

CHAPTER 1: THE TRAJECTORY OF LIFE WRITING IN 'A LAND DIVIDED'

Background

The history and place of autobiographies in Zimbabwe has been shaped and influenced by what Mair and Sithole (2002: 21) call “four main influences: the pre-colonial, the colonial, the armed liberation struggle, and Zanu-PF rule”.¹ These four streams have had a bearing on the socio-cultural, geo-political and economic spheres in Zimbabwe, and have resulted in what has been aptly described as “extreme polarities” (Palmer and Birch 1992: 3). In their book, *Zimbabwe: a Land Divided*, Palmer and Birch (1992) describe Zimbabwe as a land of diametrically opposite elements in all spheres of life. They argue that Zimbabwe is a land divided by geography, climate, race, class, ethnic differences, gender, agriculture, law and history, and culture. The polarities are manifested in the disparities between ‘high and low-lying areas’, ‘regions of high rainfall and drought prone areas’, ‘black and white’, ‘rich and poor’, ‘Shona and Ndebele’, ‘women and men’, ‘commercial and peasant farmers’, ‘white-owned and black-owned land’, and ‘Zimbabwean and Western music, dance and art’ (ibid.: 3). These binaries reflect Zimbabwe’s socio-political and economic culture and are in turn reflected in the trajectory that has been charted by autobiographical writings in this divided land.

Autobiographical writings in their diverse forms have a traceable history in Zimbabwe’s literary trajectory dating back to the period before the invasion and occupation of Zimbabwe by the British South Africa Company (BSAC) in 1890. According to Chennells (2005: 131), the earliest life writings began with “the narratives and diaries of missionaries, travelers and hunters”. They took the form of travelogues and hunting narratives, and provided a model of what came to be known in European literary canon as “imperial romances” and adventure writing meant to promote, laud, celebrate and consolidate British imperial culture (ibid.: 131).

¹ The history of Zimbabwe’s political landscape can be traced back to the year 1890, commonly known as the watershed period, which saw the British invading and occupying Zimbabwe. Described by Cecil John Rhodes as the jewel of Africa, Zimbabwe became Southern Rhodesia. The 1890 occupation of Zimbabwe was met with resistance by the indigenous people, first in 1893 and then in 1896-7, in what came to be known as the First ‘Chimurenga’ (Liberation) war. This was followed by the Second ‘Chimurenga’ war 1966-80, which, led to the attainment of Independence on 18 April 1980. Ninety years of British colonial rule were followed by 36 years of rule by President Robert Mugabe and Zanu-PF. Under the stewardship of Robert Mugabe, the history of Zimbabwe has been revised in the service of the governing Zanu-PF party. A ‘patriotic’ version of history, disseminated by intellectuals and state media, has distorted legitimate history. See Blessing-Miles Tendi’s *Making History in Mugabe’s Zimbabwe: Politics, Intellectuals and the Media* (2010); T. Ranger’s “Nationalist Historiography, Patriotic History and the History of the Nation” (2004).

Chennells (2005) further contends that the early published autobiographical accounts were written by missionaries, travelers and hunters such as Robert Moffat (1856), David Livingstone (1857), William Baldwin (1863) and Frederick Sellouts (1893). Despite making a godly claim to truthful description of events with clarity and precision by invoking the detached objectivity of science in giving meaning to Africa's topography, the writers saw things in Manichean binaries: white as opposed to black, good versus evil, western civilization versus African backwardness and literacy versus illiteracy, among others. Such narratives have earned themselves the label, 'white autobiographies in Zimbabwe' as opposed to autobiographies of and by White Zimbabweans (Chennells 2005). Aside from purely economic and expansionist influences, the history of British invasion and occupation of Zimbabwe was also motivated and shaped by the trajectory of, largely "White" autobiographical narratives for the "main[ly] White book-buying public" (Roberts 1982: 139). The objective of these autobiographical travel and hunting narratives was not just to keep a personal record of one's experiences in Africa, but to contribute to the larger imperial narrative and to prepare England for its imperial destiny.

Similarly, the rise of Black Nationalism gave birth to autobiographical narratives by black Zimbabweans as a way of forming black nationalistic consciousness and a subversion of the dominant version of white imperial history. This speaks to McAdams' (2008: 247) view that "[w]ithin any society, different stories compete for dominance and acceptance [...] and reflect, in one way or another, prevailing patterns of hegemony in the economic, political, and cultural contexts wherein human lives are situated". While power elites may privilege certain life stories over others, "people may resist dominant cultural narratives, give voice to suppressed discourses, and struggle to bring marginalized ways of imagining and telling lives to the cultural fore" (McAdams: 247). Commenting on what he calls African modes of self-writing, Mbembe (2002a) argues that by anchoring themselves on three phases of history namely; slavery, colonialism and apartheid, African self-writings have tended to follow a fixed, racialised tradition of victim narratives of loss. Therefore, titles such as *Crisis in Rhodesia* (Shamuyarira 1965), *An Ill-fated People: Zimbabwe before and after Rhodes* (Vambe 1972), *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* (Vambe 1976) and *Roots of a Revolution: Scenes from Zimbabwe's Struggle* (Sithole 1977) were efforts to make sense of lives lost, to borrow from Mbembe (2002a).

However, the same narratives were created outside of, and in opposition to, dominant cultural modes, and marked the construction of counter-narratives (Bamberg and Andrews 2004). Autobiographical narratives by black Zimbabweans took the form of a counter-discourse to the imperial literary canon whose sole objective was to preach the imperial gospel of domination. Here, we are confronted with literary polarity shaped by race, with white writers and imperial narratives on the one hand, and black writers and their narratives on the other. The narratives by black writers set out to contest colonial narratives of the past in order to open new spaces for the recreation of memory and representation of the self and the collective other. It is however, important to note that the ‘other’ is not always authored as a “collective”. It could be a powerful individual/coterie with which the autobiographer is in contest. Commenting on the racial antagonism in the narratives of both Black and White writers, Collin Style (1985: 55) argues that young black writers have “faced the white squarely, and incorporated him, for good or ill, in [their] work” while White writers “are equally deficient in their handling of the black”. According to Style, the antagonism “stems from a certain [mutual] cultural distaste created by the class divisions of the society” (ibid.: 55).

The transition from white colonial rule to Zanu-PF rule on 18 April 1980, after a decade and half of what is known in Zimbabwean history as the Second Chimurenga [Liberation War], saw the emergence of “Zanu-PF narrative(s) of the past” (Ranger 2005: 218). The earliest writer of these “nationalist narratives”, and “patriotic history” (Bhebe and Ranger: 2001) was Maurice Nyagumbo the author of, *With the People: An Autobiography from the Zimbabwean Struggle* (1980). However, the early 1980s witnessed relative quiet and dearth on the literary front in terms of life writing, but academic research, and novels, poetry and drama flourished.² The publishing of Nkomo’s *The Story of My Life* in 1984 by Methuen in London, and its subsequent ban in 1985 by the new black government of Zimbabwe meant that voices that wanted to make important personal statements on the country’s political

²Works such as Zimunya and Kadhani’s (1981) *And Now the Poets Speak: Poems Inspired by the Liberation Struggle*, Martin and Johnson’s (1981) *The Struggle for Zimbabwe: the Chimurenga War*, Ranger’s (1985) *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War*, Lan’s (1985) *Guns and Rain, Guerrillas and Spirit Mediums in Zimbabwe*, Nyamubaya’s (1986) *On the Road Again*, Hove’s (1988) *Bones*, Moore-King’s (1988) *White Man, Black War* and Chinodya’s (1989) *Harvest of Thorns*, among others, were published in the first decade of independence in Zimbabwe. However, the same cannot be said about life writing in Zimbabwe during the same period.

process using autobiographies would be suppressed.³ The suppression was due in part to the genre of autobiography itself; that it is a “self-portrait” (Howarth 1980: 85), whose claim to truthful depiction of the life of the narrator has landed itself what Olney (1980: 4) calls “a fatal attraction” of its critics. In the case of Joshua Nkomo’s political autobiography, we begin to see the changes in the contestatory aspect of political autobiographies by blacks writing about the post-1980 period compared to those writing against colonialism in the pre-1980 period who contested against white writing, but not black politics and black rule. Described as “a personal record of a life that has played a part in [Zimbabwe’s political] history” (Nkomo 2001: xv), Nkomo’s political autobiography was banned because it contradicted an emerging dominant narrative of Zanu.

Staunton (1997: 1–2) astutely describes the 1980s period in Zimbabwe as follows:

[I]t was a period of adjustment, of quiet grief, of mourning, of pain, [and] peace was too precious, hope for a black government too great, reconciliation too precarious, war and memory of war too painful for anyone to want to immediately probe the complexities of war [and its aftermath], ... [thus] in the early years of independence there was an expectation that Zimbabwean Authors would write books that proclaimed the socialist message; didactic novels.

Notably, the lack of clarity and uncertainty about the socio-political and economic ideology and policy of the new government resulted in people adopting a wait-and-see approach. There was censorship and self-censorship when it came to life writings. More so, the memories of the brutality of the war of liberation were still fresh in the minds and hearts of the people. Added to this was the tension and subsequent unleashing of indiscriminate terror by the Fifth Brigade in Matabeleland and parts of Midlands between 1981 and 1987. Consequently, the lull on the literary front, especially with regards political autobiographies was inevitable because “there was enough in the post-war atmosphere to encourage active self-restriction” (Kaarsholm 2005: 4)

However, the situation would change dramatically in the post-2000 era, which has been described by Wild (2010) as the “times of crisis” in Zimbabwe. Wild adds that “a country that was once hailed as a model of political and economic progress in Africa [...] is now considered to be on its deathbed”. This phase in the socio-political and economic history of

³ The haunting effect of Nkomo’s political autobiography, which led to its banning is discussed in detail in Chapter 6 of this research project.

Zimbabwe is popularly known as the “Third Chimurenga” [Third Liberation War] period. For the first time in two decades, the Zanu-PF hegemony was challenged by the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) founded in September 1999. Secondly, Zanu-PF’s attempt to impose a new Constitution was rejected in a Constitutional Referendum through a 'NO' vote⁴ which shook the walls of Zanu-PF, which had never tasted defeat. Seen as an act of provocation and retrogression, the 'NO' vote resulted in the land occupation by the people of Svosve village. This was followed by numerous pieces of legislation that were meant to ensure the continued supremacy of Zanu-PF by stifling freedoms of expression, association and the press.⁵

Subsequent to the promulgation of repressive laws, Zimbabwe witnessed numerous arrests of journalists working for the private media and the ultimate bombing of the *Daily News* printing press in January 2001. State security agents and state machinery were used to silence any person, institution or organization that was perceived to be hostile to the state. Ironically, this post-2000 period, with its severe formalized political repression, would be the one to manure the production of against-the-grain life-writings, instead of the 1980s and 1990s. One could argue that in the context of severe repression, the book, in the form of biographies and autobiographies became the escape route, the machinery used by writers to express their dissatisfaction and to challenge the Zanu-PF dominant narrative, which was established through Mugabe’s collection of speeches; *Inside the Third Chimurenga: Our land is our*

⁴ The 'NO' vote of 1999, was believed, within Zanu-PF circles, to have been largely sponsored by the white commercial farmers in order to block the proposed provisions in the Draft Constitution, on Compulsory Land Acquisition without compensation. It must be mentioned that after the expiration of the 1990 grace period entrenched in the Lancaster House Constitution, which stopped the Black Government from compulsory acquisition of land owned by former Rhodesians for redistribution to blacks for purposes of agriculture, the British Government reneged on its promise to provide funds for compensation. This meant that even with the willing-buyer willing-seller policy, the Zanu-PF government found it difficult to acquire land because the Constitution provided for the compensation of the ‘current’ land occupiers who were largely white.

⁵ For further reading on the “Third Chimurenga” phase, see the article “The Chickens Have Come Home to Roost”, *The Herald* of 21 October 1999. The Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment No. 17 Bill was passed into Law on 16 December 1999. See *Hansard* Volume. 26 No. 35. The Bill provided for compulsory acquisition of land from White commercial farmers, with Britain providing compensation for physical infrastructure developments. See also R. G. Mugabe’s Unity Day Interview with Super Mandiwanzira, Wednesday 22 December, 2000 (*ZBC Archives*). Other Bills promulgated by Mugabe’s Zanu-PF are, Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA; 09 November 2004) and its subsequent amendment on 18 December 2007 (*Hansard*); The Public Order and Security Act (POSA as amended on 18 December 2007); the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) Bill of 25 November 2004, which was meant to restrict, control and monitor operations of NGOs that were believed to be working in partnership with the opposition MDC to effect regime change. These laws had one objective; to curtail media freedom and freedoms of association and assembly.

Prosperity (Mugabe 2001). This collection of Mugabe's Third Chimurenga speeches is the founding document of a discourse being countered by a large output of biographies and autobiographies, chief among them, *Mugabe: Power, Plunder and the Struggle for Zimbabwe* (Meredith 2002), *Simon Vengayi Muzenda and the Struggle for and Liberation of Zimbabwe* (Bhebhe 2004), *The Face of Courage: Morgan Tsvangirai* (Hudleston 2005) and *Dinner with Mugabe: the untold story of a freedom fighter who became a tyrant* (Holland 2008).

While these life-writings were meant to counter Zanu-PF narratives of sanctions and give voice to an otherwise voiceless society, Gono's (2008) autobiography *Casino Economy: Extraordinary Measures for Extraordinary Circumstances* came as a counter-measure. It contested very crucial political processes and established him fighting in the same trenches with Mugabe and the entire Zanu-PF team. However, even the repressive laws of the Zanu-PF government could not silence the emerging new voices, which operated through the machinery of the book. They were especially prominent among minorities, the economically and politically disadvantaged, and other marginalized groups in society. Commenting on the anti-Zanu-PF and anti-Mugabe biographical and autobiographical narratives, Muchemwa (2005: 195) posits that "autobiographical writing – especially when combined with journalism [...] becomes an effective way of countering false mediations and incomplete [one sided and subjective] representations found in official historical narratives". As such, these narratives were seen as a serious threat to state security, hence, Mahoso (2011), a Mugabe loyalist, described them as dangerous weapons of mass deception.

In this contestation for space, minority women writers, such as Fay Chung (2006) and Judith Todd (2007), added their voices to the machinery of autobiographical narratives of the time. There was also an upshot of life writings by some Zimbabweans who until now had used other media platforms such as newspapers, political organisations, public gatherings and the labour union movement to express their displeasure at the manner in which Zimbabwe was being run down. These are Nkomo (republished in 2001), Nyarota (2006), Tekere (2006), Mhanda (2011) and Tsvangirai (2011) among others. Ian Smith's (1997) narrative falls immediately before the year 2000, but fits within this category because of its preoccupation with a deep desire to depict a nation that fits Veit-Wild's (2010) description of Zimbabwe's fall from the proverbial 'riches to rags'. It seems by breaking the silence, they are laying claim to a truth that has been hidden for decades, and are, therefore, speaking of a nation and a history that has gone wrong. It is this selection of political autobiographies by a cross

section of Zimbabweans that will be the focus of this research project, primarily to examine the strategic uses of narrative in this machinery of autobiographies to present the self and other.

What I find striking about the history of autobiographical narratives in Zimbabwe from the 19th Century to the 21st Century is the revelation that autobiographical narratives have been largely influenced by the historical trajectory of Zimbabwe. Each historical phase, right from the pre-colonial through the colonial to the struggle for liberation, independence, the post-independence period and the Third Chimurenga phase, has had its fair share of autobiographical narratives, and these have been largely utilitarian. Therefore, the theory of intentionality in autobiographical narratives finds fulfillment in the utilitarian nature and role of these narratives in Zimbabwe. It is against this background that this research project critically analyses selected political autobiographies from Zimbabwe with a view to bringing out how the machinery of autobiography has been used strategically to present contesting images of the self and other.

The machinery of autobiography: a contextual meaning

The publication and launch of Edgar Tekere's autobiography *A Lifetime of Struggle* (2007) was met with what Jonathan Moyo (2007a) called, "hysterical reaction", which betrayed fear. The "paranoid" reaction of Mugabe's propagandists, argues Moyo, was evidence that the world of power was finally collapsing around Mugabe and his hangers on. He further argues that Tekere's autobiography made three telling disclosures that were seen by Mugabe's propagandists as "fatal to whatever [was] left of Mugabe's reputation and legacy" (Moyo 2007a). However, Mugabe's dismissive reaction and unsavory response to Tekere's political autobiography and the excitement it caused provides the contextual meaning of the machinery of autobiography in this study. He describes Tekere's autobiography as a political campaigning tool used by Tekere and his publisher, and argues that "you can't become a president by using a biography. [...] The machinery is not biographies; the people who vote for us are ordinary people of Zimbabwe. We have a congress that will decide [...], not the (book)" (Muleya 2007).

Therefore, the word "machinery" should be understood in the context of the reaction of Mugabe's 'propagandists', the media frenzy following the launch of Tekere's book, Moyo's arguments, Mugabe's response and the public reception of Tekere's autobiographical

narrative. The reception was described by Mandaza as “unexpected” as the “project” had successfully sold 500 copies in one week. Drawing on this view of political autobiographies as political projects, tools and weapons, I pursue the idea of the machinery of autobiographies through notions of writing strategies, book production and circulation in selected political life stories in Zimbabwe. The critical term “machinery” is explored in detail through five narrative strategies which are also interrelated thematics in this study. These are authentication, patronage of authorship, historical recurrence and narcissistic rage, erasure and palimpsest and hauntology and spectrality. The thematics also provide the basis for selection and exclusion of the primary texts for this study. By exploring the machinery of autobiography through the above narrative strategies and thematics, I bring to the fore what Foucault elsewhere (1979: 189) calls “the power of writing” in political autobiographies. Foucault contends that compared to political power, writing plays “a certain political function [...] but it is a quite different technique of power” (Ibid.: 192). It is this political function and power of writing that I explore in selected political autobiographies in order to bring out how the machinery of autobiography is a critical concept in Zimbabwean literature, history and politics.

Harlow (1987: 125) concurs with Foucault when in her delineation of resistance literature she asserts that writers “present a serious threat to the authorities’ who attempt to control the ‘power of writing’”. The objective of the power of writing, According to Harlow, is to “alter the relationships of power which are maintained by coercive, authoritarian systems of the state control and domination” (Ibid.:133). Therefore, the writer’s power with words can be consciously used by the writer who calculates the consequences of that power (133). It is when the power of writing is seen as a threat, alters relationships, challenges the status quo and is calculated to cause effect and affect that the term “machinery of autobiography” deserves interrogation through the writing strategies used in selected political autobiographies. Even though Mugabe attempts to downplay the power that the book has, his words betray his awareness of the power and influence that the book possesses and how in the case of selected political autobiographies, it is being used as a weapon for political campaign. Thus, my take on the machinery of autobiography is drawn from the arguments presented by Foucault, a theorist of discourse, and Harlow an analyst of resistance literature, on the power of writing. The selected political autobiographies share commonality of themes that bring out what I am calling the “machinery” of the book.

‘Strategic uses of narrative’

Strategic use of narrative, like machinery of autobiography, is military imagery that should be appreciated in the context of the power of writing. As with machinations, the word strategy speaks of the intrigues, the maneuverings and scheming, plotting even, in the way writers deliberately, selectively and with motive and intentionality, use writing and language as weaponry. The word strategic, therefore, should be understood in the context of Sun Tzu’s (2000) *Art of War*, wherein it means tactical, intentional and deliberately calculated to cause, to affect and effect. The argument here is that, there is deliberate and strategic deployment of narrative, calculated and intentional selection of “resuscitated memory” (Nyambi 2014: 1) in political autobiographies to present an image of the self and other that the autobiographer wants. Hence Muponde (2009: 76), drawing on the theory of intentionality says, “memory, as history, is written as needed. It is not compulsory to produce all of it”. That deliberate selection of what to remember, the “flashbulb memories” (Conway 1990: 61), is the strategic element of the thesis topic.

Aim

This research project critically analyses different narrative strategies that have been used to construct and present the self and other in selected political autobiographies from Zimbabwe. The aim is to establish how, in the face of severe formalized political repression, the machinery of autobiography has been used as political weaponry in Zimbabwe. Thus I have selected political autobiographies from the period 1970 to 2011. This period covers Zimbabwe’s political trajectory from the anti-colonial second liberation struggle to the third Chimurenga phase, and has generated wide ranging perspectives from writers of diverse races, sexes and ethnic origins. Therefore, the research considers Lawrence Vambe’s *An Ill-fated People: Zimbabwe before and after Rhodes* (1972) and *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* (1976); Ian Douglas Smith’s (1997) *The Great Betrayal: The Memoirs of Ian Douglas Smith*; Joshua Nkomo’s (1984, republished 2001) *The Story of My Life*; Edgar 2boy Tekere’s (2007) *A Lifetime of Struggle*; Geoffrey Nyarota’s (2006) *Against the Grain: Memoirs of a Zimbabwean Newsmen*; Judith Todd’s (2007) *Through the Darkness: A Life in Zimbabwe*; Wifred Mhanda’s (2011) *Dzino: Memories of a freedom Fighter*; and Morgan Richard Tsvangirai’s (2011) *At the Deep End*.

The study also puts to the test the seemingly definitive proposition by McDougal (1994: 42) that “an autobiography is the true story of a person’s life, told by that person”. While the question of truth in autobiography is a contentious issue, it is the processes of telling, narrating and projecting the self and other that this study explores with a view to establishing how political autobiographies have been published as weapons in Zimbabwean politics. By focusing on the politics of narrating the self and other in political autobiographies, this study seeks to add to existing research on life writing in Zimbabwe, which claims that there is a dialectical relationship between auto/biographical writing and national history. I have here in mind Javangwe’s (2011) doctoral thesis which argues that there are narrative and ideological disjunctures between experiencing life and narrating these experiences. This study takes the argument further by focusing on the different narrative strategies used by autobiographers to project the self as the center of narrative identity, and the other. By introducing military imagery such as “machinery” and “strategic” in my discussion of political autobiographies, I am proposing a new way of giving critical attention to how political autobiographies have been deployed, in militaristic fashion, as more than just personal histories but political weapons as well, in Zimbabwe. I am therefore, putting forward the argument that this strategic deployment of narration for political purposes has resulted in the machinery of autobiographies whose narrative strategies give them a uniquely Zimbabwean quality which is driven by political intentionality.

The specific objectives of this study are thus:

- To examine the range of narrative strategies used by selected Zimbabwean political autobiographers and how these strategies raise questions around:
 - i) the idea of the self and other,
 - ii) the theory and practice of autobiographical strategy,
 - iii) authorship, compilation and narrative identity in autobiography
 - iv) authenticity, nostalgia and romanticism in autobiography,
 - v) historical recurrence and narcissistic elements in autobiography,
 - vi) hauntology and spectrality in autobiography; and
- To reorient and broaden the direction of the criticism of Zimbabwean literature so that autobiographical narratives by Zimbabweans can be seen as a key genre in exploring a people’s history from the point of view of the self and other.

Thus, the study has identified five distinct and yet overlapping and complementary thematic frames within which diverse images and constructions of the self and other can be explored and appreciated. These, can be summarized as follows: authentication as a narrative strategy when one is writing against the official grain in a colonial setting; literary and political patronage in the creation and writing of political autobiographical narratives as projects; the deployment of narcissistic rage and historical recurrence as narrative and thematic tools in defense of the self; the uses of erasure and palimpsest, the authority of presence and converging voices by influential minority whites to deconstruct and reconstruct narratives and histories of the liberation struggle; and hauntology and spectrality as narrative strategies of resisting ruin and ruination. These seemingly different thematic frames are, nonetheless, complementary and demonstrate the interconnectedness of the different narrative strategies used in the construction and representation of the self and other in Zimbabwe's political autobiographies (c.f. Muponde 2015). The five thematic frames also have a bearing on the way my study is structured. Each chapter in this study has drawn from one of these thematic and narrative tendencies.

Rationale

Discussions on autobiographical narratives in Zimbabwe have been dealt with in some literary works before but these have largely focused on autofiction. This is exemplified by Levin and Taitz's essay "Fictional Autobiographies or Autobiographical Fictions?" in Veit-Wild's (ed.) collection *Emerging Perspectives on Dambudzo Marechera* (1999), and an essay on Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* as a "fragmented autobiography" in *Teachers Preachers and Non-believers: A Social History of Zimbabwean Literature* by Veit-Wild (1991). While I acknowledge the fact that there exist shareable writing strategies across genres of autofiction and life writing such as biographies and autobiographies, the focus of my study is not autofiction. I am interested in overt political autobiographies that do not pretend to be fictional. This is the basis for the selection of my primary texts for this study and the exclusion of others. The selection is deliberately motivated by the following different but interrelated thematics; authentication, patronage of authorship, narcissistic rage and historical recurrence, erasure, palimpsest and converging voices, and hauntology and spectrality.

The resurgence of interest in political autobiography in Zimbabwe has resulted in works by Chennells (2009), Muponde (2009), Vambe (2009), Jabangwe (2011) and Hove and Masemola (2014) among others. This research project is motivated by a desire to add my voice to existing research by investigating the political utility of selected political autobiographies in Zimbabwe and the effect it has on the narrative strategies used to present the self and other. Drawing on the theories of narrative identity and autobiographical strategy, which are discussed under theoretical framework (See pages 27–34), I examine the role of political autobiographies as political tools, interrogate the issue of patronage of authorship, and explore authentication strategies in autobiography by critically analyzing elements of nostalgia and romanticism. I also critique autobiographical narratives as a key genre in understanding a nation's history through the lenses of hauntology and spectrality, historical recurrence and, the authority of presence and converging voices.

The decision to focus on political autobiographies and memoirs for purposes of this research project, given the diversity of life documents, was necessitated by the need to critically interrogate further the observation by Allport (1942: 95) that, the autobiography is “the document of life par excellence”, chronicling as it does the past and contemporaneous flow of private, personal and public events that are significant to the writer. Fifty two years later, the same observation would be repeated by McDougal (1994: 42), albeit in different words when he said, “an autobiography is the true story of a person's life, told by that person”. Perhaps the most obvious, though rarely talked about, tenet of autobiographical narratives is summarized by Smith and Watson (2010: 10) as follows: that they perform “several rhetorical acts” for their authors – such as “justifying their own perceptions, upholding their reputations, disputing the accounts of others, settling scores, conveying cultural information and inventing desirable futures among others”. As such, political autobiographies are a goldmine of personal and private life incidents, and rummaging through them can be particularly rewarding, especially if one intends to establish their political utility in a politically polarized environment like that in Zimbabwe, by examining the different narrative strategies used to present the self and in so doing, the other.

Granted that autobiographies are ‘subjective’ documents, we still have to concede that they are ‘fair’, honest documents driven by controlled subjectivity which are the hallmarks of life documents. They derive authority from the “presence” of the self-writer, who “records nothing that she/[he] has not directly experienced [heard or seen]” (Chennells 2009: 98).

Besides reliance on the physical presence of the self writer, autobiographical narratives are “work(s) of memory” (Muponde 2009: 74), and memory makes deliberate and strategic recollection of events and experiences according to the motive and intention of the self writer, hence, the disciplined and controlled subjectivity of the genre. As such, the alleged “fabrications and misrepresentations” (Muponde 2009: 74) in self-writings constitute the very modes of narration that this research examines critically, as a way of bringing out the machinations of autobiography and how these expose what the theory of intentionality calls the self writer’s motive. For these reasons, political autobiography has been chosen as the focus of this research project.

Furthermore, in Zimbabwe’s literary scene, autobiographies, especially by politicians, are a whole battery of research tools that until recently were widely ignored and neglected in research, but which have enormous potential for exploring social and political experiences in humanistic fashion. Coullie, Meyer, Ngwenya and Olver (2006: 62), use diction such as “under-reflected”, “dispersed” and “neglected” to show the scarcity of critical attention to autobiography. This does not in any way imply that no significant research has been carried out in the area of life documents especially biographies and autobiographies in Zimbabwe. Quite some work exists. Examples are: Javangwe’s (2011) extensive doctoral thesis that focuses on constructions of the self and nation in Zimbabwe’s political auto/biographies, and Hove and Masemola’s (2014) book which explores strategies of representation in auto/biography. Given this resurgence of interest in autobiographical narratives, I wish to add my voice to already existing research on life writing by focusing on the machinery of political autobiographies in Zimbabwe. My study interrogates the narrative strategies used to construct the self and other in selected political autobiographies that share different but interrelated themes.

In doing so, I am cognizant of Rathbone’s (2011) observation that some existing research on life writings in Africa, especially on prominent political figures like Robert Mugabe and Nelson Mandela have tended to be accounts which either indict or praise. Michael (2004: 1), also argues that these polarities have raised the question of “whether African [auto]biography must always reflect the extremes of hagiography or demonization [...]?” The arguments by Michael and Rathbone raise issues of subjectivity and narration in the construction and representation of the self and other in auto/biographical narratives. Drawing on the arguments by Rathbone and Michael my study brings in a divergent way of looking this subjectivity, the

polarities of indictment and praising, and hagiography and demonization as narrative strategies that are deployed by life writers in order to create the machinery of autobiographies in Zimbabwean politics.

This flies in the face of Allport (1942) and McDougal (1994)'s perception of the autobiographical narrative as "the document of life par excellence" and "the true story of a person's life, told by that person" respectively. The two views ignore the utility of political auto/biography in Africa. This invites a robust and nuanced debate on the political role and function of auto/biography in Africa. What Michael sees as extremes of hagiography and demonization constitute the range of narrative strategies that are deployed by autobiographers in what I am calling the machinery of autobiography Zimbabwe. It is here that theories of narrative identity and autobiographical strategy have been applied in the search for motive in the construction and representation of the self and other in selected political autobiographies. I put forward the argument that autobiographical narratives in Zimbabwe can and have served as research tools into personal and national history, and as political tools used by autobiographers to drive personal and national agendas.

Autobiographical narratives by Zimbabweans, especially in the post 2000 era, reflect the polarities of hagiography and demonization. Black autobiographers like Nkomo (1984), Tekere (2006), Nyarota (2007) and Mhanda (2011) betray bitterness that puts their writings between the thin line of hagiography and demonization. In the same vein, white writers such as Alexandra Fuller (2001), *Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight: An African Childhood*; Peter Godwin (2005), *The Fear: Robert Mugabe and the Martyrdom of Zimbabwe*; and Douglas Rodgers (2010), *The Last Resort: A Memoir of Mischief and Mayhem on a Family Farm in Africa* among others, express a common objective and theme namely; the desire to explain to the world why and how Zimbabwean whites have become the forsaken race of Robert Mugabe's 'anger' and 'madness'. These binaries of hagiography and demonization have also manifested themselves in the reception and sometimes negative criticism of these autobiographies. Nyarota has been dismissed as a liar whose autobiography is full of fabrications and distortions. Nkomo's narrative has been described as missing the conventional mode of autobiography as it is more about Mugabe than Nkomo himself, while critics of Mhanda have accused him of being a betrayer of the struggle. Tekere on the other hand is viewed as the 'drunkard' whose book received a barrage of hysterical criticism from Mugabe's loyalists.

Such negative criticism, which borders more on personality attack than objective critical appreciation of autobiographical narratives in Zimbabwe smacks of a deliberately designed attempt to counter the said narratives without taking into consideration theories of narrative identity and autobiographical strategy, which essentially bring out issues of intentionality and functionality of text. It is on the basis of this glaring critical vacuum that this study finds justification because I evaluate the critical reception of selected autobiographies in order to establish what it says about selected theories of autobiography in relation to autobiographical narratives in Zimbabwe. I believe that autobiographical narratives in Zimbabwe possess unique narrative strategies that have to do with their functionality within Zimbabwe's various historical and political contexts. These unique qualities, which are yet to be explored include authentication strategies, literary patronage, narcissistic rage, historical recurrence, converging voices and hauntology, and are discussed in detail in subsequent chapters.

For instance, Vambe's (2009) focus on Joshua Nkomo's *The Story of My Life* is on what he perceives to be fictional elements in Nkomo's autobiography. My study seeks to bring a different element to the appreciation of Nkomo's memoir through hauntology and spectrality as analytical lenses. While Muponde's (2009: 69) exploration of the memoirs of Nyarota as an expose` of "self-folklorisation", brings out Nyarota's narcissism, I will argue further that the kind of narcissistic rage displayed by Nyarota must be understood within the context of historical recurrence as both a motif and a narrative strategy. Chennells (2009) grapples with the narrative form of Todd's *Through the Darkness as Diary*, and focuses closely on the authority of presence. Even though the focus of Chennells's analysis is the use of narrative, which relates to the focus of this research, my study introduces the idea of converging voices as a new concept and narrative strategy to the appreciation of Todd's narrative.

By bringing together a collection of autobiographies by Zimbabweans of different races, sex, political persuasions and ethnicities, this research project seeks to fill in the void that has been created by the dispersed and under-reflected critical attention to political autobiography. This, I hope will expose the effect and affective role of political autobiographical narratives driven by the motive and intention of the self writer because, as John Moffat once wrote commenting on missionary narratives, "[o]ne is so tempted to write for effect" (Wallis 1945: 151). Thus by exploring the machinery of political autobiographies in Zimbabwe, the research not only extends and adds on to existing research on life-writing in Zimbabwe but also brings in a new dimension to the appreciation of political autobiographies as political

weaponry deployed by their authors in pursuit of personal and national political agendas. It is in the context of this argument that the focus of my research is restricted to the machinery of political autobiographies in Zimbabwe and how these have used different narrative strategy to present the self and other.

Thematic Concerns

This section sketches five broad thematic frames within which the different narrative strategies explored in this study are constructed. These include authentication, literary patronage, narcissistic rage and historical recurrence, the authority of presence and epistemic privilege, and hauntology. By examining the way autobiographical narratives are strategically used to present the self and other, I hope to unearth the nostalgic and narcissistic elements in selected autobiographical narratives and explore how autobiographers deliberately use language and selectively remember events and moments that serve their personal political agendas. These agendas, at both personal and national levels, have been largely political and propagandistic, hence the subjective element of autobiographical narratives through nostalgia and narcissism. Spender (1980: 118) argues that autobiographers “write about intimate experience of being themselves. They are indiscreet, they are too interested in themselves, they write about things that are not important to others, they are egomaniacs”. However, this should not be taken as a weakness, rather it should be taken to mean that self-awareness, and according to Hutcheon (1980: 1) “self-reflective, self-informing, self-reflexive, auto-referential, [and] auto-representational”, are the basic tenets and conditions of autobiographical narratives. As such, in exploring the nostalgic and narcissistic elements in autobiographical narratives, I am conscious of Freud’s (1953) conception of narcissism as the “universal original condition” of man, which makes it the basis of autobiographical narratives, especially those driven by agenda setting, like the ones chosen for this study.

Drawing on historical recurrence as a thematic and narrative strategy, and the thesis proposition that political autobiographical narratives by Zimbabweans have strategically used narration as a weapon through deliberate selection of memory and language in order to drive personal and national agendas, I argue that the autobiography can be seen as a key genre in exploring the history of Zimbabwe from the point of view of the self. Commenting on the historiographical usefulness of autobiographical narratives, Spender (1980: 119) argues, “[i]f all men really have a point of view that looks from inwards outwards, then the true history of

the world would be perhaps a sum of autobiographies”. Alexander (2004: 13) also sees autobiographers as “makers of history who have felt the need to define their own roles in the context of contemporary [and in the case of this study, Zimbabwean] history”. Added to this is Nkomo’s (2001: xv) claim that his story is “a personal record of a life that has played a part in [Zimbabwe’s] history”. It is my argument, therefore, that by writing about themselves, selected Zimbabwean autobiographers are making a claim that as subjects and objects of autobiographies, narrators and protagonists, they have had a significant impact on the historical trajectories that have been realized in Zimbabwe.

Furthermore, consideration has been made in the selection of texts for primary focus, of a white female autobiographer Judith Todd (2007). Being white, the way Todd recollects and chooses to narrate the anti-colonial struggle in Zimbabwe against the backdrop of a Zanu-PF hegemonic narrative of the same struggle hinges heavily on the question of racial origins and the authority of presence. Judith Todd participated in the struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe on the side of black nationalists. She is the daughter of former Rhodesian liberal Prime Minister Garfield Todd, who together with his daughter, was incarcerated by Ian Smith’s government for being sympathetic to and supporting the cause of Black Nationalists. They would both fall out of favour with the new black government of Robert Mugabe until Garfield Todd lost his right to vote in Zimbabwean elections, and Judith Todd mysteriously lost her Zimbabwean citizenship. Incorporating Todd’s narrative enables me to interrogate the narrative strategies she uses to re-construct and represent the self and other in the context of the liberation struggle from the perspective of influential minority whites.

The inclusion of political figures from different political persuasions, such as Smith, Nkomo, Tekere, and Tsvangirai is strategic in that it provides a balanced overview of their experiences in Zimbabwe. Their political narrative voices give the research a unique flair and tone which have been missing in previous researches. They provide the opportunity for one to explore issues of authentication, patronage of authorship, narcissistic rage and historical recurrence, and hauntology. These have been overlooked in previous research, which has largely concentrated on style, the existence or lack thereof, of historical and scientific fact in autobiographies, and personality attacks with a view to dismissing autobiographical narratives as lies and fabrications. I have thus argued that authentication, patronage of authorship, narcissistic rage and historical recurrence, and hauntology as motifs and narrative strategies give credence to the claim that political autobiographical narratives in Zimbabwe

have a unique quality which sets them apart from conventional autobiographies in that they are designed to suit the Zimbabwean context and their narrative intentionality, which is purely political. Hence, the machinery of autobiographies.

In particular, the scope of this study has been narrowed down to an analysis of political autobiographies and memoirs because to include all life documents would make the study unmanageable. The selected autobiographical narratives are all encompassing and rich in content as they include in them the diary, pictures, letters, newspaper cuttings and speeches, all of which contribute to the strategic uses of narrative in the presentation of the self and other. Thus, through this study, I have taken a step closer to the reorientation and broadening of the criticism of Zimbabwean literature so that autobiographical narratives by Zimbabweans can be seen as a key genre in exploring the nation's history from the point of view of the self.

Review of literature related to primary texts

The basis upon which this study finds justification is the conception of Zimbabwe's political autobiographies as weaponry in the fight for political power and recognition. This notion has resulted in the idea of the machinery and machinations of autobiographies in Zimbabwe, which is the thrust of my argument. Added to this is the proposition that there has been strategic use and deployment of narration, in militaristic fashion, to construct and represent the self and other through deliberate and selective application of language and memory in order to drive personal and national agendas. This thesis statement is the launch pad upon which I review literature related to selected primary texts through the following thematics: romanticism and nostalgia; subjective criticism of subjective narratives; narratives of the struggle; authorship in question; and narcissistic elements in autobiographies. Texts have been thematically grouped and reviewed accordingly in order to avoid repetition. The grouping of texts according to themes is not a fixed, rigid and cast in stone exercise. Rather, the thematic categorization has been done cognizant of the fact that themes such as romanticism, nostalgia, subjectivity and narcissism are cross cutting and overlapping in the selected autobiographies. Thus, by classifying texts according to thematics, I intended to create unity between the literature review and thesis chapters because the themes inform the construction of chapter titles. The said thematics and chapter titles are informed by and in turn speak to the thesis claim that autobiographical narratives by a cross section of

Zimbabweans have been used strategically to construct and represent the self and other through deliberate and selective application of language and memory in order to drive personal and national agendas.

Romanticism and nostalgia: Lawrence Vambe's memoirs as history

According to Jarrett-Kerr (1976: 73) Lawrence Vambe's (1972) *An Ill-fated People: Zimbabwe Before and After Rhodes* is "history not merely in its body-shape, but rib-by-rib", in which "Vambe [...] traces his lineage back before the coming of Rhodes [1890], and so gives us a picture of the Shona people in their daily life up to and after the whites' arrival". This view is shared by Afejuku (1988) when he describes Vambe's *An Ill-fated People* as both an autobiography and history, and questions; "[c]an autobiography be history and can history be autobiography at the same time?" (Afejuku 1988: 508). He further argues that "as [an] autobiography, [and] as a literary work that offers us the testimony of a man about himself and people, its value is real. But the literary value itself, if one could really understand the essence of autobiography, appears yet secondary in comparison with the anthropological (and) historical significance". Afejuku (1988) goes on to describe Vambe as the autobiographer, reminiscer and historian who looks back into the past with nostalgia in an attempt to make us see the sharp contrast between what had been before the conquest in 1896 and the post-1896 colonial reality.

Contrary to Jarrett-Kerr (1976) and Afejuku's (1988) descriptive commentaries on Vambe's narrative, in my study of the text, I apply both social commentary and practical criticism, and argue that by combining historical fact and literary creativity, Vambe (1972) created an autobiographical narrative which is rich in content and style whose intention is to write a counter discourse and counter narrative to the denigrations by white self-writers who told the European story in Africa through travelogues. I further suggest that by propaganda of words, an autobiographical narrative such as Vambe's has the power to make or change the circumstances of its time, and thus was written for intentionality. Such an argument speaks to the research topic, "the machinery of autobiography", which raises questions of intentionality in the presentation of the self and other, given that political autobiographies are weapons and instruments used to fight personal battles. Vambe is thus writing for and from effect, something that Jarrett-Kerr (1976) and Afejuku (1988) overlook.

Lawrence Vambe's second narrative *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* (1976) follows the same argument that true history of a nation is a sum of its autobiographies (Spender 1980). Grotper (1976) argues that in spite of its transitory title suggestive of a journey motif from the colonial to independence period and an up-to-date treatment of Rhodesia, the period covered by *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* (1976) is 1930s to 1962. Its narrative focus ends at the time Rhodesia was under Ian Douglas Smith, the author of *The Great Betrayal* (1997), and was moving towards the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in 1965. Shopo (1977: 91) shares the same view when he says that *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* (1976) begins in 1927 when Vambe was ten years old and covers the period up to the early 1960s. The development of the narrative is entrenched in the growth and development of the narrator, thus making it a political bildungsroman. By focusing on the trivialities and shortcomings of coverage vis-à-vis title, Grotper (1976) and Shopo (1977) overlook the relationship between periodisation, narratorial intentionality and functionality of text in a colonial context. That oversight is the focus of my study, wherein I examine Vambe's narrative as a historical memoir whose motive is to reconstruct the history of Zimbabwe and the *VaShawasha* people from the point of view of the self.

Shopo (1977: 91) further suggests that *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* is "both autobiographical and historical". As a work of literature, Vambe's narrative can be read as "part of a Zimbabwean literary response to the colonial situation" (ibid), hence, like its predecessor, it is nationalistic literature. However, as a historical text, argues Shopo (1977: 91), the narrative contributes "to our historical understanding of the condition of black Zimbabweans' existence" in a colonial context. This dual identity of the genre of Vambe's narrative creates a very noticeable element of "artificiality" as he struggles to "strike a balance between events which were objectively significant and those which made a vivid and lasting impression on his mind" (Shopo 1977: 91).

Shopo's observation here is relevant to the thrust of this research, especially when he says,

at the subconscious level *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* is undoubtedly aimed at white readers in order to raise their consciences to the frustrations suffered by the black intelligentsia. It is therefore, not surprising that Vambe shows no definite commitment to any particular political ideology, and thus his political comments can best be summed up as liberal platitudes mingled with self-evident truths. (Shopo 1977: 93)

Elsewhere, Ndebele (1986: 148) bemoans what he calls the pitfalls of protest literature, and denounces it as “unartistic, crude and too political”. He dismisses as fallacy the claim that the end of protest literature is to make the oppressor see himself as evil, and when he does, he will be revolted by his negative image and ultimately will endeavour to change (Ndebele: 1986).

My departure from Ndebele (1986) and Shopo’s (1977) conflicting arguments is that while the target of attack might be primarily white, the strategy of dissemination used by Vambe, might secure unintended audiences – both white and black – who may be persuaded by its content as by its form. I will argue that Vambe’s narrative is driven by motive and intentionality and thus through “transcendence” (Clayton 1987: 1) also known as romanticism or the act of surpassing a limit (ibid) is a counter discourse to Eurocentric historical and autobiographical accounts about Zimbabwe. Apparent here is the suggestion that Vambe’s autobiographical narrative can be examined as a tool for political change, while also serving as an instrument of research into the history of Zimbabwe from the point of view of the self. By grounding my study on Vambe’s two narratives, I am proposing that Vambe adopted the narrative trope of authentication, and heed Achebe’s (1958) philosophical call that we have to go back to where the rain started beating us, if we are to fully understand and appreciate the history of Africa’s pre-colonial past and how it changed with the coming of Europeans.

Patronage of authorship, collusion and complicity

At the heart of autobiographical narratives is the self: the self as the narrator and the narrated; the subject and object of narration, hence the definition of the genre as the true story of a person’s life, told by him/herself. Drawing on this definition of autobiography, I put forward the argument that the issue of authorship of Tekere’s and Tsvangirai’s autobiographies is contentious and requires thorough interrogation. The political autobiography *A Lifetime of Struggle*, (2007) by Tekere, is prefaced with a twenty-five-page introduction by Ibbo Mandaza whose confession and startling revelation about authorship of Tekere’s autobiography requires interrogation as it raises issues of literary and political patronage. “[A]s editors and publishers... we have deliberately tried to steer his [Tekere] account away from personal attacks on his contemporaries, direct rebuttals of ‘unkind’ and ‘false’ statements about given events and episodes outlined in recent autobiographies and

biographies, or open condemnation...”, says Mandaza (2007: 1). This speaks to my proposition about the uniqueness of autobiographical narratives in Zimbabwe as literary weapons used by “*self-writers*” [own emphasis because authorship is in question here] to drive personal and national agendas.

In the same introduction, Mandaza recollects “the endless and numerous sessions during which [he] had to interrogate the man [Tekere], clarify facts and processes, and *edit out* [own emphasis] the angry and unnecessarily provocative” (2007: 25). By his own admission, Mandaza “sanitized” Tekere’s account of his life, and by so doing, robbed the text of its authenticity and the emotionally super-charged tone that Tekere was known for. Furthermore, Mandaza describes Tekere’s account as “part of a project...[funded from] the small grant it received from Ford Foundation in 2000” (2007: 2). As a project, Tekere’s narrative fits into the idea of the machinery of autobiography. Therefore, when Mandaza argues that throughout Tekere’s story, there is “a commendable degree of the kind of frankness and brutal honesty...” (2007: 3), and that “there is more than a tinge of bitterness in Edgar Tekere’s account...” (ibid), I am inclined to question whether the so called ‘frankness’, ‘brutal honesty’ and ‘bitterness’ are Tekere’s or Mandaza’s, considering that Mandaza’s role in the construction of this story was/is poly-faced. He was partly the editor, publisher and “co-author”. This issue of patronage of authorship is explored further in relation to motive, narrative strategy and intentionality in the representation of the self and other in Tekere’s political autobiography. I present the argument that through complicit collaboration of Tekere and Mandaza, we witness the kind of patronage that promotes mutual hosting and hoisting of both the patron and the writer who share a similar motive and political agenda.

Another text where patronage of authorship is practiced is, Morgan Tsvangirai’s *At the Deep End*. The narrative has double narrative voices, that of Tsvangirai the patron and Bango the author, and has invited mixed reactions from cognoscenti across race and nationality. Alec Russell (2011), for instance describes Tsvangirai’s account of the self as “a chilling indictment of the ruthlessness of the securocrats behind Mugabe – and the terrible price Tsvangirai and his followers have paid for challenging him”. He criticizes the narrative for lacking “crisp[y] judgments” (ibid) and attributes this literary and creative weakness to the fact that “[t]he former mineworker is, after all, of the Lech Walsea rather than the Machiavelli school of politics” (p2). Choosing to describe the autobiography as a “manifesto” (p1), which is “turgid, vapid and rapidly pulped” (ibid), Russell (2011) bemoans the elisions

– both deliberate and inadvertent – which result in the narrative being an “accumulation of damning material about Mugabe’s rule” (p2). Russell concludes, albeit with a tinge of irony and sarcasm, that “[f]or a full picture of the MDC leader, the world needs a searching biography to complement his own account (of himself)” (p1).

The review by Russell raises the interesting issue of authorship which is an area that I explore in depth, given the fact that Tsvangirai’s autobiographical narrative was supposedly written by ‘himself’ “with T. William Bango”. The problematic here, is the apparent difference between the narrative voice that is telling the story and the hand that penned it in a language that is tediously pompous, excessively ornate and grandiloquent, notwithstanding the evidence that when telling his story, Tsvangirai “betrays a sensitivity over his lack of a tertiary education” (Russell 2011: 2).

Stephen Chan (2011) tries so hard to put Tsvangirai on a pedestal as the author of his account and relegates Bango to being a “copy-editor to a type-script drawn from dictation by Tsvangirai” (p1). Chan declares; “this is an account of himself written with T. William Bango, but very much in his own voice” (2011: 1). Interestingly, Chan betrays himself and his studious claim that *At the Deep End* is authentically Tsvangirai’s account when he says that the self-narrative shows that “[h]e does not stop to think, he just [...] acts. This would be marvelous if he also had around him people who were more inclined to think than act, people who could provide balance” (Chan 2011: 3). This probably explains why in the construction of his account of himself, Tsvangirai needed Bango to do the “thinking” and provide “balance”, thus making the issue of patronage of authorship a contentious one requiring further interrogation.

Even though Chan and Russell, in somewhat papal statements, touch on the issue of authorship of Tsvangirai’s autobiography, they are not definitive and exhaustive. They gloss over the patron-client relationship of complicit collaboration in the construction and creation of Tsvangirai’s political memoir. For that reason, I explore this issue further by interrogating how patronage of authorship works as a literary and political strategy in the writing of Tsvangirai’s autobiography. I put forward the argument that through collaborative complicit and collusion between Tsvangirai as the patron and Bango as the author, the political autobiographical narrative of Tsvangirai is created as a political instrument and tool aimed at furthering the political interests of the two. To that end, the idea of the machinery of

autobiography is interrogated through the literary tradition of patronage of authorship to the point where it finds meaning and justification. I also maintain that the kind of patronage exercised by Tsvangirai and Bango, finds extension in the mutual hosting and hoisting of the patron and client as exemplified by Tekere and Mandaza, in which Mandaza plays the dual role of author and patron. Thus a critical awareness of the strategic uses of patronage of authorship as a narrative and political stratagem would bring a distinctive knowledge to the criticism of political autobiographies and the context in and motive under which they were written.

Narcissism and historical recurrence: the paradox of self-representation in autobiographies

From its origins in Greco-Roman stories, narcissism, according to Berman (1990) is not only the dramatization of cold, self-centered love that is fatally and destructively imprisoning, but is a representation of the “fundamental oppositions of human existence [namely]: reality/illusion, presence/absence, subject/object, unity/disunity, involvement/detachment” (Berman; 1990: 1). These binaries and dualisms preoccupy Zimbabwean political autobiographies today, especially in their presentation of the self and other. Ellis (1937: 362) describes narcissism as morbid exaggerations in self-admiration, while Freud (1914) sees it as object love which should be identified with the entire development of the self, right from birth. Lasch (1979) on the other hand contends that narcissism is a culture of competitive individualism which pursues happiness through preoccupation with the self at the expense of the other. Drawing on the ideas of these thinkers and how they have been modified over the years, I argue that there is evidence of narcissistic rage in Smith’s *The Great Betrayal* (1997) and Nyarota’s *Against the Grain*.

In his description of Smith’s memoir *The Great Betrayal* (1997), Downshire (2003) observes that the book is at times one-sided, and over-plays the “good old days” theme. He further contends that there is no denying that in many ways the old “racist” Rhodesia was more liberated than the brutal, squalid regime of Mugabe’s Zimbabwe. Downshire’s racialised perception of Smith’s memoir can be attributed to the fact that the narrative tells the Rhodesian story from the seldom heard perspective of its protagonist and last white racist Prime Minister – Smith himself. It would therefore, be inevitable for Smith not to attack a political system and regime he created and was determined to protect by any means.

This subjective and partisan account of Smith is also exposed by McKenzie (2013), who questions whether the text is a revelation of the truth or a revision of history. As one would expect from an autobiography, McKenzie argues, Ian Smith claims to be the victim of slanderous lies told by both African nationalist leaders and British politicians – with no right of reply. To that end, Smith's memoirs afford the man the opportunity to set the record straight. However, McKenzie challenges Smith's claim that he was committed to working towards black majority rule and dismisses the claim as "hollow" (2013), given the historical fact that Smith's 1976 radio broadcast, "Let me say it again. I don't believe in black majority rule ever in Rhodesia. Not in a thousand years", testifies otherwise.

By glossing over the brutalities of his Rhodesian government, Smith omits information that would otherwise undermine his role as a great leader and victim. Chennells (2005) ignores these omissions, choosing instead, to describe the text as follows; "Smith's narrative observes the nineteenth-century conventions of realism in which the narrator is assumed to have no biases either ideological or personal. He is a detached, objective observer; his prose a transparent medium for the certainties of the past that he accurately recollects" (2005: 136). Such unquestioning loyalty to a work of art, especially an autobiographical account by the most controversial and racist last Prime Minister of Rhodesia, whose objective seems to be to 'set the historical record straight' should be taken with the proverbial pinch of salt. Thus, I argue that written out of bitterness – towards repeated betrayal by Britain, South Africa and eventually the black government of Mugabe – the glaring motifs in Smith's memoir are narcissistic rage and historical recurrence. I examine these issues with a view to consolidating the thesis claim that as a political autobiographical narrative Smith's memoir deploys narcissistic rage and historical recurrence as narrative strategies and thematics in order to serve a personal agenda. Through these strategies and thematics, he boldly claims that he was misunderstood and thus his memoir is an attempt at reconstructing history by deconstructing the misconceptions about him.

Muponde (2009), Moyo (2007b) and Nkala (2007) provide detailed analyses and reviews of Geoffrey Nyarota's memoir, *Against the Grain: Memoirs of a Zimbabwean Newsmen*. Whereas Moyo and Nkala's reviews of the narrative are spiteful in tone, language, content and focus, choosing to look at what Moyo calls "fabrications" and "misrepresentations", "lies" even (2007b), Muponde stands detached from Nyarota as a person and critiques the narrative from a purely literary perspective which recognizes genre and the flash bulb nature

of autobiographical memory as shaped by motive and intentionality. Muponde (2009: 76) argues that “memory, as history, is written as needed. It is not compulsory to produce all of it. It is a performance: the context and circumstances structuring that context are more important than the mere reproduction of a compliant ‘record’ (as Moyo dictates)”.

Muponde notes that Nyarota’s memoirs “depart from the whipped-into-line narratives of Mugabe’s ruling party and imagined nation [...]” (2009: 76). This is what Moyo finds repulsive about Nyarota’s memoirs and dismisses the book “without any prejudice or fear or favour ... [as] plain trash” (2007b). His denunciation of the book as “very bad” (2007b) is motivated by the realization that it “is full of these narcissistic things” (ibid). While Moyo’s vitriol and ‘quibbling’ (Muponde 2009: 75) are not the focus of my research, their relevance lie in that they awaken the reader to the role of Nyarota and Smith’s political memoirs as instruments and weapons that can be used memoirists and critics alike, to expose, attack and thus do more harm than good to the other. This gives relevance to the title and focus of my study, which is, “the machinery of autobiography”. Since it is the object of this research to examine how the self and other are strategically narrated and presented in autobiographies, Moyo’s anger and diatribe provide the impetus and opportunity to consider how narcissistic rage and historical recurrence are applied as narrative strategies in the presentation of the self and other. While adding to already existing work, my research appreciates Nyarota’s and Smith’s use of narcissistic rage and historical recurrence as motifs and narrative devices that expose the machinations of their memoirs as political weapons.

Competing for narrative space: whiteness and the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe

Female voices have for long been suppressed and/or relegated to the periphery in telling the story of the liberation struggle, which is a key moment in the history of Zimbabwe. With the exception of Staunton’s (1990) *Mothers of the Revolution*, no detailed autobiographical narratives about the armed struggle for liberation have been told by women, especially influential White minorities. Thus when Judith Todd (2007) adds her voice to autobiographical narratives of the struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe, she provides what Barnes (2007: 113) sees as “a unique view of the trajectory of the liberation experience in Zimbabwe”, through the active voice, and from the perspective of a white woman who was at the heart of the political and military struggle. In his commentary on Judith Todd’s political memoir *Through the Darkness* (2007), Chennells premises his appreciation of the narrative

on the question; “[c]an a diary be an autobiography...?” (Ibid, 99) What motivates this question, he argues, is the realization that, “as with every diary, *Through the Darkness* is characterized by disjunctions: [where] narratives are begun that are not finished...” (99). Chennells further observes that by diarizing her narratives, Todd is able to speak with authority and conviction about what is happening, because hers is an experiential narrative. “Her authority derives from her presence;[and] from the fact that she records nothing that she has not directly experienced” (Chennells 2009: 98).

Throughout his analysis of Todd’s *Through the Darkness* ‘as diary’, Chennells repeatedly reminds the reader that the authenticity of Todd’s narrative hinges on what he calls “the authority of presence” (96). This “authoritative evidence” (110), as he calls it, ensures that “her narrative method does not allow the inclusion of what she has not seen or read” (ibid). Thus, the diary technique, according to Chennells’s, though lacking the “coherence of a historical narrative [and] the logic of selection” (99), with its multiple ways of regarding life (letters, notes, speeches, pictures etc), all of which are life documents as espoused by Plummer (2000), makes Todd’s narrative, “an account of the truth to life” (99). Even though the diary genre flies in the face of categorization stemming from conventional literary forms, the narrative, with its incoherencies and, indeed, shifts and disjunctions is a personal account of one’s perception and impression of national realities based on personal experience.

Conversely, it is my argument that personal accounts, perceptions and impressions which claim to be truthful to life simply because they are shaped by experience are always subject to exploitation. Thus Todd’s narrative, in its diary form raises more questions than answers about objectivity versus subjectivity, neutrality as opposed to partisanship given the biases associated with self-presentation in narratives of the self. Therefore, there is room for further enquiry into, and study of Todd’s *Through the Darkness* as a political and research tool into the history of the struggle for Zimbabwe. I present the argument that Todd’s autobiographical narrative - given her preoccupation with the philanthropic self – can be read as a competing narrative that seeks to challenge the Zanu-PF dominant discourse of the struggle, which is nativist and excludes influential minority women like Judith Todd. In my discussion, I explore issues to do with the writer’s motive, narrative intentionality and functionality of the text, something that Chennells ignores in his analysis. My contention is that by traversing ‘Through’ what she perceives to be ‘the darkness’ of Zimbabwe in the form of a diary, a darkness that is represented by the brutal treatment of the Todd family by Ian Smith, the rape

of Todd herself, the brutal killing of the people, especially Ndebeles and “dissidents” in Matabeleland and Midlands provinces under Mugabe’s government, Todd creates a narrative that through erasure and palimpsest, challenges the dominant narratives of the struggle by presenting an alternative narrative from the point of view of a white woman.

Arguments have also been put forward that the diarist claims the authority of presence for the accuracy of what has been recorded. (Chennells: 2009) Such a claim presupposes that because the diarist is ‘present’, therefore, his/her account is accurate and thus true to life. This godly claim to truth and accuracy associated with diarists is challenged here by arguing that the subjective element that comes with projecting one’s personal, private life into the public sphere always rears its proverbial ugly face in autobiographical narratives. *Through the Darkness*, therefore, is not about the philanthropic life and journey of the Todd[s] alone, whose actions have been misinterpreted, misrepresented and misunderstood by both Smith’s government and Mugabe’s Zanu-PF. Rather, it offers us an alternative narrative of the liberation struggle which stands as a competing narrative to Zanu-PF’s racialised grand-narrative, which in essence excludes and erases the role played by influential white women.

Subjective criticism of subjective narratives: views on Nkomo and Mhanda

My appreciation of Nkomo’s autobiographical narrative *The Story of My Life* (1984; republished: 2001), follows the narrative tropes and analytical lenses of ruin and ruination, and hauntology and spectrality. I argue that if one takes into consideration the periodisation, timing and context of the writing, publication and republication of Nkomo’s personal narrative, and applies the concepts of ruin and ruination, and hauntology and spectrality, Nkomo’s political autobiography can be seen as a ghostly project that is aimed at haunting his political adversaries, especially Mugabe. The book, which was written when Nkomo was in exile, running away from Mugabe, was Nkomo’s way of refusing political ruin and ruination at the hands of Mugabe’s government. Thus the text is a haunting spectre that expresses refusal to die.

My argument differs from Maurice Vambe’s (2009: 95), who fires salvo on Nkomo’s autobiographical narrative *The Story of My Life* and sees it as “personalizing inevitable historical conflicts”. He further criticizes the language of Nkomo’s narrative as “not neutral but politically contaminated so that it becomes a polemical text serving a particular agenda” (82), that of firing “salvo upon salvo on Robert Mugabe” (85). Consequently, the narrative is

lured by the “Mugabe phobia” (ibid) and betrays the self-writer who fails “to tell his story but (tells) Robert Mugabe’s” (ibid). Vambe concludes by saying “[w]e point out these inconsistencies and torsions in his autobiography whether some people who loved him and still cherish memories of him want to hear it or not” (2009: 95). He delineates, in jargon characteristic of his writing and derided elsewhere by Flora Wild (2010), Nkomo’s political autobiography as “fractured memories of the self” (82), which ‘suppress’, ‘dismember’, or ‘disremember’, by design or by default, certain facts and thus ends up being subjective. This subjectivity, he argues, “has impoverished Nkomo’s account [and] he is never allowed to become the subject of his own autobiography” (87). Another argument postulated by Vambe is that the story of Nkomo’s life, written by himself subverts and abandons “the [c]onventional [a]utobiographical [m]ode” (87). Vambe (2009) contends that Nkomo subordinates the individual narrative, which gives the text “the essence of the conventional genre of autobiography” (ibid) to the political narrative which is highly subjective, partisan and polarized. This could have been motivated by the desire to create a “political narrative which is more concerned with answering to Zanu’s historiography than telling the reader about [the Nkomo story]” (Vambe 2009: 87), hence the machinery of autobiography.

What I find ironic, paradoxical even, about Vambe’s criticism of the subjective elements in Nkomo’s political narrative is the hostile subjectivity that characterizes his analysis of the text. The resultant effect is that we are faced with subjective criticisms, responses and reactions to subjective accounts of the self. It is here that the cliché two wrongs do not make a right applies. Both the self-writer [Nkomo] and the critic [Vambe] create a window of opportunity for further interrogation of the text using hauntology and spectrality as analytical lenses, with a view to bringing out the ghostly nature and effect of the text as a project that is meant to haunt and demonise Nkomo’s political opponents.

Another text that is examined through the lenses of ruin and ruination, and hauntology and spectrality is Wilfred Mhanda’s memoir *Dzino: Memories of a freedom fighter* (2011). My aim is to interrogate the ways the text is used as a tool for and in the process of reconstructing the self and claiming one’s place and space in national history. The distinction between Nkomo and Mhanda is that unlike Mhanda, Nkomo participated as leader of the liberation struggle and not an armed combatant. However, the two memoirists have been targets of Mugabe and Zanu-PF’s project of ruining their political careers and lives with a view to reducing them to political debris. Hence, when they wrote their memoirs, they were involved

in the process of reconstructing their lost and otherwise ruined images. Mhanda's text for instance, positions him as a direct participant and armed combatant in the struggle for liberation, who is now writing from experience, and not as an observer of the struggle. However, writing his memoirs of the struggle 31 years after the war ended in 1979 raises questions about the temporal space which is likely to result in flash bulb memories of what one thinks are key moments of the struggle. This selective aggregation of events has the effect of creating a subjective narrative driven by motive and intention.

In the foreword to Mhanda's autobiographical narrative, *Dzino: Memories of a Freedom Fighter* (2011), Chavunduka (2011) argues that the memoir is an experiential account written by a man who was at the forefront of Zimbabwe's Liberation War. "In this book, Mr. Mhanda gives his views and interpretation of the war largely from personal experience. He participated in Zimbabwe's Liberation War and became one of the leaders during that period", argues Chavunduka (2011: xi). This observation is shared by Mpofu (2012: 167) who contends that "Mhanda's memoirs depict the personal experience of a freedom fighter. It is a story that says warfare is never a smooth process". Chavunduka (2011) brings a different dimension when he posits that Mhanda's narrative is relevant in so far as its content cuts across barriers of discipline. For him, the account is of great value to "historians, sociologists and educationists" (ibid), thus making it an invaluable text for research purposes.

Masunungure (2011) adds to Chavunduka's views when he posits that Mhanda's memoirs cast light on one of the under-investigated 'black boxes' of Zimbabwe's political history. This raises questions of Mhanda's motive and intentionality, given the timing of the writing and the fact that the subject of focus is a closely guarded and rarely written about area. Arguing from the same perspective as Chavunduka (2011) and Masunungure (2011), David Moore (2011) describes Mhanda's narrative as "a universal chronicle, with an individual twist – as is democracy itself" (2011: xvii). He equates Mhanda's memoirs to that of Bhebhe's (2004), Tekere's (2007) and Chung's (2006), and argues that the narrative "takes Zimbabwean 'struggle' biographies and autobiographies to a new plane. It views history through the lens of the man who became – at a very young age – the de factor leader of a group within ZANU's army, one seen by Robert Mugabe as a very great threat", and "reveals almost as much about the president's formative years as it does about the author himself" (Moore; 2011: xiv). Chavunduka (2011), Mpofu (2012) and Masunungure (2011), and Moore's (2011) appreciation of Mhanda's narrative as a historical account on the liberation

struggle and a text that portrays the self and the other are relevant to my study. However, the missing point, which I wish to contribute is that Mhanda's text is not just history. Rather, it recreates the history of the struggle as a spectre that comes back to haunt those of Zanu-PF who have for three decades misrepresented the history of the liberation struggle. Such an argument speaks to the aim of the research, which is to interrogate and examine how the machinery of political autobiography in Zimbabwe has been used to project the self and other and to drive personal and national agendas.

Theoretical Framework

My study is, to a large extent, based on and informed by the theory of narrative identity as framed by Ricoeur (1992), and reframed in current scholarship by Somers (1994), Elliott and Woodruffe-Burton (2005), McAdams (2008), and Karamelska and Geiselmann (2010). I intend to explore the various concepts that are related to narrative identity and show how they inform the focus of this study, which is to establish how the machinery of autobiographical narrative is used strategically to construct and present the image of the self and the other.

The self and the other

The self and other should be understood as identities. These identities are formed, configured and shaped by social experience and through the concept of narrative. Drawing on Newtonian physics, Dennett (1992: 275), describes the self as a "center of narrative gravity". This speaks to the self-reflective, self-informing and self-reflexive element of personal narratives. According to Dennett (1992), the self and other are apparently and extraordinarily unified "sole inhabitants" (ibid: 275) of autobiographical narratives that, paradoxically, are split binaries. Dennett further posits that "the chief character at the center of [the] autobiography is one's self. And if you want to know what the self really is outside of the other, you are making a category mistake" (1992: 288). The self and other, then, become the two centers of narrative gravity that constitute the identities of autobiographical narratives as this framework seeks to clarify.

Commenting on the duality of the self and other, Ismael, in his philosophical work *The Situated Self* (2007), submits that the self can only represent itself effectively when confronted by the other. Ismael (2007: 100) sees the existence of "a semantic-level-bridging architectural relationship between the self and other", which is made clearer whenever the

other gets into the space of the self. Like Ismael, Olney (1972) in *Metaphors of Self: the meaning of autobiography* sees the self as a metaphor in autobiography. According to Olney, the self and other “the two cannot be ultimately separated as subject and object join and merge in consciousness” (1972: 14). The self, argues Olney, “sees, looking out from the subjective centre, various objects – shapes and forms [of the other]” (ibid). Therefore, in autobiography narration is “deeply coloured by the nature of the self and the knowledge that one has of the [other]” (ibid.: 13). Taylor (2008), in his seminal work *Sources of the self* avers that morality is at the centre of shaping the identity of the self. The preoccupation of the self is to project him/herself to the world in good light. The world around the self is the other whose perception of the self can be debunked, rejected or affirmed

Judith Butler (2005), in her book *Giving an Account of Oneself*, adds her voice to the various analogies of the self and other. She offers a provocative outline of the self when she suggests that in matters of the self, insight is perilous, perception is flawed, and judgment is weak. This analogy brings out the issues of bias and subjectivity in self-narration. It also provokes the ideas of elisions, silences, omissions and exclusions when telling the story of the self. It suggests that some things have to be given up, borne, or suffered in order to tell the story of the self. “Telling a story about oneself is not the same as giving an account of oneself”, argues Butler (2005: 12). There is always a presumption that “the kind of narrative required in an account of ourselves accepts [...] that the self has a causal relation to the [...] others” (ibid.: 12). Drawing on Butler, I argue that the selected political autobiographies are responsive in the manner in which they narrate the self and other. They all speak to Butler’s argument that “a narrative that responds to allegations must, from the outset, accept the possibility that the self has causal agency, even if, in a given instance, the self may not have been the cause of the suffering in question” (12). With the exception of Vambe’s memoirs that are responding and reacting to imperial history of Zimbabwe, political autobiographies by Tekere, Tsvangirai, Smith, Nyarota, Todd, Nkomo and Mhanda are responding to the post-independence Zimbabwe’s patriotic history generated by Robert Mugabe and Zanu-PF.⁶

⁶ It is important to highlight that Robert Mugabe has not written a book about himself. Ironically, the contestation of the chosen autobiographies, unlike fiction, is that they are responding to one figure of history – Robert Mugabe – who is responsible for generating a type of history called “Patriotic History”. See Ranger (2005). Regardless of the absence of a personal narrative written by him, Robert Mugabe has a haunting effect and features in seven of the nine autobiographical narratives studied here.

Rabello de Castro (2004: 471), like Dennett, views the self and other as “tacit terms of a dichotomy that sets them apart in a hierarchical scale” in which the self as an identity is the immediate subject while the other is the debased object. In spite of their socially constructed differences, the self and other are identities that survive on each other’s capacity for mutuality, flexibility and social relationships (ibid: 472), a view that is shared by Zenenga (2012: 165) when he says that identities are “socially constructed, fluid, open to negotiation and always shifting”. The self and other, according to de Castro (2004) have a relationship that is permanently saturated by power and conflict. Through exclusion, which is often calculated, the other is marginalized and abject, and through power, dominance, human subjectivity and exploitation the role of the other is downplayed. This is the kind of exclusion, marginalization, power, dominance, subjectivity and exploitation that is challenged by Lawrence Vambe, Tekere, Tsvangirai, Nyarota, Smith, Todd, Nkomo and Mhanda as they narrate the self and other in their political autobiographical narratives, which are the focus of my study. In this politics of difference (de Castro: 2004), the self and other are mutually dependent identities whose love-hate relationship manifests the subjective element in human nature. Ricoeur (1992) sealed it when he talked about the dialectic of the self and other. He argued that selfhood implies otherness to such an extent that selfhood and otherness cannot be separated.

Narrative Identity

Formalised by French philosopher, Paul Ricoeur in his works, *Time and Narrative* (Vol. 1-3: 1984, 1985, 1988) and *Oneself as Another* (1992), the concept of narrative identity is a philosophy and theoretical framework that is useful to the understanding of the self and others. According to Ricoeur (1992: 152) individuals form an identity by integrating their life experiences into an internalized, evolving story of the self, which provides the individual with a sense of unity and purpose in life. This life narrative integrates one’s reconstructed past, perceived present and imagined future. Ricoeur (1992: 169) argues that narrative identity is a different understanding of who we are in relation to others. It starts with the understanding that there are permanent and changing aspects of our identity. The permanent aspects are somewhat fixed factors that people identify with namely; ethnic/cultural background, gender, race and life history among other things. These, certainly inform who we are as people. There are also the temporal and or changing aspects of our identity, so argues Ricoeur (1992), that unfold through the narratives in life; that we are who we are in

relation to others. In which case selfhood is related to otherness and otherness belongs to the meaning of selfhood. Thus, according to Ricoeur (1992), a person's identity is a case of binaries – the fixed and the temporal, the 'I' and 'Me', the self and the other. This dialectic of self and other as narrative identities informs the focus of my study, which is to examine the strategic uses of autobiographical narrative in the presentation of the self and other.

While arguing for narrative identity as a relational approach that takes into consideration others, Somers (1994) challenges Ricoeur's idea of the permanence of race, sex and ethnic background as fixed aspects of identity. The theory of narrative identity, contends Somers (1994: 615), brings two thematics together. These are: the concept of narrative and the social constructions of identity. He suggests that by conjoining narrative and identity, the narrative identity theory overcomes the limitations of false certainties imposed by "categorical approaches" (Somers 1994: 605) according to fixed issues of race, sex, gender, ecology, language and ethnicity among others. Somers (1994) propounds that to do away with the fixing of identity into permanent misleading categories of race, sex and gender, there is need to incorporate time, space and relationality (otherwise known as context) into the concept of identity. It is only when identity is contextualized that the value of narrative as a representational form, and a concept of epistemology and social ontology becomes apparently meaningful.

Somers (1994: 606) further argues that "it is through narrativity that we come to know, understand and make sense of the social world, and it is through narratives and narrativity that we constitute our social identities. [A]ll of us come to be who we are by being located or locating ourselves in social narratives". Therefore, the selection of primary texts for this study has been deliberately engendered, racialised, politicized and ethnicised. Additionally, the texts will also be appreciated taking into consideration the time, space and relationality of their composition.

Elliott and Woodruffe-Burton (2005) take Ricoeur's argument further by suggesting that we require a narrative identity for our self. "We make sense of ourselves and our lives by the stories we can [or cannot] tell about ourselves and others" (ibid. 462). Thus we come to know ourselves and others by the narratives we construct to situate ourselves in time and place (Elliot and Woodruffe-Burton; 2005). The self, according to Elliott and Woodruffe-Burton (2005: 462) "derives from... the individual's particular socio-cultural and historical context

and from the models, images and symbols provided by the media and the individual's immediate social experiences". Literature, therefore (literature here should be taken to mean autobiographical narratives), gives structure and meaning to the complexity and confusion of life by linking disparate life events into a coherent sequence (ibid; 2005), thereby giving the story its narrative identity.

McAdams (2008) reframed the narrative identity theory by expanding on it through what he called the six common principles in the narrative study of lives. He begins his argument by describing "life stories as autobiographical projects" (2008: 243). Here, McAdams is reflecting on the utilitarian function of autobiographical narratives, an issue that is at the core of my study. McAdams cites as the first principle the fact that the self in personal narratives is "storied" (2008: 244), a proposition that was earlier highlighted by Somers (1994) when he suggested that social life is itself storied. By invoking Cooley's (1902) theory of the looking glass self, and Mead's (1934) 'I and Me' theory, McAdams (2008: 244) postulates that "the self encompasses a subjective 'I' whose stories about personal experiences become part and parcel of a storied 'me'. The self is both the story teller and the stories that are told". The argument is reminiscent of Dennett's (1992) split self with two centers of narrative gravity. This split self and the subjective storytelling mean that autobiographical memories are highly selective and strategic, and not a veridical recording of life as lived (McAdams 2008). By drawing heavily on McAdams's sentiments, I seek to examine the strategic uses of autobiographical narrative in the presentation of the self and the other. Autobiographical memories, argues McAdams, "are encoded and later retrieved in ways [strategies] that serve the person's goals" (2008: 24), hence according to my study, the machinery of autobiography and the claim that autobiographical narratives in Zimbabwe have been strategically used to construct and present the self and other through deliberate and selective application of memory and language in order to serve personal and national agendas.

Somers (1994: 614) contends that "people make sense of what has happened and is happening to them by attempting to assemble or in some way integrate these happenings within one or more narratives", to which McAdams (2008) says stories integrate life, and calls it the second principle of narrative identity. Confronted with an ever-changing, contradictory and multifaceted social world, the need for an integrative narrative identity is dire, asserts McAdams (2008), and autobiographical reason is an exercise in personal integration (ibid). Through recollection and memorialisation, it puts particular scenes,

settings, episodic experiences in life together into a narrative pattern that gives meaning and purpose to life.

When Somers (1994) saw people as mechanical beings, who are guided to act in certain ways, and not others “on the basis of the projections, expectations, and memories derived from a multiplicity ...of [autobiographical] narratives” (ibid: 614), he cultivated what McAdams (2008) later called the third principle of narrative identity. McAdams (2008) argues that stories are told in social relationships. As such narrative expression of the self should be understood in the context of its audience. Personal narratives, therefore, solicit for a reaction and are “designed to make a point or produce a desired effect” (McAdams 2008: 245). This argument informs the idea of the machinery and machinations of autobiography, and the strategic use of autobiographical narratives in the presentation of the self and the other.

Stories, like culture, are dynamic and change over time, and thus are cultural texts. These are the fourth and fifth principles of narrative identity as reframed by McAdams (2008). He argues that “autobiographical memory is notoriously unstable” (2008: 246), and with the passage of time and increase in the temporal distance from the “to-be-remembered event” (ibid), people often misremember the details resulting in factual errors. “The temporal instability of autobiographical memory, therefore, contributes to change in the life story over time”, argues McAdams (2008: 246). Added to this are factors such as people’s motivations, social positions, goals and personal interests, and concerns which change with time and have a bearing on their memories of important events. The result is what I have called in this study, the machinery of autobiography. This analogy will be taken into consideration when discussing the contestations between Tekere (2006), Todd (2006) and Mhanda (2011) on some events about the struggle for liberation in Zimbabwe because their temporal space ranges from twenty six to thirty one years. To assume that after all these years, these autobiographers can reconstruct in finer detail, memories of and from the struggle would be to give the human mind, the infinite power of recall.

The sixth and last principle of narrative identity proffered by McAdams (2008) is that some stories are better than others, an assertion that is highly subjective. A good life story for McAdams, “always suggests a moral perspective” (2008: 247) because life stories are not ideologically innocent. Their tellers are intentional moral agents whose construction of the

protagonist self and the usually antagonistic other is from the standpoint of what is good and what is bad in a given society. The evaluation of stories as good or bad is also dependent on their utilitarian role vis-à-vis the norms and values of the society within which a story is evaluated. If McAdams's sixth principle is to be taken to its logical end, then Vambe's attack on Nkomo's autobiographical narrative and Moyo's vitriol on Nyarota's life story begin to make sense. McAdams concludes by saying that a good life story has narrative coherence and complexity; is at once therapeutic as it is rehabilitative. He calls this, the "narrative therapy" (2008: 248) of a good life story.

McAdams's claim draws from Giddens, who, in his article "The Trajectory of the Self" (Giddens 1991: 71–108), perceives autobiographical thinking in terms of clinical psychology as "a central element of self-therapy" (p72). He asserts that developing a coherent sense of one's life history is a prime means of escaping the thrall of the past and opening oneself out to the future. The fact that the author of the autobiography is enjoined to go back as far as possible into early childhood, argues Giddens (1991), makes the autobiography "a corrective intervention into the past, not merely a chronicle of elapsed events" (p72). This manifests the utilitarian role of autobiographies as therapeutic, an assertion that is shared by Rainwater (1989: 9) who posits that "the basic purpose of writing autobiographical material is to help you [the writer] be done with the past". The reconstruction of the past, therefore, becomes a corrective exercise which goes along with anticipation of the likely life trajectory of the future (Giddens; 1991). Rainwater (1989) calls it the self writer's dialogue with time, which involves serious negotiation between the writer's present circumstances and his past experiences – the result of which is a negotiated document. Lawrence Vambe and Mhanda's memoirs fit into Giddens (1991) and Rainwater's (1989) descriptions of the autobiographical narratives as the writer's dialogue with the past.

Of the selected scholars, no one could have put it across any better than Karamelska and Geiselmann (2010) who, by way of enriching the theory of narrative identity, bring a different dimension and interpretation to it. They argue that autobiographical narratives are a self-sufficient reconstruction of a life history, and the identity of the person telling the story and his place in society, notwithstanding the fact that they consist of selected events. They call this carefully selected narrative identity, a "biographical Gestalt" (2010: 2). For them, autobiographical narratives are not just about the past events, nor a mere result of present circumstances. Instead, the narratives influence the individual's re-contextualization of the

past and its events, re-interpretation of one's own biography, internalization of new approaches to one's life for purposes of new ways of acting and planning, re-actualization of events that are relevant for the individual leading to restructuring the self-conceptualization of the individual for self-positioning in the world (Karamelska and Geiselmann 2010: 3). Narrative identity, therefore, is not constant but a dynamic phenomenon.

While accepting the fact that autobiographical narratives are about "remembering the personal past" (Ross 1991), Karamelska and Geiselmann (2010: 3) argue that this involves "blending experience and emotions, aggregation of diverse ideas into a unified order, and suppression, selection and interpretation of events". This raises questions about the objectivity and lack thereof, of autobiographical narratives. However, the argument by Karamelska and Geiselmann (2010) speaks to the essence of my research topic when they argue that what appears negative about the construction of an autobiographical narrative actually "help[s] us uncover the motives which shape the process of creating the autobiographical self-construction" (p3). Meaning is thus derived not from the factual information offered by the biographical gestalt, but, more importantly, through "how" the storyteller creatively builds up a complete narrative by "selecting and rearranging various remembered events or circumstances of his life, which then appear as sequences in the narrative" (2010: 3–4). Karamelska and Geiselmann call this act of creating the self narrative and telling the life story, a biographical action (2010: 4). They conclude their argument by exposing the omnipotence of the autobiographer, which has a bearing on the construction of the autobiographical narratives and narrative identity. These two are not only inseparable but are "shaped by the decision of the autobiographer to preserve, uncover or neglect spaces of action and life options" (2010: 4). The reason is simple; individual experience, expectations and specific attitudes towards events in his life have a bearing on biographical action. (ibid)

Theory of autobiographical strategy

Howarth (1980: 85) proposes a theory of autobiographical strategy wherein he posits, "*an autobiography is self-portrait*" composed of three elements, namely character, technique and theme. The construction of an autobiography, according to Howarth (1980), requires vision and memory, control and desired goals. These demands make an autobiography a work of art and life, and the autobiographer the artist who, "in writing his story he artfully defines, restricts, or shapes that life into a self-portrait – one far different from his original model,

resembling life but actually composed and framed as an artful invention.” (ibid: 86) This takes away the restrictions of accuracy, impartiality and inclusiveness that are imposed upon other forms of historical literature (Howarth 1980: 86). Therefore, the autobiography is “hardly factual, unimaginative or even nonfictional” (ibid). This flies in the face of Maurice Vambe’s (2009) criticism of ‘fictions’ contained in Nkomo’s book and ‘suppression of some facts’ in the same. Factors such as the author’s sense of self, history, place and motives for writing determine the character that the protagonist narrator presents of him/herself. By telling the story as a narrator, and enacting it as a protagonist, the autobiographer has the privilege of space and time to manipulate detail to suit motive; hence the character (image or self-portrait) he creates is a product of selective memory, vision, control and desired goals.

Technique is the second element in autobiographical strategy. This refers to the strategic uses of devices to “build a self-portrait from its inside out” (Howarth 1980: 87). Autobiographers determine style in so far as it serves the desired goal. The inclusion of pictures, for instance, which is a technique used in all the selected texts for this study, could be seen as authenticating documents meant to prove a certain point that would otherwise be contested, in the absence of the photographs.

Howarth (1980) proposes theme as the final strategic element. Theme in autobiographical narratives is “personal but also representative of an era” (ibid: 87). It is a product of history and is dependent on the author’s general philosophy, racial orientation, religious faith, gender, and ethnicity, political and cultural attitudes. This applies well to selected autobiographies by a cross section of Zimbabweans, which are largely products of the historical trajectories of Zimbabwe. This, combined with what Howarth (1980: 100) calls the “concoction of private and public motives complicates the autobiographers’ claim to truth”. This gels well with the thesis statement of this research project.

Baumeister, Stillwell and Wotman (1990)’s argument puts a seal on this line of thinking when they describe autobiographical narratives as stories that are “selectively constructed, selectively retrieved, and distorted, they shed light on subjective biases, perhaps most especially people’s motivations to reconcile events with their desired self-concepts”. This speaks with clarity and precision to the issues raised by the research topic and thesis statement. It is clear about the motive behind the construction of autobiographical narratives. Therefore, my study shall borrow heavily from the ideas and arguments raised by scholars

that have been discussed in this theoretical section of the research project. Their ideas will be applied to autobiographical narratives that have been selected as primary texts, with a view to unearthing the machinations of autobiography, and how the genre has been strategically used to mask and/or unmask the self and other through deliberate selection of memory and language in order to serve personal and national agendas. In so doing, I seek to reorient and broaden the direction of the criticism of Zimbabwean literature so that autobiographical narratives by Zimbabweans can be seen as a key genre in exploring a people's history from the point of view of the self and the other.

Methodology

The present study is in no way “definitive”. I am instead interested in exploring selected Zimbabwe's political autobiographical narratives as metaphorical expressions of the self, to borrow from Olney (1972), reflections of the other, responses to past and present experiences, forms of communication, context related, historical and political. In doing so, I seek to enlarge the traditional field of autobiographical studies by refocusing attention on neglected aspects on areas within it. I am more interested in significantly altering the modes of analysis which were dominantly historical and anthropological. Thus guided and drawing on Moore-Gilbert's (1997: 8) argumentation, I intend to “breakdown fixed boundaries between text and context in order to show the continuity between patterns of representation of subject peoples”. As such, I have chosen the critical social research method of *content analysis* for the purpose of this study.

Content Analysis

Content analysis was chosen for its appealing factors such as objectivity, reliability and simplicity (Pawson 1995 cited in Haralambos et al 2004: 921). Four approaches in content analysis were identified and used. The first approach is *formal content analysis*. It enabled the systematic sampling, collection and classification of autobiographical narrative texts for study within their historical context. The selected political autobiographies represent Zimbabwe's political trajectory from 1972, when Zimbabwe was under British colonial rule to 2011, under Mugabe's Zanu-PF rule and its construction of patriotic history. The period covered by my research emphasizes the second approach in content analysis which is *thematic analysis*. The approach was aimed at exploring the ideological biases, purposes and

intentions of selected autobiographers, their stories of the self and other within specific historical epochs.

The themes discussed in this research study include the politics of literary authentication as well as the interracial relationships in colonial and postcolonial Zimbabwe. I also demonstrate the delicate relationship between the writer and the reader, across racial boundaries; and the significance of the literary politics of patronage. Narcissistic rage and historical recurrence, and hauntology and spectrality are some of the themes discussed. All the thematics are interrelated in a way that allowed me to also pursue notions of writing strategies, book production and circulation, especially where life stories are concerned.

The third approach applied is *textual analysis*. Through textual analysis an examination of the linguistic devices and narrative strategies within the selected autobiographical narratives was done drawing on the five interrelated thematics in order to show how they influence and encourage a particular interpretation of the selected texts. The fourth and last approach used is *audience analysis*, which focuses on the responses of the audience as critics and readers (Pawson 1995). Drawing on the reception and reader-response theory, consideration was made of what other critics have said about the selected autobiographical narratives.

The four tenets of content analysis enabled me to use the method of “close reading”, which is associated with Derridean deconstruction and traditional modes of literary criticism. My primary reason for this approach is dissatisfaction with the anthropological and generalized accounts of autobiographical reading. Through content analysis, I was able to engage as closely as possible with the texts and to put them to as rigorous a scrutiny as I could.

Chapter Delineation

The organization and structure of this research project is thematically driven. The proposed themes draw their wording from the thematics of the literature review and some of McAdams’s (2008) principles of narrative identity as espoused in the theoretical section of this research project. By arguing that the self in personal narratives is storied, McAdams (2008) sees the self as the protagonist narrator, the subject and object of the narrative whose subjective storytelling is a result of the fact that autobiographical memories are highly selective and strategic. Because of this strategic selection of memory, autobiographical narratives have a motive to solicit for a reaction and thus, are designed to make a point or produce a desired effect. McAdams’s (2008) sentiments speak to the thesis statement of this

research project. Therefore, texts are grouped in pairs per chapter according to commonality in and of theme(s). The grouping has been done in such a way that it allows comparative and contrastively analyses of the paired texts. The aim of this project is to examine the way autobiographical narratives have been used to present the self and other. This examination has the ultimate objective of proving the proposition that the machinery of political autobiographical narratives by Zimbabweans have been used strategically to construct and present the desired self and other through deliberate and selective application of memory and language in order to drive personal and national agendas. In so doing, thematics to do with romanticism and nostalgia as authentication strategies, patronage of authorship, narcissistic rage and historical recurrence, influential minorities and the quest for historical recognition, and ruin and ruination and hauntology and spectrality in autobiographies all of which speak to the thesis statement, and give Zimbabwean political autobiographical narratives their unique quality, are discussed. The deliberate sequencing of the chapters creates unity and cross-linkages that allows chapters to communicate with each other and thus give an incremental and developmental effect to the argument and the entire project. A detailed summary of the sequencing of the chapters is given below:

In chapter 1 entitled “The Trajectory of life writings in ‘a land divided’”, I present the argument that life writings in Zimbabwe have followed the trajectories of the country’s history from the pre-colonial to the post-colonial period. As the introductory section of the thesis, chapter 1 contains a brief synopsis of the thesis, background which traces the development of life writings in Zimbabwe, the aim of the research project which clearly spells out the thesis statement, the rationale, theoretical framework, and review of related literature, methodology and chapter delineation. This chapter lays the basis of the thesis argument, which is the machinery of political autobiographies in Zimbabwe and how these have been strategically used to construct and present the desired image of the self and other in pursuit of personal and national agendas.

Chapter 2: “Writing against the official grain: authenticating strategies in Lawrence Vambe’s memoirs”, considers Lawrence Vambe’s two texts; *An Ill-fated People: Zimbabwe Before and After Rhodes* (1972) and the transitional political bildungsroman *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* (1976), focusing on Vambe’s use of referential, different tropes of nostalgia and

romanticism as authenticating strategies that validate his narratives and his newly found black voice. As counter-narratives to imperial narratives of the self and black history, consideration of these two narratives is intended to bring out the polarities of narration that have been discussed in the preceding chapter. The argument is that, writing during the colonial period, Vambe's memoirs come across as counter-narratives to imperial narratives by whites whose agenda was to promote British imperial culture. Therefore, Vambe's two texts are discussed as an attempt by the writer to set the record of Zimbabwe's history straight through the history of the VaShawasha people. However, for his memoirs to be received and accepted as authentically his, he had to adopt the literary tradition of authentication. Being black, Vambe had to get the endorsement of prominent whites like Doris Lessing and Judith Todd.

The practice and tradition of literary authentication takes a different dimension in Chapter 3, when 'autobiographers' take up the role and place of patrons by engaging prominent academics and writers to write their life narratives. The status of the engaged writers validates and gives credibility to the narratives. In this chapter 3, which is titled "Patronage of authorship in Tekere's *A Lifetime of Struggle* and Tsvangirai's *At the Deep End*", a close critical reading of Tsvangirai's *At the Deep End* (2011) and Tekere's *A Lifetime of Struggle* (2006) is done to identify and expose the relationship of complicity and collusion between the patron and writer in the composition of the two autobiographical narratives by tracing different narrative voices in the two texts. The argument is put forward that the two narratives were co-authored, and thus raise questions of mutual hosting and hoisting of both the patron and author, which leaves the two autobiographies as political 'projects' that are intended to fulfill the patron-author personal and national political agendas. I challenge Tekere (2006) and Tsvangirai's (2011) decision to subvert the definition we give to autobiography and all its three parts, namely 'auto', 'bio', 'graphy', which in essence means self-life-writing (Olney; 1980). In so doing, I invoke Olney's (1980: 6) questions, "[w]hat do we mean by the self, or himself (*autos*)? What do we mean by life (*bios*)? What significance do we impute to the act of writing (*graphe*) – what is the significance and effect of transforming life, or a life, into a text?" These questions, put together with the thesis statement inform the thrust of chapter 3.

The chapter that follows; "Narcissistic rage and historical recurrence in Smith's *The Great Betrayal* and Nyarota's *Against the Grain*" analyses Ian Douglas Smith's political memoir *The Great Betrayal* (1997) and the memoirs of Geoffrey Nyarota entitled *Against the Grain* (2006) as narcissistic representations of the self and the history of Zimbabwe's media and

political landscapes. In particular, I single out the existence of narcissistic rage and historical recurrence in Nyarota's *Against the Grain* and Smith's *The Great Betrayal*, and argue that their narcissistic rage stems from and exposes the bitterness of a life fraught with historical recurrences. Hence behind the narcissistic rage in Smith's autobiographical narrative lies a desire to tell the world that I was misunderstood and misrepresented in and by history. The bitterness and narcissistic rage evident in Nyarota's memoir stems from the repeated firing and expulsions from being editor of various newspaper publications, which puts a dent on the "god-father" of Zimbabwean journalism tag. Hence the need to set the record straight by recreating an image of an editor and journalist who was a victim of dirty politics in Zimbabwe.

The heading of Chapter 5 is "Re-constructing the narrative of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe: *Through the Darkness* as a self-empowering and competing narrative". This chapter interrogates and critically analyses how Judith Garfield Todd in *Through the darkness: A life in Zimbabwe* (2007), uses the authority of presence, her epistemic privilege, erasure and the palimpsest, and converging voices to construct a new account of the discourse of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe. In particular, I explore how Todd, a white woman reshapes the discourse of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe and emplaces herself and her entire family within it in order to claim a meaningful place for themselves in the history of this struggle. Chapter 5 also demonstrates how authentication is not a one way phenomenon when we see Todd's narrative of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe told from the perspective of minority whites being authenticated by prominent black politicians and academics. This is reminiscent of how Lawrence Vambe, discussed in Chapter 2, was also authenticated by prominent whites during the colonial period. Consequently, Chapter 5 projects Todd's memoir as a minor narrative that challenges Zanu-PF's metanarrative of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe, which has deliberately excluded the role played by whites who fought on the side of blacks.

"Reconstructing the self: hauntology and spectrality in *Nkomo: The Story of My Life* and *Dzino: Memories of a Freedom Fighter*" is the title of Chapter 6. This penultimate chapter focuses on how Joshua Nkomo and Wilfred Mhanda use their political memoirs to reconstruct the self. I put forward the argument that the two memoirs, *Nkomo: The Story of My Life* (1984) and *Dzino: Memories of a Freedom Fighter* (2011) illustrate a specific understanding of reconstructing the self through hauntology and spectrality as analytic lenses.

Chapter 6 examines Nkomo's and Mhanda's political autobiographies and shows the reader how the two books illustrate reconstruction of the self. Two conceptions of reconstruction namely, ruin and ruination as conceived by Ann Laura Stoler and others (2013) are examined. The chapter offers detailed analysis of how each respective concept describes human destruction, "dislocation and dispossession", and deconstruction in a way that spells political ruin and ruination for Nkomo and personal, lifelong ruin for Mhanda. Further argument is presented that the concept of reconstructing the self adequately describes the Gothic effect of the two memoirs, *The Story of My Life* and *Memories of a Freedom Fighter* through hauntology and spectrality as metaphors of the effects of the two memoirs.

Chapter 7: "Transforming lives lived to lives told", is the conclusion and it discusses the main arguments made in each chapter, and that which is presented in the study. The chapter makes suggestions as to the areas of potential research in future, in the study of autobiographical narratives in Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER TWO

WRITING AGAINST THE OFFICIAL GRAIN: AUTHENTICATING STRATEGIES IN LAWRENCE VAMBE'S MEMOIRS

Introduction

This chapter argues that in his memoirs *An Ill-fated People: Zimbabwe before and after Rhodes* (1972), and *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* (1976), Lawrence Vambe⁷ uses referential, romanticism and nostalgia as authenticating strategies in order to offer a counter narrative to the colonial version of the history of the Shona people. Drawing on Gilfillan's (1995: 241) observation that "autobiographies function in profoundly subversive ways to counter the myth of racial and cultural purity", two arguments are put forward. The first one is that Vambe's deployment of authentication as a narrative strategy is his way of using memoir writing to subvert the colonial metanarrative and counter the lies and myths of the hegemonic colonial narrative of cultural purity. The second argument is that the range of authentication strategies used by the memoirist are his strategic ways of seeking approval and recognition as the authentic and reliable writer of the life story of the Shona VaShawasha people. Therefore, in using referential, nostalgia and romanticism as authenticating strategies, Vambe is driven by motive and intentionality. His memoirs function as a narrative mode that informs the process of reconstructing and retelling the life story of the Shona VaShawasha people that had been misrepresented by the official colonial narrative.

Structurally, the chapter has three subsections. In the subsection "Referentiality: white voices/mediation and narrative power", I discuss Vambe's use of referentiality as an authenticating strategy in a racialised environment characterized by what Eversley (2004) calls racial discourse and a racialised reading and publishing industry. I argue that being 'black' and in exile, writing against 'white' and seeking to publish in white foreign land, Vambe had to contend with circumstances "necessitating the requirement for racial

⁷ Lawrence Vambe is a Zimbabwean born academic, historian, journalist and writer whose ground breaking sequel of *An Ill-fated People: Zimbabwe Before and After Rhodes* (1972) and *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* (1976), established him as a primary source on ethnic relations, both for the version of the events he relates, and for the racial and ethnic attitudes he reports or expresses. The two memoirs are, according to Van Den Berghe, 'neither ethnographic monographs nor pieces of historiography ... though they contain elements of both. Rather, they are unpretentious personal accounts by a seminarian-turned-journalist of the last century of Zimbabwean history from a Shona perspective. Much of the accounts are drawn from oral tradition and from the life experiences of the author and his immediate family'. See Van Den Berghe; *American Anthropologist* Vol 76 Issue 2:pp424.

authenticity as a way of protecting interests and establishing social credibility” (Eversley 2004: xvi). Thus by opting for the route of referentiality, Vambe embarked on a social, political and aesthetic transaction with the very white people whose evils he sought to expose. By deferring to white authority, Vambe put himself in a compromising position; that of censorship and gate keeping by the very white voices he sought to subvert.

The subsection that follows, “Nostalgia and Self-authentication”, develops the discussion of nostalgia as a purposeful narrative strategy that seeks to authenticate Vambe’s narratives in a colonial context. I take note of Walder’s (2012: 10) view that “[s]hifting power structures within societies and between countries lead to an erosion in confidence in the present (colonial set up), and an elegiac turn to the past (pre-colonial period)”. Focusing on Vambe’s use of “selective nostalgia” (Walder 2012: 5), I offer a reading of Vambe’s memoirs as an anti-colonial personal discourse opposed to the dominance of imperial narratives and colonialism in Africa’s socio-political, economic and cultural realms. This helps bring out the utilitarian nature of the memoirs, and speaks to the theories of intentionality and functionality of text.

The last part “Romanticism, participant observation and self-authentication”, frames the final section of this chapter. Focus here is on how Vambe, posing as a participant observer in and of his community, uses romanticism as both a narrative and a self-authenticating strategy. I argue that the sense of loss of the idyllic life of the Shona VaShawasha people is no longer a matter of profound disillusionment. Rather, the loss is used by Vambe to advocate racial tolerance, love and co-existence. By writing experiential accounts, Vambe derives authority from being a participant observer in the Shona VaShawasha way of life. Thus through “transcendence” (Clayton 1987: 1) also known as romanticism or the act of surpassing a limit (ibid.:1), Vambe’s memoirs are a counter discourse to colonial historical and autobiographical accounts about Zimbabwe, and act as self-authenticating narratives. Romanticism in this case allows the autobiographical narrative to have an oppositional function in the context of colonialism.

Authenticating Strategies in *An Ill-Fated People: Zimbabwe before and after Rhodes*, and *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe*

Lawrence Vambe's memoirs are fraught with other voices that serve to authenticate his narratives and cast him into a new and larger landscape as the authentic and original narrator of his stories. Written while Vambe was in exile, and at a time when the race issue was entrenched in the literary and political discourses of Rhodesia, the need for Vambe to have his memoirs authenticated could not be over-emphasised. According to Eversley (2004: xii) authentication as literary tradition "supports the binaries on which the social function of language depends since it sanctions the line that distinguishes "us" from "them" [...] [it] suggests binaristic identities as always having been there". In the case of slave narratives, authenticating documents took the form of letters, prefaces, guarantees and postscripts "found in the appended documents written by slaveholders and abolitionists alike" (Stepo 1978: 178). The primary function of authenticating documents and voices was "[...] to authenticate the former slave's account; in doing so, they are at least partially responsible for the narratives being accepted as historical evidence" (ibid: 178). This exposes the apparent contradictions and conflicts of interest, given that slave narratives were stigmatized as propaganda tools, and inherently ideological texts serving a purpose – to win support for the abolition of slavery – yet they had to be authenticated with testimonials, letters and prefaces written by prominent whites vouching for the existence of the slave and truthfulness of the facts presented. The prominent whites were mostly former slave holders, who had to verify and authenticate a narrative that was speaking against them and exposing the atrocities of the institution of slavery. Implied here is the perpetuation of centuries-long stereotypes that blacks are prone to lying and, are illiterate and need a white voice to guarantee whatever they say or write.

The same literary tradition is evident in Vambe's anti-colonial memoirs, *An Ill-fated People* and *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe*. As with slave narratives, latent racism fueled suspicion about a black writer's ability to write a reliable text, while inert fear of the black African and his literature of protest led to authentication becoming a central issue in the publication of African literature in English, in particular autobiographical narratives which were seen as écritures of critical social realism with the ulterior motive and purpose of conveying a political message (Barthes 1964). Colin Style aptly describes how closed and rigid the

publishing industry in Southern Rhodesia was, especially to emerging Black African writers whose works were perceived as politically incorrect when he says,

Censorship, the then Rhodesia Literature Bureau, and lack of confidence, all combined to inhibit black writers. White censorship immediately blocked political writings and, most especially, unfavourable characterization of whites. So, cultural avoidance was reinforced by political suppression. [....]. The Literature Bureau reinforced the effect of censorship. [....] Established in 1953 to publish and to market indigenous books, its covert aim was to canalize and take the heat out of subversive nationalist writings. It published and paid authors, [...]. The Bureau encouraged a clean, entertainment genre of writing and would not publish or disseminate politically suspect books (Style 1985: 56-7).

The strictures of censorship laws and, a closed and rigid publishing industry, particularly for a crop of less inhibited young black writers of the 1970s, forced Lawrence Vambe to publish his memoirs *An Ill-fated People: Zimbabwe before and after Rhodes*, and *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* in London and New York respectively (Style 1985). In these narratives, Vambe “offer[s] re-writes of settler interpretations of Rhodesian history [....] [and] took the opportunity, for political rather than literary motives, to use freedom from censorship to redress the black case” (ibid: 59). However, this required an authenticating seal from eminent White people, the likes of Judith Acton (Todd) and Doris Lessing, and detailed acknowledgements that mention prominent White people.

Referentiality: White voices/mediation and narrative power⁸

Through his newly found voice in exile, Vambe recounts, exposes, appeals, apostrophizes, and remembers his ordeal and that of the VaShawasha people under colonial rule in Rhodesia in the memoirs, *An Ill-fated People: Zimbabwe before and after Rhodes* and *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe*. However, for this unique Black African voice to be heard and read throughout the length and breadth of the globe, it needed other voices to authenticate it as a way of guaranteeing its originality and factuality. Hence Vambe uses referentiality in the form of foreword documents by Judith Acton (Todd) and Doris Lessing respectively, and the author’s

⁸ The argument I am putting across here is not about blackness as opposed to and inferior to whiteness or vice-versa. In case some critics might think that I am suggesting that only black people can accurately represent all notions of identity relating to blackness, and that only blacks should authenticate blacks, in Chapter 5 of my study, I discuss Judith Todd (Vambe’s authenticator here) using black voices to authenticate her narrative. It goes to show that the issue of authentication must be understood and appreciated in its socio-political and historical context, and that the crafting of an authenticating narrative is not about race only.

acknowledgements as appended introductory texts to his narratives⁹. These serve as authenticating documents to validate the new found black voice. According to Stepto (1978: 178),

each of these introductory documents [...] [is] a classic guarantee written almost exclusively to a white reading public, concerned primarily and ritualistically with the white validation of a newfound black voice.

This view is shared by Eversley who argues that the process of authentication “reveals a matrix of power that presumes the materiality of color and the constructedness of race as social opposites” (2004: xi). This essentially means that before Vambe can claim the power his mastery of language affords – as Fanon (1967) puts it – the social world his language implies has to acknowledge that he has such possession (Eversley 2004). In fact, “if no one acknowledges [his] art as [his] mastery of language”, argues Eversley, “[he] will not possess the world [he] inhabits, the world that [his] language implies. [He] will be dispossessed” (ibid; xi). It is thus my argument that Vambe uses referential as an authentication strategy conscious of the rigid and closed nature of the Rhodesian society.

As authenticating voices, Doris Lessing and Judith Acton (Todd) invade Vambe’s literary space in as early as the titles of the two books. The book titles contain the names of these eminent white people. For instance, the complete title of Vambe’s first narrative is; *An Ill-fated People: Zimbabwe before and after Rhodes, with a foreword by Doris Lessing*, while the sequel is *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe by Lawrence Vambe, with foreword by Judith Acton (Todd)*. While it is common practice that the author’s name appears on the cover of his/her book, the inclusion of Lessing and Acton-Todd on the same cover, especially in the titles, acts as seals of authentication. By placing the names of two eminent white people on book covers, Vambe is deliberately and strategically attempting to attract the attention of unsuspecting and otherwise disinterested white readers, in the same way that the inclusion of “an unusual frontispiece portrait of the [Black] author which, as an unmistakable authenticator, visually declared to the reader the fact of the poet’s race [in 19th century America]” (Eversley 2004: 3). The fact that both Judith Acton (Todd) and Doris Lessing

⁹ Some critics might think that some important aspects of the publication contexts of these two books are being completely ignored here. I am very much aware of the fact that Vambe had been a well-known journalist in colonial Rhodesia for many years before he wrote these books. He was an author not only of these two books but of a whole body of journalism. Therefore, Judith Acton Todd and Doris Lessing would have known him from that work, and might have even worked with him in liberal causes. Their validation of his work would, therefore, not have been in the realm and basis of his good English, because they would have known of his excellent work.

were not ordinary people at the time Vambe published his memoirs adds to their credibility as authenticators. Judith Acton, whose maiden name is Todd is the daughter of former white liberal prime minister of Rhodesia Sir Garfield Todd¹⁰. Lessing on the other hand is a white liberal author who published her first novel *The Grass is Singing* in 1950. At the time of publication of Vambe's books, she had already written and published no less than five books. Thus no one was likely to question her qualification to authenticate and add her voice to Vambe's narrative. As an outspoken white liberal, Lessing, like Acton also found herself in exile when she was declared a prohibited alien in both Southern Rhodesia and South Africa.

The foreword documents by Lessing and Acton-Todd are texts and narrative voices whose sole purpose is to validate Vambe's memoirs. They combine the emotional and scientific discourses in order to appeal to the emotions and conscience of the white reading public. Put together, the foreword documents constitute a sermon that is "meant to be preached [and heard, and not to be read]", to borrow from O'Meally (in Fisher and Stepto 1980: 192). I will demonstrate that Lessing's emotional outburst is so direct that it sounds like a gospel-according-to-Lessing to a hard-hearted and unrepentant white congregation. She commends the book as gospel truth by first saying,

[i]t was painful reading this book. I hope it will be painful for other white people to read. I hope particularly that it will be read by the white-skinned British, who are responsible for the double-dealing, the negligence, the cruelty, the atrocities described here. Africans in Rhodesia think of us as the victims of Nazi oppression thought of the Nazis, and so will we be remembered by them, so will we figure in their history. The indictment is being made now – *An Ill-fated People* is part of it (Lessing, foreword to Vambe 1972: xiii)

As a white liberal in exile, Lessing writes from the point of view of a victim of Ian Smith's UDI. Her guarantee here is reminiscent of the conventional guarantee by Wendell Phillips Esq, to Fredrick Douglass's narrative when he says, "[e]very one who has heard you speak has felt, and I am confident, everyone who reads your book will feel, persuaded that you give them a fair specimen of the whole truth" (1845). Phillips writes with certainty and from the

¹⁰ Sir Garfield Todd is regarded as the most Liberal and progressive Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia in the 1950s. He was unpopular among White Rhodesians who accused him of being 'soft on natives'. As Prime Minister in 1953-58, he introduced various progressive measures, including in 1955, a five year plan to give elementary education to every African of school going age. Ian Smith's government immobilized him and his wife by placing them under house arrest for a renewable period of one year. This followed his appearance at the United Nations colonialism committee. Full-scale detention was ordered in 1972, and extended to his daughter Judith, who had been campaigning on his behalf in London and other European capitals. (see the *Guardian*; Monday 14 October 2002 for more information)

standpoint of an abolitionist, about the impact that Douglass's book will have, basing on the effect of his earlier speeches. However, unlike Phillips, the certainty of Lessing's guarantee hinges on hope. She repeats in two consecutive sentences, the phrase "*I hope*".

Acton adopts the same emotive approach as Lessing's when she directly addresses would-be-readers in the second person narrative "you". Typical of a preacher's pulpit declamation – reminiscent of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount - which is meant to create a sense of guilt among his flock, the direct address by Acton is intended to have a similar effect. She uses subtle coercion when she says,

[i]t will be a great pity if you put this book down without at least reading the first chapter. Once you have done that you will probably be compelled to read the volume right through to its bitter, bitter end. This is because you have in your hands a work which, in many ways, is a work of art (Acton, foreword to Vambe 1976: xi)

This raises the question: what is and what makes a real work of art in a colonial environment where race is an important metaphor in literature and in the production of a purely Rhodesian national character? Given that in the same environment, both blacks and whites look at each other with mutual cultural distaste (Style 1985), the Rhodesian national character and identity are "axiomatically conceived as a white one" (Eversley 2004: xii). Therefore, what Acton is implicitly and explicitly doing as a way of authentication is to use the book as a measure of black literacy as well as literary and cultural achievement by describing it as a work of art (ibid).

As a tradition, authentication also paid homage to the author through acknowledgement of his/her quality and skills of writing. In the case of slave narratives, the title of the book would always be followed by the statement "written by himself/herself [the former slave]" as a way of acknowledging the author's acquisition of the rare skills of reading and writing especially in the context of restrictions associated with slavery. Vambe writes with that in mind when he argues that the white settlers in Zimbabwe:

believed that an illiterate African is less liable to threaten their position of privilege [...]. The tragedy is that in a country so completely buried in the mire of race discrimination, most educated Africans find little, if any, recognition, once they have entered the economic, political and racial jungle that has been created in the so-called Rhodesian 'democracy' (1972: 236).

Evident here is the centrality of race and the problem of the color line in a highly racialised and closed society. The metaphor of jungle reflects the bottlenecks that await an African regardless of his/her level of education. Black and White are the binaries that define one's identity and existence, access to and alienation from the opportunities linked to the political-economic framework of the Rhodesian society. Essentially, acceptance of Vambe's two books by a white readership meant that someone had to pay homage to his artistic skills and education. Thus, Lessing says, "[M]r Vambe is particularly well-equipped to describe at first hand the drastic effect of 'white civilization' on tribal life" (foreword to Vambe 1972: xv). She further says,

Mr Vambe is also qualified to write of an experience shared by nearly all the present leaders and administrators of independent Africa – he had a Mission education. In this case, it was the famous Rhodesian Mission, Chishawasha Mission, run by the Roman Catholics (ibid, xv).

The adjectives well-equipped and qualified testify to Vambe's acquisition of reading and writing skills – through the benevolence of white missionaries. Coming from an eminent white person like Lessing, the commendation would be a good enough qualifying résumé to convince the white readers about Vambe's authenticity. His authority to write about his own people is again revealed when Lessing admits,

to detail the sheer irrational perversity of 'white civilisation' is a task best left to – the black writers. There have been, there are, many white writers recording disagreement and criticism of what they were brought up in, but not one has written with as sharp a dislike, as vivid a criticism, as Lawrence Vambe (Foreword to Vambe; 1972: xviii).

In keeping with her role of spokesperson and marketer for Vambe as a writer, Lessing gives credence to the unique nature of African history and the central role that is played by oral sources that Vambe makes extensive use of.

Without alluding to Vambe's education, Acton-Todd also writes with conviction about his unquestionable credentials as a writer. She says,

[the book] is by a writer who happens to be an African born twenty seven years after the formal annexation by white foreigners of that part of Africa known today as Rhodesia. The writer is now an exile from the land of his birth and he looks back on that land and his people with love and great longing. But had Lawrence Vambe been born anywhere else, and had his circumstances always been different, he would, I am sure, still have been a writer. (foreword to Vambe 1976: xi)

Reference to Vambe as an African born in Africa, theoretically secures him a place in Rhodesia's cultural sphere, which is limited to whites. It creates for Vambe a privileged space as an interpreter and chronicler of the life of VaShawasha people. In spite of being the educated African, who has mastered the art of literacy and formal writing, the fact that he is black necessitates what Eversley (2004: xvi), in his delineation of authentication of slave narratives sees "the requirement for racial authentication as a way of protecting interests and establishing social credibility". In other words, Vambe did not become a writer by accident. He earned his status as a writer through White missionary education. Even when he is in exile, where the easier option would be to turn a blind eye to the land of his birth, he chooses to be the mouthpiece of his land and people and this makes him a writer of note, especially to white liberals like Acton and Lessing.

In comparison to Lessing and Acton's own efforts as authenticating voices, Vambe is obviously not a docile subject in the game of self-capitalisation. The acknowledgements by Vambe in *An Ill-fated People* (1972: xi) constitute a narrative discourse that serves as an authenticating strategy. So, there is complicity and cooperation between white liberals and Vambe the author. Drawing on the Garrisonian approach in the description of Douglass and his narrative, wherein he says, "Mr. Douglass has very well properly chosen to write his own Narrative, in his own style, and according to the best of his ability, rather than to employ someone else. It is, therefore, entirely his own production" (Garrison, in Douglass 1845), Vambe begins his acknowledgements by claiming total control and full responsibility for his narrative. He declares, "[t]his book expresses my personal point of view of the Rhodesian situation [in my own personal style] and I accept full responsibility for all its contents" (Vambe 1972: xi). Vambe is the sole author, and by making such a bold declaration, he is in a way commissioning his work. His declaration of authorship, addresses the intriguing concept of artistic patronage which will be dealt with at length in chapter 3 of this thesis.

Besides the bold claim, Vambe admits having had "considerable inspiration and encouragement from several [people]" (ibid: xi), chief among them, his Son-in-law the Hon. Stephen Pollock, who told him that he "had a story worth telling and that [he] should persevere with it [...] [and whose] corrections and suggestions were extremely useful" (ibid). One is bound to question why, of all the people, Vambe would prioritise mentioning his son-in-law first. It is here that the acknowledgements begin to develop into a fully-fledged authenticating narrative strategy. Firstly, Stephen Pollock is no ordinary person; he is a

respectable, eminent white man who is married to Vambe's daughter. Secondly, his full names and titles are, "Honourable David Stephen Geoffrey Pollock, 3rd Viscount Hanworth, a British hereditary peer, academic and an elected member of the House of Lords". These perch him on a high pedestal which, including the roles he played in the making of the book, will, without doubt, validate its authenticity. In the context of exile from the brutish colonial regime of Ian Douglass Smith, there can be no greater authentication than acknowledging that Stephen Pollock, a Viscount and member of the House of Lords, made extremely useful corrections and suggestions to the book, and declared that it is a story worth telling. To the curious white readers, Pollock has stamped a seal of approval to the book as a worthy read, and thus, driven by curiosity, are likely to read the book and accept its author.

Mentioning Mrs. Lessing in the acknowledgements is also a tactful strategy applied by Vambe to asservate his narrative. Not only does he laud her as a writer of note, but he also glorifies her virtues as a fine white person growing up in an otherwise dungeon of colonial Rhodesia with its laws and policies of segregation. Of the many things she is and has done for Vambe, she is a political acquaintance in the "now defunct Rhodesian Labour Party "(xi) which would probably pit her as a liberal person. She gave Vambe "all the professional advice [he] needed", "found the publishers of this [*An Ill-fated People*] book", and "[agreed] to write the foreword to this book" (Vambe 1972: xi). It is prudent at this point to quote the entire passage for purposes of clarifying that Vambe's acknowledgements of Lessing are, in both word and deed, an act of affirmation of his work. About Lessing, Vambe has this to say;

Her writings need no pen of mine to commend them to anyone. But without wishing to embarrass her, I should like to say that, to me, she is one of the finest human beings who have been nurtured in the otherwise poisoned atmosphere of my fatherland. It was therefore something of a moment of personal triumph when I managed to place my manuscript in her hands. She in turn not only gave me all the professional advice I needed, but also found the publishers for this book. It was most appropriate and a real privilege for me that she should agree to write the foreword to this book. My debt of gratitude to her is beyond any words that I could find to express it. (Vambe 1972: xi)

Here lies a subtle admission by Vambe that without the roles played by Lessing and Pollock, *An Ill-fated People* would have been ill-fated never to see the proverbial light of day. The name Lessing becomes the open sesame to the publication of Vambe's narrative. At this point, Vambe's lauding and glorification of Lessing, which borders on groveling and hero worshiping, runs the risk of overshadowing his narrative and the role that he himself played

as a writer. He subconsciously becomes a pale shadow of Lessing. This probably explains why Colin Style bemoans Vambe's act of publishing abroad as a tragedy that "indicates how censorship can persist within the boundaries of the mind. The immediate effect of liberation from censorship is not generally to encourage literature, but to release pent-up resentments, distracting serious literary aims" (1985: 59). Even in exile, Vambe is still a servant of the white man, whom he finds, as in the case of Lessing, indispensable if he is to make inroads into the world of writing and publishing, which by and large, was closed for the black African whose literature was perceived as subversive and paradoxically minor. One will be forgiven to conclude that Vambe's acknowledgements are littered with names of eminent white people. From Stephen Pollock, to Doris Lessing to Dr Richard Gray, an academic and historian, whose invaluable "appraisal of the manuscript, [was] based on his deep knowledge of this part of Africa [Rhodesia]" (Vambe 1972: xii), Vambe cunningly and candidly negotiates the politics of race to ensure that his book *An Ill-fated People* gets published, received and accepted by the white readership.

Style's fear of persistent censorship of black literature published abroad finds fulfillment in Acton's admonition of Vambe when she disputes some of Vambe's accounts relating to her father. In the foreword she writes,

[t]here will be statements or suggestions in this book with which everyone, from different viewpoints, may argue. So much the better. I too have an argument which Mr Vambe has invited me to put here. It concerns an allegation that my father, Garfield Todd, used troops violently to break up a strike of African miners at Wankie on an occasion when he was Prime Minister of Rhodesia. I need to say nothing more here than that I have researched the matter thoroughly, that the accusation is untrue, and that am refuting it here for the simple reason that my father is entering his fourth year of detention and enforced silence in Rhodesia and cannot, therefore, answer for himself.

Even though Acton attempts to downplay the unleashing of anti-riot police by her father, on striking African mine workers, it is on record that as a sop to critics who said that her father was "soft on natives", he dealt drastically with the first big African strike at the Wankie (Hwange) colliery in 1954, calling in the tough mobile police unit. However, the issue here is not whether the heavy hand of the police was used or not. Rather, what comes out is the possibility and danger of infiltration and censorship of black writing by white liberals under the guise of authentication. Judith Acton's claim that she "researched the matter thoroughly", and found the "accusation untrue" implicitly raises questions of thoroughness and

truthfulness, reliability and factuality about Vambe's narrative. When an authenticator questions the authenticity of a work of art, in the foreword, then infiltration and censorship become a reality that the black writer has to contend with. Hence, Eversley (2004: xi) observes that "racial authenticity makes such a dispossession [infiltration and censorship, however inadvertent] possible. Its imposition on black writers denies them their art, their claim of the mastery of language". It therefore, does not follow that a book authenticated by the daughter of former white liberal Prime Minister of Rhodesia – notwithstanding the refutations raised – is most likely to appeal to a liberal white readership.

The foreword documents and acknowledgements serve as narrative voices and referential authenticating strategies to attest to the factuality and validity of Vambe's memoirs. When put together, the standalone narrative voices in the foreword documents and acknowledgements are dialogic in nature. What Acton and Lessing say in the foreword documents about Vambe as a person, and his narratives, finds affirmation in Vambe's acknowledgements. This makes the memoirs "eclectic narrative[s]" (Stepito 1978: 178). In other words, all the authenticating documents and strategies tell a story, complete in itself, which can be read independently and still make sense. However, when the different authenticating strategies and voices are integrated to the narratives, we come face to face with what Stepito (1978) calls an integrated narrative. At this level of narration, what the authenticating voices say about Vambe the author and his memoirs finds fulfillment in the narratives. That the two books make painful reading is affirmed through the rupture of the traditional Shona society, especially when one reads through the brutal destruction of property and human lives by white settlers during the 1896 rebellion¹¹.

Nostalgia and Self-Authentication

A close critical analysis of Vambe's memoirs *An Ill-fated People: Zimbabwe before and after Rhodes* reveals that he also practices self-authentication and marketing. He uses nostalgia, not as a gaze that is responding to the past, but as a self-authenticating strategy and a literary technique that is always responding to the writer's present need and circumstances. His narrative is thus not "simple recollection[s] of sentimental memories" (Santesso 2006: 11) as

¹¹ The 1896 rebellion, also known as the Ndebele/Shona uprising was the combined effort of the Shona and Ndebele tribes of Zimbabwe to fight and dislodge white settlers. The uprising was led by legendary figures like Nehanda and Kaguvi, spirit mediums who were later arrested and hung by white settlers for leading the rebellion. This historical moment is referred to as the First Chimurenga War in Zimbabwean history.

some critics have posited. Rather, what we have in his memoirs is deliberate, more careful, strategic and tactical uses of nostalgia as a tool for self-authentication as well as political and nationalistic purposes. As a work of literature whose narrative inclinations are driven by motive, narratorial intentionality and functionality of text, the project of Vambe's memoirs is not *sui generis*, but emerges out of the numerous efforts to counter a colonial discourse. Thus entrenched in the colonial Rhodesia context, Vambe's memoirs mark the culmination of a uniquely Zimbabwean genre of autobiography that is at once nostalgic as it is romantic, but offering an alternative way of viewing the world from the point of view of the oppressed black self.

African writers opposed to the dominance of imperial narratives and colonialism resorted to using nostalgia to re-create, imagine and re-present the part of Africa that had been destroyed by colonialism. They recollected the pre-colonial African past in Goethean idyllic terms; that of "reviv[ing] an innocent past with sweet melancholy" (Goethe quoted in Santesso 2006: 13). Beard (2007: 70), argues that this "classical idea of a Golden Age from which we have declined, or the Judaeo-Christian idea of a Paradise garden from which we have been ejected, often lies at the heart of the pastoral nostalgia". Mbembe (2002: 249 - 50) refers to this lost golden age in Africa when he argues that in an attempt to tame what they perceived as the threats of modernity, African thinkers "invented a narrative of liberation built around the dual temporality of a glorious – albeit fallen past (tradition) and a redeemed future (nationalism)". Drawing on Mbembe, SU (2005) contends that African writers have repeatedly exploited nostalgia for nationalistic purposes, and political movements have succeeded by utilizing nostalgic constructions in an exploitative fashion. Literary nostalgia as a narrative mode can, in the words of Beard (2007: 70.), "take the form either of mere longing for something simpler and more natural or, because of the implied difference between what is and what is desired, it can form the basis of subtle criticism of the writer's actual society".

Unlike Beard, Walder (2012: 3) sees nostalgia as a complex form of representation for writers concerned to express their relationship with the recalled or remembered past they identify with. Vambe recalls a past that has been shaped by empire and/or colonization. His recollections affirm Walder's perception that "the rosy, sentimental glow most commonly associated with nostalgia is only a part of the story [because] nostalgia is deeply implicated in the political life of people, [and] it is a part of their historical sense of themselves" (ibid: 3). Characteristic of nostalgia is that it becomes prominent at certain critical periods of human

history, especially moments following sudden unexpected changes and misfortunes. In the case of Vambe, nostalgia arises from the misfortune of colonization and his subsequent exile from home. Just like the writings of Senghor, Lessing and Achebe, Lawrence Vambe's nostalgia challenges what is happening in Southern Rhodesia by exploring the restorative memory of an individual and a community threatened by the wave of colonization. Thus Vambe's nostalgia, to borrow from Walder (2012: 2), is a search for the "roots, for a home, in the ruins of [the] history" of the Shona people,

If we take it as an attitude and a new worldview that is challenging all manner of received, colonial doctrine, nostalgia, then is essentially a narrative mode, a particular arrangement of ideas not based on lived experience but idealization as a result of present circumstances. It is, therefore, my argument that by adopting nostalgic narrative as a literary strategy, Vambe is not in any way falsifying or counterfeiting detail. Rather, he is pursuing a radical programme of self-authentication by re-writing and re-creating the history and life story of the Shona VaShawasha people. This makes his narrative a functional project.

Thus for Vambe;

[t]he history that has been told in text books about the Shona of the periods before and after white settlement is [...] a compound of mystery, myths, fantasy and distortion, mostly tailored to suit the racial prejudices of white Rhodesia. We [...]are something of an historical enigma. Our past and present have been so grotesquely misrepresented that we appear to be the most politically backward people on the African continent, a people without guts or political acumen, whose future should depend entirely on the pride and prejudices of the ruling white minority (1972: 29-30).

This remark spurs him to challenge the historical distortions, misrepresentations and falsehoods about the Shona people that have been peddled by white settlers in their imperial narratives. These narratives were largely "replete with militarism and patriotism, in which violence and high spirits became legitimized as part of the moral force of a superior race" (Mackenzie 1984: 206).

Vambe embarks on the act of self-authentication and self-capitalisation by making his intentions obvious as early as chapter two of his book when he says, "ever since I have had the privilege of an education, I have longed to recreate in writing the life of the VaShawasha tribe of this period, to tell how they viewed their past and reacted to the humiliation of defeat and the savage destruction of their culture that followed" (1972: 23-4). He thus declares;

I am going to do so now, basing my writing on the evidence of the people I knew, particularly members of my family and other relations. They were a simple, honest, straightforward people and I firmly believe that they had a much greater sense of truth about their history than most advocates of European rule in Southern Rhodesia (ibid; 24)

In order to fulfill his endeavour to set the record straight, Vambe manipulates and uses a set group of tropes of nostalgia which include among others, the pastoral, the elegiac and the modern which has also been described as political nostalgia. In doing so, Vambe hopes to trigger what Santesso (2006: 19) calls “an automatic nostalgic reaction among a broad readership [both black and white]”.

I must highlight from the outset that Vambe’s memoirs *An Ill-fated People* is a functional project responding to colonial narratives by white writers. As such, Vambe is less concerned with his own personal experiences than with the general condition of the Shona, VaShawasha people. Again, if one looks at the tropic examples of nostalgia developed by black Zimbabweans in the 1970s and early 80s for example, *A Son of the Soil* (1976), *Jikinya* (1979), *Mapondera: Soldier of Zimbabwe* (1983) and *Chaminuka: Prophet of Zimbabwe* (1983) among others, they are “all necessarily idealized and archetypal” (Santesso 2006: 19). They stand in direct contrast and opposition to the principal objectives of white colonial narratives. It can be argued, therefore, that by drawing upon a tradition of nostalgic tropes and manipulating them in a self-conscious way, to suit his primary motive – that of recreating and rewriting the correct history of the VaShawasha people – Vambe has to grapple with the complex questions of ‘truth’ and ‘objectivity’, and the acceptance and reception of his memoirs.

Two incidents in *An Ill-fated People* strike me as the basis upon which Vambe draws his inspiration to use nostalgia as a narrative strategy to recreate the history of the Shona VaShawasha people and to authenticate himself. These critical moments in the narrative are the domestic scenes involving Vambe’s family. These are: Josephine’s pregnancy prior to undergoing the Christian Church wedding, and the arrest of Vambe’s grandfather Mhizha for non-payment of dog tax as demanded by colonial authorities. Vambe is a participant observer in both incidents, which inevitably makes him an authority and thus qualifies him to make a record of the two events. In other words, he derives authority from presence.

Briefly stated, Josephine, who is customarily married to Martin, her long time fiancé, discovers that she is pregnant. The discovery devastates her so much that when she gets home

from Church, she is in “a particularly black mood” and crying (Vambe 1972: 4). When she breaks the news to her family, we are told that “it affected everybody who heard her like a flash of lightning, stunning them into a complete, menacing silence” (ibid). This is followed by tears and groans and harsh recriminations. She had committed an ‘abomination’, at least in the eyes of the white man and his church. The consequences of Josephine’s irresponsible disregard of the rules of Christian conduct which the church imposed on its tenants in Chishawasha included public humiliation, chastisement and at worst banishment of the whole family from Chishawasha for setting a wrong precedence to the community. She should have waited until the white wedding first before getting pregnant.

The second incident, which the young Vambe witnessed and recalls as “another unpleasant fact of our existence in Rhodesia” involves a white police trooper who visits Mhizha’s homestead for a routine check on whether all taxes had been paid. Among the many taxes demanded by the white government is the infamous Dog tax, of which Mhizha, in spite of ironically owning a large number of dogs, had not paid. A plan is hatched by the rebellious and outspoken grandmother Madzidza to lock all the dogs in a hut. The plan seems to have worked until the dogs, “enraged by the claustrophobic atmosphere of the small, windowless, dark and nearly airless hut, suddenly and simultaneously began to howl” (p.16). This happens in the presence of the white police constable whom we are told “turned beetroot red” (ibid) and hurled curses at the whole family describing them as “*skellam*”, “*kaffirs*”, “*bastards*” and “*bobojaans*”, before arresting grandfather Mhizha for imprisonment at Marondera.

These two incidents are telling. They reflect a Shona society burdened with the yoke of colonialism which includes humiliation, degradation, dehumanization, exploitation and subjugation. For the young and impressionable Vambe, the two incidents are moments of growth and disillusionment. He says,

After the family crisis caused by Josephine’s pregnancy, the arrest of Mhizha and subsequent incidents which loudly spoke against the white man’s system of government in Rhodesia, my curiosity about the 1896 rebellion became very much stronger than it might otherwise have been. What the two events did was to make it painfully obvious that our society found itself in hostile circumstances; and so I developed a hankering to discover what had brought them about (p.23),

It is this hankering, this desire to discover, this strong curiosity, the painful realization of the hostile circumstances which make Vambe yearn for the golden age Shona society. A golden age that Zimunya muses;

All was still until the wagon came with plunder...

I sing of an age before the torch and the bulldozer

And I sing of the life lost in napalm. (1981: 8–9)

Hence, Vambe uses nostalgia as a narrative strategy to hit back at the white imperial narratives and their distortions of the Shona life story.

Style (1985: 55) offers a simple but accurate analogy of the history of Zimbabwe when he says that “[t]he whites came to then Rhodesia in 1890, and remained for ninety years, radically altering and disrupting the traditional, pastoral lives of the Shona and Matabele inhabitants of the country”. It is this pastoral life that Vambe recreates when he invokes pastoral nostalgia to capture his early childhood memories of Mashonganyika village in Chishawasha. He recalls the simple domestic life of his people with their animals such as dogs and cattle. The unpleasant image of dogs that Vambe creates is diametrically opposite to the white man’s claim that a dog is man’s best friend. It is an image that limits the value of a dog to its utilitarian role only. Vambe begins his narrative with a detailed but negative presentation of dogs. This is somehow puzzling but at the same time telling to the reader. As the story unfolds, especially when grandfather Mhizha is arrested, for failing to pay the infamous and burdensome Dog tax, Vambe’s revulsion for dogs begins to make sense. He is making a mockery of the way the white man attaches more value to a dog than a black man. To young Vambe, the physical condition of the dogs “largely depended on what they could sniff and scavenge out of the village garbage heap rather than on the generosity and animal-loving nature of their masters” (p. 1). Naming them was done with “some mischief intent” (ibid). It offered an outlet for one to express their dislike of a neighbour and, their sole purpose was to hunt and scare away dangerous animals. In short, they were working dogs whose value lay strictly in utilitarianism, and for any mischief, they were thrashed with any weapons. Vambe says, “they had no rights whatever, except only to serve their master well” (p.1). The nervous condition of the dog as delineated by Vambe is an allegorical representation of the nervous condition of the native in a colonial setting, to borrow from Jean-Paul Satre (Preface to Fanon 1963).

In apparent contradistinction to their ill-treatment of dogs, the VaShawasha people attach much value to the number of cattle one owns. The condition of these cattle is seasonal and depends entirely on the course of nature because “misfortunes of this kind [drought, rinderpest] were rare [before the white man came], but when they did happen [...] required immediate appeasement [...] [which] – often, at least in my experience, with dramatically positive results” (p.2). This is reminiscent of the old nostalgic story that; before the coming of the white man, Africans could go under a tree, apostrophize asking ancestors for food, and would get an immediate response in the form of a plateful of food. For the young Vambe, his people were “accomplished food growers and agriculturalists” for whom “cattle was as important [...] as the white man’s bank account” (ibid). In this simple and uncomplicated village, “cattle represent[s] a man’s or a woman’s security, livelihood and almost their entire purpose for living. The whole social, psychological and tribal standing of a man depended on the number of cattle he possessed” (ibid).

By invoking pastoral nostalgia as a narrative strategy, Vambe recreates a simple rural life of the Shona people who are domesticators of animals for their utilitarian functions, agriculturalists who depend on the benevolence of nature and the ancestors, and have a form of religion that involves communion with the ancestors. For Vambe, “in Chishawasha lay buried many of our forefathers, whose spirits protected and influenced our lives in every way. The familiar, beautiful countryside of Chishawasha had been [my people’s] entire world since birth; it was [their] life and [their] spirit and freedom” (p.10). Here, Vambe writes with “a passion and candour, capturing the spirit of his people and of his home area” (Mutsvairo 1991: 109). The strong sense of loss that pervades Vambe’s recollection at this point can be explained by the fact that at the time of writing, he was an exile in London, and the cliché “distance makes the heart grow fonder” is at play here. Furthermore, Vambe does not simply describe his experiences, but rather places these experiences in the context of a familiar paradigm, that of narratives of captivity in history and nostalgia. This genre is rooted in Manichaeism, and Vambe fails to exit from the politics of this kind of narrative. Instead, he falls into the same trap of consciously and deliberately placing his own experiences and narratives within what Gordis (2005: 374) in his delineation of nostalgia sees as longstanding narrative traditions.

The same countrified and idyllic background is present in Vambe’s description of the landscape of his home Chishawasha,

which offered beautiful views of numerous hills, valleys, streams and any number of trees, rocks and plains. When the rains were good, the whole countryside was clothed in lush green grass and thick foliage. It was enchantingly beautiful, to my mind even more so than the rest of Chishawasha which has an almost picture-book beauty, with many hills, valleys, meandering rivers and brooks, wide sweeping plains and balancing rocks that seem to have been fashioned by a bizarrely imaginative sculptor. The VaShawasha people had chosen well in coming to the country that they called Chishawasha. (1972: 3)

The entire landscape of Chishawasha amuses and fascinates both the stranger and indigene. It is a land of splendor, a fortress of hope and a tower of blessing, as well as the beautiful. Here, we are confronted by the older Vambe reminiscing, recalling the life and home of his people as he knew it from lived experience. At this point in the narrative, his nostalgia is not far removed from reality as it is based on a life once lived.

All this is bound to change when reality dawns following Josephine's pregnancy and the arrest of grandfather Mhizha. The disillusioned Vambe takes his wistfulness to another level when he transits from mere longing for something simpler and more natural after realizing the differences between what is and what is desired, to bitter criticism of the colonial society that he grows up in. The two incidents leave him disturbed but disillusioned. He says,

for many days and nights after I tried without success to fathom the peculiar relationship between my people and white man, between justice and injustice, between right and wrong, the value of the dogs against the rights of men and asked myself again and again why a tax had to be paid for possessing a mere dog and not for a chicken or a cat. Anyway, why had it to be paid to some impersonal white government, whose usefulness to my people was non-existent as far as I could see? It was all sheer robbery, criminal plunder of the weak by the strong (18).

From this point on, Vambe's nostalgia takes on a new twist. We begin to witness a revolutionary awareness of nostalgia in which the tropes are emotional, clearly presented with a targeted audience, highly impersonal and idealized. Vambe combines classical and medieval elegiac nostalgia both of which are carefully constructed to respond to the politics of the day. I must hasten to mention that even though it is elegiac in nature, Vambe's nostalgia transcends the elegiac concepts of "happy memory", "blessed memory" or sacred memory" that are meant to soothe the pain of loss as Santesso (2006), puts it in his book *A careful longing: the poetics and problems of nostalgia*. Vambe's nostalgia is embedded in bitterness. With it comes a revolutionary and black nationalistic spirit that characterized popular art of the 1970s Rhodesia.

The highly charged and emotional Vambe discards the first person narrative “I” and resorts to the collective “We”. There is anger and bitterness in his spontaneous tone when he suddenly charges, “we were a free, happy people, peaceful and law abiding after our own fashion, but suddenly a white constable [...] descended on us from the blue” (p. 19). He immediately shifts back to the first person narrative “I” to express his bitterness and personal disapproval of white colonial laws and administration. Vambe’s nostalgia turns to protest when he begins to question the logic of following colonial laws:

I saw no point in any white-made laws, least of all in our duty to obey them. We had our own and they were good enough for us. They were sensible, humane and democratic, but not a single one of them involved extorting money, grain, cattle or labour for the benefit of some self-appointed clique in the tribe (19).

This back and forth movement from the “I” to the “We” carries the author’s felt outrage at this critical moment. It is a search for perspective; something that Williams (1975: 31) calls the crisis of perspective associated with nostalgia, especially when habits, institutions and experiences clash. It is also a strategic move by the narrator to connect with a broad audience while using seemingly private and personal emotions by translating them into the public sphere in order to create a collective catharsis. Even characters like grandmother Madzidza share in the narrator’s nostalgia when she wistfully reminisces the good old days as an antithesis to the present predicament of the VaShawasha people. We are told that she would often remind anyone willing to listen that “these were rotten times, unlike the good old days when there were no policemen, no money-hungry governments and therefore no taxes to pay anyone” (p.19). While this may be intended to awaken people to the reality of their present humiliating circumstance, and spur them to action, it also runs the risk of increasing the sense of bewilderment, defeatism and hopelessness because, according to Vambe, Madzidza’s recriminations against colonial authorities are “a gruesome reminder of our conquered status” (20).

Hence forth, the “We” dominates and Vambe retraces into the past that he did not experience in order to portray the best side only of the VaShawasha people. He is pre-occupied with presenting a paradisiacal vision of Zimbabwe before Rhodes. Through unrealistic idealization, we see nostalgia being used for political purposes. His conscious engagement with nostalgia allows him to create the ideal Shona world of the Golden Age where “[a]ll things must appear delightful and easy, nothing vicious and rough [...] every past must be

full of the Golden Age” (Rapin as quoted in Santesso 2006: 41). Vambe’s description of the Shona society, its politics, administration and religion “before the wagon came with plunder” (to borrow from Zimunya 1981), are testimony to this. For him,

we were a self-reliant and independent entity. As far as good government, peace and individual freedom went, the Whiteman could have learnt many valuable lessons from the tribe. In our tribal community everyone was guided by simple, clear-cut rules of social discipline, common-sense decency, a strong sense of duty and of belonging, as well as respect for truthfulness and honesty. Ours, therefore, could be said to have been a more civilized society than that to be found anywhere in the white-controlled towns and mining compounds in the Southern Rhodesia of the early ‘twenties. Life would be, and often was very satisfactory, if not idyllic, until it was disturbed by external interference. (Vambe 1972: 27).

Vambe exploits the modern form of nostalgia with a mode of idealization as its primary tenet. His desire is clear – to make an explicit political statement – something that Santesso (2006: 44) calls “bitter nostalgia of the political exile”.

Regarding politics and governance, Vambe again creates binaries between Christianity and traditional African Shona religion, and between the Shona administration before Rhodes and the white settler administration. Christianity thrives on coercion, confusion and fear through threats of hell fire, hence the Shona people “were convinced [...] that the white man had nothing of spiritual value to teach us. Our religious beliefs seemed stronger and more satisfying than those of the European. This was no idle boast” (p. 28). As for administration, the white man ruled by force, hence, “naturally, [the tribe] preferred its own government which ruled by consent and therefore enjoyed popular loyalty, born of genuine patriotism and not fear” (ibid). He goes further to aver that;

Our own form of government did not have these built-in fortifications. It ruled mostly on the quality of its civilized standards. Not only were food, fuel, shelter and other necessities of life amply supplied from our own resources, but the individual was also given full physical, psychological and spiritual security by the tribe from the cradle to the grave and beyond (29).

This “glorious past” or “past splendor” as Vambe calls it, remains imprinted on the memories of the Shona country man, and in recounting their history, the village historians, we are told, “were naturally nostalgic about the ‘good old days’” (42). Vambe describes it as “the golden age of Shona freedom” (44), with its culture of work, trade, remarkable agriculture and mining technology. Antithetical to European claims that the Shona people were a primitive

tribe that was rescued by white people; we see here a thriving Shona society that is civilized, conceived and sustained by the Shona people.

What I find contentious though, is Vambe's claim that "graft and greed do not appear to have been characteristic of my people" (p. 55). Such claims run the risk of creating a larger than life size society with larger than life size people, and that is histrionic. The conception that the Shona people did not have any blemishes finds contest in the portrayal of the same Shona society in Shona written fiction published in the 1950s and 60s as a project launched by the Rhodesian Literature Bureau in 1953, to publish and market indigenous books as a way of taking the heat out of subversive nationalist writings (Style 1985). A number of Shona novels published during this time, depict a traditional Shona society that was riddled with ethnic and tribal violence, and the politics of elimination for Chieftainship. Bloodshed, greed and graft are dominant motifs in Chakaipa's (1961) *Pfumoreropa* (Spear of Blood), Chakaipa's (1958) *Karikoga Gumiremiseve* (The lone one with ten arrows) and Mugugu's (1968) *Jekanyika* (One who walks the land). These Shona novels set in the pre-colonial Shona society, act as a colonial project to show a society in turmoil and in need of "white civilization". They are a foil to Vambe's nostalgic account and portrayal of a golden age Shona society that ruptured when white settlers came. Vambe's claim that "the king reigned rather than ruled" (1972: 45) finds its counterpoint in Chakaipa's *Pfumoreropa* in which Chief Ndyire (and Ndyire denotes greed and graft) sanctions the massacre of a whole family because his proposal of love to a married woman has been spurned. To the rejection, Chief Ndyire reacts by declaring that the woman shall be his by any means and orders the killing of her husband and all the men in her family.

However, this apparent conflict between Vambe's memoirs and the cited Shona novels should not be taken to mean that Vambe is falsifying history. His memoirs are a reaction and response to the distortions of the history of the Shona people in colonial narratives. Like Achebe in *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*, Vambe is out to set the record straight. Thus, *An Ill-fated people* is a project. In writing this project, Vambe relies on the memory bank of the VaShawasha historians, written records and personal experience. By applying different strategies of pastoral setting and language, Vambe is able to exploit different pastoral tropes and the different roles and levels of idealization in his work. In the process, he "allows politics a more prominent place in his pastoral world" (Santesso 2006: 45), an assertion that is shared by Style (1985) who argues that being in exile and free from the

censorship of Rhodesia did not encourage the writing of literature, but gave Vambe the opportunity to release pent-up resentments. *An Ill-fated People* then, becomes an opportunity for Vambe to exploit nostalgia as a narrative strategy for purely political motives. This explains why Vambe resorts to extreme idealization of the Shona people and their history. His book is a tool for propaganda, a political manifesto that is meant to expose the evils of colonialism and to challenge official colonial narratives. When speaking for a society whose rural peace and harmony have been violated through violent conquest, the departure from the isolationist policy of nostalgia is inevitable. By resorting to political commentary, Vambe is trying to 'bring back' the pastoral balance that has been lost. He thus extracts tropes of pastoral idealization to discuss the contemporary disorder and political strife in Southern Rhodesia. His objective is purely political and nationalistic. What we, therefore, see in Vambe's *An Ill-fated People* are political nostalgia and the politicization of memoirs through the strategic uses of nostalgic tropes to illuminate the present predicament of the black people of Southern Rhodesia under colonial white settlers. Nostalgia not only provides Vambe the opportunity to express resentment, disappointments and frustrations with the present circumstances, but also to exercise self-authentication and capitalization as an authority in re-creating the history of his tribe.

Romanticism, participant observation and self-authentication

In *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe*, Vambe uses romanticism to counter imperial narratives and to expose the brutality and dehumanizing effects of colonialism, in the same way it was used by white writers to promote their colonial expansionist endeavours in Africa. Using his first hand experience as a participant observer Vambe exploits romanticism as a self-authenticating strategy and – to borrow from King – to “explain simply and with uncritical admiration, the customs of his tribe” (1980: 19). His narrative is anchored on and driven by two tragic events that he witnessed namely; the death of Chief Mashonganyika and the subsequent death of grandfather Mhizha, both of whom are the custodians of the Shona traditional values. Their deaths are symbolic of the end of Shona traditional values, thus through romanticism, Vambe desperately tries to salvage what is left of the rich culture. The centrality of these two tragic events can best be described using Ricoeur (1980: 171) when he says, “to be historical, an event must be more than a singular occurrence, a unique happening. It receives its definition from its contribution to the development of a plot”. Indeed, the two

deaths, placed at the beginning of the narrative allow the plot to unravel as there is nothing to hold the Shona society and values together.

Romanticism is as much a political as it is a literary movement. It has been used in the production of “subversive anti-establishment works” and is also closely involved in political developments (Pirie 1988: 322). Commenting on Western literature and popular culture, Fischer (1959: 52) posits that “romanticism was a movement of protest – of passion and contradictory protest against the bourgeois capitalist world, the world of ‘lost illusion’, against the harsh prose of business and profit”. In the same vein, Mackenzie (1984: 206) sees romanticism as a movement that gave rise to a colonizing genre that was “replete with militarism and patriotism”, and that celebrated and legitimized violence and conquest as moral forces of a superior white race. However, the same literary tradition of romanticism with its emphasis on “[t]he value of ‘Nation’” (Kirkpatrick 1988: 268), patriotism and national sovereignty also influenced the development of anti-colonial romantic narratives in Africa to counter the perceived dominance of colonialism.

For example, romanticism is used as a narrative strategy in Geoffrey Ndhlovu’s *Jikinya* (1979), Mutsvairo’s *Mapondera: Soldier of Zimbabwe* (1983) and *Chaminuka: Prophet of Zimbabwe* (1983) respectively, to counter colonial narratives. Through mysticism and glorification, a distinctly African society, with common roots of origin, ideals of freedom, peace, love and harmony for all black people regardless of age, gender and ethnicity is imagined. The books laud and celebrate the idyllic life of the Shona people characterized by plenty, happiness, economic prosperity and peace. Mbembe (2002a: 252) describes this anti-colonial discourse as “the prose of nativism” wherein African writers take a pluralistic position which says, “we are human beings like any others”, and/or a particularistic position which says, “we have a glorious past that testifies to our humanity” (ibid; Fanon quoted by Mbembe). He decries the dilemma that this discourse of nativism has placed on African identity. Not only is this discourse “apologetic”, but it also makes narratives of the self by Africans, “discourses of rehabilitation” without necessarily addressing the real problem, which is material (Mbembe 2002a: 253 – 254). In other words, African thinkers, as Mbembe calls them, are directing their energies at the wrong target by addressing the wrong issue. That Africans are human beings, with a past is a given.

However, what we see in Vambe's romantic memoirs is the admission that the colonial world cannot be approached by realistic means, but only when the conscious is switched off and dreams take over. Embittered and disillusioned, Vambe finds solace in romanticism which affords him the opportunity to revisit and re-create his own past, his own specific nature and that of his tribe. It is my deposition that by closely examining Vambe's use of romantic idealization and proud subjectivism in his memoirs *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe*, I will expose the fact that Vambe's romanticism is not only "a weapon for stirring up people against degrading conditions, [...] a means of freeing the human personality from [...] [colonial] bondage" as Fischer would have us believe (Fischer 1959: 56), but also a means through which Vambe exercises self-authentication and self-capitalisation.

As a sequel to *An Ill-fated People: Zimbabwe before and after Rhodes* (1972), *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe*, published in 1976, is largely autobiographical, but not in the detached sense as his first. Instead, the authorial "I" takes center stage and the narrative, in linear form, follows the narrative mode of a political bildungsroman. The transition from childhood to adulthood is not only a process of physical metamorphosis on the part of the protagonist narrator, but also the different stages and levels of his disillusionment alongside the grave physical, psychosocial, political and economic changes of his environment. The physical and spiritual growth of the protagonist narrator is dialectically linked to the changes in his village and nation at large, as well as the development of the narrative.

The narrative mode in *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* follows White's description of historical accounts in that it is "inclined toward the essentially empathetic techniques of romanticism and tragedy" (1973: 26). What we see is a tactical and strategic emplotment of the narrative mode of romance in the construction and structuring of the story. This strategic use of romanticism manifests itself in the manner in which Vambe exploits the dialectical relationship between the character and growth of the protagonist narrator and his physical setting. Thus from childhood to boyhood at Chishawasha, manhood to adulthood at Kutama mission, and the cityscape in Salisbury respectively, we witness the transition from a young, subjective, impressionable and emotional Vambe to the adult, objective, informed, rational and pragmatic protagonist narrator. What begins as the world of the child in a strictly rural Mashonganyika village gradually expands to the city, to national and global politics as the narrator shifts from remembering his past to understanding his current circumstances and the circumstances of his people in the context of colonialism. Thus, *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe*

follows the general outline and plot of Laye's autobiographical novel *The African Child* (1953), in which "the author's reminiscences have been given an artistic form. In the process the personal becomes universalized and representative of widely shared forms of experience" (King 1980: 17). In other words, the narrative transits from the particular to the general.

When the narrative begins, it is the mid 1920s Southern Rhodesia and the protagonist narrator is barely 10 years old. He lives in a "once thriving community in the beautiful area of Zimbabwe, [called] Chishawasha Mission" (Vambe 1976: 1) which is on the brink of total collapse following the death of Chief Mashonganyika. The already critical situation is made dire by the defeatist and fatalistic attitude of the VaShawasha people who seem helpless and hopeless without their Paramount Chief. The narrator recalls the high levels of desperation when he says:

it was a desperate occasion. No longer protected and inspired by the physical presence of their Chief, no longer able to defend the old way of tribal life under an alien religious authority, no longer a people with a single identity, they accepted that the alien forces that had overtaken them had finally triumphed. (2).

Of interest here is not so much that the once thriving rural community has collapsed. Rather it is the young narrator's authority in narration, which stems from the fact that he is now talking from first hand personal experience. Through repeated use of "I" and "remember" in "[...] I remember well [...]" or "even I, at the age of ten, somehow sensed that [...]", and "the one thing I remember more clearly than anything else [...]" (2 – 3), the protagonist narrator allures us to the realization of his personal involvement in what is happening. Unlike in *An Ill-fated People*, where there is over reliance on oral sources of village historians, the protagonist narrator in *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* gives us an experiential narrative.

In the foreword to Vambe, Lessing highlights that Vambe is not an outsider among the Shona people, but draws his authority to write about them from the fact that he has Shona blood coursing through him. In terms of identity, "Lawrence Vambe", writes Lessing, "is the grandson of the Chief of his tribe, and has had access all his life to the records and knowledge of his people. He is Mashona, and his accounts of Shona history are not what is generally taught" (1972: xiv). This means that Vambe derives authority and validity from being the grandson of the Chief of his tribe and a participant observer, a narrative discourse that is used extensively as an authenticating strategy in *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe*. This could be the reason why the first person narrative features prominently in Vambe's second memoir.

Whether it is by default or by design, the “I” positions Vambe as a self-appointed spokesperson for the Shona VaShawasha people on a quest to expose the evils of colonialism and how it has raptured the social, political and economic fibre of the Shona people.

Drawing on his firsthand experience, Vambe delves into vivid romantic recollections of the old Shona court traditions he had witnessed during the reign of Chief Mashonganyika. As far as he could “remember more clearly than anything else” (3), the court sessions were characterized by “the meticulously correct behaviour of those taking part” (3). This involved greeting the chief while one was seated, loud clapping of hands and using totems when addressing each other. The cliché that there is a sun that never sets in Africa is evident in the slow and cautious manner with which court proceedings were held. He recalls that “another feature of these proceedings was the slow, deliberate nature of all the discussions. Nothing was done in a hurry. Certainly no one had the right to interrupt and to make a point while another person was speaking. On such occasions, these people showed how remarkable their memories” (4). Added to this is the artistry with which they delivered their speeches. The narrator reminisces that;

like trained orators, they recounted the sequence of events and put their point of view without hesitation, as if they were reading their facts from a book. They never stopped to search for words [...]. They modulated their voices from time to time, stressing certain words and phrases, so that the effect of their delivery was musical, like declaiming of poetry (ibid).

This romantic depiction of the traditional Shona court of justice as a place of musicality and poetics of dialogue shows that African courts were not there to punish people, but to mend relations and thus bring about equilibrium. Such minute detail can only come from a participant observer. Vambe recounts with authority, the court proceedings that he witnessed “as one of his [Chief Mashonganyika] many grandsons, and living, as I had done, very near him, I had seen him frequently” (3).

This contrasts sharply with the colonial justice system of settler Rhodesians which serves society along racial lines. For instance, “where European males have raped African women the sentences have been light; but where the offender was a black man and the victim a white woman, the punishment has always been extremely savage” (p. 108). Under the infamous “the black peril”, the narrator recollects that, “in thirty years or so, a total of thirty black people were to be hanged by White Rhodesia for this crime [rape of white women], and in terms of this legislation, embodying the worst masculine instincts of the ruling race” (ibid). It

does not come as a surprise, therefore, that the young protagonist narrator should recall in romantic fashion, the fascinating and beautiful proceedings of the traditional court under the leadership of chief Mashonganyika. Sadly for the narrator and his community, “all this fascinating life and much else besides came to an end with the death of the chief,[and] the tribe was never going to be the same again” (p.4). At this point in the narrative, Vambe bemoans the loss of both political and judicial independence of the Shona people, and emphasizes the role played by outside forces – Rhodesian Settlers – in the destruction and eventual demise of the Shona way of life. Though romanticized, the allegorical representation of a unified, well-organised and collective Shona court of justice provides the writer with a framework within which African history could be rewritten in order to correct the distortions by colonial historians.

In idealized romantic fashion, Vambe juxtaposes his childhood in a rural setting with that of a white child in an urban family. In doing so, he creates binaries. He erroneously perceives as neglect of children in the white community where, children are seen and not heard, acted upon and not acting. They are visible objects that only exist in the fringes of the adult world. This unenviable childhood is clearly delineated where Vambe observes,

[a]mong white Rhodesians, a child merely exists on the fringes of adult society until he is grown up. Up to at least the age of eight, he has a black nanny to provide him with the care, love and companionship that would otherwise come from his parents. [...]; most of the white families who stopped their cars on the side of the road for picnics had African nannies in constant attendance on the children. These Europeans only seemed concerned with their food and freedom, leaving it to their African employees to feed, amuse and keep their children from harm. In other words the white children were closer to their black guardians than to their natural parents (p. 17-18).

Evident here is the young protagonist narrator’s naivety about the power dynamics between whites who are enjoying the moment on African soil and their black nannies that have to work for them and their children. Vambe seeks to demonstrate that where the white child merely exists in the adult world, the black child is a part of that world and has an intimate and spiritual connection with it. Describing Laye’s novel *The African Child*, (1953) King says; “[a] major subject of the book is the traditional culture of Laye’s childhood and what it means to him” (1980: 17). Similarly, Vambe at this point in the narrative, is still in the cradle of his VaShawasha people. He relishes and celebrates his childhood in grossly romantic terms when he says;

[m]y childhood, like that of any other African child, was very different from that of my European opposite number. We were intimate with the life, opinions, virtues and weaknesses of the adult world of Gopera. The older people accepted us completely as themselves at an early age, and we were free to pick up and absorb the essentials of our environment. I certainly cannot recall any one of my relatives saying; 'have a sweet and go away and play'. On the contrary, I learned constantly, by listening and observing, and noticed how adults behaved, whether they were happy or sad, sober or otherwise. In this way, not only a rich variety of personalities, but also some of the strange customs of the tribe were unfolded to me. (1976: 18)

By juxtapositioning the world of a white child and that of a black child in such a way as to counter-anthropologize the white society, Vambe makes it obvious to the reader that his memoirs are a counter narrative to popular colonial discourse. He re-creates an authentic tribal existence that the African child begins to enjoy right from birth as he experienced it, thus making himself an authority. However, Vambe invites backlash from Shopo (1977: 92) who questions; "whether in the mid 1920s, at least thirty years, that is, after the imposition of colonial rule and capitalism on Zimbabwe, there was really an authentic tribal existence – or is this just [romanticism] on Vambe's part for the supposed simplicity of the past?". He goes on to aver that "[t]here is a very noticeable element of artificiality in Vambe's endeavours to strike a balance between events which were objectively significant and those which made a vivid and lasting impression on him" (ibid.: 91).

While it is undeniable that tribal life was corrupted by colonialism, it was also in some cases, consolidated by the same experiences, hence Vambe's insistent use of and reference to the VaShawasha clan, totem and tribe. What Shopo perceives as "artificiality" is, in actual fact, what I am calling Vambe's strategic uses of romanticism as a narrative mode and a self-authenticating tool, with the sole objective of appealing to the white world, the British especially, to see the inhuman nature of their kith and kin and come to the rescue of Africans in Southern Rhodesia, and to accept Vambe as the authentic and reliable reminiscer of the life story of the Shona people. This is essentially the thrust of my argument. In other words, the text was written purposely for intentionality. Thus, there is agenda setting in the re-collection, re-creation and re-writing of the romanticised historical experiences of the Shona VaShawasha people in Rhodesia. White aptly describes it as,

[t]he ideological dimensions of a historical account [which] reflect the ethical element in the historian's assumption of a particular position on the question of the nature of historical knowledge and the implications that can

be drawn from the study of past events for the understanding of the present ones. (1973: 22)

This ideological positionality, according to White, can either be anarchic, conservative, radical or liberal. Even though Vambe attempts to apply all these dimensions in *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* through characterisation, his thrust is largely radical. There is no doubting that his idealized recollection of his childhood is steeped in a radical view point that is meant to result in a counter narrative to imperial romances. If this romanticism is taken as a quest to paradoxically move forward to the past, then surely Vambe makes good of it by radically and with success, re-creating a past that he saw, experienced and heard.

Vambe's characterization of grandmother, chief Mashonganyika, Father Patrick Jerome O'Hea and the coexistence of Father Jean-Baptiste Loubiere and Joseph Dambaza among many others, borders on liberal romanticism. Chief Mashonganyika is imbued with infallibility. As a great ruler, he "had been an outstanding administrator of tribal justice, a man who had love for his people, the VaShawasha, and guided and protected them ably through the difficult period of adjustment following their humiliating subjugation by the Europeans" (p. 1). He is a larger-than-life, more like an epic hero with no blemish, and possessing god-like qualities. The imprint of his near perfect image in Vambe's mind is described as follows;

[t]hough spare of body and a man of extreme humility, he had had a remarkable presence. He exuded a kind of all-pervading love and a direct personal concern for each one of his people, and they in turn had repaid him with a reverence and an obedience that could only have sprung from their conviction that he was the supreme symbol of their tribal existence. I heard no malice or gossip against him. Had he been an old tyrant or a stooge of the Native Commissioner at Goromonzi, my maternal grandmother Madzidza's ever-ready tongue would have seen to it that such vital information was not concealed from anyone (3).

Such a picture-perfect image of a person, I argue, can only exist in the wild and impressionable imagination of a ten year old narrator like Vambe. The vividness and authority with which he recalls and delineates the image, character and life of Chief Mashonganyika – notwithstanding the hyperbole, show that he is talking about someone he actually saw and interacted with. It is not surprising, therefore, that when the fantastic story of Chief Mashonganyika comes to a tragic end, "[h]is death marked the end of an era" (1).

Vambe's romantic delineation of characters transcends the boundaries of race as he also glorifies white characters such as Father O'Hea without actually essentialising him. In what appears to be a covert exposé of the politics of the non-racial, similar to the one exercised by Ndhhlala in *Jikinya* (1979), which advocates tolerance, love and co-existence, he depicts father O'Hea as the alter ego of Chief Mashonganyika – albeit white. He was “without question one of the most outstanding champions of African education and medical services in my country in the pre-war years. He was also one of the cleverest men of any race, colour or religious denomination to have stepped on Rhodesian soil”(68). Vambe is not done yet, for, “O'Hea's erudition, confidence and pugnacity were exceptional” (ibid). This is no longer the young and impressionable 10 year old Vambe speaking, but Vambe the teacher. To use a host of superlatives to describe O'Hea is clear testimony that the man must have left an indelible mark on Vambe's mind and heart. More details about Father O'Hea are presented thus;

[t]hat he should have agreed to be sent out to an African country, run by a white minority with such closed minds, and spend the best part of his active life living and working in the African bush for the benefit of black people was something about which I never ceased to marvel at as long as I knew him he stayed at Kutama [...] during which time he almost worked himself to death [for black people of course], and he had to return to Europe because of ill-health (ibid.: 70).

Even though he did not die while on duty in Rhodesia, his presentation by Vambe resembles that of a martyr. The philanthropic and benevolent O'Hea also used “his family funds” (p.73) to establish a hospital at Kutama after the Rhodesian government had refused to fund the project. His Midas touch seems to turn everything he touches to ‘gold’, for “he brought all aspects of [Kutama] school up to the required standards and turned it into a teacher training and technical institution [for blacks]” (p.72). The questions that beg at this point in the narrative are; what is Vambe doing? And what is his motive here? Implicit in this moral narrative account of O'Hea is a political statement to the effect that there are also good white people in Rhodesia, just like there are good black people, and thus to paint them with the same artist's “bad” paint brush will be unfair. For Vambe, with more white people like Father O'Hea, and black people like Chief Mashonganyika, just like Judith Todd and Doris Lessing are saying – in the foreword document that is – with more black people like Lawrence Vambe, Southern Rhodesia will surely be a safe and better place for both blacks and whites.

Vambe's quest for harmonious living between blacks and whites in Rhodesia is evident in the manner he presents the coexistence and cooperation between Father Loubiere and Joseph

Dambaza. The Dambaza-Loubiere relationship is based on mutual respect and understanding. This is a succinct pointer that blacks and whites can, in fact, live and work together on equal terms. In a society where race relations are regulated by law (Horrell 1982), what we see here is advocacy at work. Vambe is appealing to the white community of Rhodesia to be tolerant and flexible, and accept black people for who they are – human beings with equal capabilities. However, bell hooks writing in 1995, expressed pessimism about this kind of thinking when she said,

the notion that we should all forsake attachment to race and/or cultural identity and be ‘just humans’ within the framework of white supremacy has usually meant that subordinate groups must surrender their identities, beliefs, values, and assimilate by adopting the values and beliefs of privileged-class whites, [and] rather than promoting racial harmony this thinking has created a fierce cultural protectionism (1995).

Earlier than bell hooks, Shopo (1977: 93) had argued that Vambe’s “political comments can best be summed up as liberal platitudes mingled with self-evident truths”. However, contrary to Shopo (1977) and bell hooks (1995), Vambe’s romantic idealization of mutually beneficial black/white relationships is not merely an illusion and does not in any way make him an apologist. Instead, it is a narrative strategy that makes an attack on, and censures sugar-coated claims of “social partnerships” and “false and hypocritical brotherhood” (to borrow from Fischer 1959: 67) between blacks and whites of Rhodesia. This makes Vambe an advocate of genuine inter-racial relationships between blacks and whites as exemplified by father O’Hea, Loubiere and Joseph Dambaza, and the marriage of his daughter to a Pollock.

Conclusion

In conclusion to this chapter, it ought to be re-emphasised that Lawrence Vambe has used referential, nostalgia and romanticism as narrative and authenticating strategies in order to re-write a tribal as well as national discourse that resists and counters colonial narratives about the Shona people. The value of these narrative and authenticating strategies is based on the desire to advance a nationalistic discourse that celebrates the Shona way of life while exposing the ills and evils of colonialism in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). As narratives of protest, Vambe’s memoirs *An Ill-fated People: Zimbabwe before and after Rhodes* and, *From*

Rhodesia to Zimbabwe are deeply imbedded and implicated in the aesthetics of authentication.

The authentication of Vambe's memoirs by Lessing and Acton-Todd as true and reliable – Acton Todd's admonitions notwithstanding – and as works of art, positions Vambe as a reliable reminiscer of the history of the Shona people before and after colonial invasion. However, both of these are compromised by treating the author, by implication, as an exception – almost an 'honorary white'. Also, treating the book as a privileged exception is patronizing. It is hard to be dogmatic about the possibilities of undermining Vambe's authority of voice, especially when we consider the books' political messages, which are endorsed by Acton and Lessing. In a way, the books undermine white superiority while depending on that superiority to make their point. All I can say is that there is a destabilizing contradiction at work here.

While referential authentication seeks to guarantee Vambe's authority through secondary voices of white people, self-authentication and self-capitalisation establish Vambe as a participant observer who derives authority from presence, and his memoirs as nostalgic and romantic anti-colonial discourses that are antithetical to the dominance of imperial narratives. The tragic sense of loss of the African way of life or the moment of rupture following the 1896 rebellion is, in effect, a narrative strategy that is at once purposeful as it is intentional. Nostalgia then, is a literary weapon that is used to subvert the hegemonic, colonial narratives of cultural purity, and Vambe has made good of it. His autobiographic motives and desired goals have helped to bring out the utilitarian role of his memoirs, and to establish him as a reliable author.

Vambe's purpose as a historical autobiographer, one would imagine, was to explore the passions common to black people and which have agitated them under the yoke of colonialism in Southern Rhodesia. He thus introduces romanticism into history. However, the kind of liberal romanticism he exploits is the type that generates "nostalgia without deep discontent" (Cranston 1994: 90). As a writer in exile, and whose work has to be authenticated by white people, Vambe must have found himself treading the thin line between meeting the expectations of his black and white readers. His romanticism, therefore, is essentially liberal as it envisions non-racial politics. By exploiting the alliance between liberalism and romanticism, Vambe confers upon himself the role of the legislator of the black people in

Southern Rhodesia and, given the circumstances at the time of writing, I contend that his memoirs meet the memoirist's objective: that of driving a personal and national agenda for change in Southern Rhodesia, and for the recognition of both Black and White people as fellow citizens.

CHAPTER 3

PATRONAGE OF AUTHORSHIP IN TEKERE'S *A LIFETIME OF STRUGGLE* AND TSVANGIRAI'S *AT THE DEEP END*

Introduction

In this present chapter, I explore the issue of patronage of authorship in Edgar Tekere's *A lifetime of Struggle* (2006) and Morgan Richard Tsvangirai's *At the Deep End* (2011). In particular, the chapter underscores three interrelated concepts namely, patronage (Gold 1982, Brennan 1988), authorship (Foucault 1977) and the archive (Mbembe 2002), and suggests that patronage of authorship in these two political autobiographical narratives gives rise to the conception of the machinery of autobiography in Zimbabwean politics. Patronage of authorship is as much a literary as it is a political strategy and interrogating it unearths the patron-author relationship of complicity between Tekere and Ibbo Mandaza, and Tsvangirai and William Bango respectively. I seek to expose the unique nature of Zimbabwe's political autobiographies, and their utilitarian function as political weapons and archives of personal political history. This, I hope will bring out the motive behind the writing of these political narratives, and the functionality of the two texts as personal archives.

This chapter begins with a brief discussion of its general purpose, which is to interrogate the issue of patronage of authorship in the composition of Tekere's and Tsvangirai's political autobiographies. It then theorizes the concepts of patronage, authorship and the archive, and details how each respective concept describes the relationship between the patron and author (patronage of authorship) in Tekere's *A Lifetime of Struggle* and Tsvangirai's *At the Deep End*. The chapter then presents an argument that patronage of authorship has influenced the development of political and literary discourses of hagiography and demonization and adequately describes the machinery of autobiography that is exemplified in *A Lifetime of Struggle* and *At the Deep End*.

My approach to the subject of patronage of authorship is derived from two unrelated claims. The first claim is by McDougal and ought to be stated here, that "an autobiography is the true story of a person's life told by that person" (1994: 42). The competing claim, which speaks to the proposition and claim of this thesis, is that the two political autobiographical narratives by Tekere and Tsvangirai have been used as strategies for masking and/or unmasking reality

through deliberate engagement of scribes, and selective application of memory and language in order to serve personal and national political agendas. Both claims raise the issue of patronage of authorship of autobiographies which is usually overlooked in the criticism of autobiographical narratives because it is taken for granted that every autobiography is written by the self who automatically is the subject and object, the narrator and the narrated in his/her own self narrative.

This commonly accepted definition of autobiography is challenged here by interrogating the issue of patronage of authorship in the two narratives. This issue has been overlooked by reviewers of the two narratives, but is central to the thrust of this research, which is the machinery of autobiographies and how they have been used as political weapons.

Alec Russell (2011), for instance, argues in his review of Tsvangirai's autobiography *At the Deep End* that "for a full picture of the Movement for Democratic Change leader, the world needs a searching biography to complement his own account". While Russell's observation brings to mind the idea of completion and incompleteness as a narrative strategy, he ignores the over-arching question of patronage of authorship in Tsvangirai's political narrative and makes the wrong assumption that Tsvangirai is the author of his own narrative. His claim that the narrative gives the reader insight into the author (Tsvangirai), especially when he gives an emotional account of his wife's death shows that Russell has missed the point about the dynamics around the authorship of Tsvangirai's book. The assumption is that Tsvangirai is the author of his own autobiography.

Another reviewer of Tsvangirai's narrative, Stephen Chan, betrays the same oversight when he relegates William Bango to merely being a "copy editor to a type-script drawn from dictation by Tsvangirai". Chan's somewhat unsavory comment can be taken as professional gripe given the fact that in 2005, he had written a book entitled *Citizen of Africa: Conversations with Morgan Tsvangirai*, in which he depicts Tsvangirai possessing the "character to be president" (7). Chan admits that his book is a project when he says, "[t]his present book is being written in August 2004. The aim is that it should be available before the March 2005 parliamentary elections. [...] The idea behind rushing this book into the public eye is so that, if the political career of Morgan Tsvangirai is also then over, at least an extended account of what he stands for and thinks about will have been made available. But who knows?" (2005: 6). Chan's delineation of the life story as an archival project is shared

by Sarah Hudleston whose biography of Tsvangirai *The Face of Courage: a Biography of Morgan Tsvangirai* was written during his treason trial as a pre-mortem obituary in anticipation of his heroic death at the hands of Robert Mugabe's regime. Evident here see is the machinery of the life story as an archive at play. However, when the actual "extended account" was produced in the form of Tsvangirai's political memoir, it was not Chan but Bango who penned it. This could be the reason for Chan's unsavory comments about the role played by Bango in the production and writing of Tsvangirai's narrative.

Patronage, authorship and self-archiving in *A Lifetime of Struggle* and *At the Deep End*

This chapter sets out to discuss patronage of authorship. As such, it is concerned with discussing how patronage of authorship as a literary and political strategy works in creating the book as an archive. The following paragraphs will look at three closely related concepts; patronage, authorship and the archive. I will demonstrate that the interplay between patronage and authorship situate *A Lifetime of Struggle* and *At the Deep End* as Tekere's and Tsvangirai's personal archives. Commenting on patronage in the English Renaissance, Brennan (1988: 1) argues that literary patronage "was a system [...] expected to deliver practical benefits" for both the patron and the writer. The patron had to carefully choose and keep a writer who could deftly use a pen in the "cultivation of exaggerated courtesy or the scribbling of a flattering dedication" toward the image of the patron (3). This "desire to endow a patron's reputation with images of excellence", observes Brennan (3), meant that literary patronage had political intentions and was a "powerful tool through which to influence public opinion" (11). This endowment and glorification of great figures with fame through the priceless gift of literary praise, according to Brennan, resulted in the development of a political discourse that served the political interests of the patron. Hence, "the functioning and efficacy of literary patronage in most cultures owes much to tradition and the prevailing social and political conditions" (1988: xi).

Similarly, Gold (1982: xii) acknowledges the political function of literary patronage in Rome, arguing that it was "designed to influence votes, propagate opinions, or provide posthumous fame". He submits that patronage was highly personalized. Consequently, individual, wealthy patrons would "seek out a writer of talent who might extol the patron's virtues and career, and lend a heroic aura" (Ibid, xi). The same literary tradition is evident today. Gold posits that in modern patronage, "the patron must be praised fulsomely but with sincerity and good

taste. The writer or artist must possess both the magic of expression and the material means to parlay this magic into a solid literary artistic work. The patron also wears two hats. The patron must choose individuals of real ability and talent and convey to them personal wishes and aims without such close guidance that creativity and originality are stifled and unimaginative and dutiful plodders are created” (1982: xii).

Closer home, the African equivalent of the renaissance artist who sought patronage from wealthy and powerful noblemen is the griot. The griot, according to Bouchard (2009: 52) told stories “according to the social or political agenda of his patron”. Often times, the griot was “used purely as a political tool for those in power”, argues Bouchard (Ibid.: 52). However, this apparent exploitation of the artist was based on mutual beneficitation for both the patron and the artist in that the artist depended on the patron for the success of his artistic projects while the griot gave what Murphy (2001: 54) calls “the stamp of that most problematic of concepts, ‘authenticity’” to a narrative. Thus as griots, Mandaza and Bango lend authenticity to Tekere’s and Tsvangirai’s political narratives. Like griots in classical Africa who were “chief witnesses to every major event” (Ousmane 1975: 3), Mandaza and Bango present themselves as persons who uphold truth and justice in the face of moral corruption in Zimbabwe. It is these griotic traits and functions that we see manifesting themselves through the roles played by Mandaza and Bango in the telling and composition of Tekere’s and Tsvangirai’s political memoirs.

Drawing on Brennan’s and Gold’s delineation of literary patronage, and Bouchard’s “portrait of a contemporary griot”, I argue that there is calculated application of patronage as a literary and political strategy in Tekere’s *A Lifetime of Struggle* and Tsvangirai’s *At the Deep End*. The choice of writers by the two patrons, Tekere and Tsvangirai, in the form of Ibbotson Mandaza and William Bango, with their vast experience, exposure and knowledge of Zimbabwe’s political terrain, and writing skills shows strategic and tactful uses of patronage of authorship for political gains. This speaks to Gold’s view that “certain patrons were highly political men who had specific programmes to carry out and who required or desired writers or artists of talent to help them” (1982: xii). This, in essence, means that literary men and artists have, in some cases, been used as a means to achieve political end. It is on the basis of this argument that in this chapter, I seek to consider Ibbotson Mandaza and William Bango – authors of Tekere’s *A Lifetime of Struggle* and Tsvangirai’s *At the Deep End* respectively - as instruments of propaganda concerned with promoting specific cultural, political and moral

values of their patrons. I argue that by combining both the traditional African forms of griotism and the Greek and Roman conception of patronage, Tekere and Tsvangirai's autobiographical narratives have the characteristic aim of political patronage; that of "influencing votes, enhancing the reputation of the patron, or disseminating political policies", and making a political or social statement (Gold 1982: xv). In Mandaza and Bango, the two patrons, Tekere and Tsvangirai attracted writers who would foster a particular "climate of opinion", to borrow from Gold (1982). It is not surprising therefore, that the two writers are primarily concerned with presenting only the positive side of their patrons by manipulating the panegyric theme and technique of hagiography.

At the center of my discussion is the issue of patronage of authorship and how it is an integral part of Tekere and Tsvangirai's autobiographies. Therefore, I will also draw on the theory of authorship as espoused by Michel Foucault in his article "What is an author?" (rpt Caughie 2001: 282–291). As if offering a rebuttal of Barthes' claim that the author has died, Foucault dismisses as "empty slogans" the proposition that the author has disappeared (282). He avers that the inscription and inclusion of the author's name on to a work of art "is more than a gesture, a finger pointed at someone; [rather] it is, to a certain extent, the equivalent of a description" (p 282–3). For instance, the name Marx is associated with the conflict theory of Marxism, Aristotle with ontology, and Shakespeare with Shakespearean theatre/drama and sonnets. Therefore, the presence of an author's name on a text is functional and purposeful in that "it serves as a means of classification" (284). Drawing on Foucault's proposition, I argue that Tekere and Tsvangirai are names associated with Zimbabwean politics, while William Bango and Ibbo Mandaza are academics, media practitioners/journalists and writers with vested interests in national politics and the political lives of Tekere and Tsvangirai. Inscribing the names Tekere and Mandaza on *A lifetime of Struggle*, and Tsvangirai and Bango on *At the Deep End* reflects not only a patron-client relationship of complicit but also narratives and lives of patrons rooted in the struggle.

The affixing of the name of the author to a book also has implications of authentication and/or common utilization of the text. However, it is Foucault's argument that the name of the author characterizes a particular manner of existence of discourse that informs the thrust of my argument in this current chapter. He argues that "discourse that possesses an author's name is not to be immediately consumed and forgotten; neither is it accorded the momentary attention given to ordinary, fleeting words. Rather, its status and its manner of reception are

regulated by the culture in which it circulates” (Foucault 2001: 284). Therefore, the presence of the names of Ibbo Mandaza and William Bango on Tekere’s and Tsvangirai’s political autobiographies respectively is not mere adornment of the two texts. Instead, their names and the roles they played in the construction of the two narratives need to be understood in the context of Zimbabwe’s political discourse of the post 2000 Third Chimurenga era. The names point towards the existence of certain groups of political discourse and refer to the status of this discourse within Zimbabwean society and political culture. “In this sense”, argues Foucault, “the function of an author is to characterize the existence, circulation and operation of certain discourses within a society” (284). It is the existence and circulation of political discourses of hagiography and demonization in political autobiographical narratives that have been created and constructed through patronage of authorship that this chapter interrogates in Tekere and Tsvangirai’s books.

The fact that certain literary discourses such as those delineated through political autobiographical narratives are acceptable only if they carry the name of the author, testifies to the author as a function of discourse, verification of established truths and authentication. The names of the authors “Mandaza” and “Bango” are thus indexes of truthfulness and reliability of the two political narratives *A Lifetime of Struggle* and *At the Deep End*. This is more so, in a politically polarized and volatile environment that was witnessed in Zimbabwe in the first decade of the new millennium. Political narratives such as *A Lifetime of Struggle* and *At the Deep End* caused a lot of excitement and provoked anxieties, and their reception and acceptability hinged heavily on the names of the authors, the date, place and circumstances of their writing. It is this argument that informs the thrust of my discussion of patronage of authorship in Tekere’s *A Lifetime of Struggle* and Tsvangirai’s *At the Deep End*.

Part of the argument I am making is that through patronage of authorship, Tekere and Tsvangirai, together with their scribes, Ibbo Mandaza and William Bango, are inscribing their political footprints on paper and preserving them in the form of a book. By writing their autobiographical narratives, Tekere and Tsvangirai, in complicity with Mandaza and Bango are creating an archive of their political exploits. *A Lifetime if Struggle* and *At the Deep End* then, become pre-mortem and post-mortem documentations and archives of Tekere’s and Tsvangirai’s lives. Mbembe (2002: 19), in his article “The Power of the Archive and its Limits”, suggests that in and through the archive, “fragments of lives and pieces of time are interred there; their shadows and footprints inscribed on paper and preserved like so many

relics”. Taken metaphorically Tekere’s and Tsvangirai’s texts are not only personal records but projects and archives of their lives, celebrating and preserving their political exploits.

If we take Mbembe’s proposition that “[a]rchives are the product of a process which converts a certain number of documents into items judged to be worthy of preserving and keeping in a public place, where they can be consulted according to well-established procedures and regulations” (2002: 20), then the autobiographies of Tekere and Tsvangirai – at least in their eyes as patrons, and those of authors that created them – are narratives of lives worth preserving and keeping in the form of texts as archives. Hence, the text as an archived document, according to Mbembe, “is one that has to a large extent ceased to belong to its author in order to become the property of society at large [so that] anyone can claim to access the content” (20). This, in essence, gives the text, which in the case of my argument is an archive, “a specific power and authority” to document certain events while discarding others (20). Mbembe calls this aspect of the archive, “a matter of discrimination and selection, which, in the end, results in the granting of a privileged status to certain written documents and refusal of that same status to others” (ibid). Drawing on Mbembe, I argue that the discriminatory and selective nature of autobiographical narratives resulting from the temporal nature of memory and deliberate application of the same as a narrative strategy gives rise to elements of hagiography and demonization in Tekere and Tsvangirai’s narratives.

Archives, submits Mbembe, are born from a desire to reassemble traces of lives lived, deeds enacted and struggles engaged in and/or evaded (2002: 22). This explains the title of Tekere’s narrative “A lifetime of Struggle” and that of Tsvangirai’s “At the Deep End”. The titles portray the lives of the two imbedded in the national political struggles that they seek to document and archive through the assistance of capable and credible scribes who author their life narratives. Therefore, by drawing on Mbembe’s ideas on the power of the archive, I will argue that through the patron-client complicity of Tekere and Mandaza, and Tsvangirai and Bango, we see the subjective narration and archiving of Tekere and Tsvangirai’s experiences. In their texts, we witness what Mbembe calls “a kind of interment, laying something in the *coffin*, if not to rest, then at least to consign elements of that life which could not be destroyed purely and simply” (22, my emphasis). Taken metaphorically, the coffin is the text; the two autobiographical narratives constructed through patronage of authorship. The complicity of the patrons and the scribes creates a permanent record, an archive of the lives that could not be

silenced or destroyed.¹² By documenting these lives, they are assigning them to “a place and a sepulcher that is perfectly recognizable because it is consecrated: the archive”, which is also the text (22), thus speaking to the idea of the machinery of autobiography, and how this idea is reflected through patronage of authorship.

Hero by birth: hoisting of the patron

In this section, I put forward the argument that Tekere and Mandaza are clear about the political utility of Tekere’s book *A Lifetime of Struggle* as a project. By hoisting Tekere as a hero by birth, the two, in their patron-client relationship, are countering and correcting the selective and self-indulgent official obituaries that have characterized the burial of Zanu PF ‘heroes’ at the national Heroes Acre.¹³ Mandaza describes the narrative as

a reminder of the many other Zimbabwean nationalists – and persons who have contributed so much in their respective ways to our society – who have been forgotten in this, *our history*; a *history* that has, for example, been so selective as to who is hero/heroine and who is not, based as it is on criteria that have less to do with reference to history itself than the self-indulgence of those who wield power and influence today. (Mandaza in introduction to Tekere 2006: 4)

It is not surprising that when Tekere’s political autobiography was published in 2006, Robert Mugabe, in his broadcast birthday interview with Zimbabwe Television (Ztv), made “veiled attacks on (Vice-President) Joice Mujuru,¹⁴ virtually accusing her of plotting with former Zanu PF Secretary General Edgar Tekere and prominent publisher Ibbo Mandaza to use Tekere’s autobiography, *A Lifetime of Struggle*, to undermine him while in the process promoting her presidential bid”. In the same interview, Mugabe suggested that “Tekere was being used by Mandaza, the publisher and editor of the book, and the Mujuru faction, to damage him for political ends”. He went on to say, “the Tekere/Mandaza issue, ah they are trying to campaign for Mujuru using the book. [But] you can’t become a president by using a

¹² The idea of the text as a coffin, an archive, a sepulcher of a life that resists any form of destruction is discussed and given an alternative use, that of a spectral presence designed to haunt, in Chapter 6 of this research with particular reference to Nkomo’s and Mhanda’s texts.

¹³ Zanu-PF has exploited the National Heroes Act ofto ensure that only Zanu-PF loyalists are declared heroes at death.

¹⁴ Joice Mujuru was unceremoniously deposed from the Vice-Presidency position as the Zanu-Pf 6th National People’s Congress in December 2014, on allegations of plotting to ouster President Robert Mugabe through unconstitutional means. Consequently, her liberation war record as the first woman to bring down a Rhodesian forces Helicopter was questioned and dismissed as a lie. This demonization of Joice Mujuru raises a lot of question about the truth and lack thereof of the history of the liberation struggle that has been taught in schools in Zimbabwe.

biography. [...] The machinery is not biographies; the people who vote for us are ordinary people of Zimbabwe. We have a congress that will decide [...], not the Mandaza way” (Muleya 2006). Evidently, Mugabe is seriously concerned about the way he is “situated, figured and narrated” in Tekere’s personal and national histories (c.f. Muponde 2004: 15). His comments raise interesting questions about the nature of life-writing when literary and political patronage is at play, and the utilitarian function of the book as an archive.

Not only is the book being viewed as a coup plot and a product of opposition politics, but also an archival document being used in a process of “despoilment and dispossession” of Mugabe’s god-like stature in the political history of Zimbabwe. While the book is an archive of the glorious political narrative of Tekere in hagiographic terms, it simultaneously claims authority to discard Mugabe’s political narrative by adjudging it “unarchivable” (Mbembe 2002: 20). Therefore, the conspiracy theory that Mugabe sees in and through the Mandaza-Tekere narrative exposes the patron-client relationship of complicity between Tekere as the subject-patron and Mandaza as the author-client. However, this patron-client relationship takes a twist when Mugabe suggests that “Tekere was being *used* by Mandaza, [...] to damage him for political ends”, in which case Mandaza assumes the role of patron and Tekere the client. Through this fluidity of the patron-client identity and category, we begin to see a new kind of patronage, which is based on complicity, collaboration and mutual beneficiation of the parties concerned.

Through Mugabe’s comments on the book, we are alerted to the reality of the political utility of the book. In particular when we take a close look at what Mugabe sees as political web involving Tekere, Mandaza and the so-called Mujuru faction. The metaphor of the web suggests that through complicity, collaboration and connivance, an autobiography whose political utility as an archive was constructed. The resultant effect is patronage of authorship, self-archiving and the creation of a narrative that according to Garber (2008: 2), has “a complicated and contradictory mixture of deep gratitude and powerful resentment”, hagiography and demonization. The question that arises in this complex intertwining of literary and political patronage, and archiving is, “which of these two will predominate in any given encounter between patron and protégé?” (Garber 2008: 2). This is made more complex when we look at Mandaza’s multi-dimensional roles as writer, editor and publisher in the construction of Tekere’s *A Lifetime of Struggle*.

However, what I find particularly interesting in the creation and construction of the Mandaza-Tekere narrative is the relationship of the two, especially when Tekere himself refers to Mandaza as “my perfect ‘*Sahwira*’¹⁵ Ibbo Mandaza” (2006: xx). As a ‘perfect’ friend, Mandaza is rightly placed to write about Tekere’s life story. This traditionally induced and inspired relationship, which has its roots in the struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe in Mozambique when Mandaza as an academic wrote reports for Tekere to present at the United Nations General Assembly, cultivates the patron-client relationship between the two. Tekere also admits to the existence of this patron-client relationship when he says, “the reports presented at these meetings had to be of a high level, with more intellectual content than we combatants could muster. I was thus very interested in assembling a ‘think tank’, who would be able to assist in compiling these reports” (pp. xx–xxi). He further confesses that “I depended a lot on him [... and] he was able to give advice at a personal level, if there was a problem” (xxi). But Mugabe thinks otherwise: Tekere is being used by Mandaza to effect regime change in Zimbabwe. These two views combined, expose a mutually beneficial patron-client relationship of inter-dependence between Tekere and Mandaza. The fluidity and contextuality of power in this relationship, which is manifested through mutual hoisting and hosting of both the patron and client necessitated the construction, writing and publishing of Tekere’s autobiographical narrative *A Lifetime of Struggle*. Tekere had a personal story to tell, while Mandaza had the means, the language and resources with which to document and package the story. Combined with the long history of their relationship, which relationship became so personal that it transcended politics to involve their private lives, it can thus be argued that by playing complementary roles in the construction of *A Lifetime of the Struggle*, the two treated literature “more or less as a commodity, purveyed to the mutual advantage of both parties involved” (Williams 1982: 4).

It therefore, does not come as a surprise that the stance and thrust of Tekere’s narrative is the laudation and exaltation of the famous qualities and reputation of Tekere and the endeavour to pit him as a hero by birth. A bit of history would help clarify the point here. It is on record that all former Zanu PF stalwarts who fell out of favour with both the Party and Robert Mugabe, were not, upon their deaths, conferred with the national hero’s status which would

¹⁵ Traditionally, ‘*Sahwira*’ is a close friend who plays a special role in one’s life. He/she is the one who knows every little detail and secrets of and about the friend. He/she is sometimes referred to as a funeral friend because when a friend dies, the ‘*Sahwira*’ is there to make jokes and feign exaggerated grief in order to lighten the occasion.

have seen their remains interred at the National Heroes Acre.¹⁶ If the fate of these men upon their deaths regarding their hero's status is anything to go by, then for a man like Tekere, who had been fired from Mugabe's cabinet, expelled from the Party he founded, and had gone on to contest for presidency against Mugabe, his chances of being declared a hero and being laid to rest at the National Heroes Acre were nil. Thus, *A Lifetime of Struggle*, "with its strong autobiographical mode and its concentration on the unique status of the individual", and the way it "asserts the centrality of his own personality and his unique identity [as a hero]", to draw from Williams (1982: 8), is a good enough example of literary and political patronage at work. Considering that literature required for political patronage is supplied for and about "great men looking for political advantage from literary support" (Ibid.: 9), Tekere's heroic status had to be told to the world as a challenge to and before Zanu-PF's highest decision making body, the Politburo¹⁷, could decide whether or not he should be conferred with the national hero's status for him to be buried at the National Heroes Acre. Thus, in *A Lifetime of Struggle*, we see the rendering of a political autobiographical narrative in order for Tekere to have some political value in a society that he had fought to liberate from the chains of colonialism, but had seen Mugabe and Zanu-PF cast him into political oblivion.

Tekere's narrative conforms to what Rathbone (2011: 338) describes as "Kipling's quirky but acute gastronomic description of [auto]biography as being either overly 'filleted or spiced' or too 'high' for his taste." His account of his childhood is telling in this regard. There is a deliberate attempt to portray him as a courageous and rebellious young man whose resilient and fighting spirit runs not only throughout his lifetime of struggle but also in his maternal family bloodline. Details of his childhood are a platform to explore and expose Tekere's heroic qualities and deeds, and are a mirror in which we see the interplay of patronage of authorship and self-archiving in the construction of the narrative. His narrative has the objective to prove that he is a hero by birth as he was born with a rebellious, fighting spirit that has its roots in his maternal grandfather. For Tekere, these are quintessential markers of

¹⁶ These politicians include Ndabaningi Sithole – the founder member and first President of ZANU in 1963; James Chikerema – a veteran nationalist; Reverend Canaan Banana – the first black President (though ceremonial) of independent Zimbabwe, and Bishop Abel Muzorewa – the first black Prime minister of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, among many other deserving personalities.

¹⁷ Zanu PF's highest decision and policy making body. It is the one that decides the hero's status of the party's loyal members when they pass on. It is prudent to mention that Tekere was buried at the Heroes Acre but Mugabe did not attend the ceremony.

heroism, which contrast sharply with Mugabe's markers of hero which are anchored on intellect, fortitude and unwavering loyalty to Mugabe and the Party Zanu-PF.

First, he is the grandson of Chief Chingaira Makoni "who took part in the 1896 rebellion against the British colonialists, known as the First Chimurenga". In order to draw parallels with his grandfather, Tekere goes on to say "the struggle to which I dedicated my own life was called the Second Chimurenga". Like Chief Chingaira the hero of the First Chimurenga, who fought against white occupation of Zimbabwe, and was "killed by the settlers and his head severed and taken to England [...] as a trophy",¹⁸ Tekere is the hero of the Second Chimurenga (Tekere 2006: 27). In and through him lies the rebellious spirit of his great ancestor Chief Chingaira Makoni. Antithetically though, his siblings – both his brothers and sister – "lived conventional family lives" (p. 26). As the chosen one, Tekere "was destined for another type of life, full of hardship, [and] marked by pain that is Zimbabwe's continuing struggle" (p. 26). What we see here is a bold declaration that heroes are born and not made. Tekere's destiny as a fighter and hero had been laid down for him by his grandfather Chief Chingaira Makoni.

Second, there is a messianic thread in Tekere's life. As part of his destiny, Tekere is portrayed as a rebel, called upon to fight from a very tender age. He is predestined for a lifetime of struggle and suffering in order to liberate the people of Zimbabwe. The fact that he is portrayed as the chosen one to liberate the people of Zimbabwe from colonial and post-colonial bondage is reminiscent of the boy Jesus who is God's chosen one, called upon to suffer and die for the salvation of man. As the narrator and the narrated, the subject and object of the narrative, Tekere boasts of his rebellious spirit which began to manifest itself from childhood. He proudly confesses that he "was badly behaved at school" (p. 22). In spite of being one of the youngest boys in the school, Tekere's rebellious nature manifested itself through his ability to lead and influence other children to rebel and disregard rules. The hovering, intense rebellious spirit of his maternal grandfather Chingaira, which also showed itself through the strong character, courage and unrelenting stance of his mother, seems to have had a strong bearing on his character. His testimony that "I was also extremely proud to

¹⁸ There are concerted efforts and on-going struggles by politicians, historians and archivists to have these skulls handed over to Mugabe by the British as part of the national heritage. See articles "Bring Back our Chief's Head!" *The Sunday Mail* November 16, 2014; www.sundaymail.co.zw/bring-back-our-chiefs-head; and "Give us Back our Skulls! Robert Mugabe"; *Daily Mail* August 14, 2015; www.dailymail.co.uk/.../give-skulls-Robert-Mugabe-demands.

be a senior *Muzukuru*¹⁹ of the great fighter Chingaira and his people [...]. And, of course I longed to emulate the proud fighter of the First Chimurenga in my role during the Second Chimurenga; and I believe that, in time, this is what I came to do” (p. 28), shows that he sees his rebellion and fighting spirit as an esoteric force inspired by a supernatural power from the spiritual realm. This probably explains why he lauds and extols his “non-conformist attitude” (p. 31), which led to his expulsion from school as early as standard three.

Even though we can detect elements of hyberbole when Tekere says, “I have always been a rebel. I was a bright child, but impossible. I would organize the other children so that the class became unteachable. Even in lower primary school I was dismissed for bad behavior and my parents had to plead to have me reinstated” (30), we should not lose sight of the fact that Ibbo Mandaza is the writer of Tekere’s narrative. Their client-patron relationship means Mandaza, as the writer, is duty bound to use what Brennan (1988: 3) calls “lavish vocabulary and archly-rhetorical formulation of dedicatory panegyrics [...] as a formulation of ritualized tribute in which the author was expected to cultivate a deliberately heightened style”. Therefore, these kinds of laudatory tributes should not be dismissed as “little more than sycophantic ephemera” (Ibid.: 3). Rather, as readers, we should see patronage of authorship operating as a joint claim to historical credibility. The Tekere-Mandaza political intentions in formulating close links between Chief Chingaira’s rebellion and Tekere’s rebellious spirit are to ground Tekere’s heroic status in the history of the struggle for liberation, and not on the selective and partisan self-indulgence of those who wield power and influence today (Mandaza in Introduction to Tekere 2006: 4). Thus by assigning the responsibility to write the narrative of his life to Ibbo Mandaza, Tekere is merely ensuring that his heroic image and status would transcend time, place and death.

Consequently, the world that is evoked by the Tekere-Mandaza narrative of Tekere’s childhood is chiefly made up of the idealized achievements of Tekere. There is deliberate hyperbolic crowning of Tekere’s public life as a child, which in my view is meant to position him as a hero by birth. This larger-than-life-size kind of idealization is evident when through Mandaza, Tekere says that in Standard 5 “my difficult behavior reached its peak. Almost the entire class was badly behaved, and teachers would abandon lessons with us” (2006: 30). He prides in the fact that as a primary school child, he would make his white teachers weep because of his difficult behavior. At St Augustine Mission school, he “emerged as the

¹⁹ ‘Muzukuru’ is Shona equivalent of grandchild.

strongest critic of government” (33), and “behaved so badly that I wrote my final examination as an expelled student” (31). The prominence and deliberate laudation of Tekere’s rebellious spirit is telling at this point in the narrative. At work here is a deliberately constructed discourse of hagiography meant to depict Tekere as a destined hero of the struggle. Unlike Robert Mugabe, who was “incorporated” (51) into national politics, the struggle and leadership, Tekere was born into it. By inheriting his grandfather Chingaira Makoni’s spirit of rebellion, Tekere’s destiny as a fighter for freedom, and hero of the struggle was mapped out for him at birth. This probably explains why his is a lifetime of struggle. By embellishing Tekere’s childhood with images representing the cherished social attributes of a hero: rebellion, fearlessness, wisdom, leadership and tactician, the narrative fosters and consolidates the pre-eminence and prominence of Tekere as a hero who was born to fight. There is an eagerness to display Tekere’s power and courage to the people. His commitment to a lifetime of struggle to liberate the people of Zimbabwe was not accidental. Rather, there is a laid claim in the narrative that Tekere’s lifetime of struggle was a calling from a greater sacred authority. Tekere validates this divine authority by drawing parallels between his life of rebellion and struggle in the Second Chimurenga and that of his great ancestor Chingaira in the First Chimurenga.

When writer turns patron: patron-client mutual hosting and hoisting

The lengthy introduction to Tekere’s political autobiography (pp.1–26) and the postscript (pp.172–5) were written by Mandaza in his capacity as Tekere’s ‘perfect’ friend, writer, editor and publisher of *A Lifetime of Struggle*. The two passages show that by mutual agreement between the writer and the patron, the tenets of the autobiographical genre can be subverted and subordinated to the wishes and agenda of the two. The way Mandaza, in both the introduction and postscript, plays out the story of Robert Mugabe against a background of social and political problems bedeviling Zimbabwe is an indication that literary patronage does not necessarily mean that the artist, by submitting to the patron’s agenda “will come to have vulgar views; you will degrade your style; and your taste will be entirely corrupted”, as Garber would have us believe (2008: 8). Instead, Mandaza as the writer, editor and publisher, assumes another identity, that of patron, and goes on to give his own personal views on Mugabe under the guise of Tekere’s life narrative. Thus in this section of the chapter, I put forward the argument that the kind of literary and political patronage that exists between

Tekere and Mandaza is about mutual hosting and hoisting of patron-client political projects, that is, the political decomposition of Robert Mugabe.

It is clear that in Tekere's *A Lifetime of Struggle* Mandaza is not simply telling a story about Tekere's life for the sake of keeping a record, but that at least some of the episodes of the narrative are to be understood as referring forward through time to Zimbabwe's contemporary affairs. What is most remarkable about Tekere's narrative is its examination and treatment of a whole range of Zimbabwe's contemporary political, social and economic problems, and how these are attributed to the failed leadership of Robert Mugabe. What we begin to see here is what I earlier called a new form of literary patronage based on complicity and mutual beneficiation of the parties involved. As the subject-patron, Tekere is hosting Mandaza's views in the same way Mandaza is hosting Tekere for purposes of advancing his own political clout. At this point Mandaza ceases to be the author-client, but assumes the role of patron, hence Mugabe's umbrage that Tekere is being used by Mandaza.

Mandaza's projection of Mugabe as "desperately trying to catch up and be part of a guerilla war in which the civilian [leader] had become [a] virtual on-looker" shows Mugabe's non-involvement in and lack of touch with the military struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe (Introduction to Tekere 2006: 14). In fact, besides being kept under house arrest for almost a year in Quelimane, central Mozambique, Mugabe, barring his skills on the diplomatic front, is relegated to a mere token and an appendage of the struggle. While he acknowledges that "the Mugabe story is one that requires its own attention and space" (17), Mandaza goes on to give a detailed account – albeit negative – of Mugabe's rise to power, which he calls "the rise and rise of Robert Mugabe" (15) that took place in "Machiavellian style, during which many a fellow traveler, like Edgar Tekere, found themselves out in the cold" (16). There is no doubting that Mandaza is out to demonize Mugabe's personality and leadership style, especially when he describes him as "a doubtful political factor", and "even a temporary leader" (16). We are also told that African leaders such as Nyerere of Tanzania, Kaunda of Zambia and Machel of Mozambique "unceremoniously snubbed the man [Mugabe] and demanded the restoration of Ndabaningi Sithole as the leader of the party", and Hebert Chitepo was "unimpressed at Mugabe's elevation" (Ibid 16). By referring to the rejection of Mugabe by well-known fathers of Black Nationalism in Africa, and Chitepo's – who by that time was the Chairman of Zanu - dissatisfaction with Mugabe's rise, Mandaza's aim is to

demonstrate that Mugabe was an unwelcome element in both the party and the struggle, and his rise to power raised a lot of questions about his leadership capabilities.

During the struggle, Mugabe is portrayed as “so much in the shadow of Tongogara and his guerilla army” (16). The post-independence period also, posed some challenges for Mugabe. He faced the threat of being challenged and having his shortcomings exposed by Enos Nkala, Maurice Nyagumbo, Edson Zvobgo and Edgar Tekere “who were aware of his strengths and weaknesses” (16). However, as a shrewd contriver and through political manipulation, the once threatening challengers in the form of his peers mentioned above, were by the 1990s “either dead, political outcasts or lame ducks in a political system in which Mugabe was becoming unassailable as leader” (16–17). It is this unassailability of Mugabe, which rendered him “more and more autocratic and dictatorial” (17) that Mandaza and Tekere, in their collusion, seek to expose as a way of discrediting him. The diction used by Mandaza to describe Robert Mugabe, for example, “doubtful political factor”, “shadow”, “temporary leader”, “manipulation”, “military might”, “autocratic” and “dictatorial”, is intensely personal and negative, and aimed at demonizing Mugabe as a person and leader.

Rathbone (2011: 338) posits that “lots of authors, almost certainly far too many authors, have made a fist at capturing ‘A list’ of people, such as [...] Robert Mugabe. But [...] these have tended to be over-enthusiastic partisan accounts which [...] indict”. The same pitfall of impassioned indictment of Robert Mugabe characterizes Mandaza’s portrayal of the man in the introduction to Tekere’s autobiography. At play here, is the political value of the tactful handling of the autobiographical narrative for a patron whose motive is the same as that of the writer – political gain. If the objective of Tekere’s narrative is to discredit Mugabe, as Mugabe himself alleges, then Mandaza and Tekere did a good job of it. Through complicity and siding with Tekere, Mandaza demonstrates a “shrewd sense of the value of literary support to a man of vast political ambition who could manipulate it with skill” (Williams 1982: 11). Thus he exploits the discourse of demonization in order to create a figure that is antithetical and a foil to Edgar Tekere.

Following his expulsion from Zanu PF, the Party he founded, Tekere said,

[a]s Secretary General of the Party, I had the constitutional custodianship of the founding aspirations and principles, as well as the policies and decisions of the Party. Thus it was I who had the authority to remind, guide, rebuke and insist on adherence to the founding principles and the

vision of the Party, and I took this responsibility extremely seriously (2006: 132).

This is not the kind of ZANU PF that Mandaza depicts in the introduction to Tekere's narrative. He presents to us a ZANU PF that is "intellectually, ideologically and organizationally vacuous; [whose] strength lies in the conflation with the state at the level of the key leaders and access to material resources" (17); a ZANU PF that is completely and diametrically at variance with its founding aspirations and principles. According to Mandaza, Mugabe exploits this inherent organizational weakness of ZANU PF. It provides for him, "a loose but convenient framework through which Mugabe, almost he alone, is able to exercise and sustain hegemonic control" (17). This probably explains why Tekere says "Mugabe was working to consolidate his personal control and power over the party, and I was obviously an obstacle to this" (132). Evident here is the existence of subtle but deliberate dialogue between Tekere and Mandaza in their patron-client relationship. Tekere's expulsion from the Party and the subsequent abolishment of the powerful post of Secretary General, meant that the custodian of the founding aspirations and principles of the Party had been gotten rid of. Hence, Mandaza sees the inherent organizational weakness of ZANU PF as a result of this.

Besides giving him the platform to pose as patron, the introduction also provides Mandaza a means to "escape the stigma of a paid hack dutifully rehearsing a dictated line by allowing him to take a detached point of view" of Robert Mugabe, and by judging him based on both the past and immediate historical contexts of Zimbabwe (Williams 1982: 14). Interestingly though, is the deliberate coincidence and similarity of opinion and detail about Mugabe between Tekere and Mandaza. The only logical conclusion at this point is that there is practice of complicity in the art of patronage between Tekere and Mandaza whose ultimate objective is to demonize Robert Mugabe.

While the introduction by Mandaza focuses on exposing Mugabe's non-involvement in the military struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe, and how he made it his object business to consolidate his power in both the Party and government, the postscript has as its center of focus, Mugabe's misgovernance and misrule of Zimbabwe, which earned him the tag, "international disgrace". When Tekere was expelled from the Party in 1981, Samora Machel of Mozambique, Quette Masire of Botswana and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania expressed concern and questioned; "How can Robert hope to run Zimbabwe without Edgar?" (Tekere 2006: 132). The coincidence is intriguing here, given the fact that Machel and Nyerere had

also questioned and doubted Mugabe's leadership capabilities during the struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe. It seems their earlier skepticism is becoming a self-fulfilling prophesy. Even though this concern was expressed twenty five years before the publication of Tekere's autobiography, the postscript of the narrative is an expose` of the self-fulfilling prophesy of the fear and anxiety expressed by the three African leaders about the future of Zimbabwe under Mugabe's rule without Edgar Tekere.

The opening statement of the postscript proclaims doom and gloom. Tekere says "[a]s I conclude this book, Zimbabwe is immersed in the deepest crisis. This is a development which none of us who founded the Zimbabwe State in 1980 would have foreseen nor imagined during those days and months of hope and optimism of the national liberation struggle" (172). This is ironic indeed, considering that the three African leaders referred to earlier, had predicted doom for Zimbabwe under Mugabe's leadership without Tekere. The crisis, which is summarized as follows; over 1000 per cent inflation, 80 per cent unemployment, 90 per cent people living below the poverty datum line, poor management of the land reform programme, and corruption, is attributed to Mugabe's misgovernance and poor leadership. A long passage, which places all the blame squarely on Mugabe, is worth quoting here;

The old saying rings true, that you cannot hold one man responsible for all of a nation's ills. But, in Zimbabwe, it is becoming increasingly difficult not to believe that Robert Mugabe is right at the center of the nation's problems; in my view 90 per cent of the blame should go to him, and ten per cent to those who have uncritically huddled around him over the years (173).

There is a deliberate attempt by Tekere and Mandaza to undermine Robert Mugabe by ensuring that he shoulders all the blame for all the woes that Zimbabwe is experiencing. Such a move would, in essence, raise doubts about Mugabe's leadership capabilities, and lead to a possible change of leadership. This is the assumption that Mugabe scoffs at when he says that one does not become a president through a biography. In a way, Mugabe is ridiculing Tekere and Mandaza's attempt to use the autobiography as machinery for change of leadership in Zimbabwe.

In order to paint a global picture of Robert Mugabe as an international disgrace, Tekere, through Mandaza says, "even outsiders, prominent statesmen among them, have expressed their disappointment at Robert Mugabe's performance" (173). He goes on to quote high-ranking African politicians and iconic members of the clergy providing a laundry-list of

Mugabe's faults. For example, Desmond Tutu is quoted as saying "Mugabe seems to have gone bonkers in a big way. [...] he has become a caricature, a cartoon figure of the archetypal African dictator" (173). Further reference is made to former President of Botswana Quete Masire's allusion to the "political and economic destruction of Zimbabwe under Mugabe" (Ibid). In their "National Vision", local church leaders aver that Mugabe "was presiding over a regime characterized by lawlessness, bigotry and political intolerance", while Enos Nkala, angry and frustrated, describes Mugabe as a liar and calls on him "to go, and go quickly" (Ibid: 174). His direct challenge to Mugabe that "in terms of entry into politics, he is a baby, and I challenge him to deny this" (Ibid: 174), shows the Tekere-Mandaza's political agenda of demonizing Mugabe and discrediting his leadership capabilities. Thus, in his chiefly status, as the anointed revolutionary grandchild of Chief Chingaira Makoni, Tekere gathers the opinions of other African Chiefly figures about his stolen and pillaged inheritance. There is great effort to prove that Mugabe could not have governed Zimbabwe successfully without the anointed figure of Tekere. It is, however, the ending of the postscript that makes interesting revelation because of its boldness in paving a way forward for Zimbabwe to come out of the crisis that Mugabe has placed it. Tekere says that there is hope for Zimbabwe's redemption and restoration to its former glory. "But this will require a bold leadership within ZANU PF itself, the courage to tell Mugabe that he is now a liability and that he should retire and pass the button to a younger and more imaginative leader" (175).

There is no doubting that there is agenda setting at work here. Tekere's narrative at this point is no longer about Tekere himself. Through complicity of the author and patron, the narrative lauds and glorifies Tekere by portraying him as a hero of the struggle and the custodian of the original values, aspirations and principles of ZANU PF. These values, aspirations and principles died a natural death with the expulsion of Tekere from the Party. Expelling the anointed one from the Party was an act of desecration that created an irreplaceable gap in both the Party and government. We also see another dimension of literary patronage here; that of collusion between the patron and the author to use the narrative to denigrate and demonize the patron's political opponents. This apparent collusion between Tekere and Mandaza is the one that gives the narrative a cyclic plot structure. The narrative begins with an introduction by Mandaza that denigrates and exposes Mugabe's rise to power and consolidation of his position in Machiavellian style. It then ends with a postscript which, though attributed to Tekere through the first person narrator, is to all intents and purposes

Mandaza's. Its content shows evidence of thorough research which can only be attributed to Mandaza's strong academic footing. The postscript also denigrates Mugabe and exposes his leadership failures. So, while the "I" in the postscript, gives the impression that it is Tekere speaking, the depth of the content and language are evidently Mandaza's work. In other words, Mandaza, by assuming the dual role and identity of the writer and patron, begins Tekere's narrative with his lengthy introduction and ends the narrative with his postscript.

Setting the record straight: Tsvangirai's *At the Deep End*

The political rivalry between Morgan Tsvangirai and Robert Mugabe led to a decade of political polarization in Zimbabwe. This resulted in the emergence of two binary political and literary discourses – hagiography and demonization, accusations and counter accusations. Hence, through archival, multi-dimensionality, blended voices, historical groundedness and modesty topos Tsvangirai's political memoir *At the Deep End* addresses criticisms and denigrations of his image by his political opponents. When it was published in 2011, questions were raised about the timing and motive behind its publication. This was because political memoirs are typically published at the end of one's political career and yet, Tsvangirai's came out when he was at the peak of his career in politics as Prime Minister in Zimbabwe's inclusive government.

Moyo (2011), who at this point in time had fallen out of favour with Zanu-PF after contesting elections as an independent against the advice of his party, but continued to be the unofficial spokesperson for Zanu-PF, saw in Tsvangirai's narrative a pack of lies in a poorly written marketing ploy meant to give him political relevance by positioning him as a democratic leader. In response Tsvangirai posits that "so much has been written from other people's perspective and not from *my perspective*. There has been so much *distortion*, so much *undermining* of my character, even *misrepresentation* of certain events over the last 20 or so years, so I am just putting the record straight" (Tsvangirai 2011, my emphasis). This makes his memoir a rival and/or competing narrative. It gives the book political utility and the status of an archive of his personal history. Tsvangirai makes use of the book as a strategy to document, archive and claim his place in the political history of Zimbabwe. However, I must hasten to mention that the use of 'archive' here is two pronged; it refers to the book as a repository of rich historical fact as well as propaganda-driven mythology. In order to come up with a rich archive of his personal and national history, Tsvangirai engaged the services of his

former spokesperson, journalist and family friend William Tagwirei Bango as a scribe. During an interview with Violet Gonda of the *Voice of America*, Bango describes his role in the writing of the narrative as follows: “all I did was to take his views which he had put down on paper, and to talk to him for long periods [200 hours] and then I summarized his thoughts and gave it back to him to *approve*, which he duly did” (2011, my emphasis).

Evident here is the patron-writer relationship between Tsvangirai and Bango, in which the “[writer’s] task was to display craftsmanship primarily to the greater glory of his client” (Kempers 1992: 188). In a typical patron-client relationship, Bango as the writer admits to receiving what Kempers calls “specific instructions [...] by word of mouth [...] on which the work was to be modeled” (Ibid.: 188). There is further admission that the final document is an authorized autobiography because it had to get the approval of the patron, Tsvangirai, before going for print. Bango (2011) says, “I summarized his thoughts and gave it back to him to approve”. Therefore, the decisions on what goes on record and what does not “were made with a view to pleasing [the patron]”, whose motive is to tell his story from his own perspective, and to put the record straight. Thus, the resultant book and its collective images constitute what Kempers calls “a historical source of information on the social relationships in which artistic patronage [is] embedded” (Kempers 1992: 188). In other words, Tsvangirai’s political memoirs serve as an archive of his personal history and political exploits, and enable him to increase his social and political standing apart from that presented by others. However, the whole process of constructing Tsvangirai’s political narrative reveals a mutually beneficial relationship of complicity and inter-dependence between Tsvangirai as the patron, and Bango the author.

The patron-client relationship between Tsvangirai and Bango seems to be similar to the one between Tekere and Mandaza. However, there is a telling difference in the elements of patronage between Tsvangirai and Tekere. While literary patronage for Tsvangirai resulted in the creation of a text that was meant to launch, consolidate and advance his political career in Zimbabwe, and thus enhance his political standing at a time when the suffering masses of Zimbabwe viewed him as a political and economic messiah in the inclusive government, for Tekere, literary patronage was meant to rescue and revive a political career and life whose death knell was tolling.

Therefore, it is in the interest of this study to emphasise the closeness of William Bango's relationship with Morgan Tsvangirai, both as personal family friends and political companions, and as patron and author. The relationship is multi-faceted: personal, social and political. Nevertheless, patronage steers it towards narrow political utility, but also allows for a broader-based foundation in personal and social history. Sarah Huddleston, in her biography of Morgan Tsvangirai entitled *Face of Courage: Morgan Tsvangirai* details how the intense relationship of the two manifested itself during Tsvangirai's treason trial. She says, "[w]hen William Bango finally saw Tsvangirai emerge from the courthouse, he heaved a sigh of relief" (Huddleston 2005: 138). Prior to Tsvangirai's emergence from the courthouse, we are also told that "around Bango, the police were using their batons to quell the enthusiasm of the gathered MDC supporters" (p.135). The Tsvangirai-Bango relationship transcends politics. It is so personal that like the Tekere-Mandaza relationship, it complicates the type of patronage between Tsvangirai as patron and Bango as writer. Bango is not just a docile recipient of instructions from Tsvangirai; rather, as a writer, spokesperson and journalist, he is also Tsvangirai's advocate and Paraclete. Thus, when it came to choosing a writer of Tsvangirai's memoirs, Bango was the person better placed to take the role of Tsvangirai's archivist, notwithstanding the fact that there were other people like Stephen Chan who had already published a book of conversations with Tsvangirai, and Huddleston who had hastily authored Tsvangirai's biography.

However, we must not allow this evidence to blind us to the social reality that as a spokesperson and author for Tsvangirai, Bango, like renaissance artists involved in a patron-client relationship with their masters, "lived at [his] expense and wrote what [he] required" (Wiseman 1982: 34). Thus, *At the Deep End* gives a very clear idea of how the author (Bango) would apply his research and writing skills as a journalist for the needs of his patron (Tsvangirai). One could also argue that by doubling up as spokesperson and author, Bango places himself among the "hangers-on of [Tsvangirai] who do his jobs for him" (Wiseman 1982: 48). Two incidents, in particular, Tsvangirai's childhood and the tragic death of his wife Susan will be the focus of this section of the chapter. These, I believe, provide us with an opportunity to see the patron and writer at work in an attempt to achieve the patron's objective – that of putting the record straight.

A childhood grounded in national politics

One of the accusations leveled against Morgan Tsvangirai, especially by his political opponents in Zanu PF, is that “he was a sell-out for not fighting in the liberation war” (Russell 2011). The other has to do with Mugabe’s “denigrations of Tsvangirai’s intellectual capacity” (Chan 2011), and that Tsvangirai is a puppet being used by Britain and America to effect regime change in Zimbabwe. Essentially, this means that Tsvangirai’s life, history and personality do not conform to Mugabe’s markers of a hero, which are, intellect, fortitude, loyalty to the party Zanu PF, and liberation war credentials. A close reading of the narrative of Tsvangirai’s childhood reveals that these denigrations constitute part of the “distortions”, “undermining” and “misrepresentation” that Tsvangirai seeks to counter as a way of putting the record straight. Thus we begin to see that *At the Deep End*, like some Greek and Roman epics, “was written and [published] to exalt the reputation of [Tsvangirai and his] family against political rivals, especially [Zanu PF] (Williams 1982: 4).

For Tsvangirai, the fact that he was born on 10 March 1952 is not enough. His birth must be grounded in the history and politics of the time so that he can position himself and claim his space in the show of leadership and resilience. Thus, he says, “I was born a few months before the white settler administration formed the federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland comprising the self-governing territory of Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and the British protectorates of Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Nyasaland (Malawi)” (Tsvangirai 2011: 3). This historical groundedness and contextualization of his birth is significant in so far as the period coincides with the rise of African Nationalism across the continent. As a way of challenging the Zanu PF discourse of laying claim to ownership of the liberation struggle, Tsvangirai says that the context of his birth, which is grounded in the rise of African Nationalism, meant that “my life was destined to be closely interwoven with political, economic and social changes in Zimbabwe” (3). The idea of predestination here, presupposes that politics for Tsvangirai is his calling because he was born into it. He may have taken long to play an active role in national politics, but when he eventually did, it was not at the behest of former white Rhodesians as Zanu PF’s discourse of puppetry suggests, but a simple nod to the calling he was destined to follow, an acceptance of his vocation. By associating his birth with the politics of the nation, Tsvangirai provides a counter-narrative to his political opponents’ claim that he is a sell-out who did not take part in the struggle for liberation.

His mockery of Zanu PF's claim of ownership of the liberation struggle is evident when he says "in my formative years, though, I suffered experiences that would leave deep and lasting impressions throughout my subsequent private and public life" (3). However, in order to avoid sounding like Zanu PF, he quickly puts a 'disclaimer' by saying, "indeed, millions of Zimbabweans were subjected to similar experiences, so I can claim no distinction for myself" (3). This contrasts sharply with Tekere's portrayal of himself as the quintessential figure of what the struggle represents and bold claim that the struggle for Zimbabwe and himself are inseparables. Where Tekere individualizes and personalizes the struggle, Tsvangirai applies modesty topos as a narrative strategy in order to ridicule, censure and lampoon the claims by Zanu PF to have single-handedly liberated Zimbabwe. For Tsvangirai, anyone who had been born, was born and was alive during the struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe was part and parcel of the struggle regardless of age because it was a people's struggle. Therefore, any claim by one political party that they hold the key to the country's liberation history is a fallacy. We are reminded of Enos Nkala's rancorous comments that "Mugabe talks, imagines and believes that he and he alone, brought about the freedom of Zimbabwe. He believes that some of us were sleeping at home with our wives while he was fighting. This nonsense must come to an end" (Nkala 2006). Tsvangirai is saying exactly the same thing, but in a subtle and diplomatic way. Nkala went a step further to threaten to unleash his own autobiography to add to the arsenal of truth-telling life narratives. What we see here are the salient but deeply suppressed realities and inside-tales of Zimbabwean history that only the auto/biography brings to the surface and no other media. Such revelations give the autobiography the material status of an archive.

With his birth grounded in the political history of the country, Tsvangirai's narrative takes another twist. He sketches the background of organizations, political groups and individuals who played a crucial role in the journey to independence. The individuals concerned, most of whom have been relegated to the dust-bin of history, are actually the fathers of Black Nationalism in Zimbabwe. Tsvangirai says, "it has taken me decades to fathom and follow the complex interplay of events, *personalities* and *parties* that delivered Zimbabwe as an independent state" (4). Unlike the precocious Tekere, who as a child in primary school, was already aware of the political dynamics of the time, thus he claims, "I have always been a rebel" (Tekere 2006: 30), the adult Tsvangirai acknowledges that at the time, he was too young to understand anything. While this may sound self-contradictory, considering that

earlier on he grounded his birth in the political history of the country, what we need to appreciate is that, at no point does Tsvangirai lay claim to have been actively involved in the struggle for liberation. What he is doing here, is to present a counter narrative to the current discourse by ZANU PF that they single-handedly liberated Zimbabwe. Hence, Tsvangirai argues that “it was not until 1957 that they (blacks in Southern Rhodesia) formally created a purely political organization, the Southern Rhodesia African National Congress (SRANC)” (5). This was followed by the 1961 conference in Salisbury “to which Joshua Nkomo and Ndabaningi Sithole were invited” (5). Subsequent to the banning of SRANC, the “National Democratic Party (NDP), headed by Michael Mawema” was formed (5), and then ZAPU was formed in 1961. According to Tsvangirai, the party called ZANU came into being in 1963, after the collapse of the Federation. By then Tsvangirai was 11 years old and he claims that “my life had stretched over the entire short history of the federation which had come and gone” (8). Implicit in this statement is the fact that, having seen the making and breaking of the federation, before ZANU was formed, then surely, present day ZANU PF has no authority to judge his political career because he was there before ZANU PF.

Perhaps a lengthy passage by Tsvangirai can help clarify his intentions. At the age of 13, he was witness to some of the colonial atrocities on black people. He says,

I witnessed how the government cut up our farmlands into units where we were forced to put up contour ridges, *I saw* our pastures being reduced drastically to limit livestock levels; and pass laws were introduced to discourage and to monitor movement into urban areas. *I heard* how chiefs and their subjects were ordered off parts of Gutu, Bikita, Chirumanzu, Mvuma and Chivhu as large chunks of these districts were turned into white commercial farms. *I recall* when new terminology was introduced to define our homes ..., which terms those older than me found derisive, offensive and insensitive (pp. 12–13, my emphasis).

The phrases ‘I witnessed’, ‘I saw’, ‘I heard’ and ‘I recall’ position Tsvangirai as an observer to the political activities of the time. He may have been too young to actively take part in the politics of the time, but he surely was not blind to his surroundings and the drastic changes that were taking place. His consciousness of the colonial injustices and the centrality of land to rural black people flies in the face of allegations by Zanu PF that he wants to give land back to former White Rhodesians. By positioning himself as a witness who saw, heard, experienced and still can vividly recall the victimization suffered by blacks at the hands of colonial authorities, Tsvangirai is offering a counter narrative to the accusations by his

political opponents that he is a puppet of the white man and his aim is to give land back to the former colonizers.

The fact that Tsvangirai is at pains to present a counter-narrative to the allegations of his non-involvement in the liberation struggle is evident when he casts blame at his father and his poor background for the turn that his life took. He claims that,

[p]erhaps I would have become a political activist but my parents needed financial help to support the other children through school. My father, as always, pressed me to finish my studies and enter working life. After leaving school I landed a job in the town of Umtali making elastic trimming for curtains and underwear bands (25).

What appears like Tsvangirai's blame game is actually a narrative strategy. He adopts a mundane approach of drawing on the ordinary common-place narratives which identify him with the people and their life. It is an everyman story that he is presenting: from humility to higher politics, from family commitment to national duty, from shop floor to corridors of power, an American dream kind of narrative. His narrative thrust here plays on populist politics. He presents himself as a humble figure from the people, of the people and chosen by the people. Chan (2011) misses Tsvangirai's narrative strategy here when he says, "by and large, fault is ascribed to others". He goes further to say "of course it is the nature, indeed almost the purpose of memoirs to exonerate and present in the most favourable light possible, the history and accomplishments of the narrator". What he does not acknowledge though is that Tsvangirai is not so much shifting blame to his father as crafting a story so engaging and compelling in its own right that it displaces the negative image of him created by his opponents. However, in doing so, he adopts a purely subjective stance which results in the development of rival stories – the Zanu PF version which can be recognized as propaganda, and Tsvangirai's memoir which claims archive status as a repository of rich historical fact.

No better than average

Another of the vilifications against Tsvangirai has to do with his intellectual capacity and lack thereof. However, Tsvangirai employs the device of modesty topos as a narrative strategy in order to give us an honest portrayal of his performance in school. Without being polemic, he admits and betrays sensitivity over his lack of a tertiary education. He cites his poor rural background and lack of a middle-class upbringing as obstacles that made it impossible for him to continue with education beyond ordinary level. Parts of his narrative

turn emotional when he reminisces about his poor background, especially when recounting his family's poverty. He recalls, "[p]olitics aside, I was increasingly concerned about the future of our own family and my role in pulling them out of poverty. How would I do that, given the inequality and lack of opportunity that faced black Zimbabweans and rural youth in particular?" (31). In other words, Tsvangirai is saying he is an everyman and not a superstar or superhero. Thus he deliberately refers to and shows concern for "rural youth in particular" as a way of dealing with passim attacks and accusations by Zanu PF that he does not command political support in rural areas, and that his party is supported by white farmers and urban people only. Therefore, by singling out rural youth in particular, he demonstrates his strong rural background, attachment to the rural setting and a high conscious level of the predicament of youths in the rural areas. This flies in the face of Zanu-PF's incoherent tirade against Tsvangirai as an urban politician.

His emotive rhetorical questions in, "after completing school, where, I wondered, would I get a job to help my parents end the family's humiliation and suffering – and what kind of job would it be?" (Ibid: 31), show the predicament and dilemma faced by a black rural child, more so, the eldest son in a colonial context where employment opportunities for blacks are limited. Besides the disadvantages of race and rural background, his situation is worsened by his lack of a tertiary education, hence, out of desperation, he decides to "settle for any job I could find" (32). Such was the multi-dimensionality of his predicament that even at school, he was no better than average. When juxtaposed with Edgar Tekere, the figure I discussed earlier in the chapter, Tsvangirai becomes a foil, especially when Tekere says, "I was a bright child, but impossible" (Tekere 2006: 30). Whereas Tekere is "no better" by choice, Tsvangirai is no better than average because of poor family background.

Tsvangirai obliquely addresses Mugabe's criticism of his intellectual capacity with sheer honesty. By combining modesty topos and the Barack Obama-like openness in his account of self and rural origins, Tsvangirai not only offers us a counter-narrative that indirectly responds to Mugabe's attacks, but also gives holistic credibility to his memoir as a competing narrative. If honesty is the highest virtue that a man should keep as Chaucer puts it in "The Franklin's Tale", then Tsvangirai makes the best of it. His sheer honesty adds political value to his identity as an open and honest leader who, unlike his all-time nemesis Robert Mugabe, does not claim credit for something that he did not do. For example, the common narrative is that Robert Mugabe has seven earned academic degrees, six of which he

acquired during his 10 years of imprisonment. Antithetically, Tsvangirai admits that he did not make the grade at Standard 3, and had the option to drop out or look for another place elsewhere. “As I was no better than average, I was squeezed out of Munyira after failing to make the grade for Standard 4 in 1964” (20). His failure to make the grade, explains his anger and bruised ego when a white official tells him that Africans are inherently dull. This is during the post office encounter when he is applying for places in other schools. He recalls that

[i]n order to apply for places in various high schools I was buying postage stamps when a white official scoffed at my ambitions, saying he did not see any reason why I should worry as Africans were dull and unimaginative by nature. I concluded my purchase and limped out, my ego thoroughly bruised, and anger seething through my nostrils (23).

Tsvangirai’s reaction at this point is understandable, especially coming from a boy who had once failed to make the grade in Standard 3. He thus fits into the white man’s stereotype of blacks as dull and unimaginative. It is ironic that following this incident, he says, “the presence of whites evoked mixed feelings of resentment and fear. I saw them as different and cruel” (23), but does not make a deliberate attempt to create a narrative that proves that whites were wrong about him. While his revulsion for white people stems from his childhood experience, and is understandable here, one gets the impression that his narrative does not do enough to counter the colonial white stereotypes about black people, and the Zanu-PF accusation that he is the white man’s stooge. Notwithstanding this glaring weakness, we still have to concede that his modesty and openness about his less than average performance at school are disarming techniques that have a way of diluting the vitriolic comments about his lack of intellectual capabilities.

Interestingly, Tsvangirai makes further admission that he “had difficulties with both spoken and written English” (24). Hence, when he sat for final Standard 6 examinations in 1966, he did well in all subjects “except English which, predictably, I failed, having had so little exposure to the language” (27). However, he credits his growing interest in politics to his improved performance in school. He says, “as my school performance improved, so did my appreciation of, and interest in politics and society” (30). What makes Tsvangirai’s account of his school life interesting is the sheer honesty with which he delineates his less than average performance. He only succeeded after failing not once, but twice. There is a deliberate stylistic to draw parallels between Morgan Tsvangirai’s school and political life

and that of Winston Churchill, whom we are told, “found his years at Harrow School challenging. He was not thought of as a good student” (The Churchill Centre 2007: 5). Not only did Winston fail the “Sandhurst [Academy] entrance examination twice before passing on his third try” (6), but also openly admits ““I was on the whole considerably discouraged by my school days”” (Ibid. 5). In spite of these challenges, Winston Churchill, we are told, was a “forward thinking man” (6) whose long political career saw him becoming Prime Minister in a coalition government in 1940. He would later write, ““I felt as if I were walking with Destiny, and that all my past life had been preparation for this hour and for this trial”” (6). Similarly, writing his memoirs in 2011, at a time he was Prime Minister of Zimbabwe in the coalition government, Tsvangirai’s sheer honesty about his poor performance in school is telling. Drawing heavily on the Winston Churchill life narrative, Tsvangirai’s memoir depicts him as a “symbol of victory among the oppressed and conquered peoples” (6). In a way, he is making a statement to his detractors from ZANU PF, that it does not require one to have a degree to be a Prime Minister. With his ordinary level, Tsvangirai was indeed Prime Minister of Zimbabwe from 2009 – 2013. In fact, when he joined government as Prime Minister, he found economic comatose in “Mugabe’s empty pantry, the country he boastfully called ‘my Zimbabwe’” (528). This is despite the fact that Mugabe has seven earned degrees to his name, and a dozen honorary ones.

Political Messiah

In his review of Paul John Eakin’s book *Living Autobiographically* (2008), Roger Porter (2011: 130) argues that “we are who we say we are. [...] and from an early stage of our lives we continue to narrate ourselves, whether in speech or in writing”. Drawing on this premise, I wish to argue that Tsvangirai’s account of the tragic and untimely death of his wife Susan is also an exposé of his claim to his political messiah-ship. The title of the chapter under discussion is “Life and death”. Through the title alone, Tsvangirai creates the allegorical image of the mustard seed or a grain of wheat and its motif of; in death lies life. We again begin to hear the blended voice of Tsvangirai and Bango when the narrative takes a complex stylistic turn. There is narrative shift from the death of Susan to the renewal and rejuvenation of the once ailing Zimbabwean economy, interwoven with Tsvangirai’s rise to the position of Premier. This harmonization of background and mood through the Tsvangirai-Bango blended voices positions Tsvangirai as the long awaited messiah whose wife’s death marks the regeneration and revival of a truly Zimbabwean spirit. The claim to messianic identity is

addressed to Tsvangirai's political opponents, whose futile attempts to block his ascension to power are being ridiculed. The message that comes across to those of Zanu PF who had vowed that Tsvangirai would never set foot at State House is that once the path of a political messiah has been paved and made straight for him, no man can change the course of action. At this point in the narrative, we begin to see what Amy Culley and Rebecca Styler (2011) call the theme of relationality or relational self-hood. There is "a shift within life writing (in this case Tsvangirai's memoirs) away from the traditional emphasis on the autonomous individual who stands out of his or her milieu in favour of considerations of the relationality inherent in individual lives" (Culley and Styler: 237). Tsvangirai's narrative follows this shift especially in its exploration of relationality between Tsvangirai, his wife, Bango the author, MDC and the nation. Tsvangirai is no longer the autonomous self, the source of his own action and narrative. Rather, he exists in a complex web of interwoven relationships that shape his life and story.

As a political messiah, Tsvangirai sees his entry in government as a divine move that is meant to redeem Zimbabwe from the economic quagmire it has been placed in by Zanu PF. The pomp, ceremony and optimism that characterized his entry in government are synonymous with and reminiscent of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem in that it gives the nation of Zimbabwe a new lease of life. Tsvangirai makes no apology about his self-importance as a political messiah when he says,

[w]ith the MDC in government, Zimbabwe came back to life again. We reopened schools immediately; the Cholera pandemic was contained; food was back on shop shelves and on family tables; and commerce and industry started to recover their productivity. School children pulled out their uniforms, washed them and, for the first time in nearly two years, sauntered into their classrooms looking neat and eager. Nurses, in their white uniforms, could be seen at bus stops, ready to do what they know best. No one wanted to slide back to the past (2011: 528).

By employing images that are evocative of resurrection and the miraculous life of Jesus, Tsvangirai claims his messianic position in Zimbabwe's socio-political and economic sphere. His presence and direct involvement in government business revived Zimbabwe which "came back to life again" in the same way that Jesus performed miracles of raising people from the dead. The disease imagery in the containment of the Cholera pandemic is reminiscent of biblical healing miracles by Jesus. The fact that "food was back on shelves and on family tables" brings to mind two incidences, the feeding of three thousand and five thousand

congregants respectively. In fact, what seemed insurmountable and impossible – feeding multitudes with five loaves of bread and two fish - was trivialized and simplified, in the same way that Tsvangirai's entry and involvement in government meant that families could have food on their tables.

The Jesus-like figure that Tsvangirai evokes seems inadequate for his desire to show the invaluable role he played in rescuing Zimbabweans from the bondage of poverty and suffering that Zanu PF had placed them under. So, he equates himself to the biblical Moses and how he freed the Israelites from bondage in Egypt. Once freed from abject poverty and suffering, Tsvangirai says that “[n]o one wanted to slide back to the past” (528), which was characterized by hunger, diseases and hopelessness. What we have here is a clear case of Tsvangirai's self-representation shaped by his personal attachment to his party the MDC and the nation Zimbabwe. The self is no longer individualistic and autonomous. The self is a political messiah who exists in and for the schools, families, shops, industries, hospitals – the nation. Similarly, the MDC is portrayed as a constellation of everymen's narratives of abuse and terror, disaffection and hurdles. Only the MDC, led by the political messiah Tsvangirai is able to overcome any hurdles and to bring relief for the people and revive their lost hope.

There is shift of narrative focus from the MDC entry into government and the subsequent miraculous changes it brought to the lives of Zimbabweans to the death of Tsvangirai's wife. It is prudent here to mention that at no point in the chapter does Tsvangirai refer to his wife as Susan. It is always Amai Edwin²⁰ or Amai Ed, to show respect, love and his high regard for her. Her death is presented as a source of strength and encouragement. It marks the birth of a new political dispensation not only for Tsvangirai but for the whole nation. Through death comes a moment of disillusionment for Tsvangirai because it “forcibly reminded [him] that it is not by our own designs that we live or die” (530). This realization ignites in him a new lease of life and energy. It propels him to assume his national duty as Premier with renewed vigour. Furthermore,

[t]he loss of Amai Edwin”, submits Tsvangirai, “raised a lot of compassion for me across the ranks of government. There was newfound respect across the political divide. [...] those in Zanu PF who seemed in the past to have hardened their hearts as sworn enemies, now appeared to respond to me as a real person with a living soul and human feelings. This spirit contributed

²⁰ 'Amai' means mother. So Amai Edwin means mother of Edwin. It is a respectful way of addressing a woman with the name of her child, and it celebrates motherhood.

in some way to the softening of hostility. After years of incessant brainwashing, Zanu PF ministers and government officials soon came to embrace the new political dispensation, accepting that my role could not be wished away (535).

The sudden political thawing of Zanu PF members shows the power of death to raise compassion, respect, break personal and political boundaries, unify and disillusion people, and embrace each other's differences. Comparably, Susan's death, like that of Joshua Nkomo, invokes "the great collective sentiment that [grips] us all as a people in grief" (Mugabe 2001: 160). Typical of a rival narrative, the thrust of Tsvangirai's narrative at this point resembles that of obituaries and eulogies recited by Zanu PF at Heroes Acre.

In a move that seems like subversion of cultural norms when one's wife dies, Tsvangirai cuts short the period of mourning his wife in order to take up his national duty as Prime Minister of Zimbabwe's inclusive government. Admittedly, he is conscious of the unusual nature of his move, but still he selflessly puts nation ahead of self as a show of patriotism and commitment to national duty. His strange behavior is like a response to Jesus' messianic command for one to let the dead bury themselves while you carry the yoke to serve the living. Thus he says,

[i]n our culture, a spouse is hardly expected to leave home immediately after a partner dies. [...] I could not fail to be aware of this but as a descendant of a chief and a national leader, I also knew that leaders shaped a nation's culture and could not focus solely on personal matters. I could not risk further complications in our politics merely in order to fulfill a traditional custom. My responsibilities demanded that I break with tradition by taking a step beyond the pressures of the bereavement, not only for the sake of the people but also to look after *Amai* Edwin's own dream and legacy (531).

The narrative takes on an interpersonal thrust. It is no longer about Tsvangirai alone, but about the people, national duty and *Amai* Edwin's dream and legacy versus tradition. What is interesting is that the narrator makes these conscious shifts of narrative focus in order to position himself as Zimbabwe's political messiah. Like Lawrence Vambe and Edgar Tekere, discussed in chapters two and three respectively, Tsvangirai is a descendant of a chief. It seems like political leaders have to trace their leadership credentials back to the roots of their grandfathers who were traditional chiefs. This grounds their leadership in history and tradition. What it means is that, like traditional chiefs and elders, Tekere and Tsvangirai are what Carolyn Logan calls "the true representatives of their people, accessible, respected, and

legitimate, and therefore [...] essential to politics on the continent, and especially to the building of democracies” (2008: 1). Thus when Tsvangirai, as a “national leader” (2011: 531), defies traditional custom in favour of national duty, he is actually drawing on traditional authorities who rely on deference and place the community ahead of the individual, the nation ahead of the self (Logan 2008).

What we have is a clear case of complicit collaboration between Tsvangirai and Bango in wanting to put the record straight. While the narrative is Tsvangirai’s, the language and style of delivering that narrative are peculiarly Bango’s. By combining the techniques of archival, multi-dimensionality, blended voice, historical groundedness and modesty topos, Bango is able to create a counter-narrative that obliquely addresses criticisms of Tsvangirai without being polemic. As a competing narrative, *At the Deep End* gains holistic credibility in the manner in which it sometimes deals with attacks incidentally and in a subtle way. One such way is when biblical allusions are indirectly invoked in order to position Tsvangirai as a political messiah who could, in a short space of time, heal all the country’s woes. Tsvangirai posits that ZANU PF “had tried for 29 years to run a government in a failing state without success, [and] I could feel their respect for my office and me, after decades of vilifying my person at public meetings and in their own circles” (526). However, it is his claim that “I believe we could have done more in a short space of time if Mugabe and ZANU PF had stopped throwing spanners in the works ...” (528), which shows the interplay between political and literary patronage. The aim of political and literary patronage, according to Williams (1982: 3), is “to obtain political advantage for the patron, often of course by having his qualities and achievements paraded before voters in such a way as to influence the casting of their votes”. The narrative was published when there was speculation about the holding of early elections in Zimbabwe. Therefore, by focusing on the impact of the death of Tsvangirai’s wife, and that of the MDC’s entry into government, the narrative, as an archival project, seeks to propagate the authority, position, dignity and image of Tsvangirai as Zimbabwe’s political messiah.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I explored how the issue of patronage of authorship in Edgar Tekere's *A Lifetime of Struggle* and Morgan Tsvangirai's *At the Deep End* exposes the political utility and unique nature of the genre of political autobiographical narratives in Zimbabwe. In particular, I underscored the fact that patronage of authorship in its literary and political forms positions Tekere's and Tsvangirai's autobiographical narratives as political weapons aimed at furthering personal and national political interests of both the patron and the author. The chapter highlighted the complex relationship of complicity, collusion and collaboration between Tekere and Tsvangirai as patrons on the one hand, and Ibbo Mandaza and William Bango acting as clients and scribes engaged by the former two to write their life stories on the other hand. The relationship, which is made even more complex by the reversal of roles when Mandaza and Bango assume the roles of patrons and Tekere and Tsvangirai become clients, shows complicity that is based on agenda setting and mutually agreed political roles, motives and intentions. Hence, the patron-client relationship at play in the construction of Tekere's and Tsvangirai's political autobiographical narratives is a succinct pointer to the machinery of autobiography.

Writing in 1977, Foucault, in his article entitled "What is an author?" asked the question "What matter who's speaking?" In other words, the question at hand then as now is; does it really matter who is speaking or writing, especially in the case of the autobiographical genre? This raises the issue of patronage of authorship. I have also argued that this patron-client relationship has gone through changes and developments as a way of responding to the dynamism of art and politics. Whereas in Classical Africa, the renaissance period, as in ancient Rome and Greece, patrons would keep artists that would serve them when need arose, and in turn the artists would depend for their livelihood and protection, on their patrons, the kind of patronage of authorship we have seen in Tekere and Mandaza, and Tsvangirai and Bango is so complicated in that it is characterized by mutual hosting and hoisting of both the patron and the author. These factors make it difficult to distinguish the patron from the client. At one point, Tsvangirai and Tekere play the role of patrons, especially when we take Bango and Mandaza as artists that have been engaged by the former two to pen their life stories. The relationship becomes more complex when we bring in the idea of agenda setting, and argue that Bango and Mandaza are not passive recipients of instructions from Tsvangirai and Tekere. Instead, as Mugabe said, Tekere is being used by Mandaza to position Mujuru for

Presidency. The same can be said about Bango, who is on record as being an activist against Zanu-PF, a party that Tsvangirai is in an ongoing struggle against. What we have seen, therefore, is that the patron-client relationship between Tekere and Mandaza, and Tsvangirai and Bango results in the renaissance of a unique type of patronage of authorship which results in the creation of a unique type of autobiography in Zimbabwe. It is thus my conclusion that the two political autobiographies discussed in this chapter, are literary and political weapons written through deliberate selection of memory and language in order to drive personal and national political agendas.

CHAPTER 4

NARCISSISTIC RAGE AND HISTORICAL RECURRENCE IN NYAROTA'S *AGAINST THE GRAIN* AND SMITH'S *THE GREAT BETRAYAL*

Introduction

In this chapter I analyse Ian Douglas Smith's political memoir *The Great Betrayal* (1997) and the memoirs of Geoffrey Nyarota²¹ entitled *Against the Grain* (2006) as narcissistic representations of the self and the history of Zimbabwe's media and political landscapes. In particular, I single out the existence of narcissistic rage in Nyarota's *Against the Grain* and Smith's *The Great Betrayal*. I argue further that their narcissistic rage stems from and exposes the bitterness of a life fraught with historical recurrences. Therefore, Nyarota and Smith use their memoirs as exegesis of mixed emotions, replications of personal issues and as a means to release pent up anger and frustrations emanating from historical recurrences that are perceived as a challenge and threat to what Burgenmeester (2013) calls their narcissistic sense of self-worth or self-esteem.

The chapter is divided into separate sections. The first section briefly reviews existing commentaries on the two authors – Smith and Nyarota – and offers an alternative view of their texts, which is driven by narcissistic rage and historical recurrence as conjunctive stylistic methods and motifs in the two memoirs. This is followed by the analysis and theorization of the concepts of narcissistic rage and historical recurrence. The section entitled “the memoir as a form of corrective programming” is a comparative analysis and literary overview of narcissistic rage in the memoirs of Smith and Nyarota. This comparison highlights narcissistic rage as a complex and comprehensive stylistic method and motif that is in both texts. The succeeding sections explore individual texts in which Smith and Nyarota rework narcissistic rage and historical recurrence in their diverse ways.

My argument in this chapter is that deep underneath the two memoirists and their memoirs, there is a fear gripping and relentless that at the end of life's labours, they are just like all of

²¹ Geoffrey Nyarota is an award-winning Zimbabwean journalist who rose to prominence as the god-father of Zimbabwean journalism at the State-owned Bulawayo *Chronicle* in 1989, when, through aggressive investigative journalism, he helped to expose and break the “Willowgate” scandal which resulted in several resignations from the cabinet of President Robert Mugabe. By fighting corruption at all levels of government through the pen, he became “something of a hero”. Nyarota would later open the independent *Daily News* which bore the motto “Telling it like it is”. The paper suffered two bombings, allegedly by Zimbabwean security forces. He also suffered several arrests and was reportedly the target of a government assassination plot.

us – mortal; fear that history will either forget them or create monsters of them. So, they deify themselves and create demigods of themselves. There is also a conscious awareness of a special position they occupy in the history and political landscape of Zimbabwe. Hence, as works of memory, the memoirs of Nyarota and Smith “are concerned with history”, personal and national, and are thus, anchored in “political and historical reality” (Coxon 2001: 37). The two memoirists make deliberate and strategic use of historical recurrence to explore their personal experiences and the roles they played in national politics. The device of historical recurrence, which involves the repetition of similar events in the personal histories of Nyarota and Smith is maintained throughout the narratives, and is an important part of the agenda behind the memoirs and their exposure of narcissistic rage.

This conjunction of historical recurrence and narcissistic rage as both literary techniques and motifs in *Against the Grain* and *The Great Betrayal*, is extremely useful for my line of argument, which I believe brings new insights into existing analyses of Nyarota’s and Smith’s memoirs. *Against the Grain* for instance, has been received with mixed feelings. In his open letter to Nyarota entitled “Nyarota’s fatal errors Against the Grain” published in *Newzimbabwe.com*, the embittered, independent Member of Parliament, Jonathan Moyo (2007), who had been disgracefully expelled from Zanu-PF and from his post as Minister of Information, describes Nyarota’s memoir as “a shocking piece of narcissistic writing”. He goes on to argue that the narrative is “amazingly badly written in terms of syntax and style” (p1). Sadly, Moyo decides not to cite “any examples of [Nyarota’s] disgusting narcissism” (Ibid). Instead, he dismisses the text *Against the Grain* as “plain trash”, and concludes that “it does not add anything to human civilization, let alone to literary development” (p7).

In the same disparaging tone, Oscar Nkala (2007) in his article “Nyarota can run, but he can’t hide”, likens Nyarota “to a monkey that gets borrowed brains for 24 hours and spends the duration of that time swearing that he is the centre of the universe” (4). He sees in and through Nyarota’s memoirs an attempt to build himself into a personality cult. However, unlike Moyo and Nkala, Robert Muponde (2009), in his article “Folklorising the Newsman: The memoirs of Geoffrey Nyarota” sees a strand in Nyarota’s memoirs that goes beyond “instances of narcissism, of a man cherishing himself as the quintessence of journalistic suffering and triumph” (p80). It is a narrative strand, argues Muponde, which is underpinned by “a quest for personal and national healing and regeneration” (ibid). Muponde’s argument speaks to the therapeutic effect of self-narratives.

For all their apparent topicality and belittling of Nyarota's book and identity, Moyo and Nkala offer a fitting opportunity for me to challenge their uncharitable reception of Nyarota's memoir *Against the Grain*. I, therefore, argue that by combining narcissistic rage and historical recurrence as both motifs and narrative devices, Nyarota constructs and presents a personal as well as national narrative that has a self-expiatory motive. In so doing, I am expanding on the debate that was initiated by Muponde (2009) that the narcissism in Nyarota's *Against the Grain* is not merely vainglory but a literary technique that is motivated by intentionality and a deep desire for self-expiation.

My argument also arises from the premise expounded by Anthony Chennells regarding Smith's memoir, *The Great Betrayal*. He contends that "Smith's narrative observes the nineteenth-century conventions of realism in which the narrator is assumed to have no biases either ideological or personal. He is a detached, objective observer; his prose a transparent medium for the certainties of the past that he accurately recollects" (2005: 136). Expanding on the position taken by Chennells, I posit that as a memoir, *The Great Betrayal* is a work of memory, and memory by its nature is temporal and selected as needed depending on motive. A deep seated bitterness betrays the tone and language of the memoirs of Ian Smith. His bitterness arises from the repeated betrayal of white Rhodesians by Britain, and also stems from what he sees as "unreasonable and retrogressive" demands for black majority rule by a bunch of "terrorists" posing as Black Nationalists of Southern Rhodesia. This gives rise to the motif of narcissistic rage anchored on historical recurrence in Smith's memoirs.

By offering a nuanced discussion of this conjunctive motif, I seek to enhance our understanding of the shifting ideologies in a Zimbabwe that is replete with traumatized political history. Essentially, this makes narcissistic rage and historical recurrence in Nyarota's and Smith's memoirs central concerns deserving serious and detailed consideration. My line of argument contrasts sharply with Moyo's claim that nothing useful will be gained by detailing the "disgusting narcissism" (2007: 1). An examination of the relationship between narcissism and historical recurrence exposes the strategic uses of political autobiographical narratives as political weaponry. This consolidates my claim that the two memoirists use their memoirs to react and respond to narcissistic injury with a view to regaining their sense of superiority.

The memoir as a form of corrective programming: theoretical perspectives on narcissistic rage and historical recurrence

As they narrate and interpret their experiences, the two memoirists, Geoffrey Nyarota and Ian Smith draw on literary models rooted in two paradigms: narcissism and historical recurrence. It is my considered view that the narrative thrust and objectives of their memoirs are personally and politically driven by narcissistic rage and historical recurrence. The narrative mode of the memoirs follows Saunders's delineation of personal narratives as "designed to ward off unbearable tension arising from feelings of envy, depression, shame, guilt and humiliation" (Joseph Saunders in the foreword to Hrushovski 1994: xi). Narcissistic rage then, becomes a way in and through which Nyarota and Smith "counteract [the] shame, guilt and humiliation" they repeatedly and systematically suffered at the hands of their political detractors (Saunders in Hrushovski, xiii). Thus, *Against the Grain* and *The Great Betrayal* function "both as a defensive and an offensive weapon" against Nyarota and Smith's political opponents (Saunders 1994: xiii). My line of argument here is informed by the Post-Freudian psychoanalytical theories of narcissistic rage, as well as the theory and notion of historical recurrence.

Narcissistic rage is the narcissist's characteristic response to threats to self-esteem. It betrays the narcissist's "grandiose sense of self-importance or uniqueness; ... unlimited success; [and] exhibitionistic need for constant attention and admiration" (quoted in Berman 1990: 20). As a state of mind and feeling, narcissistic rage, according to Berman, exhibits "feelings of rage, inferiority, shame, humiliation or emptiness in response to criticism", and a "grandiose sense of self-importance" (Ibid.:21). Without taking anything away from the fact that "[a]ll people are narcissistic; the difference is only one of degrees" as Reuben Fine (1986: 67) argues, we still have to concede that in the case of political memoir writing, the motive for writing determines the degree and type of narcissism that takes center stage. In the case of Nyarota and Smith, whose political memoirs portray lives replete with mostly negative and unfavourable historical recurrences, feelings of rage dominate their narratives. It is my argument that the source of this narcissistic rage can be traced back to what Trompf (1979) describes as historically recurring patterns of behavior and experiences that result in the shame and humiliation of Smith and Nyarota who use their memoirs to regain their sense of superiority.

In his treatise *Borderline Conditions and Pathological Narcissism*, Otto Kernberg submits that people with a high degree of narcissistic personality have

[A] very inflated concept of themselves and an inordinate need for tribute from others. [...], they obtain very little enjoyment from life other than from the tributes they receive from others or from their own grandiose fantasies, and they feel restless and bored when external glitter wears off and no new sources feed their self-regard. (1975: 227–28)

However, it is when their sense of self-perfection is under threat, or when they experience “narcissistic injuries”, or they perceive “others as shadowy persecutors endowed with sinister powers” that the “narcissist uses primitive defense mechanisms” that betray narcissistic rage (Berman 1990: 22–23). These include among others, a tendency to project aggressive impulses which gives rise to narcissistic rage. Berman argues further that the archaic grandiose self, the hunger for perfection and omnipotence demonstrated by narcissists betray “the self’s fear of fragmentation or loss of the idealized object” (27). It is this observation by Berman that informs my line of argument in this chapter. As earlier stated the narcissistic rage displayed by Nyarota and Smith in their memoirs betrays a fear gripping and relentless, fear that either history will forget them or create monsters of them. Hence, their narratives are driven by narcissistic rage as both a narrative technique and a motif that is responding and reacting to negative criticisms that have battered and bruised their egos. As Rebekka Sputtek (2012: 24) argues, “narcissistic individuals with an unstable self-esteem and low emotional stability have been found to react to criticism with anger”. This anger, hereto referred to as narcissistic rage, is a reaction to “ego-threatening information” and often results in Nyarota’s and Smith’s “coloured” perceptions of the self (25).

I also put forward the argument that there is a close link between narcissistic rage displayed by Nyarota and Smith, and historical recurrence. When Arnold Toynbee, in his collection of essays entitled *Civilization on Trial* asked the question, “Does history repeat itself?” (1948: 29) he had in mind “Polybius as a theorist of historical rather than cosmological recurrence” (Trompf 1979: 6); something that Kaufmann in *Neitzsche* calls “eternal recurrence” (1956: 266). Toynbee argues that human affairs and experiences are fraught with “undisputedly recurrent predictable order”, and as human beings, we are “partly bound by past events” that are dependent on recurrent predictable cycles (1948: 31). He argues further that “a survey of the historical landscape in the light of our existing knowledge shows that, up to date, history has repeated itself” (p.38). He calls this “a recurring pattern” (ibid), “a repetitive

phenomenon” (p.36), and “a repetitive pattern” (ibid). This idea of history as a recurring and repetitive pattern is shared by Charles Trinkaus (1981) who believes that the idea of recurrence manifests itself in a variety of forms. Using phrases such as “cyclical view of history”, “the alternation view of regular succession of two sets of phenomena”, “the reciprocal view that common events have regular repetitive consequences”, “reenactment and imitation”, “restoration, renovation, renaissance of an entire set of historical conditions”, Trinkaus submits that “all these kinds of historical repetition still add up to a generic vision of historical recurrence” (1981: 218 – 19). In this, he sees man’s life as a stage “set for a repetition of the cycle” (219). It is on the basis of this Shakespearean perception of the world as a stage where everyone lives in a cycle, performing a script that has been performed before that I argue that the memoirs of Smith and Nyarota are characterized by a repetitive reenactment of events in their lives that result in narcissistic rage. This frequent repetition and reenactment of key moments in the lives of the two memoirists is what I am calling the motif of historical recurrence.

Even though historical recurrence has been viewed in some cases negatively as a “fatalistic repetitive view of history” (Baum 1978: 69), I am putting forward the argument that in the case of Smith and Nyarota, it has a strong link with narcissistic rage. Whether typical or identical, the historical repetition of events I am asserting or implying here has far reaching effects in the lives, personalities and egos of the two memoirists that they make it their objective to document their personal histories in order to salvage their wounded pride. This attempt to salvage and reclaim their lost ego is the one that betrays narcissistic rage in their narration of the self. Thus, the inextricable connection between narcissistic rage and historical recurrence is to Nyarota and Smith as it was to Nietzsche and others, “less an idea than an experience – the supreme experience of a life unusually rich in suffering, pain and agony, [and a literary technique]” (Kaufmann 1956: 279). By employing historical recurrence as a literary technique, Nyarota and Smith apply two complementary writing styles, one of which is chance and coincidence. Here, the architect of events is what Gordon Graham refers to as “divine providence” (2011: 167). Events occur and recur through chance and coincidence, and understanding them requires “the necessity of a distinctively Christian interpretation of the past” (Graham (2011: 168). The other style is the writers’ underhand approach evident in the deliberate and selective application of memory and language in order to construct life stories that are favourable to their objective – that of leaving archives of personal history so

that they can be remembered not as failures and monsters, but as a media icon in the case of Nyarota, and in the case of Smith, as a champion of Christian civilization in Rhodesia.

Nyarota and Smith fit into Moses-Hrushovski's militaristic description of persons suffering from narcissistic injuries as deployed – in the sense of soldiers – to defend their lost dignity and bruised egos. He says,

No matter how attractive and successful they were in the present, they all felt that their dignity had been stripped away, never to return until the stain of shame could be erased. No matter what tough pose they presented to the world, they secretly worried that their shame, which they were trying so hard to conceal, is imprinted on their forehead as a mark of disgrace. [...]. No matter how much they try to prove their worth, they still feel worthless and fear being exposed for what they are so sure that they are. Much of their psychic energy is invested in switching on automatically a form of corrective programming aimed at fighting the abuse that, to them, is omnipresent. (Moses-Hrushovski 1994: xxii)

This delineation of deployed narcissistic injured persons by Moses-Hrushovski, provides the basis for the presence of narcissistic rage in Nyarota's and Smith's memoirs as they use memoir writing to prove their worth. We see, in their memoirs *Against the Grain* and *The Great Betrayal* anger mixed with contempt, bitterness and shame.

In the case of Nyarota, this excessive shame has its roots in recurrent experiences in his career as a journalist and editor. The tragic turn of Nyarota's career as an editor has in it the tenets of historical recurrence namely, parallelism and the reenactment view wherein "events which bear a very *striking similarity*" recur (Trompf 1979: 3). Commenting on Nyarota's career path as an editor, Robert Muponde observes that "when he lost his job at the *Chronicle*, he moved to the *Financial Gazette*, a private weekly, where again he was relieved of his editorial job. In 1999, he co-founded the *Daily News*, on which he imprinted his evolved personality and political vision. He was again fired" (2009: 70). The parallelism in 'lost', 'relieved' and 'fired' is as ironic as it is tragic. The biting satire ridicules the "self-appointed Godfather of Zimbabwean journalism" as Nkala (2007: 1) puts it, and exposes the numerous moments of shame that Nyarota had to endure in his career path.

Admittedly, Nyarota says, "over its brief lifespan, the *Daily News* was blessed with much success and glory, but its moment of excruciating shame was on the morning of Tuesday 23 April 2002. Mudiwa's story appeared under the heading, 'Young girls see their mother's

heard cut off” (Daily News 23 April 2002 quoted in Nyarota 2006: 279).²² The irony of it is that Nyarota himself had “been duty editor the previous night and had personally touched up the article” (p.279), which turned out to be a fabricated story. For a man who is an iconic figure in journalism in Zimbabwe, this was a life-shattering and shameful experience. It also sealed his fate as the editor of the *Daily News*. He was fired thereafter. Hence, when he speaks about the success, glory and excruciating shame experienced by the *Daily News*, he indirectly and metaphorically, or by association is speaking about the success, glory and shame he experienced and endured as the editor of the *Daily News*. He is taking the reader to the sources of his narcissistic injuries.

For Nkala, there is no denying that “Nyarota was indeed a media icon at one time”, with a “big-brother, do-as-I-say attitude in journalism”, and even some aspiring journalists “worshipping Geoff as their hero” (2007: 3). Moyo also alludes to Nyarota’s “rich experience in your professional field as an internationally acclaimed investigative journalist and award winning editor” (2007: 1). He further admits, “I hold you in high esteem as one of the internationally renowned Zimbabwean journalists, [and] your professional achievements are a credit to all Zimbabweans” (p.7). Added to this is Robert Muponde’s admission that Nyarota “is well known in Zimbabwe’s media and political circles as a troubling and troubled, and now self-exiled journalist” (2009: 69). Such eulogies of Nyarota at a time when the death knell to his career as a journalist and editor has been tolled, speaks of a man who has fallen from his former glory. Moses-Hrushovski argues, “the enormous glory attributed to many of these deployed [persons] – who indeed did achieve many special talents – only increased their feelings of shame when they saw they could not live up to the high expectations of their [society]” (1994: xx). This expected glory, argues Moses-Hrushovski, increases the grandiosity of deployed, narcissistic persons. As such, they put on an armour, and behave strategically like deployed soldiers to defend themselves from further humiliation. Therefore, Nyarota’s memoirs *Against the Grain*, becomes a lifelong deployment device in the battle for recognition.

Smith’s *The Great Betrayal* has been described as “the memoirs of Africa’s most controversial leader”, who on 11 November 1965, declared his historic rebellion against the

²² This was a sensational story of a 53 years old mother who was allegedly beheaded in full view of her two young girls by 20 youths believed to be linked to Zanu-PF. It turned out that the story was untrue, and had been stage-managed in order to tarnish the image of the *Daily News* as a newspaper that fabricates stories, in total violation of the tenets of professional journalism.

British Government through what is known in history as the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI). Like Nyarota, the mere mention of the name Ian Smith excites powerful though binaristic emotions of admiration and revulsion. The biography on the front flap of his book describes him as “a hero, a mighty leader [of] formidable integrity” (Smith 1997) to those who revere and admire him. Antithetically, the same Smith is to others “a demon, a reactionary whose intransigence long delayed majority rule in an important corner of Africa” (Ibid.:1997). The latter is the discourse of demonization that has been perpetuated by Smith’s hitherto political enemies in Zanu-PF led by Robert Mugabe. For a man who on 20 March 1976 declared “I don’t believe in majority rule ever in Rhodesia... not in 1,000 years” (Godwin 2007), there is a likelihood of leaving “twin legacies” that according to Godwin are “wrong” and based on what Wood sees as “misconceptions about the man and his country, [hence], his autobiography is timely” (1997: vii). These twin legacies are: “his unilateral declaration of independence from Britain (UDI), and his confident prediction that black rule would never happen – not in 1,000 years” (Godwin 2007). Taken out of context, the twin legacies have become “his epitaph – the epitaph of a white King Canute railing against an inevitable black tide” (Godwin 2007). It is this misrepresentation and misinterpretation of Smith’s twin legacies by blacks and whites alike that strategically position the timely publication of his autobiography as a military deployment of narcissistic rage, a weapon in the fight against the demonization of his lifelong political career, which he himself sees as a fight for justice, civilization, and Christianity.

Taught by the best, trained by the best: Nyarota’s egotistic attitude of entitlement

In the face of a grand anti-climax to the denouement of his career, especially one characterized by humiliation, shame and guilt, Nyarota chooses to resurrect through memoir writing. Thus, in *Against the Grain*, Nyarota “set[s] out to write about the trials and tribulations of an independent press struggling against heavy odds to expose rampant corruption and abuse of power on the part of Zimbabwe’s increasingly tyrannical political elite” (Nyarota 2007: 1). After he had been “silenced” through the bombing of the Daily News printing press, the paper for which he had been editor, Nyarota resorts to “the book”, the memoir genre in particular, to find his voice. As a result of repeated experiences of being fired from being editor of three different newspapers, and constant arrests, physical assaults and humiliation by political authorities, the memoirs of Nyarota are riddled with narcissistic rage. They have the object aim of proving that the name Geoffrey Nyarota is deeply

entrenched in the history of Zimbabwe, such that any attempt to silence him will not succeed. By releasing the book, a memoir, Nyarota is archiving his life's exploits as a journalist in Zimbabwe, and packaging them in the form of a permanent record. Hence he says, "once a book is out in the public domain, an author no longer owns it; it is up to the readers to read for themselves; to be informed and to reach their own conclusions" (Ibid.:2007: 1). Indeed, Nyarota's memoirs constitute the machinery of autobiography in Zimbabwe. In *Against the Grain*, Nyarota deploys his psychic energies "the way a general deploys his armies, with overt and covert power struggles and an insistent wielding of power at the core of the configuration" (Moses-Hrushovski 1994: xxiii). Coming from a person whose ego has been scarred both professionally and personally, the narrative thrust of Nyarota's memoirs is stuck in narcissistic rage and follows Moses-Hrushovski's delineation of deployed narcissistic persons that, "[t]hey are constantly on guard lest any weaknesses of theirs be exposed and in order not to be unexpectedly shamed or humiliated" again (Ibid.: xxiii).

Consequently, Nyarota invests much of his energy on "strategies aimed at avoiding shame" (Moses-Hrushovski 1994: xii). This has a bearing on the thrust of his narrative in that it results in what Moses-Hrushovski calls "the taking up of rigid positions and attitudes to avoid humiliation and embarrassment" (ibid). For Nyarota, there is a dire need to cleanse what he sees as a stain of shame caused by what he calls "my three periods of unemployment because of Zanu-PF, the political party which, along with PF-Zapu, spearheaded Zimbabwe's struggle for self-determination" (Nyarota 2006: 44). His record as an editor, notwithstanding his well-known exploits such as the "Willowgate scandal"²³ was tainted by the numerous expulsions, which put a dent on his professional image. What we, therefore, see in *Against the Grain*, is Nyarota's manifestation of narcissistic injuries and narcissistic rage as a result of the loss of the felt qualities of perfection (Rothstein 1984: 19-20). The memoir becomes a means through which he finds his resurrection and energy to claim his egotistic attitude of entitlement as an idealized object (Ibid.: 69).

After suffering traumatic disappointments and historically recurrent humiliating experiences – being fired three times from the position of editor, Nyarota develops "a defensive reactivation of the ego attitude of entitlement" (Rothstein 1984: 77). For him, journalism is a

²³ The Willowgate Scandal is a 1988-89 Zimbabwean political scandal that rocked the country following the exposure by *The Chronicle*, of government officials who were given preference in buying vehicles at Willowvale Motor Industries at discounted prices and reselling them at 'very' inflated prices. Geoffrey Nyarota was the editor of *The Chronicle* at the time. See: www.pindula.co.zw/willowvale_scandal.

calling, and he was taught and trained by the best from primary school to the newsroom. His recollections of his early days at school are steeped in narcissism and a desire to present a perfect image of himself as a person who was destined to be a newsman. Firstly, he was the youngest pupil at St Faith's, and by far the most intelligent, "coming top of my class in every examination during my three years at St Faith's" (Nyarota 2006: 48). His standard five and six teachers enjoin him to "read newspapers regularly" (p.47), as would his English teacher, Edward Turner, at St Mary's, who "saw my potential as a writer and encouraged me to work hard to improve my skills" (p.49). In his final year at St Mary's, Nyarota "was appointed *editor* of the annual school magazine. Our small editorial team did a fine job and produced an issue the staff members and fellow pupils showered with genuine praise, filling me in particular with immense pride" (p.49).

This brief account of Nyarota's life in school is grounded on narcissism and its "neurotic integration of [his] sense of entitlement" (Rothstein 1984: 70). There is a strong belief that he was, right from the beginning, destined to be a newsman. The fact that in both junior and senior school, he was showered with praises and exhorted by teachers and students alike to follow and nurture his writing prowess, speaks to "the gratifying moments when a child is being overvalued, [and which] provide the experiences which serve as the anlage for the feeling of entitlement" (p.71). So, when "The typewriter [eventually] beckons", as he rightly titles the third chapter of his memoir, it is a calling that he was pre-destined to heed. From being an editor of a humble school magazine, Nyarota was destined to becoming editor of three national newspapers – the *Chronicle*, *Financial Gazette* and *Daily News*. Therefore, the title of chapter three of *Against the Grain*, suggests a meaning that is personal in its reference to Nyarota's calling and destiny as a journalist. This makes Nyarota "a self-appointed Godfather of Zimbabwean journalism" as Nkala satirically suggests.

The theatricality of autobiography is at play when the memoirist Nyarota takes us back to his childhood to prove that his entrance into journalism was indeed a calling. His text becomes a stage of self-revelation. As a discourse addressed to his detractors, Nyarota's memoirs reveal that memory is not a faculty, nor an instrument for exploring the past, but a terrain, a theatre to impose one's version of oneself. We are told that as a youngster, Nyarota would visit Herald House to see his uncle who worked there. That his memoir is a project for self-scrutiny and declaring his ubiquity as the self-anointed godfather of Zimbabwean journalism, is evident when Nyarota cannot let his innocent visit to Herald House as a child pass without

linking it to his future as a journalist and editor at the same Herald House years later. The older Nyarota looks back with nostalgia at the years that he would, as a young man, visit Herald House. He vividly remembers how

[t]his early association with the Herald whetted my appetite for newspapers. As I waited for my uncle at the side entrance on Gordon Avenue, I was impressed by the reporters and advertising representatives alighting from company cars before disappearing into the belly of the building. I could tell the difference between the ad reps, who were always smartly turned out, and the journalists, who tended to dress rather scruffily and inevitably had cigarettes dangling from their lips. (Nyarota 2006: 46)

There is hyperbole when, on that single visit to the Herald House, the young and impressionable Nyarota suddenly develops insatiable appetite for newspapers. This hunger for newspapers would prepare him for his eventual internship as a reporter with the *Rhodesian Herald*, and his ascension to editorship of various newspapers. On the same visit, Nyarota's keen eye for detail is revealed as he scrutinizes the different personnel of the Herald House. He is quick to see the distinction between office staff and journalists. Through humour, lurking behind the notion of childhood innocence, his idea of a journalist is that of one with a cigarette and scruffily dressed. This was to be his initiation into what would in future become his place of employment in a profession that would paradoxically give him domestic and international acclaim, and earn him the tag of a failed editor who got fired three times from three different publications that are privately as well as publicly owned.

Notably, the same Nyarota "had been fascinated by newspapers since primary school." (p.46) His father "never missed a copy of the Herald" (p.46), choosing to sacrifice his lunch in order to get a copy. His mother, a primary school teacher "also read newspapers", thus Nyarota "began flipping through them from an early age" (46). Added to this is his claim that "I read every publication I could lay my hands on" (46). Evident here is Nyarota's prosthetic memory. There is a clear ambition on the part of Nyarota that his anthology of existence as a journalist remains postet. By tracing his existence as a journalist through both his paternal and maternal genealogies, Nyarota's alchemy of memory which distorts facts through deliberate hyperbole is at play here. He displays what Rothstein calls "the attitude of entitlement [which] protects him from the humiliating narcissistic injury that he cannot control [his life]" (1984: 74). For someone who, on three occasions was an editor, and three times was fired from the same job, the only way he could salvage his lost pride was by adopting "the child's ego attitude of entitlement" (Rothstein 1984: 74). Thus the genealogical

metaphor he exploits to position himself as a child of destiny, is strongly associated with the rage, the humiliation, and depression he suffered as a journalist and editor. Rothstein contends that this ego attitude of entitlement displayed by Nyarota acts as a form of defense against these painful feelings.

Which one of you is Geoffrey Nyarota?

This section focuses on how through historical recurrence, the name Nyarota was entrenched in the politics of Rhodesia and Zimbabwe, and how in both contexts, the name was perceived as a threat to state power and authority. Edward Deluzain, in his thorough examination of names in “Names and Personal Identity” (1996), observes that “names are given [...] to mark important milestones in life” (p.1). He further argues that

[t]his bestowal of name and identity is a kind of symbolic contract between the society and the individual. [...] Through the name, the individual becomes part of the history of the society, and, because of the name, his or her deeds will exist separate from the deeds of others. (1996: 2)

Nyarota demonstrates his awareness of what Deluzain describes as “the [vital] link between name and identity in everyday speech [and in society]” (p.4), as evidenced by the fact that his personal narrative draws on the paradigm of the biblical passion stories of Jesus, especially the persecution. There is an attempt by Nyarota to transform Jesus’ trial before Pilate into a personal narrative as a troubled, troubling and persecuted journalist in Zimbabwe. Two incidences in Nyarota’s narrative draw parallels from the much loaded question by Pilate “Are you Jesus the Son of God?” to which Jesus answered, “You have said so” (Luke: 23: 3). These incidences are: Nyarota’s encounter with the Rhodesian Soldiers, leading to his subsequent arrest in 1977, and President Robert Mugabe’s press briefing at State House in 1988. This followed exposure of the Willowgate scandal by Nyarota.

The two incidences, though separated by a decade, and falling into two different historical epochs, are worth repeating here because of their striking similarities that reflect the existence of historical recurrence as a motif and stylistic device in Nyarota’s memoir. The first encounter, which happened on 1 January 1977, coincided with the dawn of a new year, and Nyarota’s birthday. It so happens that while in the company of his uncle and two cousins, Nyarota was ambushed by Rhodesian Soldiers who were carrying FN rifles in rural Rusape. The context is colonial Rhodesia, at the height of the Second Chimurenga war. However, it is the dialogue that ensues between Nyarota and the leader of the soldiers that I find particularly

interesting here, and not so much the threatening guns pointing at unarmed civilians. As Nyarota recollects,

The leader stepped forward.

‘I am Detective Inspector Nigel Spur of the Special Branch in Rusape’, he said, voice cold and barely concealing virulent hostility. His advance towards us was covered by the other men, rifles aimed more menacingly now, or so I thought, at me in particular.

‘Which one of you is Geoffrey Nyarota?’

My heart pounded heavily against my ribcage. As I tried to conceal the terror that was building in me, sweat trickled down my face in betrayal.

‘It is I’, I spoke slowly to ensure that the grammar of even this three-word utterance was immaculate. I rarely endeared myself to white Rhodesians, especially those of English stock, to whom I obviously sounded like an arrogant upstart. Detective Inspector Spur did not appear to be amused.

‘So it is you?’ Spur barked as he savagely whacked me on the left side of the body with his rifle butt. (Nyarota 2006: 1)

Eleven years later, in November 1988, President Robert Mugabe would request an audience with all editors of which Nyarota was one. This followed the unprecedented and sensational exposure by Nyarota, of corruption involving Mugabe’s cabinet ministers, in the Chronicle of 21 October of the same year. The press briefing took place at State House. Nyarota recalls;

President Mugabe entered as we were settled down to tea and biscuits, and we all rose to our feet. Wearing what seemed to me a stern countenance, he waved us back into our seats. [...] I began to feel more at ease as the occasion assumed some semblance of a routine briefing for editors. The president’s eyes slowly wandered over the assembly of media executives and then, without warning, he asked,

‘Which one of you is Comrade Nyarota?’

My heart thumped. I nearly spilled my cup of tea as I answered, while struggling to control my voice, ‘It is I, Your Excellency’.

‘Aah, comrade Nyarota’, said Mugabe, his gaze now fixed on me. ‘So what is this story about corruption at Willowvale Motors?’ (Nyarota 2006: 161–2)

In spite of the fact that the two incidences are separated by a decade of their happening, and are taking place in two different epochs in the history of Zimbabwe – the colonial and post-independence – the way the two accounts are narrated is such that through chance and

coincidence, they follow common patterns and trajectories of historical recurrence. Nyarota, “consciously and deliberately placed [his] own experiences, and [his] own narrative, within longstanding narrative traditions” of biblical narratives (Gordis 2005: 374). He equates himself to Jesus before Pilate. He is the chosen one. The one destined for greatness. This is despite the fact that in both incidences, Nyarota seems at first invisible to Spur and Mugabe notwithstanding the important work he is doing and the threat he is to the State. It is possible that by professing ignorance and lack of familiarity to Nyarota, the two figures, Spur and Mugabe, who in this case are images and symbols of colonial Rhodesian authority and the post-independence black government, want to trivialize and belittle not only the name Nyarota but also the person and work that he has done. However, in a clear case of situational irony, the opposite is achieved. The mere act of singling out the name Nyarota and isolating him from the group exalts Nyarota and places him on a pedestal higher than the rest. In other words, the history of Zimbabwe, from the colonial period to the post-independence era is incomplete without the name Nyarota. Thus his life narrative and identity are inextricably entwined to the nation’s history.

When in colonial Rhodesia, in some remote, rural setting in Rusape, he is confronted by Rhodesian Soldiers who ask, “Which one of you is Geoffrey Nyarota?” His name does not only distinguish him from others – his uncle and cousins – but also distinctly makes him a part of the history of the society as Deluzain argues (1996). Similarly, Jesus is asked the question; “Are you Jesus the Son of God?” (Luke 23: 3), his curt response is “You have said so”. This leads to automatic persecution and ultimately his death. Nyarota follows the same narrative tradition. His response to the question, “Which one of you is Geoffrey Nyarota?” is equally terse, “It is I” (p.1). As the narrator and the narrated, the subject and object of the narrative, Nyarota is conscious of the arrogance in his response, as is the white Detective Inspector who, after whacking him on the side and the cheek with the rifle butt, pounced on him. One cannot miss the humour engrained in the theatricality of the incident involving Spur and Nyarota. Arrogant as he is wont to be, Nyarota triggers the wrath of a brutal colonial system represented by Spur whom he ridicules through his grammatically polished but insolently proud response. The elements of performance here are watched by an involuntary audience in the form of Nyarota’s uncle and cousins who are also caught in the cross-fire, and Spur’s fellow soldiers who watch while pointing their guns menacingly at unarmed civilians. The persecution of Nyarota intensifies when he is imprisoned for allegedly masterminding

the bombing of a police post in Rusape. This incident marks an autobiographical turning point in the life of Nyarota. It is the beginning of a lifetime of struggle, arrests and brushes with political authorities.

The recurrence of the same event, in almost similar fashion, more than ten years later, erases any doubts about Nyarota's claim to be the chosen one. The scene shifts from rural Rusape in colonial Rhodesia to State House in post-independence Zimbabwe. While the scene may have changed, the protagonist is unchangeable. It is still Nyarota. The change in the antagonist from Rhodesian soldiers in 1977, to Robert Mugabe in 1988 has significance in that on both cases, the antagonists represent state authority that Nyarota has to contend with. Thus when Mugabe, in the question, "Which one of you is comrade Nyarota?" (p.161), singles out Nyarota from an assembly of media executives, he, in a way, acknowledges the responsibilities that Nyarota the individual has as part of the nation's history and, according to Deluzain (1996), separates the deeds of Nyarota from the deeds of other media executives. Similarly, Nyarota's response to Mugabe's inquiry, "It is I, Your Excellency" (p.162), is reminiscent of his decade long response to the Rhodesian soldiers. Only this time, it is to Mugabe, the national president, and the grand stage of this performance is the State House.

His response testifies to the fact that nothing has changed except the realization that nothing has changed. It is also an acknowledgment of the "symbolic contract between the society and the individual" (Deluzain 1996: 2). Both Nyarota and society have mutually dependent responsibilities. The prefix "comrade" used by Mugabe in his address to Nyarota is in keeping with the communist politics of Zanu PF, and also places Nyarota as a 'friend', 'colleague' and 'ally' of Mugabe. It is, however, ironic that the word "comrade" fails to comfort Nyarota. He says that after the exchange, "I felt like one who had been rescued from the jaws of a very hungry crocodile" (p.162). This is not an innocent metaphor because in reality, Mugabe's totem is "*Gushungo*", which means crocodile. Therefore, Nyarota's temporary relief is indeed that – temporary. Nyarota would eventually lose his job as editor of *Chronicle*, a state-owned and controlled newspaper for exposing the corruption at Willowvale Mazda Motor Industry. His expulsion followed the "crocodile's (Mugabe) revelation that "he was not entirely certain that the *Chronicle* had chosen the most appropriate route to make public such serious allegations against cabinet ministers" (p.162). Therefore, Mugabe's use of the word "comrade" in his address of Nyarota has connotations of betrayal of fellow comrades. By exposing the corrupt activities of Cabinet Ministers through the state-owned

public media, Nyarota has crossed the line of comradeship. In other words, comrades do not betray each other; that is Mugabe's message to his fellow "comrade" Nyarota.

By representing himself as the chosen one, and thus the sacrificial lamb in national politics, Nyarota is using his memoir to show the relationship that exists between his name, identity and national political discourses. He depicts himself as the biblical prophet who is without honour among his people. Nyarota inscribes his name and identity in the colonial and post-independence history and political discourses of Zimbabwe. In spite of this, he still faces rejection from the same society that he feels he has been "chosen" to serve. This is the source of his narcissistic rage.

However, even in the face of utter rejection and persecution, Nyarota's name and identity act as a political safety valve. His name and identity saved him during the struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe, and in post-independence Zimbabwe. Again, two strikingly similar incidences stand out in support of this view. The first is his encounter with members of Zanla, a military wing of Zanu, on 31 December 1976.²⁴ On this particular incident, Nyarota's identity saved him and his relatives when the leader of the military group recognizes him. The dialogue that ensues between the two is of particular interest here;

'You must be the schoolteacher?' asked the one who did most of the talking, addressing me directly.

'Yes, I am a schoolteacher,' I responded, heart thumping audibly. I disregarded the hint of familiarity in his question, having long been coached that guerillas were never to be taken for granted

'You still teach at Regina Coeli Mission?'

'Yes, I still teach at Regina Coeli,' I answered [...]' (p. 4)

Having been addressed as comrades, Nyarota and his relatives were left to pass and go their way. The significance of Nyarota's name and identity here can never be over-emphasised. His name and identity are synonymous with national history and politics of Zimbabwe. It is a name and identity that are entrenched in the discourse of Zimbabwe's struggles. Both the Rhodesian soldiers and Zanla forces were familiar with the name Nyarota. As such, any attempt to silence Nyarota is bound to fail.

²⁴ Zanla: Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army was the military wing of Zanu during the struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe. They waged the guerilla war from the Eastern and Northern side of Zimbabwe, using Mozambique and Zambia as their front.

The second incident is Nyarota's encounter with his assigned assassin in an elevator in July 2000. According to Nyarota, "Masara, had been ordered to 'liquidate' me in order to silence the *Daily News*, which had become a 'formidable opponent of the government'" (2006: 259). It seems Nyarota is marked for death from childhood to adulthood. He portrays himself in messianic terms as a "death-bound-subject, the subject who is formed [and pursued] from infancy onward by the imminent threat of death" and the spectre of violence (JanMohamed 2005). However, when death and violence are confronted with the name Nyarota, they scatter. On this particular occasion, Nyarota is again saved by his name and identity. He vividly recollects his face to face encounter with his would-be assassin as follows;

The second thing that caught my attention was that the man with me in the elevator did not press any of the floor buttons.

'Just in time', I said to break the silence [...]. 'So, how is the family?'

His response was not what I expected.

'You must be Mr. Nyarota, the editor?'

'How did you know?' I asked, feigning surprise. (p.258)

The encounter, which acts as a manifestation of Nyarota's popularity, also testifies to the importance of his name and identity in a politically volatile environment. The dialogue is an act of disarmament. Once he gets to know Nyarota, the assigned assassin falters and testifies to Nyarota that he had been assigned to assassinate him. This attempt to assassinate Nyarota, according to Deluzain (1996), shows society's failure to live up to its part of the bargain in the symbolic name contract, which "requires that the society recognize and provide for the needs of the individual". The fact that the attempted assassination was foiled by the name and identity of Nyarota is evidence of the centrality of Nyarota's name in the discourse of Zimbabwean history, politics and media. His name and identity are permanent markers of the roles he has played in partial fulfillment of his call to serve the nation. So, when he makes the narcissistic claim to be the godfather of Zimbabwean journalism, he is responding to his detractors' attempts to silence him. In fact his narrative *Against the Grain: Memoirs of a Zimbabwean Newsman* is an act of resurrection of Nyarota following the bombing of the *Daily News* printing press, which was meant to silence him once and for all. We see the newsman's refusal to be silenced; hence he speaks through his memoirs.

Ian Smith: on the desirability of good leadership

Ian Smith's memoirs, published when he had long retired from the public life of politics serve, in his own words, to "examine the facts, the truth" (Smith 1997: 102). He also presents himself as a victim of Britain's political intrigues, double-dealing and hypocrisy. In fact, throughout his memoirs, Smith deploys a narcissistic rage that exposes the fear and belief that only the book, the memoir, can set the record of his personal history and that of Rhodesia and her relations with Britain straight. Hence, a common statement in his narrative is, "[t]he truth of this will become patently clear as the rest of my story unfolds". (Ibid.: 34) His book ends with a plea, "in all honesty, what had Rhodesia done to deserve all of this treachery? Our opponents had great success in twisting the truth against us". (Ibid.: 410) The book is indeed a project, an archive of Smith's personal, national and international history, a part of the machinery of autobiographies that are meant to mask and/or unmask "truth" through selective application of memory and language in order to drive personal agendas. In Smith lies a deep-seated fear that if he does not present his side of the story of his life, history will remember him as the "devil" that he has been presented to be.

In the introduction to Ian Douglas Smith's memoirs *The Great Betrayal*, Wood concedes that;

Ian Smith has had an almost universally hostile press – even at home in Rhodesia – and that hostility has persisted because there has been nothing of substance written to ameliorate it. [...] his political opponents, [...] saw him only as they wanted to see him. A major sin of course, was that he offended the establishment by not accepting the fate of Rhodesia as decreed by Whitehall. (Wood 1997: vii)

To complement Wood's views here, Smith has been denigrated as Africa's most controversial leader, a demon, a reactionary, racist and tactless political rebel. Drawing on such hostile representations and portrayal of Ian Smith, it is my argument that by choosing to write his memoirs at the end of his political career, Smith betrays a fear that history may forget him or create a monster of him. As such, his decision to document "the truth" (34) about his life's exploits in his own hand and voice provides him with the opportunity to counter the denigrations and negative misrepresentations of his life story. In fact, Smith's memoirs signal the "ego that the integrity of the self is threatened" (Rothstein 1984: 74). Thus he presents himself as a perfect example of a good leader that Southern Rhodesia so desired in order to survive the double dealings and hypocrisy of Britain and the onslaught of the "terrorists".

The subjective narrative thrust of Smith's memoirs betrays his narcissistic bitterness. His obsession with self-glorification shows that time has failed to heal the rage, shame and humiliation that history created in him. Even the language he uses shows that he is "entrapped in delusions of grandiosity" (Berman 1990: 24), and his memoirs reflect a "hungering for perfection and omnipotence" (Berman, 27). For someone who has been demonized in the subjective history of and by the British, evident in the 1964 biographical note on Smith to the British Prime Minister, wherein he is described as

a simple-minded, politically naïve, and uncomprehending character. His political approach has been described as 'schoolboy'. He possesses a strong vein of schoolboy obstinacy and there is a mixture of schoolboy stubbornness, cunning and imperceptions about his speeches (Quoted by Wood in the introduction to Smith 1997: x),

Smith's narrative shows a personality that has "suffered severe narcissistic injuries [and is] forever attempting to achieve a union with the idealized object [self]" (Berman 1990: 27). In him lies a fear of losing his idealized object self. Hence, when he says, "I had shown the ability to lead" (30), - and this is in reference to his days at school, university and in the army – he is presenting himself as a typical example of a good leader. Added to this is his antithetical claim that "I had the ability to reason and think clearly, to express myself in public, the will to stand my ground even against steep odds, and the willingness to work for a cause" (ibid). These qualities are in sharp contrast to the naivety and simple-mindedness that the British saw in Smith. Evidently, Smith is offering a counter discourse to the one that Britain and its propaganda machinery had spread to the world about him. Only his memoir can serve as a permanent record of his side of the story. Thus he says, [t]he truth of this will become patently clear as the rest of my story unfolds" (34).

In fact, what Smith is simply saying is that when The Liberal Party approached him with the request for him to take up national politics, they were divine harbingers who had seen his potential as the future desirable leader for Rhodesia. By positioning himself as the political messiah for Rhodesia, Smith sees himself as the one entrusted with protecting the gains and history of Rhodesia and everything that it stood for, from possible ruin as a result of "political incompetence and opportunism" (30). He thus chronicles his family roots among the pioneers who trekked from the Cape in the 1890s to establish themselves in Southern Rhodesia. He shares in their history and visionary leadership for, "[a]mong them were my uncle George, who trekked up from the Cape in 1894, and my father, Jock Smith, who joined him in 1898"

(Smith 1997: 2). Smith sees in these men, a feeling of duty to believe in a cause, to make a stand and, to support and defend it. It is this courage of their conviction that Smith shares that made him accept the request by The Liberal Party, for him to stand as their Parliamentary candidate in Selukwe (now Shurugwi) in 1948. Commenting on his acceptance of this offer, Smith says, “I was a local boy with a respectable record at school, university and in the war. Moreover, my family’s record of dedicated service to the community and beyond was really outstanding.” (p.30) For Smith, the call to national politics was not accidental. It was a natural call for him to fulfill his destiny; hence, he questions, though rhetorically, “[h]ow could any man of principle turn a deaf ear to an appeal to accept his responsibility?” (p.30) Interestingly, where the British saw simple-mindedness and political naivety, Smith saw his divine calling and responsibility to provide the much desired good leadership for Southern Rhodesia. Worth noting is that Smith faced international rejection and condemnation following his Unilateral Declaration of Independence. Thus, when, in his memoirs, he explores the “fundamental narcissistic issues, such as grandiosity, idealization, identity diffusion and empathic failure” (Berman 1990: 49), he is responding to this global condemnation. For Smith, the world has to come to terms with the fact that no history of Rhodesia is complete without him, just like no media history in Zimbabwe is complete without Nyarota. More so, when the desirability of good leadership is mentioned, Smith epitomizes it. At least this is the impression I get when Smith traces his convictions and leadership qualities from his ancestry back to the Pioneer Column.

Besides his ancestry, Smith also cites personal experiences and exposure as good enough reasons for him to take his place in national and world politics. He contends that “I had shown that I was prepared to make sacrifices for what I believed in, as had many of my wartime colleagues” (p.30). Taking his place in national and world politics, Smith suggests, would stop “undesirables gaining control and destroying the good which had previously been achieved” (Ibid). Smith sees it as his divine responsibility to provide good leadership for Rhodesia. Besides, he “had shown the ability to lead”, and naturally, the future of Rhodesia was thus “my responsibility” (30). What seems like arrogance and delusions of grandiosity on the part of Smith is actually a strategic deployment of the narcissistic self. Through his memoirs, Smith is “taking refuge in refusing to be blamed and shamed [by history]” (Moses-Hrushovski 1994: 221). Condemned by Britain and the United Nations, and equally condemned by history, Smith’s deployment of the memoir can be viewed as “a defense of the

self, [it] serves multiple functions, including defensive functions, corrective self-consoling functions, and communicative functions” (220). Wood is aware of these functions of Smith’s memoirs when, in the introduction to *The Great Betrayal* he says, “[t]ime has served, perhaps, to soften the image of this quintessential Rhodesian but, as misconceptions abound about the man and his country, his autobiography is timely” (1997: vii). This consciousness about the utilitarian nature of the memoirs of Ian Smith speaks to the machinery of autobiography, which is the thrust of my argument in this thesis.

In 1948, Smith was elected Member of Parliament for Selukwe. He boasts that “[f]or the first time in history a youngster, still in his twenties, was elected to the Rhodesian Parliament” (31). At play here is Smith the narrator and the narrated recapturing memories of glory. Rothstein calls it “original experiences of narcissistic perfection” (1984: 76). It is a deliberate and strategic move of Smith to demonstrate that regardless of the international rejection and condemnation he faced as the leader of Rhodesia, his acceptance by the Rhodesian society, as the youngest Parliamentarian in history is evidence that “reinforces his feelings of specialness” (Ibid. 76). However, this autobiographical turning point in the life of Smith was not without its dramatic moments. He recalls a conversation between old-timers at one of his campaign meetings. One of them commented; “I remember Ian Smith in kindergarten at our school just up the road, and now I am being asked to accept him as my Member of Parliament?” (31) In reply, one of Smith’s ardent supporters said, “you were happy to accept that he should go away and fight for you in the war!” (ibid. 31) This exchange has its roots in the biblical narrative of the rejection of Jesus by those who ordinarily knew him as the son of Joseph the carpenter. It also marks the turning point in Smith’s life. Subsequent to this, says Smith, politics became first, an adjunct to, but with the passage of time, a dominant part of his life. Beginning with the call by The Liberal Party, Smith would rise to become Africa’s most controversial leader. His narrative then, is a battle for the values of good leadership that he represented at school, university, in the army, Parliament and as the Prime Minister of Rhodesia.

The Kiss of Judas: self-righteous anger of a narcissist in Smith’s memoir

A detailed analysis of the language of bitterness used by Smith will expose the deep seated self-righteous anger and narcissistic rage in his memoirs *The Great Betrayal*. This language of bitterness, I argue, stems from the feeling of abuse and betrayal Smith suffered at the

hands of Britain. Hence, without claiming the role of an apologist for Smith, Godwin distances himself from all those who have written about Smith and have identified and blamed him for leaving a legacy of his unilateral declaration of Rhodesia's independence from Britain. He contends that the

[r]esponsibility for UDI is not Smith's alone. Blame must be substantially shared with Britain. The disengagement from Africa was irresponsible, little more than a hasty jettisoning of colonies, however ill-prepared they were for self-rule, and a virtual guarantee that they would fail as autonomous states. The foreign office particularly mismanaged Rhodesia. Its attitude was tainted with cultural condescension (Even now, in the obits, much is made of Smith's nasal twang and the sniffy aside that his father was 'a butcher'...). (Godwin 2007: *The Guardian*, 24 November).

Similar views are shared by Richard Allport (1997: 3) who observes that the book was;

originally scheduled for publication by Harper-Collins at the end of 1995, [but] was cancelled at the last moment amid much publicity by the media that this was due to Collins wanting Smith to change all references to Mugabe and his men as "terrorists", to "guerillas" or "freedom-fighters". Smith refused and went looking for another publisher who would not claim the right to censor his words.

Allport goes further to suggest that the term "freedom-fighters" is a misnomer and, asking Smith to "change his terminology would in effect have meant re-writing the better part of his book, and, in the process, denying his own principles and beliefs!" (p.3). His claim that Smith's refusal to change his terminology shows a man standing on "his principles and beliefs", offers one the opportunity to provide a nuanced analysis of the language used by Smith in his memoirs. Drawing on both Godwin and Allport's arguments here, I wish to argue that Ian Smith and Rhodesia suffered the biblical Judas Iscariot's kiss of betrayal at the hands of Britain. His political life is littered with recurring patterns of moments of betrayal, out of which anger and bitterness exude. It is thus my submission that the language of bitterness and self-righteous anger used by Smith when referring to Britain and the British, and the black people of Rhodesia betrays what Paul Johnson in his book *Intellectuals*, calls "condescension turning to self-righteous anger" (1988, reissued 2005: 37). While Johnson may have been referring to Percy Bysshe Shelley's "heartlessness of ideas" (p.28–51), as "contemptuous", "more ferocious" and "totally insensitive to the feelings of others", such delineation applies to Ian Douglas Smith and the way he uses language to put across his message of bitterness and betrayal.

For purposes of my argument here, I will summarise Smith's political life as follows: the fall of the Federation, the 1961 constitution, relations with the British Conservative government, the Victoria Falls conference, assumption of the Premiership in 1964, the advent of the British Labour government and the 1964 referendum. In all these historic moments, the recurrent theme is that of betrayal. Britain, according to Smith, reneged on her promise to grant independence and dominion to Rhodesia, not once or twice, but repeatedly and without shame, in strikingly similar fashion of duplicity. It is on the basis of this historical recurrence of the motif of betrayal in Smith's life that I wish to challenge what Godwin (2007) sees as the "effective demonology" of Ian Douglas Smith as Africa's most controversial leader who will only be remembered for two unthinkable legacies, namely, the UDI and the "not in a thousand years declaration". It is thus my argument that as a motif and stylistic device, historical recurrence is strategically and effectively applied in Smith's memoir as a way of saying "I was misunderstood", in the same way Godwin (2007) confesses, "I once thought of killing Ian Smith. Now I think he was misunderstood".

Indeed, all the historical episodes in Smith's political life mentioned above, "follow a similar course [... and] a single historical pattern, that of recurrent forms", which result in "a perpetually recurring" theme of betrayal (Graham 2011: 146). According to Graham, this essentially means that not only do the events have a common thread of a promise made and then broken, but also have a "common and cumulative content" (145), which ultimately make Smith's UDI an eventuality. Trinkaus (1981: 218) concurs with Graham when he alludes to Trompf's perception of "the cyclical view of history as going through a continuing sequence of beginning, middle and end, only to start over with a repetition". Consequently, this repetitive sequence and the going round in circles only to return to the original position without making progress is what stretches the patience of Smith and Rhodesia to breaking point. Hence, the question,

[b]ut how long could we go on in this twilight zone of indecision and expectation, trying to deal with people whom we could not trust? They gave us one story last week in London, and then a few days later turned it around in a manner calculated to bring us into disrepute. [...] The whole scene reeked of hypocrisy and cynicism, and understandably it was difficult for us to believe that they were thinking of the best interests for Rhodesia. (Smith 1997: 94)

The uncertainty in "twilight zone" has striking parallelism with "indecision" and "expectation", which testifies to having hope in an otherwise hopeless situation as a result of

the betrayal of trust between Rhodesia and Britain. This lack of trust is intensified through olfactory imagery when Smith perceives the whole scene as reeking of “hypocrisy and cynicism”. This suggests that Britain is rotten to the core and thus cannot be trusted.

So fond of images of rot, corruption and entanglement is Smith that when the trust Rhodesia has in Britain is betrayed, he laments, “[w]e were entangled in a web of political dishonesty and intrigue” (76). He goes further to demonstrate his outrage at the refusal by the British Labour Party to grant Rhodesia full dominion status, by invoking again the images of entanglement when he says, “we were caught up in the evil web of political intrigue, expediency, and appeasement – indeed, corruption – all tied together in the same package and labeled ‘Diplomacy’” (72). He concludes his lamentations by saying, “my poor country, Rhodesia, was ensnared” (77). Smith’s repetitive use of the images of a spider’s web to suggest entanglement and betrayal, vividly highlights the recurrent nature of British betrayal of Rhodesia, and the conception of a nation’s political narrative characterized by “historical cycles” (Graham 2011: 146). It would take a person of Smith’s character – bold, principled and patriotic, and with a passionate and discerning eye – to untangle Rhodesia from the recurrent web of betrayal and entrapment by Britain. This is the message that the memoir of Smith seems to be putting across.

Maybe the question to answer is; why does Ian Smith hold this Platonian “cyclical view of [the] history” of Rhodesia? (Graham 2011: 146) The answer lies in the fall of the Federation and how it amounted to betrayal of trust that Rhodesia had in Britain. When the idea of Rhodesia’s federation with Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland was first mooted in 1948, Godfrey Huggins, the wily and experienced leader of the United Party had assured Rhodesians who wanted genuine freedom and independence from Britain that ““we can have our dominion status tomorrow – the British government has assured me, after our exemplary record, it is there for the asking”” (Smith, 32). To this, Smith reacted thus,

[t]his sounded sensible and right, and the important thing was that we were working with people we could trust, the British. We had always worked together for our mutual benefit, and stood by one another when the need arose. We were in the fortunate position of dealing with proven friends, in fact with our own blood-relatives. (Ibid.;32)

Viewing Britain as family and the British as blood-relatives shows Smith’s absolute trust in the Britons. The diction used by Smith in “trust”, “proven friends” and “blood relatives” betrays Smith’s *harmatia* at work. His myopia and error of judgment are the source of his

anger when his erstwhile friends and relatives betray his trust. The kind of trust and unwavering faith that Rhodesia had in the mother country lay the foundation for a recurrent pattern of betrayal, which eventually turns to rage, anger, hatred and rebellion. Acting as the manipulative parent to a naïve and unsuspecting child, Britain treacherously and systematically betrays Rhodesia in Machiavellian style.

What begins as a relationship of trust, blood and friendship would soon turn to mutual distaste and contempt, a perfidious association even. When Rhodesia's demand to have its full independence based on self-rule from Britain is foiled, Smith soon realizes the British government Janus-faced and full of underhand intrigue and double standards. Hence the only rational conclusion was, "to terminate this perfidious association" (81). Furthermore, Britain's decision to withdraw financial aid to Rhodesia riles Smith. He not only describes it as "absolutely scandalous" (84), but also as a move meant "to pressurize us into dancing to their tune. This was blatant blackmail, which one might expect if dealing with a bunch of gangsters". (85) This transition from trustworthy friends and blood relatives to scandalous, blackmailing gangsters testifies to the extent of betrayal and humiliation that Smith had to endure in his dealings with the British. The negative diction used here also shows Smith's ferocious and contemptuous rage at Britain's double-dealing and hypocrisy. To Smith, the move by Britain was not only "immoral behavior" (85), but also shows succinctly that any undertakings given by the British Government are "worthless" (ibid). This is a far cry from being the original friends and relatives that could be trusted. In fact, the British used "perfidious diplomacy and intrigue and blatant deception" which infuriated Smith whose principles of honesty and openness were not compatible with British hypocrisy. (100) As if the double dealing was not enough, the British resorted to another "underhand trick"; that of seizing Rhodesian assets in the Bank of England. Smith calls this move, "British bank robbers" and "British plunderers". Such derogatory language, coming from a narrator who earlier on had described himself as more British than the British, and as a blood relative of the British is an expose` of narcissistic rage on the part of Smith.

The other signs of betrayal of trust manifested itself when the British displayed no desire to oppose what Smith sees as the "extravagant demands" of black politicians to the north of Rhodesia, choosing instead to apply "the dreadful philosophy of appeasement" (37), against the "well-known and tried policy of gradualism and evolution" when dealing with black people of Africa (38). In a clear case of betrayal of "repeated agreements and promises of the

British government” in Machiavellian style, there was a “sudden dramatic change in Britain’s colonial policy ... and the most outrageous thing of all was that it was not the Labour Party, but the Conservatives, our ‘trusted’ friends who were the architects of the plan” (40). Thus Smith deploys the language of bitterness and self-righteous anger to describe black people of Rhodesia. Following on the literary canon of imperial romances, Smith denigrates the pre-colonial African past as a “Dark continent” and glorifies empire building when he says,

[b]efore the advent of the pioneer column in 1890, the local population had remained at around 300,000; kept in check by constant war, disease, pestilence, malnutrition and starvation caused by droughts. With the coming of the white man, however, all this changed. He prevented the wars, provided medicines for the people and veterinary services for the stock [...].” (57)

The racial prejudice and contempt for black people demonstrated by Smith here, is a deliberate attempt to falsify history in order to justify the continued presence and existence of white domination in Rhodesia. For Smith, Rhodesia is not a country for black people. In fact, “there had never been any doubt in my mind: this (Rhodesia) was my country, my home, and I had never had any problems living with and getting along with our black people” (25). Reference to blacks as ‘our black people’, ‘our average black’ is not only racist stereotyping, but Smith’s strategy of showing that black people of Rhodesia are not yet fully grown and need white people in order to gradually develop “as and when they were prepared to accept change” (ibid).

However, when this ‘average black’ decided to challenge the apparent invincibility and superiority of the White Rhodesians through the might of the gun, the language of Smith’s narrative takes a dramatic twist, though it maintains its racist undertones. Black Nationalists are “power-hungry revolutionaries”, who thrive on “espionage and propaganda” (34). Negative labels such as “black extremists”, “terrorists”, “gangsters”, “bully-boys”, “black agitators”, “these people”, and “intimidators” among a host of other derogatory adjectives abound in Smith’s narrative. These are used with reference to black nationalists who dared to demand black majority rule when in actual fact “Rhodesia was an oasis of peace and contentment,” argues Smith. “Visitors to our country invariably commented on ‘the happiest black faces we have ever seen’”. (409) Such is the extent of Smith’s conviction. Toward the end of his narrative, Smith says, “[t]hey called themselves ‘freedom-fighters’. We referred to them as ‘terrorists’ because they deliberately used terror to intimidate the people” (407).

British betrayal of Rhodesia betrayal geminates during the 1961 Southern Rhodesia constitution referendum into what Baum (1978) calls a typical historical repetition. Just like there was an omission by commission, of a clause to protect and guarantee Rhodesian independence, during deliberations on the federal legislation, the same error of judgment – omission by commission – was repeated in drafting the new constitution of Rhodesia. It must be noted that this was not an oversight on the part of the drafters, but a deliberate case of where angels fear to tread. Smith says,

[t]here was, however, an all-important omission: a guarantee of our independence in the event of the break-up of the federation. The excuse given, that such inclusion would provoke an acceptance of the fact, was especially hollow in view of the Monckton Report.²⁵ We would live to regret this weakness. (41)

A major weakness indeed, it turns out to be. Evident here is the fact that what begins as trust on the part of Rhodesians, develops into political naivety and error of judgment; trepidation even. If politics is a dirty game about power, influence and greed, then surely the Rhodesians were too smart to play the game and too afraid to make bold decisions. In fact, what is apparent here is that Rhodesia was lacking in leadership, and this seems to be the message that comes across as Smith chronicles his own life story, which in essence is the story of Rhodesia's relations with Britain.

What I find particularly interesting though, in the two historical episodes discussed thus far, is that in both incidences, Smith is the only politician who raises doubts about the sincerity of the British and their unwritten promises, and advocates the inclusion of clauses that would protect and guarantee Dominion status of Rhodesia. Up to this point, Smith is the visionary and cautious leader that Rhodesia is lacking. While in the debate on the federal legislation he is the one who suggested that a clause be inserted and his idea was shot down, during the special Party Congress on the new constitution for Rhodesia, Smith “was the only dissenting voice out of 400 delegates” (41). He objects to the congress's all-important omission, but his lone voice is muffled by the 400 delegates. For Smith, history is repeating itself in almost similar fashion, and for the second time, he is the only one with a discerning eye that can see beyond and through the dirty politics of Britain. Through historical recurrence, Smith is “cultivating an almost messianic status for himself” (Godwin 2007). He positions himself as

²⁵ The Monckton report of September 1960, made the suggestion that the British government should be prepared to permit secession. This was going against the letter and spirit of the Federation and the commitment that had been made to the effect that the Federation would be indissoluble.

the visionary leader that Rhodesia so much requires if it is to extricate itself from the political intrigue and duplicity of the mother country, Britain. This contrasts sharply with the British portrayal of Smith in a biographical note to Prime Minister, Sir Alec Douglas Home, wherein he is described as “a simple-minded, politically naïve, and uncomprehending character” (Wood 1997: x). Instead, Smith is the only Rhodesian politician who is far-minded and far-sighted, and able to see through the double-dealings of Britain.

Again, history would prove that Smith was right to demand a written and signed guarantee of Rhodesian independence, especially when the new legislation for Rhodesia passed through the British Parliament to give effect to the agreement. Smith recalls how the British legal drafters manipulated the Rhodesian constitution to ensure that “it deviated substantially from what had been agreed” (43). We are told that the legal drafters “inserted Section 111, which retained for the United Kingdom, the right to intervene by Order-in-Council, everything else to the contrary in the constitution notwithstanding” (43). Such underhand doctoring of the Rhodesian constitution by the British is, according to Smith, “associated with a typical piece of British duplicity” (49). By describing the betrayal of Rhodesia by Britain as “typical”, Smith is in a way making a cyclical view of the relationship between Rhodesia and the mother country. Such a view speaks to what Baum (1978: 67) calls “the historical repetition asserted or implied by such Greeks as Plato, Aristotle and Thucydides [which] was only typical”. The behind-the-scenes deceit and treachery of the British angered Smith and fellow Rhodesians who had trusted Britain to act on principles of justice, honesty and honour.

The expose~ by Smith positions his book as a project that is aimed at countering the negative history about Smith and Rhodesia that has been peddled by British historians and other. By employing the motif and stylistic device of historical recurrence and its various views as listed by Trompf (1979), namely, cyclical view, the alternation, reciprocal and reenactment views, Smith ensures that blame for his UDI lies squarely with Britain. There is a recurrent pattern of betrayal of trust, which shows the interconnectedness of cause and effect as a way of justifying the eventual UDI. The clause that was nicodemously inserted by British legal drafters reduced the entire Rhodesian constitution to a nullity. Not only does it mock the entire legislative process of Rhodesia, but it also means that Britain would continue to control and determine the fate and future of Rhodesia both politically and economically.

In another case of betrayal that smacks of deviousness and dishonesty, and “in violation of all the agreements and promises given” (Smith, 49), Britain, in a period of six months, announced Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia’s right of secession from the Federation in September 1962 and March 1963 respectively. Out of anger and “as an indication of his resentment, (Welensky, the governor of the Federation), refused an invitation to lunch with Macmillan at 10 Downing street” (49), in spite of the fact that he was in London at the time of the announcement. He chose instead to use “some strong language about British deceit and treachery” (49). While snubbing a meal might appear mundane and passive protest, its value in Smith’s memoir is that it gives the narrative its cumulative effect, which is also a characteristic effect of historical recurrence. Each incident of betrayal, and Rhodesia’s reaction to the betrayal – the passivity and/or triviality notwithstanding – have an incremental and cumulative effect to the thrust of the narrative and the build up to Rhodesia’s Unilateral Declaration of Independence as a collective catharsis.

Talking about this cumulative effect of British history of betrayal, Smith says, “[a]nd having been devious and dishonest once, why would anyone worry if they simply repeated the process? Whether you kill one, two or five people, you can be hanged only once”. (49) Indeed, what we are seeing here is historical recurrence at the stage of reenactment and imitation, something that Trinkaus (1981: 218) sees as “a deliberate or externally determined repetition of a significant action”. This significant action is the continued betrayal of Rhodesia by Britain. Welensky had no kind words for the British Conservative government, especially when it had made a promissory note by word of mouth, that if Southern Rhodesia wanted dominion status, it could have it anytime, “it was there for the asking” (50). While this promise had been clear and consistent, Britain chose to delay the process by calling for a conference to discuss the issue. Once again, Welensky accused Britain of betrayal. His anger is evident when he says, “If labour came to power in Britain at least they might stab us in the breast and not in the back” (50). Satirical as it is, this loaded statement reflects painful truth about the extent of the betrayal suffered by Rhodesia at the hands of the British Conservatives, whom they ironically thought were their “friends” and better still “blood-relatives”. Welensky’s bitter irony here is testimony of the bitterness abound in white Rhodesians.

What one cannot miss is the seething anger and deep seated bitterness of the Rhodesians, at the betrayal of trust by the British. Also difficult to miss is the fact that the Rhodesians are

repeatedly gullible and always fall prey to British deception and treachery. The Victoria Falls conference to discuss the dissolution exercise, for instance, was preceded by a pre-conference meeting between the Rhodesians and Guy Butler, a representative of the British Conservative government. The only item on the agenda of the meeting was Southern Rhodesia's request that it should get its independence no later than the other two territories of the federation. There is disillusionment when Smith says, "all I wanted was a simple, straightforward confirmation of our request, without any escape hatches which would subsequently enable the British to manoeuvre their way out" (53). There is development of consciousness which gives the impression that the Rhodesians have learned from the past and will not be taken for the proverbial ride. Without wavering, and true to the duties of a messenger, Butler delivered the message from the British. "I have been asked to convey to you our government's long-standing gratitude for your exemplary record, and to confirm that in these circumstances we are able and willing to meet your request", he said. Looked at superficially, Butler's statement is bold and straightforward. However, the fact that he has "been asked to convey" a message makes him a messenger. He is just the proverbial carrier pigeon that delivers but does not have powers of execution. This is patently clear in that his role is to "confirm" what is the obvious, that Britain is "able" and "willing". What I find ironical, laughable even, is the fact the Rhodesian Prime Minister, Winston Field "nodded his head approvingly and said that it looked as though our conditions had been met" (53). Winston misses the glaring point that being able and willing does not amount to the actual granting of independence to Rhodesia. As a messenger, Butler simply plays around with words and confirms that Britain "can" and not "is" or "will" grant Rhodesia dominion.

However, unlike Field, Smith says, "I was listening with meticulous care" (53), thus cultivating himself as the precautious and precocious politician who pays attention to detail. His revelation that "one thing I did notice was that no one was taking a minute of the meeting – our cabinet secretary Gerald Clarke was sitting quietly listening" (53), shows that history has not taught Rhodesians the importance of documentation. The common proverb "once beaten twice shy" seems to have been omitted in their learning. When asked what he thought about Butler's message, "I took my time," says Smith, "and there was a kind of embarrassing silence with everyone to me, but I was unconcerned, and, when ready, simply said: 'It sound all right. Are we going to sign an agreement?'" (53–4) There is drama and performance in this whole scene. First, Butler performs his role of messenger very well that one was "unable

to flaw [his] presentation” (53). Second, Field plays the dumb show by nodding his head approvingly to Butler’s performance. In this drama, Smith, like the Elizabethan audiences who would come to hear and not so much as watch the play, is “listening with meticulous care”. However, what distinguishes him from the rest is that he is not a passive audience that takes Butler’s performance hook, line and sinker. He listens, observes and questions – all three characteristics of a good leader. His demand for an agreement to be signed shows that he has learned from past mistakes. Sadly for Smith, and as always, he is alone in making demands for a written and signed agreement.

He is told, as before, that “in all these matters dealing with inter-family affairs, between that mother country and her colonies, there must be trust, and without that it simply would not work” (54). Butler’s talk of trust, the same trust that Britain had earlier betrayed without shame, not once, but on numerous accounts is as ironical as it is a mockery of the wisdom or lack of it, of the Rhodesians. As the deputy prime minister, Smith’s objections are over-ruled by Field whose over-trusting nature sees him agreeing to Butler’s proposal to live everything to trust or should I say to chance, especially when dealing with the British. Acquiescently, Field says to Butler, ““if you give your word to all of us here, as you have done, I accept that we must take it on trust”” (54). However, contrary to Field’s sheepish acceptance of Butler’s verbal promissory note based on trust, Smith says, “as a parting shot I looked straight at Butler and said: ‘Let’s remember the trust you emphasised, if you break that you will live to regret it’” (54). The scene, which begins with a performance, ends dramatically with Smith giving a word of warning to Butler. The bold, precautions and questioning nature that Smith demonstrates throughout this theatrical performance demonstrates the kind of leadership that Rhodesia needed at the time. It is the boldness that Field lacks, thus it is not surprising that a vote of no confidence is passed against him and Smith takes over as the Prime Minister who eventually declared UDI. His threat to Butler is not in vain. In fact by making the threat to Butler, Smith was in a way also threatening Field whom he eventually ousted. What we see in all the historical episodes discussed is that there is a recurrent pattern of events, the theme of betrayal and the behavior of those involved. This repetitive and cyclic nature of events is part of Smith’s grand plan to use the book to expose the double-dealings of Britain, and how these led to Rhodesia’s UDI. Therefore, historical recurrence as a motif and a device serves to cultivate a new discourse about the image of Smith. It is a discourse that says, “I have been misunderstood”.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter it has been stressed that even though it is the original and generally accepted condition of autobiographies to be narcissistic in their narrative thrust, narcissism is so broad and complex a subject that it cannot be glossed over in this manner. As such, this chapter has focused on narcissistic rage. There are signs, for example, in *Against the Grain* and *The Great Betrayal*, that narcissistic rage is not just about self-glorification and a preoccupation with the perfect self. In fact, there is a dialectical relationship between narcissistic rage and historical recurrence. What may appear as grandiosity on the part of the self could actually be a sign of fear, anger, bitterness and narcissistic injuries as a result of shame, betrayal and humiliation.

Smith for instance, provides a dossier of evidence to justify his negative delineation of Black Nationalists and Britain. My focus has been on the language he uses which betrays his rage, seething anger and bitterness following what he calls betrayal by the British on the one hand, and having his superiority complex challenged by the black people he thought he owned, on the other. Smith's narrative thrust takes on the deployment of narcissistic rage to expose what he sees as a "web of political intrigue, expediency, appeasement – indeed corruption – all tied together in the same package and labeled 'Diplomacy'" (77). Rothstein (1984: 102) argues that "[t]his propensity to sadistically humiliate is accentuated and intensified" when someone feels that he has been failed and betrayed as a narcissistic object. Smith has been betrayed by the British, and his ego narcissism has been challenged, shamed, and humiliated by the "average black people". Therefore, his "dread of such humiliation" (102), drove him to deploy self-righteous anger and the language of bitterness in his memoirs *The Great Betrayal*.

Similarly, Nyarota through his memoirs, *Against the Grain*, engages in what Sandler, in the foreword to Moses-Hrushovski calls "a lifelong battle for his 'rights'. This battle is against felt injustice, abuse, and oppression, and for the right to be emotionally understood, accepted, and held, especially, when an error or failure has been experienced" (1994: xi). Nyarota's language of self-glorification and grandiosity stems from a deep-seated bitterness and strong feeling of repeated abuse and humiliation at the hands of both the colonial Rhodesia and independent Zimbabwe governments. After three humiliating dismissals as editor of three different publications, there is a quest by Nyarota to use his memoir to carve and position himself as the god-father of journalism in Zimbabwe.

What I find fascinating though, about Nyarota and Smith's political memoirs are the similarities in their deployment of narcissistic rage as a motif and a narrative technique. One gets the sense that to them, what matters the most is as Moses-Hrushovski says, "to fight for their mission, to protect themselves from [historical] disintegration, to achieve power [through the book] to prove their righteousness, and to win their battle for justice; or at the very least not to be defeated once again" (1994: 221). Steeped in personal and national history, their political memoirs have a militaristic defensive function of deployment (ibid: 220). The two memoirists are so bitter, so entangled in narcissistic rage that they make it "their mission never to forgive or forget, [...] before the others admit their share of the responsibility for having wronged them" (ibid: xix). It is appropriate here to conclude that both Nyarota and Smith effectively deploy narcissistic rage and historical recurrence as motifs and narrative techniques in order to tell their personal stories.

CHAPTER 5

RE-CONSTRUCTING THE NARRATIVE OF THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE IN ZIMBABWE: *THROUGH THE DARKNESS* AS A SELF-EMPOWERING AND COMPETING NARRATIVE

Introduction

In this chapter, I critically analyse how Judith Garfield Todd in *Through the darkness: A life in Zimbabwe* (2007), uses the authority of presence, her epistemic privilege, third person collaborators and, erasure and the palimpsest to construct a new account of the discourse of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe. In particular, I explore how Todd, a white woman reshapes the discourse of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe and emplaces herself within it in order to claim a meaningful place for herself and her family in the history of this struggle. By assigning herself a special role, place and space in the struggle for justice and for the liberation of Zimbabwe from British colonial rule and Ian Douglas Smith's UDI, Todd re-conceives and affirms her and her family's unique relationship to the struggle in a way that according to Hammar (2012: 216), challenges exclusion and ostensibly claims belonging through naturalizing her family's presence in the struggle. By drawing on four conceptions namely, the authority of presence, epistemic privilege, third person collaborators and, erasure and palimpsest, I argue that Judith Todd uses the authority of presence to construct a personal narrative of the struggle from the position of a serious insider. She has epistemic privilege when it comes to providing primary and immediate knowledge of the struggle for independence in Zimbabwe by virtue of having been a "participant observer of a rare kind" (Hastings 1986: 78). Hence in her political memoir, there is reinterpretation of personal experiences of the struggle away from supposedly preordained narrative patterns of the struggle, which have "been cramped into a strict[ly] [Zanu-PF] literary mode" (Foster 2001: 21). Todd works within a well-established narrative trope of erasure and/or palimpsest to present an alternative account of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe. The account depicts influential minorities – the Todd family – at the center of the struggle and positions them as centers of narrative gravity and authority. Emphasis here is primarily on what has been called the "'project of [white] belonging' wrought through a cultural politics of identification, emplacement and representation" (Hammar 2012: 216).

The discussion that follows focuses on three interrelated agendas which center on how the authority of presence, epistemic privilege, erasure and palimpsest, and authentication serve as underlying concepts that signify Todd's autobiographical narrative's intent to deconstruct the Zanu-PF official history of the liberation struggle. First, I intend to illustrate how Judith Todd's autobiographical narrative forms a palimpsest that challenges Mugabe's government's effort to erase the name Todd from Zimbabwean history by denying them Zimbabwean citizenship and thus turning the history of the liberation struggle into a purely Zanu-PF nativist narrative. I will argue how Todd delineates her palimpsestual presence through birth narratives which embody the concept of citizenship. Secondly, my focus is on the way Todd uses "third-person collaborators" (Fortune and Robillard 2013: 281), as a literary and narrative trope to authenticate not only her autobiographical narrative but also the role played by the Todd family in the history of Zimbabwe from the colonial to the post-independence period. Thirdly, I am interested in the role played by influential minorities in the liberation struggle, as delineated by Todd who writes from the perspective of an insider white woman who was at the center of the anti-colonial struggle. Todd's identity must be understood in the context of her being White in a society that is predominantly Black, which in essence would imply that she belonged to the rank of powerful minorities. However, she is politically significant because her family helped Zimbabwe's guerrillas during the struggle for liberation. In doing so, I hope to elaborate Todd's political autobiography as a palimpsest, which through processes of elision and erosion, challenges and deconstructs the Zanu-PF official version of the struggle. Todd is involved in a process of claiming and entering a narrative space that has been dominated by Zanu-PF males.

The way Judith Garfield Todd in her political autobiography *Through the darkness: A life in Zimbabwe* (2007), uses what Anthony Chennells (2009) calls the authority of presence to construct a new narrative of the struggle for justice and for the liberation of Zimbabwe from British colonial rule and Ian Douglas Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI), is markedly different from the authors considered in the previous chapters. Those authors namely, Lawrence Vambe, Edgar Tekere, Morgan Richard Tsvangirai, Geoffrey Nyarota and Ian Douglas Smith, are all male and, with the exception of Ian Douglas Smith, black Africans. Their political autobiographical narratives, therefore, privilege their own masculinities and position them as centres of narrative gravity. They claim monopoly of knowledge – based on experience and their direct involvement in war – to construct

narratives and discourses of Zimbabwe's war of liberation and struggle for independence and justice from the perspective of powerful males. By way of contrast, Judith Garfield Todd constructs a personal narrative that, according to Ngoshi (2013: 1) "debunk[s] the perceived manliness of the political struggle and its representations by hailing the participation of [minority white] women in the struggle for liberation [in Zimbabwe]". In so doing, she deconstructs and contradicts Zanu PF's dominant narratives of the past (Ranger 2005), which are products of and have been shaped by partisan accounts of the armed struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe. Consequently, what we have seen are Black Nationalist narratives and recreations of patriotic history (Bhebhe and Ranger 2001).

I attribute this subversion of nationalist discourse of resistance in Zimbabwe by Todd to her epistemic privilege. Firstly, she writes from the authority of presence. By this I mean she was directly involved in the struggle for liberation. Secondly, she had the privilege of an education. She is an intellectual and a product of the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (Now University of Zimbabwe). Thirdly, Todd has the privilege of race in that she is white and is the daughter of Sir Garfield Todd, the former liberal Prime Minister of Rhodesia between 1953 and 1957. Added to this is Todd's desire to generate a personal narrative that affirms the representations of especially influential minorities – and in the case of my argument here – the Todd family and the roles they played in Zimbabwe's anti-colonial national liberation war. These white minorities, according to Tanya Lyons in her seminal work *Guns and Guerilla Girls: Women in the Zimbabwean liberation struggle* (2004), like young black girls and women who were involved in the struggle for independence, have had their voices, roles and involvement in the struggle obscured and silenced by undue and biased glorification of black men. This marginalization and exclusion of women in general and white minorities in particular is what Judith Garfield Todd is contesting through her personal narrative.

More lasting than bronze

When Judith Garfield Todd's political autobiographical narrative *Through the darkness: a life in Zimbabwe* was published in 2007, the political climate in Zimbabwe was tense and racially polarized. The Britain-versus-Zimbabwe war over land had translated to a Robert Mugabe-versus-Tony Blair war-of-words, which ultimately became a black-versus-white

conflict.²⁶ This racialised conflict had among its casualties, members of the Todd family. Garfield Todd's right to vote in Zimbabwe's elections was taken away in 2002, when his name was removed from the voters' roll. Judith Todd also lost her Zimbabwean citizenship on grounds that she still held dual citizenship. In spite of the High Court's ruling in her favour, the Registrar General Office, in a clear case of contempt of court still denied Judith Todd citizenship of Zimbabwe. In the end she settled for the citizenship of New Zealand. This was despite the fact that she had been born in Zimbabwe, had fought alongside Blacks against Ian Smith's UDI and her father was Prime minister of Rhodesia for five years and a Senator in Mugabe's Parliament in the early 1980s.

Mugabe's actions and the defiance of the Registrar General implied, for the Todd family, what Richard Galpin (1998) calls "erasure as an action, and [the name Todd an] erased text" from the history of Zimbabwe. The scarping off of Garfield and Judith Todd's names was employed and exercised, one could argue, "more in the spirit of agitation" (Galpin 1998) as a result of the British versus Zimbabwe war over land. This phase represents and constitutes a calculated attempt by Robert Mugabe and Zanu-PF, to appropriate the dominant rhetoric of the struggle to one political party – Zanu-PF – and one group of people – black Zimbabweans, in particular, men. Clearly, twenty-seven years of Zanu-PF rule under Robert Mugabe's leadership in independent Zimbabwe had, to use Anthony Chennells' phrase, failed to erase and set aside the legacy of a Rhodesia that knew itself principally through racial categories (Chennells 2009). Mugabe's racialised perceptions, seen through his racial remarks are testimony that all was not well in the state of Zimbabwe. Something was seriously wrong. As a party, Zanu-PF was practicing "the old colonial habits of inclusion and exclusion, centering and marginalizing" on the basis of racial origins, argues Chennells (2009: 103). Consequently, and as if responding to Zanu-PF's practice of looking at racial origins to establish an individual's identity (ibid, 103), Judith Garfield Todd in *Through the Darkness: a life in Zimbabwe*, presents what Galpin (1998), elsewhere calls "a balancing factor that prevented the erased text [Todd's family name] from being altogether obliterated". Thus when she titles the first part of her narrative "*Origins*", this is a fitting title to begin a narrative that is meant to challenge the Zanu-PF dominant narrative of the struggle for

²⁶ See "Mugabe 'let me keep my Zimbabwe'", in which Mugabe said "So Blair, keep your England and let me keep my Zimbabwe": www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-136292/Mugabe-let-Zimbabwe.html. September 2002. In his speech, Blair avoided this issue and was criticized by Tories for failing to deal with Mugabe's attack. See "Defiant Mugabe attacks Blair": news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/Africa/2231641.stm.

Zimbabwe, which, through deliberate exclusion for political expedience, is silent about the invaluable role played by some white people – in the case of my argument here, the Todd family – on the basis of racial origins.

In Judith Garfield Todd's political autobiography, we begin to see a competing and self-empowering narrative that subverts the established discourse of Zanu-PF's dominance in the history of Zimbabwe's liberation. It challenges racially disempowering histories of Mugabe's Zanu-PF. Judith Garfield Todd begins her personal narrative by claiming her place and space, and that of her family in Zimbabwe's geo-political environment. She situates her birth and her family name in rural Zimbabwe when she says, "MY FATHER DELIVERED ME INTO ZIMBABWE AT IMPOVERISHED Dadaya Mission in March 1943" (Todd 2007: 1). Without doubt, the capitalization of the sentence is an editorial stylistic that is used at the beginning of every chapter in this narrative but, it also invites different interpretations. Especially if we consider the fact that the narrative is challenging racial origins as a marker that is used to determine one's identity, place and space in the history of Zimbabwe's liberation.

Sentence capitalization in this case is Judith Garfield Todd's bold way of showing and claiming her right of place and space in Zimbabwe. That she was "delivered" into Zimbabwe makes her Zimbabwean by birth. More importantly is the fact that she was born at an "impoverished", rural Dadaya mission, which essentially means that she did not, by virtue of being White in colonial Rhodesia, enjoy the privileges of a luxurious birth and urban lifestyle. By situating her birth in a humble and impoverished rural missionary setting, Judith Garfield Todd is in a way associating her birth with the messianic birth of Jesus Christ whose parents delivered him in a manger after failing to secure the luxury of a room in the inn. Lurking beneath the humility of a manger is the messianic identity of Jesus Christ, who would bring salvation to the poor of this world. Similarly, the humble birth of Judith Garfield Todd in a poverty-stricken rural environment and its association with the manger birth lends a sacrosanct credibility to her family's part in the struggle. It also foreshadows her socio-political messiah-ship and the significant role the entire Todd family would eventually play in the history of Zimbabwe's political struggle in order to uplift the lives of impoverished black people.

This impoverished and remote rural environment of Dadaya is further exploited by Judith Todd to present her father Garfield Todd as a political leader whose main concern is the poor and disadvantaged rural black people of Zimbabwe. Her father's entry into active white politics as a member of parliament "from the black background of Dadaya" (1), is reminiscent of the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem (Luke 19: 28–40, *Good News Bible*). Implicit in Judith Todd's portrayal of her father's entry into what she calls "white politics" (1) is that his strong attachment to and intimate association with the black background of Dadaya automatically made him an unofficial representative of and spokesperson for the disadvantaged black people. His presence in parliament and involvement in active politics would bring a new twist to the politics of race in Rhodesia. Garfield Todd is a different white person; a white Zimbabwean with vested interests in the welfare and well-being of black people. The names Dadaya and Todd are synonymous with the rise of Black Nationalism and the development of an education system – courtesy of Grace Todd – that lay the foundation for the excellent reputation that the education system in Zimbabwe has today. By tracing back the origins of the Todd family to Dadaya Mission, and placing her birth and her father's entry into politics in the black background of Dadaya, Judith Garfield Todd has constructed a competing narrative that challenges and disempowers Zanu-PF's dominant narratives of the struggle that are anchored on racial origins. There is a "conscious 'un-writing', or rewriting" (Galpin 1998) of the narrative of the struggle in order to establish and claim geographical, historical and narrative space in the discourse of the liberation struggle.

From humble beginnings at an impoverished Dadaya Mission in rural Zimbabwe, Garfield Todd "became prime minister of Southern Rhodesia" in 1953 (1). However, five years later, he would be "turfed out of government and parliament for working towards a democracy that would embrace the entire population of four million instead of just the quarter million who were white" (1). Garfield Todd suffers the biblical misfortune of a prophet who is without honour among his own people when he is rejected by his kith and kin in Southern Rhodesia. This is followed by his house arrest in 1965, as a way of "silenc[ing] his increasing opposition to minority rule" (1). Judith Garfield Todd skillfully chronicles her father's political history in a way that entwines the history of the Todd family in the political and nationalist history of the country. His stance against racism and the sacrifices he made on behalf of marginalized black people fly in the face of Robert Mugabe's racial slurs and Zanu-

PF's racialised perceptions of black-white relationships in Zimbabwe's post year 2000 era. The narrative is, to borrow from Geetha Ramanatha in her article "Memoirs of Feminist Modernities" (2014: 27), "purposefully framed" by Judith Todd's reflective accounts of her family's political life through intimate recollections of events in rural Zimbabwe. In all this, the bold claim that Judith Garfield Todd is making is that even when racial origins are used to include and exclude, center and marginalize, the name Todd will always have a place at the centre of Zimbabwe's history of the struggle for independence and black majority rule.

The Todd family made huge sacrifices on behalf of black people of Zimbabwe. One of the consequences of these sacrifices was the detention of Judith and her father on charges that they were likely to interfere with the maintenance of public order. Judith Todd recollects this period of detention when she says "in January 1972, my father and I were arrested [...] and locked up in solitary confinement in the black male prisons of Gatooma, now Kadoma, and Marandellas, now Marondera" (2). In prison, she would proceed to go on hunger strike, which was broken by force-feeding her. Such is the fear that the Ian Smith government had of the Todd family and its determination to fight for the rights of black people in Zimbabwe that the only way of silencing them was to detain, isolate and force-feed. What is novel about Judith Garfield Todd's accounts of her family life at this point is her vivid recollection of events that happened thirty-five years before she documented them in the form of a book. Such vivid and intimate recollections stem from the fact that she is writing what she experienced firsthand. Aiming for self-empowerment, Judith Todd constructs an autobiography that places herself "on a more equal footing with the male power structure" (Giroux 2009: 282), while at the same time "eroding and eliding" (Ibid, 282) both the Rhodesian and Zanu-PF discourses of the struggle. Ian Smith and Mugabe's apparent dominance in the history of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe hinges on self-empowering histories they have churned out. Similarly, Judith Garfield Todd, speaking from the authority of presence, claims her place and space, and that of her entire family in the political history of Zimbabwe's struggle for and after liberation by constructing a competing narrative that disempowers Mugabe's Zanu-PF and Smith's Rhodesian Front's dominance in the history of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle. She makes it apparent that detentions on political grounds during Smith's UDI were not peculiar to Zanu-PF and black Africans. White people, such as

the historian Terence Ranger, Guy and Molly Clutton-Brock²⁷, Phyllis Johnson and David Martin, who were seen as a threat to the continued existence of white minority rule in Rhodesia suffered the same fate.²⁸ Like the Todd family, they were also detained and/or forced into exile.

In his scathing, powerful and haunting memoir *When a Crocodile Eats the Sun*, Peter Godwin (2006) describes Judith Garfield Todd as “a fiery critic of Mugabe, the more effective, and the more reviled by him, because of her impeccable Chimurenga ‘struggle’ credentials”. Barring the irony and satire in the metaphors in Godwin’s book title, wherein the crocodile symbolizes Mugabe and his totem, and the eating of the sun is an allegorical representation of the dark patch and ruin of Zimbabwe under Mugabe’s rule, resulting in the darkness that Judith Todd’s book title “*Through the darkness*” alludes to, Godwin lauds Judith Garfield Todd’s Chimurenga credentials. Her impeccable Chimurenga credentials find confirmation in Fay Chung’s memoir *Re-living the Second Chimurenga* wherein she describes Judith Todd as “a well-known Zimbabwean political activist who was linked to ZAPU rather than ZANU, [and who] agreed to work with us for the sake of Zimbabwe” (Chung 2006: 136). Evident here is Judith Todd’s selfless commitment to the cause of the struggle for liberation in Zimbabwe. She puts country first ahead of political affiliation. She demonstrates her selfless sacrifice and commitment to the struggle when she embarks on hunger strike while in detention. Even when she was in exile abroad, the fact that she remained classified as a detainee for eight years succinctly shows that she was a threat to Smith’s minority government. Thus her role in the struggle cannot be glossed over as “she was an indefatigable treasurer for our (ZANU) fundraising efforts” (Chung: 136). By creating a narrative that vividly captures scenes of the injustices she faced at the hands of Ian Smith, scenes that place her on the same pedestal with Black Nationalists who were fighting for the same cause, Judith Todd is using the book to void and erode Mugabe’s Zanu-PF’s dominant discourse of the struggle, while at the same time challenging Zanu-PF’s use of racial origins as a marker to exclude white people from the history of the struggle for liberation. *Through the Darkness* becomes Judith Todd’s tool of refusal to be marginalized. She resists erasure by creating a narrative that positions hers at the centre of the anti-colonial and post-colonial struggles.

²⁷ Rejected by Ian Smith’s government, Guy and Molly Clutton-Brock were first white couple to be buried by Mugabe himself at the National Heroes Acre.

²⁸ In 1963, Terence Ranger was placed under three month’s house arrest at his Borrowdale house in Salisbury (now Harare). In February of the same year, he was ejected from the country for political subversion. An account of his miseries is in *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia: a Study in African Resistance* (1967)

The passage of history covered by Judith Todd's short section "*Origins*", has self-glancing accounts of how troubled and troubling her family was as they struggled together with marginalized blacks for majority rule in Zimbabwe. Consequently, upon attainment of independence in April 1980, Judith's father, Garfield "was appointed a senator by the new prime minister, Robert Mugabe" (2). At this point in the narrative, one would think that Garfield Todd is being rewarded for the role he and his family played in the struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe. Ironically, this is the same role that Mugabe and Zanu-PF would, twenty two years after independence, and sixty-eight years of Garfield Todd's commitment to the well-being of black people in Zimbabwe, attempt to erase from the socio-political history of Zimbabwe by "strip[ing] (Garfield Todd) of his Zimbabwe citizenship and his right to vote" in 2002 on the basis of racial origins (2). The greatest irony though, is that this is the same Garfield Todd who founded Dadaya Mission, was the unofficial spokesperson for the cause of black people in parliament, sacrificed his position as premier by pushing for reforms that would benefit black people, and was arrested and detained for his role and support of the black nationalist struggle for liberation in Zimbabwe. Stripping Garfield Todd of his Zimbabwe citizenship, is an act of voiding history. Kosselleck (2004: 192) calls it "the disposability of history". It is an attempt by Mugabe and Zanu-PF to re-write the history and narrative of the struggle that completely disempowers, excludes, marginalizes and disposes white people.

However, this conception and grasp of history as "something that [is] disposable and constructible" (Kosselleck 2004: 194) shows that history has a way of negotiating its terms and cannot be rubbed off overnight. In the same way that Mugabe's Zanu-PF tries to permanently dispose of the history of the Todd family, *Through the Darkness* takes us through the "makeability" of history (Ibid. 193). The fact that one can make history, as argued by Kosselleck (2004), is evident in the way Judith Todd chronicles the history of the Todd family from what she calls "origins", which origins have nothing to do with race, as the Zanu-PF narrative of the Third Chimurenga was wont to do. Judith Garfield Todd "undergirds [her] life story entwined in the history of the family and the country" (Ramanathan 2014: 27). What this does to *Through the Darkness* as a competing narrative is that it gives it a historically self-empowering effect. This essentially means that, any attempt to erase the role played by Judith Todd and her family in the struggle for Zimbabwe by denying and taking away her place and space in history, is synonymous with deleting the

history of the Todd family in Zimbabwe and ultimately deleting the entire history of the nationalist struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe. Such an uphill task would mean re-writing the entire history of the struggle because, contrary to Mugabe and Zanu-PF's dominant narrative of the struggle, which is steeped in racial origins, the origins of the Todd family are not racially motivated. Rather, the origins of the Todd family in Zimbabwean history are grounded in the impoverished rural environment of Dadaya Mission. Therefore, by constructing a competing narrative that speaks for herself and her entire family Judith Garfield Todd is claiming her place and space at the center of narratives and histories of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle.

Converging Voices: authenticating the role played by the Todd family in the struggle

This section discusses how Judith Todd uses secondary voices as narrative and authenticating strategy to attest and affirm her place, space and role in the struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe as politically and historically hers. *Her-story* of the struggle, She-Murenga as Essof (2013) calls women's struggle for recognition in Zimbabwe, is told by and through powerful voices of authoritative figures in the history, politics, media and academic circles in Zimbabwe. I put forward the argument that Judith Todd strategically uses converging voices of prominent black Zanu-PF figures and former PF-Zapu political stalwarts – both male and female – who share the same history as hers to tell her story. The effect of such a narrative strategy is that it does not only break the race and political barrier that would otherwise militate against her claim of place, space and role in the liberation struggle, but also enables her to create a narrative that explores the “intangible intimacies of history” that only real belongers share (Hammar cited in Muponde 2015: 50). Especially so, given the fact that the liberation propaganda that has been propagated by the black ruling elite has pitted Zanu and Zapu as the only liberation movements that were at the forefront of fighting for black majority rule in Zimbabwe through their military wings Zanla and Zipra respectively. Two major incidents that undoubtedly serve as converging voices will be the focus of my discussion here. These are Willie Dzawanda Musarurwa's tribute to Garfield Todd's eightieth birthday and Aeneas Stanslus Chigwedere's eulogy for Grace Todd entitled “A great daughter of Zimbabwe” (418).

What I find strikingly interesting and ironical about these black voices is that Aeneas Chigwedere is also a stalwart in the nativist politics of Zimbabwe, and yet he speaks and

eulogizes for and about a White person and White family. Furthermore, in spite of the thirteen year gap between the composition of Musarurwa's tribute and Chigwedere's eulogy, the two speak to each other and converge, especially in the manner in which they authenticate the place, space and role of the Todd family in the struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe. The two converging voices also affirm the role played by white women in the same struggle. However, I must be quick to highlight a point of caution, that when Musarurwa's tribute to Garfield Todd and Aeneas Chigwedere's²⁹ eulogy to Grace Todd were delivered, they were not meant to counter the Zanu-PF dominant discourse of the struggle and how it marginalizes and excludes white people in general and white women in particular. In fact, both the tribute and the eulogy were occasion specific, and were meant to celebrate the lives well lived. One could also argue that the tribute and the eulogy are specifically aimed at showing Mugabe's nemesis Tony Blair, the kind of White men that need to be groomed in Zimbabwe. However, it is when the speeches are viewed and interpreted in the context of Judith Garfield Todd's autobiography as a competing and self-empowering narrative that we begin to see how she uses converging voices as a narrative strategy in her "quest for [an] alternative knowledge" and discourse of the struggle for liberation in Zimbabwe (Ware 2013: 3). As such, Todd's self-narrative falls into Ware's consideration of how women's life writing has offered a situated mode of resistance to dominant and racialised regimes. Her employment of concepts such as estrangement and dislocations as keys to understand the relationship between blackness and whiteness is relevant to my discussion Todd's self-narrative as a means to work through the struggle for change and recognition of whites in Zimbabwe's liberation war history.

As early as 1999, some prominent black Zimbabweans had started to note with concern, the deliberate and calculated marginalization of the crucial role played by some whites in support of the Black Nationalist struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe. One such prominent person was Sekai Hove Holland, who, in defense of Judith Garfield Todd in particular, and whites in general, wrote,

²⁹Aeneas Chigwedere is a prominent historian (especially of oral history) and academic, while Willie Musarurwa was a world renowned journalist who participated in the struggle for liberation and whose remains are interred at the National Hero's Acre in Zimbabwe. Hence their statuses in society give narrative authority to their voices and authenticity to Judith Garfield Todd's autobiography.

whites who contributed to this country's liberation are being relentlessly attacked and their contribution to our country's liberation is now being ignored and denied. Not that Judith Todd cares. She has developed a thick skin like most who have been vilified, marginalized and attacked by our politicians for 19 years. Her work is recorded locally and internationally. Only those who attack her stand to lose their personal reputations. (*Daily News*, Friday 23 April 1999).

What we have here is the case of a black woman speaking for and on behalf of white people and affirming the role they played in the struggle. Holland also exposes the Zanu-PF dominant and racialised discourse of the struggle and how it deliberately excludes and is silent about the invaluable role of white people in the liberation struggle. It denies them a place and space in the history of the struggle. Holland's observation finds complementarity in the convergence of Willie Musarurwa and Aeneas Chigwedere's voices in Judith Garfield Todd's narrative. The two voices are historical testimonies of the role played by the Todd family and the central place they occupy in the history of Zimbabwe's struggle for independence and justice. They portray the identity of the Todd not as grounded on racial origins, but in what Shirley Lim (2007: 4) has elsewhere called "historically verifiable subjects and their experiences".

The strategic inclusion of these converging voices by Judith Todd's exposes her desire for approval, a quest for an alternative discourse of the struggle, which gives her family due recognition. By exploiting the voices of prominent male black voices to vouch for her and her family, she somehow appears to have disengaged herself from the discourse of the struggle, but continues to influence the same discourse and debate through other people's voices. The converging voices of Musarurwa and Chigwedere reflect what Lim (2007) describes as the destabilization of the dominant ideologies, histories and practices of exclusion and/or marginalization of certain groups, (in the case of my discussion here) especially women and whites, by denying them full recognition of the central roles, place and space they occupy in the history of the struggle for liberation.

Musarurwa for instance, begins his tribute to Garfield Todd by saying, "I first knew Garfield Todd when I was a student at Goromonzi Secondary" (334). Similarly, Chigwedere heard and knew of Garfield Todd when he was in Standard 4, "in a totally rural setting" (418). In spite of the thirteen year gap between the production of Musarurwa's tribute and Chigwedere's eulogy, the two make it clear that Garfield Todd is a well-known name and figure in the history of Zimbabwe. His popularity and prominence in Zimbabwean history attest to the

invaluable role he played and contributions he made in shaping that history. Therefore, his presence in that history cannot be wished away or erased. He occupies a central place in the trajectory that was followed by the history of the struggle for justice and black majority rule in Zimbabwe that no amount of vilification and demonization of whites, exclusion and marginalization of the same, and denial of the role they played in the struggle will erase Todd's involvement in history. What we have here are two voices, separated by thirteen years, but finding commonality in the manner they portray Garfield Todd. Their convergence is an act of authenticating Todd's role in shaping the history of Zimbabwe. This shows that authentication is not a one way process, a case of from white to black thing as some critics might think. Rather, authentication reflects the dominant power dynamics at any given moment in society.

In the 1950s, Musarurwa would occasionally "go to the House of Assembly to listen to Garfield Todd speak, particularly on matters pertaining to Native Education" (334). Particularly interesting are the implications of Musarurwa's statement here that out of all the Legislators in Parliament, only Todd's voice was worth listening to. Most importantly is the idea of archiving that comes with Musarurwa's mentioning of the House of Assembly. Speeches delivered in Parliament are recorded and documented verbatim. They are then archived as a permanent record of what would have transpired in Parliament. By implication, Musarurwa is alerting the reader to the fact that Garfield Todd's speeches exist at Parliament as a permanent record of what he stood for in the history of the struggle for black majority rule. What we have here is an act of legitimizing and naturalizing the role played by Garfield Todd in shaping Zimbabwe's history. The existence of documented evidence in the form of *Hansard*, from which Musarurwa "used to derive great joy in reading his (Garfield Todd) speeches in Parliament" (334), is a succinct pointer to the fact that the figure and name Todd cannot be erased from the history of the struggle in Zimbabwe. Through Musarurwa's voice there is deliberate installation of Garfield Todd at the helm and heart of Zimbabwe's nationalist struggles. Garfield Todd represents the kind of whiteness that Zimbabwe should not only accommodate but celebrate. Thus denying him a place in the history of Zimbabwe's struggles is synonymous with rejection of the entire history of the country's struggle for liberation.

Musarurwa further acknowledges the extraordinary voice of Garfield Todd's who took it upon himself to carry the burden of representing oppressed black people in Parliament. We

are told that “his speeches were made more appetizing because he spoke on behalf of the African people. He was, as it were, the representative of the African people in that lily-white parliament” (335). Through the voice of Musarurwa, we are taken into history to listen to and appreciate the lone voice of Garfield Todd in a white only parliament. Speaking on behalf of African people means that Garfield Todd was taking a political risk that would mean his complete isolation from his kith and kin. Writing at a time when both Garfield and Judith Todd had been denied their Zimbabwean citizenship and the right to vote by Mugabe’s government, Judith Garfield Todd is using the double narrative technique where she remains the author of the narrative but is using Musarurwa’s voice to speak for her in the same way White people used to speak on behalf of blacks. There is censure and ridicule of the decision and attempts by Mugabe’s government to exclude, erase and even delete the name Todd from the history of Zimbabwe’s struggle for liberation. His “polished oratory and articulation” says Musarurwa, “was a great pleasure to listen to” (335). The use of superlative expressions such as “great joy”, “great pleasure” and “unmistakable joy” to describe the reaction of Africans to Garfield Todd’s speeches in parliament, testifies to the conscious appreciation that African people had for Garfield Todd. Not only are his speeches archived in the parliament *Hansard*, but also are permanently imprinted in the minds and hearts of the African people on whose behalf Todd spoke. He is a folk figure whose significance lies in that Aeneas Chigwedere, an oral historian of note, and Musarurwa, a journalist of note (much revered by Nyarota whose memoir I discussed in Chapter 4 of this thesis) are raconteurs here in the unfolding narrative of the Todds. Combined with the people’s conscious appreciation of the role played by Garfield Todd in the struggle, this renders futile, any attempt by Zanu-PF to exclude and marginalize him from the histories of the struggle on the basis of racial origin.

One cannot miss the subjective element in Musarurwa’s tribute to Garfield. Not only is the language he uses full of praise but also borders on hero-worshipping. More than being polished, Garfield Todd’s speeches in Parliament are described as “appetizing because he spoke on behalf of the African people” (335). He also went beyond talking, and “fought to see that justice was extended to the African community in the country” (335). What we see here is politics of the human which goes beyond nativism. The same politics of the human was played out by the Slovo family (Joe, Julia and Ruth) in South Africa.³⁰ This can be

³⁰ Ruth First and Joe Slovo, husband and wife, were leaders of the war to end Apartheid in South Africa. Uncompromising militants, they were the perfect enemies for the white police state. See Alan Wieder and MR Admin *Ruth First and Joe Slovo in the War against Apartheid* (2013).

attributed to the fact that Garfield Todd is a missionary who understands the doctrine of liberation theology. So, he selflessly combines faith and works in the fight for justice and black majority rule in Zimbabwe. By using Musarurwa as the authenticating voice of her father's liberation war credentials, Judith Garfield Todd strategically maintains authorial distance that gives credibility to her narrative. The secondary voices she uses to tell the story and history of the Todds, and the role they played in the struggle are living testimonies that some white people also fought on the side of the oppressed. Being white is a matter of skin pigmentation. It does not automatically make one an oppressor as the discourse of Zanu-PF would want Zimbabweans to believe.

The name Todd is some kind of a relic, which is "unalterable and indestructible" (Fedida 2003: 63). Faced with possible decomposition through what Fedida calls "progressive destruction" (Ibid, 64), Judith Todd uses her narrative to preserve the family name. Through the book, the name Todd is "retained and preserved, manifests the power to maintain in visibility – undecomposed and sheltered from all annihilation" that they played an invaluable role in the struggle (Ibid, 64). It is not surprising therefore, that Garfield Todd is viewed as a political messiah because, "many Africans", says Musarurwa "worshipped Mr Todd as champion of the black people" (Todd, 335). He adds that "black people [...] knew almost every good thing that Mr Todd had done for them" (335–6). This is unlike Ian Smith who makes such claims without the black people corroborating his evidence. What I find questionable though, is the near-perfect image of Garfield Todd that Musarurwa's voice creates at this point. This god-like image runs the risk of following the same trend of Zanu-PF dominant narratives of the struggle that Judith Todd's narrative is competing against. The romanticized image of Garfield Todd, coming from a journalist of Musarurwa's caliber, betrays what Bal (2008: 17) calls the art of narrative as exhibition. By using Musarurwa to exhibit a glorified image of Garfield Todd, Judith Todd creates a narrative that serves as an exhibition and thus a "competing model" that claims space for Whites in the discourse of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe. More fascinating is Musarurwa's claim that the black people of Zimbabwe "knew nothing about his (Garfield Todd) dictatorship" (336). Admittedly, the Todd family played a significant role in the struggle for liberation in Zimbabwe. However, we still have to take with caution Musarurwa's absolute and definitive statements, which run the risk of portraying the stereotype of black people as unquestioningly accepting followers and worshipers of Garfield Todd as their blemish-free political messiah.

Especially when we recall Lawrence Vambe's (discussed in Chapter 2) expose' of the violent brutality of the police at Wankie colliery, which was sanctioned by Garfield Todd.

Therefore, glorification of Garfield Todd can also be taken as Judith Garfield Todd's way of defending her father from the "falsehoods" she alleges were peddled by Lawrence Vambe in his 1976 memoir, *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe*. These relate to allegations that when he was Prime minister of Rhodesia from 1952 – 1957, Garfield Todd unleashed anti-riot police on striking African mine workers at the Wankie (Hwange) colliery in 1954. Such an allegation, if proven correct, would, without doubt, cast a dark shadow on the near-perfect life and image of Garfield Todd that Judith Todd tries to create through Musarurwa's voice. Hence, in the foreword to Vambe's memoir, she directly disputes this allegation by saying,

[t]here will be statements or suggestions in this book with which everyone, from different viewpoints, may argue. So much the better. I too have an argument which Mr Vambe has invited me to put here. It concerns an allegation that my father, Garfield Todd, used troops violently to break up a strike of African miners at Wankie on an occasion when he was Prime Minister of Rhodesia. I need to say nothing more here than that I have researched the matter thoroughly, that the accusation is untrue, and that am refuting it here for the simple reason that my father is entering his fourth year of detention and enforced silence in Rhodesia and cannot, therefore, answer for himself (Foreword to Vambe 1976:).

At play here is the machinery of biography. Judith Todd uses a book to challenge Vambe's book. This, I suppose, is the reason she admits plurality as opposed to mono-vocalism when she says that different viewpoints are better. It also explains why she uses different but converging voices to tell her story. That "Mr Vambe has invited me (Judith Todd)" to air her opposing views in his book, contrasts sharply with authors discussed in previous chapters who do not allow their adversaries to speak in the covers of their books. Ironically though, Judith Todd did not return the favour of inviting Vambe to air his views when she wrote her memoir in 2007. Her claim that she researched thoroughly the matter regarding allegations levelled against her father and found the accusations to be untrue is significant especially in the context of her book as a competing narrative. It positions her as providing rational disputation, which was absent and is absent in Zimbabwean politics. It further raises the issue and question of the silenced that, like Judith Todd, have a quest to be heard and to participate freely in the politics of representation and self-representation. Hence, she uses Willie Musarurwa's voice to speak about her father's infallible character and commitment to the cause of black people in Zimbabwe. This probably explains Musarurwa's definitive

statements such as Africans knew nothing about Garfield Todd's dictatorship, only the good things as shown by the fact that Todd was "interested in the welfare of the African people [...] for decades" (336). This claim by Musarurwa depicts Garfield Todd as a man incapable of doing harm to those that he has been divinely called upon to free from Smith's UDI and British colonial rule.

Even though his tribute is for Garfield Todd, Musarurwa is also conscious of the role played by Mrs Grace Todd, the wife of Garfield, in the struggle for liberation in Zimbabwe. At a time when "most Rhodesian white women were concentrated in domestic activities including cooking for the Hartley Forces' canteen to feed the [white] boys on their way to or from the front", as Lyons (2004: 133) says, Grace Todd fought on the side of African people, but from a different front – education. Musarurwa avers that

Dadaya was not only famous because of Mr Todd but also because of the Dadaya schemes which were authored by Mrs Grace Todd and which were used by every black school in the country. It can be said that among teachers in Southern Rhodesia Grace Todd was more famous than Garfield Todd. (Todd: 335)

What Musarurwa does is to throw a hint at the role played by Grace Todd in the struggle for black self-determination, without giving further detail. It is at this point that Aeneas Chigwedere's voice is strategically used by Judith Todd, in a way that converges with Musarurwa's, to give a testimony about Grace Todd, from the point of view of an authoritative historian, hardliner Zanu-PF political and academic figure. That Chigwedere, a hardliner Zanu-PF apologist is the one that speaks positively about Mrs Grace Todd, registers the ironies of narrating the nation.

Chigwedere's eulogy for Grace Todd inadvertently demolishes the proud histories of the liberation struggle as told by Mugabe and Zanu-PF. These are histories of hate that deliberately exclude and marginalize the role played by white women.³¹ The eulogy is entitled "A great daughter of Zimbabwe", and Grace Todd is described as "the great lady" and "a legend in Education circles" (418). Not only is Chigwedere acknowledging that Grace Todd is Zimbabwean – contrary to Zanu-PF's doctrine of race which stripped the Todd family of their Zimbabwean citizenship, but also participating in the act of beatification of Grace Todd by describing her as a "legend". This places Grace Todd in the same league as

³¹ See also Chenjerai Hove's *Up in Arms* and his representation of white women in war-torn Zimbabwe.

legendary figures in the history of the struggle for Zimbabwe like Nehanda, Mapondera and Chaminuka. Lyons argues that the military language ascribed to the methods and actions of Nehanda as a person and spirit medium, credit her with “inciting violence [...] military leadership and skills” (2004: 74). The name Nehanda was also “invoked for revolutionary purposes that were constructed as part of women’s liberation movements” (ibid, 77). Mugabe also acknowledges the legendary role of Nehanda when he says’ “Nehanda’s importance is unquestionable” (1979). Similarly, by ascribing the image and stature of legend to Grace Todd, Chigwedere is equating her with the figure of a white Nehanda, and saying her importance in the history of the struggle for Zimbabwe and the development of the education system is unquestionable. She participated in the struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe from a different front – the education front. The conception of education in this case should not be limited to the formal schooling system that Grace Todd established for blacks in Rhodesia, but should also be taken as a conceptual metaphor in the nation’s imaginaries of coherence, progress and continuity. Today Zimbabwe boasts of a ninety eight percent literacy rate. The basis of such progress and continuity lies in the Grace Todd schemes, which lay the foundation for the education system that Zimbabwe enjoys and celebrates today.

For Chigwedere, attending the burial of Grace Todd was not a matter of choice or duty for him as the minister of education. Instead, he admits that his ministerial duties aside, he still would have attended her burial “partly as an admirer of the Todd family and partly as an expression of African indebtedness” (418). Grace Todd is a relic, whose “all-powerfulness” (Fedida 2003: 62) is exemplified by the remnant, which is Zimbabwe’s education system. Therefore, Chigwedere’s eulogy is ironically a rejection of the reductive nature of Zanu-PF’s discourse of the struggle, which is purely nativist. As a historian who also benefitted from the expansion and development of African education from 1954 by Garfield Todd, Chigwedere “discovered that the African education system [Garfield] expanded and developed was in fact the Grace Todd system that was then known as the Dadaya Scheme. Gradually I started to appreciate the African indebtedness to the lady lying here now”, he adds (419). Even though his speech is factual – coming from a historian – it also combines the emotive approach by putting emphasis on “African indebtedness” as if to suggest that had it not been for the lady Grace Todd, Africans in Zimbabwe would still be “in the darkest corner of Southern Rhodesia” (419). Grace Todd is the light that Africans wanted to be able to see and develop consciousness about the oppression of blacks by whites.

In fact, what I find particularly striking, and running against the grain of Zanu-PF's discourse and propaganda of heroes and heroines is Chigwedere's declaration of Grace Todd as a national heroine and his presentation of a manuscript to Garfield Todd entitled "the White Heroes of Zimbabwe" (420). For Chigwedere, contrary to Zanu-PF's dominant discourse of race, "whoever produces a national system is necessarily a national hero and this explains why I am endeared to her". (420) Here, Chigwedere challenges the criteria that are used by Zanu-PF to decide who hero/heroine is. This is discussed at length in Chapter three of this thesis "Patronage of authorship" where Mandaza sees Tekere's book as a

reminder of the many other Zimbabwean nationalists – and persons who have contributed so much in their respective ways to our society – who have been forgotten in this, *our history*; a *history* that has, for example, been so selective as to who is hero/heroine and who is not, based as it is on criteria that have less to do with reference to history itself than the self-indulgence of those who wield power and influence today. (Mandaza in Tekere 2006: 4)

Chigwedere's voice at this point is in direct confrontation with Zanu-PF Party politics and policies that like Ian Smith before them, used state resources to promote segregation by marginalizing people on the basis of race.

Whereas the name and spirit of the legend Nehanda were invoked during the second Chimurenga for revolutionary purposes, Chigwedere's eulogy for Grace Todd invokes Grace Todd's spirit and bones to intervene in the country's post 2000 socio-political and economic situation.³² To lady Grace Todd, he says,

your bones will be buried here (at Dadaya and not the heroes acre) but your spirit will live forever. Our situation in the country, political, economic, social and religious will continue to need the intervention of powerful, balanced and just spirits such as yours. Rest in peace in your cherished centre of operations. (420)

This resting place and cherished centre of operations was ironically Dadaya mission and not the national hero's acre. This is in spite of the fact that history has it on record that she single-handedly developed a primary education curriculum that benefitted black people in Zimbabwe. Reference to "bones" and "spirit" is an attempt by Chigwedere to attach legendary qualities to Grace Todd and thus equate her to the legendary figure of Nehanda whose bones and spirit are believed to have influenced the war of independence in

³² For a detailed account of the invocation of bones and spirit of the dead, see Mutsvairo's *Feso* (1956), Hove's *Bones* (1988), and Ranger's *Revolt in Southern Africa* (1967)

Zimbabwe. In so doing, he is bestowing heroine status to Grace Todd, after Zanu-PF and government denied her that status. It is no wonder he says, “I am a product of the Grace Todd scheme, all the Africans here who did primary education before 1980 are children or grandchildren of the Grace Todd Education System” (420). This inevitably makes Grace Todd the mother or grandmother of all the beneficiaries of her scheme, thus making her a mother of the revolution, to use Staunton’s (1990) phrase. Grandmother is a title that is also ascribed to Nehanda when people refer to her as *Ambuya*. It is a title that denotes wisdom, experience, selfless maternal love and the preparedness to suffer for the benefit of grandchildren.

I find it necessary at this point to quote a large passage that positions Grace Todd as a figure of national importance who deserves national heroine status and recognition in the history of Zimbabwe. In fact, the passage is a succinct pointer that any attempt to exclude, marginalize and erase Grace Todd from the narratives and histories of Zimbabwe’s struggle for independence will be an exercise in futility. About Grace Todd, Aeneas Chigwedere says,

Thrown into the deep end of a pool like this Mrs Todd accepted the challenge and devised a curriculum for her class. [...] she broadened the curriculum and proceeded to make syllabuses for all classes at Dadaya. The neighbouring schools saw salvation in her and came to borrow her lessons. The neighbouring Districts were not slow to detect the light glowing from Dadaya. Inevitably they pleaded for the Grace Todd Lessons and Dadaya ended up as the Education Service Centre for many districts. By 1945 the Southern Rhodesia Government had got wind of this development and had asked for the Grace Todd lessons and adopted them too. By 1950 therefore, what had become the African Education System and popularly known as the Dadaya Scheme, was the Grace Todd scheme. (419–20)

Tsvangirai, discussed in Chapter three, uses the same metaphor of “deep end” to refer to his political life dedicated to serving and saving Zimbabweans from Mugabe and Zanu-PF’s tyrannical rule. Similarly, Grace Todd’s deep end is the challenge of coming up with an education curriculum that would serve black Zimbabweans in a socially, politically and economically closed environment of Rhodesia. The metaphoric references to “pool”, “salvation” and “glowing light” whose source was the Dadaya, “one of the darkest corners of Southern Rhodesia” (419), takes us back to the way Judith Garfield Todd uses liberation theology to develop a narrative strategy that positions her family as having political messianic effect and influence which was desperately needed in order for Zimbabwe to attain independence. As a family of Missionaries, the Todd played an invaluable role in the

development of an education system that ensured the development of the much needed consciousness among the oppressed Africans.

The fact that “the Southern Rhodesian African Education System was the product of one person, the lady lying before us here” (420), testifies to the central role, place and space that is occupied by non-black women like Grace Todd in the narratives and histories of the struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe. Africans of this country, according to Chigwedere, owe it to Grace Todd and the battle she fought from the education front on behalf of them. She devoted and sacrificed her all for the benefit of black people of Zimbabwe, and this is not a feat that can be easily erased from narratives, discourses and histories of the liberation struggle. The three Todds, Garfield, Grace and Judith are figures that are known locally and abroad for the role, place and space they occupy in the history of Zimbabwe’s struggle for independence and justice, from way before Ian Smith’s UDI to the post-independence Zimbabwe. Notwithstanding the politically motivated move to take away their Zimbabwean citizenship, the name Todd, according to Musarurwa and Chigwedere’s converging voices will continue to reverberate the metaphoric walls of Zanu-PF’s rigid and selective histories of the struggle because the name is a relic interred in the hearts of many African people who feel indebted to the work that the Todd family has done in shaping the trajectory that was taken by the history of Zimbabwe’s struggle.

Conclusion

In Todd’s narrative, we have a record of the experiences of private individuals who dedicated their lives to the public sphere for the benefit of Zimbabwe. The involvement of the Todd family in the liberation struggle has been the focus of this chapter. By positioning the Todds as centerpieces of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe, the author is re-appropriating the idea of racial origins as it relates to the discourses and narratives of the struggle. This makes her memoir a competing and self-empowering narrative. Zanu-PF’s dominant discourses of the struggle have excluded, through deliberate erasure and palimpsest, the roles played by whites in the struggle. Antithetically, in *Through the Darkness*, Todd uses strategies that render erasable her narrative’s portrayal of the roles played by her family, and the place and space they occupy in the discourses and histories of the struggle for liberation in Zimbabwe. I have thus managed to demonstrate that as an insider, who enjoys the epistemic privilege of writing from experiential knowledge and the authority of presence to construct a narrative that

contributes to the creation of a new historical discourse and knowledge of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe, Judith Todd has produced a competing and self-empowering narrative that challenges Zanu-PF's dominant, nativist and racialised narratives of the struggle. I have also shown that through erasure and palimpsest, Judith Todd takes advantage of her strong intellectual background, being white and female to construct a narrative that unapologetically claims her place and space and that of the Todd family as actors in the histories of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe.

However, what I find strikingly interesting and unique about Judith Todd's life narrative are the different narrative strategies she adopts and applies in the construction of her memoir. Judith Todd, I have argued, makes use of different tropes of liberation theology to challenge the Zanu-PF doctrine of racial origin as a marker of one's role and place in the struggle. Limiting historical narratives to racial origin reduces histories of the struggle into nativist narratives. She also uses converging voices of prominent black men from both Zanu and Zapu to vouch for the Todd family, and to authenticate her narrative as a true record of the role they played in the struggle. I have attributed this narrative strategy to the fact that the active role and involvement of the Todd family in the struggle have been excluded, ignored and erased by Zanu-PF and Mugabe's dominant and racialised narratives of the struggle. It has not just been relegated to a supportive role but the name Todd has been "deleted" from Zimbabwean history through the act of deliberate and calculated withdrawal of Zimbabwean Citizenship from the Todd family members by Mugabe's government.

CHAPTER 6

RECONSTRUCTING THE SELF: HAUNTOLOGY AND SPECTRALITY IN *NKOMO: THE STORY OF MY LIFE* AND *DZINO: MEMORIES OF A FREEDOM FIGHTER*

Introduction

This penultimate chapter focuses on how Joshua Nkomo and Wilfred Mhanda use their political memoirs to reconstruct the self. The two memoirs, *Nkomo: The Story of My Life* (1984) and *Mhanda: Memories of a Freedom Fighter* (2011) illustrate a specific understanding of reconstructing the self through hauntology and spectrality as analytic lenses. This chapter examines Nkomo's and Mhanda's political autobiographies and shows the reader how the two books illustrate reconstruction of the self. First, the chapter examines two conceptions of reconstruction namely, ruin and ruination as conceived by Ann Laura Stoler and others (2013). This section details how each respective concept describes human destruction, "dislocation and dispossession", and deconstruction in a way that spells political ruin and ruination for Nkomo and personal, lifelong ruin for Mhanda. The chapter then presents an argument that the concept of reconstructing the self adequately describes the Gothic effect of the two memoirs, *The Story of My Life* and *Memories of a Freedom Fighter* through hauntology and spectrality as analytic gazes of the haunting effects of the two memoirs. The two books illustrate lives of pain and suffering dedicated to liberating Zimbabwe and Zimbabweans, first from colonial bondage and, second, from Robert Mugabe's Zanu-PF tyrannical rule. It is, therefore, my argument that through massive investment in the symbolic infrastructure of pain and suffering, the memoirs of Nkomo and Mhanda embrace in them what Roger Luckhurst calls the language of "ghosts and the uncanny – or rather anachronic spectrality and hauntology" (2002: 527). Therefore, what we have in Nkomo and Mhanda, I argue, are two political autobiographers and political figures whose self-narratives deal with ghosts, not of the dead, but ghosts of the living; something Shane McCorristine calls "phantasms of the living dead" (2010: 139 –191). Nkomo and Mhanda are conscious of the processes of ruin and ruination that have been meted against them through "hostile deconstruction" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2007: 78) as a way of uprooting them from the political history of Zimbabwe before and after independence. Thus through self-narration, Nkomo and Mhanda posit themselves as political ghosts, phantoms that cannot

be done away with but will forever haunt and occupy that special place in Zimbabwe's political history and landscape regardless of how altered this terrain of the struggle itself is.

Political debris: ruin and ruination of Nkomo and Mhanda

The process of reconstructing the self presupposes that deconstruction and destruction have taken place. Drawing on Stoler and others' ideas of ruin and ruination in their astute and multi-disciplinary (anthropological, historical and archaeological studies) book *Imperial Debris: On Ruins and Ruination* (2013), I will call this process of deconstruction, "ruin and ruination". While alternative phrases and vocabulary such as "historical blunting", "degraded personhoods" (Stoler 2013), and "refashioning the self" (Scott 1999) and "the self in transformation" (Herbert Fingarette 1963) will come in as synonymous phraseology of deconstruction and reconstruction respectively, they will serve as the jargon that serves not only to authenticate Nkomo and Mhanda's political narratives but also to validate that processes of political ruin and ruination, and reconstruction of the self have taken place in Nkomo and Mhanda's lives as exemplified in their political autobiographies.

What I find fascinating in both Nkomo and Mhanda's political memoirs is the two writers' awareness of the "symptom[s] and substance of history's destructive force" (Stoler 2013: ix) and the processes of ruin and ruination that this history has and continues to mete on their political career and image. By history I am here referring to their experiences in both colonial Rhodesia under Ian Smith's UDI and post-independence Zimbabwe under Mugabe's Zanu-PF rule. Nkomo (1984: xiii) for instance, clearly states that his book is not a history but "one day, *if I am spared*, I may contribute to the writing of one with a happy ending (my emphasis)". The happy ending never came and he did not get to write a happy ending narrative. The aura of fear, insecurity and uncertainty in the words of caution "if I am spared" shows that he is conscious of the imminence of death and destruction, and the carefully calculated process of historical dislocation and dispossession that is taking place in order to wipe him off Zimbabwe's historical terrain. Similarly, Mhanda, "seen by Robert Mugabe as a very great threat" (Moore 2011: xiv), faced the process of "defanging" (ibid. xv), as Mugabe was "eliminating [this] thorn from his side" (xvi). Thus, Mhanda (2011: 253), like Nkomo, views himself "as a victim of the internal struggles within ZANU before [and after] liberation". This victim mentality, which has the potent effect of turning Nkomo and Mhanda's memoirs into victim narratives, is a result of the fact that they are aware of the

degradation and scarring their bodies and selves are going through in the aesthetics of being politically ruined and destroyed by their political opponents – black and white alike.

At issue here are the political lives of Joshua Nkomo and Wilfred Mhanda, and how these, through ruin and ruination have been turned into political debris. Focus is on how the two have taken advantage of their political ruin to “provide a favoured image of [their] vanished past” (Stoler 2013: 9), in a way that ensures that their reconstructed selves have a continual haunting effect on the politics of Zimbabwe. In her introduction to *Imperial Debris: On Ruins and Ruination*, Stoler describes to ruin as “a virulent verb” (9) that signifies the ongoing process of “decimation [and] displacement” in people’s lives. (8) In its virulent state, to ruin has an ongoing corrosive effect that condenses alternative voices and narratives of a people’s history. Consequently, to ruin according to *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, as quoted by Stoler (9), “is to inflict or bring great and irretrievable disaster upon, to destroy agency, to reduce to a state of poverty, to demoralize completely”. Through the diction “inflict”, “destroy”, “reduce” and “demoralize”, we envision the power of the metaphor of destruction and how irretrievably battered and shattered one’s image will be after being ruined. This idea of ruin and ruination is extended by Ariella Azoulay when she describes “To ruin” as “the architecture of destruction” in which individual units “have been totally demolished” (2013: 209). While Azoulay’s focus is the actual house, this house demolition can be taken metaphorically to refer to the ruin and ruination of a person’s character, personality and history. This act of “deliberate and willful destruction” of persons and property, as Vyjayanthi Rao calls it in his article “The future in ruins”, constitutes the deconstruction that has taken place on Nkomo and Mhanda. Their place and role in the history, politics and struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe from British colonial rule have been deliberately and carefully “tamed”, ruined and decimated “so as to limit any deleterious and feudal pull it might exert on the future” (Rao 2013: 291). The fact that both the Smith regime and Mugabe’s Zanu-PF rule inadvertently “colluded” to ensure that the political histories of Nkomo and Mhanda are deconstructed through deliberate and carefully constructed processes of ruin and ruination succinctly points towards the central role the two occupy in Zimbabwe’s political history of the struggle for liberation. I now turn to the concepts of hauntology and spectrality and how as metaphors of textual resistance to ruin and ruination manifest Nkomo’s and Mhanda’s memoirs as phantoms that resurrect the images of Nkomo and Mhanda as monumental political figures that refuse to be destroyed.

Understanding hauntology and spectrality in Nkomo and Mhanda's memoirs

Hauntology, according to Davis (2013: 54) entails “replacing the priority of being and presence with the figure of the ghost as that which is neither present nor absent, neither dead nor alive”. Taken in its metaphorical sense, Nkomo's autobiography *The Story of My Life* constitutes the ghost that in essence comes back to haunt Zimbabwe and challenge Zanu's dominant and hegemonic politics. First it was written while Nkomo was in exile, fleeing from persecution by Mugabe, which means that Nkomo was physically absent from his home Zimbabwe. His narrative therefore, is the ghost that comes back to haunt his political adversaries. Secondly, it was banned by Mugabe in 1984, as an act of ruin and ruination meant to make sure that his story does not get to the people of Zimbabwe. This makes it a haunting narrative that represents a new aspect of reconstructing and representing the self that had been deconstructed in Zimbabwe's post-independence political discourse. As an act of ruin and ruination, the banning of Nkomo's narrative shows that Zanu was “intent on preventing its traumatic and usually shameful secrets from coming to light” (Davis 2013: 54). It also inadvertently transforms the book into a phantom, which represents Nkomo's “return from the dead in order to reveal something hidden or forgotten, to right a wrong or to deliver a message that might otherwise have gone unheeded” (54).

Similarly, Mhanda's memoir *Dzino: Memories of a freedom fighter*, follows the literary trope of hauntology in the manner it “track[s] the secrets [about the struggle] and bring[s] them to light” (55). Thus Mhanda's narrative exemplifies a phantom, a text “in distress” harbouring secrets, to borrow from Davis (2013: 55). I must be quick to point out that the two political narratives, *The Story of My Life* and *Memories of a Freedom Fighter* are not explicitly ghost stories but their narrative thrust and the memories they evoke and invoke, according to Davis, revolve around the transmission of phantoms and secrets.

As spectres, the two books act as deconstructive narratives hovering over and above the Zanu hegemonic and dominant discourses, thus “making established certainties vacillate” (Ibid.: 55) Looked at as spectres, the narratives of Nkomo and Mhanda reveal historical secrets that are shameful or otherwise. They, as Davis (2013: 54) says, “open us up to the experience of secrecy [...]: an essential unknowing which underlies and may undermine what we think we know”. The political history of Zimbabwe that we know through the grand narrative of Zanu, is challenged, deconstructed and haunted by the spectres of Nkomo and Mhanda's minor

narratives and voices. As literary spectres, ghosts and phantoms, the two memoirs push at the boundaries of dominant, hegemonic historical narratives of Zanu, and “gesture towards a still unformulated future” (Ibid, 58) narrative of Zimbabwean history from the point of view of minor narratives and voices.

Commenting on the spectrality and haunting power of texts (books), Wolfreys (2013: 71) says, “there is thus at work here a certain troubling, a trembling, in the idea of text itself”. Such lucid description of the power of text speaks to the idea of the machinery of the autobiography. Nkomo and Mhanda’s books, partake in their own haunting power. Banning Nkomo’s book was Zanu’s attempt “to bury the text, to entomb or encrypt it” (Wolfreys, 72) in the name of preserving and entrenching a purely Zanu grand narrative of the struggle. Not only do the two narratives work as apparitions of Nkomo and Mhanda, who through the texts, engage in the self-embalming process. The text gives Nkomo and Mhanda a state of permanent existence. Dead-and-alive, their lives are preserved and maintained through the texts. Thus in their state of permanency, the texts serve as spectres and phantoms that will continue to haunt and trouble Zimbabwe’s political history.

Both Nkomo and Mhanda were forced into exile by Mugabe’s security agents. In a sense, their exclusion from Zimbabwe is synonymous with what Vidler (2013: 404) calls the act of being “buried alive”. Desirous of self-restoration, Nkomo and Mhanda use their memoirs to steer out of them “a feeling that death was beginning to talk” (Gravida quoted by Vidler 2013: 404). The next section focuses on how both the Ian Smith and Robert Mugabe regimes tried to destroy and deconstruct the political history of Nkomo and Mhanda. The two will however, be discussed separately, beginning with Nkomo.

No respite for Nkomo: from Gonakudzingwa to Gukurahundi

In an environment that is characterized and rocked by violence, racial and political tension as a result of the oppression of one race by another, imprisonment, deliberate isolation and/or detention for long periods are some of the ways of ensuring the political demise of your opponent. Thus the mere mention of Gonakudzingwa³³ and Gukurahundi³⁴ takes us into what

³³ Gonakudzingwa was a restriction camp situated in the Gonarezhou Game Park. The place was used by the Rhodesian security forces during the Second Chimurenga. It was at this camp that political prisoners that included the late Father Zimbabwe, Joshua Nkomo, Josiah Chinamano and his wife among others, were incarcerated and isolated right in the middle of the jungle, surrounded by dangerous wild animals.

Richard Strier (1982: 386) calls “the theatrical dimension of public life” for Nkomo. Gonakudzingwa was/is a detention camp in the Gonarezhou national park. It was/is notorious for being “home” for many Black Nationalists during the struggle for liberation in Zimbabwe. It was a place of political ruin and ruination. The idea behind Gonakudzingwa was that of “hiding prisoners away in game reserves” (Nkomo 1984: 121), firstly because “the natives were just there, part of the African fauna like elephants” (Ibid.), and secondly, “[t]he objective was to cut us off from the world, to make it forget us and us forget it” (Ibid. 130). This delineation of Gonakudzingwa evokes the ideas of ruin and ruination as ongoing processes of destroying and decimating a person’s life, character and political career. We begin to see this process of deconstruction when Nkomo, by virtue of being a political prisoner, loses his name and is referred to as “a prisoner”. The “Father Zimbabwe” tag that he claims to have been called by immediately falls away, especially when he is dehumanized to the level of being equated with wild animals. Not only is he hidden, to ensure political invisibility and insignificance, but the place of hiding is a “game reserve” because a native in the eyes of colonial authorities is the same if not worse than beast.

Added to this is the idea of rot. Nkomo headlines the chapter that focuses on his life at Gonakudzingwa as “Left to Rot” (130–142). The association between Gonakudzingwa and the image of rot projects Gonakudzingwa not only as a place of detention but also an imperial project with the potential to ruin a person completely. Thus Gonakudzingwa – and to adopt Stoler – becomes a metaphor of a “degraded environment, [for] degraded personhoods” whose political lives are redefined by spaces that have been “turned toxic” in order to ensure severed relations “between [them] and people and between people and [them]” (Stoler, 7–8). As a place of detention and isolation from public life, and a force of destruction of one’s image and ambition, Gonakudzingwa, one would expect, meant for Nkomo, a vanished, falling, neglected past in a state of decay and disrepair. The effect of this offensive strategy of ruination is best captured by Nkomo when he says, “[t]hey wanted us, and the cause we stood for, out of the way. So they shut us up to rot quietly, in Camp 5 of the Gonakudzingwa protected area, in Gonarezhou Game Reserve” (Nkomo, 131). Because the rot was gradual and carefully calculated as a form of erasure from active nationalist politics, Gonakudzingwa

³⁴ Gukurahundi – a Shona word for the spring rain that sweep away dry season chaff – was a code name for a Mugabe’s Zanu-PF led military operation aimed at the suppression of Zimbabwean civilians, mostly supporters of Joshua Nkomo, by Zimbabwe’s notorious 5th Brigade in the predominantly Ndebele regions of Zimbabwe during the 1980s.

was home to Nkomo for ten years. The objective was to ruin Nkomo's political career and ensure that his growing support base would shrink. This was made clear to Nkomo by the British foreign secretary Sir Alec Douglas-Home during a meeting of the two in Salisbury (now Harare) in 1970. After years in detention, Nkomo dared to refer to himself as a representative of the African population, whereupon he was told, "'The people have completely forgotten you', said Home. 'They no longer recognize you: you do not represent anybody now. What we have done is reasonable, and if you do not accept it you will be left out'". (140) While one cannot rule out the possibility of this being political propaganda aimed at extinguishing Nkomo's revolutionary spirit through isolation, what cannot be missed however, is the implied "you have been politically ruined" by detention at Gonakudzingwa. Stoler refers to this prolonged detention as "targeted humiliations of subject populations [...that] are neither aberrant nor exceptional tactics of imperial regimes, but fundamental to their governing grammar" (2013: 3). Evidently, this language of detention was part and parcel of the whole imperial project aimed at stifling African Nationalism, for which Nkomo was a leader. Whether it worked or not shall be seen in the section on reconstruction.

The 11th of November 1965 spelled doom not only for Southern Rhodesia as a whole but also for Nkomo and his colleagues who were in detention. For those like Nkomo and others who were detained at Gonakudzingwa, Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence meant direct political assault and total isolation from the outside world. A state of emergency was declared, and in a move meant to consolidate Nkomo's image as political debris, "[a]ll our visits were stopped, the police guard on us was strengthened, and we were forbidden to move across into the other camps", says Nkomo. He adds, "Now there were to be no visits, no news of the outside world, no free association with the people in the neighbouring camps. We were shut away". (128) In short, there was no life, and admittedly, Nkomo adopted a defeatist attitude at this point. By saying "we were shut away", Nkomo draws our attention to the process of ruin and ruination that took place at Gonakudzingwa. The isolation through prolonged detention, the dehumanization that took place through forced association with wild animals, and the state of emergency, are all tactics that speak one language, the governing grammar of an imperial regime whose harsh and toxic corrosion of individuals that are perceived as a threat is an act of ruination.

The attainment of independence on 18 April 1980, after decades of a protracted struggle against British colonial rule did not bring respite for Nkomo. It was a transition from Gonakudzingwa to Gukurahundi. Where Ian Smith's Gonakudzingwa had failed to break Nkomo, then the brutal and fierce acts of Mugabe's Gukurahundi were meant to destroy him completely. From being called a terrorist by Ian Smith, Nkomo and his opposition party Patriotic Front – Zimbabwe African People's Union (PF-Zapu) would soon earn a new tag; Mugabe's Zanu-PF accused him of being the "father of dissidents". Paradoxically for Nkomo, the transition from Rhodesia to Zimbabwe made him realize that nothing had changed. The same allegations of trying to destabilize the country that were leveled against him were revived by Mugabe's Zanu-PF government. A reign of terror in the form of a Zanu-PF North Korean trained military wing, Fifth Brigade was unleashed in Matabeleland and parts of the Midlands provinces in what came to be known in Zimbabwe's post-independence history as Gukurahundi. An estimated 20000 people, mostly of Ndebele origin lost their lives (*Breaking the Silence* 1992).

Writing on what he calls the "triple metamorphosis of Joshua Nkomo", which in essence implies the shape-shifting, forms of life and multiple identities of Nkomo, as well as his reincarnation as an apparition, to haunt his adversaries and Zimbabwe's political landscape, Ndlovu-Gatsheni says, "[t]his portrayal of Nkomo as 'father of dissidents' set the stage for a systematic, violent campaign against PF-Zapu, Joshua Nkomo and Zipra combatants" (2007: 75). If the name Gukurahundi (a Shona term for the storm that sweeps away the chaff, paving way for the normal rainy season) is taken in its literal meaning, it translates to violent acts whose objectives are cleansing, ruin and ruination. Hence, Ndlovu-Gatsheni posits that "[t]he violence against PF-Zapu, demonization of Joshua Nkomo and attempts at writing ZIPRA out of the liberation struggle, was taking place at a crucial time of nation-building by Zanu-PF" (ibid. 75). Simply put, the name Nkomo, his party PF-Zapu and its military wing ZIPRA were to be wiped off the history of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle. Unlike Gonakudzingwa which symbolized prolonged detentions, Gukurahundi had the objective of yielding immediate results. The deconstruction, decay and ultimate ruin and ruination of Nkomo became the obsession of Zanu-PF, which was bent on re-writing the history of the struggle that would exclude Nkomo, PF-Zapu and ZIPRA.

The Fifth Brigade violence which was meant to demolish Nkomo and his party was officially sanctioned by Mugabe as the Prime Minister when he publicly said, "'Zapu and its leader Dr

Joshua Nkomo, are like a cobra in a house. The only way to deal effectively with a snake is to strike and destroy its head”” (Nkomo 1984: 2). The serpentine imagery in “cobra”, and how to deal with it, which entails striking in order to “destroy its head” makes us envision Robert Mugabe positing as a god pronouncing his first punishment against mankind in the Garden of Eden after man’s first act of sin. This god-like quality of Mugabe meant that his word was final and could not be challenged hence; the violence that followed led to the deaths of thousands of people. This is the same man who had addressed Parliament in 1982, and warned that “some of the measures we shall take are measures that will be extra-legal ... an eye for an eye and an ear for an ear may not be adequate in our circumstances. We might very well demand two ears for one ear, and two eyes for one eye” (Hansard 1982: vol 6: 18). What began as a verbal warning, turned out to be an officially sanctioned act of genocide and/or ethnic cleansing. What we should not lose sight of is that Gukurahundi was an act of political ruin. Zimbabwe’s history was being redirected and rewritten to ensure the exclusion of Zapu, Nkomo and ZIPRA.

Complicit in this project to destroy Nkomo and relegate him into the dustbin of history were several Zanu ministers, “[who] insulted Zapu, insulted me as its leader, and said that all minority parties should be crushed” (Nkomo, 219). This language of hate and violence, argues Gaylard (1993) would be repeated by Edgar Tekere, Minister of Manpower Development and Planning, when he called for a military operation to crush the Zapu opposition in the following terms: ““Nkomo and his guerillas are germs in the country’s wounds and they will have to be cleaned up with iodine. The patient will have to scream a little””.³⁵ (Astrow 1983: 167) The systematically patterned acts of violence that followed these utterances were aimed directly at decimating Nkomo and his party Zapu. Barely a year into independence, Nkomo was “sacked” from his job as the powerful home affairs minister, faced “demotion” to a politically insignificant minister of public service and eventually to the “meaningless title of minister without portfolio” (Nkomo, 220). This humiliation and degradation of personhood as Stoler puts it signifies the corrosion and decay that precede the political ruin and ruination of a public figure like Nkomo.

³⁵ There is irony in Tekere’s utterances when one realizes that the same Edgar Tekere who had used medicinal imagery in support of ‘ethnic cleansing’ would complain later when the political party Zanu, he founded, rejected him and subjected him to the same treatment that had been meted on Nkomo, with his full blessings and support.

Realising his loss, Nkomo painfully labels himself “outcast” (224–234). His was a case of history repeating itself, only that this time, the architects of his fall were his former partners in the struggle against white minority rule. He admits, “[m]y own losses were very large indeed; other party members much less able to afford any loss at all were *ruined*”. He goes on to add that Zapu and its leaders “had been *eliminated*” (my emphasis 228). There is no doubting that Nkomo’s admission that he, together with his support base and party, had been ruined and eliminated sounds defeatist and fatalistic. However, we should not lose sight of the fact that he had realized that he was dealing not with an individual, but a powerful system whose intention was to destroy once and for all his support base. It is this attempt to ruin and deconstruct him politically that he challenges using his memoir *Nkomo: The Story of My Life*. It is here that the value of the book as a form of self-embalment and a text of haunting becomes apparent. The memoir is the instance of the ineradicability of the ghost of Nkomo. It is the tool used by the autobiographer to manifest the justice-seeking nature of the ghost of Nkomo who, even when detained and isolated at Gonakudzingwa, in exile running away from Mugabe’s security agents, and seemingly dead-and-buried, eternally returns to haunt until some form of expiation has been conducted.

On refusal to fall: spectres of Nkomo

In Nkomo’s memoir, there is “an unrelenting drive to reconstruct, perfect, and beautify the [self]”, as Carden-Coyne (2009: 4) says with reference to the bodies that were mutilated by the First World War. The Second Chimurenga (hereby represented by Gonakudzingwa), and the 1980s Gukurahundi destroyed human bodies and identities on an unprecedented scale. In particular, the onslaught upon the body, personality, identity and political career of Nkomo and how he refashions and reconstructs his identity is my concern. There is a hidden awareness, in Nkomo’s memoir, of the imminent death and collapse of Zapu as a political party and ZIPRA its military wing. That Zapu will be submerged, destroyed even, by Zanu is glaring. Therefore, by unleashing the memoir *The Story of My Life* three years ahead of the 1987 Unity Accord, which marked the official demise of Zapu, Nkomo is literary refusing to die. His memoir is, in Derridian terms (1994: xx) “a living on” spirit that “in advance comes to disjoin or dis-adjust the identity to itself of the living present as well as of any effectivity” of the deconstruction of Nkomo’s identity at the hands of Mugabe’s Zanu. It is a political narrative that not only seeks to reconstruct Nkomo’s identity but also to ensure that that identity will have a permanent, haunting effect on Zimbabwean history. There is thus in

Nkomo's memoir what Derrida in *Specters of Marx* calls "*some spirit*. Spirits. And *one must* reckon with them. One cannot not have to, one must not not be able to reckon with them, which are more than one: *the more than one/ no more one* [*le plus d'un*]" (Derrida 1994: xx). It is this living on spirit that seeks to redefine, refashion, reconstruct and re-infuse Nkomo's identity through memoir writing, into the "sanitized and reinvented" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2007: 73) history of Zimbabwe, a history that Chennells (2005: 233) calls "state patriotic history" from which many, like Nkomo, Zapu and ZIPRA are deliberately and by design excluded.

The memoir is testimony that there is connection between the death of a political party PF-Zapu and the fate of Nkomo the man and his invaluable role in history. When it comes to the history of the Zimbabwean struggle, the name "Nkomo", "is – in a certain sense – entirely uncircumventable". (Magnus and Cullenberg 1994: xi) This has been made certain by the memoir which carries within it the specter of Nkomo. Therefore, the official end and collapse of Zapu in 1987 did not portend that of Nkomo both, politically and historically. The fact that as early as 1984, he was aware of Zanu's plot to deliberately deconstruct the history of the struggle when he says, "[e]ven our national history is distorted" (1984: 228), shows that he is disillusioned and thus his book "is the personal record of a life that has played a part in history" (xiii). It is this life, which Derrida calls the spirit that we cannot, must not not be able to reckon with – the haunting specter of Nkomo that is the focus of this section. Here, I focus on two strategies that were used by Nkomo in his memoir to reconstruct and refashion his identity to a point where the mere mention of his name haunts Zimbabwe's political history. These are; his link with the spiritual world and his association with the founding fathers of African Nationalism.

Nkomo's visit to the Dula Mwali cult shrine in the Matopos Hills in the 1950s posits him as the favoured and chosen one to lead the struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe. His encounter with the spirit of the mountain God at the Dula Mwali shrine was not a chance encounter. He attributes it to the development and growth of "the spirit of Zimbabwean nationalism" (13). His desire for freedom from white colonial rule, found him with some twenty others at the mouth of the shrine. We are told that after falling into a soft rhythm of clapping, "suddenly a voice like that of an ancient man began to call us by our names: 'You, son of Nyongolo [...] – what do you want me to do for you? How do you expect me to accomplish it: when I told King Lobengula what not to do, he did it?'" He goes on, "I replied, *as leader of the group*: 'Babamkhulu, grandfather, we have come to ask you to give back this

land to your children, the people of this land””, whereupon he is told ““I will give you back your land. It will be after thirty years, and it will be after a big war in which many will die.”” It is however, Nkomo’s claim that “for thirty years I kept the secret that the voice had foretold a long and costly struggle” that is of particular interest here. (14) Even though this incident is rooted in traditional African religion, it bears resemblance with two biblical incidents. The first one is the baptism of Jesus where a voice was heard talking, “This is my beloved Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” (Matthew 3 v 16; *New International Version*) The second is the voice that Moses heard commanding him to go to Egypt to set free God’s children and take them to their Promised Land Canaan – an undeniably tall order, which would take Moses forty years to accomplish.

Similarly, it would take Nkomo thirty years to see the liberation of Zimbabwe from British colonial rule. His claim to be the favoured and chosen one takes him to a point “where he appropriates ritual powers so as to mythologise himself as the true inheritor of a chain of power that stretched from pre-colonial times only to be disturbed by colonial rule” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 79). By projecting himself as the custodian and “keeper of national secrets that other nationalists did not know” (ibid.), Nkomo puts himself on a pedestal that others including those that are trying to deconstruct history by ruining his character, identity and political career, cannot challenge. He places his degraded name and degraded personhood into the spiritual realm where none can bring them down. By turning his struggle for recognition into a spiritual warfare, Nkomo has taken his fight into a realm that no ordinary man can challenge. It is here that we begin to see the spectre of Nkomo coming back to haunt Zimbabwean history. It is a history that is littered with spirits, ghosts and phantoms that, to borrow from Derrida, we cannot afford not to reckon with. The same voice would visit him in the form of a dream at Gonakudzingwa to pronounce his freedom and the fact that the war was coming to an end. The mysterious voice called him by name, “Joshua”, and went on to tell him, “I have come to tell you it is over now. Get out of here.” (145) By now, Nkomo’s life of struggle has gone full circle. What begins as a call to lead the struggle at the Dula Mwali shrine in Matopos Hills ends with a declaration of completion when he is told it is over now – reminiscent of Jesus’ last words on the cross, “It is finished” (John 19 v 30; *New International Version*). This, coming against the backdrop of demonization by Zanu as the father of dissidents, serves to present a diametrically opposite image of Nkomo as the chosen one to lead the struggle, an identity and role he would not betray for the sake of power.

Besides ritualisation, visions and dreams, Nkomo's rebuttal of Mugabe and Zanu's demonization and ruination of his identity as the father of nationalism in Zimbabwe comes by association. Contrary to the criticism leveled against him "for being too fond of travel, and for spending too little of my (Nkomo) time at home" (86), which would reduce him to an absentee nationalist who was gallivanting when others were in the bush fighting the enemy, Nkomo uses details of his acquaintances and contemporaries to consolidate his position not only as 'father Zimbabwe' but also as one of the founding fathers of African nationalism. Among the luminaries of nationalist struggles in Africa he associated with were Nelson Mandela, Kenneth David Kaunda, Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda, Kwame Nkrumah, Patrice Lumumba, Sir Seretse Khama, and Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, all of whom became presidents of their respective countries. Added to this is that he was elected *president* of the African Railways Employees' Association, *president* of the African National Congress, *in absentia*, *president* of the National Democratic Party, and life *president* of Zapu. Implicit here is that if all his acquaintances became presidents in their respective countries, then Nkomo was robbed by Mugabe and Zanu, of his opportunity to be the president of Zimbabwe, hence he talks of "the doubtful elections" of 1980, which ushered Zimbabwe's independence. Ndlovu-Gatsheni puts it well when he submits that by associating himself with Africa's political greats, Nkomo's intention was,

To alert his readers to his rightfulness to the leadership of Zimbabwe, like other continental leaders who assumed power at the departure of colonialists. One is also given the impression that Joshua Nkomo is projecting himself as a supra-nationalist who ranks alongside luminaries of the broader pan-Africanist struggle in Africa. (2007: 80)

In other words, Nkomo's memoir projects him as an embodiment of the pan-African spirit, which cannot be wished away. Thus, any attempt to deconstruct his identity by erasing him from the history of the struggle is an exercise in futility because it will entail re-writing the entire history of nationalism in Africa. There is a bold statement that says he ranks among Africa's greatest statesman and political heavy-weights, and thus no amount of demonization can bring his name to ruin. The same technique of narrative by association is used by Tekere (Discussed in Chapter 3) to foretell the doom that would befall Zanu after he was expelled from the party. He recalls how Africa's political heavy weights – Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, Samora Machel and Quett Masire – questioned Mugabe's logic of expelling him from Zanu. "How can Robert [Mugabe] hope to run Zimbabwe without Edgar [Tekere]?", they asked (Tekere 2007: 132). Therefore, the collapse of Zapu and ZIPRA did not portend the death of

Nkomo. The fact that Nkomo's name continues to be exploited by Mugabe's Zanu-PF today - 31 years after he wrote his memoir, and 16 years after his death – to woo votes from the people of Matabeleland, most of whom are Ndebele-speaking people, shows that the spectre of Nkomo lives on, and continues to haunt Zimbabwe's political landscape. It is a spirit we cannot afford not to reckon with.

Reconstructing the self and re-claiming the struggle: the ghost of Mhanda's memoir *Memories of a freedom fighter*

In this section, I argue that Wilfred Mhanda's book can be interpreted as a resurrected ghost of Mhanda that comes back to haunt his political enemies, especially Robert Mugabe. Thus by employing hauntology as my theoretical concept, I submit the argument that through memoir writing, Mhanda partakes in the exercise of political self-redemption. Hence, there is a bitterness that pervades Mhanda's memoir *Dzino: Memories of a Freedom Fighter*, hatred of how the history of the struggle turned out and rage against Zimbabwe's authorities. This bitterness makes Mhanda's memoir a site of struggle and transformation of history. There is a haunting perception of the history of the struggle for liberation in Zimbabwe. This haunting perception aims to re-claim the struggle from opportunists who robbed authentic freedom fighters who possess authentic voices, the opportunity to tell the real narrative of the trajectory that was followed by the struggle for liberation. Therefore, by laying claim to possessing authentic knowledge of the struggle, Mhanda's book acquires an aura that gives it a haunting effect, especially as it seeks to challenge the way Mugabe's Zanu-PF has deconstructed the history of the struggle by constructing "patriotic history" which is based on and shaped by opportunism. Through "resuscitated memory" (Nyambi 2014: 1) Mhanda's once silenced voice makes use of the memoir as a narrative genre to reconstruct the self, and to rehabilitate his "ghost" as a respectable subject and authoritative figure of the history and politics of the struggle for independence in Zimbabwe. This is in spite of the fact that he waited for three decades to write about a subject that happened more than 31 years back. This gap is the one that explicitly demonstrates the ghostly and haunting nature of the memoir, which comes at a time when least expected. Even time could not contain the ghost, the text.

The answer lies in his political memoir when he alludes to the meaninglessness of independence following the manner in which he had been ruined by Mugabe and Zanu-PF:

My comrades and I had spent years fighting to liberate our country but had now been reduced to footnotes of this momentous time. We had become outsiders, distanced from the contagious euphoria gripping the country. The independence we had fought so hard to achieve was at hand and yet, sadly, we found ourselves unable to rejoice with the black populace. For us, the overriding feeling was that we were free from Machel's³⁶ prisons but did not feel like victors. It was hard to reconcile to this reality, a disorienting and painful experience, as Mugabe and Zanu-PF were still doing their best to caricature us as enemies of liberation. How could we adjust to our new-found personal freedom in such a hostile and disempowering environment? (Mhanda 2011: 198)

The bitter irony in the metaphor “reduced to footnotes” shows the fierce rejection he faced and the strong feeling of dislocation and alienation he felt as a result of pointed assaults upon his identity and personhood, and “increasingly blunted” history of the struggle (Eagleton 2003: 7). This feeling of not belonging manifests the pain and injury done to him as a result of imprisonment in “Machel’s prisons” at the instigation of Mugabe as he sought to consolidate his power. The effect of this process of ruin and ruination was that Mhanda and his comrades became victims of their stolen victory hence they “did not feel like victors”. It is this bitter realization that drove Mhanda to use the memoir genre to reconstruct the self. More so, when the Zanu-PF manufactured history continued to “caricature” him as an enemy of the struggle that he personally rescued from détente.³⁷ Reference to the post-independence period as “a hostile and disempowering environment” succinctly highlights the ruinous effect the Zanu-PF controlled atmosphere is, especially to those who are seen as threats to its power and authority. In a paragraph, Mhanda clearly delineates how as a person he was laid to waste and turned to political debris. His memoir therefore is an attempt at self-redemption by reconstructing his image and identity as the man who revived an otherwise dead and buried struggle for liberation by forming and leading ZIPA as a military arm that combined both ZANLA and ZIPRA forces.

As part of a systematic project to disregard and destroy the role played by Mhanda in the struggle, Mugabe orchestrated the arrest of all ZIPA commanders, Mhanda included. In a well-calculated move meant to reduce them to “inactive leftovers” (Stoler, 29) of the

³⁶ Samora Machel was the president of Mozambique who aided Mugabe’s rise to the helm of Zanu as a liberation movement by arresting all those who were opposed and seen as hostile to his rise to power. Wilfred Mhanda was one of those who were arrested and imprisoned in Mozambique.

³⁷ It was a period between 1974-1975 when the liberation struggle had gone on abeyance. It was during this period when Kenneth Kaunda the then president of Zambia which was part of the Front-line States and John Voster the then president of South Africa were making efforts to bring the liberation struggle to a halt to pave way for independence through negotiations. See www.pindula.co.zw/secondchimurenga

struggle, rotten relics and forgotten ruins, they were first detained at Chimoio before being taken to Beira, both of which are in Mozambique, and then incarcerated in the basement of the Grand Hotel. At Pemba, the twenty four of them were locked in one room that had been turned into a prison cell. Here, the camp commander told them they were “‘just like a pair of shoes I’ve been asked to take care of – if I am asked to eliminate you, I will not have the slightest hesitation in doing so’” (Mhanda, 184). The degradation of personhood and dehumanization to the level of used shoes shows the high level of disregard of humanity and human life. This is demonstrated further when Mhanda describes the prison conditions, he says;

To make room for these fresh arrivals, we were moved from the basement of the water tank to a disused toilet block. The room was so confined that we could hardly move. The sixteen of us lay with our heads on the elevated portion of the disused urinals, as this was the only way we could all fit in the congested toilet, our new home. (188)

There is deliberate investment by Mhanda, in the description of the infrastructure of suffering in order to show the hardships that he experienced. There is also indirect indictment of Mugabe’s claims of liberation credentials on the basis of his decade long imprisonment, when his prison environment allowed him to read for and attain academic degrees. On the contrary, the conditions described by Mhanda here are as Stoler says, “sites [...] of implacable resentment, disregard and abandonment” (2013: 28). Therefore, abandoned, isolated and sometimes “confined to pits in Chimoio camp for six months” (Mhanda, 193), only a survivor of the holocaust, argues Mhanda, can best describe the feeling and experience because “‘it is as difficult for one experiencing it to understand it as it is impossible for one who has not experienced it to believe’” (ibid. 188). The levels of personal injury and mutilation meted against Mhanda and his fellow comrades in Machel’s prisons and how these were meant to ruin him personally and politically have a haunting effect on the reader. Accordingly, his memoir constitutes the salvage political project, or exhumation, which is also what Zanu-PF does for suddenly remembered and dusted up mass graves. Its aim is to resurrect an almost dismantled body in an almost state of political ruin and ruination. This state of rot and decay, of political debris is captured well by Geoffrey Nyarota in his memoir *Against the Grain: Memoirs of a Zimbabwean Newsmen* when he describes Mhanda and his fellow comrades when they returned to Zimbabwe in 1980, following years of detention in Mozambique:

Zanu-PF's former detainees at Pemba were rather subdued when they flew into Salisbury from Maputo three months before independence and were whisked straight from the airport to a press conference at the Monomatapa Hotel. The motley band of ex-prisoners presented a pitiful sight. Dishevelled and emaciated, they appeared out of place in the opulent ambience of the majestic hotel, which had risen at the southern end of the luxuriant Salisbury Gardens while most of the assembled guerrillas had been in exile. (Nyarota 2006: 115)

The biting irony and satire in the harmonization of background and mood strike a chord of untold suffering, ruin and degraded personhoods. The antithesis in “subdued” and “independence” speaks of stolen victory and the painful realization that for this band of guerrillas, nothing had changed. The fact that they are “disheveled and emaciated ... in the opulent ambience” is a premonition of their failure to belong to new Zimbabwe. They have been ruined by war and detention, and only the pen in the form of Mhanda's memoir can salvage their stolen lives and history.

Disqualified but never destroyed³⁸

Mhanda, like Nkomo is using the memoir to rebuild his lost life in the hope of making himself “whole again”, following the degradation that he suffered, which ruined his identity and personhood (Carden-Coyne 2009: 2). Thus, the memoir is a way of retrieving a part of himself from the ruins. In fact, the haunting effect of the memoir is shown by the way it captures ruination as a force that incites “vibrant refusal to accept its terms and re-cast the story” (Stoler, 26). What is novel about Mhanda's memoir is the way it re-casts and creates new identities and narratives of the struggle. The ruination he suffers seems to have positive value addition to processes of decay and destruction especially if one looks at the memoir as a conceptual metaphor of the practice of exhumation. It opens up and reveals the once entombed, dead-and-buried but embalmed figure of Mhanda as a freedom fighter of note. Mhanda rejects the negative label that he has been given by Mugabe's Zanu-PF as an enemy of liberation by reconstructing the self as an authentic freedom fighter who rescued a war of liberation that had gone comatose during détente. In the face of censure and a sustained and protracted process of destruction (Rao 2013) by architects and drivers of patriotic history, Mhanda projects himself as a “resurrected ruin” (ibid. 290). His emphatic assertion and claim

³⁸ This heading was borrowed from Sharad Chari's article “Detritus in Durban: Polluted Environs and the Biopolitics of Refusal” in *Imperial Debris: On ruins and ruination* (ed) Ann Laura Stoler, pp 131–161.

that he saved and served the struggle for liberation is his way of revivifying his dead and dismantled past by reconstructing himself as a living monument. While ruin suggests abandonment and demolition, and carries with it “traumatic memory” of a “buried history” (Luckhurst 2002: 528), reconstruction on the other hand speaks of a newly Gothicized image of the self. Therefore, by reviving and invoking ZIPA, Mhanda’s memoir engages in what Luckhurst describes as “historical excavations that self-reflexively incorporate knowledge of the Gothic genre itself” (ibid. 529). There seems to be in Mhanda’s memoir, a “rapacious demand for authentic” national history of the liberation struggle, one that is neither sanitized nor narrowly focused on lauding the ruling elite (Luckhurst 2002: 530).

Matter-of-factly, he says,

The removal of ZIPA paved the way for Mugabe to assert his authority over the army, which was all that was left of ZANU at the time. Mugabe and the ZANU leadership had had no role in ZIPA’s formation, but they were beneficiaries of its successes. ZIPA owed Mugabe and the ZANU leadership nothing; on the contrary, the latter had ZIPA to thank for their freedom. Without ZIPA, none of them would be what they were and where they were on the day the ZIPA commanders were arrested. They were reaping where they had not sown – just as in the case with the violent farm invasions many years later. ZIPA had paved their way to power and all traces of it had to be obliterated. (2011: 176)

In the face of total obliteration of ZIPA³⁹, which in essence is the obliteration of not only history of the struggle but also role, place and space played and occupied by Mhanda during the struggle, what we see here is the spectres of Mhanda coming back in the form of a memoir to haunt and challenge patriotic history of the struggle. In this patriotic history, the name Mhanda has disappeared, but as Derrida (1994: 5) pointedly says, “The name of one who disappeared must have gotten inscribed someplace else”. This is alternative history coming back to haunt and challenge patriotic history, giving credence to the Derridain claim that “haunting is historical”, the only thing to note is that it is never dated (ibid. 4). In his exercise of “a politics of memory” as Derrida puts it (ibid. xix), Mhanda reminds the reader that in spite of the fall and demise of ZIPA, its name and the name Mhanda will always be inscribed, if not in the authentic history of the struggle, then in the hearts of those that

³⁹ Zimbabwe People’s Army (ZIPA) was a military wing that brought together Zanla and Zipra forces. This was seen by Robert Mugabe and his liberation war loyalists as a renegade military wing formed by power-hungry guerrilla fighters with the intention of usurping power from Nationalist leaders.

benefitted from ZIPA's exploits during the war. The agricultural imagery in "they were reaping where they had not sown" projects Mugabe and Zanu leadership as chancers and opportunistic hawks, birds of prey who benefitted from the blood and sweat of genuine freedom fighters like Mhanda, Sadza and others who are "not given a footnote in ZANU's current line-up of 'heroes'" (Mhanda, 122). By making himself an alternative voice through the memoir, especially in Zimbabwe where history, argues Nyambi (2014: 1), "occupies an important place in socio-political discourses, [and] the dominant historical narrative [...] manifests a clear attempt by the state to conveniently eclipse certain aspects of national history that threaten the political status quo", Mhanda, "releases literature's hauntology to express the horror that history cannot convey, and that our memory struggles to contain" (Loevlie 2013: 336). He infuses his personal experiences with the autobiographical narrative genre in order to overcome the disabling experiences of war and Zanu-PF propaganda regarding the history of the struggle.

Drawing further on Patrick Wright's *A Journey Through the Ruins: The Last Days of London*, I argue that ruin and ruination in the case of Mhanda implies "human fallout" (1991: 12), especially in a political environment where patriotic history is told and shaped from the point of view of the ruling and powerful elite. His political memoir is thus a jeremiad against patriotic history in true Gothic fashion aimed at haunting people who have ruined Zimbabwe, its history, economy and people, and left it to the vagaries of corrupt politicians. This concurs with Christine Boyer's argument that

we need to establish counter-memories, resisting the dominant coding images and representations.... We are compelled to create new memory walks [...], new maps that help us to resist and subvert the all-too-programmed and enveloping messages of our [patriotic history]. (1996: 28–9)

Without a doubt, Mhanda is forging counter-memories of the history of the struggle as he experienced it. This new memory, the micro-narrative, which directly challenges grand-narratives and re-casts the popularized history of the struggle has a haunting effect that resists the regimented history of Zanu-PF, and has the potential to emerge and become dominant grand-narratives at some point. We have to understand that by writing and fighting against the grain and spirit of patriotic history, that which always wants to order and regiment the life and trajectory that Zimbabwean history follows, Mhanda is essentially supernaturalising the self. He turns himself into a super-historian of the struggle who writes from personal

experience. This gives his personal micro-narrative narrative an aura and potential to swallow macro-narratives. The song of betrayal that Mhanda is singing here is now dominant in Zimbabwe's historiography.

We might as well borrow from Jean-Michel Rabate's (1996: xviii) argument on the forgetfulness of modern philosophy, and submit that the Zanu-PF discourse and jargon of 'authenticity' "has always attempted to bury [its] irrational [and insignificant] *Other* in some neat crypt, forgetting that it would thereby lead to further ghostly reappearitions". Mhanda is the apparent irrational and insignificant *Other* in the eyes of Zanu-PF because he refused to show allegiance and loyalty to Mugabe. However, any efforts to bury him in some "neat crypt", arresting him on no charges ten days after independence, as well as forcing him into exile for more than a decade failed to destroy him. He is the ghostly reapparition that comes back to haunt history. Hence, the title of this section is "disqualified but not destroyed". He may not qualify to be the hero that Zanu-PF decides on, but even the demise of ZIPA could not stop him from unleashing a memoir that would tackle "a task that badly needed attention" (Chavunduka 2011: xi), that of challenging Zanu-PF's monopolization of the struggle and exposing those that hijacked the struggle but are forever ungrateful to those who sacrificed for them to take positions of leadership in Zanu-PF and government.

Conclusion

In his book *Refashioning Futures: Criticism after Post-coloniality*, David Scott talks about dehistoricising history and avers that "the shape of the past ought to guarantee the shape of the present" (1999: 94). Conversely, Scott is talking about the symbiotic relationship between the past and the present, and admitting that the past will always have an effect on the present. Similarly, in the current chapter, I embarked on examining a meticulously exhaustive exercise in historical reconstruction. Focus has been on how Joshua Nkomo in *The Story of My Life* and Wilfred Mhanda in *Memories of a Freedom Fighter* reconstructed the self against the back drop of political onslaught on their identities and histories aimed at creating ruins of them. I traced how the tactics of ruin and ruination used by the colonialists against Black Nationalists are similar to the systematic methods of disregard, decimation and destruction applied by the independent government of Robert Mugabe.

Central to my reading of Nkomo's and Mhanda's memoirs was less the history they so masterfully accomplish than the historiographical narrative strategies of reconstructing the

self that inform the two books. Consequently, the question I was grappling to answer was whether hauntology and spectrality are part and parcel of the process of reconstructing the self in *The Story of My Life* and *Memories of a Freedom Fighter*. What comes out clearly is that in the two memoirs, the past is being mobilized and deployed as the guarantee of one's claims about the self in the present. Essentially, the past is represented as the spectre that continually haunts the present. Through reconstruction of the self, we see that the authority of the past has great influence in the present.

That the two memoirs were written at strategic moments in the lives of the memoirists is telling. Nkomo wrote his memoir in exile at a time when his future in Zimbabwean politics was uncertain. The memoir then served as a permanent record of his political life which was dedicated to ensuring freedom and justice for all regardless of race or ethnic group. He thus presents a narrative that reclaims his "Father Zimbabwe" tag. Mhanda on the other hand wrote at a time when his political career had waned completely – three years before his death on 28 May 2014. His memoir is a direct challenge to patriotic history. It invokes and exhumes the metaphorical 'bones' of the liberation struggle in order to evoke the haunting ghostly image and name of ZIPA. This gives his memoir an aura of spectrality that haunts Zanu-PF narratives of the struggle. Conclusively, in both Joshua Nkomo's and Wilfred Mhanda's memoirs, there is fetishisation of the self which projects the memoir as a form of power to cause ruin and ruination of the memoirist's adversaries while reconstructing the battered image of the self.

CHAPTER 7: TRANSFORMING LIVES LIVED TO LIVES TOLD

Conclusion

The purpose of this study has been to critically examine the strategic uses of narrative in constructing and representing the self and other in Zimbabwe's political autobiographies from 1972 to 2011. I analysed the changing representations of the self and other and examined the range of narrative strategies used by Zimbabwean political autobiographers of different races, gender, ethnic groups and political persuasions. In particular, I considered how these narrative strategies bear upon questions of history and politics in Zimbabwe. To adapt Muponde's (2015: 1–10) formulations of methodological strategies on his study of Zimbabwe's childhood, I presented the argument that the ways in which narrative has been strategically used in selected political autobiographies to construct the self and other make it possible for one to see these autobiographies as a contested terrain, one in which the larger political tensions and conflicts of the society manifest themselves. Consequently, my study sought to read the political history of Zimbabwe through the narrative strategies used in selected political autobiographies.

The study is not a total account of Zimbabwean political autobiographies. This can be seen from the small number of texts used and selected narrative strategies and thematics analysed, namely authentication, literary and political patronage, narcissistic rage and historical recurrence, erasure, palimpsest and the authority of presence, and hauntology and spectrality. Through these narrative strategies and thematics, the self and other are accorded a central role in the socio-political and economic history of Zimbabwe. Not only are the self and other strategically portrayed as centers of narrative gravity, the subject and object, the narrated and narrator but also “a tool for the construction of a wide variety of [politically] and historically specific sets of ideas and philosophies” (c.f. Muponde 2005: 259). Therefore, the imagining of the self and other in Zimbabwe's political autobiographies is tangled in the political history of the nation. The self and other are figured as contested sites, continually contesting the discursive spaces of memory whose continual disruption, reconstruction and reshaping are captured in Zimbabwe's political autobiographies. (c.f. Muponde 2015)

What is discernible in this study is the criticality of plurality, diversity and contestation in the representation of the self and other and the ingress of narrative strategies used to construct and represent the same in Zimbabwe's political autobiographies. Thus, the study has

identified five distinctly contradictory and yet overlapping thematic frames and tendencies within which “complementary and contradictory diversity of the images and [constructions] of the [self and other] I explore can be appreciated” (c.f. Muponde 2015: 7). These, have been summarized above as follows: (1) authentication as a narrative strategy when one is writing against the official grain in a colonial setting; (2) literary and political patronage in the creation and writing of political autobiographical narratives as projects; (3) the deployment of narcissistic rage and historical recurrence as narrative and thematic tools in defense of the self; (4) the uses of erasure and palimpsest, the authority of presence and converging voices by influential minority whites to deconstruct and reconstruct narratives and histories of the liberation struggle; and (5) hauntology and spectrality as narrative strategies of resisting ruin and ruination. These seemingly different thematic frames are, nonetheless, complementary and demonstrate the interconnectedness of the narrative strategies used in the construction and representation of the self and other in selected political autobiographies (c.f. Muponde 2015). The five thematic frames also have a bearing on the way my study is structured. Each chapter in this study has drawn from one of these thematic and narrative tendencies.

While Chapter 1 sets the tone and thrust of my argument by defining the area of investigation, which is the machinery of autobiographies in Zimbabwe, tracing the trajectory of political autobiographies through different phases in Zimbabwean history thus highlighting their utilitarian nature, and outlining the thematic frames in which I locate the structure of the whole study, Chapter 2, analyses how authentication is used as a narrative (literary) and political strategy in *An Ill-fated People: Zimbabwe before and after Rhodes* and *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe*. I suggested different ways in which authentication is used by Vambe – who wrote his memoirs while in exile – not only as a way of seeking approval and recognition as the authentic and reliable writer of the life story of the VaShawasha people but also as the hegemonic narrative of cultural purity subverting the colonial metanarrative (Gilfillan 1995: 241). The analysis of Vambe’s two memoirs offers insights into life through time in Zimbabwe. What comes out clearly is the delicate relationship between the writer and reader, across racial boundaries; and the significance of the literary politics of patronage. The Vambe’s memoirs bring out the idea of the machinery of autobiography through Vambe’s strategic choice of whites to endorse his stories, even though he (Vambe) may be (re)contesting the colonial narratives produced by the same whites. Through Vambe’s writing strategy of authentication, we begin to see complex notions of book production and

circulation, especially where life stories are concerned. Therefore, authentication strategy involving the mediation of white voices gives Vambe's memoirs narrative power which "reveals a matrix of power that presumes the materiality of color and the constructedness of race as social opposites" (Eversley 2004: xi).

In what appears to be an ironic twist of circumstances, I also demonstrated in Chapter 5, how Judith Todd, a one-time authenticator of Lawrence Vambe's narrative, had to also use converging and collaborative voices of prominent black personalities to authenticate her life narrative. This happened at a time when her family name was facing the threat of extinguishment and extinction from the history of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe. Only the converging and collaborative voices of Zanu-PF loyalists, Aeneas Chigwedere and Willie Musarurwa, could save the Todd name from permanent deletion by authenticating their invaluable contribution and emplacing the name Todd to the history of Zimbabwe. Yet, Judith Todd's authentication documents – a eulogy and a tribute – unlike Lawrence Vambe's – foreword documents – are occasion-specific. They were delivered at two antithetical events, a funeral and a birthday, and are thus documents that celebrate the lives of Judith Todd's parents.

However, I also argued that Vambe is not a passive actor in this authentication drama. Rather, he claims his authority of voice and authenticity through nostalgia and romanticism as purposeful narrative strategies for self-authentication. The narrative deployment (Kraus 2006) of nostalgia and romanticism as self-authentication strategies positions Vambe as a participant observer in and of his Shona community, hence he draws his authority from presence. In this case self-authentication allows Vambe's memoirs *An Ill-fated People: Zimbabwe before and after Rhodes* and *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* to have an oppositional function in the context of colonialism. This speaks to the thrust of this study, which is, the machinery of autobiography. Right from the beginning, we see different ways of how narrative is strategically deployed to construct and represent the self and other. The strategy for narrative deployment is context-related. In the case of Vambe, the colonial context provided little if any opportunities for his voice to be heard. Authentication, therefore, should not be seen as a sign of weakness. Rather, it is strength, a narrative strategy that allowed him to negotiate through political and racial spaces in order for his voice to be heard.

From the practice of authentication by others and the authors' self-authentication, as is the case with Lawrence Vambe and Judith Todd, my discussion explored another strategy used by autobiographers to not only authenticate their life narratives but to even create them. This involves the patron's engagement of a credible author to write his/her life narrative, which gives rise to the concept and practice of patronage of authorship in autobiographical writing. Thus, *A Lifetime of Struggle* and *At the Deep End*, as discussed in Chapter 3, are political narratives that, through patronage of authorship, manifest the machinery of political autobiographies as political weapons in Zimbabwe. Created and constructed through mutual hosting and hoisting of the patrons and their authors, the two narratives display the relationships of complicit collaboration between patrons and authors with the characteristic aim of political patronage; that of "influencing votes, enhancing the reputation of the patron, or disseminating political policies", and making a political or social statement (Gold 1982: xv). I have argued that the literary and political strategy of patronage of authorship in *A Lifetime of Struggle* and *At the Deep End* marks the two political narratives as pre-mortem and post-mortem documentations and archives of the patrons' lives on Zimbabwe's political landscape. They are personal archives of lives destined for and scarred by struggle.

What came out clearly is that the stories of Tekere and Tsvangirai as conceived in the two memoirs were told according to the social and political agendas of the patrons and their authors. While the authors who penned them were used purely as political tools for the two patrons, they were not merely praise singers out to scribble flattering dedications for their patrons. Instead, they are instruments of propaganda concerned with promoting specific cultural, political and moral values of their patrons and fostering a particular climate of opinion. Thus, the conception of the machinery of political autobiographies in Zimbabwean politics finds fulfilment through Tekere and Tsvangirai's political memoirs. I also observed that patronage of authorship is an extended way and strategy of authenticating a narrative. By engaging educated and 'credible' authors such as Mandaza and Bango, who give the stamp of that most problematic of concepts 'authenticity' to their life narratives (Murphy 2001), Tekere and Tsvangirai have strategically deployed patronage of authorship as a way of giving credibility to their narratives. Thus there is a close link between authentication as discussed in Chapter 2 and literary patronage, which also is an act of authentication explored in chapter 3. Notably, the distinction in the kind of patronage practiced by Tekere and Tsvangirai is that of degree of complicit collaboration between the patron and author. I observed that in the

exercise of patronage of authorship, Tekere and Mandaza overtly enjoy mutual hosting and hoisting, which I find missing in Tsvangirai and Bango's patronage. Thus, for Tekere and Mandaza, there is no definitive position regarding who is the patron and the author. In the case of Tsvangirai and Bango, there is no doubting that Tsvangirai is the patron and Bango is the paraclete.

The conceptualization of the memoir as a personal archive of a life destined for and scarred by struggle, which I mentioned above, was expounded in Chapter 4, through the discussion of how historical recurrence as a narrative strategy and thematic concern betrays narcissistic rage in Ian Smith's and Geoffrey Nyarota's memoirs. I argued that the way narcissistic rage and historical recurrence as conjunctive stylistic methods and motifs are purposefully deployed in *The Great Betrayal* and *Against the Grain* shows that deep underneath the two memoirists and their memoirs, there is a fear gripping and relentless that at the end of life's labours, they are just like all of us – mortal; fear that history will either forget them or create monsters of them. I also demonstrated how by offering a nuanced discussion of this conjunctive motif of historical recurrence and narcissistic rage, we enhance our understanding of the shifting ideologies in a Zimbabwe that is replete with traumatized political history. In the face of a grand anti-climax to the denouement of their professional and political careers, especially ones characterized by humiliation, shame and guilt as a result of recurrent betrayal, Nyarota and Smith choose to resurrect through memoir writing. We are again alerted to the concept of the machinery of autobiography in Zimbabwean politics.

There is, however, another version of historical recurrence that manifest in Nkomo and Mhanda's memoirs discussed in chapter 6, when the memoirists reconstruct the self against the back drop of political onslaught on their identities and histories aimed at creating ruins of them. Evidently, the tactics of ruin and ruination used by the colonialists against Black Nationalists are similar to the systematic methods of disregard, decimation and destruction applied by the independent government of Robert Mugabe's government on Nkomo and Mhanda. Even though historical recurrence is an implied motif in Nkomo and Mhanda's memoirs, and a key motif and narrative strategy in Smith and Nyarota's memoirs, these conjunctive thematic overlaps reflect the autobiographical utility in Zimbabwean politics.

The gripping and relentless fear of a grand anti-climax to the denouement of their political and professional careers displayed by Nyarota and Smith also rears its proverbial ugly head in

Judith Todd's work, discussed in Chapter 5. We witnessed the once "silenced voices" (Nyambi 2014: 1) of "the forgotten soldiers" (Lyons), especially influential minority white women resuscitating their memory of the struggle through the memoir *Through the Darkness: A Life in Zimbabwe*. I explored how Todd uses the authority of presence, her epistemic privilege, erasure and the palimpsest, and converging and collaborative voices to construct new accounts of the discourse of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe from the point of view of influential minority white women. In particular, I underscored how Todd, a white woman reshapes the discourse of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe and emplaces herself within it in order to claim a meaningful place for herself and her family in the history of this struggle. By so doing, I argued, Todd used memoir writing to re-conceive and affirm her own unique relationship to the struggle in a way that according to Hammar (2012: 216), challenges exclusion and ostensibly claims belonging through naturalizing her presence in the struggle. I also observed that even though Todd draws her authority to narrate the struggle from "presence", and enjoys epistemic privilege, which adds to the advantage of having been presently involved in the struggle, She, ironically is the "White voice" whose mediation in authenticating Lawrence Vambe was discussed in Chapter 2, who finds herself caught up in the same literary tradition of authentication, but this time being the one requiring authentication from "Black voices". She thus uses "third-person collaborators" (Fortune and Robillard 2013: 281), as a literary and narrative trope to authenticate not only her autobiographical narrative but also the role played by the Todd family in the history of Zimbabwe from the colonial to the post-independence period. I attributed this role reversal to the fact that Todd is using her political autobiography as a "corrective narrative [that] ... resists the masculinist [and nativist] realism of Zimbabwean liberationist narratives that seek to impose a censorship on interrogations of the 'official account'" (Armstrong 2015: 245). Thus, Todd's writing, underscores what Armstrong (Ibid.:245) calls "the importance of counter-narratives, 'counter-memories' to falsified accounts of history" as it relates to the struggle.

The other narrative strategy used to construct and represent the self and other in Zimbabwe's political autobiographies came out of my reading of *Nkomo: The Story of My Life* and *Dzino: Memories of a Freedom Fighter* in Chapter 6. I argued that Nkomo and Mhanda use their political memoirs to reconstruct the self from political ruin and ruination through the narrative tropes of hauntology and spectrality. The chapter is both a terminus for this study as

well as a new point of departure for future research on the strategic uses of narrative to construct and represent the self and other within the Zimbabwean political autobiographies. In Chapter 6, I argued that through massive investment in the symbolic infrastructure of pain and suffering, the memoirs of Nkomo and Mhanda embrace in them the language of “ghosts and the uncanny – or rather anachronic spectrality and hauntology” (Luckhurst 2002: 527), as a narrative strategy to reconstruct the self. I further observed that, in the face of hostile deconstruction of the self by the other, with the resultant effect of political ruin and ruination, what we have in Nkomo and Mhanda, are two political autobiographers and political figures whose self-narratives deal with ghosts, not of the dead, but ghosts of the living; something Shane McCorristine calls “phantasms of the living dead” (2010: 139 –191). They use their memoirs as sites to portray themselves as political ghosts, phantoms that cannot be done away with but whose specters will forever haunt and occupy that special place in Zimbabwe’s political history and landscape regardless of how “altered” this “terrain of [the] struggle itself” is (Scott 1999: 16). Thus in Chapter 6, the study argued that Nkomo and Mhanda’s use of narrative to construct the self is so markedly different from how authors in previous chapters have been using narrative in their political autobiographies. Hauntology and spectrality are narrative tropes that have not been deployed significantly in Zimbabwe’s political autobiographies. Thus, *The Story of my Life* and *Memories of a Freedom Fighter* depart from commonly used narrative strategies in ways that problematizes narrativity, especially as it is used in political autobiographies. Therefore, Nkomo and Mhanda’s memoirs are a good point for ending this study because they suggest and point towards possibilities of new departures in the use of narrative to construct and represent the self and other in Zimbabwe’s political autobiographies.

For instance, suggested areas of possible study that emerged from my study of Zimbabwean political autobiographies include the varied representations of family origins, chieftainship and/or royalty, spirituality and anointment as markers of one’s claim to political power and authority. These thematics offer an opportunity for the study of the political autobiography and how it goes beyond archiving of one’s political exploits and rebuttal of political opponents to include the spiritual realm and the role and influence it has when it comes to determination of leaders and leadership qualities. The probable area of interrogation would be the claim by political autobiographers studied here that leaders are born and not made. The

suggested areas for further study will also be an opportunity to extend and develop further the ideas of hauntology and spectrality that I discussed in Chapter 6.

The actual placement of each chapter in the study was thus meant to reveal a different and yet uncompleted representation of the self and other while testifying to the individual authors' ability to manipulate different narrative strategies so as to yield a varied and complex picture of the self and other in the context of Zimbabwean history and politics. From each of the thematic frames and narrative tendencies discussed in this study, there are several potential ideological and philosophical implications for political autobiographies in Zimbabwean literature and history. As personal narratives, "the lure of narrative" (Newton 1995: 16) in political autobiographies is in the way the self situates him/herself in the narrative vis-à-vis the other. Newton calls this "ethical self-situating" (Ibid.: 17). This process of self-situating, of "one telling oneself without losing oneself" (16) is the one that causes complications in political autobiographies because the ultimate end of political autobiographies is a "bleached" (Newton, 19) image of the self.

Further complications arise when the narrative trope of authentication is questioned in view of the "bleached image" of the autobiographer. Questions may be raised about the authenticity and/or inauthenticity of the bleached image that is being authenticated. Thus authentication in its diverse forms of prefaces, acknowledgements, foreword documents, collaborative voices and self- capitalization and patronage has critical gaps that provide emerging interests in Zimbabwean autobiographical scholarship as well as global theorizing on political autobiographies.

The original objectives of this study were to examine the range of narrative strategies used by selected Zimbabwean political autobiographers to construct and represent the self and other, and to reorient and broaden the direction of the criticism of Zimbabwean literature so that political autobiographical narratives can be seen as a key genre in exploring a people's history from the point of view of the self and other. What, therefore, should be said in conclusion, is that these political autobiographies as I have discussed them in my study are typically narratives of reclaiming one's life. This reclamation of the self as the center of narrative identity has been done through different but complementary narrative strategies namely, authentication, literary patronage, historical recurrence and narcissistic rage, erasure and palimpsest, the authority of presence and collaborative voices, and hauntology and

spectrality. Each narrative strategy deployed was responding to the socio-political context of its time. However, a striking revelation that came out of this study is that one is likely to end up sympathizing with the characters in chapters 2–6 if we consider the real possibility of them being converted into “political debris” by their political enemies, and/or by time. This leads me to another observation that; all the political autobiographies (save Vambe’s) point fingers at one enemy – Robert Mugabe – who has not bothered to author his own biography, as he will live by being a haunting presence in the told and lived lives of these writers, are ironically evidence of debris. This situates Zimbabwe’s political autobiographies as political weapons against the tyranny and exclusionary tendencies of the ruling elite in Zimbabwe today. Political autobiographies from Zimbabwe can thus be viewed as a productive “machine”, releasing into the public stories of those who have suffered at the hands of the colonialists and African nationalists and rescuing them from ruination and historical oblivion.

Therefore, studying the depiction of the self and other in Zimbabwean literature, in particular, political autobiographies is one way of researching the various strategies a nation chooses to shape its socio-political and economic destiny. There is therefore need to emplace political autobiographies at the center of Zimbabwe’s literature in order to fully appreciate and understand the nation from the point of view of the self and other. This will also give Zimbabwean literature a sense of completeness as national literature that has global underpinnings. In the face of the conflicted realities of postcolonial Zimbabwe, where official history is captured by a clique in the ruling class and manipulated to promote that particular clique’s agenda to the exclusion of the majority of the population, individuals who choose to write their stories will also be telling the stories of the silent majority.

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