neoliberal Policy on Television

The African National Congress (ANC) government's call upon its inception, parallel to the middleclass representations on televisual texts, was firm on policies of equality of women and on children's rights in society, amongst a variety of social concerns. However, the fixated preoccupation with "strong but not tough enough" women still entices the tongue, as it seems, especially when it comes to the representations of black African middleclass women on television. These narrative structures make it certain that even though as a democracy,

conceptualizations of women in the context on television soap operas in South Africa denounce certain middleclass epitaphs about black African middleclass women. The latter suggests, as evinced in the text *Generations* that the existing spectrum of women existing within the text's composition feed into society's stereotypes, visa versa. Therefore, these stereotyped constructions make it a norm for women to be called, for example 'hoes' in society and in the text without any derivative explanation to potentially counter this sort of ideology. Moreover, the understanding that television reproduces a purveyor's apparition of socialization to its audience prevails. The interlinking of television and the political economy of 'nation- building' policies in South Africa is premised on the ideas that the televisual medium works to socialize people, stimulate material desires, and regularize consumer relations. To the latter, Ives (2007) postulates that depictions in present day South Africa serve as apparatus to the governments mission to build a neoliberal post-apartheid national ideology. It is argued that urban post - apartheid South Africa is occupied with "public theatres of late capitalism." (Mbembe, 2004:394). Therefore, neoliberalization for South Africa had not air-tightly accounted for black African middleclass women. This makes it possible to assume that the New African was not intended to be the black African woman, reiterating ripple effects of how patriarchal capitalist power has firmly positioned itself in South African culture through soap opera texts.

With this being said, the idea of pushing forward the contentions of a predominantly New Africanized society; the South African Public Broadcaster (SABC) in conjunction with policies like the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of 1994 had a mandate to narrate and negotiate how the black American-adopted and aestheticized black American middleclass socialization and sensibilities were to be assimilated in the new South Africa. Even South Africa's operating economic subsidiary tool the: Growth, Employment and Redistribution

(GEAR) programme marked an interphase in black African middleclassness and its middleclass sensibilities that are interpreted on televisual texts as popular art texts. The RDP was established to address the socioeconomic problems brought about by the significances of the fight against its precursors under the Apartheid regime. The policy placed interest on lessening poverty and speaking to the shortfalls in social services in the country; whilst GEAR was established as a macroeconomic policy implemented by the Department of Finance in June 1996 as a five year plan targeted at strengthening economic development, broadening of employment, and redistribution of income and socioeconomic opportunities that would have been favorable to the poor. These policies have since been exercised by the ruling party in South Africa, the African National Congress (ANC). The modernist agenda espoused by proletariat black Africans since the turn of the 20th century continues to be marked by the new democratic dispensation of 1994, which are also the essence of the neoliberal policies in 21st century South Africa. Here the New African Movement of the early 1900s, were impressed by what the New Negros had achieved in the United States within the short period of their emancipation in 1865 (Balseiro and Masilela, 2003). Therefore, the New Negro in America resembled, not only racially, the struggles of colonialism which were akin to apartheid in South Africa. Therefore, the manner in which this population regained their dignity and agency -alongside having maneuvered their own financial autonomy as a black African American community -was the motive of the New African Movement, as it was anticipated from the 1990s onward in South Africa. As pertinent those activities, they had influenced the New African because South African intellectuals had learned a way to forge black South African modernity. The manifested double consciousness of the past and the future akin to the New African and the New Negro resemble a Machinean Anglo-African identity with binary sensibilities that resemble modernity alongside traditionalism, which

generates an awareness of the positions occupied by black people and black experiences within the modernizing terrain of South Africa. Vital to this creation of the 'new', is the interrogation by these intellectuals so as to understand the kind of renaissance the New African anticipates. This suggests that The New African Movement had learnt that "in America, no people make greater study of the Negro than the Negro himself." (Cressy, 1911). The understanding is that The New African Movement facilitated the negotiation of the politics of representation during the turn of the twentieth century era, and here the same reflection on soap operas in South Africa post- 1994 applies. Moreover, Masilela suggests that Solomon Plaastje's idea of regeneration is inseparable from what the New Negros had achieved within United States' modernity hence his essay in 1904 *Negro Question* where he analyzes the chronological, national, metaphysical, and spiritual circumstances and empathies that create solidarity between African-Americans and Africans (Masilela, 1996) and suggests that the New African should adopt the ways in which the New Negro has managed to advance themselves as society. Therefore, while socialism suggests a collective share in the country's economy, neoliberalism suggests societal reforms which favor individualism and a free market system. These reforms including equality, somehow hide from viewing historical contingencies from which the nation just emerged. And in terms of televisual culture, these reforms are expected to be seen on television soap operas in South Africa as representing the black African middleclass.

When *Generations*'s construction of black female characters and the black South African experiences are juxtaposed to *Sarafina (1992)* – a different visual reality emerges. *Sarafina is* a South African film adapted from its original theatre play by Mbongeni Ngema. The screenplay was directed by Darrell Roodt. As Ngema says, the film is about Sarafina (played by Lelethi Khumalo), a schoolgirl who together with her *co-hort* of mates faced the South African Defense

Force of 1976. The text depicted a time in South Africa's history and so does *Generations.* The character of Sarafina comes out as poised and strong throughout the film. Unlike *Sarafina, Generations*, though sequential in its episodic makeup – is irrelevant, as it remains within a certain context of South Africa, which is suggestive of an outdated framework of production interpreted from a falsified contextual makeup. *Generations* presents a 'tragicized black image' of the African black middleclass. These constructions are problematic and remain stifled within a preoccupation similar to Hollywood's traditional film frameworks on racially black representations.

South African black middleclassness as commodity, celebrated together with democracy, remains ideally a "success benchmark" in the African social culture. This is because popular television series like *Generations*, have since been household brands in South Africa assuming prime time slot/s for a span surpassing two decades. Thus, *Generations* is associated with a context that idolizes black African middleclassness, which since swept in with the "freedom pool" of affluent black people in the country. Hence, the drama series is said to have been created and intended as an aspirational 'tool' for the black South African who has been on the receiving end of racism for centuries.

The existing competitiveness in television soap operas in South Africa is in tandem because of the highly competitive commercial environment existing in South Africa. Barber (1987) suggests that this relationship between popular art texts and their commercial element maintain that popular artists have the mandate to cultivate their audiences – "…who are both patrons and their clients" (pg.: 30). This follows a theory by Mhlambi (2012) which suggests that "…everyday African culture… ordinary people and their everyday experiences… are the domain to which African- language literature addresses itself." (pg.: 98). This chapter intends to apply Barber's

model of African popular arts and culture in *Generation* (1994). Through this theory this chapter will explore themes such as: 'stereotypes' and 'prejudices', together with 'nation-building' and 'neoliberalism' which illustrate the texts demonstration of negative depictions of the black African middleclass. Moreover, this idea suggests that reform/ neoliberalism should be seen on texts that are in place "to give hope to the people of South Africa" as said by creator and executive producer of *Generations,* Mfundi Vundla. However, the established contradicting ensemble presented by the text *Generations* on black women provides the very society, by expectation, which ought to extrapolate 'new' South African sensibilities, with demeaning representations of black African middleclass women as though this 'othered figure' when compared to its 'dominant' male counterpart's representations in society stands no ground of being positively presented, with absolutely no value associated with this woman's constructions in popular arts texts of this sort. Here we rely on the semiotics and possible aesthetic contradictions that make the text problematic. These are distorted storylines of African culture which see vast vilification of the African communities in many soap operas texts.

2.3 Television and National Identity in South Africa

In the South African context, ideas of universality and globality controvert those of the national identity. This means that even though South Africa, as an active participant in the global socio-political interactions associated with international neoliberal policy pressures, the construction of a nation from an apartheid history is masked by persistent racial and economic inequalities unanticipated by civilians. These inequalities are, too, presented to be experienced by black middleclass women on *Generations*. Ives (2007) suggests that these effects play a role in reasserting hierarchical power relations i.e. race, class, and gender binaries which are found to persist on soap opera texts like *Generations*. As these nuances are found to elude the national

imagery on South African television, they run the risk of postulating normalcies that become accepted familiarity in society.

Media culture provides a platform where nationals may construct senses of class, ethnicity and race, of nationality, of sexuality, of 'us' and 'them' (see Kellner, 1995 in Ives, 2007: 156). Abu-Lughod claims that television is exceptional technology in moving beyond traditional boundaries and strengthening encounters among "…life worlds, sensibilities, and ideas." (1997, 122) because these merit qualities of visual media as they act as storytellers of the national narrative. And to this idea, Gramsci suggests [television] is a 'common sense' emerging from a hegemonic culture that promotes the values of the bourgeoisie as this assists in preserving the status quo - often to the detriment of the poor and working class, and socially dominated gender/s in society. Here, the understanding of media as a potential detrimental apparatus is acknowledged as it runs the risk of being *influencer* to *influenced* and visa versa. Therefore, the languishing praise on scholarly texts that possess counter arguments to social class related popular cultures and visual culture in post-colonial contexts fail to speak to context based materials that in their homogenous deliberateness as *means and messages*, within them, nuances remain unexplored as overall/ universal existences of society. Nuttall and Michael (2000) suggest that these 'culturalist' models "were effectively employed by the apartheid state" (pg.:13). This history of culture manipulation is evident as the televisual medium, currently in South Africa, provides ideological significance of television constructing a national imagery. Dolby (2001) acknowledges the faults that come along with the formation of nation-states; but suggests that, "newly emerging democracies such as South Africa face specific and substantial problems in forging national identities." (pg.: 12). This suggests, as Nixon (1997) states, the assumption that "all nations… have available to them a past that is equally susceptible to effective reinvention." (pg.: 81) is reasonable justification

which results in fixations preoccupied with archaically subverting imagination(s) of what constitutes a nation. And with the above it is necessary to deliberately explore images and their parallel rhetoric in characterological constructions in representations of society.

2.4 Reflections on Television and the Neoliberalism(s) of South Africa

South Africa's national identity is an imperceptible value in a prolonged contested history of images, where the apartheid government segregated the country by 'race'. By integrating race with 'nationhood', 'culture', and 'civilization', in the post- apartheid era, mainstream media in South Africa, including television genres like soap opera, assume roles in creating, reflecting, and challenging that which exists as historical national imagery (Ives, 2007). Post- apartheid South Africa is evinced by government and media organizations that constantly "…construct a united, coherent, 'rainbow' nation…" (Ives, 2007: 160) to which the understanding that suggests there cannot exist a unilateral zed black African middleclass women's imaginative construction should take a prevailing ideology within the creative industry. However, as the democratic dispensation is encompassed within neoliberalism, black middleclass representations on South African soap operas rely on notions of both 'visibility' and 'silences' (see Ives, 2007: 160). This suggests the evident new role assumed by television in South Africa's new political economy. Here the pre-existing notion that women in South African film industry assume roles celebrated to be associated with peripheral localities as little if any are proactive in the backbone of creative processes, where financial influence, motive and redress don't present the feminist agenda. Furthermore, Leslie Marx (2000) ratifies the 'rainbow ideology' as it "...reassure[s] international investors (economic, cultural, and intellectual)" in the transitioning capacities of the country. And to this idea remains the resultant suggestive that programming on television soap opera in South Africa still shapes, contests, and reflects the popular national imagery – a role in the

control of media by the National Party during apartheid. Moreover, as the celebration of a rainbow nation persists, attributed gendered values and creative feminist sensibilities are suppressed and diluted to sole purposes channeled to entertainment.

Mandated to the construction of a 'new' national imagination was the need to correct histories inconspicuousness in South Africa. Here, representations of a black African middleclass situated within urban terrains of the black population are evident depictions in soap opera texts like *Generations* (1994). Even more, the formation of the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) suggests developments in the transition from apartheid (Krabill, 2002). The IBA's role was to remain consistent in "insuring plurality of players in the media field, as well as guaranteeing the political independence of national public service broadcaster, SABC" (Primetime South Africa, 1996). Ives (2007) claims the IBA suggested untouched market forces would make diversity vulnerable as the white population of South Africa holds majority of capital. To the latter workable market conditions for the establishment of diversity were used to regulate this pluralism (Barnett, 1999), and this suggests that the regulated pluralism validates the way in which the South African government fosters the 'rainbow ideology' on television soap operas within the context of neoliberal economic state of affairs.

Furthermore, a "continued presence" (Ives, 2007: 165) of constitutional mandates to rectify residues of the apartheid era in a capitalist market complicates and disrupts hegemonic notions of neoliberalism in the context of South Africa. And here the experience of the South African governments' constant negotiation on the intersectionality's is evinced by neoliberal ideologies of individuality and 'rainbow' ideologies all the while backing the rectification of past injustices through corrective action. However, the existing political economy and the film industry in South Africa remains in positions that somewhat refuse to exercise gendered empowerment as

process into identifying an equal and fair society espoused by neoliberalism. The latter can be furthered in film criticism across the diaspora as feminist analysis does not extended in to gendered post-colonial prevailing contingencies existing in the diasporic film terrain, which this chapter aims to explore and suggest shortfalls existing in South Africa's television soap operas. Moreover, the text *Generations* provides an example of this political and social transition and is claimed to have "evolved in tandem with the nation's democratic dispensation" (*Generations,* 2005).

2.5 The Politics of *Generations* and Film Producer: Mfundi Vundla

Mfundi Vundla, executive producer of *Generations* (1994) is a stalwart member of the African National Congress (ANC) who was expelled from the University of Fort Hare in 1968 for practicing and engaging in antiestablishment political activities. Vundla was exiled in 1970 to the United States of America where he completed his higher education in Political studies and English. In 1986, he worked as a writer for television in California under David Milch, the creator of the series *NYPD Blue* (1993) and writer for *Hill Street Blues* (1982). Arguably this is where his interest grew more in the televisual arena. Whilst exiled, Vundla, founded the African Arts Fund, with the aim of raising money to fund Colored, Black, and Indian South Africans studying fine arts in America. And upon his return in 1992 he posited the much-needed framework of basis for 'new' popular arts in South Africa. This suggests that Vundla had anticipated the 'new' popular arts terrain that was introduced along with neoliberal policies in the 'new' democratic South Africa in 1994. His role as a driver in popular arts resulted in him submitting a proposal for soap opera to the SABC. The creation of *Generations* is the effect of this opportunity, which has gone on to impact South African people in the democratic

dispensation. Generations is the first local TV show that focused on the dreams, needs, as well as aspirations of the black middleclass audience in South Africa.

The casting mandate, at first, for *Generations* called for a multiracial cast, arguably, due to the pinnacle period espoused in the construction of a 'Rainbow nation'. *Generations* is the only South African soap to have changed its mandate from a multiracial cast, as focalization in the mainstream media continues more on popular culture and the black middleclass. It is common for soap opera to alter their mandate to the producer's discretion, especially in response to the broadcaster's request. Hobson, to the latter, suggests that 'soap opera is the production of a cultural form which has to fulfill all the requirement and needs of the broadcaster and the audience' (2003: xiv). Therefore, the move toward an exclusively black cast since 2003, suggests that the producers of *Generations* were complying with a decision by the channel, SABC 1. Here the continuing mandate was to reposition the channels 'brand identity' to target a younger, black middleclass audience. These kinds of developments according to Clara Nzima, SABC 1's Programme Manager, were enthused by the channel's attempt to appeal more to its black middleclass target market by including a younger black cast. Further, Ien Ang (1987) postulates that this sort of interchange connotes a shift by the broadcaster from a public service approach towards a more market-oriented approach, whereby television audiences are defined in terms of what they are assumed to 'want'. This implies that public service institutions now perceive, as drivers of hegemonic ideology, and symbolically address, the needs of their audiences according to global pressures as customers than civilians, "especially at the organizational level" (Ang 1987: 368).

However, as hegemonic cosmopolitan ideology in South Africa has depended on television little is known about the contexts of emergence of texts like *Generations*. Here the understanding is

that as much as presumptions lie greatly with the concerns over Mfundi Vundla's political affiliation to the ruling party – his background as former exiled citizen collated with an American aestheticized film framework's adoptive experience, proves evident the claims explored on *Generations* by this research. Moreover, the texts significance as driver of hegemonic ideology in a newly democratized South Africa suggests the ways in which government employs certain apparatus i.e. soap opera to the benefit of continuously constructing the South African 'Rainbow Nation' identity which is vulnerable to political expansion and contraction in the African region due to the countries neoliberal globalized existential external pressures.

The soap opera *Generations* (1994) is the first soap opera text created by an African middleclass producer, Mfundi Vundla, in South Africa. Further, Vundla's brother Peter Vundla is one of the first black people to be a prominent player in the advertising industry in South Africa. And to the latter, Peter's business is, arguably, a framework model of reference that has been used in Generations (as the storyline draws much from the lives of media moguls in the advertising industry of South Africa) Cooper-Chen (2005). Therefore, as the text depicts "aspirational"—affluent, urban, and chic middleclass lives, Cooper- Chan (2005) claims the images depicted by the text are "far from the reality of the lives of most of its viewers." suggesting that as a pre - determined/ conceptualized text, *Generations* lacks originality. This is evident even in the production team's make-up where co- executive producers, cinematographers, editors, and art direction positions are assumed by predominantly white male individuals from countries like the United Kingdom and America. Here, the lack of critical creative imagination is evident in the show, and thus presents a distorted conceptualization as these creative would lack contextual understanding which is the main idea in the theory of popular culture by Mhlambi (2012).

Further, Mfundi Vundla's wife, Karen Vundla remains co-executive producer of *Generations* and the sequel *Generations The Legacy* (2014) made by Morula Pictures. Mfundi Vundla remains chairman and executive producer in the company.

2.6 The Political Context of Change, Transition, the New National Identity, and the Politics of *Generations* (1994)

Generations (1994), arguably, conceptualized a rare African middleclass woman in South Africa. This is seen in characters such as black middleclass woman, Karabo Moroka (played by Connie Furguson) which depict an only-daughter who's storyline takes off as a young ex-model, drug addict, and overtime succeeds as a novo-rich African woman who is career focused and eventually becomes the heiress to her father's legacy. The rareness of such accomplishments amongst African women, including crossing the traditional bare when it comes to the African culture of what constitutes the practice of succession – being an heir, suggests a remarkable instance in society. However, the likes of the latter black African middleclass woman, internationally, is found on daytime soap opera shows like the *Days of Our Lives (1965)* resembled by racially white characters the likes of Sami Bradey (played by Alison Sweeney since the year 1993): and *The Bold 'n the Beautiful*'s *(1987)* Brooke Logan (played by Kathrine Kelly Lang) hence the suggested sanitization of black African middleclass women's' construction to that of a 'cleansed-overtime' conceptualization of their racially white female counterparts. These soaps premiered in South Africa subsequent to their release in Hollywood. Moreover, these Hollywood texts are the first elite middleclass storyline dramas to be introduced to the South African population pre- 1994. This means that *Generations* assumes a similar narrative structure to its racially white centered film counterparts, only contributing to a discourse on black middleclass depictions in the South African context.

2.7 Entry of Black Women on Television Soap Opera

Black women entered television when white producers and executives depicted Black women through prisms that were rooted within the middleclass white American vantage points. This white male prejudiced voyeuristic gaze viewed their only encounter with African-American women as domestic servants and entertainers to their perverse 'needs' (Cheers, 2018). Studying the cinematic pleasure of the male gaze; this controlled viewing within the film sets the viewer's interpretive viewpoint (Gaines, 1984). This suggests, as Gaines claims, that the examination of such Hollywood filmic tradition has assumed "sexual difference" (see Mitchell Barrette, 1980) to be the eroticizing pivot in television akin to television soap operas in South Africa. Arguably, there are two categories of constructing black women on television, either a glorified "fetishized" imagination of a black woman who is of no significance other than a symbol of sexism in a "patriarchal exchange" (Willis, 1981). Or exists within the second category, the audience, inhabiting the point of view held in reserve for the male. Therefore, since colonialism, the encounter with black women has maintained negative spaces in society where the black woman is supposed to be excluded.

2.8 Analysis of *Generations (1994)*

This chapter analyses gender as an active element of semiotic systems where specific principles, philosophies and practices intersect with that of the 'female' identity existing in society and within constructed images in the soap opera *Generations* (1994). The analysis comprises of still frames from the scenes in the episodes of the text. Here criticism is encompassed by the meaning of value degree(s) in shot angles, lighting, aesthetic, dialogue, tone, settings, and most importantly – possible meaning to implied audience. The female semiotic system provides the framework for the variety of constructions present in the texts composition- "material elements,

personal dispositions and behavioral styles" (Lloyd and Duveen, 1990: 1). The latter, suggests that texts are comprehended to be signifiers of gender relations which make available the resources to which individuals in society employ, express, and engage a social gender identity. This means that the organization of the analysis as mentioned above will be a semiotic analysis where common codes and signifiers in the stills hold a potential to allude to what the research is examining – negative representations of black African middleclassness in South African soap opera texts.

The analysis is separated into three parts where the exploration of black African middleclass women takes place reflecting on grouped female characters from the soap opera text. Here Karabo Moroka's (played by Connie Ferguson) character is of interest as she assumes the role of a young woman who is born into a middleclass setting. Therefore, her identity is that which represents this particular kind of women in the South African society. Arguably, this is a character construction preoccupied with playing the role of inspiring the youth during the period when the series was released (considering the inception of the new democratic dispensation in South Africa the year 1994) disposing messages of the consequences tied to drug addiction and how that affects the family setting. However, it is also of vital interest that as a young black middleclass woman she is represented as being involved in drug addiction which remains a persisting social ill in South Africa's context. The following section looks into characters such as Queen Moroka (played by Sophie Lichaba), Priscilla Moroka/ Mthembu (played by Tina Jaxa), Hilda Letlalo (played by the late Vinoliah Mashego), Ntsiki Lukhele (played by Pamela Nomvete), and Kgomotso (played by Carol Bouwer). Here these characters, too, possess attributes associated with black middleclass women. However, with them is the addition of an upwardly mobile African woman who through her means in education and being career driven,

escapes the township environ to take control of her life as she experiences the suburban terrains of the then idolized Sandton suburbs, Johannesburg. The interest of exploring these images is to examine in what ways these constructions have been presented and what connotations they carry with them? The obvious presentations is that in their modern lives the struggle of maintaining intimate relationships with their male counter parts is a predominant storyline form in each character. However, this problem along with stereotyped nuances that pronounce this social issue with a demonized stance of promiscuity have the potential to be interpreted in specific polarities that suggests sexist prejudiced constructions of images on women in South African soap operas. The third section in the analysis explores the characters of Mmatlakala Sebobe (played by Lilian Dube) and Nontombi Mthembu (played by the late Nati Rula). These characters are middle aged black African township women who both have daughters married the Moroka family – Priscilla and Queen. These characters are presented as single mother's who aspire to be industry women who are involved in the production of jam for company, Home Industries. Their storylines are encompassed in rare relationships such as having significant partners across the racial divide as seen with the character Nontombi. Here the interest lies with the exploration of single motherhood in the township to the relationships they have with their daughters together with how the adaptation of a 'rainbow nation' had been presented through these women's constructions as they present obvious localities in a spectrum of black middleclass women existing in South Africa.

2.8.1. A Notoriously Troubled Young Black Middleclass Woman – The Character: Karabo Moroka on *Generations (1994)*



Figure 1- Source: https://www.YouTube.com – Paul, Archie & Karabo arguing about Kgomotso.

These black 'middleclass' aestheticized frames, with characters dressed in businessmen and women's suits, golf shirts and pants; with an urban lifestyle setting where ceilings are not visible giving the impression of highly modern architecture of urban Johannesburg. This takes the role of *classificatory* signifiers as meta-functions in the construction of symbols of social class which are associated with architecture within a frame. The protagonist Archie Moroka (played by Sello Maake ka-Ncube) is on a mission to convince his father Paul Moroka (played by David Phetoe) to let go of his "foolish" relationship (according to Archie) with his new mistress, Kgomosto, who is introduced as a significantly young female character who is dating Paul. The beginning of the scene is encompassed by a medium-long shot where dialogue is between Archie and Karabo.



Figure 2- Source: https://www.YouTube.com - Paul, Archie & Karabo arguing about Kgomotso.

Figure 1 and 2 above, are frames extracted from scene 3 episode 14 in the text *Generations* (1994). In the establishing shot of this scene. Karabo is presented as relaxed leaning on the couch arm rest, and Archie standing, discussing the possibility of their father having the pre-assumption as to why they had wanted to see him so early in the day. As the *fourth-wall* camera is in a vertical position with the lighting positioned at a high angle positioned at +45 – 90 degrees, (in Figure 1) Paul walks in from the background of the frame in the subsequent shot and comes to a still in frontal view to the camera where in both frames he is positioned in a medium shot in the frames (see Figure 1 & 2) suggesting the anticipated interaction with this character as he is leading the dialogue in a static three shot frame featuring all three characters. The frontal vertical medium positional angle of the camera sees that Archie and Paul (the two male figures) taking over the frame reducing the frames *modality* so as to assume positions of power leaving the character of Karabo zoomed out in the background with reduced power as a signified figure where the audience is detached and diverting less attention towards this character. Present in

these shots is a reduced *depth of field* diverting focus from what exists in the shot other than the talent, and because of this, *objective shooting* is paramount as the audience is more interested in the dialogues, expression and what the characters are wearing. However, in the framings Karabo (the female figure) in both shots occupies the background as presented by the camera frames. As the shot composition switches due to the horizontal makeup of camera angles, from +0 – 180 degrees, and again at a -180 in almost the opposite direction the female figure remains part of the background and in between the two dominating male characters showing her neckline upwards. Moreover, this makes her *intimate distance* lessen her presence which depicts a figure without power in the frame. Even more the *demand* is diverted outwards: from Karabo in the background, to Archie positioned in between the character in the background and Paul in the foreground- meaning that focus is placed in the fore ground and not where the female figure is placed. This suggests that though this character participantes in the delivery of the scenes dialogue (a little) she remains docile as the character somewhat seems to hold a possession which cannot participate in a conversation predominantly taking place between two males. The pictorial element of framing in the camera frame postulates that the narrative action suggests modality in these shots as societal norms where women and/or black middleclass women constructions remain in traditional frameworks which can't be escaped. Moreover, this reinforces the characters identity as a female figure which is preoccupied only with emotions and the domestic. This is evident in the characters dialogue:

"Papa, retsa [subtitled: 'listen to me'] ... *What if she leaves you in a couple of months? Will you be able to handle it?"*

This suggests, validates, and reinforces the emotional schema attributed to female characters in soap opera texts. Even more, this emphasis of the domestic orientation is further validated and reinforced by adding to this character's dialogue, when saying:

"*She may want a family in the future. What will happen then?"*

Here, although Archie and Karabo are arguing to convince their father to change his decisions which are supported by ideas of him thinking that Kgomotso (Paul's mistress) "*…is the right medicine for an old man like* [him]." The dialogue is predominantly delivered by Archie and completely collapses the female character's presence as she remains in the background with only her face showing under a concentrated light contrast than this figure's fore positioned counterparts.

The character of Karabo as mentioned somewhere in this research, depicts a black middleclass young woman intended to be read in to by audiences of a similar age group. Nonetheless, as Karabo is from a wealthy family she stumbles across 'social ills' where she finds herself struggling with a drug addiction. However, because of this drug addiction which she seems to want to curb, her agency as a business woman and a female friend, conscious in the decisions she makes, in her storyline, is always trialed and measured to that of the men that exist in her life. Even more, her relationship with Archie is a power struggle because this male figure consistently ridicules her for the only wrong, she has committed – her drug addiction. And none of the other male characters perceive her potential beyond that of her drug addiction. An example of this is at the end of episode 14 where her friendship with Kgomotso is introduced by a scene in which Kgomotso goes to visit Karabo in her salon to speak and settle what seems to be a rough patch caused by Kgomotso's relationship with Karabo's father. These two young women arrive at a decision that it is okay for Kgomotso to date Paul. However, in a subsequent scene Karabo is

seen by Archie having a phone call with Kgomotso. Archie, astonished by this cordial interaction:

Archie: *Tell me I heard wrong… You weren't talking to that hussy, were you?*

Karabo: *That hussy, happens to be my best friend. Nke sa be le sekgope ho ena, ho ya ho ile.* [Subtitled: I can't bear a grudge against here forever.]

Archie: *I don't believe this. Nare o go dirileng?* [Subtitled: What has she done to you?]

Karabo: *Archie, Re ka se e lwantshetse ruri kgang ee?* [Subtitled: I've decided it's no use fighting it.] *Kgomotso is going to be very much part of our lives.*

Archie: *Wa r'eng?* [Subtitled: What are you saying?] *They haven't set a wedding date?*

Karabo: *No. Papa offered her a job at New Horizons.*

Archie: *What?! Oh, this is madness. I suppose he wants to make her the M.D.?*

Karabo: *She'll handle all the legal aspects of the expansion plans. That's the only way papa will approve them.*

Archie: *Listen to me. The next shareholders meeting we have to vote together and veto this ridiculous idea. It's our only chance to…*

Karabo: *Ny' Archie, not this time. Nke se go eme nokeng.* [Subtitled: I won't do it.]

Archie: *Tseo ke botsena ho sekame sepe!* [Subtitled: This is insane!] *First she bewitches Papa and then you. But then you are always weak isn't it? Junkies... have very little self-respect.*

Karabo: *You can insult me all you like. Matlhale a gao a bophokojwe a ka se dire.* [Subtitled: Those tactics won't work anymore.] *What a bastard you are Archie Moroka, no wonder you haven't a friend in this world.*

[End of episode]

Therefore, in Karabo's efforts to maintain peace with her best friend and father she is expected to denounce her father's decision to employ Kgomotso at New Horizons. When she refuses to be part of Archie's plan, he brings up a problem she is suffering with- drug addiction. This makes situations difficult between the two characters. Moreover, this scene exposes the relationship and depicts her in an unfavored position as she is presented to be the aberrant family member who does not think beyond the preservation of their family name. She is presented as a female figure who would rather maintain peace (outside of her own family) with her friend than her family. And due to her noticeable success, this attribute is 'good for nothing' because she is presented as 'disloyal', and can't exist in a man's world where self-respect, and clan reputations are of the utmost importance; suggesting that her reasons to make peace with her friend is limited to her inability to fathom that a certain level of family preservation(s) which elides and disregards her position of what 'family' is according to the held male perspective.

This character's drug addiction storyline is even expanded, beginning in episode 20 where half-brother in-law Zakes Mthembu/ Moroka (played by Mxolisi Hulana) is on a mission to destroy the Moroka family. His plan involves the destruction of Busani Moroka (played by Arthur Molepe), Archie and Karabo, by getting her hooked, to a point of no return, on drugs (cocaine). She's unaware of this and because of these financial troubles find their way in to her life and she has to turn to Zakes for help. At this point Max Naidu (played by Robin Singh) is accomplice to Zakes plan and plays the role of drug merchant who has involved Busani in his drug trades as a

mule and Karabo as his addict. Figure 3 below, is a medium long shot framing, where the lighting is dim and is complemented by lit candles on top of the bar counter signifying an intimate moment as seen in the frame. With an almost dark background, Karabo is the focal view of the camera shot positioned in a *frontal ¾ shot view* at approximately +0 to 35 degrees camera angle. She is dressed in predominantly latex material clothing with only a bra top under her jacket, revealing most of her upper body and as a sexually objectified center figure she sits on a bar seat in front of Max who seems to be having his way kissing her on the neck and whispering in her ear. The obvious objectification is revealed by the concentrated light positioned at a frontal neutral angle towards this character's sexualized construction showing skin at an almost voyeuristic nude manner because of how her clothing colors compliment the increased, darkened backgrounds depth of field. Leaving the audience to either judge her showing this much skin or to the benefit of the male viewer who is assumed by the producer to sexualize this female figure. The two characters are presented laughing alluding to fun taking place between the two. In the first shot (figure 3) of this scene:

Karabo: *Put on some music, I wanna dance*.

Max: *Sure thing baby… How about another line?*



Figure 3- Source: https://www.Youtube.com – Karabo cozy with Max.

The following shot framing (Figure 4) depicts Karabo in a medium wide shot in kneeling proximity above the side table sniffing on cocaine. The camera angle has switched to approximately +90 degrees with a much lighter contrast on the character suggesting zooming in on the action which supposedly is meant to suffice a shocked reaction from the audience. This pictorial element objectifies this character as the doer in this wrong act, again aiming to gain shock and possibly a judging audience. With an almost completely present background the represented participant becomes focus and assumes center of attention though not in a positive depiction. As the music plays in the background the scene continues, and the camera angle switches to almost -45 degrees angle assuming a ¾ frontal view of Karabo's kneeling profile. Minimizing this character in size in the subsequent shot (Figure 4) and Max occupying the mid-vertical medium shot looking down on Karabo, although he invited her to "*take another line*" and provides her with the drugs- he is still presented as ashamed of her and proud of his actions

at the same time. Following this shot Karabo invites Max to a friends and colleague's party at the Moroka residence as her friend, but Max refuses the invitation and insists they have their own party at Max's place. The scene abruptly ends and Karabo heads home.



Figure 4- Source: https://www.YouTube.com – Max looking over Karabo as she sniffs cocaine.



Figure 5- Source: https://www.YouTube.com – Karabo being a spectacle at the Moroka Residence's party.

Figures 5 is a left panning medium long shot of Karabo soon after Karabo arrives home at the party. Here, the camera framing presents her as speaking to talent outside the frame. This *open frame* concept signifies this action, as the talent is faced far left walking in from the right-hand side of the frame. Located in the center of the frame the character commands attention and what seems to be of interest is the racially white male figure who turns towards Karabo. Moreover, this obvious white male gaze is continued in a subsequent shot, Figure 6, where Karabo is now placed in between two white male present figures in the framing- one in the background and one in a profile view situated at a side foreground facing the character. These points of power in both camera framings suggest the lucid middleclass white male gaze as a voyeuristic apparatus which always takes center stage. Suggesting dominant powers these two figures exist at almost each opposite horizontal end of the frame one looking from behind and the other positioned above her eyeline looking down at her, with a somewhat embarrassed, appalled position which supposes a subjecting power and a somewhat judgmental gaze.



Figure 6- Source: https://www.YouTube.com – Karabo addressing her father's colleague at the Moroka Residences house party.



Figure 7- Source: https://www.YouTube.com – Karabo holding a bag of cocaine in her hand at the Moroka Residence.

Figure 7 depicts Karabo in medium shot view where she is clearly intoxicated as her physical gestures suggest and the possession of the conceptualized iconic 'cocaine bag'. The latter description allows interpretation based on the above. What is of importance in this camera framing is the existing symbols of reaction placed in the background as art objects depicting a traditional Africanized woman. In the top right-hand side of the frame, the painting seems to be just above the talents head and is somewhat a spectator, as audience, to this vector. In the immediate distance, top left of the frame is another painting which is blurred out but in visual proximity as it faces the represented participant as though representing the audience but a traditional foreign white woman glaring at this jaw-dropping act of this character.



Figure 8- Source: http://www.Youtube.com – Karabo and Archie arguing, as she is out of money for her business.



Figure 9- Source: http://www.Youtube.com – Karabo is desperate to do anything for money, as Max asks her to tell him she loves him.

Figure 8 depicts Karabo in a medium shot, where audiences can engage her emotions as she is presented with a frowning face. This character is looking away from Archie facing the camera in

a frontal angle. Here, the two are at it again as Archie doesn't seem to show any empathy towards his sister who claims to be bankrupt. Karabo in this camera frame is dressed in a revealing top under a blazer exposing cleavage as this allows for the understanding of her character as a model and young middleclass woman. The scene taking place in Archie's office at New Horizons. He tells Karabo that he does not have any money to help her with the addition of claiming that the only help she needs is "*drug counselling*". In this shot she is infuriated by Archies remarks:

"*...Ha ko itebelle* [subtitled: Look at you.] *You are a mess. Not so long ago you were the shining light of the modelling industry. You had a future. And now all you're interested in is shovelling that junk up your nose."*

Karabo: *What do you want me to do?!*

Archie: *Get treatment! And then I will think of helping you. You're sick Karabo, no different from an alcoholic. Only, your dope is much more expensive.*

Karabo: *Stop it! I'm not an addict.*

Archie: *Oh kgaetsedi ya me…* [Subtitled: Oh my sister] *you are. Admit it. O tlhabisa ba ga Moroka ditlhong le batho botlhe…* [Subtitled: You are a disgrace to the Moroka name and all the people…] *who looked up to you. If all the girls who dreamt of being models could see you now.*

In this scene the character although commanding attention as she is occupying the foreground of the frame, the narration depicted is that she has disappointed the 'world'. The resurfacing of this storyline in this scene remains that the power relies on Archie. This suggests that this female character cannot be an example in society as though the character is limited to the presented description. This however side-lines Karabo's depiction as a businesswoman which is the whole

purpose of her visits to Archie in the scene. Moreover, this means that as much as a female figure could be in need of help she will always be reduced to having to meet the male's requirements, as Archie claims that she spends her money on cocaine which is mostly reduced to social stereotypical social ill representations. Further this storyline suggests the deliberate exclusion of women in new South Africa supposing that this middleclass woman could never comprehend what modernity espouses and expects from women in society as a whole. In figure 9, presented in a close-up shot we see Karabo's face amplified with more focus on her emotional intensity, as the shot mood raises the intensity of the problem surrounding the characters emotions. Here Karabo is facing Max, as she tells him she is frustrated as her dream is going under because of being in debt.

Karabo: *Well do you know of a way out?*

Max: *I'll think about it some more.*

Karabo: *So you'll help me?*

Max: *I'll expect something back though.*

Karabo: *Anything.*

At this moment in the scene Max steps closer assuming a close-up shot of him as he looks Karabo in the eyes, with camera alternating single medium close-up shots between the two characters. The shot presents Max caressing her side shoulders asking her to claim love for him. This is when the camera shot switches and presents Karabo in a somewhat nervous predicament as she seems to have no choice but to tell Max what he wants to hear due to her circumstance. This scene suggests a sexist purveyor's perspective where a male character would use his advantage to get a woman to do whatever he pleases. Moreover, this kind of sexist

objectification of this character is prevalent due to this character's agency being measured and limited to having to meet the male counterpart's expectation. Here this characterization suggests that although Karabo could be borne into a South African familial setting this woman presents an unready black middleclass young women who is preoccupied with ridiculed associations such as social ills in society at a time when South Africa is changing and therefore damning this representation but suggesting it as social reality.

2.8.2 South African Black Middleclass *Jezebels* on *Generations (1994)* – The Characters: Queen Moroka, Priscilla Moroka, Hilda Letlalo, Ntsiki Lukhele, and Kgomotso

2.8.2.1 *Queen Moroka*

The camera framing presented in figure 10, presents the character 'Queen'. Queen is a township girl who because of her schooling and upwardly mobile aspirations has become a black middleclass woman who prides herself for always choosing herself and the right 'monied' man in her life. This character's storyline begins with her staying with her mother in Soweto and working for advertising agency 'New Horizons' belonging to the Moroka's, as a front desk manager. As Queen is not one that holds back on her desires, she happens to have a romantic relationship with Zakes Moroka. Figure 10 is a camera shot in the previous episode where Queen is depicted in a medium frontal shot with Zakes Moroka facing her. The background is taken up by the two talents suggesting a decreased depth of field. The framing presents the two within a cozy atmosphere where Queen is seen playing with Zakes's tie. This characters gestures and dialogue is of importance here as she is enticed by Zakes's ambitions to take over company New Horizons in the future.



Figure 10- Source: https://www. Youtube.com – Queen and Zakes speaking about their prospects as a couple

Queen continues the dialogue-

Queen: *Oh! And how do plan to do that?*

Zakes: *You wait and see. I can picture you in the Moroka Residences; you belong there.*

Queen: *Then tell me… What about Paul?*

As this dialogue is taking place, Queen seems to be getting all the answers she is looking for from Zakes as she continues to play with his tie. It is evident here that the use of the medium shot is to allow the viewer to look close in to the female figure and interpreted this character's gestures as manipulative postulations that ought to denote prejudice allowing to the viewer to judge the character as using her body or moral ground to get what she wants and keeps her counterpart pleased. This places more attention on this character as the conversation switches to

a more suspicious encounter, which includes Queen as her curiousness is presented to be gravitated more towards a sexist, conniving representation of the character. In figure 11, the character 'Queen' is assuming the center position of the camera framing in a medium shot. The use of the open frame suggests that indeed Queen is talking to Archie who is positioned outside of the frame. The neutral depth of field presents a pronounced background where to the left of the talent in the frame is a sign cut short by the camera framing- the word "New" which stands for 'New Horizons', with a clear red line horizontally going through the word "New" toward the outer right-hand side of the frame where Archie is positioned.



Figure 11- Source: https://www.Youtube.com – Queen accused by Archie for putting mysterious message card in Priscilla's gift.

However, as the camera angle, shot angle, lighting angle and eyeline are all positioned at a neutral position toward the character Queen the vector "New" emphasized by the red line is suggesting much stronger character- the signified which is outside of the frame. Moreover, this leaves the character inside the frame held to account for the narrative suggested in the scenes

storyline by Archie. This character's construction is reduced, even more, in the dialogue between the two as Archie accuses Queen of putting a message card reading "You may wear the wedding ring, but Archie is my man." into Priscilla's gift. However, Queen is clueless of what Archie talking about.

"*Archie, o boa motlholo*. [Subtitled: You can't be serious.]"

Archie: *No. The card with a nasty little message you put into the book.*

Queen: [giggling] *What did it say?*

Archie: *You damn well know what it said.*

Queen: *Archie, I really don't have time for your drama today. First it was panties in your jacket and now a strange card…* [Subtitled: What will you come up with next?]

Archie: *Can you prove it wasn't you?*

Queen: *Listen. We had a lot of fun while it lasted, but I have other interests now.*

Archie: *What interests?!*

Queen: *Zakes… He is such a gentleman.*

This dialogue leaves Archie unsettled as the scene ends. Here, although Queen has nothing to do with the mysterious card she is presented as untrustworthy. This negative depiction is extended where the character is made to take responsibility of the somewhat problematic promiscuity presented in this scene. By suggesting she has other interests now and asserting that she and Archie had "…fun while it lasted." Presents this character as the sex driven and manipulative one, though Archie is the common male figure between Priscilla and Queen with him being involved in numerous affairs.

2.8.2.2 *Prisilla Moroka*



Figure 12 – (Source: https://www.Youtube.com) – Priscilla and Archie at the breakfast table arguing he is caught cheating.

Figure 12 is a medium-long shot with the character Priscilla Moroka positioned at the lower center of the camera framing. This character is enclaved by tall cylinder pillars at almost a downward camera angle. Seated down, Priscilla is reading a newspaper and in her background is Archie who is almost vertically absorbed by the increased depth of field in the background. As Priscilla is placed at the bottom of the frame, this figure is easily associated with the set's coffee table and other objects that somewhat lie horizontally in the composition of the frame. This separates the two figures and suggests them as two opposed positions of power. With Priscilla occupying the dominated and Archie, the dominant subject within the frame.



Figure 13- (Source: [https://www.Youtube.com)](https://www.Youtube.com) – Priscilla and Archie at the breakfast table arguing he is caught cheating.

Figure 13 is a high angle medium camera shot taken at +0 degrees angle to the talent where the use of these cinematographic elements was to expose the characters emotions. As this shot is a continuation from figure 13, and 12 – the emphasis in focusing on this characters emotions is executed by situating her in the foreground as she assumes a dominating figure in the framing so as to make the viewer engage more with the talent- allowing for audience-text engagement where the viewer can make their own judgement. The midground and background (though blurred out) have a reduced depth of field although occupied by dining room seats and a pedestal with flowers placed directly behind the character's head. The relationship between figure 12 & 13 is based on the deliberate decisions seen in the composition of figure 13. Here, as Archie occupies the right-hand side of the medium long shot frame, facing Priscilla at +45 degrees with head room and look room which allows for the subjective and objective spectacle transition played by

the camera resulting in figure 13. The objective spectacle is achieved by employing the medium shot cinematographic element as though the viewer is present in the frame as a third party focusing on Priscilla's dialogue as she is unconvinced that Archie is cheating:

Archie [as the character stands to position in figure 12]: *Why do I bother? You have made up your mind.*

Priscilla [from figure 13]: *I know you very well. Is it one of the office girls?*

Archie: *If you know me that well; you should know that I would not touch an office affair. We have to try and sort this out as adults.*

Priscilla: *If only unondixelela ngubani kamsinya, nguban? NguNtsiki? NguQueen? Ngabo boy'-two? If so, bayazana? Mmh?* [Subtitled: As soon as you tell me who it is. Is it Ntsiki? Or is it Queen? Or is it both of them? … do they know about each other?]

Moreover, Priscilla in this scene plays the role of a vector to the subjective storyline, as an insecure black middleclass woman. This particular storyline is established prior to this shot where Priscilla says "*I don't know what to think anymore. Andilalanga. Ndicing' intwenye ubusuku bonke.* [Subtitled: I didn't sleep. I kept thinking…] *I should think you feel sorry for me. That's why uhleli nam, Archie.* [Subtitled: That's why you're still with me.] and Archie responds "*If I want a divorce I will tell you straight out…* [subtitled: Why would I hesitate?]. The dialogue clearly distinguishes the inferior to the dominant figure. And although Archie is involved in the relationships he is accused of, the cinematography postulates an emotional, insecure woman, who feels is being pitied by the man she has married. The camera has taken the role of Archie and given more detail to the visible character to suggest that what Archie (who is located outside of the frame) thinks is what the audience thinks and perceives of the represented character.



Figure 14- (Source: https://www.Youtube.com) – Priscilla, Archie and Busani talking about the babysitter who got attacked.

Figure 14 is a neutral angled camera long shot where the characters Busan Moroka, Archie Moroka, and Priscilla Moroka are depicted. The scene is established with medium-closeup high angled shot on Priscillas hands as they eat at the breakfast table. As this character fixes her food, on to the fork and knife she is boggled by a violent occurrence which the family's babysitter was involved in – "*I can't eat. I keep seeing her face in front of me; the way she looked. I'll never forget it as long as I live."* Busani and Priscilla are situated at almost -/+165 degrees opposite to each other at adjacent angles across the table, and Archie at a frontal +180 degrees to the camera. As these characters occupy the midground of the frame, with an empty seat directly in front of Archie in the foreground, the background provides enough look room and head room- keeping the characters at almost a neutral perspective where the depth of field is also at its neutralized element and audiences can't really being to engage with the text critically. However, what is of an astonishing nature, is the natural presumption of deliberately placing Priscilla with both, her

former ‘lover’ and baby father with her current husband who happens to be the former’s biological brother in one camera framing. Here, comprehending the composition relies greatly with the storyline existing in the soap *Generations*. Further, considering the nature of the character Busani who is consistently presented as the ‘black-sheep’ of the Moroka’s, even worse than Karabo, the objective stance here is that the cinematography places emphasis on this triangular-relationship(s) so as to place judgmentally stereotyped spec on the character Priscilla – which can easily be understood as the women who went for the more financially stable and ‘promising’ brother, Archie. This suggests and reinforces stereotypical prejudices like “She got there to where she is by preying on the monied man.” which so casually can be an overlooked and normalized statement in society.

Figure 15 is a medium close-up shot size that features the character Ntsiki at an over-the-shoulder single camera shot framing. The character Ntsiki is in obvious feud, presented at a +180 degrees angle at frontal view with a neutral depth of field which provides a solid background as Ntsiki occupies the immediate midground. The scenes establishing shot introduces Ntsiki and Archie’s workplace relationship as colleagues and former once-off intimate partners.

2.8.2.3 *Ntsiki Lukhele*



Figure 15- Source: https:// www.YouTube.com – Ntsiki threatening Archie with sexual harassment charges.



Figure 16 - Source: https:// www.YouTube.com – Ntsiki is confronted by Archie as she had visited the Morokas Residence looking for him.



Figure 17 - Source: https:// www.YouTube.com – Ntsiki in another confrontation with Archie as he has found out that she has been lying about a pregnancy by him.

Here Archie storms into Ntsiki's office while she is presented talking on the telephone by her desk, and demands Ntsiki, out of unwarranted speculation, to explain the whole debacle of the mysterious card that was put into Priscillas gift.

Archie: *Don't you use my wife to get back at me.*

Ntsiki: *Why should I want to get back at you?*

Archie: *Who was it then?!*

Ntsiki: *Listen, if I wanted to do something to get back at you; I'll do something much more original.*

Archie: *I don't believe you.*

Ntsiki: *Oh lets face it – you are a bit of an ally cat. It counld've been one of a number of girls, right?*

Archie: *Do you value your job?*

Ntsiki: *Look. Don't you dare threaten me. I'll have you up in sexual harrassment charges quicker than you you can jump your pants, lover boy! Ooh, I can just see the press in a frenzy.*

Archie: *Why are you doing this to me?*

Ntsiki: *I'm not doing anything to you.*

Archie: *You better be telling the truth. I'm warning you.*

[End of Scene dialogue]

At this point the scene's closing shot presents Archie storming out of Ntsiki's office, and the camera reverting to Ntsiki sitting down at her desk. Here a point-of-view shot is established as the camera zooms in on the character to a medium close-up camera shot, providing the viewer with the talents reaction after the feuded interaction. Moreover, the use of such cinematographic elements presupposes the negative ideal in constructing this character- as an uncontrollable workplace fling. Ntsiki is presented as an unusual strong character in the workplace- as a female figure, but the storyline of a bitter, vengeful black middleclass professional woman who falls in love with the boss and is unable to maintain workplace etiquette, which suggests a demeaning stance on the representations of black middleclass professional woman. Further, figure 18 is a static medium shot size frame featuring Ntsiki and Archie with the characters situated behind each other at ¾ frontal angles facing the left-hand side of the frame. Ntsiki occupies the

foreground and Archie in the midground. Archie is positioned in front of a dark brown/ black fish tank area in his office where on either side of the area the wall continues in a light brown-tanned background to which Ntsiki is placed to the left side. As Archie remains still in a tense mood while Ntsiki who rotates around him and comes to a still in front of him- she is presented with a smirking face. Here, the composition of the frame presents Archie as the dominant even pronounced by the dark background and Ntsiki, submissive as the neutralized figure. However, the dialogue adding to a storyline of Ntsiki claiming that she is pregnant with Archies heir, suggests the furthered storyline of a bitter vengeful black middleclass woman, with the addition of an obsessed woman lusting for her superior in the workplace.

Archie: *What's the big idea? Are you trying to ruin me?*

Ntsiki: *Slowdown, if you have a problem with my work…*

Archie: [Interjects] *Don't play stupid; it doesn't suit you.*

Ntsiki: *You neither.*

Archie: *What were you doing at my house?*

Ntsiki: *I was looking for you.*

Archie: *That much my father told me.*

Ntsiki: *Oh! Maybe I should've told him the rest as well.*

Archie: *What do you want form me?*

Ntsiki: *Nothing a court of law won't grant me.*

Archie: *Which is?*

Ntsiki: *Listen, darling… Let's not argue. You're going to be by my side. I know that and you know that.*

Archie: [takes a deep sigh] *So you're going to have the child no matter what I say?*

Ntsiki [in figure 15]: [giggles] *Of course, and you are going to help me raise him.*

Archie: *I see..*

Ntsiki: *Yes… When are you going to marry me?I need to know, soon.*

This female character's negative construction of a vengefully unrelenting black middleclass professional woman at the workplace is even matched to the character Queen (although to this character this attribute is associated to financial gain in this character's storyline) where at the beginning of this episode a previous scene featuring Ntsiki and Queen at the office are shown at multiple medium- close up shot sizes- depicting the emotions and reactions these characters. Here Ntsiki is infuriated and in her dialogue, she says: "*This time Ntsiki Lukhele is in control. Nobody treats me like dirt and gets away with it.".* Queen is flabbergasted: "*Uhm.. I.. I've got to…",* lost of words and Ntsiki continues, "*That's right; go ahead. Be the doormat. Not me. Not anymore. From now on- I'm in the drivers seat. And nothing is going to stop me. I'll get what I want, even if it kills me."*

The two-shot camera framing type in figure 17 is presented in a medium- cowboy camera shot type where the camera angle is at a static-neutral position. Ntiki and Archie occupy opposing sides of the camera framing shot where a clear use of the cinematographic rule-of-thirds element has clearly defined the interaction between the two characters situated at profile view towards the camera facing each other. Here, the establishing shot in this scene shows Queen and Archie arriving at realization that Ntsiki has been lying about her pregnancy. Queen is even depicted

arguing why she's had been suspicious all along regarding this pregnancy as she claims that "*...she wasn't showing…"*. Archie on the other hand is furious because of how he has been fooled and lead in to believing that the whole pregnancy is real. Whilst Queen and Archie are at it- Ntsiki walks into the frame from the background. The introduction of this character then turns the frame from a two shot in to a three-shot camera framing type to which Ntsiki then occupies the short right hand side of the camera framing. As Archie is the tallest, and Queen occupying the center of the frame at medium height- Ntsiki is shorter than these two characters and becomes the spectacle of the scene as they both face toward her and all three characters are presented at a somewhat medium-wide shot. Ntsiki is wondering what the matter is:

Archie: "*…You lied to me, you bitch!"*

Ntsiki requests Queen to excuse them. While this character walks out of the frame in to the background, Ntsiki is seen stepping towards Archie.

Archie: *Keep away from me. I know you are not pregnant!*

Ntsiki: [smirking giggle] *Oh! But of course I am, darling. I showed you a picture of our baby, didn't I?*

Archie: *Wherever you got that – I don't know. Maybe you asked Frank Guzana to syeal that for you as well.*

Ntsiki: *Frank… Guzana? Who's that?*

Archie: *Ahh, you damn well know who it is. You cant fool me anymore. You've played your sick game long enough.*

Ntsiki: *Oh darling. I did it all for you because I love you so much. I… I can't live witout you.*[Ntsiki tries to caress Archie] *Don't you understand how much I need you?*

Archie [figure 19]: *Ey, don't ever come near me again. Oh, you repulse me!*

Ntsiki [breathing heavily]: *You're not going to get rid of me this easily. You play- you pay. And boy did you play, and boy are you gonna pay. Big!!!*

This scene concludes with Ntsiki leaving Archies office and the camera continuation shifting from a medium shot framing of the two characters, to a medium-close up shot framing of Archie, and finally, a close up shot where Archie is presented turning to face the camera's zooming in element, slightly shaking his head with his eyes wide opened. Here the dialogue's addition of a psychologically unstable construction to the character Ntsiki suggests and presents this character as problematic. In this storyline if the character isn't depicted as obsessed and vengeful, this character is a lustful and mentally disturbed black middleclass professional women, suggesting an extremist negative perspective on black African middleclass women.

Figure 24 is an over-the-shoulder single medium close-up shot type camera framing, featuring the character, Hilda. With an almost completely erased depth of field this character occupies the midground with no head room and only the look room supplying a very close proximity to the figure the character Hilda is facing. Situated in the midground at right hand side ¾ frontal view, Hilda blocks out the background and the frame is tight and filled with emotion as the lighting on this character's face increases focus to the presented heightened emotions.

2.8.2.4 *Hilda Litlalo*



Figure 18 & 19- Source: https://www.YouTube.com – Hilda in a supposed work meeting, at New Horizons with Archie.



Figure 20- Source: https://www.YouTube.com – Hilda at the Moroka Residence's colleagues and friends party.



Figure 21- Source: https://www.YouTube.com – Hilda frustrated by Julius's unrelenting behaviour of courting her in the workplace.

This character is positioned at almost +45 to +55 degrees to the camera where she is presented speaking to the character Archie (who is not a feature in the frame): "*We really should get down to work."*. And in a subsequent shot (figure 19) that features Archie at an opposite over-the-shoulder single medium close-up shot type camera framing to the latter, positioned to the left hand side at almost -45 to -55 degrees to the camera in a ¾ frontal view responds: "*Well, I couldn't agree with you more."*. Here the two characters are depicted in the act of an intimate affair which is a supposed work meeting. Hilda runs an advertising agency which is seen as a complimenting company to the primary New Horizons, to which for the duration of her storyline in the soap she is depicted involved in blackmailing and manipulation for work that as the owner of the agency, she secures. However, the affair takes place with Archie who is married to Priscilla, who happens to be Hilda's best friend and work colleague and Priscilla is left clueless.

Therefore, although Hilda is constructed as a workplace leader and prominent women who is career driven, this character does not escape the held prejudice associate with female conduct in the workplace that seems to always preoccupy itself with suspicion, as presented by the text Generations, especially linked to black middleclass women who are in management positions – "How did she get there?".

Hilda's strong character is explored more as she is presented in a medium shot in figure 22. Here Hilda, is a guest at the Moroka colleagues and friends party, where in the introduction shot of the scene, she is presented in a long shot walking in from almost the center background of the frame through a heightened doorway. At this point a shot depicting Archie looking toward the door "*O-o.*. [Subtitled: Who invited that one?]", referring to Hilda, as though trouble has come to his shore. Paul tells him, "[Subtitled: Your wife works for her. Please try and behave.]" This character's presence, as she turns heads in the room, moves in from the background at directly 180 degrees frontal view towards the camera. As figure 22 features the characters Archie and Paul in the midground, to which Hilda walks towards and comes to a stop creating a three-shot frame.

Hilda [figure 22]: *Good evening, boys. It looks like a great party.*

Paul: *It is. I'm glad you came.* [Pauly and Hilda lighlty laugh]

Archie: [not expressing any signs of being friendly or happy with Hildas presence]: *May I get you a drink?*

Hilda: *Champagne… but if you don't have the real thing, a glass of chadonnay will do.*

Paul: [clears throat as he interjects] *How's business?*

Hilda: *Oh polo e tsamaya sintle thata.* [Subtitled: It's going great.] *And Priscilla has everything to do with it.* [As she faces Archie in a cheeky stare]

Archie: *I'll get your drink.*

Here Archie steps out of the camera frame, and at this point Hilda concludes her conversation with Paul as she sees Priscilla walking into the room. The following scene featuring Priscilla and Hilda at a medium shot. Here the two greet and complement each other's dresses. Immediatley Hilda says to Priscilla: "*Mamela kesana, indoda yakho ayivuyanga tu ngokuba' kwam apha."* [Subtitled: You know what? Your huband is not happy I'm here.] and Priscilla responds "*Tough."* and conversation quickly moves on to another topic. Moreover, as Priscillas strong character, takes over the scene as a dominating female figure, her verbal gestures - "*...evening, boys*" and conflict instigating - "*Your husband is not happy I'm here.*" with the reaction caused by Archie's "*O-o! Who invited that one*?" suggest a character construction that is troublesome, and unwanted as though when she is not offering any sexual intent, she is then unwanted and/or useless.

Figure 21 is medium close-up camera shot type framing featuring the character Hilda in a ¾ degree frontal camera angle. The camera framing's composition is created that the use of an open-frame setting is complemented by dialogue suggesting the existence of an un-featured character (Julius) out of the frame. With a focus on the emotional reaction by Hilda, the mood of the scene emphasized to an argument. Hilda occupies the foreground, with a somewhat neutralized depth-of-field where the background is in close proximity with pronounced objects and visual contrast. This character's dominant construction is highlighted as she is situated at an immediate frontal center to the camera, and light reflecting on to the characters face echoing to the background wall. This This makes a two-color contrast, with the main light positioned behind

her. On either side of the character the contrast begins to darken with art-frame objects placed. As she faces the outer right-hand side of the frame, to the right background is an art painting with deformed human-like illustrations that possess eyes which on the camera framing look at her with wide open eyes providing a somewhat shocked reaction. Here, the dialogue between Hilda and Julius is explored. This dialogue follows an introduction scene where Hilda arrives to a gift of flowers at the office. She surprised, under the impression that they are from a client, only to find out they from Julius whom she's previously had an intimate encounter with. Furious about this she goes into her office and Julius follows her.

Hilda [figure 23]: *Do you have a problem with women saying "No." to you?*

Julius: *I love you. Can't you understand what I feel?*

Hilda: *It was sex, Julius. And that's romp in hey stack, that's all. Not love. Our relationship is now strictly proffessional. Stop pestering me.*

Julius: *You know, I thought I knew you.*

Hilda: *Typicall male response; assuming they know everything about women. Well brother, you don't!*

Moreover, Hilda's character as a woman who is prominent and strong-willed, who is presented as having autonomy and agency when it comes to her sexlife – the preoccupation with this characters sexlife is of concern. Hilda is disloyal to her best friend; presented as always lusting over her male counterparts even those younger than her. She seems to be a heartbreaker and homewrecker, as she remains single. This character's construction doesn't seem to be an apparent one as she is a new contendor in the managerial business world. Therefore, she uses her sexual poise to get what she wants, sleep with whone ever she pleases and but can't get one thing

riht, keeping a partner of her own which is a stereotype of troubled women who make it in the business world whom are associated with being ubearable and cunning.

Figure 22 is a medium- close up shot type camera framing, that features the characters Kgomtso and Karabo at frontal view towards the camera angle. Karabo occupies the foreground with no look room, while Kgomotso is placed in the midground- allowing for a reduced depth-of-field where the background is distinct but with objects visually unidentifiable. The neutral camera angle suggests equalized positions of power, although Karabo's forward position also allows for the interogation of this character's emotions as the audience eye is caught by this character's bright coloured suit. Karabo is in a tense mood as her friendship with Kgomotso has been under strain because of Kgomotso's intimate relationship with Paul, Karabo's father. The introduction shot to this scene presents Kgomotso walking in to the camera framing from the back, via a doorway into Karabo's salon in a long shot where Karabo seems to be in the inner most left side of the room at her desk, speaking on the phobne when she sees Kgomotso walking in. Kgomotso walks up to Karabo and the two stands at opposite ends of the camera framing, with karabo behind her desk creating a two-shot camera framing which quickly switches to figure 24:

Karabo: *I didn't know you had an appointment.*

Kgomotso: *I don't.* [Subtitled: Look, we need to talk.]

Karabo: [Subtitled: I think we've said all there is to say.]

Kgomotso: [Subtitled: Are you going to cut me out forever?]

Karabo: [moves around Kgomtso to figure 24] *I don't think this is the time or place to discuss it.*

Kgomotso: *This is killing me. The bad vibes between us are driving me insane.*

Karabo: *But they don't seem to have affected your infatuation with my father.*

Kgomotso: *I know you're upset about Paul and I.* [Subtitled: But the facte remains, I love him.]

Karabo: [Subitled: I love him too. I don't want to see his heart broken.] *He'd never survive that blow.*

Kgomotso: *I would never heart the man I love.* [Subtitled: Neither do I want to destroy the best frienship I've ever had.]

Karabo: *Are you sure you not just setting him up as a father figure…* [Subtitled: …and you're confusing your feelings?]

Kgomotso: [Subtitled: You don't know how many times I've wrestled with that question.] *But everytime, the answer comes back to – no. I can't even compare him to the men I've dated- egotistical babies with one track minds.*

Karabo: *You really do love him, don't you?*

Kgomotso: *I know it sounds crazy.*

Karabo: *This is not easy buy somehow I understand.*

2.8.2.5 *Kgomotso*



Figure 22: Source – https://www.YouTube.com – Kgomotso talking to Karabo about her relationship with Paul.



Figure 23: Source – https://www.YouTube.com – Kgomotso and Busani reminiscing on their broken intimate relationship.

Here, as the two characters reconcile, Kgomotso constantly has to reaffirm herself the love that she claims she has for Paul. However, the constant repealing by workplace colleagues, and friends of this character suggests the untrustworthiness associated with young women who are intimately involved with significantly older men especially in African cultures. While this love seems to be unshakeable, this character's construction is based on this uncommon 'real love', which is obviously expected to generate prejudiced negative reactions. These reactions are embedded at almost every instance at constant mentioning of this character's name featured or otherwise. However, as Kgomotso's character is under this guise, her entire role in being a women who loves and is conscious of her decision, is underscored and taken as a black middleclass woman who is after an ulterior motive that is encompassed by home wrecking and misleading old men. And what is even of more interest is that the very Karabo who at first is at opposing ends to the idea of Paul and Kgomotso later on in the soap she is found in a more financially deliberate situation with a significantly older man – Max, too, suggesting that this prior interaction of these two young women is somehow a pre-measure putting forward that it is common in society that women are after money, without allowing for Kgomotso's 'true love' storyline to be explored. Moreover this collapses the entire potential responsibility of allowing for a completely autonomous black woman in post-apartheid South Africa.

Figure 23 is a medium shot camera framing type which features Kgomotso and Busani. The two characters are presented sitting at a restaurant setting where, Kgomotso is at a frontal view and Busani situated at -90 degrees toward the camera at a profile view. The two shot frame at a neutral camera angle with the characters positioned in the mid ground provides sufficient look room and head room, creating an increased depth-of-field. To the latter the background is

occupied by unfeatured characters as patrons to the restraint with art directly on the wall. The characters, objects and calm neutralized frame suggesting equal power relation(s) as primary interpretation. However, dialogue allows us to explore further the relation that exist between the two characters.

Kgomotso: [Subtitled: I'm sorry, but it's for the best.]

Busani: [Subtitled: I don't understand. We were becoming so close. I love being with you.]

Kgomotso: [Subtitled: I know. We had good times. But it's over.]

Busani: [Subtitled: I think you used those same words when we broke up before. Have you met someone else again?]

Kgomotso: [Subtitled: No, there's only you. But it won't work out, believe me.]

Busani: [Subtitled: Is it's because of Archie and the court case?]

Kgomotso: [Subtitled: You're against what Arch is doing. How can I pursue the case against our father knowing how you feel about it?]

Busani: [Subtitled: You're right, you can't]

Kgomotso: [Subtitled: I've worked hard to get where I am today.] *I can't let anything jeopardize that.* [Subtitle continued: Please try to understand]

Busani: [Subtitled: Yes, you had to make a choice between me and a carrier. And I lost]

Kgomotso: [Subtitled: Please don't make it sound as if.]

Busani: [Subtitled: You can't let this destroy what we have. Why not drop the case or give it to someone else?]

Kgomotso: [Subtitled: I can't. The firm needs Archie's business. The senior partner say if I lose this one I'm out]

Busani: [Subtitled: Can't you understand? I love you.]

Kgomotso: [Subtitled: Thanks for everything] *You're a wonderful man.*

Here, although Kgomotso stands her ground throughout the scene, and in the midst of Busani's - "*I think you used those same words when we broke up before. Have you met someone else again?*" which resurfacing a prior storyline about Kgomotso and Paul as way to emotionally hold her accountable for being stern in that she does not want to be with him. Therefore, the use of this kind of dialogue dents this characters reputation suggesting that whenever this black middleclass woman is represented as having agency, arguably, this agency will be measured against her unescapable attribute of being involved with older men, or rather a negatively judged past that wil forever remain this her shadow.

2.8.3 Modern Township *Mammies* In 'New' South Africa's *Generations (1994)* - The Characters: Nontombi Mthembu and Matlakala Sebobe



Figure 24- Source: https://www.YouTube.com – Matlakala and Nontombi are having a conversation.

Figure 24 is a medium shot type camera framing featuring the characters Matlakala and Nontombi. These characters occupy the midground, where the background provides an increased depth-of-field allowing for look room and head room to supply a neutralized eye-level camera shot where the powers are neutral. As the background is visually accesible within a kitchen setting these two characters are sitting at the dinner-preparing table, where Nontombi is chopping vegitables and Matlakala is having fruit as they conversate. The composition of the frame supplies a horizontal makeup of vectors, objects and figures in this frame as the kitchen stove dimension/ shape, cupboard drawer's rectangular shapes, table cloth patterns- square and chairs, together with wall tiles posing lessened powers these two charactwers possess. Evenmore, these township women are dressed in approns and with Nontombi always in a doek. However, this

domesticated woman is not an unusual figure and/ or character construction to audiences. What resides though, is a modern middle-aged black middleclass woman. Matlakala and Nontombi, are presented as business venturists existing within the Soweto township. Their partnership in jam production, is, though, challenged by issues of loyalty and trust issues that don't seem to escape their minds as the other wants a written contract while the other sees no need for one as they are friends and should supposedly trust one another.

Matlakala: *It won'y be long now maki.*

Nontombi: *Kufuneka sithengise i-jam eninzi phambi kokuba ufudukele e-Sandton.* [Subtitled: You'll have to sell a lot more jam before you can move to Sandton.]

Matlakala: *You must think positive maaki, izinto zenzakala bhetere and quicker xa ucinga njalo.* [Subtitled: That way things work out.]

Nontombi: *Ngokuqinisekileyo kufuneka senze i-appointment negqwetha. Kukho amagama endiwanikwe nguPaul.* [Subtitled: We must make an appointment with a lawyer. Paul recommended some.]

Matlakala: *I-lawyer yokwenza ntoni? Andizimiseli ukubanjwa mna.* [Subtitled: Why do I need a lawyer? I'm not planning to get arrested.]

Nontombi: *Kaloku ndandikuxelel ngalamini into yokuba kufuneka si-sign i-contract echazayo into yokuba siszi equal partners.* [Subtitled: I told you we need a contract. Stating that we're equal partners.]

Matlakala: *Asidingi-contract maki. Uyandithemba name ndiyakwethemba.* [Sututled: we don't need one. We trust each other.]

Nontombi: *Hewethu nantoni na ingenzeka phakathi kwam nawe.* [Subtiltled: What if something happens between you and I?]

Matlakala: *Andiplani ukuwa mna. Ndife.* [Subttled: I'm not planning to die just yet.]

Nontombi: *Maki, ingozi ziyenzeka.* [Subtitled: Acidents do happen.]

Matlakala: *Uyabona ke. If anything happens to you. Ndiza kwenza sure ukuba isheri yakho ndiyayigcina kakuhle.* [Subtitled: I'll look after your share.]

Nontombi: *Ha-a. Yiyo ke lento kufuneka ukuba yonke into yethu ibhalwe phantsi.* [Subtiled: That's why one should have these things in writing.]

Matlakala: *Maki, kudala singaba hlobo. Ngoku umnt'wesithathu ufunani phakathi kwethu?* [Subtitled: We've been friends for a long time. Why do we need a stranger comign between us?]

The depiction of township women participating actively in the economy of South Africa was a matter unheard of. The texts present these two characters at opposing views regarding a pivotal part of their business as partners- a contract. While Matlakala remains unconvinced on the one hand, as she handles matters with emotions- their personal relationship as friends. Nontombi on the other, is presented as the business savvy one between the two. What is of essence in the analysis posed by exploring the two, is the extent at which these characters are significantly different in their construct while very similar as their racial makeup proves. Nontombi, is depicted as the more civilized, knowing, settled woman who has dated the rich men of the world and currently with an Afrikaaner man. Matlakala on the reverse side is the typical township women who understands that life and wealth does exist outside of the township and that is what she wants for herself and her daughter, Queen. Nontombi's storyline is astonishing as she is a former intimate partner to Paul Moroka. Her daughter Priscilla is married to Archie Moroka, son

to Paul. Nontombi also has a son Zakes, who became a Moroka when Nontombi and Paul were still involved. As positive this characters construction may seem it is of concern that such an unfathomed cross-family intimate relationship is presented all under the flag of entertainment while the very civilized woman is presented as some suspicious manipulating scheme conductor who goes as far as involving her children in her messy relations of love as a single mother. What is also a continued problematic depiction is the representation of a somewhat racist black woman who can't seem to escape the past as expected by her white male counterpart and society by democracy.



Figure 25- Source: https: https://www.YouTube.com – Queen at her mother's house in Soweto.

Matlakala on the other, as seen in figure 25, is single mother to Queen. This characters somewhat negative depiction is met by a raw common black township mother character who speaks her mind and keeps matters 'real' with everyone. The cow- boy shot camera framing presented in this figure features the characters Matlakala and Queen. The two shot camera framing sees the

two characters occupy the midground while the increased depth-of-ferld in the room allows for objects situate in the background to be visable. In this shot matlakal is busy with her jam fruits when Queen enters the from the immediate right bottom of the frame.

Queen: *O tshwantse ho dira selo. Monkgo o wa mang o gogotlhe!* [Subtitled: Do something! The smell of rotten fruits is everywhere.]

Matlakala: *Ha ko tlohe mona. Ka nko tse thibaneng, o nkga jwang.* [Subtitled: Nonsense. You can't smell. Your nose is blocked.]

Queen: *O ka se batle ho ira madi ka mokgwa oo. O senya nako ya gago*. [Subtitled: You won't make money. You're waisting your time.]

Matlakala: *Ya senyang nako ke wena. Ho nste ho ya jwang ka wena le Archie? Ke utlwa bare o khikhila le Zakes.*[Subtitled: You're the one who's waisting time. How are you progressing with Archie? I hear you're after Zakes now.]

Queen: *Ke ne ke bedelitse pitsi e ka se fenyeng le Archie! Botshelo jwa me bo go mo Zakes*. *Yo le ke Morka ya tsebang se a se batlang*. [Subtitled: I had it all wrong. Archie's losing it. My future lies with Zakes. That Moroka knows where he's going.]

Here Matlakala and her daughter, Queen are presented talking about the protagonist of the soap, archie Moroka. This scheming suggests the motives as to why Nontombi perhaps can't seem to trust her. Moreover, as Matlakala works tirelessly toward the lifestyle she deserves, in the dialogue with her daghter is seems to trend between the two mother friends to benefit from the same men and the same family using their daughters as they live their loves through them. The vindicating of these two women continues as the the story of Nontombi is further explored. As mentioned, Nontombi is involved with an Afrikanner man as seen in figure 28. Although this

picture suggests an interaicial relationship anticipated in society as presented by the text. Here, civilized Nontombi battles with issues of race and identity as she dates this iconographic figure in the context of South africa. As Nontombi and boyfriend are presented at a medium angle at horozontal opposing ends of the frame with the female figure to the left dressed in obvious domestic aprons and doeks and the male to the right in a suit in the immediate midground. The increased depth-of-field allows for a clear background to which a room- divider/ wall unit divides the frame with a much more object background to Nontombis side and an organized not so busy background to the male character. This composition of the frame has obvious divided positions of power, with the black african woman associated with her typiacl stereotyipcal submissive polarity and the white middleclass man positioned with authority at a ¾ frontal view. Here, the dialogue establishes Nontomi's racist opinion as said by the male counterpart. Nontombi is handed a gift:

Nontombi: [Subtitled: Thanks, but if the neighbours see this…]

Male Character: [Subtitled:Then I'm glad I didn't bring flowers.]

Nontombi: [Subtitled: They're already talking about the fancy car outside.]

Male Character: [Subtitled: Don't let it embarrass you.]

Nontombi: [Subtitled: Let them gossip they'll always have a lot to say. According to Rose we're abput to get married.]

Male Character: [Subtitled: Just goes to show you. People are all the same.]

Nontombi: [Subtitled: what do you mean?]

Male Character: [Subtitled: The same would've happened in Sandton.]

Nontombi: [Subtitled:The only thing that would happen in Sandton is that the neighbours wouldn't speak to you if you visited a black woman.]

Male Character: [Subtitled: I don't know… That's not true. Time have changed.]

Nontombi: [Subtitled: If you say so.]

Male Character: [Subtitled:You're hardly one to talk. Look how you carried on about Bongi and Gregg.]

Nontombi: [Subtitled:That was different.]

Male Character: [Subtitled: Really? Racism is racism wherever it comes from.]

Nontombi: [Subtitled: You wouldn't understand.]

Male Character: [Subtitled: I don't know… You know, we all carry hurt which we don't want to discuss.]

Nontombi [figure 26]: [Subtitled: You white people always hurt more than us Blacks.]

Male Character: [Subtitled: You'd be surprised. What would you say if I told you that I also once loved across the colour line. I don't talk about it much. Not that I'm ashamed of it, but people don't understand easily. I'm telling you this because I think it will help you to accept this thing between Bongi and Gregg.]

Here, Nontombi breaks the scene and moves to the kitchen: [Subtitled: I think the water's boiling.]. The subsequent scene moves to the Kitchen:

Male Character: [Subtitled: I'm sorry… sorry that I blurtted out like that.]

Nontombi: [Subtitled: Get me the milk from the fridge.]

Male Character: [Subtitled: Should I rather not have told you?]

Nontombi: [Subtitled: What does it matter? It's over and done. Let's forget it. What are you doing in the location? Where's your wife? Why don't you go to her? Don't tell me. Tell her.]

Male Character: [Subtitled: She's the one person I wouldn't be able to tell.]

Nontombi: [Subtitled: You've tasted forbbiden fruits.] *So what?!* [Subtitle continued: Many of you white peole did. I'll never forget it. You people… And where are you tomorrow?]

Male Character: [Subtitled:You know, the business world has taught us that tomorrow has a way of looking after itself.]

Nontombi: [Subtitled: And what became of that woman? Where is she now? Or did she have to scrubb the floors while you wife shopped?]

Male Character: [Subtitled: You don't understand.]

Nontombi: [Subtitled: But where is she now? Where is she today?]

Male Character: [Subtitled: I don't know. She vanished with the child.]

Nontombi: [Subtitled: What?]

Male Character: [Subtitled: There was a child. I never saw him.]

Nontombi: [Subtitled: You're just like all the rest.]

The civilized, progressive woman presented in this scene is phenominal. Strong willed, and stands her ground. This is an uncommon character in the township, as dating an Afrikanners man, and putting him in his place is even more of a symbolic power associated with this character. The relevant speak and tone is employed in the dialogue. However, as Nontombi

possesses this positive attribute her charater construction remains questionable as she dissaproves another of daughter's intimate relationship with a white young man, but she is seen actively being with her's. It is also interesting how in the dialogue the male character constantly tells her she doesn't understand, as though racism and black women's struggles don't correlate.



Figure 26- Source: https: https://www.YouTube.com – Nontombi and her businessman boyfriend at her house.

2.9 Black African Middleclass *Modern Mammies, Jezebels,* and *Troubled- Tragic Mulatto Conceptual Images* presented on South African Television Soap Operas

Debates on the depictions of African [-American] women in television and mass media, in general, have been expansively explored (Cheers, 2018). Research by Herman Gray (1995), Robin Mean Coleman (2000), Kristal Brent Zook (1999), Donald Bogle (2001) and Beretta E. Smith- Shomade (2002, 2013) examines the production and consumption of African- Americans, and African- American women in particular on television (Cheers, 2018). This research focuses on enduring stereotypes rooted in racism and sexism. Patricia Hill Collins (2005), too, examines

television images of African- American representations within a critical framework encompassed by race and gender; but (Cheers, 2018) suggests that this research does not explore the production and consumption aspects of these images on television. Collins further examines the stereotypical images of African-American women that have persisted in the media and hegemonic ideology operations, in both Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment (2000) and Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender, and the New Racism (2005) where Collins states, "Portraying African-American women as stereotypical mammies, matriarchs, welfare recipients …helps justify U.S. Black women's oppression." (Collins, 2000: 69 in Cheers, 2018); which is where the examination of black African middleclass women representation on South African television soap opera relies.

Television shows, until the 1980s were made of predominantly black casts which focused on, racially black, themes that were under the imaginative control of, racially white, studios and network executives (Cheers, 2018; Tomaselli, 1986). Gray (1995) discovered that white producers of television programs, with programs that catered to Black audiences, enforced harsh creative control in order to "discipline, contain, and ultimately construct a point of view." (Gray, 1995: 71). Gray, further to the latter claim, suggests that white producers and executives continue to depict black women through prisms that are rooted in perspectives of middleclass white Americans, who have traditionally, principally observed and encountered black African women through their domestic servant social positions (Gray, 1995).

To the discussion important to the purpose of this research, four popular stereotypes of Black women, which are rooted in racist and sexist ideology, are explored in the text *Generations (1994)*. To this four, Bogle (1992) identified two main stereotypes for African American women in television, the *mammy* and *tragic mulatto*. The *mammy* is the oldest and broadly recognized

stereotype for black women, and Bogle states, this racially black female character construction "is usually big, fat and cantankerous," as depicted by Matlakala's character construction, and the *tragic mulatto* is a woman of both, racially black and white heritage, who struggles with her identity. Though the latter woman's character construct is not discussed in this chapter, resemblances of this woman in the African context are explored in the following chapters.

To the stereotypes suggestive of bodily features of black woman above, the behavioral *jezebel* in the second section of the analysis; this stereotype depicts an African women that is not only driven by lascivious thoughts of sex and lust who is lewd, insolent, and shameless in speech (Cheers, 2018). Carolyn M. West (2008) notes that the *jezebel* stereotype is resultant from the prolonged period of slavery in Americas history. During this period African American women were sexually coerced by slave owners- their family members, friends, slave administrators and vigilante mobs, namely the Ku Klux Klan (West, 2008). West carries on saying that the Ku Klux Klan "branded Black women as sexually promiscuous and immoral" so as to justify these "sexual atrocities" (West, 2008). These presentations are found to exist on the text Generations, but however they have been modified into the democratic South Africa as chanced characterizations this a disoriented makeup which fails to make its audience comprehend how these imagined constructs find themselves at positions as depicted in this text, which are greatly tied capitalist patriarchal motives of ideologies that surface in society. Another stereotype is the *sapphire*. This stereotype suggests an African woman as the classic "angry black woman", who is loud in her tone of voice, stubborn and overbearing like Ntsiki Lukhele. West expands on this definition noting that the *sapphire* first appeared during the 1940s and 1950s, and contemporarily this image "[suggests] that Black women's anger, [and] their justifiable response to societal injustice, is dangerous or funny." (2008: 296) suggesting that the somewhat obsessive

characterization supposes audience reaction that should be a judged humor response without evaluating the build-up causes as this woman's characterization supposes a ludicrous figure which is not accepted in society.

A central core theme in Black feminist thought, Collins (2000) comments, is that "these controlling images are designed to make racism, sexism, poverty, and other forms of social injustice appear to be natural, normal, and inevitable parts of everyday life." (p.g., 69). In Black Sexual Politics, to the four aforementioned black woman's stereotypes, Collins further identifies three contemporary alternative stereotypical representations of Black women: *modern mammies*, *Black ladies* and *educated bitches*. The scholar claims that these characterizations are depicted in television series and are found on *Generations* (1994).

Collins (2005) argues that the representation of African women on television is actually a direct commentary on the social conditions in Africa and across the diaspora. The scholar further suggests that "the mass media has generated class-specific images of Black women that help justify and shape the new racism of desegregated, color-blind America." (Collins, 2005: 147) and arguably the diaspora. In doing this, in the South African context the mass media constructs class-specific blackness that includes the *Black lady* and *modern mammy* as characterizations for black women, which ultimately shapes the discourse about race and integration in Africa. The *modern mammy* like Nontombi's character and *Black lady* characterizations on the surface provide an alternative view of middleclass South African women which still confines black women to acquiescent positionality's in society. In addition to these characterizations, Collins introduced the *educated Black bitch* façade which can easily be associated with the character of Hilda Letlalo, which is described as "women [who] have money, power, and good jobs. But they are beautiful, and, in some ways, they invoke personas that depict black African women who are

in control of their own bodies and sexuality." (2005, 145). These are Pam Grier- like depictions of African and/or American actresses whose roles in several Blaxploitation films, including films like *Coffy* (1973) and *Foxy Brown* (1974). Collins's (2005) critique of these three contemporary stereotypical representations of African American women is specifically focused on the economic and social advancement of black women from working poor to middleclass independence and how the media validates their lived experiences, but however suggest a demonized promiscuous depiction. It is imperative to note that though *Black ladies, educated Black bitches* and *modern mammies* are alternative stereotypes to the historical representation of the *jezebel, mammy, sapphire* and *tragic mulatto* but remain persistent images on television; on South African television soap operas these cosmopolitan 'alternatives' in popular art texts like *Generations* provide contingencies which are marked in certain political economic and socio-historic eras, and when explored they suggest similar corollaries to their traditional Hollywood derivatives.

2.10 Nollywood: Representation of Women in Nigerian Dramas and Film Videos – On the African Region- *Presentation of a Dark African Woman*

Nollywood speaks of predominantly "southern Nigerian, English-language films…" (Brock, 2009: 1). These film texts are produced by people from the varying range of southern cultures existing in Nigeria. To the understanding of the African, these texts consist of film productions that promote convergences of the eastern cities of Enugu, Onitsha and Aba, which exist in correlation and are subsidiaries of marketing systems based in Lagos (Haynes, 2007). Nollywood films re-surfaced, and now into the mainstream, in the early 1990s and have remained successful since. Brock continues to claim that "[t]he potential of Nollywood in Nigeria is very promising and it is playing an important role in creating images that portray Nigeria." (Brock, 2009: 2).

This suggests that these representational filmic texts generate significant influences in society, on the topic of influences by visual texts, as established earlier by this research. The existing relationship between 'audiences' and 'popular art texts' is that one of the two parties assumes the role of consumer- of culture/s whether positive or negative. Nollywood, in Nigeria, is a wide-ranging concept of popular culture that speaks to the veracity of film forms as interpreters of Nigerian society which presents a revolution in consumer information technology. The resultant content produced on Nollywood productions depicts the everyday domestic, economic and politics. Here lived experiences of the people are the mainstay of the industry. Lester (2007) in Abah (2009) suggests that these video-films, as popular art forms in Nigerian society (in terms of demand and accessibility) and their admixture of content – contribute textual imagery that encourages "alternate groupings as they imagine and project their cohesiveness and solidarity" during economic and energy turmoil. Therefore, as there exist film texts that present certain moments in time, there is an active relationship between contexts of emergence in texts and their context as genre.

According to Haynes (2000), the Yoruba ethnics' traveling theatre began making video films in 1988. Another ethnic groups' films, the Igbo's films, are said to "sell more than their Yoruba counterparts." (*ibid*: 44). The two sectors are poles apart in terms of what they present, on the one hand Yoruba films focus on the Yoruba community, and tend to be preoccupied with historical storylines which exist as Yoruba tradition and culture and on the other, Igbo films are inclusive of heterogeneous make-up of Nigerian cultures and traditions which seek to attract the urban audience (Haynes, 2000).

Here, the juxsta-positioning of Nollywood to South African soap opera texts is based on the articulations of the Nigerian society as these texts claim to represent the country's

socialization(s). Therefore, the understanding is that to fully comprehend television soap opera popular art texts in South Africa, a regional perspective is needed to explore differences and similarities in popular African filmic texts as they claim, and are expected, to represent their respective communities.

2.10.1 Representation of Women in Nollywood

As the Nollywood films within Nigeria's film industry play an important role in contemporary Nigerian society, the industry provides a negative image of Nigerian woman. Brock (2009) states that in Nollywood cinema there exists definite images of women, from a myriad of socio-economic and socio-political backgrounds, which are comprised of "elements of beauty, sexual power, and degradation of women, prostitution, and evil." (see Petty, 1989: 19). Agatha Ukata (2010), suggests that filmmakers in Nigeria have "resorted to reversal roles of women and men in society." (p.g.: 1). This, she suggests, is a result of the failure to examine these disreputable stereotypical representations about women in the Nigerian society. Even more, Ukata states that these misconstructions are read and interpreted in the same manner on television, as these women are perceived in society - "as outlaws and evil to their families and society as a whole." (2010: 1). This means that although Nigerian Cinema is the largest cinema industry on the African continent; the cinema thrives at the expense of fouling Nigerian women's image for the sole purpose of entertainment- including black middleclass women. Therefore, though video technologically has advanced Nollywood cinema, Nollywood videos continue to succeed in re-democratized dispensation of Nigeria as they re-produce distorted images of women. This continued preoccupation of negative images results in the re-production of societal reservations and anxieties on women which resurface from patriarchal entities within society which are based

the filmmakers' sexist bias together with the conceptual imagination of the kind of black woman existing in Nigerian society (Ukata, 2010).

The adverse effect of sexism as evinced in Nigerian videos has, since their inception, been at the fault of films mostly produced and directed by men. However, the privileged patriarchy in these filmic texts has a bearing in the manner in which the resultant representation of social constructions has been interpreted in society. This suggests that the normalized patriarchal rhetoric(s) and the ways in which the Nigerian society interrelates, is based on the opinions of the voices which rule even in the domestic within Nigerian communities. Therefore, Bunmi Olujinmi's (2008:119) claims of sexist ideas in Nigerian films is based on the social stratifications between women and men in Nigeria and this explains how such dichotomies have translated in to the Nigerian film industry, which is male controlled, and provides added reason as to why Nollywood insists on portraying conflicting images of women in their society.

2.11 The South – south Relations: The Construction of Women by Brazilian Film & Television Dramas and Impacts on Society in Brazil- *Controlled Women's Sexualities*

Southern and/or even South- south nations when comparing South Africa and Brazil, with the existing television dramas (soap operas) aim to deliberate in social discourse on everyday episodes as though representing every day 'reality'. Porto (2011) states that topics of national identity in the fictional programming of TV Globo in Brazil, a dominant media conglomerate, for four decades broadcasted Brazil's political history and these presented compelling visuals of the nation, expressed in microcosms and the imagined locations in which the stories took place. The appreciation of an eclectic Brazil is what local programming typifies. This suggests that Brazil's

film industry has transcended the traditional concept of filmic frameworks and has rather adopted a localized interpretation of everyday life as presented in context with the relevance of depicting quotidian lives. Brazilian telenovelas present a joint national public space that provides diverse audiences with a common experience that cuts across regional, class and other social boundaries (Hamburger, 2005; Kottak, 1990; La Pastina, 1999; Mattelart and Mattelart, 1990; Pait, 2005). This exists though the dynamic nature of such processes is not explored. Here Porto (2011) asks questions: "What happens when media representations of the nation shift, challenging traditional ways of thinking and imagining? How does the broader historical context mediate the symbolic representations of the nation that are built and disseminated by melodramatic series?" (P.g.: 44).

However, Williams (1990) states that the complexity of culture(s) and the varied nature of the interrelations of its characteristics are key differential components when comparing the reflections of society (in Porto, 2011). This suggests that 'mediation', "a more active process in which distinctive realms of social life (culture, society, media, etc.) are connected, but not over determined" (Porto, 2011: 56) is more effective for the comprehension of social relations. Here, as telenovelas in Brazil have assumed roles that try to balance many societies in Brazil; concerns like Lisa Brown's (2009) *Pleasuring body parts: women and soap operas in Brazil*, where she explains how rural Brazilian women have manipulated telenovelas to their own selective interpretation. These women assume domestic roles in households where poverty has prevailed, and have made *novelas* their escape place by consuming much of the telenovelas by *Rede Globo*. Telenovelas in Brazil remain in the same concept of presenting middleclass socialization as much other operas all over the world, but in Brazil especially rural women, have used this television to subjugate themselves in pre-cautioned ideals of how their bodies are to be

conceptualized. Brown (2009) says representations of women on television has hardly shifted from the patriarchal gaze which controls in sexist ways 'women's bodies and their sexual agency'. Brown states that as these women consume their selected *novelas* they read on ways to socialize their bodies in ways which would be favored by their male counterparts i.e. common unprecedented knowledge that women should refrain from sexual intercourse because their vagina's would be "used up" by the time a man wants to marry them so as to be practice abstinence and preserve 'yourself' for the male figure. This suggests how female bodies in many societies in the diaspora are treated to have traditional and cultural ideological potential of generating superstitions guarded by patriarchal objectification. Mediation also explores the designated dynamic relationship that supplies effect to initial meanings in cultural and communication practices. Based on these assumptions, it is possible to think of television as a contested terrain in which struggles over symbolic representation take place. Moreover, Michèle and Armand Mattelart (1990: 149) emphasize that we should not apply television as 'as measures that control, one-dimensionally, the social and ideological reproduction of the existing social order' more so for the objectification of women, but rather as 'a contradictory and controversial space where meaning is negotiated and cultural hegemony created and re-created by means of mediation'.

Telenovelas are said to be the most popular form of entertainment, particularly amongst women, across Latin America. As this genre in Brazil influences people's behaviors, North- Eastern Brazil's rapid decline in birth rate over the past four decades, is attributed to televisual programmes (Faria and Potter, 1994 in Brown, 2009). Chong, Duryea, and La Ferrara's *Soap Operas and Fertility: Evidence from Brazil* (2012) claims that there was a mutually held practice by Brazillian women audiences to have "fewer children in order to be able to afford the

consumer lifestyle promoted in the programmes", and that "…women [we]re opting for Caesarian births in order to maintain a youthful body (read tight vagina)." (p.g.: 7). As a result the total fertility rate (in percentages) in 1960 dropped from 6.3 to 5.8 in 1970, to 4.4 in 1980, to 2.9 in 1991, and 2.3 in the year 2000 (Lam and Marteleto, 2005). Chong, Duryea, and La Ferrara (2012) note that the deterioration had no deliberate association with government policy as there was no official population control policy ratified by the government. Moreover, this means that this decline happened at a time when the Brazilian government, for a period of time, had deemed the "…advertising of contraceptive methods illegal." (Chong, Duryea, and La Ferrara, 2012: 2). Therefore, this suggests that the dissemination of hegemonic messaging and values, which at times comprised of development policy in Brazil, have had the influential prospective to reach households through the screen. The latter then supposes that the expansion of commercial television can be correlated to fertility patterns in Brazil, and in many ways *Globo TV*'s role in constructing women's sexuality in the context of Brazil's socio-political economy, in the present. Arguably, while scholarly work highlights key vicissitudes on the structure in Brazil's socio-political economy, television played the pivotal role of shaping individual inclinations towards fewer births. However, the effect of exposure to one of the most pervasive forms of cultural communication in Brazilian society, soap operas or *novelas* had postulated subjugating social nuances in this context of populous crisis. Therefore, the value of the vagina in the Brazilian society is warped with the whole woman as its value is and can only be determined by/ and through the male figure in these societies. This means that, according to the ubiquitous honorable rhetoric on Brazilian women's sexuality presented by telenovelas- "in order for a woman to conform to the 'respectable woman' status, the vagina must be owned in a recognized relationship of dependency…" (Brown, 2009: 13) by the male counterpart.

2.12 Bollywood: The Conceptualization of Women in Indian Filmic Texts- *Women As Audiences In India*

Feminist theory on Indian soap opera, argues that there exists gendered audiences in soaps as the text's viewers are emblazoned in these productions (Ahmed, 2012). The understanding here is that as soap operas, around the world, are conceptualized in ways that intrigue and focus on women's socialization(s) - the feminine aesthetic. These soaps generate a myriad discourses that impact and affect the domestic sphere which women, in particular, are contributors and consumers of. The latter suggests that soaps, since their inception, have appealed and gravitated toward those who value the personal and domestic world - women. However, the diverse Indian cultures and diverse roles that woman comprise of are not accepted. The stereotyping of women is common in soap opera texts although an existing image of the modern women across the diaspora has transformed from being a timid, passive, acquiescent housewife, to a woman who has evolved into a strong individual.

Satellite television in India brought about the popularity of soaps in the year 1993 and this platform has been commended for "contributing the most to the multi-lateral, multilingual, and multi-channel television system, operating on an elaborate schedule." (Ahmed, 2012). This development in India's film industry allows for an admixture of cultures to interrelate depositing a generic social hegemony to its audiences as common culture interpretations on women all over India. Bollywood filmic texts perform baroque functions of women that assume marginalized positionalities to national growth and development in India (Kaul and Sahni, 2010). Moreover, these limiting images reinforce these stereotyped images and constructed role specifications of woman as fixed projections which are read to be homogeneous truth(s) of their reality in the Indian society. This means that as *Generations* (1994) possesses similar attributes as imagined

constructions of black middleclass women in the South African context; these similarities exist as presenting reality across the diaspora as in the case of Indian soap opera texts. Karthika (2005), says even at instances when these women are in possession of power, a nuanced patriarchal perspective is unquestionably contemporaneous. India's remote inhabitants are merged into the national mainstream so as to construct a nation; and here television has added to an unmatched explosion [and exploitation of women on film] and commonly held information in society (Gopal Saxsena, 1996).

In India as soap opera expose decision making processes in texts, and these can be identified in the excess of minutiae and distinctions that are seen as articulating social problems which are simultaneously employed to advance the plot lines. However, when construing dominant perspectives, it is easy to suggest that Bollywood texts instigate that women are only able and engrossed in trivialities of the everyday domestic life. Therefore, what is of essence here is that soap operas can potentially reinforce already problematic characteristics which have been normalized in society about women's lives. Another way of reading is that soaps value the fabric of women's lives. Tania Modleski (1988), methodologically, symbolizes a reader-response approach where textual critique can be offered to imply construct of the intended audience. To the latter she carries on to state as Raghavan (2008) postulates that these audiences cannot be definitively spoken for as candid patrons, who are undifferentiating and/or stultified.

2.13 Conclusion

This chapter has introduced a seminal work of female constructions in post- apartheid South Africa where African language(s) popular arts tradition evinces diversity, complexity and fluidity and, as Hannerz (1999) points out, this should be an invitation to look at systems of meaning which do not hide their connections with power and the material life. Here, the research

has located frameworke'd constructions of the past in the present where texts evidently remain under pressure to conceptualize and imagine black African middleclassness as negated. Supported by Fabian's (1997) observation that there exists a need to make the vast and vigorous expressions of African experiences visible - Mhlambi (2012) stresses that emerging forms of expression, reflecting the life-like experiences and consciousness of the masses, deserve our fullest attention as evidence for cultural independence and creativity. Moreover, Mhlambi suggests, from sterile fixations on the presumed disintegration of tradition and on the rare accomplishments of 'assimilated' elites we must proceed to a fuller appreciation of the new mass cultures (in Fabian, 1978).

Tommaselli (1986, 1989) suggests that black television, in the past was intended at co-opting the black Africans into a modernized black African middleclass. This, too, allows justification to the fact that the cinematic modes of discourses in films produced under state controlled auspices reflect varied constructions of blackness and also allows for unspoken reductions of previously held beliefs on black African middleclassness and values to take center stage at certain political epochs. Souleymane, as described in Olivier (1996: 5) states that though change exists in the construction of blackness, the overall change rests upon characteristics of "white mental projection, revealing a profoundly racist unconscious [and signified ideology, in set-made-productions]". Therefore, Tomaselli's analysis of early black television dramas demonstrates the controversy which in subtle ways, is the government's response to an assembly of international and localized pressures. Moreover, South African television dramas remain reformed in the philosophical outlook of policies so as to perceive them progressive towards racial inclusion, taking into account certain achievements obtained by educated Africans, whilst the broader reality nuances remain regressive.

The South African Broadcasting Corpooration (SABC) emphasized social engineering policies such as nation-building and neo-liberal policies in their programing from the early 1990s (Ives, 2007; Evans, 2010; Tomaselli, 1997; Kruger, 2010; Laden, 1997). These policies were in line with South Africa's new political economy, and as mentioned before, are disseminated through popular discourses found in contemporary creolized cultures to construct 'aspirational' narratives that reflect changing economic patterns in the post- apartheid African society. The adoption of transformative policies by the SABC signified a shift from and provided alternative models to the apartheid past. However, the alteration of socio- economic and cultural contexts of production and reception have remained the most daunting task for transforming not only television productions but also South African film production (Mc Clusky, 2009; Dovey, 2009).

The white, male-dominated South African film industry (Tomaselli, 1989a; Kruger, 2010; Jacobs, 2011) and the tendencies toward racial collaboration within the South African television industry that began in the mid-1980s (and which, at that stage, were a ploy to produce material that masked and elided power relations in all spheres of South African life) persist into the present and continue to shape the post- apartheid national imagery on television (Ives, 2007).

Arguably, television production from the 1980s featured aspirational content for the black middleclass as a logical response to the national identity encouraged by the co-option policy (Tomaselli, 1986) which continued the preoccupation with black middleclassness (Laden, 1997) that stretches back to the colonial missionary enterprise (Posel, 2010). Post- apartheid, neoliberal ideologies in television programmes, just like the co-option policy of the late apartheid era, focused on black African middleclass and its patterns of conspicuous consumption to forge new ways of fashioning mainstream black African Identities. Here, *Generations*' role was to provide glimpses of how post- apartheid African National Congress (ANC) wanted to 'shape, contest and

reflect the popular national imagery' (Ives, 2007: 161) to the African majority through television programming which somewhat provides vantage point where the excision of black women in positive postulations has failed. These depictions are evident across the diaspora, and the following sections speak to them.

Chapter 3

Black Criminal Accomplices: Interrogating Domestic Culture(s) Depicted in Black South African Middleclass Soap Opera Series – *The Queen* (2016)

3.1 Introduction

Black middleclass criminality themes on soap opera texts in South Africa treat black African middleclass lives as a negated 'othered' point of reference where, racially black, Africans are presented as criminal syndicates. Johannes Fabian (1990), suggests that myths and racism treat "othering [as an act that] expresses the insight that the Other is never simply given [; it is] never just found or encountered, but **made**." (in Keyan Tomaselli, 1996: 89). This means that in South African television soap opera there exists a continuing 'intellectual construction of an 'Other'' (*sic*). Evident in televisual series like *The Queen* (2016) is the domestic servitude cultures existing as competing 'civil' culture(s) presented criminated male accomplice character constructions framed to be domestic servitude character constructions. The characterological family - the Khoza's are presented to be a black African middleclass family that is involved in industry competition as syndicates in drug cartels, which the series' storylines revolve. This means that representations of the black middleclass on South African soap operas are invested in images ranging from employees to family relatives that have identities imagined to be black middleclass criminal accomplices. These images exist, and are conceptualized within immediate social contexts of association, as texts are read to be representing social realities of the black African middleclass in the South African context. However, the latter suggests that South African television soap opera texts have shifted from the traditionally racialized (white master-black servant) conceptualization of the domestic servitude social institution in society. These somewhat unrelenting black criminal accomplice constructions find themselves as images either

constructed to be family member characterizations within the middleclass setting. Such imagery is continued in the civil employment place, constructed to be characters enticing the rhetoric of black middleclass criminal syndicates involved in corruption etc. The distorted construction of domestic servitude culture roles continues meanwhile the democratic dispensation, too, continues to present and prescribe a somewhat positive ideologically 'othered' competing black middleclass, to a racially traditional, white middleclass counterpart.

This chapter aims to explore criminated character constructions in the soap opera text *The Queen* (2016). The family makeup of the text presents themes of reunion between families and relatives; of illegal 'othered' industry business associated with the black middleclass family setting; and themes of inheritance within the 'othered's' conceptualization of criminate industries within black middleclass popular art texts. These meta-themes continue to make-up bulk of overall themes selected as ideologies associated with criminal and/or illegal acts in the drama series genre in South Africa. The premise of the chapter is to debunk the criminal relationships imagined in the popular art text *The Queen.* Here, the main mission is to surface the characterological stereotypes presented by Donal Bogle's (2001) work of black African American [male] representations. To this body of work, the research aims to extend the established black male character stereotypes- Tom's, Coon's, and Brute's, from the American episteme to an active black African middleclass conceptualization which existed in Hollywood's traditional black filmic representations. These images constitute ideologically limited false exaggerations of the African middleclass as invested in criminality. As these texts have prevailed in the post- apartheid era, they too, have significantly dominated the encounter with modernization in South Africa. The damning juxtaposition between black lower socio- economic classes to their black upwardly mobile middleclass counterparts in soap opera texts suggests the

opposite negatively presented relationship which no longer assumes the regular rhetoric between the employer and the employed for the, racially black, contextually. The notion of a crime syndicated relationship extends to the rhetoric of criminate culture(s) associated with black middleclass socialization which this chapter aims to explore. This chapter, by virtue of the consolidated democracy with modernization, aims to explore the manner in which the relationship between the black African middleclass and their civil and/ or domestic servants has been portrayed on television soap operas in South Africa as criminal accomplices. Here, the chapter presupposes that due to the inevitable democratized modernization in the South African society, black middleclass television soap opera texts have disregarded the "high moral"/ "high discipline" rhetoric of representing value instilling images of the black middleclass to which politics have spoken to in South Africa. This examination wants to understand why these images have surfaced parallel to a 'materialistic' and/or 'greed lead' black middleclass rhetoric (Iqani, 2007) in South Africa? The chapter further looks to evaluate how the politics of the black middleclass have been organized in relation to criminal relationships that exist with servitude culture roles in soap operas which serve as drivers and silencers of hegemonic ideology in the mainstream media as possible continued anti-black ideology? Here, the chapter aims to establish that soap opera texts in South Africa prey on criminal accomplice roles which associate and condone negative rhetoric and representations on this class. Lastly, the chapter seeks to understand in what ways the sudden established shift in domestic and/ or civil servitude roles to criminal accomplice as negative representation continuum, so as to account for democracy's class stratifications which are attributed to black middleclass negative representations has representation perpetuated ideology of the '*othered*'s picture on South African soap operas. Here, the chapter seeks to distinguish whether middleclass televisual soap opera texts aim to

isolate this class by locating the class at social ill peripheries of socialization and association by 'typified' economic status and racist motives associated with commercial programming in South Africa.

3.2 The *Othered* in South African Middleclass Soaps

The display of criminated representations of 'othered' black African middleclass character construction, seen on *The Queen* (2016) is described by Tomaselli (1996) as texts that can be traced to early "film epochs". These times were encompassed with African films that were "patronizing" (*sic* in Tomaselli *et al.*, 1986) to the indigenous Africans and across the diaspora. This means that this tradition of a western stereotypical, categorized, 'othered-gaze' designs, continues in post- apartheid South African television soap operas as character constructions that have achieved affluence and are materialistically progressive, but criminated. The point of departure is that the black African middleclass socialization in South Africa, and presumably the diaspora, is presented as a civil 'juxta positioning' class identity to the racially white middleclass counterpart in mainstream soap opera series. This is based not so much on the unprecedented assumption that representations of black middleclassness act as a race stake role embroiled in the neoliberal capitalisms understood as Black Economic Empowerments in South African soaps. Which, as initiative, only work to include the black person without rectifying residues of power politics. But are rather potential developments into investigations such as preyed-on juxtaposed black criminal constructions by television which reinforces negatively limited identity ideologies deduced to criminate black middleclass lives. McFarlane (2009) suggests that the upward agency of affluence attributed to Blacks within black middleclass settings, as phenomenon, in South Africa contributes to questions which are posed in "anti-subordination" (pg. 64)

investigations between the imperialist ‘other’ and black ‘othered’. Such questions remain between who and how is the ‘other’ to remain objectifying the ‘othered’.

Moreover, this suggests a notion of “Visual Imperialism” set upon the South African televisual terrain, which Tomaselli (1996) claims that “What distinguishes visual imperialism from the processes shaped by dominant ideology however, is that dimension of imperialism in which struggle is one of culture over culture rather than of a class nature (in Caulfield, 1969: 193). This means that the way visual imperialism succeeds in South Africa is how stereotypes and prejudices are disseminated through racial class character makeup inclusions and exclusions. Here, class then becomes the visual residue to which the ‘othered’ signifies a constructed representation. Therefore, the exaggerated uniform idea of perpetual black African middleclass lives is imagined realities by soap operas as driver of visual imperialism. Tomaselli continues to say that this suggests the colonization of the world perceived through the practice and prescribed consumption of selective imagery production that plays the role of representing leading beliefs or, as in numerous case in points, representing the truth (in Kuehnast, 1992). The latter then resurfaces the colonial ideologies that are treated by media such as television to account as entertainment in a democracy that is yet to establish a South African identity as these textual images present a distortedly homogeneously ‘blanketed’ identity of the black African middleclass in South Africa. The anti-subordination tactic of the ‘other’ allows for popular art texts to characterize the black African middleclass within criminated possible justifications of black African middleclassness in South Africa presented by powerhouses in commercial media.

The chapter’s aim is to somewhat answer McFarlane’s questions of: “[To the] anti-subordination [acts which are potential progressive initiatives to present middleclass entertainment(s)] - to [that subordination of the ‘other’] what happens [as processes of

subordination] when the Black identity is combined with comparative affluence and educational attainment? What effect[s] does class have on race in this circumstance?" (*sic).* As McFlaren answers that as a constituent of culture and/or race, class can only exist as an attribute of race. To this statement, I add that, class attributes pass off derogatory ideologies of blackness as race, i.e. criminality, existing as an attribute of black African middleclassness as in the text *The Queen* (2016). The institutionalization of criminated labor within black middleclass settings is "distracting entertainment", as described by (Feldman *et al.*, 1977: 378- 81). This suggests a commissioned 'acceptance' that black middleclass South Africans, as objectified 'othered' representations, pose a threat as reality to democracy in South Africa as racial factorization. Therefore, this bastardization, too, similar to fashionable concerns and social ills like warfare, paucity, ferocity, sexual category, and class and race skirmishes, presents African middleclassness as having achieved commercial currency as in the case of South Africa and its black African middleclass as commodity in popular art texts.

3.3 Middleclass Consumer Culture in South African Black Popular Art Texts

Across the diaspora the consumer culture[s] of the black middleclass remains an interesting phenomenon. This 'consuming class' attribute (Bennett *et al.*, 2009) continues to be an unexplored topic relating to black middleclassness in South Africa. The social reality is that while the black middleclass remains a global participant, the trans-nationalization nature of the South African black middleclass (Lopez and Weinstein, 2012) is claimed to be an unstable and unconcealed sphere (Iqani, 2017), where the media continues to have neurotic consumer identities of this class as in the case of television soap operas in South Africa i.e. *The Queen* (2016) where black middleclassness is characterized by a luxury lifestyle. Here theses texts present an expected understanding that black middleclass attainment and its consumer culture are

attained in more ways invested in criminality. Iqani (2017) suggests that this class should not be viewed as "...a fixed social category but 'a working social concept, a material experience, a political project and a cultural practice..." (pg., 106) - a continuing culture process. Here, Lopez and Weinstein (2012: 21) suggest the historical value of material acquisitions relevant in experiences and discursive conditions of the black middleclass exhibited pre-, during, and in post- apartheid South Africa. The consumer culture of the black middleclass spoken to by Lopez and Weinstein, 2012; and Iqani, 2017 – in the context of South Africa, remains fluid and thus its ecclectisized nature as politics of the black identity. Therefore, any representation of this class, expectedly, should allow for the varying stories of triumph, true struggle and hard work, to name a few themes which distance themselves from fixated ideologies. However, Burger *et al*., (2015) suggests that the black middleclass in South Africa exist in a somewhat dichotomized socialization where the middleclass is divided between individuals who are invested in conspicuous consumptions lifestyles where others are said to be following the white middle class consumption patterns, while other are too participants of conspicuous consumption where wealth is obtained through criminality. As the scholarship of Burger *et al.*, supposes an either-or 'prescribed' black middleclass in their research, the residual value of the 'othered' middleclass remains unexamined and thus the reluctance in soap opera genre texts in South Africa constructing storylines and imaginations of a value, integrity instilling black middleclass in South African soap opera series.

Conspicuous consumption is related to social status as visible consumption of selected goods, thus the intention of a black middleclass perceived as "…a primarily attractive market, depicting its members as highly ambitious and aspirational in their spending patterns." (Burger *et at.*, 2015: 43). To the latter, Krige (2009, 2011) notes that scholarship has criticized popular culture

for disseminating condescending cultural stereotypes associated with the black middleclass in South Africa and Burger *et al.*, (2015) argues that members of the black middleclass have raised substantive concerns relating to the depictions which associated them with people who are "…greedy and consumerist, resulting in what is seen as simplistic, patronizing and inaccurate representation of reality." *(sic)*. Here, the two-steps-forward-one-step-backward relationship evident to the black middleclass politics and fixated images on black middleclass soap opera dramas, signals a similar relationship of the democratic dispensation and politics of expectation within in the middleclass. Here, democracy is predominantly prescribing a 'new' middleclass with attributes of affluence, meanwhile colonial visually racist reservations are engraved in powerful knowledge sources such as television and treated as existing homogenous social reality in South Africa. Moreover, this understanding of conspicuous consumption examined as an element which then translates in underscoring them as linked to criminal activity in the South African context. The black African middleclass lifestyle become stylized caricature culture and are fixed as criminated subgroup on television soap opera. The perceptions generated by such constructions substantiate the claim that black African middleclassness is a fragile component in the development of any previously colonized country. However, scholarship fails to establish the reluctance of mainstream media's motive involved in perpetuating contents that reduce this diasporically inspirational social class, which this chapter aims to explore.

3.4 Production, Production Politics and the Political Economy of Producing *The Queen* (2016)

The Queen (2016) is a commercial television - DSTV Mzansi Magic soap series production that airs during television prime time soap slot at 21:00 CAT daily. Production executives are Connie and Shona Ferguson who are owners of Ferguson Films. These two veteran South African actors

have been part of several productions including *Generations* (1994) (examined in chapter 1) where Connie Ferguson began her acting lead role as Karabo Moroka and Shona as Ace on the television series. The two, then went on to star as Itumeleng and Marang on the text *The Wild* (2011) a DSTV M-Net soap. Shona along with wife Connie Ferguson, went on established Ferguson Films and both starred on their film production series *Rockville* (2013) which premiered on Mzansi Magic, then the film *The Gift* (2014) and currently are starres as Jerry Maake and Harriet Khoza in *The Queen*. These shows are all representations envisaging modern middleclass black South Africans in the post-apartheid disposition. *The Queen* is head written by Phathutshedzo Makwarela and Gwydion Beynon who are renowned screenplay writers for several television soap series in South Africa and currently Executive produce *Legacy* (2020) which will be examined in the following chapter. Here, the obvious, suggesting that whatever their intention the interest to construct black African middleclass representations had to be visually commissioned as popular art texts representing the 'other' as contender in traditionally white media platforms; which further intends to suggest that as they, too, have been veterans in the televisual and commercial television industries in South Africa their intention to be creatives within private television remains entangled in politics that guide what, how, and who is represented. However, as Furguson Films has too produced popular art texts that have been visual entertainments through film within the territory of South Africa, the unusual route that actors become film executive themselves as they harness skills on and off set, is not in question in the research but rather how black middleclass images have become recurrent positionalities depicted as criminals imagined by these creatives. Further, what is of coincidence though is that the investigated text continues black African middleclass representations two decades into democracy in South Africa. Therefore, as this text exists and is developed two decades into

Generations (1994) which is too examined in this research, evidence that the televisual experience in South Africa continues negative images invested in anti- black ideology as formidable entertainment even at junctures where democracy and modernization of the black person has been achieved, but not on paid television. This suggests that as organization within a democracy has been required to be transformative by legislation, empire will and continues to control class and race identities in South Africa.

3.4.1 Television Soaps in the Second Decade of Democracy in South Africa

Television in South Africa continues to prescribe black African middleclass identity politics in the post-apartheid dispensation placing emphasis on nation-building, reconciliation along with a national ideology of unity composed as a "rainbow nation" (Barnett 1999 and Roome 1997). This allows for popular art soap opera texts to embrace multiple cultures existing within South Africa. However, the paid television's preoccupation with criminality continues to carry the day within South Africa's television industry with a subject focus on a protagonist – the black African middleclass. The South African television backdrop comprises, but is not limited to, two subscription services where DStv/MultiChoice is a subdivision television corporation under the company Naspers Media. The two companies are responsible for the subscriptions and distributions on the DStv platform. Moreover, DStv plays a much lucid role regarding the texts played on channels like Mzansi Magic (*The Queen*'s airing channel), where programme mandate is achieved to be commissioned texts. A substantial amount of locally commissioned programming available on DStv's own branded channels where, historically, access was only by the preserve of the wealthy and privileged whom the majority is racially white. It is recently that DStv has added more local television channels, offering a series of channels dedicated to producing local content, including Mzanzi Magic, to which production policy aims to broadcast

only in South African indigenous languages. This volumous content is produced for such channels and is commissioned by DStv from independent production companies.

3.4.2 DStv's Commissioning Editorial Policy

Commissioning editorial policy is the established set of advice strategies, which govern DStv channel's editorial content producers (production institutions and creatives). Here, the understanding is that DStv is responsible for the acquisition, commissioning, and scheduling of content (Teer– Tomaselli, 2020). This comprises the DStv's and M-Net Mzansi Magic's attitude toward the respective community (indigenous South African community) and supports editors in arriving at editorial conclusions. However, while editorial policy may establish how frameworks and organizational procedure are carried out in creating and commissioning content, regulatory authorities and legislation govern what is appropriate for television in South Africa. Therefore, editorial policy exists to ensure that priorities and editorial strategy aligns to that of M-Net Mzansi Magic's and plays the role to inspire and engage audiences under the regulation of established regulatory stakeholders. Further, as channels and independent producers are responsible for editorial priorities, which alow them to work with, create and develop ideas which aim to meet the viewer's needs. Therefore, while Mzansi Magic is responsible for the final editorial and creative control over the content, format and presentation of the commissioned programming, the regulatory framework prescribed by Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa's (BCCSA) Code of Conduct and the Electronic Communications Act of South Africa provide the M-Net broadcasting service in accordance with the relevant provisions and the applicable regulations and other regulatory instruments enforced by these authorities to which wholistically combined M-Net broadcasting service should not contravene. The BCCSA

code of conduct for subscription broadcasting service liscencees under item 10 mentions 'Contents which may not be broadcast - Advocating war, violence or hatred' suggests that:

> Subscription broadcasting service licensee may not knowingly broadcast material which, judged within context – 10.1 amounts to propaganda for war; 10.2 incites imminent violence; or 10.3 advocates hatred that is based on race, ethnicity, gender or religion and which constitutes incitement to cause harm.
>
> (BCCSA, 2001)

Here, item 10 of the code of conduct is read with the following - Section 54(1) of the Electronic Communications Act 2005 (ECA) which provides that all broadcasting licensees must adhere to the prescribed Code of Conduct for Broadcasting Services. The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), too, developed a Code of Conduct for Subscription Broadcasting Service Licensees in accordance with section 54(3) of the ECA (2005) which all exist through the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) under one purpose that is to:

> …develop, protect and promote national and provincial identity, culture and character. In achieving this, these regulations will seek to promote programming which:
>
> a) is produced under South African creative control.
> b) is identifiably South African and recognizes the diversity of all cultural backgrounds in South African society.
> c) will develop a television industry which is owned and controlled by South Africans.
> d) will establish a vibrant, dynamic, creative and economically productive South African film and television industry.
>
> (ICASA, 2016)

Therefore, as the research aims to investigate black middleclass soap opera texts in the post-Apartheid dispensation, regulation authorities have also secured ways in which derogatory race stratifications can be avoided. *The Queen* (2016) exists far from these regulations as this chapter

suggests and to a significant degree contravene codes of conducts as expected by legislation because the continuing negative representation presented by the investigated texts do not uphold the presiding regulation and certainly M- Net Mzansi Magic can too be assumed to mis abide with South African authorities as a television channel that commissions content as distributed by the DStv encounter in South Africa, especially when all bodies have a constructive role to play in the continuing construction of an eclectic South African identity.

Ncube (2019), suggests that contemporary drama storylines dedicated at telling local community stories with distinctive cultural identities and practices have started to problematize multiculturalism. Here, Ncube states that more emphasis is directed at authenticised African experiences in the contemporary situation which includes the representation of black African middleclasses on television soap opera. This includes the eminent representation of the 'othered' black African middleclass in the South African setting where images are more focused on crime alternative depictions without ever presenting the legitimate black African middleclass societies. Yolisa Pahle, head of General Entertainment at Naspers (holding company to DStv), emphasised that the company's attention is on "sharing powerful stories for Africans, by Africans, because we understand the importance of unique, home grown content" (City Press, 2016). However, as for some creatives: writers, directors and producers, it is deemed emancipation to the creative industry, considering the history of visual representation during apartheid, and the era's residual effects currently in the post- apartheid dispensation, where reconciliation is being the only South African story. The range of explorations into identity, relationships, crime, and extravagant lifestyles which is the very essence of investigation in this research, betters the visual representation, but refuses to distance itself from an obsession with criminately devious and negated 'othered' black African middleclass image constructions on texts. South African

screenplay director and actor Duma Ka Ndlovu claims that “South Africans want stories that reflect their lives. But they don’t want stories that look down on them or patronize them. They want people to understand black life, township life and African life; something that gives them a sense of pride” (Mkwanazi, 2015). Moreover, even at junctures when creative like Ndlovu go on to say, “the interesting thing about the sudden upheaval of local content is we don’t have to toyi- toyi, march or to ask for it. The time is right” (Mkwanazi, 2015); this disregards and deflates the process of decolonialism, and of deconstructionism of apartheid representations and colonial anti-black ideology which to this research seem to have seeped through in to the South African democracy when visual emancipation is investigated in soap opera drams and this has continued into the second decade of democracy as popular art texts.

3.4.3 Popularity of Soap Operas and Dramas in Second Decade of Democracy

Television show business in South Africa encompasses a dominant soap opera gengre, every so often degraded as trite. Ruth Teer- Tomaselli suggests that the exchange with consumers in soaps is pure emotion. She continues to say where soapies take viewers on a heightened emotional storylines, they too let them experience extraterrestrial- like lives vicariously through charismas that somehow resemble them, which brings about an escape into desirable lives of characters in unkown whereabouts (Chronis, 2013). This suggests that soaps have the power to releave as well as that of generating ideology in societies imagined and out of reach to the text’s audiences. South African soap operas are scheduled for primetime slots, and “primetime” actuality being the hours between 18:00 and 22:00 at evening times. Furthermore, South African soaps exhibit a great deal of film genre crossover and hybridization. Actor and director Duma Ka Ndlovu, says that “In South Africa we take a primetime drama and call it a soapie because we use the ingredients of a soapie, a telenovela and a thriller to tell a story” (Mkwanazi, 2015), while

Straubhaar (2007) suggests that soapies in South Africa are culturally contiguous and therefore suggests a daily record "…of the concerns, obsessions, ethos, and values of the society…" it derives (Teer- Tomaselli, 2011: 414). Television soap opera in South Africa offers "stories that authenticate the audience's world by reflecting that world back to them" (King'ara 2013, p. 90); however, soaps locally are predominantly criminate suggestions of black middleclassness.

3.5 Entry of Criminate Black Male Middleclass African Stereotypes on Television Soaps

The representation of black people has since existed throughout slavery and written text days, and now in contemporary popular art texts such as *The Queen* (2016). Donald Bogle (2001) suggests, as in Tomaselli (1996), the argument on visual imperialism - that the 'fetish' and/or obsession about the black prescribed ideology during the colonization of Africa generated prejudices and stereotypes by the time black images, about Africans, had to be adapted into filmic texts in the early 1900s. Tomaselli further notes that during this period "images of Africans and their primitive ways – cannibalism, gluttony, fetishism, sexual promiscuity, and heathenism – fused into the notion of 'darkness', the absence of light of human values" (in Stoller 1992: 141). This suggests that as texts are imagined and created, they perpetually consist of prescribed stereotypical and prejudiced image trends that work to interpret existing attributes of the racially black populations in Africa and the diaspora. Tomaselli continues to claim that even in democracies Africans continue to be presented as the "…irredeemable Other…" through popular media as television soap opera as in the case of South Africa. Moreover, to the female stereotypes examined in Chapter one – the Mammy, Jezebel, and Molattoe; male stereotypes, too, exist as framework characterizations that can be found on the soap opera text *The Queen* (2016). The *Tom*, *Coon*, and *Brute* black male stereotypes are continued from Bogle's *(sic)* critique, this criticism allows for a much-broadened understanding of the 'othered's' (the black

African middleclass) class, gendered, and cultural relations existing in society. Even more, as black middleclass male criminality in South Africa has been conceptualized promptly and derived from African American contexts of socialization these first stereotypes make it plausibleto examine existing black middleclass male criminality locally, in popular contemporary televisual texts.

3.6 Analysis of *The Queen* (2016)

3.6.1 Visual Social Semiotics

Harrison (2005), understands visual social semiotics as a fresh field of study (originating in the 1990s) that involves "the description of semiotic resources, what can be said and done with images (and other visual means of communication) and how the things people say and do with images can be interpreted" (Jewitt and Oyama 2001: 136). This means that visual social semiotics rely not only on textual purposes which aim to placate commercial standards of entertainment where a visual text investigation is only concerned with commercial logic reasoning as to why television soap opera texts in South Africa dwell on criminate male characterizations as fitting entertainment. Moreover, the latter intersects with the contexts of concepts of socialization texts as social identifiers and signifiers related structures with the presumption that society remains the basis of interpretation which "[s]eek the hidden or deeper 'structure', 'codes' and 'grammars' that under-pin phenomena" (Ball and Smith, 1992: 41) such as those suggested by black African middleclass soap opera texts i.e. *The Queen* in the context of South Africa. Therefore, analyzing how criminate black African middleclassness (an 'othered' class context) is presented within the concept of masculinity which is constructed as male characterization(s) in South African television soaps, the link between visual imperialism, domination, and the creation of subordination in the middleclass terrain in South African can be

located at the anti- black ideology peripheries in society. Woolacott, suggests that semiotics play the role of investigating what the eye reads along with conceptualized stereotypes and prejudices that present themselves as residual meaning - where the "constellation of studies, philosoph[ies], a theor[ies], [and] a set of concepts and a method[s] of analysis" (1988: 94) interconnect to surface particular socially racial symptoms. In social semiotics, attention is particular to the characteristics of social organization and social context which make meaning.

However, signs are regarded as items for consumption where process of sign making are associated, enthused by, and depended on the cultural, social and psychosomatic history of conceptualization and contextualization of the creative/ creator. Social semiotics is engrossed with/in the perspective which the sign is created. Therefore, in this research social semiotics studies the filmic component of popular art texts as allied to, but not reliant on, written texts. Moreover, social semiotics allows for the use of linguistics as written and visual systems of meaning mutually are perceived to be emergent of alike cultures. This suggests that with substantial consideration and appropriateness, social semiotics argues that each medium comprises, of specific confines and prospects of interpretation. Therefore, the combination of visual and social semiotics provides a suitable method for examination where black African middleclassness is a subject of examination in the context of investigating criminated accomplice roles in the soap opera text, *The Queen* (2016).

Kress and van Leeuwen develop the methodology of visual social semiotic theory through social semiotics, where social semiotics accepts that linguistic and visual grammatical forms are prescribed social rule, and which cannot not exist in isolation from meaning (Halliday; cited in Kress and van Leeuwen). However, this method overtly suggests how meaning is produce and transferred – which is indicative through patterns of visual features prominent in western

societies. This allows evidence resembling key black middleclass constructions existing as established convention in western society, to be employed by 'creatives' as ways to 're-produce' social meaning as adopted reality in the South African context. Jewitt (1999) claims that denotation is prearranged in the edifices of imaginings where representation assumes the basis presentation of individuals, entities and setting; to which the composition assumes its mode and medium. The description and interpretation of these structures forms the basis of the social semiotic approach to analyzing visual texts.

In *The Queen* (2016) the characters Kgosi (played by Sello Maake KaNcube), Shaka Khoza (played by Sthembiso Khoza), and Brutus Khoza (played by Themba Ndaba) are characters in the text that drive themes of violence. These characters also, to some extent, reveal how heightened tensions between family members. As these character's storylines revolve a family that is involved in illegal drug syndicates as black African middleclass individuals. However, their constructs resemble a rather too-historical-too-soon-a-revisit of male character constructions that prevailed in the history of Hollywood. These stereotypes are found in popular television texts *The Queen* (2016) as 'othered' criminate masculinities which are explored in this analysis. In the text Kgosi leads much of the first season as he orchestrates his sister's husband's murder when Mzi is on a mission to divorce Harriet for their house helper. As Brutus (Mzi's brother) and Shaka (Mzi's older son) are infuriated missioning day and night to avenge Mzi's killer, Kgosi repeatedly finds himself at odds with the two. These characters reveal much of black middleclassness involvement with the township rhetoric of drug dealings inclusive of violence. Even more, these character constructions are presented with a somehow opposite character construction that is either harmless and invested in correcting the world (role as Jerry Maake played by Shona Furgson) as a policeman, and army pilot, son to Mzi Khoza - Kagiso

Khoza (played by Loyiso MacDonald). The character Kgosi is investigated below as the harshly criticized character in the text.

3.6.2 The Black African Middleclass *Tom* as Opprobrium'd Kgosi in South African Soap Opera-*The Queen* (2016)

Kgosi's storyline (played by Sello Maake KaNcube) is characterized of a homosexual middle-aged black African middleclass male who endures his class social status through his beloved sister Harriet Khoza's (played by Connie Ferguson) inheritance from Mzi Khoza (played by Treasure Tshabalala), her husband. This character is forever and always loyal to his sister and her children – daughter Keabetswe Khoza otherwise known as Kea (played by Dineo Langa) and son – Kagiso Khoza (played by Loyiso Macdonald), almost at a suggestive stunt that he becomes more of servile family member than an uncle and brother to the Khozas. The series begins with Kgosi orchestrating Mzi's death which takes place at Keabetswe's wedding, as Mzi had planned to divorce Harriet who he ordered to leave the premises just after the wedding ceremony. Kgosi, eloquent in his speech, a character with inexistent emotion, and very determined to seize opportunity – this character is presented as confident and strong-willed. However, Kgosi's character revolves around that of the black male image construction stereotype, the *Uncle Tom*.

This section provides a detailed description of the *Tom* character stereotype as an evident characterological construction in the soap opera *The Queen* (2016) played by Sello Maake KaNcube as the character Kgosietsile otherwise known as Kgosi. The *Tom* characterization is the first of several socially common 'Good Negro' characterizations that are evident on American performances and films. *Tom*s are typically characterized as bullied, harassed, badgered, whaled, incarcerated, and affronted (Bogle, 1994). Such characterological attributes remain between a faithful, expected stoic, forever generous, and resembling selflessly imagined constructions.

Bogle *(sic)* suggests that these characters would usually commend themselves to white audiences as heroes, to which the text *The Queen* (2016) is class- bound. This means that in the soap opera text *The Queen* (2006) a similar character construction in the text is present. Here, two 'Toms' are established. The section compares and contrasts the investigated text's conceptualization of an African black middleclass *Tom* character that is constructed as an imagined character in the South African context with resemblances with the initial novel Tom character and with that of a history of continuing stereotypes that have evolved over time through to the introduction of the cinema. These resemblances justify the manner in which African middleclass has been interpreted in South Africa.

3.6.2.1 The Novelistic *Tom* resemblance in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1853) presented in *The Queen* (2016)

In Harriet Beecher Stowe's antislavery novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1853), there exists a portrayal of a temperate, modest, Christian slave – Tom, to whom the black male *Tom* stereotype is characterized. This character's beliefs are meek, regular, and thorough. Stowe employs this character as demonstration of a picture-perfect placid and forgiving nature of a black man, which she believed remains quiescent in all racially black people as such qualities would ordinarily reveal themselves in positive conditions. Moreover, in the novel, Tom's initial master - Mr Shelby, is benevolent and therefore, Tom's instinctive sanctity flourishes. The story develops and Mr Shelby suffers as a businessman due to his business acumen, or lack thereof, and his financial plights compel him to sell Tom, and Tom remains put despite the news that he would soon be sold. Tom's second master - Mr St. Clare, makes friends with Tom and promises him that he would free him, but inopportunely for Tom, Mr St. Clare is murdered prior to getting signing manumission papers. Tom is then sold to Simon Legree, a cruel, merciless plantation owner.

Legree is a drunkard who distastes religion and religious people. As Legree intends to use Tom as an overseer, Tom is ordered by Legree to beat a woman slave and he refuses. Legree strikes him repeatedly with a cowhide lash, and again, he tells Tom to beat the woman. Tom, with a soft voice, says, "The poor crittur's sick and feeble; 'twould be downright cruel, and it's what I never would do, nor begin to. Mas'r, if you mean to kill me, kill me; but, as to my raising my hand against anyone here, I never shall, - I'll die first" (Stowe, 1853: 439). However, evident in *The Queen* (2016) the character Kgosi poses much of the similar characteristics to that which are described in the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. This novelistic Tom as a slave – diligent at his job, devoted to his masters, calm, and often content as in *The Queen*, the character Kgosi. On one hand, while the 1853 Tom is vended, cussed, struck, jolted, whipped, overworked, and then beaten to death; on the other Kgosi, in the series, is presented with similar storylines where family members like Mzi Khoza (played by Brutus Khoza (played by Themba Ndaba), and Shaka Khoza (played by SK Khoza) are often presented scuffling with Kgosi.

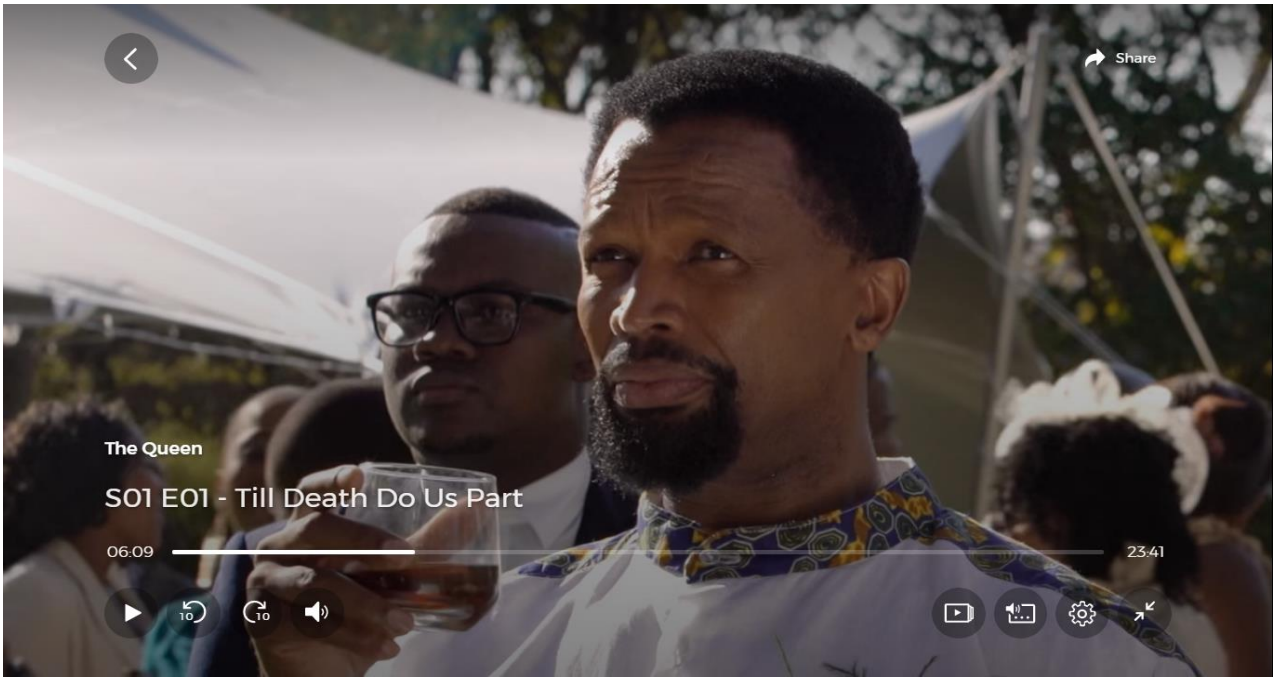


Figure 1 – (Source: Showmax.com) Kgosi at the Khoza's during Keabetwe's Wedding precession

Figure 1, is a two shot camera framing in the scene of the first episode of the series, where in the scene the character Kgosi assumes the featured talent (character), positioned in the foreground with a focused depth of field more to the talent's face which the shot relies more on the talent's actions so as to keep us in temporal suspence. This medium tilt-shift lens allows the viewer not so much perspective on the entire dialogue taking place between the talents but more specifically on Kgosi's speech. At this point Mzi begins the dialogue with special appearance talent 'Doctor Phiri' (played by Saint Seseli) with Kgosi positioned next to Phiri and Brutus Khoza (played by Themba Ndaba) next to his brother, Mzi. The scene begins with a wedding precession setting where the camera pans, first in a gradually horizontal whip pan shot following a butler walking toward the group of men standing around to the right hand side of the camera frame, with the talents reminiscing on making fortunes, family burdens and children growing up. At this moment Kgosi's response to Mzi allows emotion to play a great deal as the character's reaction in the continuity scene is viewed at an almost a neutral camera angle. The butler exits the frame and the camera moves around the group of men to a frontal view where the talents are positioned at opposite horizontal ends of the frame. The camera shots continue back and forth at almost neutral +/-45-degree angles between the talents where each frame is in a medium shot. Kgosi appears in most of the +45-degree shots, and the camera shifts from a full shot to a medium shot to which Kgosi appears in figure 29:

Mzi: *Kodwa ke umunt wakh' uyazala. Ahh wazal' umlotha wodwa. Ngiyakutshela. Ingan'zam aziyazi inhlupheko. Ezikwaziyo nje kukuqhoboz' amafa zisapahaze imali yami.* [Subtitled: Yes, they're all adults now but I still try to create a haven for them. Unfortunately, they choose their

own dysfunctional paths. I'm telling you; my kids know nothing about suffering. The only thing they know is to splurge! And spend my money.]

Phiri: *Hawu, kodwa khawusho Hlase. Is that not the reason you've worked so hard – ukuthi lezingane zinga sweli lutho.* [Subtitles: But, tell me Hlase, is that not the reason that you've worked so hard? That these kids need nothing.]

Mzi: *Well that was the idea. Kodwa ke konakala. Uyazi ukuthi ingan' zami zonke azina- dankie. Ngaphandle nje kweyodwa, uShaka.* [Subtitled: But it's clear as daylight that all my children are ungreatful. Except for one of course, Shaka.]

Brutus: *Nakho ke!* [Subtitled: That's right.]

Mzi: *Eh. Phiri. Kwakungelula mfo. Ngikhumbula umsebenzi wami wokuqala nje ngisebenza eJemisini ngiwu-driver. Babengirholela ize leze. Eight hundred-rand nge-forghtnight.* [Subtitled: Phiri, it was not easy my friend. I remember my first job in Germiston working as a driver. I used to earn peanuts. Eight hundred rands per fortnight.

Phiri: *Mm. Imadlana.* [Subtitled: That was nothing.]

Mzi: *Kodwa ngazama ke. Ngangine-van eyodwa nje, engangi gijimisa ngayo impahla yonke indawo la. Kuthe kule awu nganonophala. Ngazithola nami sengishaya phela nge-trucking company, enkulukazi kunazo zonke lapha emzansi. Ehe. Awubeke nje namhlanje sizobusa lapha indodakazi yami eyigugu...* [Subtitled: At that time, I only had a bakkie to help me transport goods everywhere. Eventually, things looked up. I found myself running a truck business. One of the biggest companies in South Africa. Look at my success today even my beautiful daughter…]

Brutus: *Ahh umlilo.* [Subtitled: She's ravishing.]

Mzi: *Isizothathwa yindodana kaNgqongqoshe wezwe.* [Subtitled: She's getting married to the Minister's son.]

Kgosi (Figure 29): *** [Subtitled: What's sad is… Hlase, is that with all the riches you have you still don't have any class.]

Mzi: *Kukhuluma bani pho! Wena! Unani wena? Ngoba awulutho nje uw'mahlalela into engasebenzi.* [Subtitled: look who's talking! You! What do you have? You are nothing. Never even worked a day in your life.]

Kgosi sees Kagiso approaching and walks to him as they greet each other.

Kgosi: *Hey…*

Kagiso: *Malume…* [Subtitled: Uncle…]

Kgosi: *** [Subtitled: My favorite nephew.]

Kagiso: *It's good seeing you.*

Kgosi: *Good seeing you.* *** [Subtitled: There is your father.]

Kgosi exits the camera frame and the scene continues.

The significance of this camera framing is the establishment of the character Kgosi. Here, early in the series we are provided a characterological construction that remains firm in his truth where the character is articulate in the manner in which he feels regarding Mzi's decision to divorce Harriet for the house helper which translates into the resented response in the scene. This character calls out Mzi stating that he remains without class even with his wealth, judging that even Mzi's character is irredeemably immoral as he remains a somewhat a sexually promiscuous black middleclass male. Mzi's own short-lived character present more pointers as to the ways in which even him as wealthy man, his affluence cannot be tracked without this middleclassness being associated and tracked with residuals of criminal activity. Moreover, the sarcasm, causes a condescending response from Mzi here, as he calls out Kgosi for being jobless, unmaterialistic and almost insinuating that he is lazy – for not "working a day in his life". These themes are

common in the attributes described Donald Bogle's (2001) *Tom*'. However, this type of *Tom* remains in the South African context as an 'othered' character construction that is both not harmful and tolerant. This repeated occurrence in devaluing systems seems to be an element that a South African – *Tom* has succumbed, though he is a supposed middleclass citizen who remains servile, as with the character Kgosi to the Khoza family. Black middleclassness is stripped from Kgosi at this point as he only justifies an 'othered' prevailing criminate black middleclass. Titled employment is not his business which defines his blackness within a middleclass setting. This means that he therefore has no choice other than to opt for tolerance and a smirk to somehow put his point across. This character's economic agency suffers only to a normalized idea that drug criminality bares violence (directly or indirectly), and that there is always a black middleclass male character in soaps that will forever hold testament to that framework whatever the circumstance. Kgosi's harmlessness as with the original Tom is null and void as presented by figure 2. As scuffles take place while the Khoza's are in search of Mzi's murderer Kgosi offers to help.

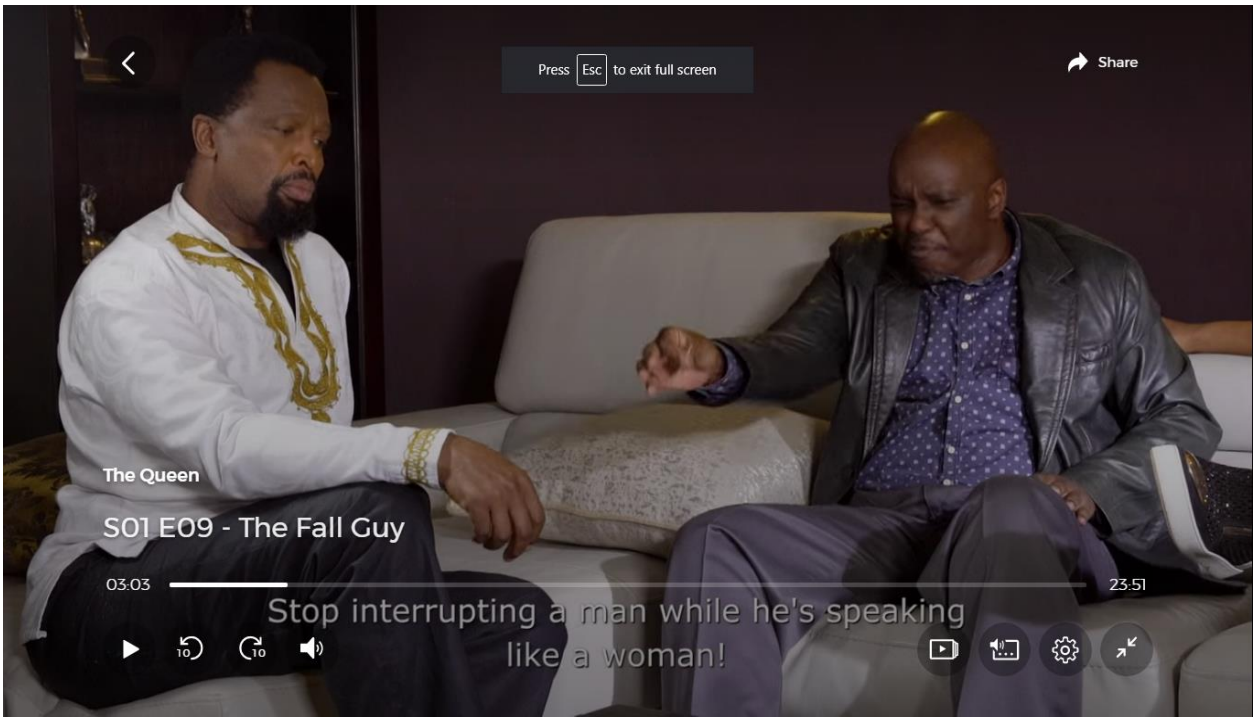


Figure 2 – scuffling between Kgosi and Brutus Khoza during a family meeting as kgosi offers his help to find Mzi's shooting fall guy (Source: Showmax.com)

Figure 2 presents a medium wide two shot featuring talents Kgosi and Brutus where the characters are occupying the midground between the house canvases and the camera which allows for a more attention as spectacle in the scene. These characters are presented having an exchange while a family meeting takes place. Kgosi positioned to the left of the camera framing and Brutus on the opposite end which provide the understanding that the two characters are at different ends signifying and element of conflict within the frame. This means that the frame presents split emotions on opposite ends – one, clam Kgosi, and on the right Brutus with an upset face. Brutus, faithless, in Kgosi once again finds an opportunity to speak down at this character as depicted furious in the frame. Here, as the search for Mzi's murderer has exhausted all options, a meeting is convened by Shaka khoza (played by Sthembiso SK Khoza) a day after Harriet staged a kidnapping, also, orchestrated by Kgosi. The scene begins with an establishing

shot of the suburbia architecture of the Khoza's pool side view to the house, which cuts to the family sitting around in a lounge setting. Kea's husband Tumi (played by supporting act Thokozani Edmund Ngema) begins the dialogue:

Tumi: *Uhm, maybe I should just call my dad. He could help.*

Kea: Mhm, Tumi ubabakho ak'suSuperman. [Subtitled: No. Your fatheris not superman, Tumi.]

Tumi: *Baby, but you know that my father is a very powerful man, right?*

Kea: *Hhm! Siyak'bongela*. [Subtitled: Good for you.]

Tumi: *He could speak to the Minister of Police and hecould ask him to …*

Shaka: *Thina boMkhathini eyethu iililo siyazibasela sizicimele. Kea, uphi unyoko?* [Subtitled: We, the Mkhathini's finish whatever it is that we've started.]

Brutus: *Amen!*

Kea: *Ngimazelaphi mina?* [Subtitled: I'm not her keeper!]

Harriet walks into the room with Kagiso and takes a seat.

Harriet: *** [Subtitled: I'm sorry to keep you waiting. I unfortunately did not sleep well last night. My whole body's complaining today.]

Kagiso: *You need to see a doctor mom...*

Harriet: *** [Subtitled: I'll be fine, son. Shaka, this is your meeting. You can go on.]

Shaka: *Harriet, uhm… I know that we don't always see eye to eye as a family. And lento yenzeke izolo was unfortunate.* [Subtitled: And what happened yesterday was unfortunate.]

Kgosi interjects: *"Unfortunate"? Unfortunate? My sister was kidnapped. Beaten! Abused! And almost killed!*

Kea: *Ka Women's month ebille.* [Subtitled: During Women's month even.]

Kagiso: Had you cooperated with the police from the get go Rambo would be behind bars, not terrorizing this family, Shaka!

Shaka: *You know, your faith in the police is really touching mfan' omncane yazi. Realy it's so cute. Sibesazi kahle kamhlophe sonke ukuthi amapoyisa alapha eSouth Africa ayiyoyo nje kuphela ezikhuluphele ezingakwazi nokugijima. Until this matter is resolved, no one is to leave this house on their own. Amadodami aseKZN ayeza lana edlin and everyone is getting a bodyguard* [Subtitled: … younger brother. When it is quite clear that South African Police services are people who can't do their jobs. … I have men coming from KZN.]

Kgosi: *And how are you planning on finding him?*

Shaka: *** [Subtitled: I've got men searching the whole of Tembisa for Rambo.]

Kgosi: *Do you ven know if he still lives in Tembisa?*

Shaka: *Look, I will find him! And when I do find him I'm going to make sure that he…*

Kgosi: *** [Subtitled: Wait! Are you going to blow his brains out? How can you even say that?! When you clearly don't know where that damn Rambo is!]

Brutus (figure 33): *Hau kahle, awume. UShaka usakhuluma. Awuyek' ungena indoda emlonyeni ngathi ungumfazi! Usakhuluma!* [Subtitled: Do you ever shut up! Can you not see that Shaka is still speaking? Stop interrupting a man while he's speaking, like a woman! He's still speaking!]

Kgosi: *** [Subtitled: Well if you keep on interrupting me I will bite you. What I'm trying to tell you is that let me help you struggling heroes! I've got birds waiting to sing!]

Brutus: *Inyon lezo? Inyoni zakho lezo sobona uzoz'thola phi, ziyabhabha, ziyahamba la.* [Subtilted: Your damn birds; we don't even know where you get them. Your damn birds will fly away!]

Kgosi: Mxm.

While Kgosi finds the opportunity to save the moment as he brings out his heroic character as would the character Tom in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*; he offers help to find Mzi's murderer to Brutus and Shaka knowingly that finding the murderer would be in his plan, too as revealed in the soap in a later episode. Brutus quickly makes it a short-lived moment where he's crude state over shadows Kgosi's help proposal. Here, the obvious haux in Kgosi's cunning justified as an act of heroism continues to erode the entire fact that this character is supposedly a middleclass individuals with morals and values. Moreover, as the camera jump-cuts between four and two shot camera framings at almost -/+ 180 degree angles creating tension in the scene, the multi layered dialogue seems to be Kgosi's very own orchestration too. Here, as Kgosi had anticipated that the search for Mzi's shooter will have lead Shaka and Brutus to Rambo (played by Batsile Ramasodi) the difficulty in seizing Rambo is, too, Kgosi's own doing. Kgosi makes it a point that his assistance in finding Rambo is the only way anyone can avenge themselves and even try to find some justice for the Khoza's even when Shaka tries to assure everyone that the perpetrator will be found. At this point Brutus quickly does the usual – shuts down Kgosi, and the good for nothing attribute is brought up, again. Therefore, as heroic and loyal, this character construction, it is negative, and attributes of this nature nonetheless makeup a number of black African middleclass storylines in South African soap operas as with the character of Kgosi. From a criminal accomplice, an opportunist uncle, and brother who plays a servile role to the Khoza's, Kgosi this character's existence is always questioned and disapproved based on his good for nothing trait as his black African middleclass character is always presented along with a shifty, immoral, unemployed black middleclass representing the 'Other'. As the Tom characters develop and evolve from the initial with time, they too have been adapted into filmic character forms which extend this stereotype's attributes which were evinced by modernization, and

democratization in the post- Apartheid era in South Africa as characterizations of the black African middleclass. The section below uncovers the filmic Tom.

3.6.2.2 The Cinematic/ Filmic *Tom*

The early 20th century was comprised by many cinematic adaptations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* which represented slavery as a benign social institution in society. In many films the contemporary cinematic Tom is the smartest, most articulate character – the enlightened Tom. This Tom character construction is initially intended to probe into philosophical concerns such as social equality; the promotion of human welfare along with selflessness as socially enabling elements in the black society's developments. Moreover, this characterological construction acts upon these metaphysical ruminations. This Tom is a quintessence of devout quality, and sacrificing for others (usually and as prescribed, the racially white). Like the earlier Toms, filmic Toms are denied sex lives as with Kgosi in the soap opera text *The Queen* (2006). The character Kgosi, like the Tom in many roles, is without a romantic relationship, and sexual fulfilment. Bogle (1994) describes these filmic Toms as mild-mannered, retrogressions to humanized Christian servants of the 1930s and 1940s where almost every film that explored the topic of slavery included Toms as in the productions of exploration with black middleclass Africans in South African soap opera texts. The modern filmic portrayal of the *Tom* stereotype is a distortion of the original character construction in Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1853) where, now, it has achieved a slur kind epitaph.

The modern-day use of the slur "Uncle Tom" or "Tom", in the diaspora, is defined as a dichotomized variation, where on one hand exists a black male character who is docile, loyal, religious, and a contented servant who regards himself of lowly social status, while on the other

hand in Soaouth African television soaps there exists a criminally motivated black male characterization who subordinates himself into inferior relations so as to achieve more favorable social status within the prevailing mainstream societies such as middling social classes in society, similarly to the "Uncle Tom" slur definition. In both occasions, these characters are believed to have been overly identifying and/or associated with racially white status socialization – in the first instance because of fear, and in the second, because of opportunism. This characterization of the black African middleclass male use is more common today and resonates with black middleclass character constructions as criminate accomplices in South African soaps. Therefore, the black African middleclass *Tom* is resonant with the latter Tom's characterization where this character remains loyal to the mission of survival characterized with opportunism as further analyzed in figures 3 and 4.

Figure 3 and 4 begin in a tracking frontal medium two shot, featuring the characters Kgosi and Harriet in the frames. This continuity analepsis (flashback) scene interjects the films composition in real time the morning after Mzi's shooting when Violet (the maid) comes in to Harriet's bedroom to offer her a head wrap. This allows for tension and increased suspense of the viewer. The scene begins in a full fade-in black and white special effect shot of the featured talents walking down a garden pathway, so as to bring about memory thought which alludes to how the murder of Mzi came about. The camera keeps tracking the two talents as they deliberate on Mzi's decision.



Figure 3 & 4 (Source: Showmax.com) – A continuity shot of Kgosi with Harriet as she breaks the news that Mzi wants her out of the house

Harriet: *For two years he's been carrying on with her under my roof. For two years he's disrespected me.* *** [Subtitled: And here I am respecting everyone even Violet thinking she's well behaved. While taking care of his bastard child. I won't let him do that to me. I won't let him disrespect me and my children.]

Kgosi: *** [Subtitled: What are you planning to do then? You won't be able to fight him easily. He will defeat you and you will be left on your own.]

Harriet comes to a stop and Kgosi turns to back to her to continue the conversation.

Kgosi: *** *Or else your children and I will find you in a shallow grave.* [Subtitled: My dear sister. You got married to a real thug. A brutal thug. Hmm…He'll fight you with fire and you? No, fight fire with fire. This is the very same man who left his family before being involved with you. He will do the same to you.]

Harriet: *** [Subtitled: He'll never do that to me. I loved him and I meant everything to him.]

Kgosi: *He can and he will. He's decided that he doesn't love you anymore. You're expandable. Replaceable. And he's found a fitting replacement for you, the maid. Half your age.*

Harriet: *I want him dead.*

Kgosi: *That can be arranged.*

Moreover, when Harriet is unsure whether she wants the love of her life dead, Kgosi assures her that "…that can be organized." And is unflinching in his statement. Even more, an element of opportunism presents itself as Kgosi understands that if Harriet does not act quickly, she will lose everything including her children, which leaves him out of luxury and his "said" middleclassness that the film tries to expose. As this scene continues from a medium frontal tracking shot, continuity editing allows for medium close-up over the shoulder jump-cut shots between the two talents as audience's suspense remain an element of anticipation towards the main focus of the dialogue – the decision to annihilate Mzi. This is built up by the tension caused by the background music as high tempo sound. Such organized entertainment texts publicly prescribe notions about the black race similar to what the traditionalist racially white people dare not say, that, crime and welfare are black phenomena, and that like institutions of affirmative action in society (to the racially white) sound like reverse discrimination, to which alludes to perspectives of white racism being interpreted by this race as not the cause of black problems. This partly challenges the accepted ideology that crime exists far from justifiable cause due to racial discrimination, segregation, subordination, and degradation which are all intertwined as intersectional components of black societies. Black African middleclass texts are without any investigation in media existing in developing countries such as South Africa though these texts remain invested in negative perpetual images of the black middleclass.

3.6.3 Frameworking as Residual Representation of The Minstrel *Coon*, and Uncle Remus - The *Coon*, As Black African Middleclass Character Construction(s) Evident in the Character Brutus Khoza in *The Queen* (2016)

The initial use of the Coon character stereotype remains described as a complete disregard of the racially black African male, drawn from an almost completely chastised conceptualization invested in anti-black politics across the African diaspora (Bogle, 2001). The character Brutus Khoza played by Themba Ndaba in *The Queen* (2016) is an early 1900s black character construction which has become resurfaced representation parallel to modernization that came about with duplicate coon types. In America there exists a character that is recognized as an "older, docile black person who accepted Jim Crow laws and [its] etiquette..." However, the black African coon is identified with youthful, metropolitan blacks who insulted whites. The character construction depicted by the black African middleclass coons is represented as a happily dedicated servant like Brutus. While this character holds a servile role to his brother Mzi Khoza he also presents characteristics that as described by Donald Bogle (1994), where he suggests that historical coons were also depicted as "no-account niggers, those unreliable, crazy, lazy, subhuman creatures good for nothing more than eating watermelons, stealing chickens, shooting crap, or butchering the English language. (pg., 8) which he also acknowledges as representing resistance against slavery and discrimination. The Minstrel *Coon*, the *Coon* – Uncle Remus, and the Black African Middleclass *Coon* are traced as frame working processes of creating anti-black residual representations of the black African middleclass.

3.6.3.1 The Minstrel *Coon*

Minstrel *Coon*s are caricatures that initially were typical characters among minstrel performers who were members of a band of entertainers with made-black faces. These performers' recited songs and music that would, superficially, be of black American origin. Minstrel show white audiences were entertained by these 'slow-talking fools' as they depicted exaggerations that evaded physical exertion and any grownup responsibilities. However, this transformed the coon into a comic figure for performances where these imagined constructions are source to spiteful, ill-mannered, laughable pity which the character Brutus resembles. Here, the significance of this character construction presents the manner in which caricature constructions have paved a way for misrepresentations of blackness in popular art forms such as soap opera texts in South Africa where texts are found to be at extreme lengths with imagined character constructions which lies significant with that of many Minstrel *coon* shows. Minstrel Coons were at times referred to as "Zip Coons" or "Urban Coons". The characterizations on one hand revolve around skits where if the theme is of an ante-bellum plot, the coon is represented as a liberated black male; and if the skit's plot post-dated the slavery era, he is presented as a racially black urban male character. The latter makes much of Brutus's black middleclass characterization as this representation exists in post- apartheid South Africa. Moreover, this characterological caricature holds the thought that he is smart as his racial white counterpart – as whites were believed to be of higher intellectual frequency during the medieval times. However, this black male's recurrent malapropisms and inaccurate rationality suggested otherwise. Here, the black African middleclass Brutus is presented playing a servant-like role to his brother and the whole Khoza family. The character Brutus, like the Minstrel *Coon* caricature, hardly ever accounts for anything to anyone in the series even with his dependent state on the Khoza's. Brutus's humor is presented at the most

unexpected times during the series. Here, this old- fashioned character *ubab' omncane* (uncle) to Shaka is presented in a dilemma between Harriot Khoza and Zodwa (former wife to Mzi) in figure 5.



Figure 5 (Source: Showmax.com) – Brutus and Shaka after Zodwa throws a tantrum the morning of Mzi's funeral

Figure 5 is a frame presenting the inseparable characters Brutus and Shaka in a medium shot camera framing. The two characters occupy the foreground of the camera where the depth of field is clear between the two with an out of focus background, where the framing suggests that the viewer focuses more on the continuity in this scene as Brutus's wittiness jumps out unexpectedly right at the end of the dialogue. Zodwa, Shakas mother has found herself in an altercation with Harriet the morning of Mzi Khoza's funeral. As she is furious, this character storms outside screaming and Shaka along with Brutus have to calm her down.

Shaka: *Mama! Please calm down.*

Zodwa: *Yhini wena?* [Subtitled: What is it?]

Shaka: *Ehlisa umoya bandla.* [Subtitled: Please stay calm.]

Zodwa: *Ungangitsheli ngomoya wena.* [Subtitled: Don't tell me to calm down.]

Brutus: *Zodwa. Awume Zodwa.*

Zodwa: *Uthulile lowa mfazi nengani yakhe behlekisa ngami.* [Subtitled: Shaka, how do you let her talk to me like that?]

Shaka: *Ucashukiswa ulamfazi vele ngampela?* [Subtitled: That woman insulted you?]

Zodwa: *Bekufanele ukuba ngimshayile nje ngenqindi.* [Subtitled: Actually, I should have hit her.]

Shaka: *Mama. Mama. Ngiyakcela. Usibukisa ngabantu manje beheka wonke umuntu ujonge thina. Awehlise umoya ngiyakucela.* [Subtitled: Mam, I'm pleading with you. Mama, will you stop! You are making a scene. Please calm down I'm begging you.]

Zodwa: *Ngikubukisani? Abantu? Ungakhulinge ukhulume kanjalo name, siyezwana.* [Subtitled: I'm causing a scene? Don't you dare talk to me like that. Do you hear me?]

Brutus: *Zodwa…*

Zodwa: *Seyek'thengile lomfazi. Wena bengcabanga ukuth ubuleli lana kumina. Bengithi walala la. Umkhohliwe wenzeni lomfazi? Lomfazi wangikhipha la nawe ezinzulwini zobusuku e-force(a) ubaba wakho ukuthi asixoshe. Mina ke manje ngithule?* [Subtitled: Are you siding with her, Shaka? I carried you nine months. I carried you in my womb. Have you forgotten what she did to us? That woman kicked us out in the middle of the night forcing your dad to abandon us. And now I must keep quiet?]

Shaka: *Ma!* [Subtitled: Mama!]

Zodwa: *Ungakhulinge ungiphakamiselel izwi.* [Subtiled: Don't you dare raise your voice at me.

Brutus: *Zodwa. Awume ukuduba. Inhlosoo yakho ukuthi uHarriet lo angcwabe ubaba wengane zakho? Iyona inhlosos yakho leyo?* [Subtitled: Are you going to let her bury the father of your children in your absence? I that your wish?]

Zodwa: *Yazi malume uyaqala ukukhuluma into esile*. [Subtitled: You know what uncle… Only now you are starting to make sense.]

Brutus: *Nakho ke…* [Subtitled: Exactly.]

Zodwa: *Uyanya. Angiyindawo. Ungijwayela kabi. Nkosi.* [Subtitled: Like hell I will. If she wants a fight, I'm ready. She's disrespecting me.]

Brutus: *Uyabona ke mshana ingako mina ngingathathanga umfazi. Ngulo msindo lona. Angiwufuni mina lomsido. Hleze nje babang umsindo abafazi sonke is'khathi nje.* [Subtitled: Now do you understand why I'm not married? It's because of such noise. I'm avoiding such noise. Women always make noise the whole time.]

As the camera framing throughout the scene presents medium to medium close-up jump cut shots of all three characters suggesting the raised voices of tension in the dialogue, Brutus remains calm. His role here is to calm Zodwa as an elder of the Khoza family but rather does so in a manner that pledges allegiance to the first wife, whom is Zodwa to Mzi. Once he is successful on this account with Zodwa, this character's old fashioned humor can't help but jump out at the end when he tries to once again justify himself as to why he is unmarried – claiming that women "always make a noise". Here the comic figure Brutus is always presented well within the constructs of his role as an uncle to the Khoza's but is depicted as a character who can't maintain the gravity of any situation. Moreover, as this happens the attributed inexistent sex life of this character goes to show that the coon that is Brutus is a coon existing well within the confines of a servile black African middleclass male character. This is because audiences

identify with this household brand, which the character of Brutus then becomes a needed role when trying to maneuver black African middleclassness in the case of South Africa, which too allows for the criminate storyline to have a more fuller presentation as popular art text presenting the 'other'.

3.6.3.2 The *Coon* – Uncle Remus

The *Coon* - Uncle Remus, is a fictional title to a character and narrator of a collection of Black American folktales. This character appears to be harmless and good-natured, and sometimes referred to as a first cousin to the *Tom* character construction, but distinguishes himself by his old-fashioned, ingenuous, and witty reasoning. Here, the significance of the role presented by Uncle Remus is that which tells more than one story in a history of distorted depictions of the coon characterization which include the black African middleclass framework. The character Brutus Khoza presents much of the attributes, first as a middle-aged character role whilst on one hand as the uncle-like character that he represents in the soap, and on the other as the oldest member of the Khoza family who remains invested in the operations of the illegal cocaine trading as 'Khoza Trucking' in the series owned by the Khozas. This evolved *coon* character construction surfaced during the 1930s and 1940s where Remus's entertainment, like *Tom*'s satisfaction and the *Coon*'s pranks, have been drivers of representation(s) signifying the black man's satisfaction with his servile role, and currently, his place now as a black African middleclass uncle, within the post- apartheid system with which the coon – uncle Remus character construction is presented by Brutus, South Africa. Brutus's character objective is mainly presented at ease, where his free time is over self-effacing, non - pacifistic, who is circumventing labor. And like the *Tom* character construction the *coon* – Uncle Remus has either

had past romantic relationship and has no interest to be involved in romantic relations the present, where if the *Remus* is wedded, his wife is the dominant; and if alone, he sought after women to please the flesh devoid of entanglements. In figure 7 Brutus is presented with continuing black African middleclass coon characteristics below.

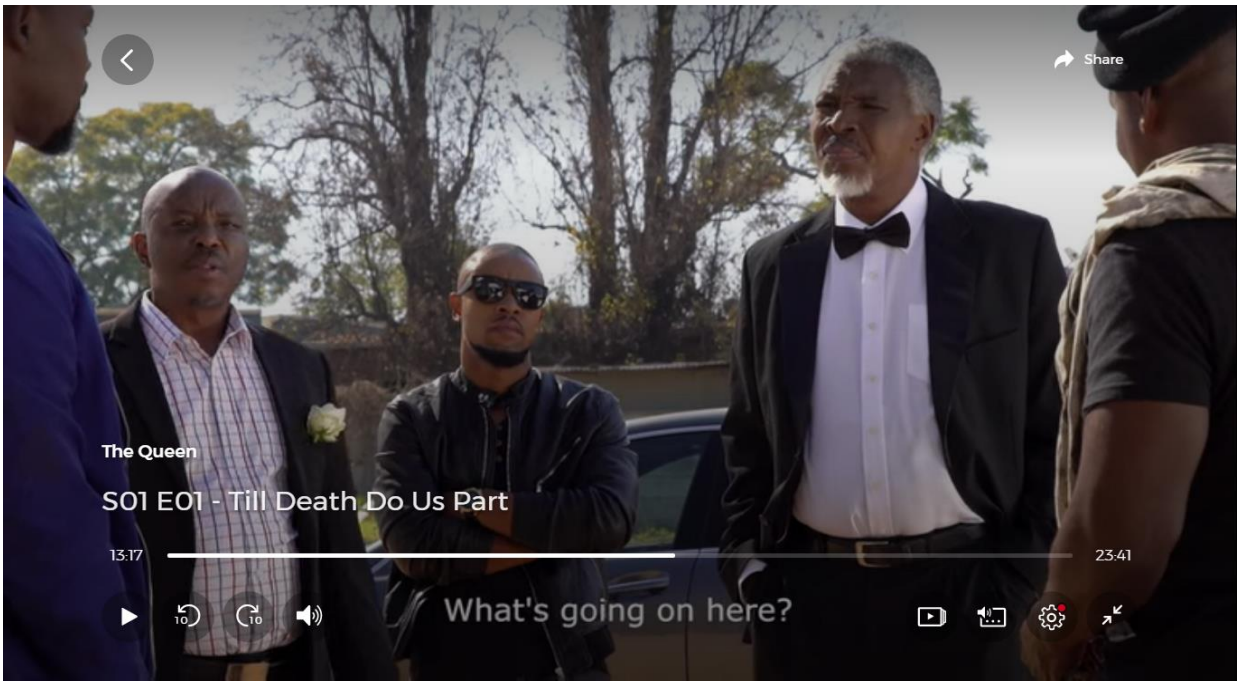


Figure 7 (Source: Showmax.com) – Brutus, Shaka, and Mzi at the Khoza Trucking depot

The camera framing presents a medium shot depicting the characters Shaka in the centre, Brutus to the mid-left, and Mzi positioned in the mid-right hand side. Here the mise en scene presents a perfect opportunity to allow for power relations to be interpreted outside of the dialogue's obvious depiction. The foreground of this medium shot camera framing is occupied by the maintainance workers at the Khoza Trucking depot – Schumaker played by Vuyolwethu Ngcukana and Mjekejeke played by Sipho Manzini. As these two characters occupy the horizontally outermost sides of the frame the are presented powerless as they assume the unfeatured.

(voiceover): *Hey uShaka ucishe wambulala uRambo madoda. Ucishe wambulala uRambo ngenduku. Anazi bafethu. Ahh! Zangena ezidla izambane likapondo.* [Subtitled: Shaka nearly killed Rambo! He almost killed Rambo with that Knobkerrie. You guys know nothing. As the chief and his heir arrive.]

Mjekejeke: *Awu madoda! Bab' uKhoza bengingasakuboni nhlobo. Usuyidle kanje indwangu. Ungumlungu omnyama qobo lwakhe.* [Subtitled: Oh goodness! Mr Khoza I almost didn't recognize you there. Dressed to kill. You look like royalty.]

Brutus: *Uyaqala ukubona umuntu ogqoke i-suit Mjekejeke?* [Subtiled: First time seeing a man in a suit, Mjekejeke?]

Mzi: *Lusuku olubaluleke kakhulu leleli kumina. Kwenzekani la ekhaya? Noma ni-busy nisaphazana nemali yami?* [Subtitled: Today's a very important day. Whats going on here? Are you busy spending my money?]

Mjekejeke: *Hayi, cha mhloniswa. Yonke into ihamba kahle lapa. Nama-truck a-service(iwe) nje impela.* [Subtitled: No, sir. Everything is under control. Even the trucks are serviced. All is in order.]

Mzi: *Good. Manje le trailer yona izolungiswa uma liyaphi ilanga?* [Subtilted: Now when is that trailer going to be fixed?]

Mjekejeke: *Hayi mhlonishwa, maduze nje izolungiswa. Ungakhathazeki mhlo' kuzolunga.* [Subtitled: It will be fixed soon, sir. Don't worry about it. It will be sorted.]

In this scene Mzi, has been alerted that product (cocaine) has arrived at the depot, just moments before Kea's wedding commenses. The establishing shot in the scene depicts the Khoza trucking depot as the thre characters Mzi, Brutus, and Shaka arrive. While Mzi to the right is more in

focus in the presented framing and is the one who is leading the dialogue, his presence as a larger figure and position in the camera framing alows the viewer understand that he holds most if not all the power in the studied scene. Brutus, on the other hand occupies the midgroundground and is in mid-range when compared to Mzi and Shaka. His neutral position suggests, as his lack of speech or exclusion from the dialogue does, that is this character holds no power in this scene when compared to the figure next to him. This recurrent positioning in the camera framing evident in the series then alludes more to claims that Brutus is only present in the business operation as a *coon* and is without any significance as to how operation(s) is run. Moreover, this means that his only access as a servile member of the khoza family within in the business rehearses the 'good fot nothing' characteristic suggested as attribute to the *coon* construction but, only now, as a black african middleclass South African representation.

3.6.3.3 The Black African Middleclass *Coon*

This racially black African middleclass *coon* character is usually lacking any interest in matters of the personal future as his character is a habitually shiftlessness, to a somewhat incoherent clown presented in South African soap operas like *The Queen* (2016) as Brutus Khoza. This *Coon* usually embodies a childish like trait but is an adult notwithstanding a good-for nothing characterization of an adult. He plays a role as servant to a master, although he sometimes resembles an unhappy element with his social status, whatever the organization – all which are characteristics of the *coon*. Here the significance of the black African middleclass coon character is the residual elements/ character attributes that are found and traced from historical depictions about black people's socialization which have become evolved trends with the awakening of modernization witnessed in the post – apartheid South African television soaps. The middleclass

coon character as observed in *The Queen* (2016) identifies with the character Brutus Khoza where this character resembles much of the attributes of the caricature described by Donald Bogle's *Coon* (2001, 1994, and 1986). This popular art text construction in South African television soap opera revolves around a somewhat servile character construction where Brutus lives to serve his brother Mzi Khoza. Though Mzi's character lifespan is cut short in the series, Brutus's paternalistic agency is more oriented with that of Mzi's as he is brother to Mzi. This character's habitually jobless state is accepter of anything and everything any Khoza is willing to do to protect the drug business. Here, Brutus's character does not account to anyone throughout the series. The character remains supporter to anything that Shaka (Mzi's older son) is willing to do as long as it is done in the name of saving the Khoza name. This character is almost always presented eating and 'butchering' the English language as this re-pronounces this character's comic attribute. Malapropisms and inaccurate rationality are the characteristics that make this character a somewhat household name in South African households without any examination of what this kind of character construction re-produces, reinforces, and perpetuates, ideologically in televisual texts produced as black African middleclass perspective within popular art texts in South Africa. This therefore makes this elderly character construction a pleaser and comic figure within the dynamics of the family through the drama, deceit, and even vengeance between family members. As Brutus assumes a position of an elder to the Khoza's he is without autonomy to make his own decisions unless backed by Shaka. Even more, this construction remains without a sex life throughout the series and audiences are only provided with a hint of a past relationship which he escaped the moment he found out that he had a child on the way. Therefore, this black African middleclass *Coon*, is indeed resembling attributes of a traditionalist's racially suppressive framework representation of blackness as black middleclassness, to which this

research is investigating. These representations have decidedly fixed perpetual negative constructions of members of the black African middleclass in post- apartheid South Africa and have remained a cinematic challenge throughout time.

3.6.4 The Black African Middleclass *Brute*

The last of the black male's image stereotype is the *Brute*. In many texts this characterological construction remains a prominent imagined idea for popular art texts, such as *The Queen* (2016). The *brute* construction is described as black male 'talent' with attributes suggestive of natural savagery, whose behaviors are always presented with animosity, destructiveness, and criminality. Jan Nederveen Pieterse (1992: 224) suggests that investigations that aim to comprehend representations invested in 'othernesses' continue to try and understand non-western literature with western literature (in Tomaselli, 1996). This means that in this new era, which is upon South African civilization, post- apartheid, allows for televisual representation such as *The Queen* to rather make it the text's responsibility to use tribal connotations invested in violence and savagery as realities of black African middleclassness. Further, as the *Brute* is criminating, his sociopath instinct, and anti-social peril is almost presented and expected to be subject to deserved judgment in South African television soaps. In the black African middleclass setting as in the popular are texts in South Africa this obsession-like brute characterization has, too, met post- apartheid civilization with such black middleclass constructions as individuals who flow in with constructions of this 'othered new class'. The late 19th century prescribed a black wrongdoer to white victims, though these accounts were rather infrequent; Pilgrim (2012) suggests that incidences such as 'white rape' were due to white men. However, the *Brute* caricature is said to be a "red herring" *(sic)*, "a myth used to justify lynching, which in turn was

used as a social control mechanism to instill fear in black communities, as it now continues in black African middleclass representations in South Africa. Seemingly as with the evolved brute construction in television soaps in South Africa, each lynching sent messages to blacks: "Do not register to vote. Do not apply for a white man's job. Do not complain publicly. Do not organize. Do not talk to white women." These frameworks of tribal connotation as with those of visual imperialism can be understood as allied anti-black conceptualizations of black African middleclassness in South Africa. Therefore, like the other black image stereotypes, the *Brute*, too, had a role in perpetual images associated with anti- black ideology. Allen Grimshaw (1969), suggests that the *Brute* exaggeration is noticed at its extremes most whenever black people are struggling for social equality to which the character Shaka Khoza played by S K Khoza in *The Queen* (2016) as a character that too represents an individual that lives between, on one hand the extreme of a township life in Thembisa, Johannesburg and the middleclass other which he only has come to access through his father Mzi Khoza. Therefore, this continued exaggeration still persists in South African popular art texts such as *The Queen* (2016).

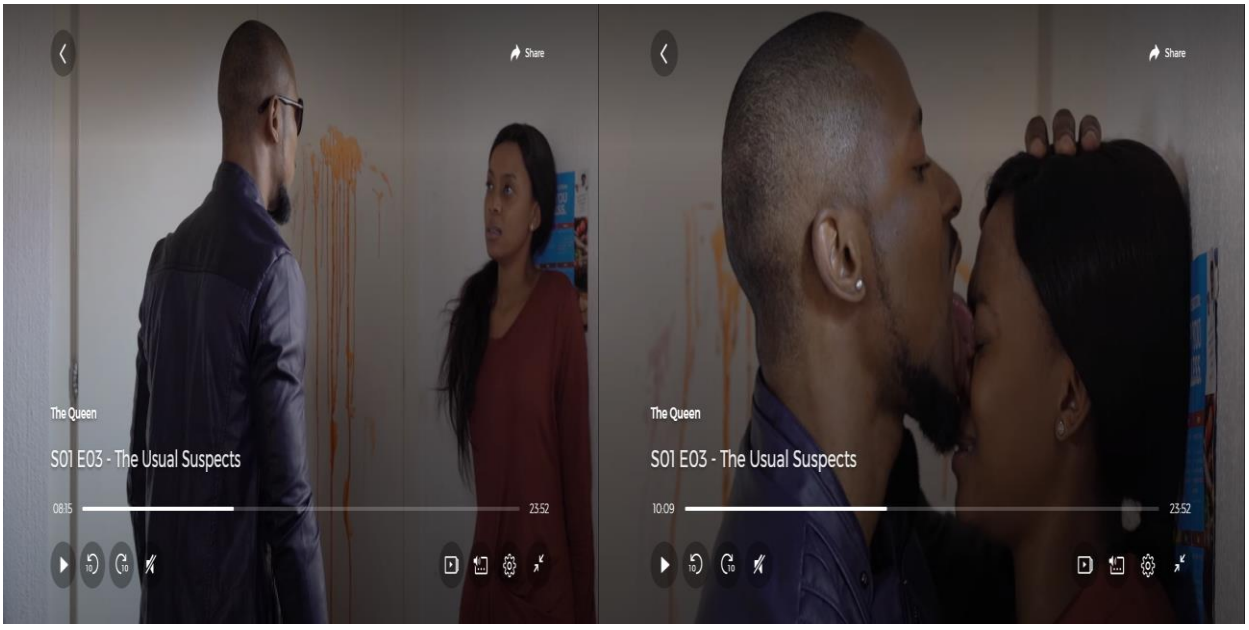


Figure 8 & 9 (Source: Showmax.com) Shaka breaking into Rambo's place while the girlfriend is inside

In figure 8 and 9 Shaka is on a second mission to find Rambo as he is suspect to his father's murder. Here, Shaka, angry and in high pace he is in Thembisa but his mission fails and finds Rambo's girlfriend rather. While figure 8 is presented in a medium shot camera framing where Shaka is presented walking toward a female figure who is seemingly terrified of the man she sees in front of her. These two characters occupy a focused depth of field where they both occupy the mid ground of the camera framing while the room, too, seems like an area in closed distance proximity suggesting the heightened violence of the scene. The background is a wall covered in what seems to be a blood spill that was caused by Shaka as he broke into the same room where he still was in the look to find Rambo who was attacked. The scene begins with Shaka knocking open the door and when he finds that the person, he is now hunting is not there he opts to terrorize the girlfriend to a point where he gets into an act of sexually victimizing her. (Female): *** [Subtitled: Please, don't kill me.], she says as he walks up to her where he proceeds to smelling the female figure in a surprisingly animal like manner.

Shaka: [Giggles] *Thomas.*

Thomas: *Ya.* [Subtitled: Yes!]

Shaka: *Le medi. Wankra. Hamonati.* [Subtitled: This woman. She stinks. She smells good.]

Thomas: *Yah neh!*

Shaka: *Lalela la sfetjana.* [Subtitled: Listen to me, you bitch.]

(Female): *** [Subtitled: What?]

Shaka: *Iphi indoda yakho?* [Subtitled: Where's your man?]

(Female):*** [Subtitled: I don't know I haven't seen him.]

Thomas: *Awazi ukuthi hlampe ingaba ikuphi?* [Subtitled: Don't you perhaps have an idea of where he might be?]

(Female): *No!*

Shaka: *Ugcine nini ukumbona?* [Subtitled: When last did you see him?]

(Female): *** [Subtitled: The last time you were here, he came to give us money and he just took his stuff then he left.]

Thomas: *Bekunini lapho?* [Subtitled: When was that?]

(Female): T*wo days ago.*

Shaka pulls out a gun and uses it to sexually victimize the female character.

Shaka: *Uyayazi lento? Hm? Uyazi ukuthi iyakwazi ukwenzani? Iyabanda ne?* [Subtitled: You know what this is? Hm? You know what it does? Hm? Cold isn't it?]

(Female): *Please.*

Shaka: *Shh. Lalela la. Indodakho ngifuna uyinike umyalezo uyangizwa? Umthsele ukuthi isikhathi sodlala umlabalaba sizophela ngoba nenkukhu iyakhathala uma ibaleka. La ngizomthola khona…* [Subtitled: Hush. Listen to me. I want you to give him a message do you hear me? Tell him that the time to play games will eventually come to an end. Because even chickens get tired of running. And when I eventually find him…]

Here, he continues to the presented medium close up shot of Shaka and the female in figure 9 where he bites her lips and finishes off with licking her across the face leaving this female figure in distraught. What the two camera framings depict are the extremes of Shaka's character as a very violent man. As he does as he pleases with females he maintains with males as he is an

always blood hungry animal who can't be controlled. This attribute then continues that of the brute as an 'othered' black African middleclass. While the series presents crime within the black middleclass setting, continued stereotypes of violence that are said to align with criminality present themselves as storylines that are fitting in popular art texts in South Africa. While Shaka is characterized as violent, complying with the law, too, seems to be an attribute which he possesses and fittingly aligns with that of the *brute*.

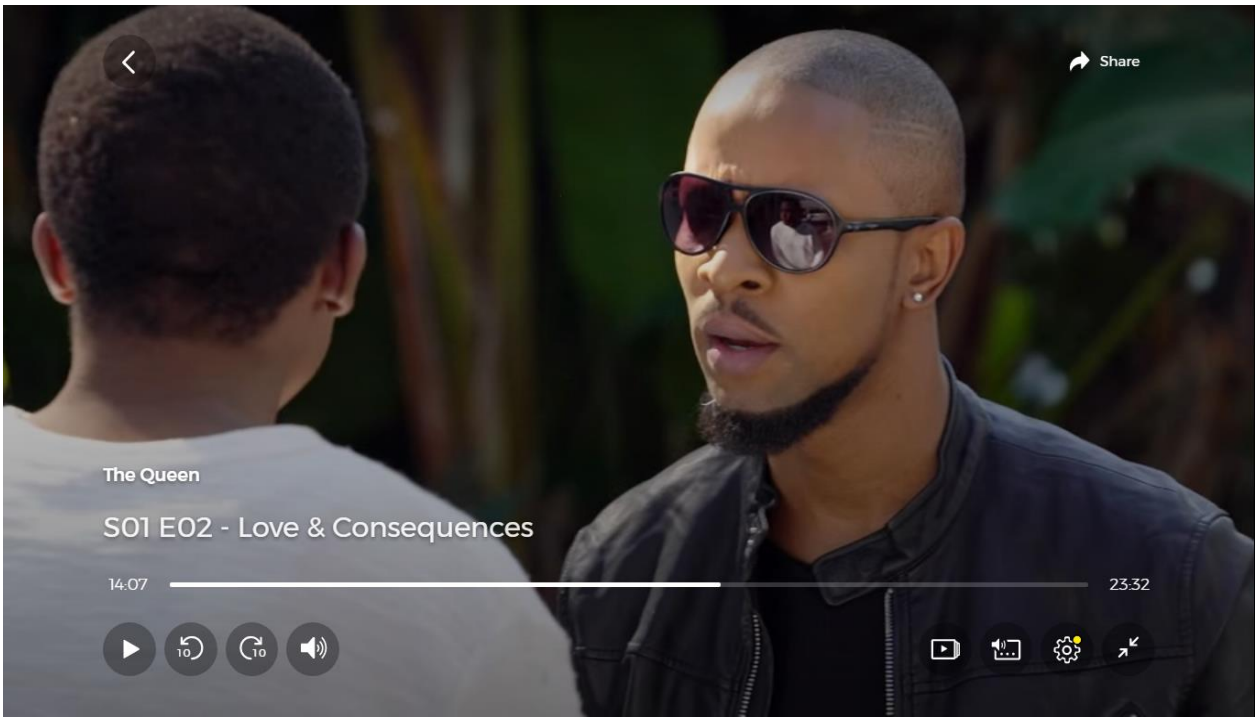


Figure 10 (Showmax.com) – Shaka and Kagiso scuffling while Shaka refuses to comply with the police

Figure 10 is an over the shoulder medium close up shot of the featured character Shaka. While Kagiso assumes the unfeatured as he is looking away from the camera a heated conversation between him and Shaka takes place. Kagiso, realizes that Shaka and Brutus are not complying with the police services investigating the murder of Mzi Khoza. While the camera is focused on the two characters with a camera framing which remains dark behind Shaka the setting presents

to the audience that the character Shaka can be associated with darkness as a troubled child in the Khoza family. The scene begins with begins with Kagiiso running after Shaka outside to have a conversation with him.

Kagiso: *Shaka! Shaka! You need to go to the police and tell them what you know.*

Shaka: *For what? Khona bazombopha bamkhiphe naksasa? I mean even if the guy gets convicted, he still gets out.* [Subtitled: So that they can arrest the person and release him the next day?]

Kagiso: *So what are you going to do? You going to find him, kill him and then what? Is he going to bring our father from the dead Shaka? True justice will… Will only happen if you go to the police.*

Shaka: *f**ck justice… ulinde bani fethu wena? Wonke umuntu yazi la ukuth mfethu kade wangcina ngisho uk'khuluma nobaba. You didn't even like dad. Manje uzofika lana to play some f**cken hero. Do everybody a favor and f**ck off. And stay in your f**cken lane, son.* [Subtitled: To hell with justice… And what does that supposed to mean? Everybody knows you weren't in speaking terms with dad. Now you want to get here and play some type of hero. Now do everybody a favor and back off. Stay in your lane son.]

Here the black African middleclass brute is many characteristics of the black male brute in one where this character represents violence, criminality, and unlawfulness. This continued savagery is what makes the character of Shaka a household brand where only a black child that who's storyline is one who grew up without a father turns out to be a risk in society. While Shaka's character is a devoted server to his father, as we see that at extremes where he tries his best to avenge him. All Shaka's efforts are to please his father even when he is not there. This is

presented when during a time where he tries to avenge his father's death, he disregards the business operation and leads it with irrationality where he fights with clients and customers who are close business partners in the drug syndicate. The latter too suggests that this disregard of the black African middleclass goes to prove that even when chance to redeem himself as within this social class it is impossible because a troubled black person has no space in middleclass civilization, and only this 'othered' kind is a risk to post- apartheid South Africa.

3.7 Conclusion

3.7.1 Understanding Masculinities Present in *The Queen*

This chapter aims to investigate the idealized black African middleclass masculinities postulated by South African soap opera popular art texts that have prevailed upon democracy in the country. *The Queen* (2016) presents a uniquely bastardized black African middleclass male who either is too dangerous for society or extremely devious and invested in criminality, which the two to some extent cross lines. Here, the analyses depend on three approaches that are associated with visual analysis, which remain contained within visual text investigations as in this chapter. This means that the semiotic elements presented in the text can and are evidently indicative of the producer's imaginative direction. In South Africa actors, directors, screenplay writers, including producers, (the mind of the creator) is at one end like Duma Ka Ndlovu suggests that "South Africans want stories that reflect their lives. But they don't want stories that look down on them or patronize them. They want people to understand black life, township life and African life; something that gives them a sense of pride" (in Mkwanazi, 2015). However, the unnoticed historical resurfacing of traditionally colonialist images on television soap operas have dominated the second decade in democracy. This then allows for research to move from/ extend the decoloniality agenda to understand then what drives the mind of the creative televisual

industry. This analysis is developed from Kress and van Leeuwen's understanding of social semiotics, to examine 'what is in' the image and the possible characterological imagined male constructions. Butler (1993) treats gender performativity as an element of society that needs to be understood as the effect of a guiding system which gender differences and genders are 'masculinized' and 'hierarchized' under repeated entertainment presentations as control. Here, Butler continues to explain that "social constraints, taboos, prohibitions, threats of punishment operate in the ritualised repetition of norms, and this repetition of norms constitutes the temporalized scene of gender construction and destabilisation [in society]." (1993: 21). This means that as television soaps in South Africa construct characterological image repetition, they too position themselves as drivers of ideologies which this research deems anti-black. This understanding further, suggests the lack of understanding that images run the risk of being read as social norms suggestive of negative rhetoric on black African middleclass male characters/ civilians in the South African setting posited as mere entertainment. Moreover, this meaning is located within a socially constructed environment of textual meanings of masculinities, where the premise of this thesis's mission is to establish whether soap opera texts in South Africa suggest male social realities or, lack thereof - racially suppressing myths, examining the case of *The Queen* (2016) and because of such investigations the concept of Social Semiotics to this subject is revealed.

Chapter 4

Seeing Black African Middleclassness through "Whiteness": A Comparative Study of *Scandal!* (2008) and *Legacy* (2020)

4.1 Introduction

Black African middleclass 'newness' as optimism linked to the rainbow nation of 1994 (Habib, 1997) where a new South Africa 'has been forged' is now, again, reversed to meaningless, untrustworthiness, and a threat to society. Black communities find it hard to dream of a better imagined life two decades into the new post- apartheid dispensation. Evidently, on television popular art texts as Iqani (2017: 110) suggests (about black middleclassness in South Africa) - the black middleclass has the potential to "shake off a legacy of racism" as media tried to demonstrate in the first democratic decade. However, television soap opera media has maintained that black African middleclass socio- economic transformation knowledge is counter discursive as its representation continues to establish "whiteness" as a desired identity construction. "Whiteness" is an ideological structure that introduces and reproduces white privilege, where the quality of being racially white functions as ideological heteronormativity that exists from history and continues to localize 'new' black South African middleclass discourses. As legacies of apartheid resurface, the televisual depictions that ought to develop black African middleclass culture and perhaps bring about hope to society emphasize historical notions of racialized ideology, and are now, representing black African middleclassness as undoubtedly, negative, black identity to the eye. However, while Iqani investigates another form of media representation: Black middleclassness in newspaper medias and their resultant consumerist positionality, televisual representations play a much grave role in re-producing standardized ideas of the past. Therefore, particularity in this type of televisual backwardness

(the reverse of a democratized television space), while other medias like newspapers endorse black African middleclassness allow for a gap where "whiteness" ideally thrives. Even more, Pattillo- McCoy (2000: 2) claims that while the triumphs of civil rights movements in the United States celebrated black middleclassness across the diaspora as 'new' he acknowledges, the untouched challenges presented by racial integration, ghettoization, general lower quality of life of Africans than middleclass whites and the ignominious critique where black middleclasses are said to imitate the white upper classes as they are witnessed to be "frivolous, materialistic and disloyal to their own race" (*sic.*: pg. 18 in Iqani, 2017). Moreover, these are similar ideological continuities about whiteness in South African television soap operas currently. Here, O'Dougherty (2002) expresses the phenomenon of a 'new' black middleclass in Brazil connecting its forecast as a catastrophe to the 'inherent' feebleness of the black middleclass (in Iqani, 2017), where he continues to say that this type of lifestyle and "dream was over" (perhaps even before it began) and it had become a "paradise lost". In the current socio- economic state in South Africa middleclassness representations suggest that this social status can only be accessed by whites. Iqani continues to state that in South Africa black middleclass newness remains meddling between a bitter lack of faith in television where soaps insist to thrive on this class's inability to adequately and competently exhibit black African middleclass sensibilities outside of whiteness. Ultimately this notion undermines the fact that black African middleclassness in South Africa is and can be devoid of "whiteness". Moreover, this chapter wants to align itself to Sipho S. Maseko's (2000) work where he claims that the celebration of black middleclassness has failed to account for the history of 19th century missionary school where the black middleclass together with liberation movements who faced obstacles from white power to their development. Maseko also points out that current televised notions about black middleclassness

are rooted in the apartheid regime's establishments of 'bantustans' which "provided opportunities for many […] blacks to climb their way on to the middleclass ladder". Maseko views these perceptions as offering limiting "whiteness" ideas which cannot be the single perspective prevailing in South Africa currently. Further, a new set of ethics perpetuated by a 'new' black African middleclass invested in materialism, greed, and voracious consumption as on television soap opera texts are all a re-historization of white power finding its full expression as "whiteness" in the post- apartheid dispensation. This means that soap opera texts that attempt to represent white people in South Africa fail to exist without their dependence on traditional values and ideologies that in turn set black African middleclassness to its detriment as white character constructions have to be measured against their black counterparts who seemingly have to uphold white imaginative notions and storylines. Therefore, the presented need to examine lives represented on television soap operas in South Africa by this chapter aims to add on the findings by feminist scholars who have investigated black middleclass socialization. Moreover, black African middleclass lives are drivers of aspiration in other social classes as they represent unsuppressed and relevant economically viable lives for poor South Africans who see the need to live lives that are not determined by whites and "whiteness". This chapter then works to exhibit those faults in current television soaps as they maintain and are drivers of white supremacy in the South African context.

As the chapter aims to explore the functions and constructions of whiteness in black African middleclass soap opera texts in South Africa, the investigation establishes the way white male heteronormativity, too, functions as a determinant of black African middleclass masculinity. Firstly, in the text *Scandal!* themes of toxic hyper masculinities are explored where black African middleclass male character constructions are imagined and created to be egotistic, greed-

lead, and self gratifying. Secondly, where opposite masculinity character constructions, to the latter are explored, themes of insufficient and troubled male identities, homosexuality, and mental disturbance of black African middleclass males are explored. These opposing black African middleclass masculinities allow for a thorough investigation into two types of male constructions predominant in popular art texts in South Africa. In the text *Legacy*, themes of workplace transformation and power struggles are identified in black middleclass male character constructions, where on the other hand, white male character constructions present themes of absoluteness and unshaken/ compromised racially white male identities. Therefore, the purpose of uncovering these themes is to investigate them against the backdrop of heteronormative identity masculinities established by "whiteness" within the texts. This creates a comparative study firstly, of the characters in the texts, and secondly cross-textually to compare and contrast the texts as existing as products of the phenomenon of "whiteness". Further, the chapter intends to demonstrate how the focalized white female(d) gaze perpetuates a persistent sanitized underdevelopment of the black African middleclass "black - bitch" rhetoric. Here, the investigated themes range from manipulative, incompetent black business women, to promiscuous and vengeful black African female middleclass character construction as evinced on *Scandal!*. On *Legacy* themes of a black trophy wife out to destroy a white family setting; and of the displacement of a black middleclass female body within that of a white. Here, the exploration of white female identities which are less wrong when compared to their black counterparts where they present manipulation and greed are also investigated. Therefore, suggesting the theme of underdeveloped black female character constructions allows for the exploration of black female constructs in television soaps in South Africa while critiquing the

nature and framework in which they have been imagined. The following section investigates white hegemony resistance continuing as blackness.

4.2 White Hegemony Contending as "Blackness"

The two soap opera texts *Scandal! (2008)* and *Legacy (2020)*, position "whiteness" as either determining and/ or as prescribing how black reality should be lived and anticipated. "Whiteness" on South African soaps functions as an 'othering' construction which positions black African middleclassness as existing outside of the seemingly standardized guarded inner-circle/ nucleus (of social uniformity). Here, "whiteness" performs as a refined racial identity where it is neither wrong nor unusual, unlike its African counterpart. The post- apartheid soap opera genre context of South Africa encompasses black African middleclassness as an identity determined by "whiteness" where in the investigated texts black bodies are seen to be presenting negatively opposing imagined constructions to their white body counterparts withn the same social class. This happens while a democratic dispensation prevails, where racist politics of "whiteness" surface in television soap opera texts, which make it difficult for black African middleclass political ideologies to exist, thrive outside of, as blackness aims to position itself as devoid of "whiteness" within a supposedly inclusive society. Hellanie Marx Koetze (2014), suggests that while South Africans continue in the process of internalizing and destabilizing identities, through selecting and omitting them; traditionalist identities and/ or cultures such as "whiteness" continue to reimagine, reinforce, and reestablish "whiteness" as a hegemonic normative, national identity positioned as political power identity through particular popular television soap opera texts in the present. This implies that contemporary black African middleclass textual representations cannot be explored without a negative position, perspective and perception of "whiteness" as ideology, which too, does not want to be presumed as anti-

black. This applies, on one hand, to the example of how imagined domestic white settings cannot exist without the domestic help of a poor- lower class black African (in layman terms) which prevails as popular character constructions in popular art texts; and on the other, and more to the conciseness of the chapter, the manner in which black African middleclassness has to be consistently regulated by white character figures as imagined opposing constructions in popular art texts which become constructions that run the risk of being interpreted as determining how and what black African middleclassness entails in the South African setting; even more whether corruption is seen based on white lenses or corruption is benchmarked on universal laws that govern the definition of illegal acts (which, too, to some great extent are based on white supremist ideas).

Another analogy is the struggles brought about by BBBEE (Broad Base Black Economic Empowerment) socio-politics of South Africa when such phenomenon affects the white person without popular texts ever interrogating its intent (whereby the very basis is ideally established by "whiteness" to act as inclusive of blacks in a space like South Africa, where majority of the population is black and African). Black economic empowerment exhibits the potential to restore equality, enhance economic growth and form a better life for all. However, this allows for the maintenance of white voices that guard socio economic patterns of equality in society without those of blacks, where subtle ramifications of "whiteness" intend to impact a greater reaction as they are presented in texts to exhibit the norm and the usual for the sake of 'mind blowing' entertainments while black constructions are imagined to exist outside of that norm. It is to this realization that white contemporary South African media, specifically television soap operas, like other mainstream public spheres, must reconceptualize how white people ought to socialize in a democracy where equality and integration towards black Africans is key in broadening

national identity politics (Koetze, 2014). Ndebele (2000) emphasizes that white South Africans need to redevelop a culture that is compatible with current social democratic politics. This means that popular art texts in the current democratic dispensation, also, need to be drivers of black development(s) interrogating whiteness and not exist as unilateral and end-receiving in the context of South Africa. Further, Matthews (2011) suggests that questioning white identity is key in themes invested in post-apartheid discourses, and the question of how "whiteness" is able to maintain its place in the post-apartheid dispensation of South Africa as racist, offers considerable examination and deliberation, which this chapter will demonstrate. The above suggests that a reconstitution of the white identity, it's privilege, locally and internationally, in mass media should be at the helm of decolonization. However, as popular culture soap opera texts in South Africa are centered around "whiteness" as a determining factor of black African middleclassness – how black African middleclassness is interpreted, conceptualized, imagined, disseminated, and recollected through normative "whiteness" ideologies, these televisual texts somewhat lack originality, and exist without reality. Therefore, suggesting that popular art texts are black inclusive but are engineered as silenced realities of black African middleclassness in the South African landscape merely smothers the televisual encounter with democracy and with the African race. This chapter aims to explore how South African popular television soap opera texts perpetuate "whiteness" as a homogenous ideology. While this chapter intends to question black African middleclass imagined visual representations in *Scandal!* (2008) and *Legacy* (2020) white bodies are presented to be superior and without any wrongs. This continues while "whiteness" is a subject matter concerning Critical Whiteness Studies where the investigation of structures that produce white privilege in these texts aims to understand how blackness interrelates in a modern society so as to examine the ways in which "whiteness" manifests itself

within the black South African context through television soaps as a driver contending negated black representation. This research, too, aims to establish how soap opera texts are perpetuating "whiteness" as the standard in South African society where it continues to erode what African blackness stands for in the South African context.

4.3 The Contexts Presented by *Scandal!* (2008) and *Legacy* (2020)

Scandal! and *Legacy* highlight the admixture of cultures that exist in the South African context. Here, cross cultural relationships, interacial relationships and social lives reflect that of the South African society which prevails in the post apartheid dispensation of South Africa. However, as this translates into televisual texts of a rainbow nation, the domination of white bodies seems to defect that of existing black bodies. These are constructions that play the role as counterparts in a historically and predominantly racialized society of South Africa. The Johannesburg, South Africa settings existing in the two texts represents where blacks and whites meet for economic pursuits where the business plot within the texts derives. Moreover, as the heightened plot twists and drama in the two series continues, visual- textual analyses allows for the interrogation of how two racial groups – black Africans and whites coexist. The understanding here is that supremacist ideologies never ceased to exist in the democratic dispensation of South Africa. While *Scandal!* exhibits the obvious media business agency orientation with Johannesburg, it reflects and represents individuals that come from black townships who make it their mission to succeed and are purposefully constructed to 'escape' their initial lives and get submerged into suburbia. On the other hand, in *Legacy* extreme white wealth is presented against a black township backdrop. Here, the inclusion of blacks into white spaces presents ideas that seemingly always want to question the existence of black bodies in white spaces. The prevailing filmic move from distinct representation of blacks and whites to mixed lives and socialization presents

a context which ideally has been sought after by ideologies of inclusiveness and a South Africa for all. However, the stripped distinctiveness between the two racial groups is taken up by themes invested in prejudices, stereotypes and inescapable negative representations of black middleclass within South Africa where context and ideological background play an important motive as these bring about held notions in societ where black bodies are expected to compete with their white counterparts, but are also running the risk of perpetuating and continuing interpretations invested in white privilege.

4.4 The Pervasiveness of Whiteness in South African Soap Opera

While black African middleclassness is regulated by "whiteness", "whiteness" in television soaps continues the process of eroding of African blackness in the context of South Africa. Here, as whiteness assumes central ideology the textual- visual comparative study highlights the instances in soap opera texts where texts have fallen short in representing black South African middleclassness due to "whiteness". Whiteness functions as a standard for what is acceptable, normative identity power politics and as preservers of notions about the black 'othered' in popular television soaps. This therefore means that "whiteness" is relentless in ascertaining that black African middleclassness is forever in question which ultimately exhibits a sense of ignorance. "Whiteness" and the connotations inherent to the construct of whiteness remain contentious issues in South Africa today because a history of colonialism and apartheid ultimately continues the struggle for whites to find a new sense of "cultural rootedness" that is devoid of racism's privileges and it seems that popular television texts have provided this ideology a platform. Ratele and Laubscher (2010), suggest that in South Africa, historically, race is located at the point of power balances, and that "whiteness" seems to have sustained its "defining weight" (in Marx Koetze, 2014) which is present in current mass media texts such as

the investigated popular soap opera texts *Scandal! (2008)* and *Legacy (2020)*. White privilege and power are still widely held and common in the South African society and Vice (2010), substantiates this when she claims that in South Africa it is impossible for anyone not to be aware of their race and social status where, due to racial identity, one is located on the 'privilege spectrum'. This means that the effects of racial privilege and/or disparity are still unambiguously ostensible. This chapter, then, locates "whiteness" as perpetuated in television soap operas and intends to privilege the idea of ignorance that it is not conditional, that white racism(s) and power, with its effects, play key contributing positions in televisual soap opera texts on the racial divide phenomenon in South Africa. While little research is dedicated at investigating black African middleclass representations, the need to examine "whiteness" in black African middleclass soap opera texts is key to establishing inaccuracies about this social class in South Africa.

Further, Roediger (1999) highlights the essential epistemic disproportionateness between white understandings of blacks and black interpretations of whites as he claims that these views are linked through clusters whose respective privilege and/or subordination tend to create deception, intent to deceive, circumvention, and parody on the one hand, while presenting truthful perceptions on the other as the studied South African televisual texts are evidence of this. This suggests that modern mainstream televisual texts, have profoundly ill-disposed black images for the development of racial conceptualizations invested in structural group-based distortion(s) of "whiteness". Here, the patterns likely to substitute mistaken belief: photosensitive misapprehensions, phantasms, spectre, imaginings - are by their very predictability common to the human existence, and for the sake of this study, specific to the black African middleclass demise. This means that the presented and prescribed televisual texts exhibit correspondingly

nonconcrete, general and inconsistent knowledge. Through an exploration of structures and the activeness of whiteness, this chapter will demonstrate how a predominantly inescapable and scarcely hypothesized form of arrogance, namely 'white arrogance', is associated with white power which prevails in soap opera texts in South Africa. White arrogance has the advantage of pointing out theoretical considerations which are appallingly outdated. Nonetheless, conventionally stoic intellectual frameworks exist in popular television soap opera texts, where veracity, inaccuracy, actualities, and fact, are encircled with satirical epitaphs and can be used to question the stealth of whiteness constructions. The expression white arrogance infers the possibility of conflicting ideas and knowledge, where a distinction would be lost claims to truth that are evidently inconsistent or competing discourses represented in televisual texts in the South African landscape. Therefore, exploring 'arrogance' is key to reformulating knowledge that will provide some truths and inaccuracies of the televisual framework(s) in post– apartheid South Africa.

Soap operas in South Africa have the obligation to exhibit knowledge in true form of representation (as social reality) which prescribes information relating to national cohesion in society. The generated knowledge, as it does, from television soap opera texts in South Africa cannot go without any impact in society, as it is interpreted and disseminated to impact society. Television media as Gould (1981) suggests, social knowledge racializes groups by scientific racism and "…ascrib[ing] negative and static characteristics to [the]… group". These include but are not limited to measurements of their "…physical bodies, their genetic or hereditary structure, their physiognomy, their intellectual capacity, their approach to gender roles, their approach to child rearing, modes of production, their migration or settlement, or their capacity to self-rule." This means that as television is the driver of social processes and knowledge, soap operas collect

and reimagine how race is learned within social groups. Here, social knowledge explores social pathways which are access to knowledge, although not much has been explored with black African middleclass socialization in the context of South Africa. Therefore, while this chapter acknowledges the variety of popular art texts it looks at television soaps as one of the many routes that feature interactions with other agents. These are contrasted with private or asocial routes to belief acquisition, where the exclusivity of black African middleclassness on television is constantly left out. Social epistemology focuses on group entities and examines the spread of information or misinformation across groups. The production of knowledge in the form of television soap productions, as Charles Mills (1998, 1999, 2007) suggests is understood in the "thin" logic of true belief as it is said to represent reality. However, it is concerned with both the production of knowledge and its inverses - the false beliefs and the white ignorance that remains, where the absence of true belief - is generated parallel to the televisual soap opera encounter's main role as entertainment and representations of societies. The main question is here is: Which frameworks have a relatively constructive impression on familiarity as exhibited by popular texts as 'error' and 'ignorance'? Moreover, the spread of misinformation, and the distribution of error (containing the likelihood of immense error distribution) within larger social groups existing in the South African society is defined as "whiteness", and societal observes (some absolutely malicious) that encourage whiteness, would attempt to provide answers to the latter question of misinformation re-/distribution. Further, Goldman (2003) suggests that the picture (presented by mass media) of "society" is perhaps opinion with a few unfortunate exceptions where he is suggesting inclusivity and harmoniousness. Here, this account offers the equivalent in social epistemology of mainstream media which theorize the American political atmosphere as one where sexism and racism are recognized as "irregularities" existing as social ills. The U. S.

socio- political culture is conceptualized as fundamentally free and inclusive, although, residing with the stretched history of systemic gender and racial subordination being referred to as the status of a minor "deviation" in society from the norm which, too, exists in the South African landscape. However, this reference to some of the feminist and race literature(s) disregard implications of systemic social oppression existing through and within sub-grouped processes of racism which for the purpose of this project are not explored. The latter idea similarly occurs in the South African terrain where scholarship is embedded in macro– social problems without ever examining sub-groups of blackness where the representation of black African middleclass in television soap opera texts can be found. Therefore, while these crucial points of investigation have the potential to handicap any genuine social epistemology of black African middleclassness, in effect they possibly stand at vantage points where social realities can be understood or interpreted differently from normative ideology generated by whiteness. Chauvinism and patriarchy, and discrimination and white supremacy continue to be a settled standard rule in societies globally. Therefore, racial conceptual amplification through popular art texts into specific subjects where whiteness is the driven social epistemology presents black African middleclass television soap opera texts insofar as lay interpretations of popular art texts work to marginalize domination. Its consequences, though, maintain the African identity even when "whiteness" continues to prevail, and while "whiteness" is consistent in its motive to disregard theoretical interpretations that intend to de-root colonization's residual encounters in post- apartheid South Africa.

4.5 Production, Production Politics and the Political Economy of Producing *Scandal!* (2008) and *Legacy* (2020)

Scandal! (2008) and *Legacy (2020)* soap opera series are South African popular art texts that aim to represent middleclass societies which interact with one another as racial socialization(s) and characterization of these social groups distinguish each from the other. These middleclass texts encourage viewers to engage and be presented with the heterogeneousness of the 'rainbow nation' which culturally, and traditionally espouse the South African society throughout history and post-1994. While the two texts are set to be depicting the high-end lives of Johannesburg moguls, these texts too, explore how other classes socialize themselves within such a concentrated/ focalized class representation. The two texts are multilingual South African texts with *Scandal!* produced by Ochre Moving Picture at Sasani Studios and *Legacy* produced by Tshedza Pictures. *Scandal!*'s running time set to 30 minutes on the original channel e.tv, the drama series is created by Gloria Medupe and directed by Ian Nkulu. *Scandal!* (formerly known as *The Voice*, is one of the longest running television soap opera texts, like *Generations: The Legacy*, in South Africa and is broadcast on eAfrica, e.tv Botswana and e.tv Ghana. *Scandal!* is primarily set at the fictional media company Nyathi Family Holdings (otherwise known in the series as NFH) based in Newtwon, Johannesburg. The media company has its main newspaper *The Voice* and tabloid magazine *Scandal*. The soap opera text focuses on employee lives at NFH and characters that directly and indirectly interact with those at NFH. A major attribute of the soap is the socioeconomic divide which is explored through balancing fictional characters residing in township Soweto who are characterized to represent and allow perceptions as the series interrogates the needs of a South African middleclass presented in *Scandal!* The series is exclusive to the network channel e.tv in South Africa it is mandated to follow editorial policies established by the network. e.tv was launched in 1998 and is the first and only privately owned free-to-air South African television station. The station is owned by eMedia Investments (Pty)

Ltd formerly known as Hosken Consolidated Investments (HCI), and Remgro (a fragment of the Rupert commercial domain). It is said that HCI bought out its minority black shreholders as they had failed to repay loans, they used to purchase MidiTV (former e.tv) leaving behind the majority whites shareholders in the company. Moreover, while the channel claims to value "commitment, honesty, accountability, professionalism, resourcefulness, mutual respect, free thinking, initiative, aspiration, flexibility, teamwork, and sharing of expertise [and] skills" (www.emediaholdings.co.za) the subject of transformation is not on this list of values as part of their mandate as a media company existing in South Africa. Therefore, while the organization has changed in ownwership to, arguably, racially white leadership since its premise, seemingly, its existence in the post- apartheid dispensation does not aim to transform the lives of South Africans. On the other hand, *Legacy* is a relatively new text, the drama telenovela is produced for the network M-Net DStv. The Sandton, Johannesburg set drama is created, and executive produced by Phatutshedzo Makwarela and Gwydion Benyon at Tshedza Pictures. While *Scandal!* presents an admixture of social classes living toward a predominantly black South African middleclass, *Legacy* exudes the scornfulness attributed to middleclasses within extremely rich social class settings. Here, while the two texts present similar characteristics of mixed races they too present how whiteness and blackness interact when made to socialize together in more characterological ways than one. The paid television channel M-Net is owned by Naspers a racially white corporate consortium where the channels founding principles were endorsed by the National Party government during the 1980s to allow Naspers as the only company to run the television network. The networks successful program was *Carte Blanch* an investigative journalism display that exposed many of South Africa's most well-known scandals of human rights manipulation, exploitation and consumer matters. The network in subsequent

years was given *Open Time* (an hour slot which later became two) on SABC's TV4 which was temporary by then government cabinet. During this time former president P.W. Botha refused the channel to broadcast news. The channel then set aside its plans for news broadcasting and began South Africa's first local soap opera *Egoli* (1992 – 2010) and subsequently established M-Net Supersport (now Supersport) which is exclusively for sports. When rugby became a full professional sport in 1995 most of the broadcasting rights in the Southern Hemisphere were sold to Rupert's *News Corporation*. Moreover, M-Net claims to "strive to play a significant role in the development of the film and television industry of the [African] continent." (www.mnetcorporate.dstv.com). Moreover, the channel has endorsed a previously predominantly raically white sport – rugby, and its innate endorsement by the apartheid government. This means that the nature of establishment in this channel is white centered. Therefore, *Legacy* as a production of this enterprise cannot be dissimilar and disconnected from this organizations founding principles.

4.6 Seeing the Gaze: "Whiteness" – An Analysis

The South African contemporary era, people relate with the world principally through visual images (Rose, 2001). This means that investigating the visual, as an addition component of to the textual, allows for a broadened consideration of constructions and contestations that may exist as racial imaginations in popular South African soap opera texts. Ives (2008), claims that the visual is able to reveal imports, where language and the eye alone cannot move beyond what is said and seen in texts. I will argue that this method of analysis affords perceptions of black African middleclassness into the construction and contestation of power where "whiteness" is observed benchmarking blackness in South African soaps. The textual examination of *Scandal!* and *Legacy* will be based on the character's constructions, and how these interact with one another in

their original series and how, if possible, these can establish distinct links, similarities and significances to the other. The objective here is to highlight how black African middleclassness has been, in these texts, a persistent benchmarked culture and/ or social class that cannot exist without the delusion/ pollution by whiteness as a conceptual duty to making and presenting entertainment as whitened in the case of South Africa. The section begins with the exploration of female constructions in the soaps.

4.6.1 "Black–Bitch" African Middleclass Female Construction(s) and "Whiteness" on South African Soaps

In this section I observe in both the texts *Scandal!* (2008) and *Legacy* (2020) the ways in which whiteness continues the maintenance of an 'underdeveloped black – bitch' identity construction, which comes along with a history of manipulation, gold-digging, cunning – a reputation scorned like no other. Here this underdevelopment of black female middleclass representation is always measured to the always correct white character as constructions that benchmark blackness through whiteness. This characterological analysis wants to compare, first, the female characters Dintle Nyathi and Layla McKenzie from *Scandal!* and Dineo Price to Felicity Price from *Legacy*. This intends to determine whether the plot, sequence structure, together with the character make-up – could be similar, and if so, what do perceptions can be gathered from the texts. Therefore, while history has seen black female bodies in popular media being sexually objectified the intention is to highlight plot and visual narrative constructions that are evidently presented "whiteness". First, the section looks at female characters on *Scandal!*

4.6.1.1 Dintle Nyathi and Layla McKenzie – Female Characters on *Scandal!*

In *Scandal!* the characters Layla (played by Natasha Sutherland) and Dintle (played by Mapaseka Koetle – Nyokong) are somewhat seen as competing female figures, the one, racially,

white and the other black. While Layla has been working at NFH as an executive, Dintle too has been working at NFH but at the cafeteria. However, the goal set Dintle does not settle for anything in the drama as she worked her way in to the corporate world of NFH first as a Social Media Account Manager where is a subsequent season she now is Chief Executive Officer. Layla on the one hand, is baffled by the decision to make Dintle C. E. O due to her understanding as an experienced and learned white woman seeing Dintle as a manipulative, gold digging township girl who she feels is unexperienced and not cut-out to be C. E. O. The character Dintle is established in the series as liking the finer things in life and is determined to do whatever it takes to achieve what she wants and who she wants which to Layla are all problems that are attributed to black young girls. As Dintle's character is refurbished in city center Johannesburg this character's storyline, too, gathers a not so recommendable reputation based on her actions and ways of achieving the material life she aspires, well not, according to Layla. Layla is a white middle-aged woman who has an impressing resume. The white middleclass figure is almost always seen at odds with Dintle (whom now has moved toward middleclassness) either because arrogance or privilege, while the 'othered' Dintle is at most times found at opposite at ends with Layla because she believes that Layla is fixated on her past and rather competes with the color of her skin than mere business practices which are all new to Dintle's corporate orientation. The relationship of the two characters warrants an examination of how racial identity of characters supposes agency ideology (whether through ignorance or praise) which is evident with Dintle and Layla. This section also looks at female characters from *Legacy*.

4.6.1.2 Dineo Price and Felicity Price – Female Characters on *Legacy*

The characters Dineo (played by Kgomotso Christopher) and Felicity (played by Mary Anne Barlow) are rivalries as stepmother and daughter. Dineo is established as a kind- hearted wife where initially she is not interested in her husband's (Sebastian Price played by Deon Lotz) wealth and Chief Executive Officeship succession, but later presents a change of heart. Felicity is daughter to Sebastian and ex-wife Angelique Price (played by Michelle Botes). Felicity is characterized as the main antagonist in the series. In the beginning episodes of the *Legacy*, Felicity is seen plotting with her mother for the C. E. O. position at Legacy investments. This happens while on the other hand Dineo fights to save her husband's legacy, and while Felicity aims to save her father's legacy together with her mother as they fight tooth and nail to prevent Dineo from making her son, SJ (played by Anton David Jefta) C. E. O. as the series main storyline is on the Price family members struggle over power. Here, Dineo's character exists between, first, a trophy wife who is young and black, married to a significantly older white male character. Moreover, the negative perception presented by this character surfaces when ex-wife to Sebastian and stepdaughters find themselves at odds with Dineo. However, Felicity who is almost the same age as her stepmother is presented as trying to keep the ship afloat from the said 'opportunist' Dineo. Therefore, while the two characters have similar resemblances their character constructs, firstly as distinct racially prejudiced and stereotyped characters, present ways in which the racial make-up of the characters presents pre-assumed ideology that exists as perpetual yardsticks which maintain certain rhetoric within black African female characters in popular soap opera texts.

4.6.1.3 Focalized White Female(d) Gaze: A Persistent Sanitized Underdevelopment of The Black African Middleclass "Black - Bitch" Rhetoric – Characters Dintle, Layla, Dineo and Felicity

This section explores the underdevelopment of black female figures where "whiteness" thrives to continue negated character constructions of black African female middleclasses.

4.6.1.3 a) *"Whitness" presented as an underdeveloped characterization of Dintle Nyathi, and a wronged white character Layla McKenzie*



[Figure 1- Source: www.Viu.com] – Dintle's Attitude

At the first launch of a media campaign of *Izigigaba* - a reality feature segment of NFH online publications Dintle is in celebratory mode where her team is gathered. They applaud each other and sip on what seems to be Champaign. As Dintle has asked everyone to continue the party at the bar at NFH, on her way out she runs into Layla. The medium close-up shot presents Layla

and Dintle in the foyer at NFH publications. Lalya's head, at no headroom, is position between two upwardly vertical light beams that are positioned at an unfocused depth of field in her background where she is in focus and present in the foreground and fully featured in the camera framing assuming a position of power to the right of the camera framing as she stands taller than Dintle at a frontal-side camera position. Here, tension is present at a minimal as the light beams signify heightened power over Layla. On the other hand, Dintle is almost out of the camera framing where she is positioned to the left of the camera framing at almost an over-the-shoulder camera position facing Layla to the right where only the side of her head is visible toward the camera signifying a figure with less power in the camera framing. In her background horizontal opened blinds are feature positioned from the top to the bottom of the camera framing suggesting even increasingly less power as the figure remains short and her face out of the frame. This is furthered by the nature of their dialogue:

Layla: Well done Didi!

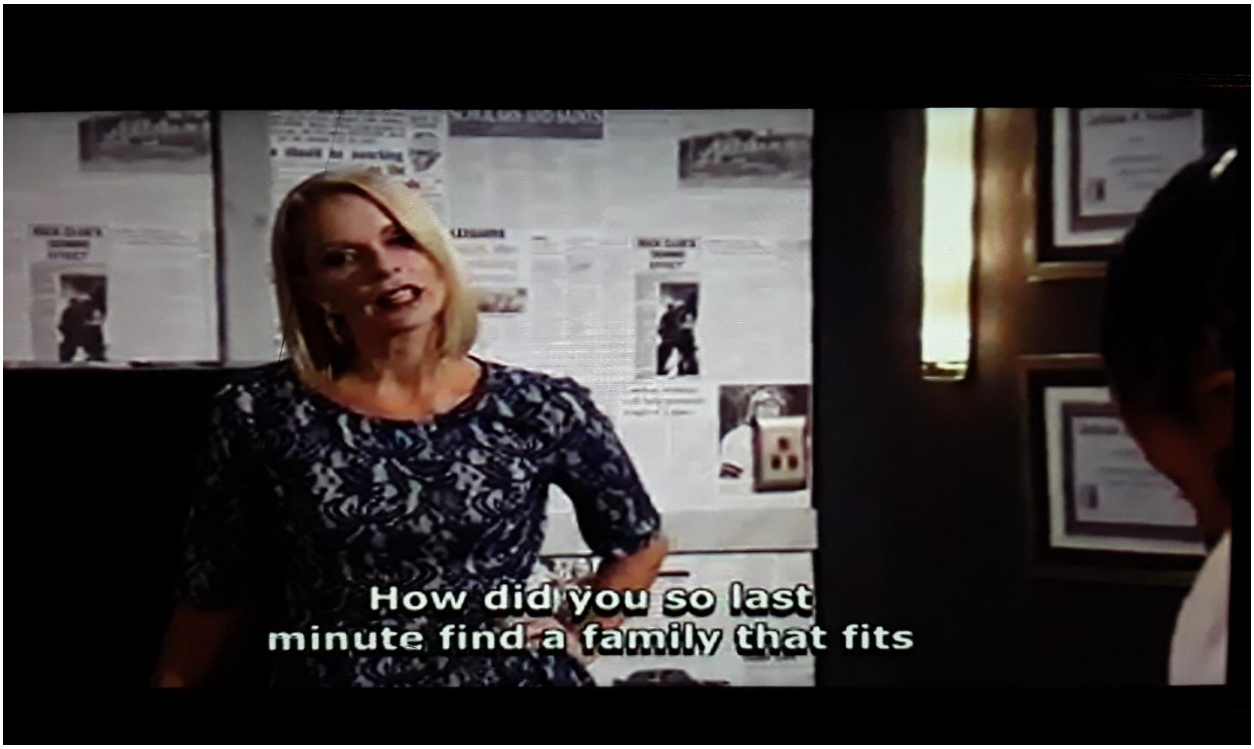
Dintle: Thank you!

Layla: Well done.

Dintle: Mm. Thank you. I told you that I can do it… Sorry.

The conversation is brief and Dintle continues past Layla. Here, Dintle's character is downplayed by her attitude where she has now proved herself right to her number one rival in the series. Her dialogue is towards proving herself Layla with a rather immature attitude. This suggests the characterological power relations which exist and go beyond workplace employee-employer relations between the two characters. The analysis considers the psycho- analytical positioning of the figure Dintle her attitude toward Layla. Here, while Layla genuinely

congratulates Dintle, Dintle in turn makes the situation one for bragging. This happens to a point where Layla subsequently rolls her eyes as she is not surprised by Dintle's reaction. However, the character underdevelopment of the 'black-bitch' here is attributed alongside a conceptual construction which erodes the positive ideological characterization of black female corporate bodies as preferred black African middleclass representations on South African television series. This happens while the exploration of the black 'othered' (in story lining) is seemingly condensed into prejudices and stereotypes.



[Figure 2- Source: www.Viu.com] – Layla doubts Dintle's work conduct.

The morning after the first launch of *Izigigaba* Layla finds the infographics of the first episode doing well she can't keep up with how Dintle is doing all the great work at the office and sees the need to doubt the conduct of her work. While Layla is still astonished by the success of the launch in Dintle's office Layla is presented in at a frontal view medium shot camera framing

with one hand on her hip and the other pressured down on a television set stand where she occupies the mid-ground with a focused depth of field in her background. Layla occupies the left center of the camera framing. Behind her to the left is a television set and directly on the wall behind the tv is white newspaper wallpaper which ultimately signifies the journalistic work they do in the office at NFH publications. Although this is the case, the articles on the newspaper wallpaper appear to be vertical and to some extent giving Layla a more postured structure of power as she too, stands upright facing Dintle. The white background to Layla somewhat gives a lightened appeal towards her resembling no tension and harm signifying the good character. On the other hand, Dintle is positioned as an unfeatured figure (we can only presume that it is her due to dialogue) toward the outer most left side of the camera framing where an adjacent dark charcoal colored wall is positioned to contrast, and is against the whitened newspaper wallpaper that Layla stands in front of. The added aesthetic of the beam light and framed certificates that are faced toward Layla signifies a symbol of authority where Dintle is presented as dark and scheming. The beam light further creates the undercurrents of opposing backgrounds where Dintle is on the darkness side, dividing and separating the two figures where Layla is in the light and right. The dialogue brings about doubt and suspense and audience reaction toward Dintle where she quickly brings to her defense attitude and depicting that she is bossy. Here, Layla is once again in a position of power as focus is on her and the delivered dialogue.

Layla: Geez, these figures are really impressive!

Dintle: Mhm! And they keep rising. I told you this is going to be a hit.

Layla: This means word of mouth is working, right?

Dintle: Yes, and we need to use that to our advantage. So, I was thinking, maybe find us clients that advertise about families, the youth and check how many people are watching. Because numbers don't lie.

Layla: Mm. You've got so much energy for someone who's been partying the whole night.

Dintle: First of all, I don't need alcohol to have fun. And secondly, you know us young people can party the whole night and still be fresh in the morning.

Layla: Mhm.

Dintle: Mmm.

Layla: Uhm… By the way, uhm… how did you so last minute, find a family that fits perfectly into that pre-publicity? It seems almost too good to be true.

Dintle: I did say that they were on the short-list, right? So please go work.

Layla: Mhm.

Layla's suspicions are quickly lived experience in a subsequent episode where she finds out that Dintle hired an actor to perform as a reality star of the premier of *Izigigaba*. Therefore, Layla was right in doubting Dintle's ability to do the job without ethicality which proves the power relations of the characters and subsequently allude that Dintle cannot be trusted as C. E. O. as she can't abide by process as an executive at NFH.



[Figure 3 – Source: www.Viu.com] – Wardrobe: Dintle's loose blouse wear vs. Layla's solid texture formal wear.

At a work meeting Dintle has gathered her team members to give instructions on the upcoming second episode of *Izigigaba*. The two characters Dintle and Layla are sitting next to each other around a table where two unfeatured actresses are standing behind Layla's chair – one positioned a little left to Layla, taking down meeting minutes, and the other standing to the right looking at Dintle with a smirk as though disapproving of her. The medium-longshot camera framing presents Dintle positioned to left and Layla to the right which continues the power relations of the two figures where Layla assumes a position of power and Dintle none. The two characters are significantly under contrasting lighting where Layla is directly under high resolution lighting signifying her authority in the frame and accentuating power politics as she sits upright, and Dintle at a low where less power is exhibited and even more due to her body language where she's almost lifting her shoulders and lessening the presence of her head. As they are positioned

at opposite ends of the camera framing facing one another with contrasting background shades – the darker background with focused lighting presents Layla in a solid blue formal top wear assuming that she's in business and demanding authority from everyone else in the frame as a figure that knows what she is doing around the meeting table, and Dintle in a loose blouse chest-showing leopard print top wear under minimal lighting signifying a somewhat loose-ended, unconcealed, clueless character with a whiteboard background where perhaps brainstorming has been taking place signifying a presented character that is perhaps still learning and has the whiteboard notes to remind her of how to do her job. Again, dialogue resembles how unprofessional Dintle is as she uses colloquial street language when giving a brief to Layla "FOMO" (Fear of missing out) where she too continues to be bossy.

Dintle: It's our bid day tomorrow we are shooting our second episode.

Co- workers: Wow!

Dintle: Yes. So, the story is about a young gay woman, let me check… who hasn't told her family about her sexuality. So, she's tired of living a lie. So, she wants us to help her reveal the truth.

Hlengiwe: Interesting!

Layla: Scandal! TV saving family lives since 2021.

Dintle: Mhm, I'm glad you like it Layla. Anyway, please start working on the teasers.

Hlengiwe: I have urgent deadlines, so if there isn't anything else, can I please…

Dintle: Sure, you can go.

Dintle: Don't give away too much hey. They must have FOMO.

Layla: I'll try my best.

Dintle: Shout if you have something, okay?

Layla: I'll scream.

Dintle: Good.



[Figure 4 – Source: www.Youtube.com] - Dintle's promiscuity.

Dintle finds herself having an office affair with Amogelang (otherwise known as Amo played by Kagiso Rathebe) who happens to be Hlengiwe's (colleague to Dintle and executive at NFH played by Nunu Khumalo). Amo and Dintle work close together as Amoe is the camera man for Izigigaba and Dintle the Presenter on the show. Here, Amo and Dintle prepare to shoot the second episode of *Izigigaba* the two get caught up in a conversation on their romantic entanglement. The medium close-up shot camera framing presents Dintle in a side-frontal view where she is faced from the left-hand side of the camera framing toward the right toward an

absent figure. This suggests that viewer attention should be placed onto Dintle. As she occupies the mid-ground in focus, her background depth of field is out of focus and we can barely see what features are behind her. This suggests more focus and reaction from Dintle's dialogue. However, as she is presented in control of the dialogue the three character background shades red, light, and then black from right to left of the camera framing resembles a shift within the mood of the scene where Dintle is first flirting with a co-worker, then shifts to being light of the moment, to reverting back to her dark, bossy, bitchy, self- driven sort of attitude.

Amo (played by Kagiso Rhathebe): Okay, maybe you can give me tips on how to get my boss on my cheering squad.

Dintle: Well, I'm already on your side. I guess your job is to make sure you keep me there.

Amo: Okay.

Dintle: So, how was your dinner with Hlengiwe?

Amo: uhm… It was good.

Dintle: That's nice.

Amo: You should have joined us you know. It was just very chilled vibes. Nothing major.

Dintle: Mhm. I didn't want you guys to cramp my style.

Amo: Okay. Okay, well at least we didn't get up to any side-dish business or whatever. So, we don't have to be acting weird.

Dintle: I know what happened and what didn't happen. I was there too, remember?

Amo: Yes, I'm just saying. We can all hang out and vibe without it being weird. Right?

Dintle: I know. I had work to do. And no one can stop me from doing anything I want to. So, I don't feel guilty, you see. And you shouldn't feel guilty. So, take a deep breath and chill.

Amo: I'm chilled. I'm good. I mean, there's nothing wrong.

Dintle: Mhm.

Dintle in this scene is presented as an unapologetic, promiscuous black young woman who lives by her rules. The same Dintle is rivals with Layla, her baby-daddy's mother at work, although she chooses to have an affair with Amo who happens to work under her lead. This uncouth black African middleclass woman is characterized as a cheater, lustful, sex driven, and manipulative in the series. However, this happens at Layla's watch where she remains unchanged on her opinion about Dintle, and Dintle lives to meet this idea of an ungovernable black female middleclass character construction as it remains perpetuated in the popular art text *Scandal! (2008).* The relationship posed by the two characters Layla and Dintle proves rivalry in the workplace where the black character comes with and is established with residual negative connotations of stereotyped to black female middleclasses. Here, the white character is always questioning the existence of the other suggesting an unfitting and unwanted Dintle. The next section looks into female characters presented in *Legacy*.

4.6.1.3 b) *"Whiteness" presented as a sexualized, deceitful trophy wife characterized as Dineo Price benchmarked by white character Felicity Price*

In this section the similarities on *Legacy* are, too, presented by female construction in *Scandal!* are exhibited. However, the continuum of the black-bitch rhetoric presented by the texts extends to storylines invested in notions of black trophy wives to wealthy white males where the problematization of cross cultural relationships is seen as perpetuating a storyline where the

black figure is usually not accepted and somewhat a danger to the white setting as in the case od Dineo Price. Here, Dineo is exhibited as the 'sacrificial lamb' of the Price family time and again as she exhausts herself in doing anything to protect her marriage to Sebastian Price. Narrative notions of corruption, treachery, and even ideas of goldigging are presented through this character against a white female fugure – Felicity who works tirelessly to get rid of Dineo in her family as she claims she has destroyed the love Sebastian had for his first wife. Objectification and a sexualized black female body is explored.



[Figure 5- Source: www.Showmax.com] – The introduction and establishment of the character Dineo

The morning of a press conference where Sebastian Price announces his retirement Dineo prepares her speech as she is about to be successor to Sebastian at Legacy investments. While the price family prepares for this occasion Sebastian returns upstairs to check on Dineo. Here,

romance and excitement set the tone for the scene. Figure 5 presents a camera shot framing of the characters Dineo and Sebastian, at the Price mansion, prior to the press conference where Sebatian will be announcing his step down as Chief Executive Officer of Legacy Investments. Dineo is presented naked in a longshot camera framing taking a bath. Dineo positioned to the center of the camera framing assumes the center figure. All the room objects are in a clear view to her and the camera whilst the center object - the tub, is in ceramic white suggesting a calm easy centralized mood. The neutral frontral camera view, again, suggesting calm emotion sees Dineo writing on a note book while having a conversation with Sebastian. Here, Sebastian is positioned at an upwardly diagonal view to the camera which distinguishes authority and power relations between the two figures as he holds a position of power as a white male figure and as Dineo's husband in the camera framing. Sebastian walks up to Dineo and they both occupy the midground which signifies two figures that are equally romantic with a focused depth of field where headroom is clear and the background in focus, which too implies the balance in mood, romance, and emotion. However, a mohogany colored large mirror is located to the left of the bath tub where Sebestian's reflection is visable which too faces down toward Dineo in the tub symbolizing an emphasized presence of power attributed to this character. Positioned vertically to the center above Dineo's head is, also, a mohogany colored underwear rack located in the background. This object ends at mid-height against the wall and signifies a link between the mohogany colored furniture in the room to the reflected figure in the mirror – Sebastian, although, now Dineo is with limited power and is more asbored by the white tub and off-white walls which shrink her as a present figure. This is similar to the significance of the mohogany wooden-glass large chest located to the right, where Sebastian stands between it and the bath tub. Here, Sebastian is at a slight stand facing down at Dineo, which pronounces Sebastian as the

dominant figure with an obvious perverted white male gaze. In this camera framing Sebastian walks around the bath tub starring at Dineo where he sexually objectifies her even in his dialogue as "my young trophy wife". This camera shot framing suggests the nature of Dineo's establishment, first as a wife to Sebastina, and second, as a black African middleclass female figure. The over sexualized introduction of this character, even when she writes her monumental successorship speech as C.E.O. the camera framing maintains her role as a trophy wife only. This occurs through a perverted white male gaze which cannot be escaped even in the continuity of Dineo's storyline.

While everyone in anxious as it is unknown who will take over from Sebastian rivalry starts to build up in the soap. During this time S.J. (Sebastian Junior son to Dineo and Sebastian) arrives and everyone is in a happy mood while welcoming him. At this moment Dineo is done preparing herself for the occasion where in this scene she joins everyone downstairs. Felicity, who already has her own mind set on the possibility that her father will endorse Dineo for C.E.O of *Legacy Investments* she keeps to herself and watches everyone reminiscing in anticipation for the event.



[Figure 6- Source: www.Showmax.com] – The introduction and establishment of the character Felicity

In Figure 6 the introduction and establishement of the character Felicity (Sebastians oldest child and daughter) presents her in a white suit over a purple blouse top the morning of the press conference as this signifying the formality of the occasion she anticipates. Felicity is presented at a closeup camera shot framing where she is standing in front of a gold framed mirror which is out of camera focus at the Price residence foyer. During this scene, as everyone is excited to see S.J., Dineo too makes her way down the stairs, looking ravishing as seen in figure 7. Moreover, the aesthetic character on the mirror is reflected directly behind Felictiy suggesting what she sees in contrast to her understanding of the purpose of the upcoming event, where Dineo is somewhat missing the point of the press conference as formal. This character is looking up and outward to the left of the camera composition where Felicity's side-frontal view is exposed. Here, as this camera framing focuses on the facial reaction presented by this character, the mosaic mirror and Felicity face toward Dineo as she comes down the stairs suggesting anticipated reaction which guides audience reaction as Dineo is in a high-end jumpsuit feathered garment showing her cleavage (casually catagorized as evening garment).



[Figure 7- Source: www.Showmax.com] – The character Felicity glaring at Dineo coming down the stairs

Here, as Felicity's suit commands corporate/ business woman, Dineo is dressed to maintain her luxury status and purposely over sexualized figure. This creates a need to interprete Dineo as a materialistic black African middleclass figure, more so that audience reaction depends on Felictiy which the camera shot framing depicts. This reaction furthers the idea that even though Dineo could potentially, and possibly be chosen as C. E. O. by Sebastian, she will always either be existing outside of the normalized appropriate fit for business executive or a failure too busy concerned with her materialistic life.



[Figure 8- Source: www.Showmax.com] – Dineo 'not good enough' to be the face of Legacy Investments

After the press conference where colleagues and the Price family members are seen enjoying themselves to the news by Sebastian stepping down, more breaking news that *Legacy Investment* is involved in a corruption scandal have surface in the media. Here, Dineo was responsible for paying off a bribe to the premier where she had claimed to have taken care of it swiftly when asked by Sebastian on their way to the press conference. In figure 8 Dineo is presented in a medium shot camera framing with Sebastian where attention is drawn toward the dialogue, body language, mood and tension. The two characters are presented in profile view towards the camera where their eyes meet at neutral level sugesting the tense mood. Here, Dineo is positioned to the center of the camera framing signifying the spectacle of corruption that she becomes as soon as the bribery news become a topic in the episode. These characters are in the foreground and their background is dark, except where the use of natural lighting is coming

through the drapped lace behind the curtain to present grey and light shades reflecting on Dineo. The monochrome shades in the room provide an upside down cone-shaped light focus on Dineo where she is seen in a worried condition looking at Sebastian, where these colors act as symbols of an inconsistant scheming, a dark thought black African middleclass woman who is now also involved in a crime. Here, Dineo has paid a bribe to the premier and Sebastian is furious at the point where he summons Dineo to their room. The contrasting background shades of the two characters suggest two figures at opposing ends where one is confused and the other furious at the 'other' as depicted by the characters. Here, Dineo has to face the shortlived reality of her proposed reign as CEO. Sebastian goes as far as reminding Dineo that she is not fit to be chief executive of Legacy as it is suggested over and over that she has not earned the position. This means that this black character cannot exist without the judgement of the white male character. Moreover, Dineo has to be the character that involves *Legacy* in a scandal of this nature as she soon takes the fall for the bribery and more so because her ethicalness can always be judged through prejudices of gold-digging, and 'trophy wifeness'.

4.6.1.3 c) *Rivalry between Felicity and Dineo*

While the decision to make Dineo C.E.O is interupted by a corruption scandal orchestrated by Felicity, the rivalry to get rid of her continues. Felicity is out to prove by any means necesarry that she is the one fit for the C.E.O. position. This character is helped in her scheming by her father's driver Stefan Potgieter (played by Sean-Marco Vorster), who leaks information to the media and makes sure to help Felicity in "protecting" the Price family's legacy from Dineo. Here, the continuation that Dineo is a danger and threat to the establishment of the family business and the family itself is explored.



[Figure 9 – Source: www.Showmax.com] – Felicity as an innocent saviour of Legacy Investments

The day after the news break of a corruption scandal at *Legacy* Felicity and Felicity in figure 9 is presented kissing Stefan's upper arm where a tatoo of a teddy bear is drawn. The close-up camera shot framing presenting the two is at a neutral eye level shot suggesting that the romance depicted in the frame is an act that the two figures have common agreement upon. Stefan positioned to the left where his arm separates the two characters and Felicity is positioned to the right of the camera framing, where she is romantically looking at Stefan who's head is positioned slightly above hers and out of the frame towards the top left corner - suggesting that Felicity assumes more power, first as his boss, and second within the romantic relationship that the two have. The characters are positioned in the foreground where Felicity's face is in focus suggesting drawn attention to this figure. The camera framing background is slightly out of focus where silky beige curtains are seen drapping with a decreased depth of field directly behind Felicity

continue to suggest drawn attention and even slight sexual command to this character. However, the teddy bear holding one balloon on Stafans arm suggests a symbol of innocence which contradicts the very basis of their relationship as Stefan is only used by Felicity to get information that otherwise her father Sebastian wouldn't communicate with her, especially during this time when no one, except for Sebastian, knows who will be next C.E.O. Here, Stefan is lead by his emotions to do whatever Felicity asks him as he is strongly attracted to her. Stefan has recorded Sebastian and Dineo having a conversation about the bribe while headed to the press conference the previous morning. Evenmore, the romanticism shown by Felicity isn't pure as she is only doing it to thank him for "saving the Kingdom from the clutches of the evil step-mother" as the information was leaked to the media subsequently after recording. Further, Stefan's allegience to Felicity means that he does not identify with Dineo and would rather "save" Legacy Investments from her while in the midst of a sexual relationship with Felicity. Here, the symbolized innocence, along with the exerted power which Felicity's character survives on suggests, and continues to perpetuate the darkness, scheming, untrustworthiness, and corrupt characterization which Dineo is established through.

4.6.1.4 d) Findings

The characterization processes gathered in this subsection are evidence to the examined underdevelopment of a "black-bitch" in black African middleclass soap opera texts in South Africa. The characters Dintle and Dineo prove to be conceptualized through similar characterological constructs. Moreover, Kgomotso Christopher who plays the role of Yvonne Langa on *Scandal!* is an exact duplicate to the character Dineo on *Legacy* (not discussed in this research). This suggests the relentlessness of popular African language art literatures in depicting and representing black female African middleclassness as a typified, limited, whiteness

frameworked constructions, which continue to provide inadequate and mythical ideologies of black African middleclassness. Here, the relationship presented between the two texts *Scandal!* and *Legacy* exhibits that "whitenes" is always localized within similar characterological constructs that, in this case, white South Africans share similar attributes and those are shared within common ethical, worthy to judge, and somehow deserving identities. Where, "whiteness" representing racially black African middleclassness, blackness is constructed to exist in different settings/ lives that are never fixed. Therefore, this suggests that since black African middleclass women seem to either be coming from a ghettoized and/or with a scorned reputation background attached to them in soap operas they are always threatening to, and dysfuntional within, white settings in the context of South Africa.

4.6.2 Black African Fragile Middleclass Masculinities and "Whiteness"

This section relies on the examination of white middleclass, and sometimes firstclass, male construction Sebastian Price. Here, this character in the text is established through power struggles of succession either from his young black trophy wife Dineo, or his first wife's daughter Felicity, and even a black African male power-hungry character construction Msizi on *Legacy* and a criminalized, vengeful Mthunzi on *Scandal!* Further, the black politically inclined and transformational employee comrade Msizi in white corporate as per the case of *Legacy* is arguably betraying the conventional white heteronormative space. The construction of a white male character (Sebastian), usually, is attributed to an almost heroized, perfect, and morally intact figure that plays a protagonist role. This fugure arguably determines every other character's make-up in the text and how these interact with one another in the soap. The character's examined along with Sebastian Price are Msizi Zulu in *Legacy*, and Chumani Langa with Mthunzi Mayiza on *Scandal!* The characterological interpretation is that white corporate

executive constructions are ascribed preferential attributes of whites and "whiteness" when compared to their black counterparts. These are then read as "whiteness" contending as black middleclass constructions where the storyline thrives through stereotypes, prejudices, and anti-black ideologies of fragile black African middleclass male constructions.

4.6.2.1 Chumani Langa and Mthunzi Mayiza – Male Characters on *Scandal!*

Chumani (played by Ayanda Daweti) is son and heir to the Langa family, and Mthunzi (played by Bongile Mantsai) is a rival character to the Langa's. The two black African middleclass male characters represent opposing ends of black male masculinities where one is representation of a hyper, and the other a representation of a hypo black masculinity. While Chumani is a homosexual male character that struggles with his identity in the South African context he, too, battles with his unaccepting mother Boniswa Langa (played by Lusanda Mbane). Chumani displays attributes of a troubled homosexual black African middleclass male with consequent mental breakdowns in the series. On the other hand, Mthunzi presents an extreme characterization, of a power-hungry masculinity established as, vengeful, deceitful, and ego-driven character who at most finds himself manipulating his way into the Langa family empire. These two-opposing extreme end characterization constructions suggest two representations of black African middleclass males where one is consumed by an identity crisis in a black middleclass African context presented through "whiteness", and at the other extreme – a toxic black African middleclass. The exploration of two male constructions is viewed through a white male gaze ideological conceptualization where the very absence of a white male character figure in the series is suggestive of a never troubled and never morally wrong white male character to the 'othered' black African male character construction.

4.6.2.2 Msizi Zulu and Sebastian Price – Male Characters on *Legacy*

The characters Msizi (Played by Siyabonga Thwala), and Sebastian (played by Deon Lotz), are first established as co– workers where Sebastian is outgoing Chief Executive Officer and Founder of Legacy Investments, and Msizi is executive director of the Media division in the company. Sebastian's character is short- lived, and Msizi's is presented as a transformational employee who is completely invested in black economic empowerment in the business and corporate South Africa wholly. In the series as Sebastian retires and speculations as to who would take over the reins of Legacy remain undisclosed as he is murdered hours before the announcement which is at the helm of public media speculation. However, plotting and conspiring schemes to get the CEO position ultimately makes Msizi the Price family's number one lookout for person perceived as an internal enemy. This happens at the height and accolade praising of Sebastian just days before Sebastian announces his successor. Sebastian Price goes missing and during his search Msizi, at this point, is presented as greedy and as a character that would do anything to get the top position at Legacy.

4.6.2.3 White Male Heteronormativity as Determinant of Black African Middleclass Masculinity: A Study of The Characters Chumani, Mthunzi, Msizi and Sebastian

This section explores black African middleclass masculinities as guarded by "whiteness" character constructions which aim to reinforce ideas of a fragile black male African middleclass identity. While the previous section of analysis intends to suggest that black female benchmarking is due to the inherent pursuit of a black- bitch rhetorics in South African soaps, this sections then wants to apply the topic of heteronormativity in black African middleclass masculinities as aspect which "whiteness" employs to continue its priviledge, arrogance, and objectification of blackness. The section first looks at the presented hyper and hypo masculinities in the text *Scandal!*

4.6.2.3 a) *"Whiteness" presented as characterized by hyper masculine Mthunzi*



[Figure 10 – Source: www.Youtube.com]- Mthunzi conspires with Thembeka to collapse ThebeLanga on condition he brings back the love of her life

In an effort to collapse ThebeLanga Holdings, Mthunzi has conspired with Thembeka a black female character who plays the role as advisor into a rescue mission to the company when things go wrong. However, Boniswa Langa, C.E.O at ThebeLanga who is gullible to this scheme, continues to trust Thembeka who trades information on ThebeLanga with Mthunzi on condition that Mthunzi convinces her lost lover back into her life. The two conspirers are in Mthunzi's office when Mthunzi gets lost in his words confiding to have feelings for Thembeka. Presented in figure 10 is a close-up camera shot framing of Mthunzi and Thembeka in Mthunzi's work office. Here, Mthunzi is presented at a frontal side view at almost an over the shoulder view from behind Thembeka - where he occupies most of the frame from the right-hand side. Here the camera focuses on Mthunzi to illuminate his dialogue and body language where he is presented

smiling at Thembeka who is located to the outer most left side of the frame where she is not in view standing at Mthunzi's desk. The camera framing somewhat presents a suggested collateral feeling of intimacy which is presented in the dialogue and Mthunzi mannerisms. Mthunzi is in the midground of the frame where an increased depth of field presents his background clearly as the blinds are positioned horizontally and directly behind this figure where the dark brown black color of the blinds symbolizes the a contrasted mood to what the two characters are actually meeting about. Thembeka is somewhat surprised by Mthunzi's behavior. This suggests that this black African middleclass male character in his scheming is vunerable to somekind of dillusional love relationship with his business partners as the case of the two. The two conspire to dismantle the company – Thebe Langa – and on Thembeka's condition that Mthunzi convinces Quinton (played by Broghton Ngoma) to take Thembeka back as his lover. Thembeka in return will be the inside man for Mthunzi at ThebeLanga as she is advisor to acting C.E.O. Boniswa Langa. Langa believes everything she is told by Thembeka. However, Mthunzi tries to flirt with Thembeka but she is not interested as she reiterates that the relationship is strictly business.

Thembeka: Boniswa took the bait.

Mthunzi: Mm.

Thembeka: The first site should be up for sale soon.

Mthunzi: You know, you're a brilliant woman.

Thembeka: No, I don't like compliments.

Mthunzi: I'm sorry but it's all happening so fast hence the compliment.

Thembeka: Yes. That's because I'm pressed upon her and there's no time to waste. ThebeLanga needs a serious cash injection and everything should be sorted out by the time the newlyweds get back. What?

Mthunzi: I'm sorry about the compliments.

Thembeka: Good.

Mthunzi: Yes. Thembeka, I know you're a brilliant woman and… okay, sorry… You said no compliments.

Thembeka: It was your plan Mthunzi, I just executed it.

Mthunzi: You're flawless and we're equal partners.

Thembeka: Yes, in crime.

Mthunzi: You know, Quinton is a lucky guy.

Thembeka: For wanting nothing to do with me.

Mthunzi: No. For being a fool.

Thembeka: Listen dude, you don't have to use your charm on me. I'm fully invested in what we're doing.

Mthunzi: No. Don't confuse charm with admiration. They are two different things.

Thembeka: Mthunzi, you do remember our agreement about this is strictly business, right?

Mthunzi: Of course not. We come from different places. We came here to work that's all.

Thembeka: Good. I'll see you around.

As Mthunzi works hard to avenge himself to the Langas, he finds himself attracted to Thembeka's almost innate way in making certain that what Mthunzi wants- Mthunzi gets. This is contained in the "admiration" that Mthunzi speaks to, and is symbolized in the contrasting shades that are present within the frame where Mthunzi's suit is purple which is contrasted by the clear background with the blinds going in an opposite direction, again, symbolizing the present conflict of interest between the two figures in the scene and what their sole business relationship is based on. Here, the character Mthunzi presents a hyper masculinity identity that is bitter and filled with vengeance, finds himself having feelings with his accomplice. Therefore, masculinity is explored in the text as fragile when he doesn't get what he wants and is at times confused in the relationships he makes which creates a character that continues to be undecided. A somewhat headless-chicken construction identity. Therefore, the character makeup of Mthunzi who exists in the series as a lingering isolated figure who is bound to his office with no clue as to what he does exactly, is arguably a reiteration of criminate male constructions that exist outside of the heteronormative setting of acceptable white male constructions. Here, the absence of a white male figure completely throws this character out of context as not fitting and somewhat a useless coon without any value even in the wholistic makeup of the soap. However, even when comparing the organizational setting the black African male construction across the texts *Scandal!* and *Legacy*, Mthunzi remains at a periphery in society as an unwanted dangerous black middleclass male construction that is destructive.



[Figure 11 – Source: www.Viu.com] – Mthunzi has hired someone to cover up for him as though he is in Singapore

Mthunzi in his quest to destroy ThebeLanga hacks the company's database in a mission to find classified documents that could see the behest to shutdown the company. This is soon picked up when an investigation into the ThebeLanga database hack by Mthunzi is launched, where Mthunzi is made aware of this by Thembeka. Here, when son-in-law Romeo (played by Hungani Ndlovu) suspects Mthunzi, he quickly checks for Mthunzi's whereabouts and finds out that Mthunzi is in Singapore a plan that organized by Mthunzi when they confirm with Mthunzi's mother. Figure 11 is a medium close- up shot where Mthunzi is presented immediately after he gets off the call with his mother. Here, focus is more directed to the characters face where facial expression and mood are exhibited as Mthunzi's mother has bought his lie that he is in Singapore. The camera framing presents Mthunzi at a frontal view where he is in thought, perhaps in trying to figure out what his next move at trying to destroy Thebe Langa would be, or

now that the Langa's could be suspecting him in their company troubles – what their next move will be. However, the character's background is in complete white where the framing gives little headroom due to a decreased depth of field. This symbolizes and perhaps predicts the uncertainty of Mthunzi's scheming and plotting to avenge himself as he, now, is no longer in speaking terms with his inside man – Thembeka. The emptiness of the frame also exhibits his never satisfied void when he can't get through to his accomplice as he is left with no alternative or suggestion towards his next plan. This understanding provides more depth in that this character is always captured/exhibited within the confines of his office space. This allows for the understanding that this figure is at most driven by his ego as a businessman whom no one knows what he does but also his loneliness is suggestive of an even more scheming, dark, unfriendly, character that can't share the world with people unless he is benefiting from it. This kind of fragile black middleclass masculinity can be defined as toxic in society and hence the toxicity the character plays within the context of the soap. Therefore, the role of "whiteness" suggests that this hyper masculinized black middleclass character poses a danger to business and society.

4.6.2.3 b) *"Whiteness" presented as characterized by hypo fragile masculine Chumani*



[Figure 12- Source: www.Youtube.com] – Troubled Chumani is immersed in his psychological state

Figure 12 is a complete contrast to the masculinity attributed to Mthunzi. While Romeo, Xolile (played by Sivenathi Mabuya) and Boniswa are deliberating who could be responsible for hacking the ThebeLanga data base, they suspect Mthunzi as they agree that this kind of sneaking is written reeks of Mthunzi all over it. Moreover, while Chumani must face a recurring guilt conscious he is embroiled in mental, and psychological issues which in effect are established through presenting him as a troubled son of the Langa's. Here, what troubles Chumani, in essence, is the inability and struggle to maintain his identity as a black homosexual male who is always caught up in guilt consciences which at one point are characterized through revealing that he isn't a true heir to the Langas; or because of his grandmother who passes on and he can't stomach the thought that he hadn't told her that he wasn't her true grandson that she, the

remaining matriarch of the Langa's thought is. Here, Chumani is depicted in a medium shot in the lounge at the family residence. The character Chumani is presented in a morose state where he is looking down and is in a frontal-side view to the camera. This character occupies the foreground of the camera framing where he is in proximity and his body language can be examined. Thich exhibits the kind of mood the character is in. While little headroom is presented in the camera framing, symbolizing tension of a troubled character – Chumani's is presented in the foreground with a focused depth of field where his background is clear. Here, the background in single monochrome grey colors and where the wall is in different wallpaper patterns, from a solid grey at the left of the camera framing to a floral two shaded grey wallpaper, to a meshed grey room divider feature to the extreme right-hand side. This change in texture grey colors and warmth symbolizes the present inconsistent moods which Chumani exhibits in the foreground. However, the sequence in developing a storyline of this nature while it parallels Mthunzi's suggests a rather comparison-based agenda where to some extent the exhibited homosexuality is carved and made to contrast a sneaky, scheming, dark character, which is Mthunzi in this case. Therefore, on one hand the text *Scandal!* presents these two black African male constructions as existing at opposing ends of a masculine spectrum but, their fragility and inconsistent inadmirable attributes are famishes of black male identities by "whiteness" which serves to reiterate black male identities that cannot exist within the heteronormative spec of whites. In the next section we see how the troubled character Chumani portrayed.



[Figure 13 – Source: www.Youtube.com] – Chumani's guilt manifests and contributes to his psychiatric state

When Chumani is desparate to fix a financial mess as C.E.O of ThebeLanga his guilt gets the better of this character. In figure 13 - Chumani has signed off a purchase for incorrect products ordered by ThebeLanga and this creates a whirlwind that temporarily bankrupts the company. Here, Chumani must deal with a characterization as incompetent black African male executive in corporate South Africa. In the camera framing below this character is presented in a medium shot camera framing. Exhibited is a troubled business executive, which ultimately exhibits a weak, incompetent and unable black masculinity in the business world. Tension is presented by the figure taking up almost the whole frame where no headroom is present. Chumani is in the foreground with a completely out of focus background suggesting this character's emotion presented by his body language where frustration is visible. In the scene the monochrome grey colors consume this character's intent to have a cordial conversation with his ex-lover Tshepo

(played by Bohang Moeko) who has visited him, which however turns in to a rather guilt triggering experience as Tshepo did not show any sympathy towards Chumani's condition.

Moreover, the plot suggesting that this character is not a true heir of the Langa's quickly proves right the suggested absence of a nuclear family which Chumani would be existing within had he been the true heir which in this vein he would supposedly be imagined as heterosexually characterized figure. Further, the troubled attribute speaks more to this figure's crumbling family structure which is continued by limited ideology of racially black constructs of homosexuality. To this idea, a character on Legacy – Sanele [not examined in this section (played by Teboho Tsotetsi)] as a junior business analyst is reminiscent of this kind of conceptualized black African homosexual middleclass. The character Sanele presents a stereotypical performance where he completely 'acts' gay throughout the series. This is obviously done and in place to solicit entertainment. These constructions are existing alongside their heterosexual counterparts which are altogether indicative of a conservative South African society of heteronormative identities. Character constructions with identities that are said to exist outside of the normative presents a patriarchal society invested in "whiteness". However, when these are cross-referenced (as black African middleclass constructions) to racially white heteronormative constructions they then perpetuate and make black African homosexuality and heterosexuality, existing as masculine identities, somewhat benchmarked by a factor of whiteness and its existing inability to explore African identities as complete characterizations on their own. In the next section we explore a black middleclass male political transformation-driven character construction Msizi in the text *Legacy*.

4.6.2.3 c) *"Whiteness" presented as a power-hungry politically inclined characterization Msizi*



[Figure 14- Source: www.Showmax.com] – Msizi's attempted takeover as acting C. E. O of Legacy Investments

In the continuing narrative plot of the text Legacy, when Sebastian Price steps down as C.E.O he stalls his decision to make Dineo Price his successor as she had caused *Legacy Investments* to be embroiled in a corruption scandal. Meanwhile, Sebastain is pressured to announce who is to takeover he disappears on a hiking trail where in the continuity of the series we witness that Felicity with the help of Stefan murders Sebatsian. At this point the chairman of the organization has to exercise her duties and appoint an acting C.E.O while the search for Sebastian continues. During this time Msizi and Felicity scheme and pull tricks of blackmail and manipulation contesting for the position. However, Msizi gets the chance as he is confident that black executive representation is needed in corporate South Africa and this could be the chance to transform "the game". He is soon sworn in as acting C. E. O. Figure 14 is camera shot framing

presenting all company executive directors at *Legacy Investments* where Msizi has called a meeting soon after his appointment. The camera shot framing presents a long shot camera framing with the character Msizi in a board of directors meeting around a table. Here, Msizi is seen welcoming Lucky Ntshinga (played by Hamilton Dhlamini) as a new director of Legacy's marketing division. The camera framing positions Msizi at the center right standing, where in this scene he shows Lucky his seat to his left. Lucky at left center opens his seat sitting down. In this scene, Msizi walks into the camera frame from the right as he speaks on his cellphone but quickly finishes and comes to a stop where he continues standing at one end of the table, and where at the other Felicity (although outside of the frame) is seated suggesting an opposing unfeatured position of power. Featured in the frame are four racially white males that sit on either side of the table, as Msizi occupies a position of power at almost a slanted triangular shape as he assumes the top of the triangle and is located toward the top of the frame. In the background is a grey wall with black blinds where natural light comes in. The camera cuts between a medium close-up shot, a long shot and a medium shot of the characters Msizi and Felicity at either ends of the boardroom.

Msizi: Hi, everyone. Sebastian Price is still missing and saying nothing of the recent shocking allegations against Dineo – these are unspeakably hard times. Felicity, I can only imagine how hard this is for you and the family, should you need anything at all please call on us. Alright, back to business. With my appointment as C.E.O…

Felicity: …acting C. E. O.

Msizi: …I'm going to have to find a new director to take over the media division. I'm pleased to announce that I have found one – Lucky Ntshinga. Now, not many people know that this cadre also has a degree in journalism; He'll be heading up our deeply important work here at L24.

Lucky: Hi, everyone. I'm honored to be part of the team. Thank you.

Msizi: Transformation is a new priority here at Legacy. I want a detailed transformation plan from each and everyone of you by Friday next week. I want you to show me your vision for the future, and I'll show you mine. Good.

Here, while Msizi plots his way as transformation leader at Legacy, his acquaintance with Lucky and this character's appointment as director is striking as the two have a history. This questionable companionship is further established in a subsequent scene where Lucky is found questioning Msizi of a scholarship certificate awarded to him. This presents the untrustworthiness attribute that the two characters embody. Even more, Msizi's plot to become C.E.O is found manifesting as he allocates a first mission for Lucky where Dineo is to become a news topic on L24 (the news division). Here, Msizi has developed headlines where Dineo is to presented as the "most hated woman in South Africa", where black male South Africans hate her for choosing a white man over them, and white are woman hating her for stealing their man; and even more, black women are hating her for not having to put up with a black man. These subject headlines are all a plot to bring Dineo as an inappropriate figure to be C. E. O. where the faults of a black woman are preyed on – which ultimately parallel his statement of "shocking allegations" in his dialogue. Here, the optimization of "whiteness" is seen portrayin a black African middleclass untrustworthy character in the face of corporate white South Africa. Therefore, whiteness has continued to benchmark this black male identity as a falsified transformation-driven character construction existing in South African popular arts.



[Figure 15 – Source: www.Showmax.com] – Msizi's holds a secret black board member's coope meeting at Legacy Investments

During Msizi'z bid to become C.E.O of Legacy Investments he immediately after Sebastians disappearance he volunteers to come assist in keeping the company afloat assisting Felicity. As they work hard to maintain company operations Msizi is seen conspiring with black board member in a manifesto, during the night, to call for transformation in the corporate industry of South Africa. In figure 15, a medium long shot camera framing of Msizi is presented in a shareholders meeting at Legacy Investments. Here, Msizi is located in the center of the frame where he is seated with four black males unfeatured figures that are facing him as he is talking to them. This creates a focus on to Mthunzi even with the audience as he asks them to vote for him in an upcoming board meeting, where all the characters are presented at level heads as they sit around the table symbolizing unity. However, with the concentrated head light coming from the left of the frame casting a shadow picture throughout the right hand-side of the frame, and the

background presenting scattered low lighting through the window, this suggests that the meeting is held at night time which further exhibits that the held meeting is in fact secret which is further witnessed in Msizi's dialogue. Here, the obvious narrative is that as Msizi is desperate to be CEO of Legacy Investments, however his franticness presents a character that is power hungry, who's said objective, too, is transformation. In the dialogue:

Msizi: Eh, lalelani. I-penalty le. Uma singahluleka ngeke siphinde siyithole imali. This is your moment, okay? Sengiqalile ukukhuluma nabantu laba abaku-government laba be-Pension Fund, ba-control(a) u-30% we-Legacy voting shares. They are prepared to work with us, but that's not enough. Each of you needs to get your people, and their peoples-people. If we do this right, we'll change the face of South African business forever. [Subtitled: Listen, this is the penalty shootout. If we fail now, we'll never get the money. This is your moment okay? I've already started talking to the people from the government pension fund. They control 30% of Legacy's voting shares…]

Ivana: He's right. The Legacy P.R. machine has been in overdrive keeping people hopeful. But make no mistake, Sebastian Price is dead – the end of an error. I've been thinking about what you said, and I think I can help you. But if we're gonna move, we have to move fast.

Here, as the scene continues the music score presents heightened tension which suggests suspense and the secretive greediness of the scene, which drops immediately as Ivana (chairperson of the executive board members at Legacy) steps in and everybody in the room faces her in shock. The camera pans around the room at close-up shots to present the men's astonishment that she is even agreeing to conspire with them to taking over Legacy Investments. Here, the camera rotates, and the music rises to a soft tune at a steady tempo while Ivana moves even closer and says her dialogue – suggesting a sense of commonality and agreement in the

meeting. Moreover, the representation of Msizi at both meetings is different as in the first frame he commands his C. E. O-ship as somewhat dictating and separating himself - from the white bodies which supposedly work alongside him in his position of power within the presence of white figures, and presenting a scheming unified, dark and almost evil representation within the presence of black figures. Further, the racist differentiated sub-constructions typically present nucleated presence of a destructive black African middleclass concept of unity where black men find themselves deserving and greedy for money. Here, to the adverse, the white accustomed set up of the black man in power can only be dictating and scheming with tricky motives presented as transformative where "whiteness" sets a conditioned black male type and a silent white that is somehow presented as dormant. The power-hungry nature of this character sees him destructive and untrustworthy where he deceives his own black female figures in the series (the case of Dineo). His opportunism is marked as dangerous by a characterization of "whiteness" that does not even privilege his political will to transform corporate South Africa. Therefore, this black African middleclass character construction remains displaced in society and exists outside of the accepted heteronormative white concept of a leader in corporate industries. In the next section the character Sebastian is privileged by "whiteness" as an identity representing power.

4.6.2.3 d) *"Whiteness" privileged as a preferred heteronormative construction Sebastian*



[Figure 16 – www.Sowmax.com] – Sebastian is wrong about Dineo as she is involved in a corruption scandal

The afternoon prior to Sebastians disappearance, after the bribery scandal news by *Legacy* breakout at the press conference Sebastian and S.J. are seen in figure 16 where the camera shot framing presents Sebastian with son – S. J. Price on a game drive. Here the two characters are in a medium close-up shot where they have come to a stop and are deliberating about the current scandal where Dineo is implicated for bribing a premier in the building of a R2 million stadium by Legacy Investments. In the camera shot framing Sebastian is in clear focus presenting him as a figure assuming power over the two where the camera exhibits him in deep thought. To his left, S.J. is presented in a calm state where he looks at his father. However, the background is out of

focus in the camera framing and with minimal headroom to the characters where tension is subtle with a presence of a worrisome mood. In the dialogue:

Sebastian: Ahhh, my boy. I spent forty years of my life building this company. And one failed snoop – your mother has taken us right to the brink.

S. J.: You were gonna make her C. E. O., weren't you? Dad, we come back from this. Legacy is bigger than one scandal. Listen, I love mum with all my heart, but if she did this, she'll take the heat. She'll want to. To save the company and your legacy.

Sebastian: If you were in my shoes Junior, who would you choose?

S. J.: There's only one person that can takeover if you step down. Felicity. She knows the business inside and out. She's a fighter. She's a Stigler for the details. She's been preparing her whole life for this job.

Here, Sebastian is established commanding the power of an over popularized white male figure - a billionaire. His establishment as the dominating white male figure (although a character short lived) this model of an almost righteousness and ethically moral figure can only be white. Here, as a racially white male character construction Sebastian is always acquitted from the drama that takes place within his family. However, he is faced with a decision to either make Dineo or his daughter Felicity his successor even though all odds seem to be against Dineo. Moreover, the subtleness of this character's command of power remains unshifted as he plays a role of neither wrong nor accounted for white identity in the series. This suggests the preference to this white male masculine construction that can only be wronged. Therefore, this white male construction serves to be a literal white male gaze within the contexts of the text whom "whiteness" privileges.



[Figure 17 – Source: www.Showmax.com] – Sebastian finds out that Felicity sabotaged Dineo

The morning of Sebastians disappearance when he finally makes a decision to make Felicity his successor, he first requests that they revisit his favourite hiking trail. In this scene Sebastian gives Felicity a pep talk and continues to tell her the news that she will head Legacy Investments. However, in the continuity of the scene Sebastian realizes that Felicity has been sleeping with his Driver Stefan and concludes that she has sabotaged Dineo where she has framed her in the bribery scandal. In figure 17 the camera shot framing presents Sebastian in a cow-boy camera shot framing where he is in a frontal side view from above his knees up located to the right symbolizing the figure with power. This character speaks to Felicity who faces her back to the camera framing walking to hold her father's hands as the camera is set to focus the viewers eyes more towards Sebastian's speech. The background presents a decreased depth of field where the horizon from the top of the hiking trail is out of focus as the smog creates a bed of white-greyish color over the vegetation in the distance. Here, as the figures occupy the foreground, with the

midground visible with shrubs and small bushes up a hill to the left-hand side Sebastian gives a sentimental talk of the trail.

Sebastian: You know, I, came up with an idea to start Legacy Investments on this hike. Right here.

Felicity: Yes, daddy.

Sebastian: Well it feels fitting to pass on a baton like this and close the circle where it all started. I have to be honest with you, Dineo was my first choice, but you were always my right choice. You've earned this Felicity. You've earned the right to show the world what you are capable of. And I have no doubt that you will be the best C. E. O. Legacy's ever had. Well, at least top two.

Felicity: [the two share a hug] Oh thank you daddy. Thank you so much. I'm gonna make you so proud of me.

Sebastian: I know my darling, I know you will. [Sebastian breaks the hug]

Felicity: What?

Sebastian: You stink.

Felicity: Excuse me?

Sebastian: ...of cheap cologne. You stink. And I know this cheap cologne. Damn you. You're sleeping with my bladdy driver, aren't you? It's you. Stefan tipped you off, and you tipped off the Daily Descent…

Felicity: No. No, daddy.

Sebastian: You found out that I have chosen Dineo, and you set out to sabotage her. Is this the… Is this how much you hate her? So much that you would jeopardize everything I have worked for my whole life trying to...

Felicity: Nooo. No...

Sebastian: You've hated Dineo since the day I married her. You never gave her an inch. Made her feel like she's an outsider even though you knew I loved her. Because you knew I love her!

Felicity: What was supposed to do?! She tore my family apart… Our family! She tore it apart! It's bad enough that you tossed mom out for her, but then you were gonna give her our company. Our Legacy! No.

Sebastian: Don't you dare talk about my wife like that.

Felicity: No! You betrayed us. You betrayed mom. You betrayed all of us, and what for? Some stupid little conniving gold-digging bitch!

The character Sebastian continues to take no responsibility of the scandal. Instead he finds out that Felicity has been getting information from his driver. He is enraged by this and is upset. However, Felicity does not backup she throws a tantrum that he's betrayed his first family and she couldn't have let Dineo get 'their' legacy. In this scene it is obvious that Sebastian has been knowing of what happened but has been looking for someone to blame. As the man in power within Legacy and the Price family he moves from not trusting his wife's capabilities to run the company, to shifting his decision to make her C. E. O., then to making his daughter C. E. O. and then to changing his mind and blaming Felicity for not loving and accepting Dineo as his lover. This white male figure cannot be wrong as he cannot take responsibility for his actions. Therefore, the continued unaccounted-for white male character construction is deliberately

imaged to maintain his patriarchy and hence no one can question him. While he is ultimately responsible for Dineo's implication in the bribe scandal he doesn't accept the responsibility as the C.E.O of Legacy Investments. Further, he goes on to blame his daughter for trying to destroy his marriage while she cries out that she had only been protecting what belongs to them. Therefore, "whiteness" here has manifested the truest form of white male privilege and more so in a circumstance where a polarized white male figure refuses to take any responsibility for any of his actions though he is depicted to be the one who is wronged.

4.6.2.3 e) Findings

Here, while black African middleclasness exists between two extremes - a psychologically homosexualized African middleclass character Chumani, and criminalized, shifty, scheming, sneaky avenging, power hungry black African masculinities Mthunzi and Msizi –white male heteronormative gaze is the one to explore and determine such extreme-d constructions. It is the whitened hyper-masculinity characterizations that create the conflict but shift the responsibilities somewhere else. In the two texts, Msizi who is established as greedy and power hungry, and self-conceited becomes a spectacle alongside a Sebastian who cannot be wrong, where Chumani on the other hand, is perceived, characterologically, as weak, troubled, and constructed with and identity crisis as a homosexual black male. Moreover, heteronormativity here, is always positioned to be in precise and any black extremity positioned to be 'othered' and unfitting. This means that white heteronormativity benchmarks blackness as an established and overt gaze as a process of whiteness which spectacles black African female and male middleclassness in South African soap opera texts.

4.7 Conclusion

In this chapter the topic of "whiteness has been explored where it is suggested to have a contributing nature towards the anti-black seminal works as presented in popular culture texts – television soap operas. Here, as whiteness assumes central ideology of cinematic conceptualizations, the textual- visual comparative study aims to highlight the instances in soap opera texts where texts have fallen short in representing black South African middleclassness as negative due to "whiteness" as a standard for what is acceptable and normative identity power politics. "Whiteness" insists as a benchmarking and determining product and preserver of notions on and about the black 'othered' in popular television soaps. The work typicalizes South African soaps as not only simply invested in racial struggles, however, proves and aligns itself more to the black liberation's movements of the post-apartheid era where in the arts works cannot be simply interpreted. While "whiteness" is recognised as a pervasive concept of imperialism it is, too, expected that scholarship must challenge and root it out as a popular culture framework that persists. Where visual textual application into the plot and intended structures of the soaps is seen to be depicting and extending social myth the chapter has proven correct for its investigation.

Chapter 5

Closing the Black African Middleclass Scene as Valorized Myths in Popular South African Soaps: A Conclusion

5.1 Summary of Chapters

The study draws from popular television series as texts that are produced in and for the black South African target market. In the introcuction chapter I lay out the context of the study where the problematization of popular art texts – soap operas in the post- apartheid era have shifted their role as aspirational dialogue foe black African middleclass and societies of the nation. The deconstructive nature of the research highlights a back ground of rich black African intellectual work that speaks to black African middleclassness and how it ought to bring about change in the African contexts and as adoptive ideology of American and diasporic knowledge of the success of Africans around the world. Here, the study evaluates, across time, the manner in which Black African middleclassness has been portrayed in South African soap operas where television texts are popular art forms which contribute to the worlds in which we relate and translate to interprete as a South African society. In chapter two, I discuss how in the context of South Africa, overtime, certain black female character constructions and conceptualization(s) have come to take center stage in depicting the black African middleclass on *Generations (1994).* This includes soap opera traditions and how certain key racist (anti-black) themes in the text suggest the distorted black African middleclass misrepresentation(s) as argued by this research. The focus of this chapter revolves around the contextual emergence of *Generations* and how, now, the ideologized conceptualizations of a black African middleclass South African has changed since the class's popular emergence, since this context in the post- apartheid dispensation. In chapter three, I debunk the criminal relationships imagined in the popular art text *The Queen*

(2016). The main aim is to surface (or bring to the clear) the characterological stereotypes presented by Donal Bogle's (2001) work of black African American male representations as present in South African soap operas. To this body of work, the research aims to extend the established black male character stereotypes- Toms, Coons, and Brutes, from the American episteme to an active black African middleclass conceptualization which existed in Hollywood's traditional black filmic representations, and now, too, exists in popular art texts in the post-apartheid era of South Africa. In chapter four, I argue that "whiteness" assumes central ideology of cinematic conceptualizations in the conext of South Africa. The textual-visual comparative study of the texts *Scandal! (2008)* and *Legacy (2020)* aims to highlight the instances in soap opera texts where texts have fallen short in representing black South African middleclassness where this social class's demise is due to the pervasiveness of "whiteness" as a standard for what is acceptable and heteronormative identity power politics, where "whiteness" insists as a benchmarking and determining product and preserver of notions on and about the black 'othered' in popular television soaps in the post- apartheid dispensation of South Africa. Here, as "whiteness" privilledges white identities it provides an even greater point of lay for "white ignorance" where being racially white has the advantage of gesturing theoretical considerations with appallingly outdated, conventionally stoic intellectual frameworks which exist in popular television soap opera texts. To the latter, veracity, inaccuracy, actualities, and fact, are encircled with mocking epitaphs attributed to black African middleclassness. Therefore, exploring "white ignorance" is key to reformulating knowledge that will provide some truths and inaccuracies of the televisual framework(s) in post– apartheid South African popular culture texts.

5.2 Discussion

Mhlambi (2012), in her book, African- Language Literatures: *Perspectives on IsiZulu Fiction and Popular Black Television Series* has developed ideas from Barber (1987, 1997, 2000), wherein she indicates that popular arts and culture in Africa provide a solution to the "aesthetic conundrum" (Dhlomo, 1977 in Mhlambi *sic*: 98) where a broad- ranging admixture of traditional and European sensibilities which need specific focus when articulated in texts presenting Africans in an African way. However, Mhlambi speaks to the quotidian lives as presented in texts, where she says films that "employ African aesthetics as pivotal axis through which neoliberal, post- apartheid ideologies and representations can be mediated" depict a radical shift from the "hegemonizing socialist discources" (2012: 102). Mhlambi, further questions whether such texts are used as "false consciousness" as observed in Fabian (1997) where a deployment of of popular discources in mainstream cultural productions without necessary evaluation of texts is an effort toward conscientizing and reflecting on black African lives? The simple answer to this question is that: black African middleclassness in South Africa is multifold, where transcultural South African societies cannot accept uniformed herenormativeness which are obvious racist narratives as standardized frameworks in popular culture texts. Further, these popular art texts need to refrain from adopting Hollywood cinematic measures of representing black African middleclassness where the practice of anti-black effects seem to be dumped on South African shores. This means that the relationship brought about by Barbers model of popular arts extends as Mhlambi says the range of local literary boundaries must employ South African cultural products as in the case of the expected "rainbow nation" in texts. Here, Hannerz (1987) adds that while the model considers artists, writers, and academics as engaged in a conversation the hopes to see manifestations of this nature are key to developing the South African cinematic landscape where the practice of fluidity is essential for black African middleclass

representations. Moreover, this research has located itself to be a deconstructive motive into African language cinematic examinations as the need to destabilize and peripherize racism continues in South Africa.

5.2.1 A Mythical White History of Black Images as Popular Art Texts in South Africa

Africa's encounter with motion picture has been invested in a mythical white history of black images across the diaspora. This encounter, as this research finds, has remained and saturated in popular art forms like television soap operas – the case of South Africa throughout the post – apartheid dispensation. It is evident in the examined texts that while the democratized socio-political terrain of South Africa aims for equality, racial underdoings have not followed suit where the black races in South Africa can be represented in their most form. This, however, perpetuates a black African image that can't be perceived to exist exclusively without a white gaze which is predominantly subtle but hovers in society that Africans cannot be changed and appropriate as civilians accepted within heteronormative white spaces. While heteronormativity functions parallel to hegemonic power politic of the racially white; within the South African space it reduces any efforts which black majorities strive for transformation, and a well-versed African renaissance. The televisual space of South Africa is still widely in the control of white monopoly where black races only function as gatherers of content based on mandates that are disseminated by media capitals owned by whites. Moreover, this allows for the understanding that black majorities in South Africa can only play the role as contributors and not makers of their cultures and knowledge. In the next section I discuss how soap opera in South Africa belongs to empire.

5.2.2 A Black Soap Opera Commodity of Empire

The argument that soap opera in South Africa continues to belong to white empire derives from the evidence gathered in this research where the examination recurrently finds traces of processes perpetuated by empire where this is inevitably inescapable as the texts exhibit. However, the way these black soaps invested in empire seems to have evolved. This evolution is witnessed throughout history – during colonization, and now, during post Apartheid times in South Africa where the very founding principles of male and female black images still represent similar frameworks since Hollywood introduced motion picture. These traces are found in forms that remind the black populations of where they come from and how they ought to perceive themselves though with tainted storylines of conspicuous consumption as the case of black African middleclasses.

5. 3 Shortcomings of Research

The research wants to intend that where there are processes in to reflecting society's popular cultures the responsibility of representation equally needs more attention as national, race, and conceptual identities are at stake. However, cinematic social studies fall short in containing quantifying this kind of research as it relies more on qualitative research methods, perhaps the need to make concrete these methods to these studies is open to quantitative extensions where balance and support of theoretical fields would help towards indepth studies of this nature.

- End-

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