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The limits of existential freedom: a decolonial perspective

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Wits Centre for Diversity Studies

School of Social Sciences - Humanities

MA (in the Field of Critical Diversity Studies)

A RESEARCH REPORT

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TITLE: The limits of Existential Freedom: a Decolonial perspective

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Abstract

This research project uses Zakes Mda's narrative of post-apartheid South Africa in *Sometimes there is a Void* (2011), and the philosophical and theoretical framework of decoloniality, to unmask the limits of Sartrean existential freedom. The research problem is approached from the philosophical and theoretical framework of decoloniality in order to unmask unfreedoms and historical dehumanisations as limits to existential freedom fundamental to colonial control. This project is a meeting of existential theory, as pertaining to existential freedom, and decolonial theory, particularly questioning the limits of existential freedom in a post-colonial and post-apartheid South African context. This testing of limits of Sartrean freedom may question the viability of a Western discourse in the African context. The South African historical context entails violent racial categorizations and injustice, notably through the apartheid regime, which echoes through the unfreedoms of the post-apartheid context. This unfree context is conditioned by its own absurdity and existential disillusionment. As this study is guided by the research problem in theory and literature, qualitative methodology enabled conceptual, interpretive, and philosophical engagement of the content, text, and literature. The scholarly voices of decolonial philosophers such as Fanon and Cesaire are used to contrastively illuminate Sartre's well-meaning but otherwise limited take on freedom, thereby presenting a dialogue of the decolonial perspective with Sartre's ideas in order to test applicability outside of an inaccessible space of conceptuality. The project aims to dissect how existential freedom may be the product and property of power and privilege. This is problematized in terms of the narratives of the African Liberation Struggle (Mda, 2011), thus unmasking how the colonized, in this case segregated and oppressed, do not have access to positive freedom, the 'freedom to be free' (Arendt, 1961). The research addresses the power dichotomies at play in the accessibility of freedom, which is existentially theorised in terms of Sartre's 'The Look' (1943), along with the decolonial dichotomy of the colonized and the colonizer. As Sartre's freedom seems accessible only through universalized privilege, the concept of existential freedom may be posed as idealist within collectively unfree contexts.

Using decoloniality as the theoretical framework, the dominating tendencies of coloniality are unmasked through the colonial matrix of power as contextualized in the South African post-apartheid context. This frames unfreedoms and limits of existential freedom as: racism, coloniality, social inequalities, state corruption, and political and existential disillusionment. The South African context of collective unfreedom may be understood as framed by the colonial matrix of power (Mignolo, 2008), in its various controls. These systemic unfreedoms reinforce inaccessible freedom as a privilege within a hierarchy of freedom, particularly in terms of poverty and revolution (Arendt, 2018). As such, existential freedom may be considered as an ideal to be valued within unfree contexts in its principle of self-determination, rather than continuing hoarded freedoms through perpetuations of poverty and collective unfreedom.

Keywords: Freedom, Decoloniality, Existential Freedom, the Western Subject, The Other, Coloniality, Critical Diversity Studies/Literacy, Narrative, unfreedom.

Chapter One

Introduction: Background and Context of the Study

1. **Introduction**

This research project uses the narrative of Zakes Mda in *Sometimes there is a Void* (2011) to show the limits and thereby critique Sartrean Existential Freedom, in terms of the post-apartheid South African context. This will be done by deploying decoloniality as a philosophical and theoretical framework. Methodologically, the study is conceptual, philosophical and therefore interpretive and essentially qualitative in approach. The scholarly voices of decolonial philosophers such as Fanon and Cesaire are to be used to contrastively illuminate Sartre's well-meaning but otherwise limited take on freedom.

Historical injustices and oppressions have led to the idealization of 'freedom', to be philosophically approached through Sartrean Existentialism, particularly Sartre's concept of Existential Freedom. This theory of freedom has, since the publication of Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* in 1943, been problematized and responded to particularly by African decolonial theorists. These responses conceptually involve colonialism, decolonization, the post-colonial context, oppression and otherness. Otherness or the process of othering has been perpetuated by oppressions (Young, 1990), and thereby conceptualized and theorized by those Othered. The decolonial discourses problematize power relations, knowledge production (Kilomba, 2013; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018) and possible existential potentials, as questioned in a social movement such as black consciousness. The concept of existential freedom may thereby be considered in its limits, as well as its potentials and implications, in terms of the possible othering binaries created through power relations: spatially, as in West/Africa and Colonizer/Colonized, and conceptually. This binary may be philosophically considered through Sartre's existential and conflictual situation 'the Look' (Sartre, 2003 (1943): 276-277). In which one is objectified within the gaze, or look, of another. As such, one's freedom and one's existential Being, which Sartre terms the being-for-itself, is reduced from subjectivity to objecthood by the other thus losing one's subjecthood (Atkins, 2005). My project is a meeting of existential theory, as pertaining to existential freedom, and decolonial theory, particularly a question of the limits of existential freedom in a post-colonial and post-apartheid South African context. This testing of limits of Sartrean freedom may question the viability of a Western discourse in the African context.

The main focus of the discussion of otherness as a limitation to Existentialism to be considered is the set of issues in decolonial theories and African philosophies, particularly the otherness as created in the process of colonization and the culture of coloniality. This 'othering' is of the entire African continent through colonization and colonial or Modern discourse (Zaller, 2019), and is internalized by the African subject who then self-alienates. The objectification at play here involves the African being viewed and perceived as inferior, which reinforces white supremacy. The context that surrounds decolonial discourse is the 'post-colonial', in which the African asserts subjectivity in its own right (Kilomba, 2013). As such, the African subject is able to be aware of and reflect upon existential ideas – this can be discussed in terms of the problems that surround entering a certain discursive space. The conversations and dialogues to be had around freedom in colonization and coloniality will be done through the theoretical framework of decolonial theory. The limitations of existential freedom, in the colonial context and perspective, are relevant in critical diversity studies as they are typically seen as aspects of diversity that deviate from the heteronormativity that conditioned much of European philosophical thinking, modernity and coloniality.

The questioning will consider the power relations present which cause existential freedom to be inaccessible, particularly from an African and decolonial perspective within colonial difference, as to be defined in the next paragraph. Freedom is largely conceptualised as a 'freedom to' (positive freedom) or 'freedom from' (liberation or negative freedom). Positive freedom may be understood as relative to existential freedom and Arendt's (2016) 'freedom to be free'. As such, positive freedom may be seen to be enabled by systems of privilege whereby one's advantage requires the disadvantage of another, or the domination over that Other (Johnson, 1997). Existential, otherwise known as radical or absolute, Freedom is theorised by Sartre (1943) as something fundamental to every being-for-itself, and is enabled by and limited within context, situatedness or facticity. The Othered positionality, and its possibility for the realisation of one's fundamental Existential potentiality, is at focus in my research considerations: the possibility, or lack, thereof may allow the questioning of the power relations at play. My intention to centralise this questioning of power relations may be facilitated through post-modernist theories, particularly those of critical social theory: critical diversity studies, diversity discourse, critical race theory, and critical diversity literacy. These approaches and focuses are also to be applied to my reading of the Mda (2011) biography, which serves as an account of lived experience, through which the South African context is experienced and

problematized in the particular experiences of politics, existential dilemmas, and the contextual need for freedom. The Other, as explored in discourse, may come to challenge and critically engage with the typically dominant discourse of hegemonic normative cultural imperialism and universalism which is a common occupation within the literature of Critical Diversity Studies (e.g. Kilomba, 2013).

The limits of Existential freedom are largely seen in terms of otherness, as manifest in racism and coloniality. Existential otherness, as problematic for the consideration of oneself as a subject, is problematizable in terms of Sartre's discussion of 'the Look' in Being and Nothingness (1943), whereby the gaze of another objectifies the subject, the subject becomes an object or an 'other' for someone else. The African thinkers who responded to Existential ideas (freedom, the being-for-itself), such as Fanon (1952, 1965, 1965) and Cesaire (1956, 1972), were contextually confronted with racial oppression and discrimination. As such, they were confronted by, and of, colonial difference (Mignolo, 2002). Colonial difference entails "situating or geopolitically locating knowledge production from the colonial difference of the North-South divide" (Grosfoguel, 2002: 203). The positionality of colonial difference is created by coloniality of power (Grosfoguel, 2002: 208). As such constituting "Border thinking" or "border epistemology" (Grosfoguel, 2002: 09), whereby new perspectives may emerge from analysis by the subaltern (Grosfoguel, 2002: 222). Colonial difference may be differentiated from Imperial difference (Mignolo, 2002: 57), which may be seen in the differing positionalities of writers. Imperial difference is the positionality of being in privilege, or a first-world un-colonized country (Mignolo, 2002). This difference, of Colonial or Imperial, may be further differentiated by the issue of praxis and theory: those of a Colonial difference are writing from lived experience and thereby may involve praxis, on the other hand those of Imperial difference are theorizing from a distance without experience or praxis. These black African thinkers were thereby marginalized and outside of the positional criteria (Kilomba, 2013) for the production of knowledge (surrounding Existential ideas), thus outside the scope of discursive control, power and theoretical consideration. The whiteness of the original Existential theorists widened their opportunities and reaffirmed their institutional legitimacy. These theorists were never directly confronted by a context and experience of racial segregation, oppression, marginalization and discrimination. The use of decolonial thinking in this research project may allow me to question whether I, the researcher, am of colonial or imperial difference: I will further explicate my positionality or locus of annunciation, and that of the thinkers I use in the

next chapter. The positionality relevant to this study, that of the researcher, entails whiteness within a South African post-apartheid context thereby conditioned by the oppressive, colonial and racist history of being white. As such taking responsibility for this whiteness and historical injustice as an anti-racist. The issues of access as relevant to existential freedom is conditioned by the positionality of middle-class privilege, whiteness, and womanhood, which allow some understanding of being under the gaze of another, being objectified.

1.1. Definitions

Existential Freedom: the fundamental and ontological essence-less-ness, a lack of individual pre-determination; a freedom of self-determination, whereby success is not necessarily the consequence (Sartre, 1943). This is accompanied and constituted by Existential Responsibility and Existential Anguish. Sartre defines Existential Responsibility as the "consciousness of being the incontestable author of an event or an object" or one's being (Sartre, 1943: 574 & 655). Sartre's absolute freedom, and its absolute responsibility, means that we are only what we make of ourselves (Atkins, 2005: 88). The awareness of the responsibility for one's freedom is met with unbearable anguish, thereafter taking up one's freedom with understanding of the freedom, its responsibility and what is at stake. Sartre defines Existential Anguish as "the reflective apprehension of the self as freedom, the realization that a nothingness slips in between my 'self' and my past and future so that nothing relieves me from the necessity of continually choosing myself and nothing guarantees the validity of the values which I choose" (Sartre, 1943: 649). Kierkegaard, long before Sartre, highlighted angst as key to existentialism as: "the state of mind a person who comes to realize that one can use one's freedom, when the path that may be chosen is not understood and yet exercises an attraction" (Mautner, 2005: p27). In this way, one's being "condemned to be free" (Sartre, 1956) articulates the overwhelming sense of responsibility. Freedom is characterised as the product and condition of the isolation of human reality by its own nothingness. In this way, human reality is conditioned by its lack of prescribed essence or handbook on life, and is isolating because the responsibility for oneself is an individualizing force (Sartre 1943). This concept of radical individualizing freedom, particularly its internal individual responsibility for one's meaning-making, is problematic in terms of coloniality which is the dominant meaning-giving influence external from individuals.

Ontology: the inquiry into, or theory of, the being of a particular being (Mautner, 2005: 442); concerned with being (as a verb), existence, becoming, and reality (Barnes, 2003: 653). As this

study is concerned with Sartrean existentialism, the relevant understanding of ontology is from a perspective of phenomenology, which thereby equates being with consciousness. While ontology is concerned with reality and the world, **phenomenology** is concerned with the consciousness of the world as the conscious interaction with phenomenon. Philosophers such as Husserl, Heidegger, and Sartre base this consciousness on the embodiment of mind and body through being and perception (Merleau-Ponty, 2012 in Woodruff, 2018). Phenomenology and the study of consciousness is also concerned with intersubjectivity and intentionality, which relate to the perpetual meaning-making of the being-for-itself (Sartre, 1943; Woodruff, 2018) through existential freedom. Sartre's existential phenomenology is largely concerned with the self-reflective consciousness of the being-for-itself (Sartre, 1943), which this study may come to question as limited to subject positionalities of power, privilege and access.

The western subject: situated being-for-itself, with the freedom, the consciousness, responsibility, and anguish, yet is largely based upon and theorised through a subject positionality of what Grosfoguel (2009) explains as the subject of imperial difference: "European, capitalist, military, Christian, patriarchal, white, heterosexual male" thereby a figure of power and privilege which Grosfoguel (2009:19) describes.

The other: hierarchical binaries aid in the understanding of difference. As such, this study focuses on the binary of the western subject which creates and oppresses the other. The paradigms through which to understand this other within coloniality and globalism as the legacies of colonization which had an embedded logic of control, domination and exploitation disguised by a language of rescue modernization, civilization, and Christianisation (Mothoagae, 2014), which constitute the perceptions and construction of the Other. The construction of the other herein coincides with the classification of the colonized, as that other, into the zone of non-being (Mothoagae, 2014; Grosfoguel, 2016) through the assertion and the limitation of being 'human' as a European-only possibility (Mills, 1997), particularly in the context of European enlightenment humanism. This 'Other', as oppressed and made systematically inferior, is dehumanized by the West and colonizer. Through CDL, which this study is guided by, the subject needs to recognize the unequal symbolic and material value of different social locations: through acknowledging hegemonic possibilities and the hegemonic/dominant tendency to marginalize the 'other'.

Coloniality: the enduring pattern of colonial power (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018: 17 -23), which entails domination through hegemonic Eurocentricity (Grosfoguel, 2002: 205-219). In the South African context, this continuation is regardless of independence or 'liberation', thus freedom is not achieved and has become a kind of nightmare (Mda, 2011: 426-432) involving globalized economic and capitalist regulation (Grosfoguel, 2002: 205; Posel, 2010). "Coloniality refers to long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labour, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations. Thus, coloniality survives colonialism. It is maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self, and so many other aspects of our modern experience" (Maldonado-Torres, 2007: 243).

Decoloniality: following from colonialism and coloniality in resistance (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018: 17), thereby entailing the unmasking and undoing of coloniality and its "logic" (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018: 139). Decoloniality is thus a challenge to coloniality as constitutive of social and epistemic order, with aim of the liberation of knowledge, understanding, and subjectivity (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018: 140).

Critical Diversity Studies as to be used in my study: As the field of Critical Diversity Studies is concerned with otherness, my focus is on the colonized figure (the Other), thereby I may problematize positionalities of privilege and power (Johnson, 1997; Young, 1990; Steyn, 2015).

Narrative: "a story, an account of a sequence of events" (Mautner, 2005: 410). This study thereby deploys analysis, interpretation of and critical engagement with Mda's (2011), biography *Sometimes there is a Void*, as an account of the experience of the limits of existential freedom within the South African apartheid and post-apartheid post-colonial context, which also includes experiences of the existential void.

1.2 The research questions

Primary:

How does a reading of ***Sometimes there is a Void*** unmask limits of Sartre's concept of Existential Freedom?

Supporting Questions

How does decoloniality unmask the limits of existential freedom?

What are the decolonial propositions of freedom in the present?

Is the Being-for-itself limited to certain situatedness-es (of power)?

1.3 The Research Problem

This study began as an investigation into the limits of Sartrean Existential Freedom in terms of the binary of otherness. This developed into a more contextually grounded study based on the Zakes Mda narrative in *Sometimes there is a Void* (2011). As such, this study is a critical exploration of the limits of Existential Freedom through the narrative of Mda, grounded within the South African context. The major problem my project aims to address how Existential Freedom may be the product and/or property of power and privilege. This is problematized in terms of the narratives of the African Liberation Struggle (Mda, 2011), and thus unmask that the colonized, in this case segregated and oppressed, don't have access to positive freedom, the 'freedom to be free' (Arendt, 1961). For this problem to be solved, I must first address the power dichotomies at play in the accessibility of freedom, which is existentially theorised in terms of Sartre's 'The Look' (1943), along with the decolonial dichotomy of colonized and colonizer. These dichotomies or hierarchies make the 'fundamental', 'ontological' and/or Existential concept of Freedom one that could be considered to only be encounter-able or realizable in positionalities of privilege. Thus, I will be considering decolonial African philosophers, such as Fanon and Cesaire, in dialogue with Sartre's ideas in order to test applicability outside of an inaccessible space of conceptuality/the abstract.

1.4 The Purpose or Rationale of the Study

Within the African post-colonial and South African post-apartheid context, freedom has come to mean, be theorized, and experienced as different and seemingly contradictory things. The liberation from colonialism and apartheid, with the fall of those respective regimes, may have been expected to be and was idealized as political, existential and positive 'freedom to be free' (Arendt, 2016). These expectations were not fully realized as the legacies of colonialism and apartheid live through coloniality and globalism, the latter reinforcing western economic dominance through capitalism. This is demonstrated in the possession of demonstrable wealth (Posel, 2010) as a show of power, living out the 'ideal' of freedom, and of aspirational ignorance (Steyn, 2012). The post-apartheid and post-colonial 'freedom' has come to be tainted by issues of corruption, selfishness, and, from the highly Western influence, capitalist

individualism. As such, the dream and ideal of freedom seems a nightmare to achieve (Mda, 2011), thus a kind of capitalist aspirational cycle (Posel, 2010). This reinforces coloniality, and through the greed of individualism the continent-wide issue of poverty continues.

As such, positive freedom, freedom to be free (Arendt, 2018), while enabled by systems of privilege is practiced without its constitutive responsibility, as with Existential Freedom. Existential Responsibility, with the being-for-itself being 'condemned to be free' includes carrying the "weight of the whole world on [one's] shoulders; [one] is responsible for the world and for [oneself] as a way of being" (Sartre, 2006 (1943): 574). This 'way of being' is Existential Freedom, in taking it on with its constitutive responsibility and anguish, which this study uses interchangeable with positive freedom (Berlin, 1969 & Carter, 2019) and 'freedom to be free' (Arendt, 2016). The systems of privilege, which seem to enable existential freedom, entails one's advantage requiring the disadvantage of another, or the domination over that Other (Johnson, 1997). The issue of Existential Freedom, in this study's questioning of colonial power binaries, may then be highly relevant to the South African context.

This project is theory and literature based, and is qualitative in methodology, which allows for my philosophical academic background to engage with the content and issues at play. In this way the context, my background of philosophy, and the Critical Diversity Studies can be placed into dialogue and thereby engage with the issue of Existential Freedom in the post-apartheid South African context from multiple perspectives and disciplines, with a focus on the decolonial perspective. My use of Mda's biography (2011) may elevate such thinking in terms of providing lived experiences of South African political contexts, movements, struggles and thereby allow me to concretize my study, making it relevant to the trends of theory: philosophy, existentialism, decoloniality, and sociology.

A 'big picture' objective of my study is to expand the thinking on Freedom from Sartrean Existentialism to the decolonial imagination of freedom, in light of hegemonic binaries and constructions. In this way, I will be using decoloniality to bring a critical perspective in terms of difference, diversity and otherness, to my problematization of power binaries and Existential Freedom, in a world of tyrannical binaries and constructions. The purpose of the study is a grounding of my theoretical research interest of existentialism into critical diversity studies. Through Decoloniality as the theoretical framing of my project in terms of the Critical Diversity Studies vocabulary (Steyn, 2015), thereby concretizing it and complexifying the concepts. I aim

to take the theoretical ontological concept of Existential Freedom, and concretize and problematize it in terms of the power dichotomies of colonization. In doing so I may theoretically draw from decolonial thinkers and African philosophers of Liberation, which may allow this project to extend the thinking on Existential freedom into the greater contexts of post-apartheid post-colonial South Africa and the theories of decoloniality, where freedom is typically theorised and standardized as a value of whiteness (Zaller, 2019). As I have not explicitly found theory or literature on this focus, a theoretical dialogue of freedom(s) in South Africa framed by decoloniality, I aim to fill that theoretical and philosophical 'gap' in the literature which may be a work of inter-disciplinary nature.

1.5 Layout for Research Report

This research study is done through the following layout:

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

Chapter 3: Methodology

Chapter 4: Literature Review

Chapter 5: Discussion and Argumentation

Chapter 6: Conclusions

Chapter Two

Decoloniality: A Theoretical, Conceptual and Philosophical Framework

2. Introduction

This chapter aims to flesh out Decoloniality as a theoretical, conceptual and philosophical framework of the present study. The study examines the limits of radical freedom that is pronounced by Jean Paul-Sartre (1943). Sartre's radical freedom is interrogated using the narrative of Zakes Mda (2011) in *Sometimes there is a Void*, a book that reflects the condition of 'unfreedom' that prevailed after the end of apartheid in South Africa. Sartre (1943) declares that human beings are naturally condemned to freedom but the narrative of Mda demonstrates that unfreedom can continue even after the end of formal colonialism. As such, freedom is not guaranteed in the fall of an oppressive regime, such as colonialism, nor should it be taken for granted. As such, this chapter presents what a decolonial theoretical, conceptual and philosophical framework is and how this framework functions. This study observes how after the end of apartheid in 1994 the conditions of 'unfreedom' and therefore coloniality, remained in place and caused disillusionment and unhappiness for black South Africans such as Zakes Mda. This continuity of unfreedom after formal apartheid had ended calls into question Sartre's beliefs and renditions of freedom and liberation. Decoloniality as a theoretical, conceptual and philosophical framework enables this study to understand and explain how the end of formal colonialism does not mean the end of coloniality and unfreedom. In that way, the study is able to understand the difference between what Sartre says about radical freedom and what Mda observes on the ground in post-apartheid South Africa. The chapter also provides a rationale and justification for the use of Decoloniality as a theoretical, philosophical and conceptual framework. The way through which Decoloniality serves the purposes of Critical Diversity Studies, a discipline on which this study is based, is also explained in this chapter.

To this study, Sartre might be a radical philosopher of freedom but still remains ill-equipped and poorly resourced to articulate clearly on the conditions of the colonised and their struggle for freedom in settings such as South Africa. His Locus of Enunciation, which will be explained below, did not permit him a clear view of the condition of unfreedom and freedom. Decoloniality also allows the integration of ideas on freedom from colonialism that are advanced by such philosophers as Frantz Fanon and Aime Cesaire whose experiences and views largely differ from those of Sartre. In *Sometimes there is a Void*, Zakes Mda (2011) provides a

narrative of the life and conditions of a black South African after apartheid. This narrative provides the study with a setting and a case upon which Sartre's thoughts on freedom are to be tested, affirmed or negated, confirmed or denied. In this way, Decoloniality does not only unmask the continuity of coloniality after colonialism but also exposes the limits of philosophers that imagine freedom from positions and locations of privilege and power. This study will note that Sartre was a philosopher of liberation who however thought and wrote about freedom from a position, or Locus of Enunciation, of power and privilege.

This chapter explains the Colonial Power Matrix that is an analytical and interpretive tool that Decoloniality uses to make sense of the world. The chapter proceeds to explain the importance of the concept of the Locus of Enunciation which refers to how thinkers think from certain specific positions and locations that shape their thoughts. By the use of the Locus of Enunciation concept this study will better understand why from his position and location in Europe, Sartre could not clearly see the unfreedom and coloniality that exists in such places as South Africa.

2.1 Colonial Power Matrix

This section of the chapter aims to explain the concept of the Colonial Power Matrix. The Colonial Power Matrix is a central interpretive and analytical tool that Decoloniality uses to understand power relations. For this study, the Colonial Power Matrix will be helpful in understanding how the end of apartheid did not change the colonial and apartheid relations in South Africa. Before this section clarifies the Colonial Power Matrix in detail, the chapter delves into a definition of key terms and concepts that are used in this study. These concepts are Coloniality, Decoloniality and Sartre's idea of Radical Freedom which this study critiques. The definition of key terms helps to lay a clear background and foundation for the study.

2.1.1 Coloniality

This subsection of the chapter seeks to define coloniality. Coloniality is a central and critical concept and term in this study; therefore, it should be clearly defined and understood. Coloniality refers to the way in which after the end of formal and administrative colonialism colonial power relations and colonial conditions remain in place for those that were colonised. For example, those black South Africans such as Zakes Mda that endured apartheid domination, oppression, and discrimination were to complain that the end of apartheid did not remove

apartheid conditions and power relations in the country. A leading decolonial philosopher, Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2007) provides an illuminating definition of Coloniality:

> Coloniality is different from colonialism. Colonialism denotes a political and economic relation in which the sovereignty of a nation or a people rests on the power of another nation, which makes such nation an empire. Coloniality, instead, refers to long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labour, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations. Thus, coloniality survives colonialism. It is maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self, and so many other aspects of our modern experience. In a way, as modern subjects we breathe coloniality all the time and everyday (Maldonado-Torres, 2007:243).

In the definition that Maldonado-Torres Makes of Coloniality this study notes that Coloniality arises from colonialism but it is different from it. The difference is in that "coloniality survives colonialism" which means that the end of colonialism leaves Coloniality still in place. This study notes that when Zakes Mda (2011: 426-432) complained about continuing unfreedom in post-apartheid South Africa, he was in fact complaining of Coloniality. Another canonical decolonial thinker, Ramon Grosfoguel (2013) argued that it is a great myth of the 20th Century to argue that the end of colonial administrations in Africa and the Global South brought the end of Coloniality and colonial power and knowledge relations. As used in this study, therefore, Coloniality refers to the enduring colonial conditions and power relations that remained in South Africa after apartheid had formally ended in 1994.

2.1.2 Decoloniality

After having defined Coloniality above, it is important for this chapter to define Decoloniality which is after all the theoretical, philosophical and conceptual framework of this study. Decoloniality thereby follows as a resistance to coloniality (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018: 17), and it thereby entails the unmasking, negation, and undoing of coloniality and its "logic" (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018: 139). As such, Decoloniality is a perspective of inquiry for study, discussion, consideration, and revelation of the coloniality that remain post-liberation. Decoloniality is thus

a challenge to coloniality as constitutive of social and epistemic[1] order, with aim of the liberation of knowledge, understanding, and subjectivity (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018: 140). Decoloniality is thereby what Enrique Dussel (2011) has called a "politics of liberation" that seeks to dethrone coloniality without burning the bridges of the world and practicing isolationist fundamentalism.

2.1.3 Sartre's Radical Freedom

Sartre defines freedom in steps, starting with his dismissal of prescribed essence, essence is understood here as one's purpose, function, and reason for being, which can be seen through his famous quote "existence precedes essence" (Sartre, 1956). For example, a being-in-itself as Sartre terms beings and objects with prescribed essence; a box for example, is made for the specific purpose of holding things, which is unlike human beings that aren't knowingly created with a particular purpose or function. In this way the human being is conceptualized as the being-for-itself: in opposition to the being-in-itself, an object given a purpose prior to its production and existence. As such, human reality is experienced through consciousness as the being-for-itself, without prescribed essence. The being-for-itself is a nothingness or no-thing-ness, which means that it limits what it is through determining, negating or eliminating the options of what one is not: a human being is not something with a prescribed essence. This lack of prescribed essence is the freedom from absolute predetermination. As such, the human being as a being-for-itself and consciousness exists as a constant projection of oneself, and constant choosing of oneself, through meaning-making projects thereby as expressions of freedom. This is a freedom to confer significance (Solomon, 1972: 280), and make meaning of one's circumstances through projecting oneself, choosing oneself and thereby self-determination. This freedom, as made clear by Sartre (1943), is largely constituted by responsibility and anguish. Sartre's absolute freedom, and its absolute responsibility, means that we are only what we make of ourselves (Atkins, 2005: 88). The awareness of the responsibility for one's freedom is met with unbearable anguish, thereafter taking up one's freedom with understanding of the freedom, its responsibility and what is at stake. In this way, one's being 'condemned to be free' articulates the overwhelming sense of responsibility. Sartre's concept of freedom may thereby be understood as a radical individualism, of self-reliance. Freedom is characterised as the

[1] Epistemic: knowledge creation and validation institutions.

product and condition of the isolation of human reality by its own nothingness. In this way, human reality is conditioned by its lack of prescribed essence or handbook on life, and is isolating because the responsibility for oneself is an individualizing force (Sartre 1943). It is necessary to understand that "to be free does not mean to obtain what one wished but rather by oneself to determine oneself to wish" (Sartre, 1943: 505). As such, this concept of freedom is a one of self-definition (Crowell, 2017), of meaning-making. Furthermore, freedom is a power to make oneself, to signify meaning, and the power of negation, to delimit oneself from what one is not. This concept of radical individualizing freedom, particularly its internal individual responsibility for one's meaning-making, is problematic in terms of coloniality which is the dominant meaning-giving influence external from individuals.

2.1.4 The Colonial Power Matrix

This section of the chapter delves into the important concept of the Colonial Power Matrix. The Colonial Power Matrix is important to this study because it is the analytical and interpretive tool of Decoloniality. It is through the Colonial Power Matrix that Decoloniality is able to expose and illustrate how Coloniality works. How countries such as post-apartheid South Africa are controlled and dominated through Coloniality can be explained using the Colonial Power Matrix. Coloniality dominates post-colonial societies such as South Africa through specific controls that the Colonial Power Matrix clearly names:

The Colonial Power Matrix as articulated by Walter Mignolo (2008) names a few 'controls' through which the modern colonial world system keeps nation-states, such as South Africa, in bondage. The Colonial Power Matrix may explain the present power systems, in the post-apartheid South African context, as the control of authority, control of the economy, control of gender and sexuality, and control of knowledge and subjectivity are the ways in which Coloniality operates:

> **Control of authority**: based on the creation of imperial institutions during the foundation of the colonies, or more recently, by use of military strength, forced destitution of presidents of countries to be controlled, the use of technology to spy on civil society.
>
> **Control of the economy**: based on the appropriation of land (and subsequently natural resources) and control of labour, financial control of indebted countries.

> **Control of gender and sexuality**: having the Christian and bourgeois secular family as the model and standard of human heterosexual relations; and heterosexuality as the universal model established by God from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century first, and then by nature from the nineteenth century to the present.
>
> **Control of knowledge and subjectivity:** by assuming the theological foundation of knowledge, after the Renaissance, and the egological foundation of knowledge after the Enlightenment, and by forming a concept of the modern and western subject first dependent on the Christian God, and then on its own sovereigns, reason and individuality. (Mignolo, 2008:15).

For the purposes of this study, this chapter adopts and seeks to adapt the Colonial Power Matrix. There is a need to show how each control of Coloniality applies or relates to the South African context and in doing so the interests of this study. For instance, considering the Control of Authority as part of the Colonial Power Matrix enables this study to observe how different leaders of South Africa had or did not have authority to determine the liberation of South Africa. The end of apartheid might have given to the black South African government what Mignolo (2008:13) has described as symbolic, and therefore meaningless, power. The letter that Zakes Mda (2011) wrote to President Mandela, a letter that is discussed later in this study, was a way of questioning whether Nelson Mandela had the power and authority to ensure freedom and liberation in South Africa.

Under the Control of the Economy this study will be interested in how far the end of apartheid gave or did not give control of the economy to the black democratic government of South Africa. For instance, Thabo Mbeki (1998) as the deputy President of South Africa, in the speech entitled *"Reconciliation and Nation Building"* but best known as best known as: 'South Africa: Two Nations', bemoaned the continuing economic inequalities that kept black people poor and white people rich in the Republic. Poverty, as Hannah Arendt (2017: 11) noted, does not give people the 'freedom to be free.' In other words, due to the prevailing poverty and inequalities, this study may note that black South Africans were not free to be free. Mda, in that way, was a black South African who did not become free to be free, which Sartre might not have understood from where he was located.

The Control of Gender and Sexuality leads this study to questioning gender and sexuality relations in post-apartheid South Africa. The end of apartheid might not have ended pre-colonial and colonial gender and sexuality power relations in the South African society. The story of

Mda (2011), in *Sometimes there is a Void*, shows that void where men and women were still unequal even as both black men and black women suffered unfreedom. Even the celebrated South African democratic constitution does not seem to have managed to solve Coloniality in terms of unequal gender and sexuality relations amongst the people.

Control of Knowledge and Subjectivity refers to power over those who know and those who do not know, and the management of people's subjectivity, which is their identity and belonging in a country. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission process that shaped the new South Africa was led by religious and not political and intellectual leaders. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission process that shaped the new South Africa was led Desmond Tutu. It was he who first described South Africans as the 'Rainbow people of God', which was a theological, spiritual and symbolic way of understanding political identity. Religion and symbolism, as this study will note, cannot solve concrete material and social inequalities. This, therefore, will help this study to determine how freedom was symbolised and ceremonialised instead of being concretised in post-apartheid South Africa. Sartre, this study will observe, was not aware that freedom can be metaphorical and ceremonial instead of being concrete. Mda, on the other hand, wrote from a direct experience of ceremonial freedom where Mandela was just a heroic symbol of freedom not a deliverer of liberation in concrete terms. What Grosfoguel (2013) meant by freedom being a myth of the century is exactly that freedom can be made symbolic, ceremonial and mythical instead of being real and true.

2.2 Rationale of decoloniality

The task in this subsection is to explain exactly why decoloniality is the right framework to use in this study. The Colonial Power Matrix that is described above partly justifies the use of Decoloniality in this study. Chiefly, Decoloniality is suitable for this study because it is the theory and or philosophy that has concepts that make Coloniality visible. It is through Decoloniality that philosophers like Charles Mills (1997) begin to make sense. Mills argued that the world is governed not through the Social Contract but a Racial Contract that binds victims of racism and their victimisers together. Post-apartheid South Africa, the subject of this study, can be understood as not being ruled through a visible democratic constitution but rather by an invisible racial contract that continues to keep Coloniality in place many years after the end of apartheid. Steyn (2012) argues that South Africa is marked by an 'ignorance contract' where perpetrators of apartheid claim to be ignorant of their injustice also begin to be relevant

here. Decoloniality helps to unmask and reveal hidden knowledge and ignorance which power uses to hide its evil.

Thabo Mbeki is a South African political leader who was also considered a renowned thinker and public intellectual. Mbeki made many comments about South Africa that scholars and journalists continue to use. This study, especially this section of the chapter, is interested in the evidence of Coloniality in South Africa. In the speech, entitled "Reconciliation and Nation Building" but known as: 'South Africa: Two Nations', Mbeki stated thus:

> This reality of two nations, underwritten by the perpetuation of the racial, gender and spatial disparities born of a very long period of colonial and apartheid white minority domination, constitutes the material base which reinforces the notion that, indeed, we are not one nation, but two nations. And neither are we becoming one nation. Consequently, also, the objective of national reconciliation is not being realised. (Mbeki, May 1998)

In this statement Mbeki was describing, in his own words, coloniality. The end of apartheid, otherwise, did not destroy the racial divisions and social inequalities that existed in apartheid South Africa. For that reason, this study can observe that Decoloniality is the appropriate philosophy and theoretical framework to use in understanding freedom and unfreedom in post-apartheid South Africa. In Mbeki's political and philosophical speech and Mda's artistic narrative we witness evidence of coloniality and unfreedom after the end of apartheid in South Africa. This study will, later in the discussion chapter, note that Sartre was unable to understand freedom and unfreedom in a manner of lived experience as Mda and Mbeki did, due to Sartre's privileged and powerful locus of enunciation. Decoloniality allows this study to see and understand clearly human thought, social conditions and geographic and epistemic differences. Sartre, Mbeki and Mda might all have pondered freedom and unfreedom but they did not do so from the same locus of enunciation. Talking, for instance, about the durability of Coloniality, Mbeki noted that: "The abolition of the apartheid legacy will require considerable effort over a considerable period of time." (Mbeki, 1998). Mbeki spoke in awareness that Coloniality survives colonialism and that Decoloniality, even if he did not use those terms, has a long journey, of resistance and revelation, towards full freedom and liberation. Sartre simplified and minimised the complexity of that journey, this study will note.

Much like Mda, Mbeki was alarmed by the condition of Coloniality and unfreedom in post-apartheid South Africa. Decoloniality as a philosophy of liberation is able to understand both

the Coloniality and unfreedom, as well as the alarm of Mbeki, Mda and others who felt that things must change. Mda's (2011) letter to Mandela, in the last days of 1997, may parallel with Mbeki's taking issue with continuing social inequalities. Decoloniality, through the concept of the Colonial Power Matrix and Locus of Enunciation to be explained below, also understands why Sartre did not see what Mbeki and Mda experienced and saw. Mbeki for instance noted in alarm: "much of what is happening in our country, which pushes us away from achieving this goal [of reconciliation], is producing rage among millions of people. I am convinced that we are faced with the danger of a mounting rage to which we must respond seriously" (Mbeki, 1998). Decoloniality understands and can explain the rage of the victims of coloniality that Frantz Fanon (1952, 1965) and Aime Cesaire (1955, 1956), in their different ways, expressed. Decoloniality also understands the origins of unfreedom and therefore can pronounce the solutions. Mbeki noted thus: "In many instances, correctly to refer to the reality that our past determines the present is to invite protests and ridicule even as it is perfectly clear that no solution to many current problems can be found unless we understand their historical origins." (Mbeki, 1998). For that reason, Decoloniality does not only describe problems of Coloniality, it also unmasks the origins and offers solutions, which brings about an intellectual and also activist philosophy.

Perhaps the most important justification of Decoloniality for this study is that it understands the nature of power and privilege. How the world, from Latin America, Asia and Africa came to be dominated by colonialists and imperialists is explained by decolonial scholars. Below, this chapter details Ramon Grosfoguel's explanation of how Coloniality began and how it created hierarchies of power using certain differences of race, class, gender and so on. Grosfoguel, for instance notes that in the conquest and colonialism which produced Coloniality in Latin America and by extension Africa: "A European/ capitalist/ military/Christian/ patriarchal/ white/ heterosexual/ male arrived in the Americas and established simultaneously (spatially and temporally) several entangled global hierarchies that for purposes of clarity in this exposition I list below as if they were separate from each other" (Grosfoguel, 2009:16). Grosfoguel goes on to list the hierarchies of difference, power and privilege that conquest and colonialism produced:

1. A particular global class formation where a diversity of forms of labour (slavery, semi-serfdom, wage labour, petty-commodity production, etc.) are going to coexist and be organized by capital as

> a source of production of surplus value through the selling of commodities for a profit in the world market;
>
> 2. An international division of labour at the core and the periphery where capital organized labour at the periphery operates within coerced and authoritarian forms (Wallerstein, 1974);
> 3. An inter-state system of politico-military organizations controlled by European males and institutionalized in colonial administrations (Wallerstein, 1979);
> 4. A global racial/ethnic hierarchy that privileges European people over non-European people (Quijano, 1993, 2000);
> 5. A global gender hierarchy that privileges males over females;
> 6. A sexual hierarchy that privileges heterosexuals over homosexuals and lesbians (it is important to remember that most indigenous peoples in the Americas did not consider sexuality among males a pathological behaviour and has no homophobic ideology);
> 7. A spiritual hierarchy that privileges Christians over non-Christian/non-western spiritualities institutionalized in the globalization of the Christian (Catholic and later Protestant) church;
> 8. An epistemic hierarchy that privileges western knowledge and cosmology over non-western knowledge and cosmologies, and institutionalized in the global university system (Mignolo 1995, 2000; Quijano 1991);
> 9. A linguistic hierarchy between European languages and non-European languages that privileges communication and knowledge/theoretical production in the former and sub-alternize the latter as sole producers of folklore or culture but not of knowledge/theory (Mignolo 2000). (Grosfoguel, 2009: 17).

The hierarchies of difference, power, and privilege that conquest and colonialism produced and institutionalised which Grosfoguel (2009) explains, can also be observed in post-apartheid South Africa that Mda describes. These hierarchies help this study understand Mda's perspective on freedom and unfreedom, and Sartre's blindnesses to these same limits to freedom or systems of unfreedom. For that reason, this study justifies and defends Decoloniality as its elected analytical and interpretive tool. The apartheid regime in South Africa created and used such hierarchies, as Grosfoguel has described, to structure South African society, which allows the ongoing racialized oppression to continue.

2.3 Locus of Enunciation

In this section of the chapter the concept of the Locus of Enunciation is explained. This concept is critical in this study as it illuminates the differing views on freedom between Sartre's and those views of Mda, Fanon, Cesaire and others. Locus of Enunciation refers to the geographic, social and political location from which thinkers think and write. The body, its history, experiences and conditions are part of the Locus of Enunciation. The subject position or locus of enunciation refers to the position from which a thinker thinks and speaks. To illustrate this point, Walter Mignolo (1999: 235) argued that "I am where I think" meaning that his identity and his thoughts are tied together to define him as a philosopher. That argument by Mignolo was an explanation of the Locus of Enunciation. In this way, "loci of enunciation are constituted at the intersection of epistemology and the politics of location" (Mignolo, 1999:238). As such, one's positionality is constituted by power systems, difference, and possible ideologically-fuelled subalternization (Mignolo, 1999). In this way, this study is grounded in subject-position reflexivity as much as it is in decolonial thinking. Another decolonial scholar, Paula Moya (2011: 80) noted that "who we are" cannot be separated from "where we speak" and from us as thinkers that think from our geographic and social realities. Moya (2011) discusses geopolitics, and the issue of situatedness whereby knowledge or text is constituted by one's context, horizon, and positionality; this is done in order to address epistemic decolonization as the author explicitly states her advocacy for a philosophy of liberation. Moya (2011) states the importance of power in the shaping of one's horizon and positionality, something that should not be taken for granted but acknowledged, addressed and challenged. As such, a Locus of Enunciation is constituted by power, whether benefiting or being disadvantaged thereof. Locus of Enunciation therefore refers to the way in which our positionalities and locations in the world shape and colour, and also flavour or poison our thoughts, depending on where we stand and what we are thinking and articulating. The locus of enunciation, subject position, and positionality of a researcher or author fundamentally constitutes one's perspective. This perspective thereby conditions the written work of theory or literature, whether conceptual or allegorical. Positionality and Locus of Enunciation are important both to Decolonial theory and Critical Diversity Studies.

The colonial matrix of power, as explained in a previous subsection as a concept of decoloniality which explains how coloniality works, benefiting some while disadvantaging and

oppressing others[2]. Those that are advantaged by the system are within what is called imperial difference. On the other hand, those that are disadvantaged and oppressed by the system are within what is called colonial difference. Colonial difference may be differentiated from Imperial difference (Mignolo, 2002: 57), in terms of the differing positionalities of thinkers, Imperial difference is the positionality of being in privilege, or a first-world un-colonized country (Mignolo, 2002). Colonial difference may additionally be understood as the position of disadvantage within the power relations under colonialism. The subject and control of power here may be understood as one of imperial difference, and the object of power, being controlled or objectified, as one of the colonial difference subject position. Being aware of one's subject position or Locus of Enunciation, in being decolonial in approach, means "[speaking] from the side of the colonial difference [which] forces us to look at the world from angles and points of view critical of hegemonic perspectives" (Grosfoguel, 2002: 209). Mignolo (2018: 186) asserts that colonial difference brings to the surface that which the rhetoric of modernity blurs. Each of the main thinkers of this study, Sartre and Mda, have differing subject positions of colonial difference or imperial difference which give authority to the concepts which they address.

Frantz Fanon (1952, 1965) and Aime Cesaire (1956, 1972) are two black and African thinkers that responded to Sartre's existential philosophy of freedom. Fanon and Cesaire as black philosophers and political activists experienced unfreedom and colonial oppression in more vivid ways than Sartre imagined. Cesaire, for example, resigned from the French Communist Party (Cesaire, 1972), from being a Parliamentarian, because of continuing racism and coloniality, which he experienced even as he was part of the government of France. Fanon on the other hand experienced racism and colonial difference while in colonized Algeria and other resisting countries, and as such he articulated the black (male) experience (Fanon, 1952).

2.3.1 Self-reflexivity:

As a white woman in this 'post-apartheid' racialized context, I am constituted by the country's history. By positionality I am a white middle class woman. I grew up in the post-apartheid era in South Africa. Personally, I do not affirm whiteness in the political sense even as I bear a

[2] Thereby constituting "Border thinking" or "border epistemology" (Grosfoguel, 2002: 209), as discourse of new perspectives may emerge, from analysis by the subaltern (Grosfoguel, 2002: 222) – those from the colonial difference and the margins. As such, the positionality of colonial difference is created by coloniality of power (Grosfoguel, 2002: 208).

white skin. My experience of being by fellow white skinned people made me aware of the racial oppression which black skinned people have lived with. Having personally struggled with issues of (existential) anguish[3], and found injustice in the treatment of others in the everyday South Africa I consider myself anti-racist and anti-superiority. As such I strive for inclusion, and equality through engagement with issues in order to understand and deal with them. By delimiting my positionality and situatedness, I can see that unlike the majority of South Africans I am of a privileged middle-class background, in which I am not constrained by the lived experience and priority of survival, work, and money. In this way, my white and middle-class background privileges me to be able to prioritize fulfilment, happiness, and contentment. My gender position of being a woman includes the disadvantage of my having been violated and being a potential but unfulfilled sexual assault victim. As such I have had personal experience with mental health issues, particularly depression, which has led me to channel this experience into an academic passion of existentialism. My honours academic research on Sartrean existentialism focused on the concept of anguish, in the 21st century context. In this way, decoloniality allows for me, as the researcher, to account for my subject position as a source of privilege and possible blind spots. In ignorance, these blind spots may be seen as a furthering of white dominance and agendas therein. Instead, through the self-reflexivity of decoloniality I attempt to engage with the problematic aspects of my socio-historical categories, such as white dominance and the agendas therein, and the perceptions thereof. Now, in this study, the focus is on the concept of freedom as empowering, and critically engaging with its limits, particularly in terms of Sartre's own locus of enunciation.

2.3.2 Zakes Mda:

This subsection of the chapter seeks to explain the Locus of Enunciation of Zakes Mda. This is important to the study in that Mda will be understood clearly from where biographically and geographically he wrote. Mda's father was one of the founders of the ANC youth league, and a founding spirit of the PAC. Because of his father's political activism, Mda had to exile himself to Lesotho. Mda considered himself politically relevant (1965-98) and a drunk, having been a bystander to troublemakers. From his time in secondary school onward, he found passion in

[3] Existential anguish is the overwhelming sense of responsibility of one's essential freedom, this involves having to choose oneself and one's self-determination, over suicide.

playwriting and prose, and only wrote and published literature after the end of apartheid. At which point, he mostly studied and taught in Lesotho until he received a grant to study a PhD at Ohio, had already married and had children from his first marriage. On the time of his return and working at a university in Lesotho, he had an affair with the woman who would be his second wife. Once they married, they moved to the US, in which time the couple fought often, to which Mda's youngest son of the previous marriage was witness. The twenty years between that and the completion and publication of the biography describes his divorce from his second wife, and subsequent happy marriage to his current wife. Mda splits time between the US and South Africa, to oversee his bee-keeping-and-honey-producing community around the former home of his late grandmother. This span of time also provides some of the back-stories and inspiration behind some of his novels. Considering Mda's upbringing closely, and examining the opportunity for education which he received, this study can note that he was relatively more privileged than most black South Africans. However, being a black person who lived under and experienced apartheid and the post-apartheid South Africa, Mda's narrative can be trusted to reflect the condition of unfreedom in South Africa that this study delves into. Mda's autobiography captures his first-person subjective narrative and subject position as one of economic privilege and intellectual authority. His literary fame and the authority therein came after having been published and respected for his literature and tendency to capture cultural allegories and history over imagery. These biographic events give context to this study's central issue of unfreedom in the South African context, particularly in terms of the validity and situatedness of Mda as the narrator.

2.3.3 Jean-Paul Sartre:

Sartre lived and thought in 20th century Europe, which endured the Great Depression, two World Wars, and the genocide of the Holocaust. Political leaders and philosophers alike pondered the human condition and sought to re-evaluate normative discourse. The world as Sartre witnessed and lived was marked by uncertainty and anxiety. Sartrean existentialism emerged in that context. Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980) was born into an intellectual family (Cogswell, 2008: p.105), and as such was encouraged to pursue philosophical intellectualism with the privilege of having institutional backup. His intellectual curiosity led him into the French philosophical community (Cogswell, 2008: p.106) within which Sartre developed relationships with prominent philosophical thinkers of the time that were engaged with

contemporary existential philosophy and were rediscovering phenomenology. Those that theorised Existentialism, particularly Jean-Paul Sartre, lived in a privileged French context, in which they had the necessary institutional support and freedom to conceptualize such in-depth and abstract philosophy.

The whiteness and 'white privilege' of Sartre widened his opportunities and reaffirmed his institutional back-up. As such, he was never directly confronted by a thrownness[4] or situatedness of racial segregation, oppression, marginalization and discrimination: as thinkers, such as Fanon, of colonial difference would. Additionally, Jean-Paul Sartre was a man, which can be understood as another enabling power of constantly (re-)affirmed of his problematically universalized, male superiority. This position of imperial difference, as such, involves ivory tower and distanced thinking, which had typically been associated with enlightenment philosophy. Freedom, for example, was more conceptually and abstractly at stake from such an imperial white male position rather than truly being entangled within, or having experienced unfreedom. As such, Sartre had various positional blind spots, and thereby his theory may be seen to perpetuate inequality and possibly his own ignorance towards his subject position.

Sartre's biography and his geographic location within imperial Europe and his historical context privileged him with power and luxury. Sartre, in that way enjoyed the typical "European, capitalist, military, Christian[5], patriarchal, white, heterosexual male" power and privilege which Grosfoguel (2009:19) describes. Such a position of power and privilege made Sartre blind to unfreedom in the colonial world such as Africa from which Fanon and Mda thought. In other words, Sartre became ignorant of the colonial world and it conditions of unfreedom. In this way, the imperial difference and privileged subject position which Sartre occupied enabled his 'authority' in 'universal' existentialism and anti-colonial views to have been heard. As such, the content of his theories may have value but his subject position is the object of critique in this study. It follows that Sartre's locus enunciation opens up space for problematizing his concept of freedom as radical ad absolute. As Sartre's concept of freedom may have only been

[4] Heidegger's idea of 'thrownness' (Young, 2011): one's always already being situated within a context, a space and time which encompasses a history. As such, the social is prior to the individual (Young, 2011), and within the situatedness of social and contextual facts that predetermine positionality (an individual's social position) through thrownness (Young, 2011).

[5] Following Nietzsche's announcement of the death of God, Sartre was an atheist, and in opposition to his privileged position of capitalism he discursively identified as a Marxist.

possible or applicable from a position of privilege, the critique in this study is based on Sartre's generalizing and universalizing such a freedom to those dominated through and since being colonized, which calls their independence into question.

In conclusion to this section, it can be noted that identity and historical context are important in the understanding of what a thinker thinks and believes. Myself, Mda and Sartre are biographically, geographically and epistemically located human beings that think, speak and write from our specific loci of enunciation. The use of Decoloniality as a theoretical framework especially the concept of the Locus of Enunciation allows this study to engage with the limits of Existential Freedom that Sartre represented.

2.4 Critical Diversity Literacy

This section of the chapter seeks to clarify the relationship between Decoloniality and Critical Diversity Literacy as theories and practices. The section also intends to defend this study as a decolonial study in the field of Critical Diversity Studies. The theoretical, conceptual, and philosophical framework and perspective of decoloniality may be seen to clearly encompass Critical Diversity Literacy, in its framework, vocabulary, and aim of understanding hidden power systems and privilege. As demonstrated in the Colonial Power Matrix section of this chapter and the Rationale of Decoloniality that is presented above, Decoloniality as a theoretical and philosophical framework is highly aware of difference, power, privilege and oppression and domination. All these are important concerns of Critical Diversity Literacy. As such, while some may use Critical Diversity Literacy in service of decoloniality, I use decoloniality in service of Critical Diversity Literacy and Studies. In this way, my study within the discipline of Critical Diversity Studies involves the use of a further vocabulary and language for the unearthing of power systems, which allows for inequality, unfreedom and oppression, particularly within subjective narratives of lived experiences, additional to the colonial power matrix.

Critical Diversity Literacy (Steyn, 2015) is a framework to understand and engage with difference and diversity, by shedding light upon the ways in which power operates along the axes of difference. This framework highlights its aims as moving society toward transformation, integration and greater equality, through unfolding dynamics of specific social contexts. This set of criteria (Steyn, 2015) allows me to frame my critical engagement, with

texts, to always consider the power relations involved and do this with the goal of being critically literate. The Critical Diversity Literacy framework (Steyn, 2015) synthesizes relevant trends in Social Theory pertaining to issues of diversity, difference, and otherness, to challenge heterogenous spaces and the myth of modernity through changing the social imaginary. As such, I use it as relating to decolonial discourse in response to Existentialism, which was formulated from problematic loci of enunciations of privilege and power (Johnson, 1997; Young, 1990; Steyn, 2015). To understand difference and the importance of it in diversity and oppressions (Steyn, 2015), I look at Johnson (1997) who asserts that difference is typically mapped out to better understand privilege, particularly as privilege is justified by difference and signifiers of otherness/inferiority. Maintaining such privilege, of demographic groups particularly comfort zones of whiteness, may be understood as taking the "path of least resistance" (Johnson, 1997). Critical diversity discourses provide an understanding of difference as a way of making sense of social relations (Young, 2011), particularly in terms of groups and their interactions with institutions. While I use decoloniality as a theoretical framework, the framework of Critical Diversity Literacy involves the use of a further vocabulary and language for the unearthing of power systems, which allows for inequality, unfreedom and oppression, particularly within subjective narratives of lived experiences, additional to what the colonial power matrix shows. Decoloniality focuses on the legacies and manifestations of coloniality, and its oppressive tendencies, since the end of colonialism, as such within the general issue of diversity, difference and otherness at stake in the Critical Diversity Literacy framework.

2.5 Conclusions

This chapter has laid out the decolonial framework, how it works and how it fits into the context of post-apartheid South Africa, particularly through the contextual use of the colonial power matrix. Decoloniality allows for the understanding of what has happened, and is happening, making coloniality visible as coloniality survives colonialism, through interpreting the colonial power matrix as ways of control. Decoloniality is appropriate in the South African context in terms of the country's history, its remaining injustices, and the challenges to every-day freedoms. Decoloniality has been defined as: the unearthing of, resistance and undoing of coloniality and the power systems that limit freedom, through the colonial power matrix and its persistence of un-freedom therein. In justifying decoloniality as the theoretical framework, I

have referred to Mbeki's speech on the racial division of South Africa after the country's attempts at reconciliation, whereby the longevity of coloniality and the tendencies of apartheid continue to constitute the society. Decoloniality allows for me, as the researcher, to account for my subject position and the problematic aspects of my socio-historical categories, such as white dominance and the agendas therein, and perceptions that I attempt to engage with through decoloniality. As decoloniality accounts for the positionality and perspectives of the Other, this perspective is aligned within Critical Diversity Studies. Decoloniality may be understood to serve Critical Diversity Literacy and studies, as the framework aims to displace centrist power over epistemologies and provide the language to voice the necessary marginalised positions of difference and diversity. The exploration of the limits of Existential freedom in the South African context involves engagement with problematic apartheid legacies, ignorant whiteness and the historical and discursive dominances therein, which may be done through my analysis of literature and later discussion.

Chapter Three

Methodology

3. Introduction to Methodology

This chapter aims to clarify the methodology of the research study, under the decolonial framework. This research endeavour of assessing existential freedom in terms of colonized positionalities as articulated in decolonial literature, is a theoretical, philosophical, and conceptual literature study, a qualitative study. As the theoretical framework of decoloniality is made explicit in the previous chapter, the methodological approach to and of this study is to be made explicit in this chapter. This study is based on analysis of literature and the core concepts of: freedom, existential freedom, and the coloniality of unfreedom. As such, the study's core concepts are not quantifiable or measurable, thus employing a qualitative methodological approach

Research studies achieve reliability through methodological repeatability. While repeatability is typically associated with quantitative research methodology, this study is based in qualitative methodology. As such, the qualitative research methodology must be clarified in order for this study to be reliable and possibly repeatable as an academic study. Research method and design is presented, in this chapter, and clarifies the data and analysis which correspond with the research questions, aims and objectives as well as the topic of inquiry (Babbie, Mouton, Vorster & Prozesky, 2005). This methodology chapter will explain the research process, tools and procedures which are applied and how they logically flow from the research questions and conceptual framework (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006). This research study is based in theory and conceptual critical engagement, in order to best serve the conceptual and theoretical frameworks through the literature study.

In the previous chapter, the theoretical framework of decoloniality has been laid to highlight the subjective nature of research, as per the Loci of Enunciations. As such, through the theoretical framework of decoloniality, I am aware of and aim to avoid the possible violence of research. Smith (1999) reflects upon Western outsider research on and of indigenous communities as imposing value systems, as such research gives worth to the 'truths' that support certain ideal knowledge (Smith, 1999: 2). These issues of decoloniality, as the perspective through which to interpret and argue, are central to the study techniques section.

The qualitative methodology is discussed in the planned use of content and textual analyses under the literature study. This methodology is then rationalised as beneficial to the study, particularly staying close to the subject matter in text and interpretation. Thereafter the chapter briefly explains the study design and its techniques, under decoloniality. Finally, the chapter links its methodology to decoloniality within the discipline of Critical Diversity Studies: in order to guide the method and be aware of issues relation to power.

3.1 Qualitative Methodology

The overarching qualitative research methodology is concerned with the research questions and focus concepts of this study. The focus of this study is on the limits of Existential Freedom, as conceptualized in the theory of Jean-Paul Sartre, in the South African post-apartheid context. This context and its tendency of unfreedom is highlighted in the biography of Zakes Mda (2011). As such, the conceptual basis of this study is focused within written discourse, text, and literature. In this way, the data collected and analysed is descriptive (Crossman, 2020) which is subsequently analysed and interpreted in relation to the research aims. To clarify, qualitative research is concerned with "non-numerical data and that seeks to interpret meaning from these data" (Crossman, 2020). Usually in social science research, qualitative data is collected through participants, but here the primary data or unit of analysis of this study is the Mda (2011) biography, which provides an experiential and narrative account of contextualized unfreedom. The relevant qualitative analysis to this study includes content analysis, textual analysis, and literature study.

This study, as one of qualitative methodology, should be understood as basic research rather than experimental research. Basic research (Merriam et al., 2016) entails intellectual interest in a phenomenon, i.e. Existential freedom, with the goal to extend knowledge. In this way, qualitative research uses words as data, and forms part of subjective discourse – investigating meaning attributed to experiences and what informs how we see the world through ontology and epistemology. As such, this study is interpretivist (Merriam et al., 2016) aiming to seek understanding in and of a socially constructed reality in order to making the world visible through interpretation, and critical, in order to acknowledge and investigate the power relations that control freedoms. In this way qualitative methodology situates the researcher in the world and in discourse, thereby the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis (Merriam et al., 2016). Qualitative research aims to provide insight (Bansal et al., 2018) into

taken-for-granted theories and new theoretical directions, with discursive value in nonreducible text. As such, discourse study (Bansal, et al., 2018: 1192), particularly through content and textual analyses, is concerned with social reality and meanings, thereby challenging language and concepts by looking at the role of power therein. It is important to note that data analysis is more than data description, in order to interpret, understand and engage with data (Biggam, 2015).

3.1.1 Content Analysis:

The specific qualitative methodology of this study is content analysis. Similar to thematic analysis, content analysis works with categories (Kuckartz, 2019) to form the substance of the research. The category system (Kuckartz, 2019) of this research study concerns thematic categories: topics, arguments, and schools of thought; and theoretical categories, relating to existing theory. As such, this research is concept-driven (Kuckartz, 2019), rather than data-driven, thereby deductive rather than inductive, through theory, literature and the aims of the research. With the conceptual basis of this study, analysis and interpretation herein may construct meaning (Kuckartz, 2019). In this way, as this research is theory based, the concept of existential freedom and its reliability or limits is at stake. This content analysis is based within textual analysis whereby theory and literature are analysed and interpreted to unearth the potential limits of existential freedom, as is the aim to this research study.

3.1.2 textual analysis

The qualitative research methodology, as literature- and theory- based, and concept-driven is done through textual analysis. Textual analysis is a type of discourse analysis (Bansal, et al., 2018: 1192) which deconstructs meanings within a socially constructed reality. Textual analysis is concerned with the "representativeness of texts" (Frey, Botan, and Kreps, 1999: 1), which involves describing the content, structure, and functions of messages/excerpts/sentiments in the text. Within textual analysis is qualitative content analysis which is further concerned with the meaning of concepts, messages, and excerpts (Frey, Botan, and Kreps, 1999: 3). Within this twofold analyses of content and text, there are five units (Frey, Botan, and Kreps, 1999: 3) of analysis: meaning units, concerned with symbolic meaning; syntactical units, concerned with the language used; referential, otherwise known as character, units, which alludes to the temporal and physical which is referred to in the content of the text; thematic units, which is concerned with the topics within messages of the text; and physical units, referring to the

physical conditions of space and time devoted to the analysis of content, which I'm not using in this research. In this way, the texts of theory and literature capturing experience (biography accounting for South African experience of unfreedom) are there to be interpreted for meaning, language, context, and content/theme.

3.1.3 literature study

The qualitative research methodology, as literature- and theory- based, and concept-driven is done as a literature study. In this sense, a literature study may be understood as the overall form and qualitative method as the literature, of Mda's biography and Sartre's theory, is the data to be analysed. As a literature study, the concepts and theory are put into conversation with the surrounding discourse and context, particularly as interpreted from a decolonial theoretical perspective. The form of the study, in data collection, analysis and discussion, is literature based. As it is a conceptual study, the basis of conceptual data is sourced from theoretical discourse and Mda's (2011) biography *Sometimes there is a Void*, from which the research questions can be qualitatively investigated and explored.

This research study, of considering the limits of existential freedom under a decolonial lens, is thereby qualitative in method. Specifically, it is a literature study in form, and it uses a qualitative content analysis through textual analysis. These analyses, as to be presented in the literature review chapter and argued in the discussion chapter, allows for the consideration of data as oriented around quality, concepts, and discussion. Prioritizing texts as the primary data of this study is thereby not considering lived experience as captured through interviews.

3.2 Rationale for this Methodology

The use of qualitative methodology, particularly a literature study, content and textual analysis, may be justified in terms of the research question which is theory oriented in questioning the limits of existential freedom. This concept of existential freedom is inherently theoretical in nature, as freedom is not quantifiable or measurable through numbers or scientific data. The qualitative nature of this research is presented through a literature study, which allows for the analysis and thinking to be based upon theory and articulated discourse. The chosen biography is literature that captures theory through experience, i.e. encountering phenomena, which implies conceptual phenomena through biographical accounts of unfreedom. The chosen theoretical literature, as that which ponders phenomena is the more theoretical of Sartre's

known works, namely: he explains in *Being and Nothingness* (1943) the theoretical concepts through examples, elsewhere his fictional novels encounter phenomena, additionally Sartre is known for having lived his own philosophy. The focus on and choice of literature over collected field data is based on my personal preference of working with literature over, lack of experience in, recording quantitative or qualitative data through interacting with people, thereby being a literature-driven person with experience in existential issues. The philosophical influence on this study, through my own academic background, plays a large role in the focus on literature rather than collected field data. As such, this study is philosophical within the greater field of sociology and particularly the discipline of Critical Diversity Studies. In the discipline of Critical Diversity Studies, the nature of research and knowledge created is necessarily critical to existing knowledge and theory. In this way, the qualitative but critical methodology allows for critical engagement within the discussion chapter.

The analyses in this study, being content and textual analyses, may hereby be justified by the theoretical subject matter of the study. Content analysis, as with textual analysis, allows for the following of the themes and messages within the relevant literature (Frey, Botan, and Kreps, 1999) In doing so following the 'golden thread' of the theory, the literature, and particularly the contextual limits of existential freedom through decolonial critique. As the researcher, I must acknowledge my philosophical background as one of pondering without method. The closest thing my philosophy studies had to methodology is argumentative structure. Going from philosophy to social sciences, particularly Critical Diversity Studies, necessitates this study to be guided, articulated, and clarified through method. As such, the qualitative methodologies of literature study, textual analysis, and content analysis allow for the research to have structure in thinking and methodology, and still holding onto philosophical underpinning. These methodologies align with the research aims and the nature of the focus concept, Existential Freedom, as primarily theoretical and necessarily literature and text based. In this way, this study may be methodologically achieved through qualitative methods of data collection and interpretation through qualitative content analysis, textual analysis, and literature study. The combination of qualitative methodology and decolonial perspective may allow for the researcher bias to be made clear through subject positions, and thereby subjectivity.

3.3 Design of Study

The design of this research study, in exploring the limits of existential freedom under a decolonial lens, may here be clarified. The study's design should be first explicated through the general research process of data collection, analysis, and argumentation. This research process includes the data sources and primary texts being literature, replacing field data, and argumentation being under the decolonial lens of critique. Secondly the design is explicated through the layout of the research report as presented: introduction, theoretical framework, method, literature review, discussion, conclusion, and bibliography. The research design herein shapes the study in order to understand its process and form.

3.3.1 Research report process

Data collection process: As I am coming from a philosophical and theoretical background, I use this background to my advantage. In this way, texts and experiential accounts may provide source material to apply the qualitative research methods of critical literature analysis and textual engagement: a particularly conceptual rather than applied or in-the-field research method. I, methodologically, draw from Ndzwayiba, Ukpere and Steyn's text (2018) which uses literature to deconstruct and face problematic perceptions and dominant narratives. This approach may thereby allow for my use of online, electronic and printed text in order to have the information readily available to analyse, interpret, engage with and form into dialogue.

Data sources: My data sources include works of theory, a unit of analysis, and the post-colonial post-apartheid South African context itself, as something to interpret, analyse, and critically engage with. My primary data texts to be used include: Mda's (2011) biography *Sometimes there is a Void* as the data to analyse, and Sartre's include *Being and Nothingness* (2003(1943)) and *Colonialism and Neocolonialism* (2006 (1964)). Along with the decolonial theory to engage with the subsequent interlocutors for dialogue which include: Fanon's (1952; 1963) *Black Skin White Masks* (Fanon, 2017(1952)) and *Wretched of the Earth* (Fanon, 1991 (1963), and Cesaire's (1955) *Discourse on Colonialism*. Secondary data consisting of decolonial theory and thinkers is used as my theoretical and methodological framework for consideration, to re-engage with the ideas and texts at hand.

Data analysis and interpretation techniques: As the data to be considered in my research project is largely textual and discursive, I place greater emphasis on my techniques of analysis

and interpretation: content analysis, textual analysis, and literature study. My interpretation of data, in making sense of literature, also largely relies on my perspective of decoloniality from my subject positionality, which has been previously explicated in the Locus of Enunciation section of the previous chapter. I thus constantly consider the epistemological implications for the ideas discussed (Ndzwayiba, Ukpere & Steyn, 2018), particularly as my self-reflexivity (Mugari, 2016) involves discussing the texts in terms of their contexts, the authors' positionalities and my own positionality. The asserted self-reflexivity is on and of my subject positionality, or locus of enunciation, and awareness of the current socio-political and discursive context when engaging with texts and writing the research report. The analysis and interpretation of data may additionally be conditioned or aided by my use of the concepts and theory itself to critically engage with things, as phenomena, in order to expose deeper meaning (which may also be done through my theoretical frameworks, particularly Critical Discourse Analysis).

Argumentative discussion with interpretation, perspective, analysis, research questions, and context. This is done through the writing and rewriting of the research report chapters, each rewrite having greater insight or further clarity. While the theoretical framework and literature review chapters are key in setting my analysis and interpretation, with light discussion therein, the main argument and discussion may be found in the discussion chapter. As such presenting the data, findings, interpretation and research arguments.

3.3.2 Research Report Layout as

Chapter 1: Introduction including: research questions, aims, research rationale, definitions, brief outline of research perspective and method, introducing and justifying main sources, layout of chapters.

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework: key definitions as relevant to decolonial thinking and critique, colonial power matrix as ways of control of power and reproducing coloniality, rationale to justify decoloniality, locus of enunciation to contextualize standpoint of researcher and main thinkers, relation to Critical Diversity Literacy, concluding chapter

Chapter 3: Methods: overview in intro, qualitative method through content and textual analysis within literature study, rationale of this method, design of study, study techniques (how of method), Decoloniality and Critical Diversity Literacy thinking/attitude/questions as framing study, concluding chapter

Chapter 4: Literature review as the primary analysis and interpretation presented as: an overview in the introduction to the chapter relation to topic, race and south African literature;

Sartre theory and anti-colonial views; overview of Mda entitled: Mda *Sometimes there is a Void* as a narrative of freedom (and the fight for freedom), including relevant extracts to unfreedom and void; Fanon, Cesaire and decolonial discourse on freedom (Fanon and the (decolonial) post-independence experience); similar studies and literature (what gaps am I filling); concluding chapter.

Chapter 5: Discussion: analysis and argumentation as per methods, interpretation, discussion as per decolonial perspective and research questions. The argument is presented first in looking at the South African context, therein issues of race and diversity discourse through the narrative of Mda's experience of freedom during and after the fall of apartheid. Thereafter engaging with Sartre's existentialism, the unfreedoms of the South African context as constituted by coloniality, and what remains for the possibilities of existential freedom under a decolonial perspective.

Chapter 6: Conclusion to the study, drawing a close to the research questions an endeavour. A reflection on the implications and further questions and avenues of research presents possible methodological flaws and limits of the study.

3.4 Study techniques

The theoretical framework of decoloniality highlights the subjective nature of research, as per the Loci of Enunciations. In this way, through the theoretical framework of decoloniality, I am aware of and aim to avoid the possible violence of research. Smith (1999) reflects upon Western outsider research on and of indigenous communities as imposing value systems. As such, research gives worth to the 'truths' that support certain ideal knowledge (Smith, 1999: 2). Smith considers the dominating tendency of constructing the other through research to be something needing to be deconstructed and resisted within the decolonial turn (Smith, 1999: 2-3). Outsider research may be useless to indigenous communities (Smith, 1999: 3), which necessitates the need to clarify the possible usefulness of this study. In this way the decolonial approach to research methodology here requires an awareness of what I, as the researcher, am giving value to certain issues. This also emphasises a necessary awareness of how this study could serve social justice (Smith, 1999: 4), needing to consider what is at stake (Smith, 1999: 5) in this study, along with how this study can address such issues.

The use of qualitative research methodology largely involves my use of discourse analysis, and my understanding of contextual contingency and positionality as possible research factors (Bansal, et. al., 2018). The usage thereof is in order to create and reflect upon new ways of seeing, and thereby create new discourse. The type of research methodology being 'basic qualitative research' (Merriam, 2016: 23) needs to be understood as highly interpretive and

constructivist, whereby meaning is constructed rather than discovered, and to interpret is to construct meaning (Merriam, 2016: 24). As this study is literature and theory based, the literature study element of the qualitative methodology is largely concerned with the choice of data: literature over field data. While the qualitative methodologies have been explicated as content analysis, textual analysis, and literature study, these are frames by theories in order to conceptualise this study's place within discourse. In the South African context of diversity discourse, it is important to note that Critical Race Theory (Roberts, 2013) highlights race as central in the idealisation of 'whiteness' and the marginalisation of anything Other. This is very much a current issue that still needs to be engaged with, rather than simply ignored and overcome as if the post-colonial context is also a post-race context. It is important for me to consider race on the same level of a decolonial context as the continuing oppressions, particularly discursive marginalization, are largely based on race as a difference that power may be asserted over and othering may occur. This research study is necessarily regulated by scholarly and institutional rules and expectations, which is faced with a decolonial approach and a clear sense of how this study is to be achieved: through its design, its qualitative methods and its relation to decoloniality and critical diversity literacy.

3.5 Method: Decoloniality and Critical Diversity Literacy

The qualitative methodologies of content analysis, textual analysis, and literature study in this decolonial research into the limits of Existential Freedom aim to serve Critical Diversity Literacy and studies through the study techniques of decolonial discourse, qualitative interpretivist constructivism, and the contextual awareness. The central issue of post-apartheid existential freedom is problematizable in looking at the issue of present injustices being dominated and determined by the past, particularly past injustices and oppressions, which, as a kind of historical awareness, is key to CDL. As such, CDL is attuned to engaging with the remains, ruins, wounds, scars, and the legacies of past injustice that shape and have created the current issues within discourse and real-world diversity conceptual issues. These current issues are manifest from the presence and persistence of un-freedom in the time 'post' the fall of the racially oppressive apartheid regime. In this way, the Critical Diversity Literacy (CDL) Framework (Steyn, 2012) allows for the critical understanding of and engagement with historical injustices of differentiation through othering.

The CDL framework (Steyn, 2012) may be explicated, in terms of the following skills to be gained:

1. Understand the role of power in constructing differences that make a difference (Steyn, 2015).
2. Recognize the unequal symbolic and material value of different social locations – through acknowledging hegemonic possibilities and the hegemonic/dominant tendency to marginalize the 'other' (Steyn, 2015).
3. Through the analytic skill of unpacking how these systems of oppression intersect, interlock, co-construct and constitute each other, and how they are reproduced, resisted, and reframed (Steyn, 2015).
4. Define oppressive systems (such as racism) as current social problems and not simply a historical legacy (Steyn, 2015).
5. Understand that social identities are learned and are an outcome of social practices.
6. Possess a diversity grammar and a vocabulary that facilitates a discussion of privilege and oppression (Steyn, 2015).
7. Translate and interpret coded hegemonic practices (Steyn, 2015).
8. Analyse the ways in which diversity hierarchies and institutionalized oppressions are inflicted through specific social contexts and material arrangements (Steyn, 2015).
9. Understand the role of emotions (emotional investment) in the above criteria (Steyn, 2015).
10. Engage with issues of the transformation of these oppressive systems, towards deepening social justice at all levels of social organization (Steyn, 2015).

This set of criteria (Steyn, 2015) allows me to frame my critical engagement with texts, to always consider the power relations involved in the possibility of freedom to be free. The particular criteria explicated above are skills that should be understood as applied to this research report throughout, especially in this study's emphasis on diversity discourse within the discussion chapter. As such, the CDL framework may be seen to coincide with the decoloniality as the theoretical frameworks of this study. The Critical Diversity Literacy framework (Steyn, 2015) is useful for its insights of deconstructing and exposing power relations through critically engaging with my texts by asking questions from the Critical Diversity Studies perspective. The Critical Diversity Literacy framework, in its entirety, thereby involves unearthing and

critically engaging with systematic injustices that entail power and social relations that dictate normative societal functioning. This framework thus guides the methodology toward inclusive and critical discourse, particularly in argumentation.

3.6 Chapter conclusion:

This chapter has reflected upon and clarified the qualitative research methodology of this study. Particularly the form of this study being a literature study, thereby using literature as the primary data to analyse, interpret and argue from. The methods of analysis are content and textual analysis, similar to thematic analysis and discourse analysis thereby conceptually driven. Thereafter these methods were rationalised through the conceptual focus of the study as theory based. As such, qualitative content analysis and textual analyses under a literature study, whereby concepts are not quantifiable. The chapter then laid out the process of the research, in the data collection and analysis, and the design of the study thereby laying out of the entire research report in terms of what has been and will be done. Thereafter the chapter explained the methods technically under the decolonial influence, and being constituted by Critical Diversity Literacy. Hereafter the research report reviews the literature relevant to this study in order to make explicit the necessary theory and data.

Chapter Four

Literature Review: Unfreedom and Freedom

4. Introduction

This literature review chapter aims to explore the literature that is relevant to the subjects of freedom and unfreedom that are central to this study. The ideas of Jean-Paul Sartre, Aime Cesaire, Frantz Fanon and Hannah Arendt are examined to illuminate freedom and unfreedom. It is important to note that the relevant literature to my study of freedom, and its limits, does not include that of John Stuart Mill (2002) assertions on freedom for the reason that he is liberal, individualistic, not existential, and not decolonial. My study covers the literature of Existentialists like Sartre, Fanon, and Cesaire, along with Arendt as a political existentialist, from their different loci of enunciation which are more important and relevant because they pondered collective not individual freedom. None of the similar studies that I have found deal with freedom and Existentialism from a decolonial perspective within a South African context, and as such I am attempting to fill the gap between interdisciplinary and contextualised existentialism. Cesaire and Fanon may be emphasized as the main African decolonial philosophers and thinkers in my project that are in conversation with the Sartrean Existential ideas. The structure of the chapter begins with Sartre's Existentialism and anti-colonial views, then Cesaire's views on colonialism and the unfreedom therein, Fanon's view on freedom in the context of unfreedom, and Arendt on unfreedom, and thereafter decolonial freedom. The literature lays a foundation for my interrogation of Sartre's limits of existential freedom, through looking at the biography of Zakes Mda to dissect the issue of Existential Freedom in a narrative context, which comes in the next chapter.

4.1 Sartre on Colonialism and Unfreedom

4.1.1 Sartre's Existential theory

Sartre's existential phenomenology as theorized in *Being and Nothingness* (1943) allows for an understanding of the Western subject. As Sartre's concept of radical freedom has previously been defined through his existential phenomenology: with focus on the individual human consciousness in the existential sense. Sartre's sentiment "existence precedes essence" (Sartre, 1956) shows his dismissal of a pre-defined essence in the human consciousness. As such freedom is equitable to an 'essence' of the human consciousness. Sartre terms the human

consciousness as the being-for-itself, rather than a being-in-itself which has a prescribed essence, meaning, and function, for example a table. In this way, the essence-less-ness of the human consciousness is in opposition to the pre-defined and functional meanings of objects. Instead, existential freedom may be understood as a constant need for self-definition. As such, this freedom of the human consciousness may be understood as a necessity for the conscious projection by the human consciousness and/or being-for-itself towards meanings (Bernasconi, 2007), through meaning-making-projects. Absolute freedom is constituted and accompanied by absolute responsibility for oneself, one's facticity, or contextual embeddedness, and as such one's meaning (Sartre, 2003 (1943)). The taking up of one's fundamental freedom in the face of its absolute responsibility, and the overwhelming sense of anguish therein, is articulated in Sartre's sentiment "[we] are condemned to be free" (Sartre, 1956: 8). The realization of Sartrean freedom entails the accepting of responsibility for the choices and consequences of meaning making, along with and through accepting perpetual underlying anguish (Sartre, 2003 (1943): 574-577). The individual being-for-itself may further be considered through the inter-subjective situation of the look (Sartre, 2003 (1943): 276-286), which allows a consideration of its intersubjective power relations.

Sartre (2003 (1943): 276-277) problematizes his concept of the being-for-itself, its subjectivity and its freedom, through the conflicting scenario of The Look, which is explained by Atkins (2005), and understood as a possible theory of dialogue by Marinot (2005). Atkins (2005) discusses the Look as an absolute ontological event, a power dynamic on the foundational level of being, thereby involving conflictual intersubjective relations, and the annihilation of one's subjectivity. This annihilation of subjectivity demands one becoming an object in orbit of another. This orbiting of another allows for the centring of the other's perspective and othering of one's own (Sartre, 1943; Atkins, 2005). This conflict may never by resolved "once and for all" (Sartre, 1943; Atkins, 2005), only a dialogue of assertion and counter-assertion (Marinot, 2005). Atkins (2005: 87-89) explains that Sartre provides two options in the development of this dilemma: "either succumb to the power of the Other's freedom, or assert [one's] own power by returning the Look and thereby threatening the Other with annihilation (Atkins, 2005: 89). In this way, one being in the gaze of the Other reduces one's subjectivity (Marinot, 2005: 43) to objecthood. Marinot (2005) takes this to mean "a society of free men treating all other free men as free is impossible" (Marinot, 2005: 45; 'PW 132'). The idea of dialogue: challenging thesis with antithesis, and turning subject into object in the face of another subject, here may

be understood as an intersubjective dialogue, whereby "one is making sense of another" (Marinot, 2005: 57). The being-for-itself, in its individual conscious experience, is thereby 'objectified' as if it were a being-in-itself. This ontological objectification occurs through the gaze of, and thereby defined through the perspective of, the other. As such, the Other becomes "the one who delivers me to myself as unrevealed but without revealing himself" (Sartre, 1943: 269). This extreme othering occurred in the process of colonization, which seemingly prevented the African counter-assertion of freedom and subjectivity. For the look to be a dialogue Sartre's radical freedom, of self-determination, necessitates the privilege of the Western subject. The subject of power here may be understood as positioned within imperial difference. On the other hand, the object of power, the objectified, is one of a colonial difference subject position. As such, the Western subject of power in the process of colonization may be understood as the subject around which the object orbits, and the annihilator of the colonized, as the other, subjectivity. This understanding of colonization as a scenario of the Look are most notable in Africa and Africans not having been known to exist prior to the colonizer's acknowledgement of them as sub-humans (Grosfoguel, 2006; Fanon 1952 & 1961; Cesaire, 1955), regardless of their own customs and experiences. This understanding of the Western subject sets the groundwork for understanding Sartre's anti-colonial views, particularly through the lack of reflective consciousness in a position of imperial difference and the redefinition of the colonized under the colonial and colonizing ontology.

4.1.2 Sartre on colonialism through Marxism

Sartre's thinking and philosophy progressed in the years following *Being and Nothingness* (1943). He began to advance anti-colonial ideas that were Marxist in nature (Sartre,1964). One can observe that Sartre (1943) understood the human subject in fundamentally individualised and western terms that were of a "European, capitalist, military, Christian, patriarchal, white, heterosexual male" figure of power and privilege which Grosfoguel (2009: 19) describes. In that way, Sartre might have opposed colonialism but still remained a western and individualist thinker. This chapter reviews Sartre's collection of essays in *Colonialism and Neocolonialism* (2006*)*, particularly the essay "Colonialism is a System" (Sartre, 2006:36). The collection also includes Sartre's prefaces to Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* (1961) and Albert Memmi's *Coloniser and the Colonised* (1957), as to be reviewed herein. The collection of essays (Sartre, 1964) are mainly a Marxist critique and negation of colonialism.

Sartre's self-reflexivity (Sartre, 1957: 56-62) as a white male philosopher located in France, which was a colonising country, defines his positionality as one of power and privilege. Sartre specifically notes that "the only difference between" him and Fanon "is perhaps that he sees a situation where I see a system" (Sartre, 1957: 62). As such, Sartre himself acknowledges the difference in perspective between himself and the colonized. He understands that the coloniser holds and reinforces epistemological monopoly over the colonised. Along similar lines, Memmi (1957) suggests that the coloniser invents the colonised by defining them and shaping their lives and living conditions in their countries. Sartre's vocabulary of using "Sub-proletariat" for the colonized, shows that his Marxist angle of capitalist critique seems to be his best and only understanding of the colonial experience (Sartre, 1957: 58). As such, Sartre may have thought that the class struggle would overcome divisions between coloniser and colonised.

The introduction to Sartre's essays by Azzedine Haddour (2006) addresses some theoretical critique that Sartre has received for some of his work namely, *Black Orpheus* and *Anti-Semite and Jew*. Sartre's attempts of going beyond his own identity/positionality involved his thinking about freedom in Others. Sartre's construction of 'the Jew as both the sight as vision, and the site as location of the anti-Semite's existence' (Haddour, 2006: 11) is criticised by Kritzman (Haddour, 2006: 11) who regards it as essentialist. This was over and above Sartre having already been regarded as an authority on the Jewish experience and condition even as he was not a Jew himself. Sartre contributed to the theoretical movement of Negritude, in terms of his *Black Orpheus* (1965 (1948)) text, is his view of it as a means to an end rather than an end goal. As such, Sartre particularly noted on it as having been "dedicated to its own destruction" (Haddour, 2006: 13). Sartre is thereby critiqued for articulating an understanding of oppressed experience through Marxism, whereby he has the "tendency to reduce the colonial problematic to a class struggle" (Haddour, 2006: 13). Sartre's anti-colonial arguments attempt to delink the mastery and "collusion" of humanism, the classification of human over sub-human, with "European colonialism" (Haddour, 2006:16 & Sartre, 1961: 155). Sartre also "never implies that non-accession to history is non-accession to humanity" (Haddour, 2006: 15), in order to be distanced from Eurocentric claims on humanism. As such, Sartre's line of questioning seems to disrupt the grand narrative (Haddour, 2006: 16-17). Sartre himself notes existentialism is a humanism, the title of his 1947 lecture, thereby him questioning outside of his own positionality involves him questioning the absurdity of colonial claim on humanism. Haddour explains the context for Sartre's collection of essays, as post-World War II France. At that time, France

identified with imperial modernity and consumerism in order to recover its meaningless post-war anguish.

Sartre's (1956) essay *Colonialism is a System* details Sartre's Marxist framework for his understanding of colonialism and colonial power. Sartre begins by noting the deterioration of the colonized through their psychology, economy, and social relations (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 36-37). Sartre subsequently states that politics is too abstract and thereby not concrete to issues of survival, particularly intolerable poverty (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 37).

> Colonization (…) is a system which was put in place around the middle of the nineteenth century, began to bear fruit in about 1880, started to decline after the first world war, and is today [1956] turning against the colonizing nation' (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 37-38).

Sartre frames his understanding of colonialism along the timelines and concepts of a Marxist understanding of capitalism. As such, showing capitalism as the fuel of the colonisation of Africa as the West expanded its Empire in search of resources and cheap labour (Sartre, 2006 (1956) :39). In that way Sartre was in effect a Marxist anti-colonialist.

The reinforced and twofold capitalist colonialism allows for a monopoly to be had over the colonies (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 40). This involved the settlers and colonist acting as both the potential buyer and consumer. First world capitalism meant the sacrificing of colony's land and its resources for colonial interest, as the land is "relied upon for plunder" (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 41). Colonial control over the land thereby reduced the land to unproductiveness (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 43) thereafter, causing deterioration of resources and produce (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 44). Colonial rule superimposes a foreign code (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 42), which inherently does not universalize. This Western code does not suit the colonized indigenous culture and "could have no other effect than to destroy internal structures of Algerian society" (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 42). As such, this code may be understood as a cultural imperialism (Young, 1990), ruling to this day, having monopoly over culture, existence and knowledge (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 42). The colonisers and the colonial system divided colonised people that could now place more importance upon communication through the colonial languages (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 47). This linguistic and cultural imperialist monopoly caused the colonized a sense of internalised othering (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 48), as their own native culture and humanity had been denied to them (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 47). As such, their religion and beliefs had been confiscated (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 48) through the privileging of, and by, the colonial regime.

Colonialism is economic, political and cultural in its impacts on the colonised. As such, under capitalist liberalism, the system feeds and reinforces itself (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 42) by replacing any "collective strength" of the colonised with that of a "handful of individuals" (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 43), the colonisers. Capitalism, as the second empire, capitalism is necessarily profit-driven, thereby relying on cheap labour, reinforcing an inherent colonial drive to exploitation (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 45). As such, the increasing pauperisation entailed the fear of unemployment discouraging revolts (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 46) and ensures the power of the colonist, who created the systematic poverty. Sartre describes education as "an instrument of emancipation" (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 50), whereby the colonized peoples may revolt and be free through their use thereof. This systematic advantaging of the colonist alone (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 49) "destroys all attempts at development" (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 49) thereby accumulates debt for the colonised. In this way, colonialism can be understood to have perpetually maintained "greed itself through capitalism" (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 50) thereby solely benefiting the colonizer.

Sartre understood colonialism to enforce a state control out of reach of the colonized people, along with having asserted racism through segregation. As a Marxist, Sartre understood that "French institutions are those of a bourgeois democracy founded on liberal capitalism" (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 51). The colonial power created a nation in each colony, cut off from the natives (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 52) and being particularly segregated. Sartre acknowledged, in dialogue with Fanon on his issue of colonial madness, that the colonizers and colonial regime are embedded in a maddening power in the dehumanizing and sub-human categorization of racism and colonialism (Sartre, 2006 (1956)). Sartre acknowledges the implied racism within imperial power, by discussing the colonial power having asserted the categorization of the colonized as subhuman largely based on race (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 51-52). As such, Sartre explains colonialism as highly segregated, in the "interest of destroying Algeria for the benefit of France" (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 52). Sartre asserts that segregation could be disempowered through assimilation, which essentially dilutes cultural monopoly and power by giving power to the majority (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 52). As such "assimilation taken to its extreme meant the end of colonialism" and colonial, foreign, power (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 53), as the process of colonization requires its shattering in order for the colonized to achieve liberation (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 38). The force of the colonized in the effort to decolonize coincides with Europe's World War II fight against Nazi fascism (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 54), which Sartre takes as his

cue of aligning with anti-colonialism in saying "we can and ought to attempt to fight alongside them to deliver both the Algerians and the French from colonial tyranny" (Sartre, 2006 (1956): 54).

Sartre's (1957) essay in response to Memmi's *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (1957), both provides an understanding of the power dynamics and Western superiority complex, and reflects upon the issues around a humanist paradox within hierarchical power relations. The hierarchical power relations allow the systematization of human categorization, thus a rationalization of the treatment of others. This non- and sub-human categorization inherently justified the ill-treatment of the colonized, as they were not considered human enough to be dehumanized, by those of humanist authority in the West. The colonized, as objectified under the gaze and monopoly of the colonizer, is thereby reimagined through the "eyes and words of the colonist" (Sartre, 2006 (1957): 57-58). The colonized figure, as dehumanized and categorized as subhuman (Sartre, 1957: 58-60), cannot have a place in the world of subjects and humans as laid out by the colonizers. Colonialism ingrained the ideology of racism and sub-humanity into the colonized as "things themselves" (Sartre, 2006 (1957): 60). The colonizer perspective asserts that: "Terror and exploitation dehumanize, and the exploiter uses this dehumanization to justify further exploitation" (Sartre, 2006 (1957): 60) and "Nobody can treat a man 'like a dog' if he does not first consider him as a man" (Sartre, 1957: 61). As such, the colonial system denies the colonized of human rights (Sartre, 2006 (1957): 58) thereby forcing their continual poverty and ignorance. In this way, the extreme lengths of domination "bind the colonizers to the colonized" (Sartre, 2006 (1957): 61). This interdependent dynamic unfolds the process of the colonized dehumanizing themselves in the process of dehumanising the colonised. The process of colonialism therein entailed "natives" either being "assimilated or massacred" (Sartre, 2006 (1957): 61). In this way, the colonized must use violence, as the extreme used by the colonizers in conquest, in order to destroy and deconstruct the Euro-centric systems that dictate the categories of their being. Yet the extreme assimilation of native humans to humans would then have put an end to the regime, or destroying itself, as the colonized had to form unity against the oppressive regime (Sartre, 2006 (1957): 61).

On the other hand, while Sartre's (1961) reflection on Fanon's ideas of colonial violence provides his perspective in support of Fanon's claims, it repeats Sartre's expectation of proletariat violence in the sense of Marxist revolt against capitalism. The preface to the

Wretched of the Earth immediately highlights the issue of being over non-being (Sartre, 2001 (1961): 7), in terms of human categorization. The long-term disempowerment of the native (Sartre, 2001 (1961): 13) as religious estrangement is added to and reinforces colonial estrangement (Sartre, 2001 (1961): 17), thereby the colonized native has to alternate their own internalized inferiority. In this way "the status of 'native' is a nervous condition introduced and maintained by the settler among colonized people with their consent" (Sartre, 2001 (1961): 17). Sartre acknowledges the dehumanizing power of being in the colonial and colonizing position of indubitable power, through facing the "strip-tease of our humanism" (Sartre, 2001 (1961): 21). In this way, the colonizers, in stripping the colonized of their resources and humanity, thereby strip themselves of humanity (Sartre, 2001 (1961): 21). The colonizers are without a true claim to victimhood through their being the executioners and exploiters (Sartre, 2001 (1961): 21) through their extreme violence of colonialism. Sartre's acknowledgement of Western colonial imposition, through cultural imperialism, includes his own acknowledgement that Western culture, as superimposed, is not suited to colonized peoples (Sartre, 2006 (1961): 154). Colonial power is reinforced by the language of the master, thereby of power and the colonizer, which maintains its own "elitism" (Sartre, 2001 (1961): 22), and elitist "mumbo-jumbo" (Sartre, 2001 (1961): 25). Colonial control allowed the "European elite undertook to manufacture a native elite" (Sartre, 2001 (1961): 7), thereby creating their own legacy through this native elite, where this false bourgeoisie acted as intermediaries.

The dark demise of the colonizers in their own power, whereby through colonialism Europe is heading toward the abyss, the nothingness which they typically stray from (Sartre, 2006 (1961): 155): toward madness. Thus, Sartre's preface serves to introduce Fanon to those who need to know the effects of their power and colonial pursuits (Sartre, 2006 (1961): 156), and how they "will benefit from reading fanon" (Sartre, 2006 (1961): 165). In this effort he refers to the colonized as "our victims" (Sartre, 2006 (1961): 159). Sartre's distanced perspective seemingly is his trying to delink and thereby judge Europe (Sartre, 2001 (1961): 8-9), distancing himself from his own situation. Sartre's anti-colonial stance thereby seemingly relies on his own decentring of the European subject (Haddour, 2006: 16-17). The pattern of Sartre's awareness, of the imperial power of Europeans the West is self-proclaimed makers of the fate of others (Sartre, 2006 (1961): 159-165), persists in his Marxist revolt stance whereby "the real culture is the revolution" (Sartre, 2006 (1961): 157). As such, Sartre agrees with Fanon's stance on violence as he notes that the "'fighters' weapons are their humanity" (Sartre, 2006 (1961): 166).

In this way, violence can be seen as a means of achieving freedom, whereby "Violence, victory, freedom for next generation" which also makes that generation the offspring and legacy of violence (Sartre, 2006 (1961): 168). As such, the colonised can only rehumanise and liberate themselves through violence.

4.2 Cesaire on Colonialism and Unfreedom

Aime Cesaire was a black and African thinker, who responded to Sartre's existential philosophy of freedom. Cesaire, as a black philosopher and political activist, experienced unfreedom and colonial oppression in more vivid ways than Sartre imagined. Cesaire, for example, resigned from the French Communist Party (Cesaire, 1972), from being a Parliamentarian, because of continuing racism and coloniality, which he experienced even as he was part of the government of France. Cesaire can be understood as theoretically similar to much of Sartre's perspective, particularly in his *Discourse on Colonialism* (1955) which allows for an understanding and critique of coloniality, in historical context, and its limitations to freedom.

4.2.1 Discourse on Colonialism

Cesaire's *Discourse on Colonialism* (1955: 1) explains that historically, colonization has been presented as a "civilizing mission". This mission includes the motives and excuses of civilizing the uncivilized, conquering unknown lands, spreading the word of God, and the common good of Europe to the rest of the world. Cesaire (1955) asserts that the irony of the 'anti-savagery' mission that colonialism was presented as seemed to have actually decivilized, barbarized and brutalized the colonizer himself (Cesaire, 1955: 2). This self-barbarism is comparable to Nazism, cultivated therein as Europeans aspire to domination rather than equality (Cesaire, 1955: 2-3). As such, barbarism is the means through which the end goal of 'civilization' may be achieved, relying upon the degradation of others in the master-slave power dichotomy which superimposes imperialism, whereby the perception of barbarism is clouded with the application of universalism from the West. This mission of universalised civilization entails the West's conquering of their unknown, which existential context includes nihilism and as such conquering the nothingness, or the unknown Other, that which is different, and automatically categorized as a savage (Cesaire, 1955). The West, as a dependency parasite, is reliant on power in the exploitation and dehumanization of the colonized, and claim on their resources. This later necessitates the dependency of the colonized, plundered and powerless countries even after a

revolution and the end of the colonial era. The colonial civilizing of others and decivilizing the colonizers is based on moral relativism (Cesaire, 1955: 2), which bases morals on circumstances of power. Cesaire's assertions on colonial self-de-civilization on their civilizing mission relates to Sartre's (2001 & 2006 (1961)) and Fanon's (1961) thoughts on the colonizer falling into madness. This is particularly through the colonial instinct of violence against and upon people that represent difference and otherness, manifest in racial hatred. As barbarism is assigned to the other, the colonized, their dehumanization is thereby rationalised in the mind of the colonizer, or one in power (Cesaire, 1955). Cesaire articulates this point in saying, possibly on behalf of the colonizer,

> we aspire not to equality but to domination (…) not a question of eliminating the inequalities among men but widening them and making them into law (Cesaire, 1955).

This tendency of Western nihilistic freedom relies on the unfreedom of others, or anyone under the category of the other. As such, Cesaire asserts that colonization is a negation of civilization, thus creating a boomerang effect of the colonizer dehumanizing himself (Cesaire, 1955). Cesaire's discussion of the corruption in power, which condemns the bourgeoisie "to take responsibility for all barbarism of history" (Cesaire, 1955: 18), is based on:

> A law of progressive dehumanization in accordance with which henceforth on the agenda of the bourgeoisie there is – there can be – nothing but violence, corruption, and barbarism (Cesaire, 1955: 18).

The exploitation of the colonized Other depends upon relations of domination and submission, whereby the colonized man becomes a means of production under capitalism as exploitation (Cesaire, 1955), which aligns Cesaire's views with that of Sartre's Marxism. In this way, Cesaire's assertions may allow an understanding of colonization as a "thing-ification" (Cesaire, 1955: 6). This manifestation of Sartre's Look scenario occurs through superimposition of Western standards, knowledge and power systems, and the negation of the native and colonized ways (Cesaire, 1955). Colonialism can again be seen as having a kind of monopoly over humanism, whereby asserting colonial power objectifies and dehumanises, justifying ill treatment of others through Western self-aggrandizement (Cesaire, 1955). The Western superimposed ways emphasized capitalist individualist imperialism over community-driven society (Cesaire, 1955). The access to epistemology, or knowledge systems, in the writing of history was particularly shaped by colonization, thereby knowing no alternative (Cesaire,

1955). The legacy of colonial barbarism or self-de-civilization is manifest in the corruption and cruelty in the bourgeois and powerful people of the west, which depends upon the exploitation of others and the ignorance therein. Ignorance over reflectivity meant the West had not been living in praxis of their, 'enlightened', knowledge. In this way, the colonizer is typically in power while at a physical distance: the colonizer is the dominant but distant, in space and language and culture, figure in the power dichotomy through their refusal to acknowledge merit in "non-white races" (Cesaire, 1955: 12).

Cesaire's *Discourse on Colonialism* (1955) can also be read in terms of an understanding of African philosophy. The power dichotomy of colonizer over colonized spans further than just the control of knowledge systems and culture, to reality itself, the ontological make-up of the colonized world as determined by the colonizers (Cesaire, 1955). This colonial and Western imposition of world-defining ontological and hierarchical order had been rationalized by the civilizing and Christianizing mission, said to be a divine and godly decree (Cesaire, 1955: 14). As such, the colonized had an ontological desire for recognition from the colonial white man, in order to climb the hierarchy (Cesaire, 1955: 14-15). The colonizer's madness within self-justified power, as Cesaire quotes Mannoni, regarding colonialism being a psychological dependency complex: the colonized could not imagine colonial abandonment, and "desires neither personal autonomy nor free responsibility" and that they cannot "imagine what freedom is" (Cesaire, 1955: 15). As such, the colonized are made, wrongly, accountable for their own economic, social and general issues, and the accountability is further put onto the colonized for having idolized the colonizer (Cesaire, 1955: 15). Whereby the Western logic claims the colonized experienced "imaginary oppression":

> the famous brutalities people talk about have been very greatly exaggerated, that it is all neurotic fabrication, that the tortures were imaginary tortures applied by 'imaginary executioners' (Cesaire, 1955: 15).

The Western colonial narrative was one of having created peace and prosperity: "the persistent bourgeois attempt to reduce the most human problems to comfortable, hollow notions" (Cesaire, 1955: 16). The hierarchy established through racism, by segregation, was thought to preserve the superior race of categorized humanity (Cesaire, 1955: 16-17). As such, the colonial era involved superimposition of western standard, in which case history itself was white (Cesaire, 1955: 15); and therein Europeans used dehumanization as the method of asserting their superiority. Cesaire uses Caillois' identification of the enemy as "European intellectuals":

"the west alone knows how to think; at the borders of the Western world is the shadowy realm of primitive thinking" (Cesaire, 1955: 19), thereby reinforcing their own superiority through their own logic and rationality. This can also be seen in Cesaire's further quoting of Caillois:

> The only ethnography is white (… and) It is the West that studies the ethnography of the others, not the others who study the ethnography of the West (Cesaire, 1955: 20).

The racialization of the universal, both colonized and colonizers, ontology and access to knowledge making systems, meant the Western and white authorship of history (Cesaire, 1955: 20) and general unchecked hierarchical power. This power, and its end goal of 'civilization', had been achieved through means of Hitlerism, or tranny in order to establish the benevolent, racialised and universalised master-slave power dichotomy in order to justify exploitative dehumanization, along with the Western logic of the colonized African not being able to "imagine what freedom is" (Cesaire, 1955: 15). The systems of knowledge and understanding, having been established and reinforced by the Western colonizers, asserted the bourgeois phenomena of 'man' and 'nation' (Cesaire, 1955: 22). Cesaire poses the question:

> What else has bourgeois Europe done? It has undermined civilizations, destroyed countries, ruined nationalities, extirpated [to eradicate or destroy completely] "the root of diversity." No more dikes, no more bulwarks. The hour of the barbarian is at hand. The modern barbarian. The American hour. Violence, excess, waste, mercantilism, bluff, gregariousness, stupidity, vulgarity, disorder. (Cesaire, 1955: 23).

As such, Cesaire quotes Truman to assert that the Western leaders in the 20th century tried to disassociate themselves from their predecessors, and lend "aid to the disinherited countries, [as] the time of the old colonialism has passed" (Cesaire, 1955: 23). Cesaire also asserts that capitalist industrialization meant a mechanization of man, machines then leading to the degradation of people (Cesaire, 1955: 23). In this way, Cesaire's argument lends itself to Marxism, as he was a Marxist and member of the French Communist party, in highlighting the salvation of Europe as the proletariat:

> the salvation of Europe is not a matter of a revolution in methods. It is a matter of the Revolution – the one which, until such time as there is a classless society, will substitute for the narrow tyranny of a dehumanized bourgeoisie the preponderance of the only class that still has a universal mission, because

> it suffers in its flesh from all the wrongs of history, from all the universal wrongs: the proletariat (Cesaire, 1955: 23).

thereby following a Marxist perspective similar to that of Sartre. Cesaire's use of the Marxist perspective involves emotive and poetic language, which is typically associated with the Other, the lesser and inferior in hierarchy. Western knowledge and language systems typically refer to the Other as a They, in us vs them, but in the text Cesaire is othering and calling the colonizer and oppressor as they, them and other, as such directs blame and anger toward the colonizer and West (Cesaire, 1955). Cesaire's othered positionality of colonial and racialized difference gave him the experience, and as such the positional validity, to accuse the coloniser of barbarism and disorder, stereotypes given to the colonised. Cesaire's Othered perspective looking at the effects and dynamics of coloniality highlights the necessity to focus on the Other, thereby empower the colonized and the proletariat: particularly in pointing out the self-de-civilization of the colonizer's in their 'civilization' of, and generally having power over, the Other. Cesaire has highlighted the tendency of Western civilization to instil a system of hierarchy, allowing for lowest of the west to be high in the colonial food chain (Cesaire, 1955). These systems of hierarchy as manifest in the colonial and civilizing dynamic, and thereby Cesaire asserts the colonizer being a dependency parasite. The interdependency of colonizer and colonized, along with the contradictory colonial civilizing mission, reinforces past and present issues of coloniality.

Cesaire is generally viewed as a pioneer in African philosophy and the decolonial thinking therein, Serequeberhan, for example, discusses some of Cesaire's sentiments in *The Hermeneutics of African Philosophy* (2012). Serequeberhan notes the main issue in Cesaire's *Discourse on Colonialism* (1955) is that of the relation to the other as constitutive of European modernity and the identities therein - the presentation of the other is needed for Europe's self-presentation (Serequeberhan, 2012). Other major themes, or take-aways, thereby highlighted include European hypocrisy where barbarism is the means for establishing civilization, and that Cesaire's analysis of imperialism and colonialism is a Marxism-Leninist analysis: antagonistic economies of conquer (Serequerhan, 2012: 57).

4.2.2 Letter to Maurice Thorez

Cesaire's perspective and positionality is additionally asserted in his resignation letter from the French communist party in 1956 (Cesaire, 1956 (2010)), which is largely a critique of the

French Communist Party in terms of its systematic racism and inherent superiority complex. The general stance of the text highlights the party's mis-application of Marxism (Cesaire, 1956 (2010)). Cesaire is known for his poetic use of language, which is here understood to articulate the ghosts of injustice, the affects and effects therein, along with their literal and figurative wounds. Cesaire finds issue in the state power being over and above the working class, whereby the hope of proletariat independence is crushed from their dream of socialism to the nightmare of its reality (Cesaire, 1956 (2010)). Cesaire reflects upon this in terms of the African thinkers' common interest in political socialism, which finds issue in Stalinist applications of communism, this reflection points out the tendency of self-satisfaction over de-Stalinization (Cesaire, 1956 (2010)). As such, Cesaire highlights the importance of self-critique and reflection, a need to "take stock" (Cesaire, 1956 (2010): 147), to establish a capacity for detachment, in order to distinguish between oneself and communist party, particularly in the Western context of being stuck in an individualist society, and battling with the issues of pride therein (Cesaire, 1956 (2010)). The monopoly over humanism and the colonial civilizing mission brings into question the parameters of epistemology within colonial power having monopoly on history, truth, and acceptability. As such, contemporary discourse requires much critical engagement and awareness of subject positionality. In his alignment with the African perspective, Cesaire discusses the struggle to move discourse away from 'isms' in order to address and deal with the consequences of depending upon the bankrupt ideal of communism un-Stalinized, thereby having responsibility and accountability through conscious reflection (Cesaire, 1956 (2010)). This latter sentiment comes across as inherently existentialist and Sartrean, in asserting the taking on of responsibility through the reflective mode of consciousness.

Cesaire's critique of the French communist party, whereby it acts in isolated self-interest over the interest of population (Cesaire, 1956 (2010)), asserts a need for selflessness over self-interest in politics, as sacrifice may gain unity, strength and hope (Cesaire, 1956 (2010)). In this way, Cesaire posits that the colonial legacy on both sides is the remains and manifestations of paternalism. As such, dogmatism is instilled in the name of the communist party (Cesaire, 1956 (2010)). French communism seemed to have imposed itself upon Africa and the Caribbean (Cesaire, 1956 (2010)).

In sum, Cesaire asserts that communism and Marxism should be used in service of the people, not the people in service of an ideal of communism. As such, for the communist ideology to work it must be applied case-by-case and in context, particularized rather than universalized, whereby ideology needs to be rethought by and for us, as such the "universal is enriched by (…) the particular" (Cesaire, 1956 (2010): 152). Cesaire's larger issue in terms of freedom and power, that the universal application of communism is a kind of un-freedom which superimposes, and shifts the colonized from one oppression to another (Cesaire, 1956 (2010)). The text (Cesaire, 1956 (2010)) gives emphasis not simply to critiques and his reasons for resigning but rather his assertion that the power system is a continuation of colonialism and forcing a further problematization of race, which could be equated to Mda's letter to Mandela (Mda, 2011: 426-432). As such, Cesaire aims to empower his own positionality and particularity over the Western tendency of universals, embracing his race and constant objectification based on his race in the French context.

Serequeberhan (2012) discusses some issues as discussed and asserted in Cesaire's Letter of resignation from the French Communist Party to Maurice Thorez (1956). Thereby pointing out how Cesaire disagrees with the party's and the European left's tendency of universalising, which the colonized need to negate and overcome the negation of their Colonized lived historicity. As such asserting a necessity for the having a freedom to negate, and the need to normalise this negation, rather than mutual dependency with Europe. Serequeberhan notes Cesaire's, and the general anti-colonial view of coloniality, whereby colonizing was presented as a civilizing and Christianising mission but was actually one of economic self-advancement for Europe (Serequeberhan, 2012). Particularly on the issue of freedom Serequeberhan (2012) quotes Cesaire's (1956) letter: "The un-freedom in which Africa is presently entangled is thus directly rooted in European dominance. This is what Cesaire refers to as the "singularity of our history, [laced with] terrible misfortunes which belong to no other history" (Cesaire, 1956: 147; Serequeberhan, 2012: 63).

4.2.3 Cesaire as decolonial and in relation to Sartre

Cesaire is generally viewed as a pioneer in African philosophy and the decolonial thinking therein. Cesaire's here-reviewed works while showing his alignment with Sartrean Marxism, also highlight his assertions of particularity, and his critique of European reliance on the other for their self-proclaimed superiority in identity. As such, Cesaire removes himself from

universalizing voices and instead asserts the necessity of asserting his own voice as Other, thereby his positionality of race and within colonial dynamics provides a legitimate decolonial perspective.

4.3 Fanon and Colonial Unfreedom

Frantz Fanon is black and African thinker that responded to Sartre's existential philosophy of freedom. Fanon, as a black philosopher and political activist, experienced unfreedom and colonial oppression in more vivid ways than Sartre imagined, as the latter relied on his powers of observation, empathy and imagination. Fanon experienced racism and colonial difference, while in colonized Algeria and other resisting countries, and as such he articulated the black male experience (Fanon, 1952). He became a soldier that fought first on the side of the French army and later that of the Algerian army against French colonialism. He was a medical doctor and a psychiatrist. His experience of racism and colonialism was thus deep and multidimensional.

4.3.1 Fanon's Wretched of the Earth

Fanon's decolonial voice is most read from his final text, prior to his untimely death, *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963 [2001]). Therein Fanon's thoughts, in the first chapter concerning violence, asserts that Decolonization is as necessarily violent as colonization: whereby one "species" of men is replaced by another "species" of men, which is an absolute substitute without transition, a bottom-up change (Fanon, 1963: 27). Absolute substitution of power poses an issue: without transition is there even dismantling (Fanon, 1963: 31): as these years since decolonization, and South Africa's end of Apartheid, prove the legacies and ghosts of the oppressive past drive the systems of power and societal norm. The decolonial substitute ushers in a new language, new humanity, new man over their previous non-being of the colonized man (Fanon, 1963: 28). The issue of being and non-being is a dividing, and abyssal, line which splits the colonial world into a hierarchy of two, the institution over the native, which is asserted through violence (Fanon, 1963: 29). These zones of being over non-being instil a segregated and divided society, preventing unity of identity, knowledge or epistemology, and reality or ontology, which thereby causes violence of ambition, belonging and possession (Fanon, 1963: 30). It may be noted that anti-Western thinking is particularly against white supremacy (Fanon, 1963: 33). Fanon's chapter on colonial war and mental disorders covers the psychological issues, resulting from the issues of power and hierarchy, particularly from Fanon's

psychoanalytic perspective. In the time of resistance, decolonization and thereafter, "the war goes on" in terms of needing to recover from the psychological wounds and scars of oppression (Fanon, 1963: 200).

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> under the German occupation, the French remained men; under the French occupation, the German remained men. In Algeria there is not simply domination but the decision to the letter not to occupy anything more than the sum total of the land (Fanon, 1963: 201).

As such, Algerians and Algeria form the "natural background to the human presence of the French" (Fanon, 1963: 201), thereby forming the space for dehumanization. In this way, mental

pathologies, and psychoses, can be seen as the direct (by)product of oppression (Fanon, 1963: 201): virtually an "apocalypse" for the colonized being taken over by another way of life entirely (Fanon, 1963: 202). Fanon reflects upon how the resulting psychic wounds of colonialism were borne of black and white alike, colonizer and colonizer alike, as such a humanity of both the corrupted and compromised. Fanon later concludes his book in noting that the violence of Europe should not be idolized (Fanon, 1963: 251), regardless of the negations of man being the human condition (Fanon, 1963: 252).

The issue of freedom of the colonized for Fanon (1965; 1952; Serequeberhan, 1994; Zeller, 2019) is a complex issue that relates Negritude and its critiques, Existentialism, and Violence. The existential problem for the colonized is that of identity, whereby there is a need for reclaim of land, knowledge, autonomy and self-determination, whereby the identity of the colonized had been externally imposed through colonialism (Fanon, 1967; Zeller, 2019). The African and, more commonly, colonized identity problem is internalised and thereby establishes whiteness as the standard value and the colonized thereby measure themselves up against whiteness. Political liberation or decolonization requires both the withdrawal of the colonizer and a kind of purgative violence (Fanon, 1965; 1952; Serequeberhan, 1994; Zeller, 2019) that thereby negates the violence of colonialism in order to overcome it. The violence necessitated, as asserted by Fanon, in the process of decolonization involves: becoming human through self-liberation (Serequeberhan, 1994: 74), the shattering of proletariat chains.

The 2004 edition of *The Wretched of the Earth* (Fanon, 2004 (1963)) includes a foreword by Homi Bhabha, which gives some comparative insights into, as relevant to this study, Fanon's views on violence and freedom. Fanon's central role of violence in the political desire and struggle for freedom, while in line with some of Sartre's views, particularly as in Sartre's preface to *The Wretched of the Earth*, is at odds with Arendt's views, as she had presented in her text *On Violence* (1970). Arendt's conflict here is:

> less to do with the occurrence of violence than with Fanon's teleological belief that the whole process [of violence in revolution] would end in a new humanism, a new planetary relation to freedom defined by the Third World (Bhabha, 2004: XXXV).

This view is not entirely agreed with, in terms of the reading of Fanon's text, by Bhabha (2004: XXXV) as

> He is cautious about the celebration of spontaneous violence-"where my blood calls for the blood of the other" -because "hatred is not an agenda" capable of maintaining the unity of party organization once violent revolt breaks down into the difficult day-to-day strategy of fighting a war of independence (Bhabha, 2004: XXXV-XXXVI).

Sartre on the other hand, as Bhabha (2004: XXXVI) asserts, agrees with and thereby justifies Fanon's praise of violence, in order to:

> recover an ontological claim to humanity for those who have been treated as subhuman: "Sons of violence, at every instant they humanity from it: we were human beings at their expense, they are making themselves human beings at ours" (Bhabha 2004: XXXVI; Sartre, 2006 (1961): 168).

Sartre's claim is his critique of colonialism, enlightenment, and his support of Fanon's reconceptualization of his own theory. As such, Sartre's support of Fanon's use of violence is that it "draws the fiery, first breath of human freedom" (Bhabha 2004: XXXVI) toward rights and freedoms. Bhabha's (2004: XXXVI) own view on Fanonian violence as

> is part of a struggle for psycho-affective survival and a search for human agency in the midst of the agony of oppression. It does not offer a clear choice between life and death or slavery and freedom, because it confronts the colonial condition of life-in-death. Fanon's phenomenology of violence conceives of the colonized-body, soul, culture, community, history-in a process of "continued agony [rather] than a total disappearance (Bhabha 2004: XXXVI).

As such, the colonial condition, for the colonized, of "life-in-death" (Bhabha 2004: XXXVI) is better lived, sacrificed for, and fought against through violence in hope of freedom. Freedom here is necessarily guiltless (Bhabha 2004: XXXVII), guilt being an obstacle to freedom, as the colonizers and privileged enjoy freedom without any thought of how their freedoms is won and enjoyed at the expense of others.

Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* (Fanon, 2004 (1963)) gives some insights into, as relevant to this study, Fanon's views on violence and freedom, particularly the central role of violence in the political desire and struggle for freedom. Fanon's view of and hope for freedom is based on the basic right to be treated human, thereby have a freedom from hunger and freedom of associations (Fanon, 2004 (1963): 21-22), and the right to freedom and self-sufficiency (Fanon, 2004 (1963):37). Fanon highlights the injustice in the colonialist having enforced a system which fundamentally fights against and thereby restricts another people's freedom (Fanon,

2004 (1963): 94). This forms the aspirations of the oppressed people for independence, political freedom, and national dignity (Fanon, 2004 (1963): 112). A free and independent people should be able to work, and not be forced to work as slaves, in the sense of presupposing their "freedom, responsibility, and consciousness" (Fanon, 2004 (1963): 133). Fanon discusses possible national service as "[defending] the freedom of the nation and its civil liberties" (Fanon, 2004 (1963): 142), as "fighting for the freedom of one's people" is a necessity (Fanon, 2004 (1963): 219). Fanon's emphasis of freedom as an ideal to be strived and struggled for against a colonial order, while thereby inspiring a struggle for "future of culture" and "richness of national culture" (Fanon, 2004 (1963): 179), highly acknowledges its lived experiences and responsibilities therein of: rape and degradation (Fanon, 2004 (1963): 188), and possible psychiatric adjustment disorders, as stated in one of Fanon's case studies on the mental affects as relevant (Fanon, 2004 (1963): 206). Fanon asserts an understanding, similar to that of Sartre, of freedom based and actualized in and through responsibility: rather than the typical perception and actualization of freedom in and as irresponsible, or carefree (Fanon, 2004 (1963): 151). Fanon's acknowledgement, assertion and discussion of the relevant wider theoretical knowledge enables one to "better identify the notion of individual and social freedom" (Fanon, 2004 (1963): 228). The translator (Fanon, 2004 (1963): Philcox, 2004: 246-251) notes one's freedom to translate is bound in one's responsibility for Fanon's reputation (Fanon, 2004 (1963): Philcox, 2004: 250). In this way, Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* (2004(1963)) provides this study with an understanding of decolonial Freedom, while an ideal and a right, also conditioned by the psychological effects of its experiences including the scars, wounds and ghosts of the oppressive systems of power.

4.3.2 Fanon's: Black Skins White Masks

Fanon's psychoanalytic views of hierarchical and difference-based hierarchy are most widely read in terms of *Black Skins White Masks* (2017 (1952)) which covers the issues of freedom, and the negation thereof. Fanon aims to provide the "psychoanalytic interpretation of the black problem", which is of singular importance to highlight the lived experience of people traumatized and exploited, solely based on their being black (Fanon, 1952: 1-7). The racialised hierarchy becomes an internalized subordination to whiteness, what Fanon terms "epidermalization" (Fanon, 1952: 4), which necessitates a confrontation with one's own temporality. This confrontation is reflection, understand oneself and one's own conduct, which

is best achieved through distancing, and active dis-alienation (Fanon, 1952: 5), thereby becoming estranged from an oppressive and embodied system. In this way, true decolonization, and overcoming oppression, demands a new humanism, to initiate a humanity beyond that which the colonial order requires. Fanon's perspective, is his psychoanalytically grounded insistence on the ontological depth of the racial subject, particularly as Fanon is committed to a particular humanist universalism through detour of racial subordination and reckoning with the effects of racism at every level. In this way, Fanon asserts himself as the voice of an angry black revolution.

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4.3.3 Fanon and Unfreedom

Fanon's works have articulated and allowed an understanding of the concept of freedom as thereby limited and lived as unfreedom. Fanon's legacy includes the emphasis on the cathartic power of violence, as the necessary revolutionary decolonization (Zeller, 2019). Serequeberhan discusses some of Fanon's sentiments in *The Hermeneutics of African Philosophy* (1994), regarding issues of coloniality and the colonized African subject. In the opening pages of *Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon asserts that the colonial [and colonized] world is divided into two (Fanon, 2004 (1963): 3), which Serequeberhan (1994) refers to as "[Fanon describing] the colonial situation as it existed and still exists in Africa" (Serequeberhan, 1994: 67). The legacy therein being "neocolonialism [which] replicates colonial violence – by proxy – between Westernized and non-Westernized natives" (Serequeberhan, 1994: 67), causing a stagnant actuality (Serequeberhan, 1994: 82). As such, the native is excluded from colonial advantage

due to colonial exploitation (Serequeberhan, 1994: 67), the legacies therein encompass the globalised colonial system of hegemonic power and resistance. As the "colonizer and the colonized each constitute the Other for one another and determine themselves in terms of the Other" (Serequeberhan, 1994: 68), thereby the only mediation, in colonies, is through violence or "brute force" (Serequeberhan, 1994: 68) and self-assertion (Serequeberhan, 1994: 69). A commonality for the colonized, globally, is their shared history of defeat (Serequeberhan, 1994: 69). This necessary self-assertion and thereby self-determination, as the colonized thing has become human through self-liberation (Serequeberhan, 1994: 68), of a nation through decolonization is not simply the expelling of the colonizer (Serequeberhan, 1994: 81). In the existential sense, I understand Fanon to have conveyed freedom as a standard or value of whiteness, as embodied and asserted by the colonizer, wherein through blackness and decolonizing Africa, the concept of freedom may be redefined through, purgative and cathartic, violence for independence and liberation.

4.4 Hannah Arendt and Totalitarian Unfreedom

Hannah Arendt's text on the 'freedom to be free' (2018), published posthumously, is herein reflected upon in terms of its context in contrast with that of this study, and an understanding of freedom through totalitarianism. While Hannah Arendt wrote on the *Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951), that text is not used in this study, the term can be understood as a centralized and dictatorial system of government which requires complete subservience to the state, and:

> The total control of all aspects of life that are actually or potentially of political significance. The term was first used in the 1920s by Italian fascists for their own political goals, and later applied to Nazism and to Soviet communism. The word began to be used pejoratively [in disapproval] in the 1940s (Mautner, 2005: 621).

The context of Arendt writing about totalitarianism, and later about freedom (Arendt, 2018), was conditioned by such dictatorships and oppressive systems, which she survived. The text (Arendt, 2018) is herein read from the decolonial and Existential perspectives in order to compare and understand her possible critical engagements with the problematic systems of power globally at the time. Arendt's (2018) reflections upon freedom may be broken into: political freedom, freedom from want, the possible experience of the subject as politically free, and totalitarian unfreedom which in this study is comparable to Existential freedom.

Arendt (2018) differentiated the kinds of freedom through access and contextual priority: for example, in poverty there is a need for revolution. Arendt (2018) articulates the issue of freedom in terms of poverty, totalitarianism, and revolution: particularly as revolution, with the visibility of people in streets as revolution, fights against imperialism, annihilation, and power vacuums and for freedom (Arendt, 2018: 57). As such, revolution is a temporal and political phenomenon, always critical of the power which it is fighting, in order to revolute back to the pre-ordained and pre-establishment order (Arendt, 2018: 58). The term 'revolution' itself originated in the context of 18th century enlightenment/renaissance to restore and recover old rights and privileges (Arendt, 2018: 59), yet resulted in the opposite: privileging over others. The revolution process also complexified and transformed freedom, becoming "God's blessing restored", particularly the civil and constitutional rights and liberties (Arendt, 2018: 59). These sentiments may be related to the European universal ideal of "life, liberty, and property", whereby access to such is inherently limited and as such liberty is not the same as freedom (Arendt, 2018: 59). While "liberation is indeed a condition of freedom, freedom is not [necessarily a] result of liberation (…) it is difficult to see and say where the desire for liberation, to be free from oppression, ends, and the desire for freedom, to live a political life, begins" (Arendt, 2018: 60). This freedom is thus one of living a political life with a new form of government, being ingrained in the "constitution of a republic": thereby "equating a republican government with freedom", particularly in context of a revolution away from monarchy (Arendt, 2018: 60). Arendt asserts the necessity of revolution to remove the authority of the original body politic, it may no longer be intact. As such: "those who 'make' revolutions do not 'seize power' but rather pick it up where it lies in the streets" (Arendt, 2018: 60). In this new form of government, the republic, there is no subject and no rulers (Arendt, 2018: 60-63).

To clarify this understanding of freedom: "to be free for freedom meant first of all to be free not only from fear but also from want" (Arendt, 2018: 63), thereby this new word is comparable with miserable European worker, the proletariat, but depended on black misery to be idealised (Arendt, 2018: 63), both freedom and freedom to be free are privileges, depending on the oppression of others. In this way, the history of mankind is the history of the privileged few. Arendt specified that revolutionary liberation is necessarily the liberation from wretchedness, thereby allowing access to the freedom to be free (Arendt, 2018: 64). Arendt notes the conceptual change in the understanding and act of revolution before and after Marx whereby: before Marx revolution was the overthrow of the form of the state; and after Marx, revolution

is specified as the overthrow of the bourgeois society (Arendt, 2018: 64). Arendt specifies that freedom from want is the freedom to be free, and as such a privilege of the few (Arendt, 2018: 64). Yet Arendt's understanding of liberation, from poverty, creates a "new notion of freedom (…) changed both the course and goal of revolution" (Arendt, 2018: 65): which then establishes the goal of revolution to be the happiness of the majority of people (Arendt, 2018: 65). As such, "the conquest of poverty is a prerequisite for the foundation of freedom, but also that liberation from poverty cannot be dealt with in the same way as liberation from political oppression" (Arendt, 2018: 66).

As the goal of revolution is freedom from poverty, the goal of freedom may thus be understood as "the abolition of personal rule and of the admission of all to the public realm and participation in the administration of public affairs common to all" (Arendt, 2018: 66-67). This goal, and idealistic view, of freedom turns into a privileging freedom through a goal of emancipating

> mankind from the necessities of life, the achievement of which required violence, the means of forcing the many to bear the burdens of the few so that at least some could be free (Arendt, 2018: 67).

In this way, "idea of freedom and the actual experience of making a new beginning in the historical continuum should coincide" (Arendt, 2018: 67): thereby revolution can be understood as an eruption of new beginnings, of the body politic, with "the temporal and historical continuum" (Arendt, 2018: 68) as revolution creates the space for freedom. The human "capacity for acting and speaking (…) makes us political beings" (Arendt, 2018: 68), and acting inherently sets something new into motion (Arendt, 2018: 68), a kind of beginning. As such, the "meaning of revolution is the actualization of one of the greatest and most elementary human potentialities, the unequalled experience of being free to make a new beginning" (Arendt, 2018: 68). Arendt noted that a failed revolution causes the weakening of its country though power vacuum (Arendt, 2018: 68-69), which emphasizes the importance of political freedom (Arendt, 2018: 69). Political freedom is then further specified as the

> freedom to participate in public affairs, freedom of action—all other freedoms, political as well as civil liberties, are in jeopardy when revolutions fail (Arendt, 2018: 69).

Political freedom is thus the ultimate goal of a successful revolution, for which hope is necessary, yet revolutions are the necessary consequence of a disintegrating regime (Arendt, 2018: 69), necessitating a new form of power.

It is necessary to note that Arendt (2018) bases any understanding of the concept and experience of freedom as conditioned by one's access to freedom, in terms of one's limits and potentials. The majority of the South African population, for example, suffer in poverty, as such they struggle for a freedom from such poverty: negative freedom. In order to clarify the difference between positive freedom and negative freedom, I turn to Isaiah Berlin's concepts of liberty negative and positive respectively (Berlin, 1969 & Carter, 2019). Negative freedom/liberty is the absence of obstacles or interference, whereas positive freedom/liberty is the presence of control, self-mastery, self-determination or self-realization (Carter, 2019 & Berlin, 1969). As such, this study takes negative freedom to mean freedom from oppression, poverty, issues of survival and external meaning. And positive freedom may be understood as the freedom to, an open-ended self-control; and for Arendt (2016) this is the freedom to be free. The minority, in South Africa and globally, have access to political freedom – the freedom to be free – and thereby have access to the conceptual and theoretical depth of existentialism and existential freedom, as is limited in access to these privileged. Those that struggle for the freedom from also struggle with: the anguish of survival, the anguish of limited freedoms and responsibility for oneself in an oppressive context. On the other hand, those of privilege may both contemplate existential issues and experience more than its over-bearing anguish: thereby having the freedom of radical Sartrean freedom. As such, Arendt's (2018) articulations of freedom are in a kind of hierarchy, whereby the freedom to be free is a polarized privilege over the more common experience of unfreedom: poverty, injustice, struggling toward freedom from their limits, freedom from want, access to basic material necessities, as foundation for all freedoms. This basic foundation of freedom from want is superseded and overshadowed by political freedom: privileged and ontological, a control of one's own reality, beyond freedom to be free, self-actualization, and as such a relational freedom. In this way, in order to actualize any conceptual sense of Existential Sartrean freedom, one must have access to both of Arendt (2018) freedoms: thereby allowing a subject's realization of one's potential to express themselves in the world, in terms of representation, public associations, and thereby self-determination.

4.5 Decolonial Freedom

As most of Fanon's, Cesaire's, and Arendt's views on freedom have been engaged with in the above review of their respective literature, any further ideas around freedom may briefly be

drawn from decolonial theory and relevant theories relating to critical diversity. This theory herein draws from the philosophies of liberation, decoloniality and decolonization, which may be explored through Dussel (1985), Mignolo (2002; and Walsh, 2018), and Memmi (1957). This decolonial realm of thinking involves a kind of decolonization of discourse, critiquing coloniality, imperialism, globalism and racism; and addressing the experiences of those in the periphery (Latin America and Africa) in terms of alienation, otherness, and exploitation (Mendieta, 2016). The necessary decolonization of discourse, particularly involves epistemological practice and knowledge production which may be read in the works of Kilomba (2013), and Mothoagae (2014), and will be used in the arguments of the following chapter. The issue of freedom may be emphasized in terms of the positive-negative dichotomy of freedom-to and freedom-from, as largely explored by Arendt, the latter being thought of as the issue of liberation or independence. The notable idea (for me) behind philosophy of decolonization and liberation is that of the superimposed dichotomy and othering of the colonized as a subaltern (Kilomba, 2013; Mothoagae, 2014), which highlights liberation in the social and collective sense rather that (positive) freedom in the individual sense. Memmi (*The Colonizer, and the Colonized*, 1957), discussed primarily along Sartre's (2006 (1957)) reflections thereof, is known as a philosopher of decolonization. As his text (Memmi, 1957) problematized and dissected the colonized-colonizer dichotomy, the issue of colonialism is argued as a denial of humanity to both the colonized and the colonizer (Chapal, 2004; Cesaire, 1955; Fanon, 2004 (1963)). In terms of a possible argument for the discarding of European discourse, based on its epistemological claim on superiority, Fanon's acknowledgement, assertion and discussion of the relevant wider theoretical knowledge enables one to "better identify the notion of individual and social freedom" (Fanon, 2004 (1963): 228). As such knowledge may be gained, critically engaged with and thereafter disengagement, in order for there to be non-reliance or any sense of, as Fanon would phrase, epidermalization (Fanon, 2017 [1952]: 4). Along these lines of thinking, the next chapter will show how Mda (2011) takes issue with the idea of freedom: particularly after the South African Apartheid liberation struggle, in terms of the post-liberation context entailing the continuation, regulation and thereby invisibilization of such hegemonic systems of domination.

Memmi is known as a philosopher of decolonization. As his text (Memmi, 1957) problematized and dissected the colonized-colonizer dichotomy, the issue of colonialism is argued as a denial of humanity to both the colonized and the colonizer (Chapal, 2004; Cesaire, 1955; Fanon, 2004

(1963)). In terms of a possible argument for the discarding of European discourse, based on its epistemological claim on superiority, Fanon's acknowledgement, assertion and discussion of the relevant wider theoretical knowledge enables one to "better identify the notion of individual and social freedom" (Fanon, 2004 (1963): 228). As such knowledge may be gained, critically engaged with and thereafter disengagement, in order for there to be non-reliance or any sense of, as Fanon would phrase, epidermalization (Fanon, 2017 [1952]: 4).

4.6 Similar Studies as mine

The scope of literature must necessarily include similar studies, as I have found. This includes: one (Kivuna, 2019) on decoloniality in the African context, which aided in the theoretical framework chapter; another (Wardle, 2017) on existentialism and meaning, which helped lay foundation for understand Sartre; and one (Msimanga, 2010) entitled the 'Trauma of Freedom in the South African Context', which aids in my discussion chapter's particularizing of Existential Freedom within the South African context. Sartre's seemingly contradictory views lead to an unfortunately conflicting and uncertain understanding of freedom under such context. As such, a resolution of sorts leans on a similar study which terms freedom in South Africa traumatic: entitled 'the trauma of freedom' (Msimanga, 2010), which acknowledges the conflicting arguments on freedom in discourse and society. Msimanga (2010) notes how existential anguish is experienced in one's awareness of freedom and need for its realization in context. Sartre's existential anguish is furthered by the distress of facticity, which requires one to accept freedoms and meanings according to context and individually having the existential freedom to do and make something thereof. As such, it seems to all be a matter of choices within one's control, as SW notes "I can choose to be overwhelmed by the trauma of my freedom or the freedom of my trauma or find hope in the simultaneity of the two" (Msimanga, 2010), concurring with Sartre. Msimanga's (2010) study is in agreement with my original hypotheses and thinking of the early development stages of this study, thereby not providing engagement with poverty as an obstacle more than in the Sartrean sense of accepting the meanings and limits of one's context, facticity and situatedness. None of the similar studies that I've found deal with freedom and Existentialism from a decolonial perspective within a South African context, and as such I am filling the gap, at least attempting to, of interdisciplinary and contextualised existentialism.

1 Julius (Kivuna, 2019) decoloniality: Doctoral research proposal, using decoloniality in African application, not necessarily considering the philosophical theories: this held helped to see that contemporary academic studies, particularly in the social sciences, are very context-driven and analytical.

2 Darryl (Wardle, 2017) investigating the meaning of life: problematic field of white-western dominated South African philosophy, where the (white) philosophers created in the university space do not necessarily consider that space: South Africa. While Darryl's MA thesis is informative on the context of the rise of existentialism, and theories relating to the meaning of life, and the content therein the whiteness bubble is problematically a Westernised one…

3 Trauma of freedom in South African context: helps in seeing the application of Sartrean existentialism to the South African context, still leaving gaps in not considering decoloniality or poverty or unfreedom, rather termed as trauma in this case. (Msimanga, 2010).

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter's review of literature in regard to freedom and the experience thereof in coloniality have provided insights into, and perspectives on, freedom and unfreedom. First, Sartre's existential theory established an understanding of the Western subject. Sartre thereafter contextualised and discussed this Subject in terms of colonial relations, hierarchies and the problematics therein whereby he laid out colonialism as a system, and his call for the West to engage with Fanon's (1963) *Wretched of the Earth*. Cesaire's Discourse on Colonialism (1955) and 'Letter to Maurice Thorez' (1956) offer similarly Marxist views, to that of Sartre, on coloniality and racism as they effect the experience and accessibility of freedom. Fanon's *Black Skins White Masks* (1952) and *Wretched of the Earth* (1963) offer insight into unfreedom, as manifest in the lived experience of the colonized, and their post-colonial wounds. Thereafter Arendt's (2018) totalitarian hierarchy of freedom covers the inaccessibility and privilege of 'political freedom' over the common experience and necessity for freedom from want. Finally, and briefly the intended decolonial and diversity theories, as to be used in argument in the next chapter, were briefly presented in perspective and sentiment. As such, this study intends to subsequently cover and establish contextualised decolonial arguments with the use of the reviewed literature, the South African racialized context, and decolonial theory.

Chapter Five

Discussion: The Existential Void and the Limits of Sartre's Radical Freedom

5. Introduction

The present chapter engages in the discussion and interpretive part of this study. As such, the aim of this discussion chapter is to use Zakes Mda's (2011) narrative in *Sometimes there is a Void* to expose the Limits of Sartre's existential Freedom. Zakes Mda (2011) narrates how the end of apartheid in 1994 did not deliver freedom but another kind of unfreedom: Social inequalities, corruption, racism, crime, political and existential disillusionment. While Sartre's freedom seems accessible only through universalized privilege, the concept may be explored as an ideal. The possibility of Sartre's existential freedom is critically engaged in terms of Sartre's intentions, defences, and his becoming aware of common unfreedoms within his lifetime. Sartre's concept of freedom may be posed as idealist within the confines of collectively unfree contexts. As freedom seems dominated by collective unfreedoms in the South Africa context, the realities thereof may be unmasked as framed by the colonial matrix of power (Mignolo, 2008) thereby conditioned by poverty and the inaccessibility of hierarchical freedom therein (Arendt, 2018). As such, possibilities of freedom, even as an ideal, may be explored from the decolonial perspective in order to address the research questions of this study.

It is necessary to evaluate the human condition within the post-apartheid South African context, whereby the universalized positionality of the western subject is most pertinent, relevant and problematic. South Africa in particular is sometimes seen as "the 'little Europe' of Africa and the last outpost of empire in Africa" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015: 22). This is because of the country's history of oppression, entailing multiple phases of Western and Eurocentric domination. As this study is not aimed at pondering what this country may have been without Western intervention, this study acknowledges the complexities of this country's history and is rather focusing on the continuing sense of Western and Eurocentric domination in terms of the South African human condition.

The limits of existential freedom may be broken down through post-apartheid unfreedoms, as experienced and observed by Zakes Mda (2011). The expectations for the fall of the apartheid regime may have included social equality, freedom for all, and a non-racial society, which are based on the promises made by the first democratically elected government of the ANC in 1994. As discussed in the theoretical framework chapter of this study, Thabo Mbeki noted these unmet

expectations and largely unchanged social structures in 1998. The change in power seems ceremonial, as with the colonial power matrix and its control of authority, which may be understood as coloniality having continuing control post-colonialism and post-apartheid. The South African post-apartheid context is conditioned by the presence and persistence of un-freedom, after the official and administrative end to both the regime of colonialism and that of apartheid. As such, Mda's exposure of post-apartheid unfreedom includes: continuing coloniality in social power, racism, social inequalities, the patronage system, and thereby a feeling of political and existential disillusionment. The South African context entails complex social power relations since, and prior to, the fall of apartheid. As such, racism is the most common oppression to occur systematically, in the past, and now less explicit but still present in the country's social, political and economic issues. Looking at otherness and the unfreedom in the South African context, discursively, requires the below exploration of racism (Grosfoguel, 2016) as dehumanization, through racial (Mills, 1997) and ignorance (Steyn, 2012) contracts within social relations, and the remaining possible unfreedom as per the existing and consulted literature. This chapter will critically engage with the issues pointed out by Mda, the possibility of existential realization in this context, the challenges to 'freedom to be free' and the decolonial view on freedom.

5.1 The Void as a State of Unfreedom in Post-apartheid South Africa

The biography of Zakes Mda, *Sometimes there is a Void* (2011), acts as this study's reference point for the experiences around unfreedom in the South African context. This biography of Zakes Mda (2011) serves as a subjective account of oppression, in its various faces, along with the contextual need for freedom from racism, oppression, coloniality, disillusionment and unhappiness for the oppressed, disadvantaged, and poverty-stricken in the post-apartheid era. The commentary of focus in this study, in the questioning of freedom in post-apartheid experiences South Africa, is most notable in Mda's 1997 letter to Mandela (Mda, 2011: 424-432). Prior to which he explains his impatience with, and expresses his views of, the patronage system, in the government, having "extended to the corporate world which had become a big network of crony capitalism" (Mda, 2011: 424). Mda's remarks in the pages thereafter highlight the continuing social and racial inequalities, whereby the dream of post-apartheid freedom has become a nightmare. While the sentiments may come across quite critical, he shows hope and optimism for South Africa's future. Other than the letter and surrounding remarks, Mda's

biography follows his life story, and his reflection thereupon years later, in order to gain the multi-fold understanding of his life, political influences, his take on the contextual issues of oppression and unfreedom, his seeming authority on his own biography, the varying influences on his literature, and the existential undertones of absurdism entailing facing up to meaninglessness without hope of meaning.

5.1.1 Racism, coloniality, and continuing oppression in the South African context

The South African context of continuing unfreedom in the years since the fall of colonialism and apartheid, is largely grounded in its history of racism. Through Critical Diversity Literacy, decoloniality and diversity discourses, this study is grounded in an understanding of present oppressions being legacies, scars, and ghosts of past oppressions having present manifestations. The transition from South Africa's past of racial injustice, and its inherent tendency of dehumanization, held the high expectation of freedom and equality for all. This expectation may have needed a 'reality check', particularly in light of the decolonial reflections of coloniality continuing and implicit rule after the end of the colonial administration.

The context of oppression and unfreedom in South Africa, is presented to give the background to Mda's candour, outspokenness, and general authority in literature and political commentary. Mda, as a young South African, was very aware of cultural and racial differences of power. Mda's awareness of systematic and dogmatic propaganda includes his quoting a black teacher, who in assembly called freedom fighters 'stupid' and asserting, in a kind of internalized inferiority, that black people are not even capable of wisdom in their own right.

This display of internalized racial inferiority by Mda's teacher shows the effects of Euro-, Western- and white-centric humanism and discourse, as had been drilled into the colonized and racially-dominated population. The reality, as noted by Mda, of race and racism in post-apartheid South African is much closer to the experiences of the systematized regime, where the measures toward post-apartheid non-racialism include affirmative action and Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment. These measures of affirmative action coincide with a rise in corruption and patronage in a multi-cultural but unequal society. As such, Mda's letter and general experiences and observations across the biography are aimed at exposing these ironies of ideals and reality. This is particularly in context of the political patronage system of freedom fighters being compensated, "rewarding comrades for past services" (Mda, 2011: 426), rather

than actually delivering freedom. Mda does this with the intention of getting the government back on track, with the interests of the ordinary South African in mind.

Mda's own exile began at age fifteen: running from the Apartheid regime (Mda, 2011: 64-65). The Mda family were self-exiled to protect AP Mda, who had been a founder of the ANC youth league and a founding spirit of the PAC. Mda's letter to Mandela (2011: 431) mentions Mda's own exile in order to resonate with many political exiles, and give contrast to his experience in post-apartheid South African as lucrative. His reflection upon this exile is in terms of how his family had found their home in it, as visiting his mother in Mafeteng: for whom "exile had become home" (Mda, 2011: 72). Having had exile normalized, and systemically ingrained, into her life rather than experiencing any possible degree of South Africa's post-apartheid liberation. Mda also describes his mother as being confined to a wheelchair (Mda, 2011: 73 & 503), after having been a nurse earlier in her life, which could be translated as her own kind of disabled unfreedom. In terms of Mda's life of exile, he lived a large part of his life in Lesotho before pursuing further education in the U.S.

Mda's authority on literature and theatre involves his theatre transformation workshops, in which he exposes his students to their own histories and differences:

> At first my students, who were mostly white and had never been in a black township before, were apprehensive about venturing into a foreign world that conjured only images of crime in their collective imagination (Mda, 2011: 420).

This collective imagination encompasses stereotypes and prejudices based on race and difference, as reproduced and reinforced historically through dominating discourses and power relations. It is important to clarify, in the context of decoloniality and diversity discourse, the understanding of race as taken by this study is that of Grosfoguel (2016). Racialization occurs through the marking of bodies. Some bodies are racialized as superior and other bodies are racialized as inferior. Racism is discussed by Grosfoguel (2016: 9-15) as a

> dehumanization related to the materiality of domination used by the world-system in the zone of non-being (violence and dispossession) as opposed to the materiality of domination in the zone of being (regulation and emancipation) (Grosfoguel, 2016: 9; abstract).

Racism is furthermore a hierarchy of superiority over inferiority along the line of the human, whereby those considered "inferior" and below the line of the human can be defined and marked

along religious, ethnic, cultural or colour lines: for example, in Ireland the religious marker of difference is between catholic and protestant. This discriminatory classification along the line of being further regulates status and access to humanity. As such, Grosfoguel's defining of racism, distinguishing along a line of being and non-being, relates to de Sousa's idea of the abyssal line and Fanon's problem of the zone of non-being (Grosfoguel, 2016):

> For de Sousa Santos, both zones are constitutive of each other and form part of the project of colonial modernity. On the other hand, for Fanon, the dialectic of mutual recognition of the "I" and the "Other" that exists in the zone of being collapses in the zone of non-being where there is no recognition of the humanity of the other. (Grosfoguel, 2016:14)

Particularly as this line is perpetuated through the "capitalist/patriarchal Western-centric/Christian-centric modern/colonial world-system" (Grosfoguel 2011)". This hierarchy of being then justifies acts of being over non-being of "violence, rape and appropriation [are permitted] that would otherwise be unacceptable in the zone of being" (Grosfoguel, 2016:14). This definition by Grosfoguel aids in conceptualizing racism and the rationale therein relating to power regimes such as colonialism and apartheid. While the oppressive regimes have fallen, they continue through legacies, scars, ghostly haunting (Gordon, 2008), and social contracts of ignorance. These legacies are not as fundamentally oppressive, as apartheid enforcing racism through law, but they carry oppressive unfreedom. As such, racism, conceptually and through the observations of Mda, as ingrained in South Africa's history, is fundamental to power dynamics in South Africa. During apartheid, this dynamic was the minority of whites being privileged over the majority of black Africans, or non-whites, which involved many restrictions within the oppressive regime. Post-apartheid South Africa, on the other hand, had to involve power being shared, and through democracy given to the black majority. Mda points out this handing over of power, while no longer explicitly racist or oppressive, did not undo the fears and stereotypes which the apartheid government enforced through affective economies of fear (Ahmed, 2004) toward the Other. The internalized racialized inferiority, which Mda's childhood teacher exhibited, problematically allows for the correlation of race and corruption to have been made, in the post-apartheid government of corruption and patronage. The issues around social inequalities are next to be discussed in terms of a continuation of unfreedom.

5.1.2 Social inequalities

As in Mda's letter, general experiences and observations across his biography are aimed at exposing the irony of idealising, and thereby expecting, liberation, freedom and social equality, to be the result of the fall of apartheid. Social inequality is related to hierarchies of power within society, which encompass class, race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, language and differences. In the South African context inequality is largely based on economic status and spatiality. In the case of rural spaces, these are largely dominated by cultures and economic need, such as mining or agriculture. Mda's experiences of the dynamics of different spaces, cultures and economic experiences, gave him insight and understanding of social inequalities in terms of perceptions, understandings, and observations which frame such social dynamics. The power dynamics of Mda's privileged positionality, as noted in the second chapter, involves his own investment in and upliftment of the community within his ancestral lands in the Bee-farming project. This entails Mda's own understanding of the privileged position which he occupies as an international public figure, reaping the economic benefits thereof, and his having had travel experience and exposure to various social and political spaces gives him the advantage of seeing perspectives beyond his own, broadened horizons of understanding and empathy. In this way, one may observe the power hierarchy of exposure to certain political groups and views over those without such experience. This exposure to, experience of, and subject positionality thereby positions one within social dynamics of inequality. While Mda's positionality allows him to observe social inequalities based on race, economic status, political inclusion, such a positionality also involves his own ignorance of his power over the narrative, the bias therein, particularly in regard to the events surrounding his relationship with his second wife. As such, this study notes Mda's experience of othered positions within/out power in the instances of: his childhood disrespect of others in poverty, his observation of students in a workshop being scared of going into disadvantaged communities, and the account he gives in his letter to Mandela highlighting the ironies of ideals and reality.

Mda's biography (2011) also asserts a certain authority through which the narrative allows the reader to follow from his single perspective. This authority may be helpful in seeing his particular views in literature and his varying influences therein. As such, Mda refutes the narratives of historical record dominated by certain political figures, namely Nelson Mandela, having seemingly invisibilized the narratives and struggles of ordinary South Africans (Mda,

2011: 426-432) in order to centralize the ANC. This is not to say that Mda is an ordinary South African, or that he claims to be. Rather Mda is highlighting an ignorance of lesser experiences, that of the ordinary South African, which shows the living legacy of Apartheid in coloniality as the durability of unfreedom in the time of independence (Mda, 2011: 426). Mda's (2011: 426-432) letter to Mandela, who was President of South Africa at the time, highlights a common fear and recognition of the ANC and, by implication, the South African government having become open to nepotism and corruption. The freedom that may be understood and related here is deeper than a political liberation, as his understandings thereof may have been influenced by Fanon and his father's politics.

Mda was highly aware of and influenced by the political context in his time of growing up during apartheid. As such, the narrative of political influences as a context of Mda's life both situates him, as a figure, and his biography as the primary account of experience, additionally giving understanding of an experience of apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa. Mda's (2011) recounts of his own interactions with and influences from experience with others, particularly the well-known figures: A.P. Mda, his father, and Nelson Mandela, whereby this relationship is largely the latter consulting the former on politics, and Mandela being the lawyer for A.P. Mda. As a child, young Mda looked up to Mandela (Mda, 2011: 18). Mda specifically recounts an experience of being in the car with Mandela, being scorned for looking down on, particularly laughing at, the material property of others:

> 'You laugh at that man's car, yet you don't even have one like that' (…) I had not known that Mandela could be that firm (Mda, 2011: 20).

This instance shocked Mda, particularly into his own active respect of others. One may note Mda's experience and understanding of freedom as one without consequences, rather than Existential Freedom as entangled in its own responsibility and the anguish therein.

It is also important to note the hierarchy, and inequality, created by Mda himself as the authority in his biography. While authorship is discussed by Sartre (1943: 574) in terms of taking up responsibility for oneself and one's context, here Mda is the author of his own life story, able to control the narrative according to his own perspective, which is backed up by his literary authority. The narrative of the biography comes across as a dialogue of himself as presently writing and reflecting on, and having grown from, his experiences in youth and up to the time of writing. As such, the chronological timeline is broken up by his writing experiences, recent

events, and accounts of his journeys to the bee-farming community and visiting his family, with his third wife. Mda's retrospective narrative, in recounting his life and childhood, emphasizes the political nature of a South African existence. As such, the South African existence is highly conditioned by its historical oppressions, which may entail more unfreedom than freedom. As such, the post-apartheid South African human condition is not existentially free. The freedom which Sartre described, as existential and necessarily one of self-determination, is thereby unfulfilled to that of the South African post-apartheid freedom. In this way, the unfreedom present, and in conflict with existential freedom, in the South African context may be understood as conditioned by systemic social inequalities. While such systemic inequalities were dominated by race and thereby transformed in the post-apartheid transition, there continue to be colonial and apartheid legacies which challenge social equality.

Mda's behaviour in youth comes across as highly involved in whatever experiences he could, which evolves into his own intersubjective dialogue as he became an acclaimed writer and figure in developmental theatre. Mda observed, in one of his theatre-transformation workshops, his students' exposure to their own histories and differences, which has been previously quoted, in exposing stereotypes within their collective imagination (Mda, 2011: 420). This instance is an example of an affective economy of fear (Ahmed, 2004), as emotions are used as a social tool of control on the basis of difference. This is based on race, space, economic difference, thereby highlighting the social power dynamics as ingrained on a systematic level. Such power dynamics, and their affective economies, had been enforced and reproduced in South African history, particularly as coloniality is key in such current dynamics. It is important to note the role of social inequalities in the South African experience of unfreedom as the intersectional and layered experiences of oppression and disadvantage are more common in the context of South African history. The present South African coloniality is entangled in its globalised and Western relations as much as it is in the country's history, which condition the present social hierarchies. The unfreedom herein is fundamental to the intersectional historical oppressions and dynamics within the majority of the South African population, as such freedom is as much a social and community issue as it is an individual one; as the majority of South Africans don't consider individualism unless within certain privileged positionalities. In this way, Mda's observations on the reality of social inequalities in his letter to Mandela highlights the common unfreedom over idealised Existential freedom.

Mda's accounts of social inequality, as unfreedom and the power dynamics therein, are most notable in his letter to Mandela. While the specifics of political corruption and disillusionment are observations of unfreedom by Mda, it is first important to consider the social inequality created within such political reality over the idealised expectations. Mda's letter notes the South African post-apartheid presence of corruption and reality not meeting idealistic expectations. The social inequalities Mda highlights in his letter concern corruption, particularly crony patronage thereby privileging those with the relevant ANC credentials and access over others with suitable expertise or a different perspective. The letter sets its subject outright:

> to voice my concerns about the corruption, nepotism, and cronyism that have found their way into the South African civil service and parastatals. Accompanied by a burgeoning patronage system and the greed that has taken over our lives, these threaten to destroy our wonderful country that you and your comrades have created for us all. They threaten the great gains that the ANC government have achieved (Mda, 2011: 426).

As such, Mda unmasks the common fear within the country that the corruption has created unjust privilege. The inequality here is a hierarchy of freedom based on the unfreedom of others, whereby the 'free' are reaping gains through access to public funds and thereby kleptocracy. While this hierarchy of freedom relates to that of Arendt, it is neither true to Sartre's freedom or to Mandela's principles: "To be free is not merely to cast off one's chains but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others" (Mandela, 1995: pp. 616–617). Mda thereby unmasks this with the aim of challenging and changing the early tendency of the ANC in government toward corruption. While the contents of the letter (Mda, 2011: 426-432) are quite argumentative, seemingly painting the vivid reality that is the unfreedom of South Africa, the results of which Mda reflects (Mda, 2011: 432-434) upon did not necessarily meet his aims. The monopolisation of the state and its resources by the post-apartheid government is best framed through maintaining controls of the colonial matrix of power, thereby asserting its own native colonialism and internal apartheid in order to hoard freedom at the expense of the unfreedom of the population. The above quote of Mandela aligns with the Sartrean Existential Freedom at question in this study. It may problematically only be a principle to strive to achieve, rather than realistically be systematically enforced. Mda thereby highlights the reality not meeting such a principle in his letter to Mandela (Mda, 2011: 426-432).

It is possible to parallel the South African history of racial oppression with the genocidal oppression of the holocaust as perpetuated by Nazi Germany. While such a parallel may deem

me ignorant and privileged in comparing a western country to a colonized African country, it is one of the few existing comparisons based on crimes against humanity, and the possibilities of reconciliation thereafter. While South Africa had the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which this study classified under the colonial matrix of power's control of knowledge and subjectivity, the German post-World War Two reconciliation had greater costs and as such greater systematized measure to avoid the repeating of such events. Germany's measures of reconciliation, nation building and growth, are noted in a 1998 speech made by Mbeki:

> Unlike the German people, we have not made the extra effort to generate the material resources we have to invest to change the condition of the black poor more rapidly than is possible if we depend solely on severely limited public funds, whose volume is governed by the need to maintain certain macro-economic balances, and the impact of a growing economy (Mbeki, 1998).

The inherent controls of knowledge and understanding, within post-apartheid society, are part of the colonial and apartheid legacies.

Mda highlights the continuing legacies of apartheid and coloniality, with the inherent controls of knowledge and understanding, in his letter to Mandela (Mda, 2011: 426-432). This reality check comes after having reflected upon Mandela's ideals for equality and a non-racial South African society. This may also be compared to Mbeki's comments on the fundamentally divided society of South Africa, as referenced in the decolonial theoretical framework chapter's rationale. It is important to note that while Mandela and Mda provide ideals of freedom in the South African context, these ideals are based on equality over hierarchy. Mandela's closing statement of his 1964 Rivonia trial may emphasise this ideal of equal achievement of freedom in his fighting against racialised domination (Mandela, 1964; Evans, 2017: 77):

> During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die. (Mandela, 1964; Evans, 2017: 77).

While such a statement may seem anecdotal in the context of an argument on the reality of unfreedom over the ideal of existential freedom, it is important to state such South African social and political ideals. These ideals hoped to overcome the apartheid-enforced social inequalities based on racism and manifested in socio-economic hierarchy. While apartheid

created, enforced, and reproduced social inequalities, post-apartheid could not necessarily undo or deconstruct such inequalities and reconstruct a society anew. As the primary racism was dealt with in the changing of power in the birth of democracy in 1994, the continuing legacies of apartheid are largely encompassed through social inequalities. These social divisions present as special, cultural, economic, and classist hierarchies. The social inequalities discussed above provide obstacles and thereby limits to existential freedom in the South African context, which Mda observed.

5.1.3 State power patronage system

Political patronage systems and associated corruption and patronage systems has thus far been emphasised as characteristic of the democratic South African experience and account of unfreedom. The study now turns to specify such in terms of Mda's accounts and to conceptually unpack corruption in opposition with the freedom of the political existence of a subject. A kind of ignorance contract is enforced in post-apartheid South Africa, wherein ignorance is a choice either where the 'amnesia' of injustice (Mills, 1997; Steyn, 2012) occurs for whites or ignorance by the blacks/oppressed in order to avoid resistance and use the oppressive systems in their favour (Steyn, 2012). This corruption involves the possession of demonstrable wealth (Posel, 2010) as both a show of power, living out the 'ideal' of freedom, and of aspirational ignorance (Steyn, 2012). As such, the post-apartheid and post-colonial 'freedom' has come to be tainted by issues of corruption, selfishness, and capitalist individualism based on Western influence.

Mda's own reflection upon the narrative of apartheid shows his own awareness of anti-communist, Western-driven, propaganda in noting "Anyone who fought against apartheid was regarded as a communist" (Mda, 2011: 17), thereby under the threat of an anti-communist ban. This apartheid ANC communism threat arose after A.P. left the party, Mda particularly notes his father's view of the miss-steps of the ANC as its falling "under the influence of the Communist Party of South Africa, and by extension the Soviet Union" (Mda, 2011: 39-40), which "he called anti-revolutionary" (Mda, 2011: 39-40). In the same few pages, Mda reflects upon his father's political lectures in "family meetings" (Mda, 2011: 38): looking back in regret for not being more attentive. These meetings would include discussing politics and the liberation struggle: "I saw myself as one of those soldiers, I would one day go out to fight for freedom" (38), particularly holding the PAC's Robert Sobukwe in high regard (Mda, 2011: 38).

It is necessary to clarify the political context to corruption and the concepts around corruption creating a reality of South African experience of unfreedom. Corruption in the post-apartheid South African government may be understood as rooted in the inherited bureaucracy and political culture. This included the apartheid-era government corruption based on the apartheid ideology of preferential treatment toward Afrikaners. On the other hand, prior to being a part of the post-apartheid democratically-elected government, the ANC relied upon foreign funding in their anti-apartheid efforts. The latter's funding was not officially recorded, thereby developing the habit of the ANC being beyond financial accountability. In both cases, the corruption related to benefiting those in inner circles. It may be necessary to note that liberatory freedom in the expected fall of the apartheid regime already did not include existential responsibility, it seems unencumbered and unaccountable. The South African cases of political corruption in the years since the fall of apartheid have been reinforced and reproduced by societal ignorance, allowing the continuation of legacies of oppression and injustice. Mda (2011: 424) asserts the government to be corrupt in the service of themselves, cronies, and the ANC party, which may be termed cronyism: referring to partiality in awarding jobs and other advantages, similar to nepotism. A form of corruption which is highly relevant to the South African government is kleptocracy, referring to a government whose corrupt leaders use political power to appropriate the wealth of their nations, which includes embezzlement and the misappropriation of public funds.

The key to understanding corruption is bias: having preference and showing that through monetary gain. The South African ANC government may also be understood as corrupt through its use of patronage, in which those in power favour supporters or inner-circle in order to uphold the regime. Patronage thereby allows for the inclusion and preference of incompetence over expertise, rather than to correctly fulfil their job descriptions and responsibilities, particularly in using state funds to reward, and fund, the party in control. As such, corruption is to be understood as an abuse of power. Political corruption thereby entails acting in an official capacity for personal or party gain. Corruption being present in a context with anti-corruption measures of transparency thus means one is not complying with honest principles and aims of the post-apartheid democratic ideal. Non-compliance here can be associated with a fear of the change that comes with tackling corruption, and taking accountability for the country's resources and freedoms. In this way, this study's assertion of decoloniality is rather than maintaining coloniality in ignorance.

Mda's encounter with the post-apartheid South African government's corruption was based in his applying to work for the civil service and being rejected for being too qualified. The issue of him being 'overqualified' (Mda, 2011: 428) thereby necessitates the tendency of the South African government being underqualified, possibly incompetent, inclusive of ANC unquestioning and uncritical loyalists, and knowingly excluding those with expertise. The sentiment throughout decolonial thinking of the political being personal may here be understood as necessarily equating the two, which is not the same as a government serving the self-interests of those in power, as Mda notes (2011: 428). Mda's letter aimed to expose the phenomenon of corruption (2011:428-429) to Mandela, as this acknowledgement is of the presence and existence of such being hindering to collective national freedom. Mda noted the problematic nature of the benefits and freedoms, other than a political freedom in the common right to vote, of post-apartheid being collectively reserved for the ANC and those in government to reap to rewards of their apartheid struggles. Mda thereby notes how "the struggle in South Africa was not the sole preserve of ANC members" (Mda, 2011: 429). It is necessary to note that Mda himself specifies that his letter was not written in self-interest, for him alone to be accepted into civil service, rather to emphasize the collective social responsibility for the context (Mda, 2011: 426-430). Particularly in order to avoid uproar by the population or youth, wherein "the youth are beginning to talk of violence" (Mda, 2011: 431), which has become more pronounced since the time of Mda's comments, but without necessary resolve. Mda's concern is as a South African, for the South African condition and the well-being of the country as a systematic whole. The concern is for collective freedom and the equal reaping of liberation, over the reality of collective unfreedom and ANC centred freedom, which in itself is contrary to the ideals of freedom which Mandela asserted (1995: 616-617) and thereby to any existential realization, as is Mda's acknowledgement of absurdism.

5.1.4 Political and Existential Disillusionment

As unfreedom is highly present in the South African context through racism, historical and continuing oppressions, social inequality, corruption and thereby the hoarding of freedoms for the political elite, it may lead to a perpetual sense of absurdity. This absurdity may also be understood as a form of unfreedom, particularly as absurdism is not the same as existentialism. As existentialism asserts individual freedom of meaning-making in an absurd human condition without pre-determination or definitive meaning. Absurdism on the other hand is more

nihilistic, and may be understood as more prevalent through the eyes of Mda in the South African condition: as pre-determined meaning is evident in historical, systematic, and continuing oppressions against the majority of the population. For instance, it is absurd for South Africa to have been liberated from one regime of oppression and unfreedom to then have much of the systemic trend of that to continue through legacies, coloniality, hoarded freedoms, and corruption which prevents social inequality. In this way, the South African condition may be seen as absurd, where change is futile without it being on a systemic level with decolonial intentions. As such, the prevalence of unfreedom may be drawn from the title of Mda's biography, its common sentiments, and thereby show political and existential disillusionment with the absurd.

The title of Mda's (2011) biography, *Sometimes there is a Void*, lays out an absurdist and Existential undertone to Mda's autobiography. The sense of absurdism in the narrative captures the common human experience, in the absurdity of the human condition, which is noted in the occasional, or constant, void present in Mda's (2011) biography. Mda describes himself, in the title and the text, as a perpetual outsider, which may be understood in terms of his unsettled life of being tri-national (Nixon, 2012; Garner, 2012). In this way, the narrative or theme of Mda being an outsider may be understood as a kind of isolation, both internal and external, which may be related to existential issues of anguish, nihilism, nothingness, responsibility and freedom. This biography shows Mda as a social and political commentator on South African life, particularly bringing light to power centres, whereby Mda himself has "resisted the centre", "stayed on the periphery" and sees himself as an outsider, having been side-lined in South African society (Mda, 2011). Mda explicitly describes this void as a lack of "utter joy" in any time of his life (Mda, 2011: 22), which is further asserted to be a personal experience, thought or matter that "need not be shared". As such, Mda's recollections of childhood are conditioned with a feeling of something not being right or being incomplete (Mda, 2011: 22). This could be an indication of an awareness of externally given meanings, or societal standards, not being fulfilling enough. Mda reflects upon a ghostly feeling of this void in seeing the ruins of his childhood home, hearing the echoes of a ghostly choir, noting in that moment: "the void widens" (Mda, 2011: 48). Mda's reflections upon his early time in exile, on being lost: literally, physically and metaphorically, and free to be lost in being his "carefree irresponsible knock-kneed self" (Mda, 2011: 74) with no particular obligations, as his father paid for upkeep in those early times, which he considered the "happiest moments of his childhood" (Mda, 2011: 74).

This freedom of independence allowed him to have "ownership of basic things" (Mda, 2011: 75), a freedom which he missed (Mda, 2011: 93) in the time following, of living as a family again. As such, this study considers existentialism in this context of discourse, geography, and temporality, as finding freedoms in absurdity and voids, a challenge to Mda.

Mda's outspoken critique of the state power as being a patronage system (Mda, 2011: 424) and hopes to change its ways, which he asserts are unchanged, even since his writing his letter to Mandela (Mda, 2011: 426-432) in 1997. This outspoken tendency of Mda's may also be seen on public and contemporary platforms such as twitter, wherein he is a political commentator. As such, his literary authority may be understood to assert a sense of witty entertainment and compassion. As his biography has a conversational and engaging style allows for the book to form him into a social and political commentator, a kind of African renaissance man (Egan, 2011). This conversational style extends to the stories and narrative being a kind of dialogue of past and present, as Mda's memories are provided in poetic and descriptive language, allowing the reader to be a part of the story, set along a deeply political and cultural backdrop (Mda, 2011). As such, the text is twofold in showing the making of Mda as an artist, in imagery and the imaginary, and political observations and commentary (Nixon, 2012). In these ways, Mda presents himself in his biography and his literary works, to assert the history before him and the history which he experienced, particularly giving the subtext to his existential feelings of a void constantly present.

The aftermath the Mda's letter to Mandela (Mda, 2011: 432), having shown concern for the corruption in the government, is short-lived attempts from the government to get details and give the illusion of seeking change. However, the patronage networks have persisted, and corruption has escalated, although the current Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture give a vague sense of hope for systemic change. Regardless of such attempts, the South African condition brims with the political and existential disillusionment as noted in Mda's void and absurdism. The tendencies toward western globalised superiority, as with the western subject and continuing legacies of coloniality, begs for decoloniality in unmasking injustice and western-centric humanism. As such, being aware of decolonial perspectives and diversity discourse, notably the issue of aspirational ignorance (Steyn, 2012) in circles of corruption and thereby reinforcement of unfreedom. In the post-apartheid context, of racial categorization and social regulation, ignorance is deliberately constructed (Steyn, 2012) to maintain racial inequalities and injustices in South Africa, and as such manages racial difference (Steyn, 2012.

As whiteness is made a standard, possibly leading to "aspirational ignorance" (Steyn, 2012) particularly in terms of the "unachievable whiteness of the Other" (Mills, 1997), which is assumed to be achieved through consumption. As such, aspirational ignorance is exemplified by the rise of wealth among elites in the black population, aspiration toward whiteness as seen through demonstrable wealth (Posel, 2010), which is most notable in corrupt politicians within the post-apartheid patronage system. The case of South Africa's history being an infected historical wound may be understood as that history not being addressed, learned from, or overcome. In this way, ignorance, social contracts, and the resistances thereof are manifest in ghostly haunting, historical wounds and rage in protests. As such, the South African post-apartheid context is conditioned by the presence and persistence of un-freedom after the official and administrative end to both the regime of colonialism and that of apartheid. This is notable in the biography of Zakes Mda (2011), having been accounted for as a subjective account of oppression and unfreedom, the contextual cries for post-apartheid freedom, and disillusionment and unhappiness for the oppressed, disadvantaged, and poverty-stricken in a 'post-' colonial and apartheid era.

5.2 Sartre's Existential Freedom in the South African Post-Apartheid Context

As this study has thus far reflected upon Mda's accounts of unfreedom and absurdism, it is necessary to highlight the viability of Sartre's Existential Freedom in the South African post-Apartheid Context. Mda's (2011) biography, as discussed in the previous section, outlines the limits of existential freedom in terms of the present unfreedoms in South Africa. This allows an understanding of freedom being accessible only in privilege, as the concept of freedom as experienced in this context and separately as theorised by Arendt (2018) and Sartre are constituted by hierarchy. As the South African is steeped in the unfreedoms as conditioned by historical oppressions and continuing injustices, such is seemingly absurd. The problematic nature of the superimposed western subject of epistemology and existential realization having directly and explicitly dominated in the times of colonialism, continues in legacies and intact-rather-than-deconstructed systems of understanding, humanism, and social relations. As such, it may be necessary to critique Sartre and his notion of freedom. Particularly as he wrote from a context without persisting and perpetual unfreedoms. Sartre's existential and individualist Existentialism, while grounded in a positionality of imperial difference, may also be understood to be grounded in social contracts which expect the best of others based on one's own

responsibility for one's facticity, similar to Mandela's (1995) instance of "[respecting] and [enhancing] the freedom of others". As such it may be understood as futile and idealistic, even as Sartre himself turned to Marxist communism in his subsequent (1958-1968) thinking.

Sartre's (1943 & 1956) assertion of universalism, in existential freedom being inherent to all individuals, was based on his privileged positionality. In which he assumed his existentialism could be universalizable through individualism (Sartre, 1943 & 1956). As such, Sartre asserted a commitment to freedom by living his philosophy. This may be understood as a naïve assumption of collective good faith, possibly socialist (BBC, 1999), without consideration of and regard for existing unfreedoms. Such naivety in these existential texts of Sartre (1943 & 1956) shows ignorance toward his own privilege positionality, that of imperial difference. As such, this study finds Sartre a victim of his own ignorance in privilege: that of the western subject in universal epistemologies. This ignorance entails his having not considered power relations further than inter-subjective relations of subjects asserting, and affirming, their fundamental freedom of self-determination. This is problematic in not considering, or having experience in, colonial oppressions and the external determination of the African subject/Other by the European colonizer. The context and locus of enunciation through which Sartre is one of access and privilege. Sartre theorized and viewed the world as a Western subject, thereby in favour of humanism. As noted in the second chapter, under the decolonial perspective of Grosfoguel, Sartre may be classified as a "European, capitalist, military, Christian, patriarchal, white, heterosexual male" (Grosfoguel, 2009: 19). As such, the privilege Sartre was positioned within is one of imperial difference, thereby considering class issues as synonymous to colonial issues of hierarchy and oppression. This thinking has been problematized and critiqued by Fanon as flawed (Fanon, 2017: 116), particularly in contrast to Cesaire's affinity to Sartre's anti-colonial Marxist perspective. Fanon highlights the inapplicability of Sartre's idea of the alienated consciousness to the black consciousness, as noting the white access to power: "the white man is not only the Other but also the master, whether real or imaginary" (Fanon, 2017: 116). The western subjectivity present and universalized in epistemology and colonial discourse dominates over the African othered subjectivity as established through colonialism and continuing in coloniality.

Sartre's confrontation with contextual issues of unfreedom, while limited to his own privileged humanism in articulating existentialism, was discursively through Marxism and concretely

though protest. Cesaire's (1956) resignation from the French Communist Party critiqued Marxism, as applied by the party, as blind to racism and coloniality. His Marxist perspective shows that, at the time, the closest encounter with and experience of unfreedom was through classism: as the issue of classism was the only direct oppression, post-wars, which he could identify with. His war experiences, such as being a prisoner of war under the German occupation of France, allowed him to empathise with but not necessarily understand, or have direct experience of, oppressed peoples. As such, colonized oppressed peoples experienced treatment based on their being classified as sub-human (Grosfoguel, 2009; Fanon, 1961), below the line of the human, unlike the experiences within European classist society. Sartre's subject position of male whiteness under imperial difference continued to condition his tendency of argumentative and discursive authority, thereby problematizing and calling into question his theories and assertions, even in anti-colonial thinking. It follows that Sartre's locus of enunciation opens up space for problematizing his concept of freedom as radical and absolute. As such, within his lifetime Sartre came to understand concrete unfreedoms, which made his concept of freedom unrealistic, to the extent of him being involved in protests and being considered as anti-establishment by his fellows (BBC, 1999). Sartre saw, as this study observed in the South African context, the 'establishment' or state reinforces unfreedoms of some in order to benefit the freedoms of few.

As this study focuses on, and provides a dialogue of, the perspectives of scholars on the concept of freedom, Sartre's subject position of privilege is problematic in lending further authority to universalism through the western subject. Sartre's conceptuality, and vocabulary of using 'Sub-proletariat', shows that Sartre's Marxism and angle of Capitalist critique is seemingly his best understanding of the colonial experience (Sartre, 1957: 58). Sartre's own theory of "engaged literature" is illustrated in *What is Literature?* (Sartre, 2001 (1948)) as: creating a literary world the author is always acting either to imagine paths toward overcoming concrete unfreedoms such as racism and capitalist exploitation, or else closing them off. Sartre's concept of freedom can again be defined here as "making choices, and indeed not being able to avoid making choices" (Onof, IEP), as consciousness is constituted by self-definition through freedom. The western subject reinforces its own self-identified superiority over the colonized, and particularly the African continent which experienced colonial oppression, resistance struggles, and independence. An independence from apparent forces which later became unapparent controlling legacies, whereby the remains of Western colonial destruction may be seen to have

maintained a mentality of helplessness. While Sartre's concepts can be privileging in conceptuality and the necessity of the reflective consciousness, its necessary presence of anguish and responsibility are present in more than just the western subject. As such, such concepts may be overbearingly experienced in oppressed peoples, without possible realization or presence of existential freedom.

As such, Sartre falls into the trap of idealist universalism, largely seen in enlightenment philosophy and which is removed from concrete reality. The problematic nature of such an idealist application of individualist universalism, in his theory, drove him to Marxism and later question that (BBC, 1999) by supporting any revolutionary cause. A documentary series episode on Sartre's life entitled "The Road to Freedom" (BBC, 1999) explained how Sartre became aware of the naivety of his original (1943) concept of existential freedom and thereby, in living his philosophy, he became involved in protest against unfreedoms. In the years past the publication of Being and Nothingness (1943), in being involved in Marxism and protest, Sartre came to understand that the main threat to equal individual freedom is the state, enforcing unfreedom through inequalities and systemic oppressions. Such collective equality requires resistance against oppressive power systems, in which the freedom of some depends upon the unfreedom others, as inherent unfreedoms in the world. As such, existential freedom becomes an ideal to which to strive to, whereby Sartre (BBC, 1999) seemed to want total revolution: disrupt systems that include even a small bit of unfreedom for anyone. This would thereby entail uncontrolled and in flux freedom-of-meaning for all, and perpetual revolt. This revolutionary sense of Sartre arose with his commitment to his ideals, he felt unfree in his awareness of unfreedom (BBC, 1999). Some of his contemporaries and friends (BBC, 1999) saw this as his reaction to his original existential and radical freedom being a fantasy, an ideal rather than a reality, whereby inherent individual freedom does not exist. Sartre was widely respected, an acclaimed intellectual, he thereby used this to give attention to protests and unfreedoms which demanded change. In this way, Sartre was anti-establishment (BBC, 1999), an anarchist, asserting resistance to unfreedoms and oppressions as enforced by power, in order to achieve universal freedom.

As issues surrounding coloniality depend on hierarchical thinking, objectification, and othering, the decolonial tendency of writing from the margins relates to the issue of being othered under the gaze of the colonizer and the west, which Sartre similarly articulates as 'the look' (Sartre,

1943). Sartre's (1943) 'the look' may ideally be understood as a constant intersubjective dialogue, which comes across through western domination giving the west upper ground. As an inter-subjective dialogue (Marinot, 2005) is an ideal application of Sartre's 'the look' (Sartre, 1943: 276-277; Atkins, 2005: 87-89) allowing mutual affirmation of freedoms, rather than being dominated and objectified. Such one-sided domination is continuing to this day through the legacies and scar of historical dominations and oppressions therein. As explained previously, the look is being under the gaze of another and being an object under their orbit, which thereby takes one's freedom away as one has become an object and no longer a subject. Sartre's existential freedom is conceptualized in terms of consciousness, anguish, and responsibility and is simultaneously and inherently constituted by the context within which one is situated. The context must be taken up with responsibility in order for one to be empowered with, rather than overpowered in anguish by, the freedom inherent in one's existence. In the case of post-colonial Africa and post-apartheid South Africa, existential freedom appears to be blocked by obstacles of oppression, otherness, poverty, and as such without access to subjectivity and subjecthood. As with much of modern meaning, many depend upon extrinsic meaning including conquest and power over others. The post-apartheid context of South Africa is constituted by its necessity for liberty and the non-racial South Africa which many a politician at the time of the changing regime espoused, yet this is not manifest or actualized in a legitimately free reality. This unfreedom is largely experienced as poverty and being restricted by their own means and their being dominated by capitalism, which du Bois (1998(1935); Weiner, 2018) as a primary cause of, and a modern face of, racism. As such, the differentiation of freedoms becomes necessary in that Existential freedom is a privilege of not being trapped in striving for freedom from want as negative freedom, thereby being free to be free as a politically active citizen (Arendt, 2016). This political freedom may allow for existential freedom to be understood as a decolonial call for action and change, yet inaccessible to many in poverty and oppression. While Sartre's own fight for such ideal freedom was through protest, his original conceptualization (Sartre, 1943 & 1956) was grounded in universalizable individualism as problematized in his scenario of the look.

Sartre's (1956) assertions of universal individual freedom entails a sense of collective good faith in order for all individuals to equally be free. As such, Sartre's concept of freedom should not depend upon oppressive power relations to enforce unfreedom, base some people's freedom on the unfreedom of others. These issues allow for a critique on Sartre in two regards: his

universalized individualism and his naïve positionality as part of the western subject dominating epistemology. Sartre's existential freedom, in assuming universalizable individualism, poses his privilege of living and pondering in abstract without direct experience of unfreedom through oppression. His positionality entails having the agency and autonomy of freedom without being aware of the unfreedom which his context, in France's colonialism, created in others. Colonialism and its continuing legacy of coloniality forms the reality of domination over the Other, and enforcing their reality of unfreedom. As such, Sartre's existentialism is positioned in imperial difference, in ignorance, privilege and power, thereby limited scope in not seeing the un-universalizability of such a freedom in the case of the African subjects which have been pre-determined as sub-human, and as such are fundamentally oppressed prior to their being fundamentally free. This study aims to situate existential freedom within hierarchical discourse, Sartre does so in his scenario of the look: whereby one's assertion of one's freedom involves having power over an Other. As such, the African's reclaim of humanism is a reclaim of freedom as inherent to one's 'being'.

Sartre's lecture entitled *Existentialism is a Humanism* (lecture in 1946: 1989(1956)) articulated the theory and defences of existentialism. Mda's (2011) experiences of the absurd, the void, may be seen in the context of contrasting existentialism, as used in this study, to absurdism as relative to Mda and the South African context. While absurdism and existential share their starting point in the universe being meaningless, their conclusions differ: existentialism, as Sartre (1956) asserts, is a philosophy of action in one being constituted by the responsibility to create one's own meaning. On the other hand, absurdism, as theorised by Albert Camus, and requires the acceptance, and embracing, of and facing up to the inherent absurdity of human existence, thereby in acceptance of the absurd one chooses to "continue despite knowing that ultimate meaning is not possible" (Miessler, 2020). The essay largely articulates the critiques levelled against existentialism, and Sartre's defences thereof, regarding quietism and abandonment (Sartre, 1956). Sartre (1956) defended against such by giving depth to his concepts, he explained that existentialism is a philosophy of action (Sartre, 1956) rather than one of inaction as any kind of quietism of despair. It may be important to clarify that quietism has to do with philosophical contemplation without praxis (Kindi & Virvidakis, 2013). While anguish entails the feeling attached to existential responsibility for one's context and all humanity (Sartre, 1943: 574-577), the despair therein is the awareness of being limited to that which is within our capacities of will and action (Luchte, 2013). Quietism of despair entails the

overbearing sense of anguish, nihilism, and nothingness resigns in 'letting others do what I cannot' (Sartre, 1956), abandoning oneself to such despair. The sense of abandonment, from which Sartre defends his existential theory (Sartre, 1956), is of pre-determined meaning for humanity and human reality; as objects have pre-ordained functions prior to production, human beings depended upon a divine pre-determined nature of themselves in order to understand themselves. This is not a pessimistic abandonment, as Sartre's critics assert, but one which gives the human being power over oneself, one's meaning, being self-determined by one's own choices. As such, to Sartre (1956; referring to quietism) giving up in despair of futility is an inauthentic choice in bad faith. Sartre would rather one choose oneself, one's context, thereby choosing to live, to make oneself in and of the world. Thereby, Sartre's anguish and its despair necessitates one to act without illusion (Luchte, 2013). The difference between existential anguish and quietism of despair is anguish being part of an active process in free action, and quietism may be associated with inaction and bad faith (Sartre, 1956). Sartre's defences herein (Sartre, 1956) are of the conceptual sense, and unfortunately does not include any defences against the universalism and individualism he asserts for the existentialism, in its individualism. Sartre's theory advocates for individual freedom in a conscious human reality without valid external meaning or pre-determined internal meaning, human nature in mind of a divine creator (Sartre, 1956). This is highly individualist in that the creation of individual meaning is through the individual freedom of an individual.

The concept of existential freedom, as central in this study, seems more idealistic and theoretical than Sartre's existentialism may have originally intended. This presents a conflict of the South African reality of unfreedom, as noted by Mda (2011), and Sartre's concept of freedom thereby entailing Sartre's own awareness of the idealism of such freedom. As such, Sartre's involvements in protest against systematic unfreedoms and therein idealisation of freedom for all, therein the obstacles to the direct experience of freedom, such as poverty and the legacies and presence of historical racial oppression. The unfreedoms noted by Mda include racism, social inequality, and corruption, the latter of which maintains economic elitism at the cost of collective unfreedom in poverty. Within a collectively unfree population living in poverty many then prioritize survival and living within economic means over a freedom of reflexivity. Such context seems aligned with absurdism over the philosophy of action and meaning-making of existentialism. The exploration of the limits of existential freedom as unfreedoms present in the South African context through Mda hereby presents a divergence which problematizes such

freedom as ideal and privileged in an absurd and unfree context. Fanon (2017: 116) notes the inapplicability of Sartre's dilemma of the other, the power relations and conflicts of freedom, in a black consciousness, due to white access to both power and alienation rather than being without such access. The idealist concept of existential freedom is at odds with concrete and common unfreedoms, particularly as the South African leadership appears to hoard privileges and freedoms at the cost of collective unfreedom. Within Sartre's lifetime (BBC, 1999) he came to understand and protest toward the inaccessibility of freedom to all in order to allow collective well-being and good faith as respecting each-other's inherent freedom of self-determination. Cesaire's (1955) use of Sartre's thinking around collective well-being through Marxism includes his own awareness of western freedom being reliant on the unfreedom of others (Cesaire, 1955). Sartre's concept of freedom being reliant on collective good faith conflicts with the reality of collective unfreedom, which builds on the issue of hoarded freedoms at the expense of common, systematic, and absurd unfreedom.

The inherent historical oppressions of the South African context entail existential and ontological dehumanisation, thereby making the African existence inherently political which necessitates African reclaiming of humanity post-colonization. The contrast of despair and anguish as existential experiences within a traumatic and historically oppressed context. Sartre's existential anguish is furthered by the distress of facticity (Msimanga, 2016), which requires one to accept freedoms and meanings according to context and individually having the existential freedom to do and make something thereof. As such, it seems to all be a matter of the choices within one's control, as Msimanga's (2010) conclusion notes "I can choose to be overwhelmed by the trauma of my freedom or the freedom of my trauma or find hope in the simultaneity of the two" (Msimanga, 2010), concurring with Sartre. In this way, the present study notes the important role of diversity and othered discourses in exploring the existential experiences, if any, in contexts with such obstacles. As such, poverty and oppression prevent the reflective consciousness necessary in the realization of Sartre's concept of existential freedom through anguish. The historically and inherently oppressed context of post-apartheid South Africa, as seeped in unfreedom, has limited potential for the actualization of concrete collective freedom. The larger proportion of population suffer with poverty and issues of survival, thereby only have freedom of political vote and thereby right to protest etc. As such, less access to freedom of self-reflective consciousness which Sartre centralized in the individual experience of freedom of self-determination.

This study, as previously explained in the theoretical framework chapter, holds the decolonial perspective, its decolonial turn and inherent challenges to accepted euro-centric discourse and social experiences, as vital in the post-modern disruption of grand narratives and dominating access to epistemology. Herein the social issues present in the South African context demand disruption and protest, which may relate to the decolonial and post-modern demands of discourse. Similar to Sartre's issue of there not being any one stable meaning for the being-for-itself, this context and the concept of existential freedom is steeped in uncertainty, in contrast to humanity's tendency to depend on certainty. This debunking of grand narratives and singular meaning was of Sartre's time, post-modernism and post-structuralism. As such, one could draw a correlation in that critical diversity theory is constantly multi-perspectival and in dialogue with developing discourses and contexts and the prospects of existential freedom within these contexts and discourses need to be validated and explored through critical diversity questioning, in order for the limitations and obstacles of existential freedom within the South African context to be challenged.

5.3 The Freedom to be Free in Post-Apartheid South Africa

Many understand Sartre's concept of freedom as a kind of political freedom, a freedom to be free (Arendt, 2017), which may here be discussed in the South African post-apartheid context. This study has explicated the unfreedoms fundamental to the post-apartheid South African context as: racism, social inequality, political corruption and disillusionment. As such, the context seems absurdist in the limited access to existential freedom thereby the majority of the population remains unfree. Through these unfreedoms the South African context is largely burdened with poverty. The colonial matrix of power in the South African context, as reflected in the second chapter, is key to the unfreedoms and social inequalities in poverty and the hierarchy of Arendt's concepts of freedom. The concepts of freedom relayed by Arendt includes freedom from want, freedom to be free, and general political freedom. The possibilities and hierarchy of freedom, as articulated by Arendt (2018), and reflected upon in the literature review, allow an understanding of poverty being conditioned by unfreedom: particularly totalitarian unfreedom. It may be understood through previous reflections that freedom is higher in a hierarchy than liberation, as the South African context liberation was only from the explicit oppressions of the apartheid regime. As such, the issues of unfreedom present in the South

African context, as observed by Mda (2011), are continuing and have not been resolved in the sense of all having access to freedom.

The South African post-apartheid context is riddled with unfreedom and thereby may be understood as absurd. The absurd here may be related to not having access to meaningful freedom or meaning-making processes. Absurdism is seen in Mda's perpetual presence of voids. It is important to note that the existentialism, and existential freedom, at focus in this study, while highly abstract and not concrete, poses important concepts and ideals which Sartre himself fought for through protest in his lifetime. As such the concept of existential freedom may be related to Arendt's concepts of political freedom, "freedom to participate in public affairs, freedom of action" (Arendt, 2018: 69), and the 'freedom to be free'. In this way the existential freedom idealistically seen as inherent to every existing human being, in terms of individualism and the collective good faith critiqued against Sartre above, is high on the hierarchy of freedoms and thereby limited in accessibility. This hierarchy necessitates freedom for few at the expense of unfreedom for many, for which Arendt finds revolution as vital in deconstructing and disempowering such hierarchy.

The South African context, as seeped in colonial and apartheid legacies, has the colonial matrix of power (Mignolo, 2008) central to its power relations. As noted in the second chapter, the colonial power matrix (Mignolo, 2008) is the framework for understanding present colonial controls and the South African realities relating to freedom. As noted in the second chapter, the colonial power matrix (Mignolo, 2008) plays a role in maintaining coloniality and concrete poverty of many. The change of power in the fall of the apartheid regime required ideologies and controls of knowledge and subjectivity, including the idea of South Africa as a rainbow nation. As noted in the decolonial chapter, the colonial power matrix keeping a nation in bondage may be relatable to totalitarianism as the total control of all aspects of life (Mautner, 2005: 621; Arendt, 1951). These controls (Mignolo, 2008) relate to different aspects of life: authority to state and government power, economy to labour and land appropriation, gender and sexuality to social relations differing from policies such as Black Economic Empowerment, and the control of knowledge and subjectivity is relative to access, controls, epistemology, knowledge creation and education. The post-apartheid change of power may relate to Arendt noting "those who 'make' revolutions do not seize power but rather pick it up where it lies in the streets" (Arendt, 2018: 60). This may be understood as the formal handing over of power

was through democracy, leaving the new government to deal with the country's economy, poor quality education and varying sectors which had been dominated by Apartheid ideology.

The symbolic nature of authority within the colonial power matrix entails the democratically elected ANC government having a priority of national reconciliation. Such reconciliation was addressed through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and international moments like the 1995 Rugby World Cup. The TRC granted amnesty to those involved in order to find and address truth, which meant less or no accountability. International moments such as the RWC forced national unity under umbrella terms such as South Africans being the "Rainbow people of God" (Tutu, 1991). Such gestures of unity and reconciliation may be understood as largely symbolic and ceremonial, showing symbolic meaninglessness of power to be corruptible, which requires such illusions, gestures, ceremonies and symbols in order to reinforce social inequalities, poverty and unfreedom. Such corruption occurs through their own mismanagement and misuse of resources. This is rather than concrete or progressive in addressing the legacies and scars of the historical oppression, as a control of knowledge and subjectivity (Mignolo, 2008), a matter of control of collective identity. As such, unfreedom perpetuated through governmental and political corruption continues and reinforces past powers of control, oppression and coloniality. While the corruption of those in privilege and government effects social relations in reinforcing social inequality and as such poverty, it largely effects the economy.

The isolated, closed, and protective apartheid economy was opened up to global trade at the advent of democracy. Although the Freedom Charter had been the guiding document for ANC and liberation policies since the 1960s, the demise of communism and increasing global capitalist economic system held sway. Hence, the idealistic principles of the Freedom Charter were relinquished in favour of a liberal capitalist economy. Hence, control of the economy largely remained in the hands of the those who held sway in apartheid, and the divestment of the sanction's era was rolled back with foreign direct investment resuming (Levy, 1999). Issues of ownership were never fully addressed although the Black Economic Empowerment legislation (Cilliers & Aucoin, 2016) was introduced under the Mbeki Presidency, ensured that equity ownership was more diverse. The key historical issue of the control and ownership of land, and mineral resources were never properly addressed. Hence, the majority of South Africans remained locked out of their own economy. To a large extent the major element of

economic ownership and apartheid economic structures remained. For example, the apartheid regime dominated through a homeland system, assigning citizens to certain areas (Lieberman, 2019) and not others. These areas had little to no access to basic services: electricity, water, structured housing; which has been difficult to remedy since. This was further undermined by the rise in corruption. Which meant that schemes to address ownership and access were subverted for the gain of predatory elites (Cilliers & Aucoin, 2016). In the first decade of democracy our manufacturing sector was decimated due to the nature of global production, leading loss of employment in several urban centres. The power relationship and labour practices in mining and agriculture saw legislative change, but the overall experience of black workers retained many of the apartheid and homeland characteristics (Lieberman, 2019). Undignified and subhuman practices remained and this has led to social unrest (Buccus, 2017) and xenophobia in the past decade, since 2008. Instances of social unrest in South Africa largely relate to service delivery and undignified labour practices. The most notable event of unrest would be the 2012 Marikana mining protests which resulted in police lethal violence (Twala, 2018; Buccus, 2017). The South African economy has been defined by global capitalism economies which had led to loss of employment in key sectors, increasing inequity between rich and poor (Cilliers & Aucoin, 2016). Government has sought to address this by massive expansion of the social grant system, but while grants address poverty and hunger, they do not lead to improvement in dignity and self-sufficiency. While the country is framed by its historical obstacles of racism and inequality, it has become, post-1994, a leader in human rights and constitutional fairness. Despite shortcomings the democratic ANC government has succeeded in the provision of electricity, basic services, constitutional fairness, and housing for the poor, which has had a positive impact on dignity.

The colonial matrix of power (Mignolo, 2008), in continuing past oppressions, in present in the control of the South African economy as the post-apartheid democracy is dominated by global agendas, thereby unable to address local growth and reform. This is further hindered by corruption, and the lack of service delivery in poorer communities, lack of dignity, and lack of access to the economy for all. As the apartheid legacies and global agendas have dominated, the revolutionary ANC government has "[picked] up power from where it [lay] on the streets" (Arendt, 2018: 60). This prevents the government from building the country up with the ANC ideals of dignity, collective wellbeing and freedom. Being overcome by dealing with national reconciliation and unity, under an international eye, the government implemented short-term

solutions to tackle the issues of institutional racism, social inequality and poverty, which act as symbolic illusions. As the colonial and oppressive legacies frame the colonial matrix of power, the control of economy largely disempowers the majority of the population, thereby perpetuating poverty.

The colonial matrix of power controls knowledge and subjectivity (Mignolo, 2008) in post-apartheid South Africa through the continuing legacy of apartheid-quality education, and the 'rainbow nation' ideology. These controls in South Africa reproduce the problems of social inequalities, institutional racism, and poverty. The apartheid regime had destructive control over the population's education, thereby restricting access to knowledge to a small and privileged portion of the population. Bantu Education sought to equip black South Africans with low-skill knowledge, to be easily exploitable through hard labour, which portrayed black cultures as primitive, rural, and unchanging. The post-apartheid education system was left with these legacies of inferiority (Smalley, 2014) with its limited access to and distribution of knowledge, as such the majority of the population suffers from its continuing legacies and poor administration (Villete, 2016). While the government has pursued policies designed to improve standards of education quality (Smalley, 2014), the curriculum remained based on the western standards of coloniality, formerly reserved for white education. Increasingly, this is being challenged, with calls for decolonizing the curriculum. The challenge may be termed:

> The new constitution declared that all children had the right to a basic education [primary and secondary school]. But overcoming apartheid's legacy of severe educational inequality was a monumental task (Smalley, 2014: 3).

While apartheid unified the black population under its poor 'bantu' education standards, the post-apartheid agenda of reconciliation and unity framed South Africans as the 'rainbow people of God' (Tutu, 1991 & 1996). Furthermore, in the agenda of national reconciliation, the government implemented affirmative action, such as the Black Economic Empowerment legislation, to remedy historically reproduced privileges and disadvantages.

The rainbow nation agenda of unity and reconciliation, including the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, required ignorance for the country to move on. As such, the control of subjectivity and identity forced unity for citizens under the 'rainbow nation' ideology, without redress or justice. For example, Nelson Mandela served as a heroic symbol of freedom, but did not necessarily deliver concrete liberation to and for all South Africans (Mda, 2011). What

Grosfoguel (2013) meant by freedom being a myth of the century is exactly that freedom can be made symbolic, ceremonial and mythical instead of being real and true. While education controls the population's access to knowledge and critically engaging with their own subjectivities, the guise of rainbow nation unity requires ignorance and complacency (Gachago & Ngoasheng, 2016). As with the racial (Mills, 1999) and ignorance (Steyn, 2011) contracts being social contracts for social governance, the control and creation of knowledge and subjectivity through rainbow nation ideology continues collective unfreedom in ignorance. This may allow for an understanding of this unfree unity being at the cost of ignorance. Such ideology fast tracks healing and reconciliation for unity without allowing for redress, which allows a kind of colour-blindness toward difference rather than dealing with issues historically ingrained in the multiplicity of South African identities and positionalities. South Africans being termed the 'rainbow people of God' by Desmond Tutu (1991 & 1996) provides religion as the unity and freedom which may not necessarily be possible in the concrete South African context. In this way the guise of the rainbow nation allows for the preservations of ideals while hiding the reality of unfreedom. As such, poverty and inequality in the South African context aligns with the unfreedoms presented under the colonial matrix of power (Mignolo, 2008:15) and present in the South African context (Mda, 2011). As such, the disenfranchised and disillusioned existential condition of South Africa may further be addressed, under decolonial perspectives and methods, as ideals and goals of revolution and change.

5.4 Decoloniality and Freedom

While the South African context is highly framed by unfreedoms, the ideal of freedom, rather than an existential reality, may present itself further through the decolonial perspective: Grosfoguel (2002 & 2016), Fanon (1952 & 1963), Mignolo (1999, 2002, 2011; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018), Gordon (van Leeuwan, 2008). Arendt's (2018) issues of freedom present as a hierarchy conditioned by context, privilege and access. Sartre's concept of existential freedom, while well intentioned, is conditioned by its and his own concrete privilege. Sartre's existential freedom and as such individualist Existentialism, may also be understood to be grounded in social contracts. These contracts, in Sartre's sense expects the best of others: collective good faith in a society of collective wellbeing, based on one's own responsibility for one's facticity; similar to Mandela's (1995) instance of "[respecting] and [enhancing] the freedom of others". As such, the ideal of freedom may be a contextual issue: fighting historical oppressions and the

legacies thereof, and reframing access to knowledge and governance. This reframing is through decoloniality, and the need to take a discursive and concrete decolonial turn away from abstract and western-centric standards. As such, freedom of self-determination is herein an ideal to work toward rather than an existential reality for all. This subsection may explore how the Colonial Power Matrix, the challenges to existential freedom, and the contextual unfreedoms of South Africa in poverty may be discussed under a decolonial turn.

It may be necessary to clarify the social forces at play in maintaining the globalist western-centric coloniality which the decolonial perspective works to resist and delink from (Mignolo, 2007; 2008; 2011). The domination of the western subject, in epistemology, global social and political relations, and discourse as maintained through coloniality and its social contracts require decolonial resistance. Frameworks of social order, such as the racial (Mills, 1997) and ignorance (Steyn, 2012) contracts, maintain the dominance of "the "capitalist/patriarchal Western-centric/Christian-centric modern/colonial world-system" (Grosfoguel 2011), and its hierarchies. The ignorance therein follows the "path of least resistance" (Johnson, 1997) by maintaining idealised whiteness, which involves an 'amnesia' of injustice (Mills, 1997). This ignorance contract reinforces white privilege and white fragility, by ignorantly protecting white emotional well-being (Steyn, 2012). Standardised whiteness, capitalism, individualism, eurocentrism, and the accompanying dominating norms maintain the black political elite of South Africa (Mda, 2011) who manipulate oppressive systems in their favour (Steyn, 2012). The decolonial perspective, with insights of such legacies and inequalities, would persist its resistance to the ignorance (Steyn, 2012), racial (Mills, 1997), and social contracts which maintain coloniality and western dominance. The legacies, scars and ghosts of injustice, as maintained by coloniality in social contracts, come to focus under the decolonial perspective as a ghostly haunting which persists a feeling of "something-to-be-done" (Gordon, 2008).

The decolonial perspective relies upon delinking from (Mignolo, 2007) and resisting modernity and coloniality (Mignolo, 2011 & 2008) in taking the decolonial turn (Grosfoguel, 2007) toward the margins and the subaltern (Kilomba, 2013; Mothoagae, 2014). As such, in alignment with issues of non- and sub-humanity (Fanon, 1961), classification, and lesser access to existential being, the possibility of freedom involves a new humanity (Gordon, 2008; Mignolo, 2007; 2008; 2011). The ghostly and critical haunting (Gordon, 2008) creates a need for "something-to-be-done". These haunting injustices are argued to be a call for a new sociology and

knowledge production (Gordon, 2008), directed toward the social imaginary, needing to engage with and unearth the conditions of possibility of the injustices and hauntings. Gordon (2008) reflects upon ghostly haunting and a new way of knowing, a new sociology: through being attuned to the echoes and murmurs of "that which has been lost" (Gordon, 2008) as presently haunting. Discourse, and particularly sociology, then needs to make sense of what modern history has made ghostly, to write a history of the present, imagining beyond the limits of what is already known and understandable (Gordon, 2008). The domination of the western subject is thereby disobeyed with resistance directed toward the superimposed sub-humanity ideology which dominates modern, colonial and western epistemology.

As the colonial matrix of power (Mignolo, 2008) allowed symbolic and ceremonial redress of the apartheid injustices, these injustices continued and thereby haunted (Gordon, 2008) with the historical injustices having not been addressed, learned from, or overcome (Damousi, 2002). The critical atmosphere of haunting (Gordon, 2008) demands action, along with collective historical loss and grief being a mobilizing force that motivated a need to have their grief culturally and politically recognized (Damousi, 2002). The post-apartheid continuing unfreedoms, inequalities and oppressions relates to the South African achievement of liberation, and freedom from want (Arendt, 2017), rather than equal freedom to be free for all, which seems too idealistic in such a context. The remains of the past in the present play a large role in the positionality of a subject as they would be and feel enabled by their quality of life and quantity of obstacles therein. This feeling of accessibility enables the Sartre's concept and actualization of freedom which is the freedom to make meaning of and do something with the context within which one was thrown. The issue of freedom within power relations may be highlighted in terms of the positive-negative dichotomy of freedom-to and freedom-from, as explored by Arendt, the latter being thought of as the issue of liberation or independence. The superimposed dichotomy and othering of the colonized as subaltern (Kilomba, 2013; Mothoagae, 2014) highlights liberation, the freedom from, in the social and collective sense.

The decolonial perspective brings awareness to dominant discourses being inherently Western and Eurocentric. As such, it aims to widen the scope of discourse, in order for the thoughts and experiences of the Other to account for the existential experiences which are more complex than the universalized Western subject. In this way, the decolonial perspective resists the dominating systematic coloniality through non-eurocentrism (Grosfoguel, 2002: 4 & 20). While

it is impossible to know a reality or world in which colonialism and western domination never happened, many decolonial thinkers, making the decolonial turn, see the importance of indigenous knowledges in the 21st century (Ndlovu, 2014a). These knowledges, outside of western origins and present control, act as a means to remedy the present challenges caused by past issues (Ndlovu, 2014a). As such the decolonial turn, in re-empowering indigenous knowledges, is a theoretical and epistemological move in order to expand the possibilities of discourse and the accessibility thereof (Ndlovu, 2014a). In formerly colonized places and peoples, the existence of the Other as the subject rather than a distant figure makes the African existence inherently political, and continually in a "politicized state of existence" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015:13). This is a rebuilding of the African sense of humanity from within, outside of the Western, colonial or capitalist, gaze, a restoration of humanity through tending for the communities over the individual, through African socialism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015:35). In the epistemological sense, discourse under decoloniality and the African subjectivities deals with a decolonisation of the mind and of the metaphysical empire which remains (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015:22). This decolonial discourse may aid in reclaiming humanity on individual and common identity levels through a fight for cultural and differential recognition over cultural imperialism and marginalisation (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015: 40). In this way, the non-Eurocentric decolonial perspective struggles toward cultural and linguistic freedom, which entails "the reversal of cultural imperialism and restoration of African languages" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015: 40). The deconstruction and unmasking of the dominating Western power systems coincides with the re-construction and re-membering of Africa, in order to "[push] forward the quest for wholeness and unity" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015: 40).

On the other hand, an understanding the post-colonial simply as a trajectory in history is shown in Mbembe's (1992) observations. As such dealing with the bureaucratic formalities and rules which prevent the 'post' from being without (Mbembe, 1992), which may be seen as a rebuttal for those who critique the post-colonial discourse from a decolonial perspective. The importance of the decolonial perspective in the 'post' discourses may be seen through Marzagora's (2016) discussion of the mixed fortunes of 'posts' as most still struggle with being unparticularized. As such, "Deconstructionism [is] perceived to depart from the pressing ethico-political concerns and humanistic imperatives of the African intellectual agenda" (Marzagora, 2016): which gives necessity to strategic essentialism, nationalist humanism, and decolonial critical theory.

The South African experience and reality of unfreedom, as observed by Mda (2011), necessitates the country's progression toward collective wellbeing and common access to freedoms and services. Such concrete unfreedoms entail the colonial and apartheid legacies continuing through globalist capitalism, whereby much of the country's authority, economy, knowledge, education, identities and power relations are not of the state's own control. Sartre's concept of freedom is based on two social conditions: collective wellbeing allowing common access to freedom, and collective good faith in respecting the freedom of others. Such social conditions would prevent the hierarchies of freedom from restricting access and the hoarding of freedoms within post-apartheid liberation by the political elite. Each of the thinkers central to this study problematize the concrete possibility of collective and accessible freedom as an inherent existential freedom, which may be aligned in the colonial power matrix and the decolonial perspective. What Grosfoguel (2013) meant by freedom being a myth of the century is exactly that freedom can be made symbolic, ceremonial and mythical instead of being real and true. A decolonial turn allows for freedom to be unmasked as an illusion, and limited in its own privilege. The decolonial perspective having deconstructed the unfree realities, may align with Sartre's anti-establishment leanings and Arendt's assertions of revolution being in aim of collective freedom. As such the decolonial turn takes up existential responsibility through the discursive and concrete activist fights in social justice issues. Western domination, in continuing coloniality and inaccessible freedom, superimposes the western subjectivity as superior to otherness and the colonized (Fanon, 1963).

In his investigations of the effects of colonialism, Fanon highlights freedom as hindered for the both the colonized and colonizer in their mutual dependence, impotence, zombification, and madness. The struggle for freedom (Fanon, 1963: 179) aims for a preservation and redevelopment of national culture, by freedom fighters (Fanon, 1963: 188). This fight for the freedom of one's people (Fanon, 1963: 219), while a high priority, is not the only necessity. Most of Fanon's assertions deem freedom as challenged by the expectations and responsibilities thereof (Fanon, 1963: 250). The conditions of the colonized, and those of the continuing coloniality, involve an internalized white gaze (Fanon, 1963): a colonial and western gaze which dominates over any hope of self-determination. Fanon's observations on madness relate to the stigmas of difference, and particularly those toward mental illnesses, which inhibit freedoms, namely psychological freedom (Fanon, 1963: 181-233). Such psychological unfreedom may relate to an overpowering sense of existential anguish without much concrete

possibility for the realization of inherent existential freedom. Fanon's formulation of the zones of being as key to colonial relations (Fanon, 1963: 27-33) has had an impact on thinkers since, as discrimination based on difference have largely been related to these zones of being or levels of sub-humanity (Grosfoguel, 2016: 9-15). As a decolonial activist, at the time, Fanon resonated with a cause which he was an outsider to, which seemed to further resonate with Sartre in his writing the preface to *Wretched* (Sartre, 1961; Fanon, 1961), in contemplating the effects of colonialism on the colonist (Sartre, 1961: 21). Sartre's (1961) acknowledgement of the self-de-civilization (Cesaire, 1955) of the west as colonists shows his existential perspective of colonialist Europe headed toward the abyss, the nothingness which they typically stray from (Sartre, 2006 (1961): 155) toward madness. Sartre's preface pleads for the western colonist readers, who need to know the effects of their power and colonial pursuits (Sartre, 2006 (1961): 156), to take up responsibility and reflection as to their affects and lasting dehumanisations. In this effort he refers to the colonized as "our victims" (Sartre, 2006 (1961): 159). Such colonial reflection, if successful, may have lessened the lasting effects of their domination pertaining to global capitalist domination over local agendas being prioritized.

The potentials of existential freedom, within the limits of South African unfreedoms as framed by the colonial power matrix, may be dissected from a decolonial perspective by considering the research questions of this study. Firstly, the limits of existential freedom within the South African context as articulated by Mda and discussed in the chapter's first subsection above: racism, social inequality, state patronage corruption, and political and existential disillusionment. Secondly, the decolonial perspective helps unmask those unfreedoms through an analysis of the colonial matrix of power as present in the South African context. Unfortunately, these first two answers have left the concept of existential freedom seeming to be highly limited, hierarchical and inaccessible, which answers the fourth question in the affirmative of whether the being-for-itself, and the full realization of existential freedom, is limited to certain positionalities of power. This leaves the third research question, having aligned the study with the quietism and absurdism seen in Mda's experiences of persisting voids, on what the current decolonial views of, and hopes, and propositions for freedom are to be answered. As such the idea of freedom for all and under good faith is to be an ideal, not dismissed, to be strived toward in protest, revolution and, in the case of the majority of South African population being stuck in poverty, the ability to be self-sufficient and have control over one's self-determination: in meaning and possibilities. It is important to note that the decolonial

perspective, in moving away from elitist academia, is pragmatic, practical and political by fighting for social justice issues as a fundamental existential responsibility.

5.5 Conclusion

The limits of Existential freedom, as the central investigation of this study, are presented through Mda's (2011) observations of unfreedoms present in the South African context. These include: racism, continuing coloniality, social inequality, state patronage corruption, and political and existential disillusionment. This unfree context is thereby conditioned by its own absurdity, which further limits the possibility of existential freedom, as theorised by Sartre. The South African context of collective unfreedom may be understood as framed by the colonial matrix of power, in its various controls. These systemic unfreedoms reinforce inaccessible freedom as a privilege within a hierarchy of freedom, particularly in terms of poverty and revolution (Arendt, 2018). As such, existential freedom may be considered as an ideal which unfree contexts value in its possibility of self-determination, rather than further hoarded freedoms through perpetuations of poverty and collective unfreedom. The decolonial perspective attempts to construct a humanism in anti-eurocentrism and remembering contextual limits as inherently hierarchical with attempts of finding freedom in the liberation from the colonial and oppressive regimes.

Chapter Six

Conclusion: The Limits of Existential Freedom, in the South African context, under a Decolonial Lens

6. Introduction to chapter

This chapter presents the conclusion of the present study that has deployed a decolonial theoretical and philosophical framework to unmask the limits of Sartre's existential freedom thesis. The narrative of Zakes Mda in *Sometimes there is a Void* (2011) has been deployed to show the limits of Sartrean Existential Freedom, particularly in terms of the post-apartheid South African context. The research problem is approached from the philosophical and theoretical framework of decoloniality in order to unmask unfreedoms and historical dehumanisations as limits to existential freedom fundamental to colonial control. As this study has been guided by the research problem in theory and literature, the qualitative methodology enabled conceptual, interpretive, and philosophical engagement on content, text, and literature. Zakes Mda (2011) narrates how the end of apartheid in 1994 did not deliver freedom but rather a continuation of unfreedom: social inequalities, corruption, racism, crime, political and existential disillusionment. This unfree context is thereby conditioned by its own absurdity and existential disillusionment, which further limits the possibility of existential freedom, as theorised by Sartre. As Sartre's freedom seems accessible only through universalized privilege, the concept of existential freedom may be posed as idealist within collectively unfree contexts. The South African context of collective unfreedom may be understood as framed by the colonial matrix of power (Mignolo, 2008), in its various controls. These systemic unfreedoms reinforce inaccessible freedom as a privilege within a hierarchy of freedom, particularly in terms of poverty and revolution (Arendt, 2018). As such, existential freedom may be considered as an ideal to be valued within unfree contexts in its principle of self-determination, rather than continuing hoarded freedoms through perpetuations of poverty and collective unfreedom. The decolonial perspective attempts to construct a humanism in anti-eurocentrism and remembering contextual limits as inherently hierarchical with attempts of finding freedom in the liberation from the colonial and oppressive regimes.

6.1 Conclusions

This research study investigated the limits of Sartrean existential freedom through the decolonial unmasking of colonial othering, which is applied to the biography of Mda (2011), which explicates unfreedoms, limits and inapplicability of existential freedom, within the country. It has become clear throughout the study that the research questions are entangled under the aim and investigation into the limits of existential freedom. The surface questioning of existentialism gives context to concepts and the privileged positionality from which they arise, in terms of the universalized individualism of Sartre's existentialism. The problematic privileged positionality of the western subject, imperial difference and the colonial binaries ignored therein, are typically universalized, thereby ignorantly perpetuating dehumanisations and discrimination. Each of the unfreedoms noted by Mda align within the colonial matrix of power, thereby systematically keeping a collective unfree in order for a political elite to privilege themselves to meaning-making freedom of self-determination.

The final conclusions and findings of the study may explicate the research questions and corresponding answers. The first research question on how a reading of Mda's biography unmasks limits of Sartre's Existential Freedom may be specified through the unfreedoms particular to the South African context: racism, social inequality, state patronage corruption, and political and existential disillusionment. Each of these modes of unfreedom are rooted in historical colonialism, apartheid, and oppression which continue through the coloniality and controls of the colonial matrix of power. The second research question investigated the limits of Sartrean existential freedom through unmasking historical colonial othering, which continues in the South African context as unfreedoms, noted by Mda (2011) and, framed by the colonial matrix of power. The reading of unfreedoms and absurdism in Mda's (2011) biography gave concrete context to historical oppressions as inherent to the post-colonized and fundamentally political existence. These unfreedoms may be understood as limits and obstacles to existential freedom limiting access to those of privilege and power in hierarchy, which is specifically articulated in the universalized individualism of Western dominance in globalism, coloniality and humanism. The third research question, on the potentials for freedom under the decolonial perspective, leaves room for further questions and study to be done, rather than being entirely and sufficiently addressed in the present study.

6.2 Implications for findings and conclusions

The unfreedoms in the South African context, as observed by Mda, are the contextual and existential limits to freedom as they are along the line of the human (Grosfoguel, 2016; Fanon, 1963). These leave conditions of unfreedom entangled in absurdism, quietism, and the feeling of voids as experienced by Mda (2011). While Sartre's privilege granted him access to the freedom of meaning-making for his own existence, once he grew aware of common unfreedom he became an activist against such unfreedoms and for collective wellbeing and an ideal of freedom. This study must reluctantly concede freedom to be an ideal to strive toward, rather than naïvely maintaining an inherent existential freedom as entailing self-sufficiency and self-determinism. The decolonial perspective, and that of critical diversity theories, may thereby unmask and deconstruct the conceptuality and epistemology of power which reinforces narratives of unfreedom, in order to inform action of disruption. These critical perspectives may importantly move away from elitist academia, through being pragmatic, practical, and political by fighting for social justice issues as fundamental to existential responsibility.

This study has explored the concept of freedom from the hopes and theoretical ideals of existentialism, to the more pragmatic hierarchical experiences and accounts of freedom. As such it may be important to retrace these concepts in context. The problem of access to freedom is not simply the social conditions of one's facticity and context, but the limitations in the classification of the colonized subhuman (Cesaire, 1955; Fanon, 1952 & 1963). This classification is historically seen in oppression, exploitation, marginalization, dehumanization, disempowerment, and largely continues in cultural imperialism (Young, 1990), coloniality and the colonial legacies and controls of the colonial matrix of power. Many instances of power go unchecked in the disempowerment of others, particularly as noted by Michelle Obama (2018): "Dominance, even the threat of it, is a form of dehumanization; It's the ugliest kind of power" (Obama, 2018: 408). The hierarchical binary of colonizer-colonized presents a contrast between those of power and privilege who have access to consciousness of alienation (Fanon, 1963: 116; Sartre, 1943), and the lesser but wider experience of unreflective consciousness in unfreedom within colonial difference. In post-apartheid South Africa, the larger population exists in poverty, legacies of historical oppressions and collective unfreedom. Freedom, in any sense such as political freedom, freedom from want, freedom to be free, and existential freedom, is greater than liberation from particular oppression and the right to vote. This polarises the

idealistic illusion of post-apartheid decolonized liberation with the reality and nightmare of continuing unfreedoms. Decolonial thinkers such as Grosfoguel (2013) pose the end of colonialism and the possibility of freedom as myths: illusions and ideals to be built and strived toward. Much of the systematic continuation of unfreedoms, as framed by the colonial matrix of power, pose the South African formerly colonized human condition as decimated under a history of dehumanization, thereby needing rebuild and re-empowerment. It is important to emphasize the colonial assertions of power as the freedom to disempower others, rather than the ideal existential freedom "that respects and enhances the freedom of others" (Mandela, 1995: pp. 616–617) within existential responsibility (Sartre, 1943: 574-577).

6.3 Methodological Reflections

The arguments and assertions of this study explored the potentials of existential freedom within the scope and limits of a Critical diversity studies Masters' research report. While the research began with the intentions of affirming existential universality, the decolonial perspective unmasks the naïve myth of post-colonial freedom. In light of the unfreedoms and limits to existential freedom within the South African context, the research aim was met. It may be noted that the inaccessibility and inapplicability of existential freedom seems disappointing, particularly upon learning of Sartre's own awareness of concrete unfreedoms which he later protested. Thereafter, this study sought to explore existential freedom as an ideal. As such the research process should not necessarily be dismissed for its undesired result and conclusion, rather the process has at least partially added to the existing knowledge on existential freedom and concrete freedom beyond liberation. This study could possibly have been clearer in further engagement with Fanon and Cesaire, as had been promised, along with more reading of philosophy of liberation.

6.4 Further Questions this study poses

As previously noted, this study did not sufficiently cover the Decolonial perspective's hopes for and actions toward freedom.

Possible investigation into topics such as: social contracts particularly ignorance and racial contracts as more observable than the ideals of good faith and collective wellbeing, which may venture into ethics and morality. An approach related to ethics may consider self-interest

opposing existential responsibility. This may be clarified as and around the social contracts of collective existential wellbeing. Can there be existential freedom without ethics?

A topic which has been raised in the epistemological dominance of the western subject is the issue of epistemological equality and representation, which may be interesting to explore in terms of artificial intelligence (AI) in a decolonial context, particularly whether AI could perpetuate unfreedoms?

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