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NEGOTIATING MEMORY AND NATION BUILDING IN NEW SOUTH AFRICAN DRAMA

BUSUYI MEKUSI

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Johannesburg, 2009

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.



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STUDENT: BUSUYI MEKUSI

25th day of February 2010

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the representation of trauma and memory in six post-Apartheid plays. The topic is explored through a treatment of the tropes of racial segregation, different forms of dispossession as well as violence. The thesis draws its inspiration from the critical and self-reflexive engagements with which South African playwrights depict the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The dramatists are concerned with the contested nature of the TRC as an experiential and historical archive. Others explore the idea of disputed and seemingly elusive notions of truth (from the embodied to the forensic). Through the unpacking of the TRC, as reflected in three of the plays, the thesis argues that apart from the idea of an absolute or forensic truth, the TRC is also characterised by the repression of truth. Furthermore, there is a consideration of debates around amnesty, justice, and reparations.

Underpinning the politics and representations of trauma and memory, the thesis also interrogates the concomitant explorations and implications of identity and citizenship in the dramas. In the experience of violence, subjugation and exile, the characters in the dramas wrestle with the physical and psychological implications of their lived experiences. This creates anxieties around notions of self and community whether at home or in exile and such representations foreground the centrality of memory in identity construction. All these complex personal and social challenges are further exacerbated by the presence of endemic violence against women and children as well as that of rampart crime. The thesis, therefore, explores the negotiation of memory and identity in relation to how trauma could be mitigated or healing could be attained. The thesis substantially blurs the orthodox lines of differentiation between race and class, but emphasises the centrality of the individual or self in recent post-Apartheid engagements.

KEYWORDS: Post-Apartheid Drama, Transition, Nation-Building, Memory, Identity, 'Self' and 'Other', New Historicism, Crime and Corruption, Public Space.

DEDICATION

Dedicated to all the victims of irreconcilable divisions and pervasive tyranny.

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CHAPTER ONE

A NATION IN TRANSITION: POST-APARTHEID DRAMA AND ENGAGEMENTS WITH MEMORY, EXILE AND IDENTITY

Transition, as divergent as its deployment can be in relation to its semantic standing, is indicative of a movement away from the status quo. However, in political exigencies it, more often than not, encapsulates the instances of "regime change or congressional redistricting" (Ellen Goldring, 2003:474). Goldring (2003:475) provides further exposition where she states, "a transition implies a passage from one state, place, or stage to another", as well as that interval that witnesses alteration from one state to another. Goldring enthuses that transition is predicated on the fulcrum of the past as well as the expediency of a movement "to a future state of affairs". As a result, "a key to transition is bridging from the old, a process of 'unmaking', or dismantling while looking toward the new, a process of 'remaking' and rebuilding" (Goldring, 2003:474). Just as in the case of the South African socio-political realities, for transition to become desirable there is usually a predisposition towards what Goldring (2003:474) calls "organizational messiness", that is "a condition one expects to experience before new order can emerge". Thus stated, the implicative trend of the obstinacy of the Apartheid regime and the potent belligerence of those various oppositions to it were reinforced, precipitating an era of servitude, unrest, and general insecurity. The anomalies of the situation acted undeniably as a catalyst for change and led dichotomies to strike a compromise which would define the atmosphere for all racial interactions, and provide equality to all citizens. Characterised by racial differentiation, inequality, and cogent oppression, during the anomalous Apartheid era, constructs such as oneness, racial and citizenship equality, fairness and freedom, found free expression in the form of what Goldring (2003:474-475) terms "mimetic isomorphism". Goldring continues that this "provides a picture, a mental map, of the transition completed and helps the leader develop an image of the end state in order to fashion the process of transition". Therefore, the responsibility of charting a route out of the predicament rested on key political figures, in particular representatives of the National Party (NP) and the African National Congress (ANC). A process of transition rested on the need to negotiate for a new South Africa and was undertaken by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which undertook the

interrogation of the socio-political past of the South African nation under the Apartheid government. The spirit and letter of the TRC, however, have often been critiqued as analogous to what Goldring (2003:475) refers to as "exchange theory", which sees leaders drawing "heavily upon their own agency or sense of position in a hierarchy, as well as their own social networks to provide directions". In an attempt to attain a desired future of political virility, equality of citizenship and other such preoccupations, there has been a conscious effort to contrive possibilities which include "fascination with diversity", "freedom in negotiating identity", and "threatening implications of power" (Pumla Gqola, 2000:6-7). In relation to this, the transition of South Africa as dramatised in the dramas researched here seems "to invite reflections on the past and considerations of possible new directions" (Bhekizizwe Peterson, 1995:573).

Pre and Post 1994 South African Drama and Thematic Continuities and Discontinuities

South African literature in the early 21st century, as with other regional literature on the African continent, is still engrossed in a definition of what should form its preoccupation within the multiple themes and aesthetics at its disposal. This furthers the perspective and controversies around potency in creativity and the creative quality and political efficacy of art that extended to the nineties. The post-Apartheid period in South Africa has come to be a time of engaging with the various dynamics of racial integration, seeking to replace the unviable ideological categories of the Apartheid white/black polarity. Consequently, this development "has provoked the characteristic South African literary blend of hope, disillusion, and despair", with the literature and its derivatives tending to "amuse, console, horrify, and electrify" people "into moments of exuberance and despair" (Christopher Heywood, 2004:21). The crystallisation of literature into the above-mentioned forms of engagement is an expression of the racial mixing that came into being principally as a result of colonial expenditures and other forms of migration. The demise of Apartheid marks another watershed in the forms of engagement drama makes with the South African state. Loren Kruger (1999:191), in appraising the new dispensation, designated it as "post-anti-apartheid", which is, according to her, a "tentative description of theatre and society in South Africa at the end of the twentieth century". Starting from the

engagement with history and the upheavals of transition, reconciliation, reconstruction and development, to the hybridisation in western and South African theatrical nuances, Kruger (1999:192) further submits that "the 1990s plays depict a world of lawlessness and robber capitalism, in which race no longer determines power and a sense of community remains elusive".

Whatever description is given to this phase of theatre, it is obvious that the historical present maintains an inconsistent contiguity with the past, leading drama to concentrate no longer on Apartheid but on new realities such as forgiveness and reconciliation, violent crime and rape, corruption, exile experience and the stultification of culture(s), which form significant part of the remains of the Apartheid era. Not only are these realities reflective of the burdens of the past, there is a general drive towards subjecting them to frequent conversation. Other dramatic concerns include the general sense of mistrust and suspicion that taints interactions across racial and class boundaries in the new South Africa. All these elements have the capacity to alter cohesion, precipitate political instability and impede rapid development. Reflecting on the evolving state of drama, Mark Fleishman (2001:98) has written that "more recent trends seem to point towards a theatre of smaller narratives which is more personal, more reflective of the ambiguities and contradictions which are at the heart of new society". It has become necessary, therefore, for these overt features to be interrogated, as part of the ongoing endeavour to attain a nation of equality and freedom that is indeed cohesive, non-racial, and non-sexist.

While 1994 marked a turning point for the realisation of freedom and equality in South Africa, the socio-political spaces in the years before then were fraught with contestations between the state and individuals, groups and socio-cultural and political affiliates, who resisted the repressive and dehumanising policies of the state. Under these circumstances, the Apartheid-state "became the main trope from which African theatre teased out its stark thematic battles between good and evil, victims and torturers, the haves and the have-nots", resulting in "the cataclysmic 'theatre of power' … staged in both the acts of repression and resistance …" (Bhekizizwe Peterson, 1995:574). New literature in South Africa has consistently commented on the socio-political conditions of the majority black South Africans who were specifically targeted by the Apartheid regime, and who suffered the various acts of

racial segregation implemented by the white led government. Art has been used in this situation in rehearsing, narrating and performing senses of self and experience, as well as exploring the bites of history. It is an instrument "used "to enact questions of immediate social urgency … in an otherwise politically risky environment" (Kruger, 1999:13). The nineteen eighties marked a particularly decisive moment during the multiple declarations of a state of emergency in the country. The volatile relationship between the state and opposition movements reached a crescendo as the state tried to sustain the banning, censorship and detentions – strategies devised to undermine the resolve of artists and members of other social movements calling for an end to race-driven governance in South Africa. The Congress of South African Writers (COSAW) was formed in 1987 with its members pledging to channel their creative commitment to push for the creation of a non-racial and democratic South Africa. Such decisions were predicated on their being members of that community. However, Albie Sach (1991:187) has cautioned that, in spite of his ealier support for the position that art can be seen as an instrument of struggle, a shallow and forced relationship should not be credited to both art and politics.

This is not to say that there were no pro-Apartheid writers active during the various stages of the ongoing critique of the inimical stance of the Apartheid government. Martin Orkin (1991:108) opines that such writers were situated within the ruling classes who seemed to have actively colluded, as did certain of their plays, "with state censorship, remaining entirely indifferent to current struggle within the social order". The 1970s witnessed a rise in resistance movements, most especially from militant black students who had been influenced by notable minds like Fanon, Memmi and Cabral. The formation of The South African Students' Organisation (SASO) in 1969 led to the ideological repudiation of White hegemony through the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM). The virulence of this group was underpinned by the vibrancy of Steve Biko the first president of The South African Student's Organisation and later intensified by his brutal killing. The encapsulation of the 1970s as "the beginning of South Africa's interregnum" takes its context from the Soweto riot of 16 June 1976, when school children studying under the inferior Bantu education programme protested against Afrikaans, as the medium of instruction, rejecting it as the "language of the oppressor" (Michael Chapman, 2003:329).

The cultural reinvention of blackness championed by the BCM found expression in the theatre staged in townships, which did not have conventional theatre houses.[1] This lack of "theatrical space in the townships continued until the end of the 1980s and remained for the state a primary *de facto* means of limiting and containing theatrical growth" (Martin Orkin, 1991:150). By so doing, Orkin further submits that drama performance became "for the state not only a site for overt repressive action but a theatre within which it might demonstrate its own power". Kruger has argued that the theatre of defiance[2] was not initiated by members of South African Black Theatre Union (SABTU) considering the earlier effort made by Lewis Nkosi in the writing of *The Rhythm of Violence* (1964) in exile. Kruger (1999:130-131) however, admits that although members of the Theatre Council of Natal (TECON) and the People's Experiential Theatre (PET) were tried for treason and their activities made transient by the state, "their 'theatre of determination' would set the tone for much of the theatre in the 1970s and 1980s". The theatre of this period is not without its critics, as Michael Chapman (2003:412) has expressed his disenchantment with the reduction of the 'struggle plays' of the 1970s and 1980s to a mere venting of the anger of the oppressed. He proceeds to observe that there were various "surprising shifts of perception since the unbannings and the repeal of apartheid legislation", noting that the reconstruction of post-Apartheid South Africa requires an in-depth interpretation where historical memory comes into play. Before the 1980s, specifically in the 1960s, writers had collaborated with other artists to campaign and secure the isolation of the apartheid government internationally and from across all spheres. This period saw the state putting in place more inter-racial restrictions as part of its overall drive towards racially divided society. As a result, venues, performances and audiences were officially segregated in 1965 by the Vorster government through the institutionalisation of the Group Areas Act. Another restriction that was part of the repression of the state in the 1960s was the adoption of censorship legislation into the

[1] Bhekizizwe Peterson (1990:232) submits that no single theatre was built in the townships while about 49 theatres were located in areas designated for whites. According to him, even the one that was approved to be built in Jabulani, Soweto, in 1969, never saw the light of the day. See "Apartheid and the Political Imagination in Black South African Theatre", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 2, (June, 1990), pp. 229-245. Peterson (1990:233) offers that some of the themes that were core to the Black Consciousness included "self-identification, determination and liberation".

[2] Loren Kruger (1999:130) gives a hint on the debate surrounding the distinction between theatre of protest which is "associated with the portrayal of suffering and the appeal to humanist commiseration, especially in the work of Fugard, and a more militant successor, variously called the 'theatre of resistance'" that evolved following the Soweto uprising.

Publications and Entertainment Act of 1963 (Bhekizizwe Peterson, 1990:232). The negative implication of this legislation on drama in the 1960s was seen as part of the "net of silence" that "ruthless government action" precipitated throughout the entire country (Martin Orkin, 199:108). Martin Orkin (1991:77) writes that "the history of the 1950s is full, too, of evidence of community resistance". As a result, there was an explosion of that form of theatre associated with protest and resistance.[3] During this period, theatre performances saw both story and characters employed in reflecting the human condition of blacks, particularly aiming to show the attendant negative effects of Apartheid on their lives. Andrew Horn (1999:77a) captures the dramatic trend of the 1950s succinctly as follows:

> some plays are documentary in form, others Aesopian or allegorical, and many employ an uncompromising realism. The material poverty of this theatre has led to small scale productions, designed for the ad hoc venues, relying upon the simplest of props, costumes and technical effects.

However, prior to 1965 most black performance initiatives were taken up under the umbrella of Union Artists, a company that was formed in 1955 and made up of both black and white members.[4] Specifically, the implementation of Apartheid had "an important bearing on the social and political experiences of blacks" (Peterson, 1990:231) and such a black/white collaboration was an affront to the principles of the Apartheid National Party government that attained their "parliamentary ascendancy" in 1948. As part of the developments during this period, Peterson (ibid) also posits that the historical plays of H. I. E. Dhlomo, *Dingane*, *Cetshwayo*, and *Moshoeshoe*, "show a transition towards a militant nationalism which starts to articulate the need for self-awareness and self-determination". While the 1920s saw theatre becoming an "important activity in the cultural practices of elite Africans", the trend was consolidated with the subsequent formation of the Bantu Dramatic Society in July 1932. The elite were "inclined to European dramatic tradition" and this led to the production of Olivier Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* in 1933 (Peterson, 1990:230-231). Writing about the place of theatre in 1930s, Martin Orkin (1991:22)

[3] Zakes Mda (1996:200-201), against the backdrop of the use of 'protest' as a designation for any play that is thematically political in the media, draws a distinction between it and 'the theatre of resistance'. While the former disagrees, disapproves and appeals to the conscience of the oppressor, a mournful depiction of the hopelessness in which people have found themselves, the latter addresses itself "to the oppressed with the overt aim of rallying or mobilizing the oppressed" to fight against his oppression (an agitprop).

[4] See Bhekizizwe Peterson (1990:233).

observes that Dhlomo's plays emerged during "a variety of conflicting pressures and tendencies in the production of art and culture" and concludes that drama was used during this period "on the one hand by members of the ruling classes and by an educated elite from the subordinate classes as a means of strengthening affiliation with the colonial centre". The 1920s witnessed, among other developments during that period, the emphasis placed on the need for social awareness among the subordinate classes to locate for themselves a convenient space in the emerging trajectory, and in particular "the conditions of struggle within it" (Orkin, 1991:23). Esau Mthethwe for instance formed a group in 1929 called Mthethwe Lucky Stars, which explored "indigenous themes of rural life and customs" in its drama (Orkin, 1991:23). The "dramatic, oral elements of human contact" are certainly not alien to pre-colonial South African drama (Christopher Heywood, 2004:178). However, while the different indigenous groups in South Africa held oral performances through which they gave expression to their socio-cultural dynamics, "the introduction of Africans to formal theatre in South Africa was largely due to missionary activities". This was largely used to overcome the social limitations and barriers that were inherent in a situation of difference of cultural background, worldview and language (Bhekizizwe Peterson, 1990:229). Central to the development of this form of theatre was the contact made with Europe and America. This contact led to the adaptation of certain elements offered by theatrical traditions in the works of "Symbolist, Existentialist, and Expressionist writers like Samuel Beckett and Bertolt Brecht, and others in the 'poor theatre tradition'" (Heywood, 2004:178). This process has been captured in different manners: from conglomeration to syncretism, creolisation to collaboration.[5]

Not submitting to any complacency following the demise of Apartheid, drama has continued to engage with new realities which are substantially part of the debris of the past. Memories of the burdened past "as adroit strategies of reinventing the status quo" are constantly interrogated to achieve "personal and social change, healing and redemption" (Bhekizizwe Peterson, 2009:19). Specifically, drama has been engaging with transitional elements in South Africa, such as the expiation of the past, the need

[5] Christopher B. Balme (1999:15) posits that theatrical syncretism is "the process whereby culturally heterogeneous signs and codes are merged together". Quoting Richard Schechner on South African drama, he goes on to admit that "this indigenous, hybrid theatre has become known internationally as township theatre, where 'all the varied strands, convention, tradition, and experimentation' somehow seem to get tied together in a hybrid form … but … is an international phenomenon".

for forgiveness and reconciliation, as well as an attainment of a robust national identity which reflects the strands of South Africa diversity, "under the remit of nation building" (Peterson, 2009:19). Other than the glamorous aspects of the South African transition, drama does similarly reflect the tensions characteristic of the 'interregnum', that is morbid symptoms such as crime, corruption, violence against children and women (Peterson, 2009:19). Emphasising the need for compatibility between creativity and material, social and psychological circumstances, Lekan Oyegoke (2000:9) describes post-1994 South African literature as the golden age when "the whole country undergoes mental, psychological and spiritual rebirth". Oyegoke's view is, no doubt, conceived against the backdrop of the transformation from an Apartheid past to that of a non-racial South Africa. Even though some of the thematic tropes identified above are not peculiar to the new South Africa, they are now treated based on the expectations of the new order. Following the movement away from protest literature, Eldred D. Jones (2002:vii) has posited that South African literature "must assume a wider and deeper responsibility". Whatever this anticipated deeper responsibility might be, post-apartheid drama still provides "a minimal paraphrase of life" in South Africa (Ato Quayson, 2004:46).

Selected Plays and Thematic Manifestations

Post-Apartheid South Africa has, no doubt, witnessed the production of a huge amount of literature, most especially dramas that participate in the reflection, mirroring as well as satirising, as part of the overall engagements with the South African past and the journey to 'newness'. The textual selection made in this research was informed principally by themes (rather than any conscious preconceived dynamics) that reflect the tensions between the past, present and the future and predominantly in relation to citizenship and identity. Selection was made to incorporate the work that interrogates the unsaid and that which reflects certain symptoms of morbidity in the new South Africa.[6] Consequently, nefarious manifestations such as crime, corruption, rape, betrayal, exile, and identity negotiation appear to form a large part of the interactions within the selected plays, this being considered analogous to the broader South African social-political and economic

[6] Bhekizizwe Peterson (2009:20).

situation. This is done in response to what is seen as an attempt to embark on the task of nation-building taking place under a general climate of evasiveness in relation to the past.

This research investigates how the challenging realities of the past and subsequent assumptions of transition and nation-building have been handled in post-apartheid drama. These artistic and imaginative engagements through drama are a product of certain artistic mediation. Such mediation attracted the attention of Wole Soyinka (1999:12) who writes that the "obvious limit to the most obsessed dramatist to transform public sensibilities toward the recognition of Truth", and rhetorically opines that "the poor scribbler already tainted by his fictionalizing needs" selects, distorts, and exaggerates to create effect. Soyinka further submits that the poet/writer "appropriates the voice of the people and the full burden of their memory … to execute their judgment on history and minister to the pangs of their memory" (21). This study is based on six drama texts by six different playwrights: Jane Taylor's *Ubu and the Truth Commission* (1998), John Kani's *Nothing but the Truth* (2002), Lara Foot Newton's *Tshepang: the Third Generation* (2005), Athol Fugard's *Sorrows and Rejoicings* (2002), Zakes Mda's *The Bells of Amersfoort* (2002) and Junction Avenue Theatre's *Love, Crime and Johannesburg* (2000). Overall, the texts selected for this research offer specific manifestations that are not just reflective but indicative of the events of transition, the attendant challenges of incorporating the past into the present and the haziness of the desired future.

The texts are dramatically located within the South African contexts that produced them. A central element of these contexts is the attempt to engage with the memory of the past, remitted to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), through which certain members of society were invited to attest to the vicious acts that they underwent as victims of Apartheid crimes and perpetrators called to confess their crimes. Perpetrators were expected to show certain remorse, which it was hoped would lead to forgiveness from the latter group – a process seen by the commission to contribute towards building a new South Africa. In engaging this process, this thesis observes the intrigues of recalling the memory of the past, often impacted by both deliberate and non-deliberate forms of repression. Furthermore, this thesis examines the central role played by the state – particularly in the role of an arbiter played by the

TRC – in the process of 'awarding' amnesty to perpetrators of Apartheid crimes, and the tendentious rejection of this process by Apartheid victims. With reference to the characterisation and plot devised in some of the plays studied, this thesis avers the TRC intervention as ill-conceived, not equally or adequately representing or aiding the Apartheid victims who, unlike perpetrators who benefit from amnesty for their actions, receive nothing other than the opportunity to express or voice their traumatic experiences. In some of these texts, despite the fact that forgiveness is afforded after some protractions and solidarity is attained between the violator and the violated, it is observed that openness and sincerity are needed from the two parties in order to move away from a past of imposed inequality, separation and suspicion. Furthermore, it is believed that the idea of distancing from the past would only be possible if no new attempt is made at reinventing or exhuming past violations. This is due to the effect of 'epistolary memory' that is able to be reawakened through what Thomas Butler (1989:23) calls "mnemonic bonding, one which helped us remember important personal experiences".

Furthermore, efforts are made to investigate the cancerous morbidity of societal challenges such as crime, violence (mostly against children and women) and corruption. These are seen as challenging elements whose widespread and dramatic effect on society were exacerbated during Apartheid rule. Crime, violence and corruption are conceived as a threat to smooth social transition, and thereby endangering the hoped for future of a liberated South Africa. Specifically, the research locates crime including rape, corruption, and mismanagement as prevalent elements capable of eroding newly-gained freedom. This is a development that could make of democracy a chimera, a situation found in most post-colonial African nations. Through the use of satire, the engagement that drama makes with these vices underscores the need for more thoughtful and concentrated efforts to be made in order to eradicate these systemic problems and ensure a healthier and secure socio-political and economic climate. Beyond unpacking these serious symptoms, this thesis also looks at the imperatives of identity in some of the selected plays as it affects negotiation between individual and group identities. Emphasis on identity becomes necessary due to the conscious effort being made to integrate the different racial and ethnic identities in the new South Africa and to achieve the permanent dissolution of the various racial and ethnic divides that threaten the realisation of the metaphoric

'rainbow nation'. It is argued that attempts to create exclusive identities by individuals in South Africa are a consequence of the racial plurality that defined what some 'claimed' and how others were 'named' in the past. Therefore, according to Arlene Grossberg *et al* (2006:54), in order to achieve a sense of identification that will enhance the project of a multiracial but cohesive South African nation, there must be a "loyalty that is able to transcend identities imposed by the former order and ascribed on the basis of race". This thesis locates different attempts made by characters in some of the plays to blur or transcend old racial lines or borders in the process of negotiating their identities with people from other racial backgrounds, instead of creating more unnecessary race-based complications. This is not without generating suspicion towards those from different racial enclaves. It is motivated that a degree of more openness in the new South Africa would eliminate strife, suspicion, as well as the baggage of identity and the idea of disloyalty to the ideal of a singular nation.

Drama is being used synonymously with theatre in this thesis. However, concentration is given to the selected texts as written material. The interrelatedness between drama and theatre is best understood using the idea proffered by Zodwa Motsa (2001:33) to the effect that drama is a literary text and theatre "a visual manifestation of the text via performance". Motsa concludes that "these two aspects are inextricably intertwined". The two varieties share a great interdependence that should not "shore up a hierarchised binary division that needs deconstruction …." (Simon Shepherd and Mick Wallis, 2004:3). This "vanishing binary" is similar to the intentions that informed the founding of the first drama degree in Bristol, England, which was initiated "to study drama as a living projection of a text and to tackle social problems created by rapid developments in popular dramatic entertainments" (Shepherd and Wallis, 2004:4). However, an acknowledgement must be made of the different views shared by respective scholars on whether a piece of drama should be read as a written work or viewed when put on stage. The preferences of the scholars involved are driven by preferences they advance in the support of either one of these two modes of interpretation. However, for this research, the use of scripted plays helps to curtail the challenges of having to rely on any one particular performance of each of the plays and provides the opportunity to harmonise both the aesthetic and thematic thrusts of the dramas.

Synopses of Selected Plays

Mda's *The Bells of Amersfoort* centres on Tami, a black South African, who goes into exile following her participation in the struggle for emancipation in the old South Africa. She is arrested at the point of getting married to Luthando who was also a comrade in the liberation struggle. Tami is subjected to a harrowing experience of torture and the painful memory of this haunts her during her exile in Holland. The sweet sounds of the bells of Amersfoort paradoxically come to embody these pains, as the sounds remind and refresh the memory of these depredations in Tami. Tami's decision to go into exile follows the persistent threat to her life following her refusal to deny the secret oath of the struggle and make confessions that will implicate the other comrades of the struggle. As an exile in Holland, Tami becomes lonely and withdrawn in spite of the generosity shown her by the Dutch-South Africa Solidarity Movement. This condition regresses as she becomes an alcoholic and a wanderer. Tami finds a companion in Katja who tries hard to reform her by suggesting she develop a relationship with some children in the environment by singing isiXhosa songs to entertain them. At a certain stage Tami meets Johan Van Der Bijl who later turns out to be one of the Apartheid agents that tortured her back home in South Africa. This meeting leads to huge contestations between Tami and Johan, and by extension, to a critique of the TRC. Johan, a white Afrikaner, comes to Holland, which he saw as his home until after his arrival, for spiritual rebirth after his dastardly acts as an Apartheid loyalist. Both of them later agree to collaborate in building the new South Africa. *The Bells of Amersfoor*t interrogates the ideas of exile, haunting memory, justice and forgiveness, alteration of identity and the challenges of building a new South Africa.

The second play-text, Jane Taylor's *Ubu and the Truth Commission*, is a kind of burlesque of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, based on the appropriation of Alfred Jarry's Ubu and materials from the hearings of the South African's Truth Commission. The thematic focus in the play is driven by the use of animation and puppets. Jane Taylor, in the writer's note, acknowledges that the recreation of the Commission's hearings was triggered by the way history and biography merge implicitly in the narratives of individuals at the Commission, whose personal stories are thereby promoted to the place of national narratives, and where

"such personal grief, loss, triumph and violation now stand as an account of South Africa's recent past". Describing the Commission itself as a theatre which negotiates memory through debates, William Kentridge, in the director's note, submits that *Ubu and the Truth Commission* "is a reflection on the debate rather than be the debate itself. It tries to make a sense of the memory rather than be the memory itself". Ubu, the central character in the text, is notorious for his rapacious brutality. Evidence of his disruptive and violent character begins with how he relates to his wife, Ma Ubu. He is also fond of blaming his untoward actions on Ma Ubu. The sarcasm that taints their relationship exposes the mutual lack of respect they have for each other based on the suspicion Ma Ubu has for her husband. Pa Ubu's past and present preoccupations are embodied by Brutus, the three-headed dog that acts as his instrument of brutality, and the agent used to distort or repress truth. In the face of the kind of absolute confession or full disclosure required by the TRC, Pa Ubu plans how to obliterate the past by destroying record of his past deeds. Pa Ubu denies his past actions undertaken together with Niles, his foot-soldier, who is then punished for Pa Ubu's misdeeds. However, towards the end of the play and after the ritual cleansing sought in the blood of the lamb, typifying the blood of Jesus, Pa Ubu freezes when overwhelmed by the presence of the masses. A breeze experienced in the voyage at the end of the play becomes a symbol of transition into a new world. Pa Ubu observes that their boat travels with miraculous speed but has fears about the possibility of capsizing. The journey to the new world allows for the admission of past perpetrators of evils represented in Niles, the crocodile, who requests to know whether there is a place for him on board. Following his accommodation on board, the trio of Pa Ubu, Ma Ubu and Niles agree amongst themselves that what is needed is: "a fresh start, a clean slate and a bright future".

Junction Avenue Theatre Company's *Love, Crime and Johannesburg* is a re-creation of some of the prevailing challenges in the new South Africa, most especially how the cosmopolitan city of Johannesburg is bedevilled with crime and threatened by corruption. However, it also dwells on the intrigues of love. The play, in an eclectic manner, interrogates numerous manifestations of the present based on the perceived connection they have with the past. It goes further in evaluating what are seen to be significant successes as well as a certain overarching disillusionment. The story centres on Jimmy 'Longlegs' Magane, a poet of the struggle against Apartheid, who is

accused of being involved in the heists carried out on banks owned by some of the comrades of the struggle. He is arrested and attempts to secure his freedom using the influence of his father-in-law to be, Bokkie Levine, and his old compatriots, Queenie Dlamini, the new Chief of Police, Lewis Matome, the new Chairman of the Bank, and Bones Shibambo, a gangster from Alexandra Township and surrogate father and source of inspiration to Jimmy. Jimmy is in love with two women, Lulu Levine, a white South African, and Bibi Khuswayo, a black South African. Jimmy is arrested and has the opportunity to escape to Swaziland but chooses to go into hiding in a Bruma Lake hotel along with his girlfriend, Bibi. He is rearrested and given a life sentence but is subsequently released following the granting of amnesty to various gangsters, politicians, criminals and businessmen on the occasion of the inauguration of the third President of the Democratic Republic of South Africa. Other than the concentration on individual personal interactions, the play makes a statement about infrastructural decay in the new South Africa.

Sorrows and Rejoicings is one of the post-Apartheid plays of Fugard where focus has been shifted from an open and acerbic criticism of the Apartheid regime following its demise. However, it should be pointed out that this postness does not exclude the old regime as some of its manifestations are also artistically reconstructed in this work. The story is about a man, Dawid Olivier and his wife Allison, his mistress Marta and Marta's daughter, Rebecca. Dawid, a poet and social activist, gets caught in the hunt for freedom fighters by the Apartheid government and escapes into exile, along with many others, on a one-way exit permit. To Dawid, the opportunity to travel to England will afford him the space and sense of freedom that he has lost back home. This he articulates saying that England will give him back his voice. He pursues the desire to have his creative work celebrated globally until he suffers from an attack of leukaemia and becomes a dejected alcoholic. The initial excitement Dawid feels towards resuscitating his creative spirit for writing in London begins to diminish following the sense of loss and detachment he feels as a result of his separation and dislocation from home. As his home, Dawid's love and attachment to the Karoo landscape in South Africa shapes his activities and perceptions. He desires a change in this place, hoping for a space that promises better opportunities for Rebecca and the other Karoo youth. In spite of the imperfect social landscape of the Karoo, Dawid remains tied to it emotionally. This love for the Karoo culminates in the open request

he makes of Allison not to bury him in London when he dies, but that he should be taken back home to be buried beside his parents. Allison, who used to loathe the village for being parochial when compared to England, belatedly finds herself able to appreciate it after Dawid's death. Although Dawid obtains his wish to be buried back home, this is only attained after returning as an outcast to his community. The play touches on racial tensions, most especially those between white and coloured people, as well as unreciprocated overtures made by Dawid.

Lara Foot Newton's *Tshepang: the Third Testament* fictionalises one of the morbid occurrences and challenges of post-Apartheid South Africa, that of violent rape, and specifically here, the rape of infants. Newton reconstructs this endemic social ill in this text using fictional place, characters and events. The entire story is related by Simon, who performs all the characters, except for Ruth, whose baby (referred to as Tshepang or Siesie) is raped in the play. Through moments of delirium caused by debilitating memories, Simon reveals the inability of people to take action in the wake of the rape of baby Siesie, whose violation is in fact interpreted to be a beacon of hope by the community in the play. The play implicates the people of this community in a form of moral degeneration without necessarily blaming individuals directly. It examines the place of history and its consequences in the contemporary society, and attempts to link abuse to poverty, unemployment and other social ills. The community amongst which the play is set is portrayed as a kind of void, a social space where nothing seems to happen. It is a place of oblivion and hopelessness. The sexual violation of individuals in the present is seen as a product of the general debasements of the past. The play uses biblical allegories that foreground the engagement the playwright makes with the central themes of rape, violence, silence and inaction.

The last play is John Kani's *Nothing but the Truth*. It concerns itself with sibling rivalry, exile, memory, identity, reconciliation and justice. The text begins with the story of a man, Sipho, during the early days of black economic empowerment. He has high hopes of becoming the next librarian in a government library and is acknowledged for his diligence and professional efficiency. This dream is, however, threatened by his advanced age. His only daughter, Thando, works as a secretary for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The TRC process is subjected to severe criticism by both Sipho and Mandisa, his niece, who would rather see past violators of

human rights made to face justice. Sipho is painfully disillusioned as a result of the killing of his son, Luvuyo, by a white policeman. Looking at this incident in relation to the wider spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation, Sipho believes that unpunished deeds would breed more hatred and the desire for retaliation. The play engages with the tensions that taint the domestic relationship of Sipho and his late brother, Themba, who eventually goes into exile because of his anti-Apartheid activities, as well as those relationships which occur across racial lines, as typified by Sipho's revulsion for the white policeman that is responsible for the death of his son. After the apologies Mandisa proffers on behalf of her father, Sipho forgives his brother Themba, whilst becoming conciliatory about how to forge ahead with past 'enemies' and continued marginilisation in the new South Africa.

The South African Past and its Implications for the Present

The continued relevance of the past in the present is reflected throughout these plays, and the South African nation has continually engaged with the past because of its various legacies and implications in the present and for the future. Even though post-Apartheid drama is believed to have taken a departure from the heavy reliance of theatre on the material conditions precipitated by the Apartheid rule – mostly the unacceptable situation of the black majority – drama in the new South Africa is still committed to reflecting some of the negative elements that spilled over into the new order from the Apartheid past. In an attempt to deal with abominations carried over from the past, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was fashioned as a comprehensive strategy to revisit the past and envision a new state/nation. One might argue, therefore, that the negotiated transition during the end of Apartheid led directly to the establishment of the South African TRC. The need to reach a truce by both the ANC-led liberation fighters and the apartheid government came after the realisation that compromise was inevitable. Neither party achieved victory. A concessionary approach was adopted to form a synergy between the representatives of the National Party (NP) and the Africa National Congress (ANC). This resulted in a transitional government putting into place structures that would guarantee an all-inclusive government and citizenship. Efforts were also made to provide some protection for members from both sides whose politically motivated activities under Apartheid left them at risk in the new dispensation. This process has been criticised for placing too

much focus on how to evolve a new form of nationalism and citizenship at the expense of reflecting on the traumatic conditions or experiences of individuals. Some of the views shared by Richard Wilson (2001) are of relevance here. Looking at the emergence of a new hegemony in the process of negotiating the new South Africa, Wilson (2001:xvi) observes that "in South Africa, human rights talk became ever more compromised as it was dragooned by an emergent bureaucratic elite into the service of nation-building". As a result of this, Wilson further states that "the constitution and subsequent legislation deprived victims of their right to justice and retributive justice was defined as 'un-African' by some, such as former Archbishop Desmond Tutu" (xvi). Tutu's role as the chairman of the Truth Commission was crucial to the trajectory of the commission, as he brought to bear his religious ideals within it. Wilson holds that, in the opinion of Tutu, "retributive justice is largely Western. The African understanding is far more – not so much to punish as to redress or restore a balance that has been knocked askew" (11). Much as it may be commendable for Archbishop Tutu to maintain the ideal that Africans should avoid retribution, it is questioned as to whether the process of securing restoration and redress can be said to be complete if devoid of punishment.[7] Undoubtedly, any attempt to regain balance following a distortion of past events put forward by a perpetrator will ultimately be painful to them as it will amount to a rupturing of their familiar life style.

The TRC was to reopen and discuss the 'silences' of the apartheid past, thereby giving a voice to those who were hitherto denied the privilege of an audience in the past. There is to date a huge amount of literature on the South African TRC. Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee (1998:1) have written that they see the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) as an event aimed at capturing the South African imagination, submitting that the commission was meant to "delve into South Africa's grim past", that "the records of the hearings of the TRC are the repository of South African memory". The testimonies made at the TRC are therefore a form of recalled memory that allow for narrative reflection. Njabulo Ndebele (1998:20) sees this ability to reflect as "a shared social consciousness that will be the lasting legacy of the

[7] Wilson (2001:228), drawing from the statutes contained in international human rights conventions posits that retributive justice dictates "punishment for offenders and just compensation for victims".

stories of the TRC". Reviewing the establishment and operation of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which he claims was desired by President Nelson Mandela and presided over by Bishop Desmond Tutu between January 1996 and July 1998, Paul Ricoeur (2004:483) opines that the responsibility of the commission was to "collect testimony, console the injured, indemnify the victims, and afford amnesty to those who confessed to committing political crimes". He argues that the focus of the commission was "understanding, not revenge" and an attempt to purge a violent past. The pardoning done by the commission is seen as an effort towards "reconciliation in its explicitly political dimension". Furthermore, Ricoeur (ibid) reflects on the impact the commission has on the victims, and avers that the commission offers benefits that are altogether "undeniable in therapeutic, moral and political terms" as "families who fought for years to know the facts were able to express their pain, vent their hatred in the presence of the offenders and before the witnesses". Given the public space offered by the commission and the participation of people from different segments of the society, a collective *catharsis* was expected to have been achieved following the recounting of violation and suffering, resulting in an examination of memory. However, this therapeutic effectiveness could be argued is difficult to attain in circumstances where the requisite truths are either not forthcoming from a perpetrator, or stated with impunity.

Consequently, both the offender and the offended were expected to make some concessions at the TRC in order to forge a future for themselves. However, the offended loses that much more as he suffers a twofold loss in the process. First, he suffers certain loss during his/her persecution and secondly, a loss in submitting to the conciliatory prescriptions of the TRC. Such a conciliatory approach was based upon and embodies the notion of 'give-and-take' that is prevalent in most African societies. However, it is also important to note that restorative justice becomes a good alternative after violent resistance by the so-called marginalised and disgruntled must have failed, as seen in the tensions and pressures occasioned by the operation of and resistance to apartheid rule in South Africa. David Jefferess (2008:136) describes the period during which the violent resistance lasted as that of an "exclusion of alternative models of social transformation". Therefore, reconciliation is core to the process of transiting from the dark days of violation to a new regime of justice and fair conduct, or what Jefferess (2008:141) calls "a great leap from resistance to liberation". Even

though Nelson Mandela unequivocally states the usefulness of violence in securing his release from Robben Island, he does however add that "violence could never be the ultimate solution to the situation in South Africa and men and women by their very nature required some kind of negotiated understanding" (Jefferess, 2008:141). Jefferess (ibid), however, makes a distinction between "mutual understanding and negotiated settlement" by submitting that the first conforms "to a notion of conflict transformation, and the latter to a notion of conflict resolution". The position of Archbishop Tutu and state representatives on the issue of reconciliation were demonstrative of the inevitable necessity of the transition required to signal the arrival of the new South Africa. It is, therefore, true that "reconciliation talk", according to Wilson (2001:226), "had as its aim the centralization of justice and the augmentation of the state's monopoly on the means of coercion". Wilson (ibid) further opines that "reconciliation talk sought to transform the lifeworld according to systemic imperatives, in order to displace revenge, retribution and physical punishment in popular views on the 'just desserts' of human rights offender". This submission does not lessen the argument made beforehand on the inevitability of punishment in an attempt to achieve restoration, most especially in view of the preference in this thesis for retributive justice as the bedrock for the restorative process to be initiated. Punishment has definite effect whether physical or otherwise. The general disregard for retributive justice at the TRC may be traced back to the principles of restorative justice. Restorative justice may then be considered indispensable. Wilson (2001:233) writes that:

> Restorative justice generally eschews criminal prosecution of offenders in favour of material and symbolic reparations for victims and the establishment of a forum for victims to tell their stories. It is generally seen as 'victim-centered' rather than oriented towards the offender, as is the case with common law. Its stated aims are the restoration of social bonds, the reaffirmation of the dignity of victims, and the rehabilitation of offenders within the community rather than punishment for offenders.

As much as it is true that the TRC provided the opportunity for victims of past violations to be heard, the overwhelming concentration on the issuance of amnesty and the attendant open clamour for reparation by some victims negate the chance at any real balance in the process. Referring to the statement made in the TRC postscript, Wilson (2001:99) avers that "for the purposes of the peace negotiations and the final political settlement to the conflict, the amnesty provisions were the only indispensable and necessary part of the process of 'national unity and reconciliation'".

However, one worrisome development is the possibility that "different groups with dissimilar agendas could then appeal to reconciliation to advance their own objectives" (Wilson, 2001:101). Apart from the drawback mentioned above, it is also argued that "there was no arena where victims and perpetrators formally came together and interacted directly and at length" (Wilson 2001:154). It is, therefore, in danger of being a situation where the elite speak above the heads of those socially and politically 'subservient' to them. As this development would in turn constitute a definite form of imposition, it might also precipitate resistance from the marginalised. Amongst several other vilifications, the greatest criticism of the TRC, both academic and popular, according to David Jefferess (2008:139-140), is that the idea of reconciliation was "marginalized by an overriding interest with how the commission produces truth about South Africa's past, and how it does so seemingly at the expense of (retributive) justice". The complexity of transition in post-Apartheid South Africa consisted of elements of reconciliation, restoration, retribution, and reparation. In order to achieve reconciliation, the official structures that were put in place recommended the avoidance of retribution while subscribing to restoration for offenders and reparation for the offended. As a result, reconciliation overshadowed all other factors as it was central to the regime of change being sought. Richard Wilson (2001:97) sees reconciliation as:

> the Trojan horse used to smuggle an unpleasant aspect of the past (that is, impunity) into the present political order, to transform political compromises into transcendental moral principles. Reconciliation structures a field of discourse in order to render commonsensical and acceptable the abjuring of legal retribution against past offenders. It creates a moral imperative which portrays retributive justice as blood-lust and 'wild justice' and as an affront to democratization and the new constitutional order.

The above notion of reconciliation is reflective of the prescriptive role the state assumes in order to precipitate the right environment for its project of a new South Africa. The devaluation of retribution and the promotion of restorative justice are seen to be done without any consideration towards the feelings of the offended parties. Wilson (ibid) further submits that "reconciliation is a quasi-religious term that became a guiding principle for new rituals of civic nationalism" (98).[8] It should be noted,

[8] Wilson (2001:97) further states that "in the transitional era, reconciliation discourse mitigated the crisis of legitimacy caused by granting amnesty to tortures and entering into a power-sharing arrangement with former apartheid leaders".

however, that this project of civic nationalism is dependent on civic responsibility from citizens. As such, the disapproval may be seen as revenge, a sense which is antithetical to the trope of retribution, and could be counter-productive. Noting that Friedrich Nietzsche is one of the few writers to accord revenge a kind of respect and dignity, Wilson (2001:159) opines that Nietzsche "recognizes its universality and undeniable force and argues that it cannot be suppressed without consequences". As touched on earlier, this explains those places where disenchantment is expressed by victims or relations of victims of past tortures and killings. It might, therefore, be plausible to agree with Wilson (2001:161) that "it is not unreasonable to believe that amnesty-forgiveness in fact has undermined peaceful coexistence in South Africa or at least that fair prosecution-punishment would have promoted it just as well or better". Even though the convocation of the TRC was expected to provide a holistic resolution to the continuing presence of the Apartheid past, there exists a certain amount of disaffection both directly and indirectly linked with the prejudicial past. Such disenchantments are found in those domains where the past is addressed and the present refigured. The plays selected for this research therefore deal with some of the points where the 'closing' past and the unfolding present can be found. The discussions on the activities of the TRC and the attendant consequences thereof are taken further in the chapters.

Although the South African TRC enhances the retention of the memory of the past in the archival documentation of the hearings of the commission, the amnesty granted to perpetrators of past crimes has, in the estimation of Ricoeur (2004), "taken over the value of amnesia" (451). Forgetting and forgiving are central elements to the activities of the TRC. The former, which is analogous to amnesia, establishes the platform for the enactment of the latter, forgiving, which is tantamount to pardon or amnesty. The institutionalised form of forgetting concealed in the idea of amnesty, like that found in South Africa, is a political accomplishment seen as necessary to secure a stable transition and peace as well as a distrust free society, moving towards an enviable form of integration and cohesion. Ricoeur further describes amnesty as institutional forgetting, a political effort through which the most profound and most deeply concealed relation to the past is placed under interdict (453). In a similar vein, looking

at what he calls social amnesia, "social organization of forgetting, the rules of exclusion, suppression or repression", Peter Burke (1989:108) concludes that "amnesia is related to 'amnesty', to what used to be called 'acts of oblivion', official erasure of memories of conflict in the interests of social cohesion". Following from this, the granting of amnesty is therefore implicitly reminiscent of the idea of forgiving. Forgiving indicates an instance of violation, finding culpable and being vulnerable to a form of prescribed punishment which should be carried out by a person who has the right to do so. This, however, must have been preceded by an acknowledgement of the fault by the perpetrator, who will accept responsibility for the act in order for the individual involved to allow their forgiveness. Writing on the conditions necessary for the precipitation of forgiveness, Ricoeur states that there could be forgiveness only where we can accuse someone of something, presume him to be or declare him guilty, and that the agent could only be indicted after acts have been imputed to him and he admitted to being their author. Ricoeur goes ahead to describe being at fault as "transgressing a rule … a duty, including its recognizable consequences, that is fundamentally, a harm done to others" (Ricoeur, 2004:460-461). The above, as with reference made earlier, refers to the reactions that the outcome of the TRC generated from the victims at the hearings towards the impunity displayed by offenders. This is reflected in *The Bells of Amersfoort*, *Ubu and the Truth Commission* as well as *Nothing but the Truth*.

The readings of the commission made in these texts reveal the process of involving constricted confession. Such confessions are made amidst denials and even repressions. This process is also devoid of imputation as agents of the abusive past deny and shift the responsibility of past actions to either their former superiors or subordinates. For instance, Johan in *The Bells of Amersfoort* claims to have acted in "times of war", having being "used by the elders to fight their war" (p.150), while Pa Ubu in *Ubu and the Truth Commission* declares that he acted in a time of war and that: "These things, they were done by those above me; those below me; those beside me … I knew nothing" (p.67). Agents of violence are indicted in these texts as not accepting ownership of their actions while hiding behind a supposed political motivation for acts of violence. The emphasis seems to be on 'absolute' confession, without a corresponding accountability for their actions that could produce both indictment and contrition. Ricoeur considers this establishment of factual truth,

through the public confessions of the accused and the granting of amnesty, to have led to a situation where "the de facto immunity from their earlier crimes was transformed for them into *de jure* impunity in return for admissions without contrition" (484). The political amnesty granted by the representatives of the state, therefore, violates the conditions necessary for forgiveness like showing remorse, imputation and the consent of the victim.

Indemnifying perpetrators, as undertaken by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, is implicitly considered by some affected individuals to amount to further marginalisation. As pointed out earlier, the political compromise that provided the leeway for reconciliation was conceived based on the overall benefits it had for the country rather than on individual conditions. Arguably, the anger and dissatisfaction exhibited by victims towards the granting of amnesty to past violators as typified by Tami in *The Bells of Amersfoort* and Sipho in *Nothing but the Truth*, and the real life celebrations that followed when relatives of victims rejected the apologies of perpetrators at the TRC itself, get an explanation from the proposition made by Ricoeur (2004) to the effect that "distributing indemnities could have been satisfied without carrying the purification of memory to the extinguishing of anger, tied to the sincere request for forgiveness …". Ricoeur (2004) therefore concludes that "in this way, the amnesty granted by the competent committee did not amount to forgiveness on the part of victims, who were deprived of the satisfaction that ordinarily results from the sanction of a trial"(484). More often than not, the act of forgiving can be seen to be a religious process that dictates an unconditional pardoning of guilt by someone rightly placed to do so. However, the usurping of this responsibility by the commission takes for granted the ability of the victims to demonstrate this moral-religious obligation, notwithstanding the hurtful memories of the past. The clamours for justice by Sipho in John Kani's *Nothing but the Truth* and the request made by Tami in Zakes Mda's *The Bells of Amersfoort* to get 'something' that is in some way equal to the amnesty granted Johan, her past violator, both portray the inadequacies of the outworkings of TRC hearings.

Arguably, reparation may indeed attenuate a victim's sense of loss if correctly administered. Even though compensation itself might be seen as tantamount to commoditising forgiveness for victims and tainting the sacrifice of fallen martyrs to

the liberation process, it would surely create in the victimised the satisfaction that their violated past has engendered some positive developments in the new South Africa. Such thinking is informed by the agitation of Sipho in Kani's *Nothing but the Truth*. Both those victims that are alive and relatives of the deceased would emerge as co-beneficiaries of the 'magnanimity' of the TRC if reparations were undertaken. Forgiveness is expected to release a perpetrator from the guilt of his/her actions. Therefore, although the amnesty granted by the Commission may in broader circumstances be relevant as a platform for the political negotiation for a new South Africa, ultimately it fails to address those personal interactions needed amongst people across divides of geographical, political, economic and cultural space in post-Apartheid South Africa. The initiative of restorative justice from the government is fundamentally regarded as ruse by majority blacks, mostly past victims, who prefer pursuing retributive justice instead. It therefore follows that the impairment of the reconciliation process through what Ricouer (2004:488) refers to as the "caricature of forgiveness found in amnesty" would produce a tension that could hold the entire project of reconciliation and nation-building in jeopardy.

South Africa's Memory 'Production' and Appropriation for Regeneration

Examining the centrality of 'facts' in the activities of the TRC, Andre Brink (1998b:30) submits that "the enterprise of fiction … reaches well beyond facts: in as much as it is concerned with the real … it presumes a process through which the real is not merely represented, but imagined. What is aimed at is not a reproduction but an imagining". In search of true reconciliation, social justice is said to play a central role. Three of the plays examined in this research make use of the material properties of the TRC. Through an imaginative ingenuity, of the playwrights and their collaborators, the dramas report, critique and reinvent the TRC through the matrices of truth, confession, witnessing, forgiving, amnesty and reparation. In this way, new questions are raised and more novel possibilities evolved, far beyond that achievable by the romanticising of the state. Specifically, Chapters Two and Five present a detailed reading of the TRC, as fictionalised in two different plays. The activities of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), in particular, symbolically catalogue the different shades of torture, killing, maiming and the attendant trauma, both direct and indirect, that victims are subjected to, as well as the contestations that were raised in

view of 'prescribed' forms of forgiveness and reconciliation. Truth, as sought by the commission, could not be secured in its entirety as a result of the repression, revision and reinterpretation to which it is vulnerable. This is captured succinctly by Richard Campbell (1992:6) that "so long as we hanker after timeless truth we are doomed to scepticism, because *that* sort of truth is not attainable by historically relative mortals".

The position maintained above helps foreground the notion that the capturing of aspects of the TRC hearings as narratives contribute to the general understanding of the therapeutic nature of the creative arts. As a result, the plays add to the plethora of literatures that suggest how the new South Africa can come to terms with its challenges.[9] As a form of narrative, therefore, the mediated formulation generated could be viewed as an imperfect and unreliable version of the actual event based on what Catherine M. Cole (2004:221) calls "the murky zone between the 'truth' of the commission work and the 'untruths' of the theatre …". On a larger scale, the engagement of art and literature with the events of the Holocaust has raised some similar argument in academic discourse. An imaginative representation of the Holocaust are considered objectionable and of poor effect because of what is seen as aesthetic ornamentation that diminishes the horror and devastation found in the given pogrom. Ernst van Alphen (1997:17-18) has done incisive work on the relevance of art and literature in narrating the Holocaust. Taking a cue from the dictum of Adorno that "after Auschwitz it is barbaric to continue writing poetry", Alphen argues that representations of the Holocaust are expected to place fewer premiums on literature, but rather "the writing must be bare and realistic. Fictionalizing is taboo, while ego-documents, personal testimonies modeled on journalistic or documentary accounts, are considered to be the most appropriate genre for representing the Holocaust".

However, what literature in South Africa has done with the testimonies of the TRC is in agreement with its redemptive function at liberating citizens "from experiences of reality and history, which are apparently unbearable" (Alphen 1997:18). The dramatic texts examined in this research achieve a hybridisation of the historical and the fictional to attain what Alphen (1997:21) calls "reality effect". Alphen proceeds by

[9] Ifi Amadiume and Abdulahi An-Na'im have argued that there exists the claim that the various truth commissions were meant to checkmate the circle of violence and inscribe accurate history, and that amnesty becomes a needed instrument to secure the telling of the stories from perpetrators.

submitting that "the text as a whole does not claim that what it represents was real; rather it creates a *sense* that what it represents was real". However, the TRC does not only give people a sense of truth and accountability with regards to the harrowing events of the past, so much so that memory, according to Wole Soyinka (2000:23), "serves to preserve intimations of the infinite possibilities of such regressions of the human mind – and the dangers they spell for the harmonization goals of our world", as "both violators and victims – may enable us to anticipate or identify warning signs of impeding repetitions of such collective derelictions in our time" (22). But it meets the aim desired by Ingrid De Kok (1998:57) who posits that "the past had to meet the present through settlement, not revolution, it needed an accompanying rhetoric of how to process the future: and that process was divined as the act of nation building". Even though the conciliatory 'legislation' regarding the past put in place by the state helped to achieve a transition from minority rule to multi-racial political interactions, it has failed to appease certain individuals who felt excluded. While these disgruntled people might not be empowered enough to impact the prerogative of new dispensation, they are capable of generating quibbles that will undermine the rhetoric of 'newness' that post-Apartheid South Africa thrives on.[10]

The above is indicative of the relationship between memory and history. Memory, as much as possible, is expected to be faithful to the past or to the event it memorises. Therefore, history, according to Paul Ricoeur (2004:498), "can expand, complete, correct, even refute the testimony of the memory regarding the past; it cannot abolish it". Looking at testimonies as recognition and reconstruction of the past, Ricoeur (2004) submits that "… testimony transmits to history the energy of declarative memory. But the living word of the witness, transmuted into writing, melts away into the mass of archival documents which belong to a new paradigm …" (497).[11] In his study on the Holocaust, Lawrence L. Langer (1991:2) describes testimony as forms of remembering based on the effort made by memory to recall personally experienced

[10] Such conflicts, as mentioned in some of these chapters, are seen in the different service delivery protests and xenophobic attacks that have erupted in townships.

[11] The engagement of certain aspects of the testimonies at the hearings of the TRC by playwrights in a way helps to avoid the sweeping of certain versions of the past under the carpet. Paul Ricoeur has opined that political prose begins where vengeance ceases, if history is not to remain locked up within the deadly oscillation between eternal hatred and forgetfulness. It is further said that poetry (arts, including play/drama) helps preserve the force of non-forgetting concealed in the affliction of the past, hinting that the political rests on forgetting the unforgettable.

events whose unbroken concatenation is made impossible by the onslaught of trauma. However, Langer (1991:2) has earlier seen testimonies as "…human documents rather than merely historical ones…". The artistic imagination explored in the dramas in this study form a part of the expanded spectrum of memory that post-Apartheid South Africa seeks to positively appropriate.

Searching the Past to Rescue the Present and the Future

Memory, as a concept, offers various manifestations, some of which will be examined here in order to establish a convenient platform for our discussion. Human memory is a system of storing and retrieving information that is acquired through the senses of seeing, hearing and smelling. Alan Baddeley (1990:13) succinctly describes memories as "records of percepts". This view only brings into focus the retentive power of memory without a corresponding attention given to the retrieval process through which memory attains its relevance. Akin to the constituent structural configuration of memory mentioned above, Alan F. Collins *et al* (1993:104) posit that "memories are compilations, constructions or compositions of knowledge". In an earlier effort, Alan Baddeley (1989:35) has offered that human memory should not be seen as a single entity similar to the lung and heart but rather as "an alliance of several different systems, all of which have the capacity to take in information, store it and subsequently make it available". This position is reflective of the place of recall in the memory system. The view is further reinforced by the ability of the 'past' to encapsulate, which in turn can be extended into both the present or future when Thomas Butler (1989:13) proposes that "memory is not only what we personally experience, refine and retain (our 'core'), but also what we inherit from preceding generations, and pass on to the next". Therefore, an engagement with the past determined in the present and gesturing towards the future is somewhat venerated.[12] Although Richard Werbner (1998:3&11) sees retaining, burying, disclosing, registering, textualising and recreating memory as problematic, he, however, posits that "memory work struggles to keep traces of the past and the present alive for the case of the future". Therefore, the appropriation of the past into the present, in

[12] Thomas Butler examines the position held by the Irish playwright, Brian Friel, who argues that it is not the literal past, that is, the facts of history that shape us, but the images of the past, embodied in language, and concludes that every artistic event, its creation and reception, involves memory.

whatever form, becomes pivotal to the treatment of memory aimed at in this thesis. The first aspect of the attempt has bearing on the recording of private memory at the TRC that passes for a collective memory of the South African past, while the other is based on how individuals, as members of a group, internalise available materials for citizenship and identity engagements and negotiations.

Fundamental to this study is how memory is transgressed, exorcised and repressed, to precipitate forgiveness; all in the name of nation-building. The need to exorcise is peculiar to the victims who are plagued by the trauma of their painful past experiences while former perpetrators endeavour to suppress details of their inhumane past. These people, therefore, tend to work at cross-purposes, and such only makes the project of transformation more contentious. As a result, the textualisation of history and the reverse historicising of textual material are made in the plays under examination. These plays engaged with the intervention made by government players through the TRC[13] to memorialise and repress the past, all the while under the political imperative of evolving a new South Africa. This leads us to examine the various attempts made to parody the Truth Commission found in selected plays and the negotiations for forgiveness, forgetting, amnesty, reparation and reconciliation. Efforts are also made to interrogate the memory of exile in contrast to the experience of land and home; knowing fully that the concept of home engenders certain nostalgia while exile often leads to dislocation, frustration and personality devaluation.

Another characteristic of memory that is useful in this research is the concept of remembering itself. Remembering is an attempt to summon memories from the past into the present. Bhekizizwe Peterson (2000:222) avers that remembering is "expressive of the need to create spaces where one is able to redeem and reclaim the past, legacies of pain, suffering, and triumph in ways that transform present reality". However, the process of remembering or recall can be adverse. Apart from a psychological disorder that could impair the process of remembering, it can also be hampered by other developments like the interference caused by the dominance of

[13] Although Catherine M. Cole (2004:219-226) argues that the TRC "functioned as an instrument of psychological healing, a tribunal of public reckoning, a judicial mechanism for granting amnesty, and a symbol of the need for reparation", she, like some other observers, further submits that "The Commission was a compromise, part of the negotiated settlement by which the National Party relinquished power …" which led to the enfranchisement of majority black South Africans and the emergence of the black ruling class.

new events. The retrieval process of memory is aguably fallible, but can be enhanced in certain ways. For instance Alan Baddeley (1989:55) identifies *encoding specificity* and *context dependency* as two of the ways to achieve a positive outcome when remembering. Making reference to Tulving and John Locke, Baddeley posits that encoding specificity happens where a piece of information becomes accessible by 'feeding in' an initial fragment of what we desire to recall, while context dependency dictates that a given circumstance is best recalled under the same set of circumstances where it originally took place. Bruce M. Ross (1991:42) calls this "a recognition step invoking a principle of similarity or resemblance". Baddeley (1989:57) later submits that retrieval, then, might be problematic, "leading to failure to recall, which in turn is subject to distortion when we try to interpret our incomplete memory". Baddeley's constructive conclusion though, is that memory's "sources of fallibility are often reflections of its strength" (58). Be that as it may, it remains clear that any remembrance achieved through the South African TRC constitutes an 'excavation' capable only of providing a mere semblance of the past. Such a view conforms to the position maintained by Sarah Nuttall (1998:75) who writes, "in South Africa, the past, it sometimes seems, is being 'remade' for the purposes of current reconciliation. The wounds of the past are being opened for scrutiny, perhaps most visibly in the public sphere through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)".

Therefore, and to add to the above explications, remembering is further seen in this research as an imperfect process of retrieval. The importance of recollecting is discussed within the prescriptions of the TRC where people are made to reconstruct past events. Remembering is also treated based on the recurring trauma and disenchantment that victims of past violations still feel and the effect it has on the project of reconciliation. Other than the remembering victims achieve before the TRC, the nonchalant conduct of perpetrators has the tendency to rekindle specific experiences that may generate anger from the victims. This anger may easily be mitigated if the attitudes of perpetrators are positive towards the victims and the TRC as an umpire. Consequently, this work maintains that an exposure of past deeds, a show of remorse and penitence, forgiveness elicited from victims by recognition given to their circumstance, as well as punishment for those who are reticent in this regard would enhance the process of reconciliation. This is more desirable rather than

an attempt to repress the past or embark on claims and counter-claims of guilt and culpability.

According to events explicated in some of the texts chosen for this research, some possibilities are identified. Principal to this is the requirement for full disclosure. There exists the added impression that suppressing an aspect of the past would undermine the reconciliation being sought. Apart from this, past perpetrators should be prepared to assume responsibility for their actions and be prepared for penance. Without this victims could come to experience a desire for revenge or retaliation. Apparently, the above attitudes of both the victims and perpetrators are situated on the dynamics of the former to forget and forgive. Although deliberate forgetting is impossible, like the twin phenomenon forgiving, it is possible to choose to do so. It is postulated, therefore, that an exhibition of contrition and absolute confession by the perpetrators and the beneficiaries of the past would engender in victims the preparedness to forget and enter into negotiation on how to evolve together a social sense of accountability so sorely needed in the new South Africa.

Repression in the Memory System

One salient strategy that perpetrators rely on to distance themselves from their past actions is repression. Repression is one of the limitations that characterise the process victims undertake to remember past violations. Repression, as a phenomenon intimately associated with memory, could be analogously treated alongside remembering or recall. Repression maintains a close link with forgetting in memory discourse. While forgetting could be unnaturally induced, repression is made possible by a conscious attempt to push into the background what once occupied a dominant place in the memory system. However, it should be noted that because of the connection that exists between events stored in memory, an attempt to remember a particular event could cause the suppression of others while efforts made to suppress a certain memory might cause it to be recalled. This fluidity and interdependence between that which is remembered and that which is repressed, on the one hand and the subject on the other, are captured by Krinka Vidakovic Petrov (1989:78) when he argues that "memory implies both remembering and forgetting; it implies a choice, a discrimination between items which will be preserved and those which will be

suppressed". Baddeley (1989:58) postulates the reasonable proportion of control the normal person has over their memory when he submits that "typically we remember what is salient and important to us, and forget the trivial and irrelevant detail". This is further reinforced by Paul Ricoeur (2004:440) who opines that "the brain contributes to the recall of the useful recollection, but still more to the provisional banishment of all the others". The process of remembrance as explicated in the activities of various characters in the texts being used precedes the idea of forgetting and forgiving as well as the reconciliation requested by the TRC process. Remembrance is also central to the formation and retention of identities, most especially during exile and return. This is more so amongst the representatives of black and white South Africans who negotiate the memory of their past to construct a new form of citizenship (and identity) which is similar to the version needed for building the metaphorical 'rainbow nation'.

The alleged marginalising treatment accorded victims at the hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, most especially based on the meaning that is read to concentration on confession and amnesty, as reflected in some of the texts being studied, is viewed largely as beneficial to the perpetrators of criminal Apartheid and exposes the limitation of the process, opening it up to sharp criticism. The complex nature of forgiving and forgetting is contained in the "problematic of memory and faithfulness to the past in the former while the latter bears on "guilt and reconciliation with the past" (Paul Ricoeur, 2004:412). The engagement of Ricoeur with the phenomena of forgetting and forgiving shall dominate the focus of discussion here. Forgetting, apart from manifesting as memory impairment (distortion of memory through damage, amnesic process of aging and mortality) as mentioned earlier, is also experienced as an attack on the reliability of memory, "an attack, a weakness, a lacuna" (Ricoeur, 2004:413). This, therefore, reveals the fallibility of any representation achieved in form of memory. Forgetting, as a result, becomes a great challenge to the reliability or veracity claimed by memory. Forgetting could be achieved through the effacement of traces of memory kept in reserve. Memory traces could be inscribed on the plane of historiographical operation, impressed in the psychical schema or constructed cerebrally in the cortical order. The cortical trace symmetrical to the documentary one could be altered, effaced and destroyed, but is prevented by an archival impulse. The two forms of traces crucial to our study are the

archival and the psychical. The former describes the archival documentation in the form of the records of the TRC which accounts for the past, however imperfectly, while the latter is indicative of the images of the past individuals have internalised and which could be recalled at a later time. Instances of these are found in the testimonies of the victims in Mda's *The Bells of Amersfoort*, Kani's *Nothing but the Truth* and Taylor's *Ubu and the Truth Commission*. Forgetting as it is desired of the victimised ─ in the travesties of the TRC achieved in the aforementioned plays ─ lean towards "the idea of a reversible forgetting, even towards the idea of the unforgettable" (Ricoeur, 2004:13).

It is no surprise that the puppet witness in *Ubu*, Tami in *The Bells of Amersfoort* and Sipho in *Nothing but the Truth* struggle hard to willingly forgive, despite the requests made to that effect by the Truth Commission as re-enacted in these plays. The conversations that respective characters have with one another in these plays reflect the release of suppressed emotions characteristic of victims of past violations who have hitherto had their voices suppressed. It should be noted that despite subsequent experiences, the recollection of past happenings can still be achieved through the mnemonic recognition of elements of the past because "the past indeed appears to be stored up … under two extreme forms: on the one hand, motor mechanisms which make use of it; on the other, personal memory-images which picture all the past events …" (Ricoeur, 2004:432). To reiterate an earlier point, inscriptions occasioned by the past could be recollected based on the relevance it may have in the present. The interpolation between the phenomena of forgetting and recollection is best understood when these are evaluated side-by-side. In spite of the forgetting precipitated as a result of impediments to memory, this is overcome by the return of the forgotten past as ushered in by circumstance. Analogous to the proposition of psychoanalysts, the trauma of the victims of the haunted South African past, even though it appears inaccessible and unavailable, revisited through the advent of the TRC. This is vividly demonstrated in the emotions of those testifying and their interpreters, who went beyond an engagement with linguistic properties to dramatically reinforce the process with non-verbal manifestations. Paul Ricoeur's (2004:452) idea of forced forgetting also typifies what the TRC appears to be attempting between victims and violators. Ricoeur refers to this form of forgetting as an institutionalised one, which is only a small step away from amnesia and which he refers to as "amnestying pardon".

From Personal to Collective Memory

Another stage of memory to be examined is the interrelatedness that exists between individual memory and social or collective memory. The individual in a given community has their memory conditioned as part of fulfilling the requirements of their social development. Peter Burke's (1989) exposition on "History as Social Memory" offers good reference material in this explication. Burke (1989:98) posits that the non-objective remembering of the past achieved through histories and memories in an individual is as a result of conscious and unconscious selection, interpretation, and distortion carried out in a socially conditioned manner. Therefore, collective memory is constructed with individuals being influenced by the group in which they belong. However, it should be stated that social memory, like individual memory, is selective, leading to the realisation that memories are changeable (Burke, 1989:100). The construction and malleability of individual and collective memory is relevant to the idea of identity and citizenship formations in the emerging South Africa. Furthermore, the implicit correlation that they share with the dissolution of heterogeneous ethnic and group identities into the overarching national identity desired for the new South Africa is a point to be noted. A reiteration is further found in the view of Colin Bundy (2007:86) who holds that "nations need to control national memory, because nations keep their shape by shaping their citizens' understanding of the past". In sum, the state tries as much as possible at all times to ensure an aggregation of the various fragments of memory of its citizens. This is more specific when concerned with, for instance, the South Africa resulting from a "need to build an inclusive memory where the heroes and heroines of the past belong not to certain sectors, but to us all … Memory is identity and we cannot have a divided identity" (Hans Erik Stolten, 2007:44). However, the inclusive memory being suggested above is burdened by the fact that it cannot detach itself from the ugly details of the Apartheid past. This united memory is, therefore, illusionary considering dissonant[14] experiences of people in the past,[15] and the continuous reliance on such to achieve redress in the new South Africa.

[14] Saul Dubow (2007:51) calls this a "fragmented history and fragmentary historical consciousness".
[15] Hans Erik Stolten (2007:44) notes that while blacks are largely associated with the past of "resistance against colonisation and the freedom struggle", the same could not be said of most whites. Stolten

Ultimately, it can be inferred from both the spirit and letter of the TRC that, as an institution, it sought for cohesion between the different racial groups is South Africa, of overall benefit to the state. The great challenge in this regard is how to moderate the existing social pluralism and imbalance of opportunities, privileges and rights ascribed to citizenship, to forestall building into exclusive identities the existing sectarian identities based on race, religion, and ethnicity. Ordinarily, multiculturalism or pluralism of identities is expected not to lead to the subversion of the state since, according to Adejumobi, "… the idea of a nation-state is a plurality of nationalities bound together by a common state identity". Adejumobi further holds that "pluralism offers multiple layers of organizational participation or interaction for the individual in the state, which should enhance his citizenship qualities" (24). It should be articulated, however, that the attempt being made in post-Apartheid South Africa to correct unequal opportunities should not be viewed by the old beneficiaries as a process of exclusion but rather the entrenchment of the ideal. This is implicitly stated in the view of Marlene Roefs (2006:80) who opines that "a strong national identity might be associated with an ideal notion … which demands that all groups are treated equally or that disadvantaged groups are systematically favourably treated". This would have been easy to achieve if an acknowledgement of the guilt of the past had included the self-same imbalances that are now to be corrected. This is more so because compared to the vast majority, the new aggrieved group is minimal in number. However, the involvement of people from all spheres of life should understandably have signalled an acceptable representation of all the groups involved, ensuring active participants in the reconstruction and rebuilding exercise. Suspicion and mistrust would thereby be eliminated.

Closely linked to this are other transitional dynamics that are investigated in this research such as the idea of exile and identity, because of the central roles they play in achieving collective commitment to nation-building. This is more so in the face of the multicultural divisions that characterise the new South Africa. The interplay between citizenship, identity and exile is apparent in some of the plays used in this thesis, and provides a good space for the characters, by extension players in the unfolding South

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however warns that "having conflicting pasts is not very conducive to the building of a common, harmonious nation".

Africa, to negotiate new forms of interaction. Edward W. Said (2000:173) sees exile as "the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home". As a result, the rupturing of the relationship between the individual 'self' and the home, Said concludes, does lead to essential sadness that "can never be surmounted". The implication of this is that the belief, memory, history, myths and symbols as well as the constituent ways of living the life of the exile are altered. Kerryn Goldsworthy (1996:53) corroborates this by submitting that:

> from the coastlines of their countries and the barriers of class, right down to the skins of their bodies and the limits of the family. The boundaries of people's lives begin to change from the moment they decide to leave.

Goldsworthy's view is particularly instructive to any migrating racial group that may desire to retain the purity of its race. Viewed from another perspective, a state of exile is not limited to the physical dislocations and disruptions the individual experiences, but includes the disorientation and fragmentation the agent undergoes psychically within the socio-political temporality where s/he functions. The aggregation of identities in post-Apartheid South Africa is very desirable considering the fact that racial purity was the crux of the institutionalisation of the policy of racial segregation. The imperative of harnessing culture and identity in the South African nation is reinforced by the view of Robert B. Mattes (1999:154) who argues that "the main challenge to stable democracy is … the inability to form a consensus around a common national identity".

Identity as a psychosocial engagement brings to play the role of the agent or an individual and the spatiality where they are influenced by other social, political, economic and historical processes (Elirea Bornman, 1999:46). The internalisation of the memory of the external environment leads to the construction of the 'self', achieved, often times, based on a comparison with the 'other'. However, identity cannot be constructed in an immutable way as it gets increasingly fragmented and fractured as a result of the fluidity that characterises cultural space, particularly considering the presence of the so-called 'cultural supermarket.' Stuart Hall (2000:29) examines this changing process of identification in what he refers to as "the necessary limits of identity politics" and observes that:

> In this sense, identifications belong to the imaginary; they are the phantasmatic efforts of alignment, loyalty, ambiguous and cross-corporeal cohabitations, they unsettle the I; they are the sedimentation of the 'we' in the constitution of any I, the structuring present of alterity in the very formulation of the I. Identifications are never fully and finally made; they are increasingly reconstituted, and, as such, are subject to the volatile logic of iterability. They are that which is constantly marshalled, consolidated, retrenched, contested and, on occasion, compelled to give way.

The idea of migration, interfaced with exile, has precipitated interactions between cultures from different places resulting in creolisation and hybridisation. Transposition of cultural elements from one location to another, most especially in the case of the exile, enhances different levels of transformation that have the capacity to alter those that existed hitherto in a particular location. The displacement inherent in migrations more often than not leads to the movements of people which are accompanied by the cultural centre not in any specific direction, but in a diffusing, outward spread.[16] Cultural and identity formations are often predicated on the construction of the idea of 'self' and 'other' targeted at attaining difference. Tom Ederson's (2002:33) opinion about how different shades of identity affect particular locations is instructive here. Examining the syncretism of identities, Ederson holds that "these syncretic, creolising and diasporic identities thus contest national spaces, add to the profusion of connections which are consolidated in everyday life … rendering old dichotomies of 'self' and 'other' more ambivalent". Close to this realisation is the idea of citizenship. Arguably, the social establishment of the group, whether racial, ethnic or gender, is reinforced by the trappings of citizenship. The latter prescribes special opportunities for the subject and invariably elicits in him/her the greater commitment of identification and loyalty. However, the outcomes of such socially induced formations are left open to be negotiated as soon as they come in contact with other socio-cultural and identity constructions. The individual as a social being participates actively in the process of internalising elements within his/her mapped social environment to assume a configuration that distinguishes his social group from others. This development is explicated in Fugard's *Sorrows and Rejoicings* and Mda's *The Bells of Amersfoort*.

[16] Andrew Smith (2004:241-261) ascribes this to the parameters and shape upon which postcolonial studies are based. Smith further opines that the presence of the migrant or "borderline communities" deconstructs the stereotypes of fixed others, often arrived at using the concepts of sameness and essence. The result of this is the realization that cultures are not closed and complete in themselves, but split, anxious, and contradictory. He later defines "hybridity" as the mingling of once separate and discreet ways of living based on equality, mutual respect and open-mindedness.

The foregoing indicates the overbearing influence the environment has on the identity formation of the individual.[17] It also reiterates the notion of the suppression and repression of memory. Even though the exile always wishes to achieve a reunion with his home (idealistic or physical), such a wish is either fulfilled partially or not attained at all. As a result of the debilitation of the desires of the exile, we are reminded of the evolutionary distortions associated with the mobility of identity, most especially the fact that the exile begins to disintegrate as soon as he crosses the border. Writing on the fragmentation of identity, Tim Edensor (2002:27) submits that "… identities are increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiplely constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic discourses, practices and positions". Specifically, based on the propositions found in some of the texts used in this study, this work establishes that the retention and obliteration of events in the past, constituted as memory, is dependent to a significant extent on the whims and caprices of a mentally stable person who determines what is to be remembered and what is to be suppressed or obliterated. This is used to explain how people in exile try to retain the memory of their home(s), the difficulty involved, and the attempts made at repressing, obliterating, or replacing the memory of exile when a physical return is secured. The different situations of Dawid in Fugard's *Sorrows and Rejoicings* and Tami and Johan in Mda's *The Bells of Amersfoort* reveal the complexity of the idea of citizenship. Given the various intersects recognisable in relations between identity and citizenship, it might be right to pose the question: where is home or why bother about citizenship?

Identity is particularly deployed in some cases, most especially in Africa, to divide. This has been blamed by W. Alade Fawole and Charles Ukeje (2005:4) on the inability to stem the spate of the proliferation of identities but instead "allowing the politicization of various ethnic, racial, religious and minority identities to stall attempts at constructing a unifying national identity" in the respective nation states. The new South Africa needs to learn from these negative tendencies elsewhere, most especially in view of the past fragmentation it experienced predominantly along the lines of race and ethnicity. Arguably, the imperative of this situation is further

[17] Ross Poole (2003:274), in the exposition made on "National Identity and Citizenship" writes that national identity is not chosen, but determined by the contingencies of birth and upbringing. However, the place of the agent is validated in the capacity bestowed on him/her to choose how to demonstrate his/her commitment in the long-run.

reinforced by the need to avoid identity being manipulated by the elite class. This can be achieved, for instance, if efforts are made to aggregate varying identities in a manner that will engender and promote loyalty and commitment towards building national cohesion, irrespective of the fact that they still maintain membership of other smaller social groups. The role of the state in fostering extant multi-identities towards the project of national integration is underscored by Said Adejumobi (2005:21). Citing social contract theorists like Rousseau, Hobbes and Locke, Adejumobi opines that the evolution of the state is based on the conferment and recognition of citizenship on people in the political community to achieve a social contract. Adejumobi further posits that citizenship, therefore, is:

> an instrument of social closure through which the state lays claim to and defines its sovereignty, authority, legitimacy and identity. It is the means through which the modern nation-state made of various nationalities seeks to forge a common identity and collective experience for its people.

The project of the new South Africa is, therefore, ineluctably tied to the idea of citizenship, which can be interpreted, according to Adejumobi (2005:22), using parameters such as "category, role, tie and identity". Particularly instructive and central are the implications of the available sources of citizenship to the unique circumstance in South Africa. Citizenship, as the case may be, could be secured "through the criteria of birth (*jus soli*), descent or ancestral claims (*jus sanguinis*) and naturalization" (Adejumobi, 2005:23). An aspect of the mobilisation and participation in citizenship that was debilitating to the South African nation-state was the racial inscription that made some classes of people oppressed citizens, or what Adejumobi calls "subjects and by extension objects of domination" (23).

Trauma and Memory

One other shade of memory that is brought to bear in this research is the place of trauma in the functioning of human memory. A distinction drawn between memory and trauma by Ernst van Alphen (1997:36) is relevant to the notion of trauma and the place of memory in the formation and negotiation of identity. Alphen argues that memory is structurally different from trauma; memories are representations of the past. Taking a cue from research done in cognitive psychology, Alphen further

submits that memories have a narrative structure and collectively and individually help in the formation of identity. Traumas are different structurally as well as in effect. Specifically and characteristically, trauma "refers to the rupturing of an individual's sense of internal and external worlds which leaves post-traumatic legacies such as dissociation, depression and hypersensitivity" (Sean Field, 2006:31). Therefore, traumatic events are able to injure "in one sharp stab, penetrating all psychological defensive barriers of participants and observers, allowing no space for denial mechanisms and thus leaving those affected with an acute sense of vulnerability and fragility" (Vaacov Y. I. Vertzberger, 1997:864). In another effort, recognising trauma as a common denominator or signifier in recent global human endeavours to relate "present suffering to past violence", Didier Fassin and Richard Rechtman, (2009) in the preface to their book, hold that trauma "is the scar that a tragic event leaves on an individual victim or on a witness – sometimes even on the perpetrator. It is the collective imprint on a group of a historical experience that may have occurred decades, generations, or even centuries ago". The term, trauma, is used in this thesis to capture the restricted sense it is used by psychiatrists and in the mental health domain as "the traces left in the psyche … a psychological shock" as well as the commonplace deployment as "an open wound in the collective memory" (Fassin and Rechtman, 2009:2). When trauma is experienced on a large scale, this usually produces group ties, identification and camaraderie between individuals who would build a platform to share their pains, mourn their losses and reprimand identified enemies allegedly seen to be responsible for their condition. However, all efforts usually made by victims to mitigate the effects of trauma are left to contend with the stubborn dissociative, depressive and hypersensitive dispositions forced upon them by their experiences because, "after the mourning, the trauma remains" (Fassin and Rechtman, 2009:2). Even though there is some suspicion that victims of traumas do not always remember details of a past traumatic experience, there is a consensus that such happenings are capable of either consciously or unconsciously coming back to influence them later on in life.

A traumatic event cannot be fully experienced at the point it happens and so cannot be remembered, but could become an event experienced only after repetition. This process is exemplified in one of the texts being studied, Lara Foot Newton's *Tshepang: the Third Testament*. In *Tshepang*, the overwhelming result of trauma is

revealed in the frigid posture of Ruth, whose baby girl is sexually violated and physically battered. Apart from the fact that the existential conditioning of the village where the play is set is as a result of a brutal past, the play implicitly shows how the traumatic memory of past experiences at early stages of an individual's life could come to influence them in later life. Memory, according to Bruce M. Ross (1991:53), is "more efficient at an early stage, since it is less overburdened than it is later". Ross (ibid) further argues that although the trauma and the memory impression formed at the early stages of a child, between ages two and four, could be best remembered in dreams, "at a later time it will break into their life with obsessional impulses, it will govern their actions, it will decide their sympathies and antipathies and will quite often determine their choice of a love-object …" (54). In Newton's *Tshepang*, the unimaginable rape of baby Siesie by Alfred Sorrows is symbolically linked to the anecdotal memory of the past abuse by his father's '*houvrou'* or mistress, Margaret. The veracity of this manifestation is enhanced by Ross (1991:55) who claimed that "all experience leaves something like a memory trace behind …". Memory residues are a by-product of the social conditioning received, most especially the subordination one is subjected to in a socio-cultural society.

On the whole, while the imperatives of human relations have often been predicated on race, this research underscores the relevance of class and the role of the individual 'self' in the ongoing character engagements in particular plays and, by extension, contemporary South Africa. Such conjecture is based on the responses of individuals to issues around memory and identity, as well as the emergence of a particular character mould in a dysfunctional society. As a result, the work conceives that the creation of a better individual is highly desirable in fostering nation-building and at the same time withstanding the numerous attendant challenges. However, the emergence of such ideal individuals is contingent on a virile, stable, peaceful, fair and incorruptible society. Therefore, the re-engineering of post-Apartheid South Africa is not just about race, colour, or any vignette of Apartheid but about the individual agency that becomes locked into "the politics of 'existence' " (Patrick Chabal, 2009:24).

New Historicism and Its Applicability

The study applies new historicism's critical approach in its explication of the texts used. The term, new historicism, embroiled in controversy, "has been applied to an extraordinary assortment of critical practices … which at first signified impatience with American New Criticism … a mingling of dissent and restless curiosity" (Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt, 2000:2). The new historicism is a theory that underscores the social and political roles of literature. However, in keeping with the eclectic nature of the process found in the new historicism, discussions in the research will tangentially extend to other domains like feminism, cultural materialism and post-colonialism, when such become desirable. The three concepts assume relevance for certain reasons. The first is the centrality of the conditions of women depicted in some of the plays under study. Another reason is found in the creation of superior and subaltern, us and them binaries, and the implications of migration and hybridisation that are characteristically precipitated by the "three aspects of historical and cultural process" of "consolidation, subversion and containment" (Jonathan Dollimore, 1992:52). New historicism, in the words of Simon Malpas (2006:60), emphasises "the idea that history is discontinuous, the argument that a given period is better understood as a site of conflict between competing interests and discourses than a unified whole, and the redefinition of the role and the function of power". Power, in the view of Foucault, is unstable and circulated in a society, the application of which provokes resistance from identities and institutions outside the power base.

New historicism, called Neohistoricism in Australia,[18] and "cultural poetics" by Stephen Greenblatt, became popular as a field of criticism in the 1980s following the disenchantment of scholars from English and American universities—ranging from Frederick Crews, George Watson, and E. D. Hirsch, Jr., on one end of the scale, to Fredric Jameson, Terry Eagleton, and Frank Lentricchia, on the other — over the neglect of the contextual and historical circumstances that produced a work of art by the New Criticism. The latter favoured "formalistic" or "text–centered" (D. G. Myers, 1989:27) approach, which sees the art piece as a "verbal icon" (Wimsatt 1970) or "well wrought urn" (Brooks 1968). Analogously, H. Aram Veeser (1989:xi) sees new

[18] Stephen Greenblatt, (1989:1).

historicism as an attempt to "combat empty formalism by pulling historical considerations to the center stage of literary analysis".[19] Rather than see the text as self-enclosed, self-sufficient, cut off from the day-to-day interests of the world, thereby removing it from its social and political context, and even from the context of everyday language and identity, the new historicism insists that texts are part of the everyday life and firmly embedded in the institutions and power relations of general culture.

Furthermore, the new historicism avows and asserts that there exists an intricate link between the text or any work of art and the society. New historicism's implied preoccupation, according to Kevin A. Eaton (1994:131), is that "the societal concern of the author, of the historical time evidenced in the work, and other cultural elements exhibited in the text" must be taken into consideration "before we can devise a valid interpretation". Any attempt at separating artistic expression from other forms of social and cultural interaction would drain literature and culture of any political and social importance (Simon Malpas, 2006:60).[20] New historicism sees literature as historical and not a mere imaginative construction of the individual writer. As a result, literature gets assimilated into history as it is not a distinctive human activity, notwithstanding the fact that every human is seen as a social construct that could not transcend history. Taking his cue from the argument made by Michael Baxandall to the effect that "art and society are analytical concepts from two different kinds of categorization of human experience …" and the modification required to match them to each other, Stephen Greenblatt (1989:12) concludes that "the work of art is itself the product of manipulations, some of them our own … a negotiation between a creator or a class of creators, equipped with a complex, communally shared repertoire of conventions, and the institutions and practices of society". Therefore, the best new

[19] Veeser, in what is called "the portmanteau quality of New Historicism", submits that new historicism brackets manifestations from social, cultural, political, economic, etc, which it uses to order and scrutinise the barbaric acts resulting from cultural purposes. By implication, new historicism encourages us to admire the sheer intricacy and unavoidability of exchanges between culture and power, p. xi.

[20] Simon Malpas identifies the link new historicism has with Michel Foucault, most especially on the borrowing of three key premises from the latter's work: that history is discontinuous (Foucault 2002:8), seeing a given period as a site of conflict between conflicting interests and discourses rather than a unified whole, and the exploration of the multiplicity of how power is produced, applied and harnessed. Power, unlike the sense of it found in Marxism, is seen by Foucault as not only resident with the ruling classes but present everywhere and unstable as every usage of power generates resistance. As a result, power could be used in a society or a certain period to generate particular identities and institutions with a corresponding alternative ways of thinking and being.

historicist approach to literature that can be achieved is, according to D. G. Myers (1989:3), "to use the text as a basis for the reconstruction of an ideology".[21] In another vein, H. Aram Veeser (1989:ix) encapsulates the workings of new historicism thus:

> … the New Historicism has given scholars new opportunities to cross the boundaries separating history, anthropology, art, politics, literature and economics. It has struck down the doctrine of non-interference that forbade humanists to intrude on questions of politics, power, indeed on all matters that deeply affect people's practical lives– …[22]

Identifiable working vocabularies of New Historicists that would be helpful in our analysis are circulation, negotiation and exchange. New Historicists believe that social assets and advantages circulate unnoticed as a form of material currency, leading to different exchanges.[23] This dynamism of exchanges has been referred to by Kevin A. Eaton (1994:129) as the "interrelatedness of all human activities". All these identified elements are reclaimed through the different extant assumptions. It goes without saying, therefore, that "organicism and historicism define the New Historicism cosmos" (H. Aram Veeser, 1994:10). However, in the new historicism tradition, the latter is always eclipsed by the former as against what obtains in the work of historians who always balance their sociological organicity and linear historicity.

Going along the trajectory of the Foucauldian notion of power, the research conceptualises the South African nation as a space within which power is negotiated as "a network of relations between people … within interactions" (Sara Mills, 2007:49). This is reinforced by Michel Foucault's (2007:156) view that "a society is not a unitary body in which one power only exercises itself, but in reality it is a juxtaposition, a liaising, a coordination, a hierarchy, too, of different powers which nonetheless retain their specificity", that is "society is an archipelago of different powers".[24] Implied in the above is the percolating nature of power that Foucault believes in, which has earned him the colouration of "a political defeatist" from some

[21] D. G. Myers sees literary works as cultural products that in turn reproduce ideology. Myers looks at the representational ability of literature and posits that new historicism presumes that artistic fiction does not imitate human action, but rather it mediates it. Literature is, as a result, said to *shape* rather than *reflect* "an age's understanding of human experience and potentiality". A dialectical relationship exists between history and literary work, leading the literary work to become both a product and a producer; that is, constituent part of culture's ideology existing prior to the work of art.

[22] To establish a claim on the new way history and culture define each other, new historicism renegotiates the relationship between texts and other signifying practices, dissolving literature back into the historical complex. See H. Aram Veeser, 1989: xii-xiii.

[23] Veeser ibid, xiv.

[24] From the translation by Gerald Moore.

scholars who hold "that the grounds he did offer were irredeemably defeatist (in that power is seen as everywhere)" (Stuart Elden and Jeremy W. Crampton, 2007:9). This negotiation takes place along the axis of institutionalised categories of sex, race, social and political status. The consequences are the resistance to and challenge of obvious apparatuses, however mild such resistance might turn out to be. Rather than confine the possibility of resistance to local dictates as against institutional non-flexibility of power, the research notes the deep commitment exhibited by people to challenge both local and institutional instruments of power, either overtly or covertly.

Stuart Elden and Jeremy W. Crampton (2007:10) support this proposition when they opine that "aside form, torture and execution, which preclude any resistance, no matter how terrifying a given system may be, there always remain the possibilities of resistance, disobedience, and oppositional groupings". It is another ball game, however, that such challenges might be misdirected and thereby far from producing the desired results. Akin to the foregoing is the relevant interrelationship that exists between Foucault's ideas of the technologies of power and that of the self. According to Tina Besley (2005:77) they both "produce effects that constitute self. They define the individual and control their conducts …". Further to this, while "technologies of power determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination, an objectivizing of the subject";

> technologies of the self are the various 'operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being' that people make either by themselves or with the help of others in order to transform themselves to reach a 'state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immorality'.

The transformative process that is open to the individual is only made possible, in the view of Holly Thorpe (2008:200), if only difference could be introduced to the way s/he thinks. The place of individuality within larger environment has been conceptualized by Patrick Chabal (2009:24) as "the politics of 'existence' … the politics of being". So, the manifestations of "being" and "belonging" (Chabal, 2009:26) would help us interrogate the negotiations of individuals within the localities where they are born and live. Therefore, the different contexts constructed in the dramas used in this research are configured as a form of space which is "a vital part of the battle for control and surveillance of individuals … a battle and not a question of domination" (Stuart Elden and Jeremy W. Crampton, 2007:2).

Outline of Chapters

This research is structured into eight chapters. The first chapter, which is introductory, examines the trajectories of South African transition from the Apartheid past to a new South Africa, as captured in some post-Apartheid dramas. The chapter provides relevant manifestations about the TRC, which is an established platform on which negotiations are made with the past (through memory) in order to forge ahead in the present and sustain the hope of South African newness. This chapter also contains the theoretical frame and the synopses of the texts used. Chapter Two interrogates the notion and quest for truth by the TRC as parodied in Jane Taylor's *Ubu and the Truth Commission*. More particularly, the chapter engages with contestations around the representation of truth and reality; first at the level of form and the questioning of the idea of forensic truth. This is achieved through the testimonies before the TRC, which it is argued, that contributes to the ascription of the idea of victimhood. This chapter also reveals how truth is 'deliberately' repressed by an agent to 'obliterate' or disown his nefarious past, as a show of impunity. Furthermore, the chapter evaluates the process of justice at the South African TRC, as depicted in the play, thereby revealing the notion of selective culpability. The chapter closes with the idea of an uncertain future, as indicated in the play, which is constructed upon an insecure present.

In Chapter Three, a critical reading of Athol Fugard's *Sorrows and Rejoicings* is made. This is done with particular attention paid to issues around political dissention, race, identity and exile. The chapter specifically interrogates the precarious place of South African liberal whites, mostly of Afrikaner descent, in the ongoing trans-racial interactions and negotiations to evolve a new South Africa. Going by the racial tensions in the play, the chapter argues that it is not an accurate perception that all-race cohesion has been achieved in the 'transforming' South Africa. The chapter also unpacks the notion of exile, which can be internal or external, physical or emotional. It looks at the inevitability of exile, which is consequent on a psycho-social dislocation at home and the disjunction experienced in the host community. The chapter similarly touches on the possibility of the retention of the memory of home while away in exile, and the possibility of return which could be fundamentally

disruptive. Situating its argument on the manifestations in the play, the chapter holds that the experience of exile could be a continuous one, the moment it is initiated. Therefore, the inevitability of departure from home is tantamount to either an impossible or disruptive return.

Similarly, Chapter Four looks at the situation of a black South African exile in Zakes Mda's *The Bells of Amersfoort*, who is traumatised by her past experience of torture and nurses a nostalgic loyalty towards South Africa while disconnected from her host community, Holland. Furthermore, the chapter examines the contestations between two South African characters, one white and another black, as they lay claim to and atone for the past. The two characters end up with a commitment to build a new South Africa after Tami, the black female character, has lost confidence in members of her old movement, especially her fiancé, Luthando. The chapter sees class, and not only race, as playing a divisive role in the 'new' South Africa.

Chapter Five is a reading of John Kani's *Nothing but the Truth*. The chapter makes a critique of the TRC as dramatised in the play. This particularly involves the responses of underprivileged black South Africans to the issue of amnesty. The notion of forgiveness as conceived by the South African TRC is unpacked and redefined. These problematisations and redefinitions are made against the backdrop of the fight for the spoils of democratic rule by black South Africans who claim to have been marginalised under the defunct apartheid dispensation, and are still haunted by the continuous dispossession that is occasioned by inequality in the access to opportunities. The foregoing is linked to the definition and redefinition of heroes of the struggle. Other than these confrontations at the level of public engagement, the chapter examines some disaffection at the level of the family and the implications this has for overall human relations, most especially the central role played by the individual as a human agent and the *ubuntu* spirit in the project of reconciliation. The chapter sees the TRC, as enacted in the play, as not just a place where the state 'legislates' forgiveness and reconciliation, but where the 'subordinated' hanker for justice and equity.

Chapter Six is an explication of Junction Avenue Theatre Company's *Love, Crime and Johannesburg*. The chapter examines the themes of crime, corruption, love, as

well as systematic infrastructural breakdown, and the challenges crime and corruption pose to the health of the new South Africa. Specifically, this chapter investigates the reversal of roles of former comrades in the liberation struggles who are now 'appropriating' available opportunities. By so doing, the chapter argues that the fact that the present is threatened by crime and corruption is indicative of a precarious future.

Chapter Seven interrogates how a traumatic past experience can return to influence the actions of a person later in life, using Lara Foot Newton's *Tshepang: the Third Testament*. The chapter unpacks the allegorical link established in the play between the violated experience of a community and the dysfunctional individuals found in that society. Emphasisng the way 'silence' is constructed in the play, the chapter emphasises the attempt made to foreground rape as one of the maladies that threaten the emerging South Africa, as opposed to the indifference that people had shown hitherto.

Chapter Eight, which is the concluding section of the research, summarises the various issues on exile, identity, citizenship, reconciliation and nation building. While warning that the new South Africa should not trivialise the transitional phenomenon of 'morbid symptoms' that get worsened by the day, the chapter closes by affirming that the new South Africa offers a range of new possibilities that will continue to provide useful material for literary engagement.

CHAPTER TWO

AESTHETICS AND THE QUEST FOR FORENSIC YET ELUSIVE TRUTH IN JANE TAYLOR'S *UBU AND THE TRUTH COMMISSION*

> My problem is to know how men govern (themselves and others) by means of the production of truth. By 'the production of truth,' I do not mean the production of true statements, but the arrangement of domains where the practices of the true and false can be at once regulated and relevant.
>
> –Michel Foucault[25]

It is apparent from the discussions in Chapter One that South Africa, as a nation, does not shy away from confronting its past in order to move forward as a fledgling democracy. This is evidenced by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission having been employed in order to reveal 'truths' about the past. This chapter, therefore, examines the trajectory of TRC attempts at attaining such truths in Jane Taylor's *Ubu and the Truth Commission* and argues that a lack of commitment from an individual to tell the truth will not just impair the rigour of the TRC process, but ultimately put at risk the future of the 'new' South Africa.

South Africa is not the only country to have appointed a truth-seeking commission. Richard Wilson (2001:xviii) appraises the tendency and propensity for truth commissions when he submits that:

> Truth commissions are now standard post-conflict structures set up in over seventeen countries in the last 20 years to investigate unresolved cases arising from past human rights violations. As one strand of the globalization of human rights, they have taken on a transnational validity as one of the main mechanisms for announcing a new democratic order.

In another vein, Fiona C. Ross (2003:1) submits that truth commissions are used by political entities to attain legitimisation and to create alternative forms of interaction. As a result, Ross further holds that "truth commissions link together complex ideas about suffering, injustice, human rights, accountability, history and witnessing … that have important effects in shaping understandings and sculpting new social possibilities". However, while some commissions' findings constitute a watershed in

[25] This is used in Didier Fassin and Richard Rechtman (2009:5).

the evolution of some nations, they have been reduced in other places like Nigeria to mere jingoism.[26] The South African TRC is the product of the negotiated transition between two of the dominant voices in the transition to democracy, the predominantly black African National Congress (ANC) and the Afrikaner National Party (NP), after the realisation of the former that "military vanguardism had failed", and following the fact that neither side could defeat the other, but each side could prevent the other from ruling alone" (P. Eric Louw, 2004:159). This led to the precipitation of an agreement of collaboration in the face of the hitherto sharp divisions existing between the two parties and the people they represented. The TRC, therefore, "was a key enterprise of the government of national unity reflecting both its important aspirations for uniting a divided country and also some of its painful accommodation with the past and the perpetrators of violence" (Elaine Unterhalter, 2007:100). As expounded in Chapter One of the thesis, the South African TRC was concerned with the airing of hitherto repressed truths as part of the overall attempts to avoid a regression into such an inglorious past, or as part of the overarching attempts to create "a new moral and cultural leadership … a new hegemony" (Wilson, 2001:xvi).

However, although one could subscribe to the emergence of a new political hegemony, discussions in some other chapters of this research do not indicate that a new moral leadership has emerged. As part of the refraction of the TRC, Jane Taylor's *Ubu and the Truth Commission*, therefore, embarks on a search for truth, examines the nature of truth, and how truth is denied, repressed and circumvented. In a nutshell, the play contains the intricacies and complexities arising from the representations of truth, both at the level of form and through the probing of forensic truth. In its quest for the truth, the South African TRC came up with four notions of truth. These, according to Richard Wilson (2001:36-37), are:

> Factual or forensic truth: is 'the familiar legal or scientific notion of bringing to light factual, corroborated evidence'. This category includes individual incidents, as well as the context, causes and patterns of violations.
>
> Personal or narrative truth: refers to the individual truths of victims and perpetrators, attaching value to oral tradition and story–telling. Healing often takes place as narrative truth is recounted.

[26] President Olusegun Obasanjo officially inaugurated a commission to be later popularly called 'The Oputa Panel' on June 14, 1999. The report collated by the panel, which was submitted in June 2002, has not been implemented. A governor in one of the states in Nigeria, Rivers, established a similar commission on 29th November 2007. See http://www.usip.org. Accessed 28/10/2009.

> Social truth: is established … through interaction, discussion and debate. Social truth acknowledges the importance of transparency and participation and affirms the dignity of human beings.
>
> Healing and restorative truth: repairs the damage done in the past and prevents further recurrences in the future. The dignity of victims is restored by officially acknowledging their pain.

Taylor's *Ubu and the Truth Commission* employs some dramatic devices to engage the idea of truth, in keeping with the four basic tropes as identified above. The fictional representation in the play typifies the overall unattainable nature of a 'forensic truth'.[27] Truth, as configured in the above-mentioned ways is, however, not without certain weaknesses. As part of its onerous attempts to help the South African nation attain the truth, the TRC has been subjected to certain criticism. One of the shortcomings of the TRC is the fact that the "hearings only presented a sequence of individualized victims, as opposed to a richly complex and layered history of a state of war" (Wilson, 2001:50). The binaries of collectivism and individuality suggested in Wilson's opinion speak largely of the complex processes of differentiating individual experiences from general or collective ones, mostly when an agent functions on behalf of the state. In a related manner, Fiona C. Ross (2003:27) conceives the notions of testimonies[28] as "devastating events, experiences, or conditions, which cannot easily be recalled into language". Ross, therefore, concludes that "some kinds of experience stand outside of language's redemptive possibilities". Apart from the inadequacy at the level of content, therefore, the inability of language to adequately capture an experience of trauma poses a great challenge to the process and procedure for attaining absolute or forensic truth, since "words fail humanity at times …" (Jacqueline Maingard, 2009:8).[29] The TRC, as an attempt to construct "new national histories" using personal or 'collective' memory to produce historical narratives, has also been criticised for "its tendency to elide memory and truth and to equate forensic with personal evidence" (Annie E. Coombes, 2004:7-8).

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[27] The idea of full-disclosure which is core to the granting of amnesty was perceived as subjectively controversial as a result of the difficulty involved in getting to measure how appropriate and adequate the 'truth' that is told is to the past. Many applications for amnesty were said to have been rejected as a result of the thinking that applicants would have merely admitted on a "barest detail" that were "related only to the specific matter(s)" for which they sought amnesty. See http://truth.wwl.wits.ac.za/cat . Accessed 22-01-09.

[28] Ross (2003:27-28) also argues that "testimony 'contains' a lacuna that calls into question the identity and reliability of witnesses".

[29] See "Love, Loss, Memory and Truth" in *Zulu Love Letter: a Screen Play* by Bhekizizwe Peterson and Ramadan Suleman. pp. 5-17.

Ubu and the Truth Commission uses the central character of Ubu to explore the South African TRC as not just a form of archive, but also through the dynamics of aesthetics to problematise and interrogate the notions of testimonies, guilt, remorse and impunity. The use of animation and puppets for the generation of meaning in the play helps foreground a certain desired ambiguity, which enhances the gap between evidence and its performance. The puppets are used as a metaphor for humanity and as argued in a related discussion, they are thereby distinguished "from the 'realism' of the main narrative" (Ramadan Suleman, 2009:29),[30] culminating in the creation of new possibilities. For instance, the ubiquitous presence of the vulture allows for a sardonic comment on the moral consciousness of the people through the use of the chorus and other axiomatic expressions. The play also explores the use of puns in relation to Pa Ubu's actions in order to expose the psychic trauma he passes through and conscious repression of the memory of his past deeds. The suspicion Ma Ubu has of the secret dealings of her husband is expressed through the use of puns in her dialogue with him. This comical deployment of puns is extended to the description given to the Commission by Pa Ubu, who seeks to "put Tu and Tu together" in order to evade the pious call of the Commission. This arithmetic punning is an open reference to Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the chairman of the commission, whose intended rainbow nation signals to Pa Ubu impending bad weather. In the writer's note to the play, Jane Taylor submits that:

> Ubu's story is, at one level, a singular story of individual pathology; yet it is at the same time an exemplary account of the relationships between capitalist ideology, imperialism, race, class and gender, religion and modernisation in the southern African sub-region.

Therefore, the contestations between the characters in the play are indicative of those that exist in factual human interactions, not only in contemporary South Africa but elsewhere, irrespective of the platform from which such engagements take place.

[30] See "Director's Statement" in *Zulu Love Letter: a Screen Play* by Bhekizizwe Peterson and Ramadan Suleman. pp. 26-32.

Animation and the Unpacking of Truth

In order to achieve an unusual artistic critique of the material substance of the TRC, Taylor relies on the use of some aesthetic devices. One of these devices is the use of animation, which functions in *Ubu and the Truth Commission* as what John Bell (2001:5) typifies as the idea of the "performing object", under the scope of "forms of performance". The "performing object", which incorporates the puppet and animation, according to him, refers to "material images of humans, animals, or spirits that are created, displayed, or manipulated in narrative or dramatic performance". As mentioned earlier, Jane Taylor does acknowledge that the work of Alfred Jarry influenced her writing of *Ubu and the Truth Commission*. According to Taylor, "In *Ubu and the Truth Commission* I have taken this figure, and have characterized him using a style of burlesque derived in part from Jarry" (*UTC*, iv). The use of puppets in particular has permitted the process of transformation and solid possibilities which allow an imaginative engagement with elements that depart from 'reality' and the depiction of the actual, particularly in dealing with what Taylor calls "the weighty documentary imperatives of the TRC itself" (*UTC*, vii).

As part of the desire to link aesthetics and content to make specific artistic statements, the character representations in the text are set apart by way of their form. For instance, Pa and Ma Ubu are played by live actors while witnesses are played by puppets. Even though the two forms of character invention are transformative in nature, that of the puppet is peculiarly innovative because of the ambiguity that it allows. This is touched on substantially by Taylor, reiterating submissions made by some other people, that:

> Puppets can provide an extraordinary dimension to a theatrical project of this kind, because every gesture is as it were, metaphorized. The puppet draws attention to its own artifice, and we the audience willingly submit ourselves to the ambiguous process that at once deny and assert the reality of what we watch. Puppets also declare that they are being 'spoken through'. They thus very poignantly and compellingly capture complex relations of testimony, translation and documentation apparent in the process of the Commission itself (vii).

The above excerpt reminds us of the suspension of disbelief expected of the audience and the dependency of the puppet on its inventor and manipulator in its meaning-making role. The flexibility achieved on stage through experimentation with the

puppet further reinforces its reflexivity as well as the metaphorical unpacking of the imagination of the artist. Four kinds of puppets are used in the play: a vulture, a dog, a crocodile and a group of witness puppets. While these human and animal puppets are multivalent in that they can be exploited for both aesthetic and thematic achievements, they at the same time rupture the elements of representation since the behaviour and socio-psychological engineering their characters display are strange to those witnessed "first hand on a regular basis" by the people who are members of the audience (Chris Webster, 2005:71).

Henryk Jurkowski (1988:38-39) has come up with some characteristics that define puppets and describe how they function in their representational role. The first classification of the theatrical function of the puppet is what Jurkowski calls "the puppet as android". This adroit nature of the puppet, as an artificial human who is transformed from being just a lifeless object to be imbued with actions, verbal and non-verbal, is meant to assume the verisimilitude of the real. This notion of transformation exposes what Stephen Kaplin (2001:19) calls "iconicity … between a material object (sign vehicle) and the animate being for which it stands". Kaplin, however, enthuses that "while actors animate a sign vehicle from the inside out, using their own feelings, bodies and voices, puppet performers must learn to inhabit the sign vehicle from the outside in". The animation of the vulture, according to the puppeteers in *Ubu and the Truth Commission*, Basil Jones and Adrian Kohler, is meant to "act as a single chorus, providing sardonic commentary" with "a set of electronic squawks interpreted on the screen as proverbs". By so doing, it performs its function in the play as "an authorless automaton spewing forth programmed truisms" (xvi).

The creation of the animation of the vulture's utterances is reflective of the folkloric tradition of anthropomorphism, where certain animal characters are given human attributes and allocated significant relevance. Well-known tricksters that have been created with the capacity to reveal to us something of the human condition are *Anansi*, the Ashanti spider, and *Ijapa*, the Yoruba turtle.[31] The use of the vulture in the play is indicative of the position taken by John Bell (1999:4) that "puppet, mask and

[31] See *The Concise Oxford Companion to African American Literature* by Williams L. Andrews, Frances Smith Foster and Trudier Harris http://books.google.co.za. Accessed 28/10/2009.

performing object theatre has deep roots connecting a vast array of contemporary and ancient performance practices". Over and beyond an anthropomorphic relevance, the use of the vulture's animated utterances further illustrates "the Brechtian technique of narrator who consciously interrupts the action and speaks directly to the audience" (Hutchison, 2000:36). Such interruptions constantly remind the spectators of the material property and mimetic nature of the performance. Although no particular bird could be seen inherently to represent such a storytelling mechanism, the vulture is aptly chosen for being a naturally ravenous bird. It is "a scavenging bird of prey", used here as a symbol of that aspect of opportunistic exploitation as related to Western culture. Beyond this, people who are thought to profit from death or morbid forms of exploitation are sometimes referred to as vultures".[32] Vultures are noted to be powerful and efficient in the way they use energy.[33] One of the notable characteristics of vultures is their reliance on the wind to gain height whilst flying, rather than depending on their own effort. As a result of the link the vulture has with death, it does not, therefore, constitute merely artful metaphor but also stands as an indexical signifier of those sardonic and horrific details in the interactions between the puppets and Pa Ubu, which drive the plot of the play. The vulture in this case, reflected in the truisms, assumes an evaluative role as the conscience of a society, whose beliefs and worldview are used to assess the protagonist's actions. Apart from the deep wisdom the vulture is assigned, it is also accorded omniscient eyes, (eye-of-god-technique) through which what is hidden to both those who view or read the play is revealed.

The process of creating the vulture is reminiscent of Stephen Kaplin's (1999:2) "two quantifiable aspects" of classification in the puppet/performer dynamic, those of distance and ratio, respectively. The vulture animation reflects the former and as a result, according to Kaplin, "has become detached from the actor's body, developing its own center of gravity, its own structure, its own presence". Evidently, the detachment of the vulture from the intricacies of the plot leaves the audience with the impression it is an unbiased umpire. However, the use of the vulture allows the playwright to examine certain actions, most especially those that could be considered

[32] However, the vulture is, in Ancient Egypt, "a symbol of motherhood and of lasting romantic love". See http://www.wisegeek.com. Accessed 28/20/2009.
[33] See http://speed2work.tripod.com. Accessed 28/10/2009.

as somehow dishonest. The privilege conferred on the vulture as a result of its distance could be interpreted as that desirable yet absent public space needed for the externalisation of the repressed revulsion felt by victims of the past. It can also represent the resulting response to the investigation of past misdeeds and the attenuating propensity of the propositions of the TRC.

Furthermore, the aesthetic and meaning encoded in the play through the vulture's animated commentary is analogously reflective of the dramatic narratives realised through stage directions. But in the case of stage directions, according to E. A. Levenston (1991), the reader/spectator "is given a nudge by the author" (209) through "an omniscient narrator", like the vulture, "who knows his characters' innermost secrets, judges them severely ─ and shares his judgment with the reader" (208). A close and critical look at the aesthetic use of the vulture reveals that the emphasis may not necessarily be on the need to achieve a believable bird, but may be about securing what Webster (2005:113) calls a connection with the audience, which can be achieved through the characters. Webster (ibid) further submits that acting in character animation is not always targeted at natural behaviour or believability but at the expression of emotion, "to take your audience on an emotional journey" (116). However, paradoxically, this also underscores the process of 'distancing' or 'estrangement' found in drama. This is made more apparent when read against the ideas of Herbert Grabes (1991:101-102) on the allocation of responsibility to the stage manager through his/her "own characters and events". The meta-commentaries of the vulture allow it to function analogously in a way that is characteristic of epic theatre and, therefore, as further argued by Grabes, functioning "at least in part like a narrator in fiction". Obviously, on a literal level the role of the vulture/narrator permits the configuration of implicit details that are required for an understanding of the position each character occupies in the play. The commentaries of the narrator to the reader, just like those of the vulture in *Ubu and the Truth Commission*, according to Grabes, "serve mainly as sources of additional information, as links between the dialogues, and as rather didactic statement of what the play is actually about" (102).

Another category of puppets used in the play are the witnesses who are created alongside the human actors of Ma and Pa Ubu. Apart from the skill with which they are created, they are seen as artificial actors, and, thereby, in the words of Jurkowski

(1988:38), becoming "a little homunculus". The puppets in this case are doubly created; first as wooden objects imbued with human attributes, and secondly as characters in the dramatic world who are possible signifiers of players in the actual world. In a broader sense, as signifiers that represent Charles Sanders Pierce's trinity of "icon, index and symbol", the animation in this play achieves concreteness, through "similarity, contiguity and convention" (Jenna Ng, 2007:172). One possibility of such multi-layered meaning is contained within the physicality of the wooden puppets. In the director's note to *Ubu and the Truth Commission*, a hint is given on the "series of wholly unexpected meanings" (*UTC*, xii) generated through the experimentation with the kinetic space occupied by Pa Ubu and one of the wooden witnesses. After taking the testimony of the puppet witness as passing for the confession of Pa Ubu, William Kentridge, the play's director, writes that they attempted to position the wooden puppet close enough to Pa Ubu, the former being thus able to touch the latter with its wooden hand. The outcome of this, according to Kentridge, was profound. Kentridge opines that "what we saw was an act of absolution. The witness forgave, even comforted Ubu for his act" (*UTC*, xii). Therefore, the testaments of the puppets/witnesses used in this text are in agreement with the "conditions of possibility shared by fictional literature and testimony" (Jenna Ng, 2007:156). The experimentation made with this aesthetic device resonates with the overall intention being sought in the contextual worlds; the actual and the dramatic. This novel revelation is indicative of the bits that the physical body can manifest during the narration of past memories.

In a related development, Helen Nicholson (2005:101) has submitted that her own practice has led to laying emphasis on the physical state of the body of a teller of a story to see "… whether participants looked comfortable or distressed, and to notice how their physicality altered as their stories were told". According to the puppeteers in *Ubu and the Truth Commission*, the responsibility of the puppet witnesses "is both central and extremely onerous, as their task is to re-enact the deeply harrowing personal accounts of the effect of the former Apartheid State on people's lives" (*UTC*, xvi). In other words, the "metaphors for humanity" (*UTC*, xvii) achieved through these puppets allow for a simulation of the activities of the participants at the TRC who, inadvertently, turned the Commission's hearings into a theatrical space of re-enactment, mimesis and empathy. It is the responsibility of witnesses to recollect and

re-enact past violations in order for them to be heard. Such recollection, although fraught with emotion that could not be taken to be forensic truth, makes it possible for them to externalise violations that have been hitherto repressed, thereby gaining for themselves a voice.

The physical appearance of the puppets is reminiscent of the process by which witnesses recounted their stories before the TRC. The puppets, just like the actual witnesses who elicited support from the interpreters, provoke empathy (catharsis) from the audience/reader. This was at the same time reinforced by the supportive roles played by the translators at the actual TRC who helped the witnesses to wipe their tears, leading to empathy from the audience, both present at the venue and those remotely watching it on television. It could be argued that this promises a certain form of healing for both the individuals and society, who are either affected directly or by their participation as members of the audience. Conversely, the attempt to attain an illusion of independence for the puppets, going by the disjunctions noticed in the manipulations of the puppeteers, further makes plain what Basil Jones and Adrian Kohler call "a degree of symbolic vulnerability" (*UTC*, xvii). This vulnerability starts from the dependency of the witness puppets on the puppeteers and their acceptance of the reader/audience as the 'imagined', representing the 'real'. These puppets are constructed to be vulnerable, for instance, in a scene where Ma and Pa Ubu loot the goods at the Spaza shop, unbeknownst to the wooden puppet, that is the shop owner. Even though Henryk Jurkowski (1988:78) speaks of puppets as opalescent, having a "double existence … both as puppet and as scenic character", they become, in the scene above, agencies to be exploited socially and economically. The puppets, therefore, occupy a subaltern space, just like the group they represent in the actual world. Taken further, the puppets, just like the 'dregs' of the society, function, at best, as 'beautifying' elements in the project of South African 'transition' and 'newness'. This trend being indexical of the outside world is shown when reference is made to the kleptomaniac relationship of the Ubus with the puppeteers and is concluded that "this division between the human clowns and the puppets mirrors the era of trauma the play describes" (*UTC*, xvii).

Puppets and Meaning-Making in Jane Taylor's *Ubu and the Truth Commission*

Evidently, the enterprising employment of puppets allows Jane Taylor to metaphorically represent the hearings at the TRC. It also helps to symbolically problematise and engage with the exploitation that cumulatively led to the erosion of the psycho-social and economic ontology of a group of people. These people, represented by the puppet witnesses are, within the circumstances of the Apartheid regime and the estimation of the TRC, victims of past violations. This is not just done through the testimonies of brutality of the puppets but also through the compromise of their humanness, their psycho-social depletion and the onerous traumatic remembrance of the violations they underwent. Although these puppets have been made to demonstrate their deep emotional and physical limitations, they, just like those they represent in the real world, inscribe their power and ability to, or not to, forgive. The request of one of these puppets in the play reminds us of this:

WITNESS: The way they killed my son, hitting him against a wall, and we found him with a swollen head, they killed him in a tragic manner and I don't think I'll ever forgive, in this case, especially the police who were involved and who were there (*UTC*, 55).

The above statement rekindles the different positions maintained at various times by some people before the TRC. Apart from the unwillingness to forgive that is ascribed to the puppet characters in *Ubu and the Truth Commission*, such revulsions are also expressed by human characters in John Kani's *Nothing but the Truth* and Zakes Mda's *The Bells of Amersfoor*t. The most heinous crimes committed by the former agents of the state were considered to have been undertaken based on the prescription and the discharge of official responsibilities. Such justification and impunity for past acts of violence is echoed by Pa Ubu in the play:

PA UBU: We have nothing to be ashamed of. We were only doing our job (*UTC*, 55).

This is what the TRC refers to as acts that were absolutely political and carried out on behalf of the state. However, such acts must be fully disclosed and amnesty sought accordingly. This submission by Pa Ubu and the accusation made by one of the witnesses, cited before, reveal a process of accusations and counter-accusations from

people who have been on the different sides of a divide since the inception of their 'relationship'.

The present platform offered by the TRC confers on the witnesses the ability to forgive and pardon whereas the perpetrators are to ask for forgiveness. In a way, the above shows some instances of role or, better still, status reversal. Looking critically at the deployment of power under the Apartheid regime, it is obvious that for every repressive law promulgated, there was corresponding resistance to it. While the Apartheid government and its agents relied on the power of the state, the various movements and liberation groups depended on guerilla-like insurrections to show their opposition to the state, attempting subversion of the status quo through military action. The extent to which the power of the state overshadowed the belligerence of opposition was reflected in the approach used to checkmate it. Correspondingly, as discussed in Chapter Five, the potency of state power in a new democracy is made plain in the activities of the TRC, which is constitutionally empowered to seek full disclosure from perpetrators and grant amnesty as well as give victims the locus to be heard. This was also with a delayed mandate to award reparation. Unfortunately, however, the power of the state also imposed itself through the TRC by granting amnesty after full disclosure, but often times against the wish of the witness/victim who was not emotionally prepared to see this happen.

The assumption and usurping of such a responsibility by the state has been investigated by scholars. For instance, reviewing Freud's study on transference, Sanders holds that the most crucial aspects of the endeavour are "the transposition of figures and the assimilation of temporalities" (102). Situated within the workings of the TRC, it is evident that members of the commission assumed the place of mediator through their activities, and, thereby, allowed the victim's voice to be heard and the restoration of his/her dignity. Further to this is the assumption that victims offer conditional amnesty, which appears to be a semantic substitution for forgiveness. Their activities indicative of the spirit in which the process was conceived, the commission seemed to be acting as a 'manipulator' of the public domain on behalf of the government. These 'manipulations', arguably, can be seen as a move made in order to achieve the set goal of reconciliation and nation building. Such impressions are underpinned by the compromise that loomed large in the build-up to the

convocation of the TRC and the popularisation of restorative justice over that of retributive justice. However, the perceived intention of the commission to assume the place of the victims is tantamount to what Mark Sanders, affirming his view as a reiteration of others, calls "usurping a prerogative exclusive to the one wronged" (103). Whatever the apparent limitations of this process, the role played by the commission is reflective of a deployment of power, which fundamentally negates the right and desire of others. It only stands to reason that the granting of amnesty by the commission against the wish of an unforgiving victim would insulate the perpetrator from possible litigation. However, the belligerence the puppets/witnesses in the play show as a result of the decision of the judge to forgive Pa Ubu and his lieutenants is indicative of how other underprivileged segments of a social community can challenge the imperatives of the ruling hegemony. By so doing, it is evident in correlation with Foucault's idea that power is naturally in flux, and this ensures a constant flow between all the strata of society. Such flows of power within the different members of the societal strata are, however, devoid of equity.

Both the disclosure (confession) from perpetrators and testimony (witnessing) needed by the TRC to shatter the abysmal silence of the past are central to the development of the plot in *Ubu and the Truth Commission*. The emphasis placed on the 'exhumation' of past activities, however possible it may seem, should not be conceived in absolute terms, as it is susceptible to alteration. As argued in the Introduction, the recall of past nefarious acts through memory, which is necessary to the telling of the truth both in testimony and confession, is sentimentalised and emotionalised to a disruptive extent. This is proposed by Hans Erik Stolten (2007:39). Stolten takes a departure from the frequent pretensions of historians when writing as if they are neutral observers "presenting authoritative accounts and explanations". He further argues that "history writing, memories, and stories, can never be 'free'. They will always be laden with meaning". On another note, Gary Baines (2007:167-168) also examines the overlapping or intersecting relationship shared by memory and history, and opines that "memory, like history, is a reconstruction of the past from which meaning is derived". While he cautions that they are not synonymous, Baines submits that "memory is in a permanent state of flux, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation, whereas history is a representation of the past, a critical discourse which is suspicious of memory".

The fickle physical and emotional representations made through the puppets symbolise the debilitating effects of time and season. This lack of fixity in the recall of the past is more pronounced in the behaviour of the characters of the witnesses, much like the empathy the actual TRC witnesses received from the commission members, to arouse the empathy of the reader or audience. Added to this, the debilitation of their bodies must have also been occasioned by the process of ageing, considering the import of temporality that separates the present from the past, which hosted the actions. The corporeality of the wooden puppet that is involved in a tactile relationship with Ubu, therefore, could enliven the dual possibility of ageing and psychological disruptions. This physical response or body behaviour is what Nicholson (2005:101) has called "the meta-gestus of re-membering". Based on this, the tenability of historicising through the body is reinforced. The puppets' and Pa Ubu's bodies, therefore, assumed the level of greater signification through the use of commonplace articles, like old suit case, that belong to the past and present to interrogate the present and to project into the future. The conjecture behind this notion finds a correlation in the view of Nicholson (2005:103) when she suggests that "history is imprinted on the body, not only as a readable system of linguistic signs, but as a rather more blurred and contested site, as a layered and sedimented repository of the past that articulates with the present". Therefore, the body bears "the stigma of past experience" (Nicholson, 2005:104), and as a result could be conceptualised "as an archive".[34] The implicit bearing of the burden of the past by the body causes a traumatic event to occur in the "psyche as a '*foreign* body' " but still with the ability to have its influences (Pauline Moore, 2007:123).

Apart from the human puppets/witnesses examined above, the other categories of puppets used in the play are animal puppets, represented in the characters of the dog and the crocodile. The creation of this category of puppets appears to conform to two other functions of the puppet captured by Jurkowski (1988:38-39) as "the puppet as 'puppetlike'" and "the puppet as a puppet character in the hands of its creator and companion". The three-headed dog named Brutus and the crocodile, were believed to

[34] Helen Nicholson (2005:104-105) holds that ageing should not be viewed negatively, but graciously as an archive. She, however, argues against the position of Freud which defines the archive as "something static or fixed". Expanding on the thinking of Derrida on the body as an archive, Nicholson extends her argument that "the archival body is not the site of the deterioration of the individual, but a mediating presence between past experiences and future lives".

have been created because of the role they are expected to play in the text, which could not be easily achieved with the use of human actors. The puppeteers describe the crocodile as "Ma Ubu's handbag, but also Pa Ubu's pet advisor and cover-up man, using its big mouth as the shredder of Ubu's *incriminating* evidence" (*emphasis mine*, xvi). Brutus, the three-headed dog is introduced as "Ubu's henchman" who participates in all the evil deeds committed by Pa Ubu, therefore making "their culpability to be indivisible" (xvi). The materiality of the two puppet character types is emphasised by the puppeteers who claim to have used "an old briefcase given by Braam Fischer to Sydney Kentridge" for the design of Brutus, the three-headed dog, and "the kit bag of Basil Jones' father when on military service in North Africa" (*UTC*, xvi) for the crocodile. Although both the three-headed dog and the crocodile depend on their manipulators to carry out their roles effectively, their profound symbolism contributes to the virtuality of the play. It should be noted, however, that the reading of both the dogs and the crocodile dually signify multiple things (Keir Elam, 1980:21). It might be the case that these wooden, animal puppets are sign systems in the context of the dramatic world used to help encode and decode memory. Therefore, they function as aesthetic devices through which the experience(s) of a society are interrogated. This means that the introduction and invention of "fantastic elements" like the crocodile and the three-headed dog in the dramatic world would not destroy "the audience's (*reader's*) ability to recognize what is going on" (*emphasis mine*, Keir Elam, 1980:107).

Looking at the wider scope of semiotisation of which symbolism is appropriately a category, it is apparent that the use of the dog and crocodile puppets, just like other elements on stage, derives their relevance from the make-believe exhibited by the reader/audience through the process of signification. The use of elements as sign system on the stage has equally attracted the attention of Keir Elam (1980:7) who posits that:

> … the stage radically transforms all objects and bodies defined within it, bestowing upon them an overriding signifying power which they lack ─ or which at least is less evident ─ in their normal social function: 'on the stage things that play the part of theatrical signs … acquire special features, qualities and attributes that they do not have in real life'.

Even though the above is obviously referring to the physical stage, it is nonetheless applicable to the staging that goes on in the imagination of the reader. The dog, reflective of its basic traits, social function and description, is a four-legged barking animal which has the ability to bite, smell and sniff. However, the design of the three-headed dog is alien to the social reality from which the symbolic creature is to derive its meaning. The strangeness of this type of a dog is meant to become a 'special feature', as explicated above, of monstrosity in correlation with the intention of the playwright and the puppeteers to capture the horrific trend of Ubu's evil activities. Brutus, therefore, encapsulates the monsters in Ubu's "foot soldier, general and politician" (*UTC*, xvi) who are co-accomplices in the discharge of his duties which are essentially rights abuse and violation. The dog further has some semiotic resonance in that dogs were used in colonial periods by white residents on farms and in suburban areas to guard and viciously protect and defend their property. Dogs as used in the play also depict the instance of violence, havoc, dispossession and booties. This is in relation to the popular phrase: 'the dogs of war', which invariably talks about the versatile nature of dogs, most especially as companions in military invasions. The three-headed dog could therefore become a metaphor for the various organs of the state that collectively violated the rights of the people in the course of discharging their duties. One fundamental argument and justification given to explain such behaviour is the need to protect the state/country from misguided insurrection. The feeling that the state took measures to protect itself against insurrections and dissidence is further reinforced by the interaction between Pa Ubu and Brutus, the three-headed dog:

> PA UBU: We will tell you what you need to know. Remember, we are the tails that wag the dog. (7)
> DOGS, TOGETHER: Right, captain. You're the boss. We are your creature. (7)

The above shows, as indicated earlier, that the agents created by the state deploy their power that is arrogated to them in such a manner that is tantamount to violating people's rights. This is in spite of the fact that they are obviously carrying out orders given by somebody else. The "scat quartet" that is sung together in the play by Pa Ubu and the dogs further reveal the horrors and absurdities that characterise their operations:

> PA UBU: Not any old dog is a man's best friend

Who'd service and obey as I intend.
To get what I need
I selectively breed
'Till his parts make the whole in a singular blend.

With razor-like teeth and with steel-sprung jaw
I've found myself a weapon that evades the law.
He'll attack when he's told
And submit when I scold
For I've now made a pet of the dogs-of-war (*UTC*, 7).

This is reminiscent of the composition of the 'evil' squad that helped perpetrate some of the most violent apartheid crimes for the state. This 'blend' of imagery is best illustrated by the single body of the dog with three vicious and nefarious heads. The creation of the three heads is a potent metaphor used to transcend the boundaries of linguistic narratives to make things palpable for the audience. In this case, the play uses the concept of *ostension*, which is a part of the overall modus of signification. According to Keir Elam (1980:29) the principle of *ostension* dictates that: "in order to refer to, indicate or define a given object, one simply picks it up and shows it to the receiver of the message in question".

It is no doubt that drama affords, through signification, the chance for artistic abstraction which would be open to interrogation. It has been stated that "art by its very nature, is understood as speaking through the language of representation" and thereby provides "a space where we accept … that the act of looking simultaneously within and outside ourselves is as close as we can get to being fully conscious or present" (Damian Sutton, Susan Brind & McKenzie, 2007:75 & 77). As imagery, the three-headed dog and the eclectic nature of its composition seem illustrative of the many shades of people who became agents of the apartheid state. The power that resides with individuals is brought together by the state momentarily allowing for a sharing of state power and the culpability of its misapplication. The vulnerability and dependability of these agents, which is also captured by the nature and character of the puppet, is depicted by the dogs in their designated portion of the scat quarter:

DOGS: Not any old dog is a man's best friend
Who'd service and obey as he'd intend.
To get what he needs
He selectively breeds
'Till our parts make the whole in a singular blend.

With razor-like teeth and with steel-sprung jaw

> We now provide a weapon that evades the law.
> We'll attack when we're told
> And submit should he scold
> For we are old Pa Ubu's dogs-of-war (*UTC,* 9).

Through this interaction between the dogs and Pa Ubu, details are given of the activities that amount to the absolute disclosure sought by the Truth Commission, which the culprits nonetheless seek to suppress. At this point in the play, it is likely that the reader/spectator would gain more insight into the activities of Brutus, the three-headed-dog. In this way, the puppets are not just present in and of their materiality, but they become actors who stand for characters that exist in the real world.

Puppet Adroitness and the Legislation of 'Truth'

Similarly, the central role the crocodile puppet plays in *Ubu and the Truth Commission* is metaphorical. Just as the fantastic nature of the making of the three-headed dog puppet is not enough to cloud the meaning the reader/audience is to glean from the text, the crocodile is used to represent a group of individuals who participated in old acts of violence and yet treated the reconciliatory initiatives of the TRC with distaste and repugnance. As a result of the non-cooperative attitude of such people, they spare nothing in obliterating every trace of their evil deeds. The character roles assigned to the crocodile convey the attitudes of TRC detractors. The crocodile has a high and ravenous biting ability which makes it easy for it to lacerate or destroy and swallow at will. First, as the handbag of Ma Ubu, the crocodile figuratively represents the instrument of concealment, a role he secondly complements by helping Pa Ubu to shred or exterminate every piece of circumstantial evidence that might be used against him. Aside from helping to overcome the difficulty of malleability that a reliance on the human actor would have caused, as observed by the puppeteers, Niles the crocodile allows for a personification of the repression of memory. However, unlike that inadvertent repression or amnesia that could be triggered by an accident, what Pa Ubu and the crocodile undertake, collaboratively, is a premeditated act targeted at suppressing the truth. The intention of Pa Ubu and Niles to conceal the truth is in sharp paradoxical contrast to the anticipation of the Truth Commission of revelations of truth. As a result, whilst the witnesses struggle to explore the opportunity offered by the commission to be heard and to facilitate reconciliation, Pa

Ubu and Niles continuously display lack of interest and pride, which are simply counter-productive. If considered against the backdrop of the real TRC, apart from the fact that such actions make a mockery of the lofty idea of transformation, the impunity with which these are perpetrated could breed distrust from the other players.

However, looking at the recall process that makes the testimonies of the witnesses possible, certain conditions are made obvious. One, the wooden witnesses are greatly dependent on the puppeteers to think and give expression to their ideas. Therefore, whatever truths they present are at once the thoughts of the puppeteers, whose voices, mental ability, and actions are responsible for the actions and activities of the puppets/witnesses. This aesthetic process reminds us of the different levels of remoteness that characterised the activities of actual witnesses before the commission. For instance, most of the pieces of memory recalled and translated to witnessing were products of traumatised psyches. Other than the fact that what happened in the past cannot be fully recalled in an objective manner, the experience and knowledge of the violated past would have presented a profound challenge to the players who must, in an emotionally constructed space, 'stage' the details of the past violations they underwent, either in a direct or indirect way. This staging adds to what is widely held – that traumatic events or experiences are difficult to represent or express. It could be argued, therefore, that the sense of believability exploited by the Truth Commission is similar to the staging and representation done by the playwright to either expose the inadequacies of the TRC or reinforce the fallibility of certain of its processes. Although the parts recalled by the puppets/witnesses, as with their human counterparts in the real world, could not represent the case of absolute or forensic truth, they present a vortex from which negotiations could be achieved in the present after the 'exhuming' of aspects of the past needed for negotiation and reconciliation.

The process of 'exhumation' of this past, in the view of Nicholson (2005:90 & 93) is indicative of "a dialectical relationship between the past and present in which the speaker does not 'relive' events, but 'rewrites' them", thereby "breaking down distinctions between the real and the imaginary". This process, therefore, could be seen as an attempt by drama "to redress the balance by telling alternative stories or stories from different perspectives" (Nicholson, 2005:63), following the controversy on whose story should be inscribed or customarily told amongst a group of people or

community. Further to this and not without a hint of irony, the denial and repression of the truth that both Pa Ubu and Niles laboriously seek to achieve, implicitly exposes their nefarious activities. This is seen in the dialogue between Pa Ubu and Niles following their cooperation in justifying the actions of the former by the latter, and the 'hiring' of Niles to do what Pa Ubu calls the "cleaning up" (*UTC*, 33):

> NILES: What's this I taste?
> A bit of skull shattered in pieces,
> A pair of hand torn off at the wrists,
> Some poisoned scalps shorn of their fleeces,
> Some half-burned skin injected with cysts.
>
> …But here are some tougher bits, not so easily digested.
>
> A piece of tongue that would not be silent,
> A beaten back that ignored the ache,
> A hand up-raised in gesture of defiant,
> A blood-red heart that would not break.
> Here, Cap'n. These oddments you feed me are most
> unsavoury. *(Burps)* Hello, that bit tasted familiar.
>
> PA UBU: Eat up, Niles, there's a good boy, or you'll find yourself attached to a pair of leather soles. (*UTC*, 35)

The conversation above shows a subordinate who takes instructions from a fastidious superior. Such instructions are backed-up with either covert or overt threats of possible slipping into a dangerous or precarious zone. For instance, Pa Ubu tries to intimidate Niles into submission by illustrating a threat to turn his 'remains' into a pair of shoes. As a pair of crocodile skin shoes, Niles would, in humiliation, become subordinated from the rank of special agent of the state to that of a mere foot soldier. More importantly, however, the third party to the dialogue ─ the dramatic audience/reader ─ is well positioned and privileged to know the full extent of the inimical activities of the interlocutors.

The level of the acceptability of the pieces of evidence given by witnesses can be measured against the fact that the TRC found it more convenient to accept evidence discovered through commissioned investigations and verifications. Be that as it may, even though the submissions of the wooden puppets in the play are liable to be subjected to forensic evaluation, they are qualitative enough to help them represent the burdens of the past and participate in the 'sloganeered' imperatives of reconciliation. Other than this, it will allow for the inscription of the 'self' and a negotiation for better socio-political and economic recognition. This recognition for

civil rights in a way negates the dehumanisation of the past and could be touted as a major achievement in the project of reconciliation and reparation. Over and above this, the puppets allow for the creation of a popular space for the narration of the collective history of a people through the codes of personal memory. Apart from the significance of the accounts of witnessing by the puppets in the area of embodied memory, the 'narrations' of the puppets/witnesses have the ability to precipitate an atmosphere of mourning and empathy; the latter being one of the touchstones of the effectiveness of theatre. On another note, the reaction of Niles to the onerous responsibility of his silencing truth promises some deep revelations.

Even though the duo of Pa Ubu and Niles could easily deny all the allegations proffered against them by the puppets/witnesses, that cannot be said of the reader/audience who is privy to the process of the repression of facts. For instance, the first part of Niles' statement, quoted above, is a catalogue of the killing, maiming, and poisoning that Pa Ubu and his agents carry out. This set of violations, when juxtaposed with the evidence of the witnesses, attains some substantive correlation. Niles' histrionic contribution in the above dialogue also reveals an attempt to delineate the category of victims in line with the nature of the various atrocities committed in the past. The first five lines of Niles' statement give the impression of subjugation initiated and carried out in the past, and which is only being bemoaned by victims. However, the last six lines could be ambiguously read as talking of instances of people that have been silenced/killed physically, but whose traumatic memories are too overwhelming for the perpetrators to ignore. These dead victims are continually and metaphorically asking for vengeance or, at least, pacification. Taken as representative of either of these, suffice to say that the last six lines seem to bemoan the difficulty inherent in repressing the memory of the past, most especially when such is contemplated by an agency that is culpable or complicit in it. Arguably, going by the exposition above, the use of puppets in Jane Taylor's *Ubu and the Truth Commission* provides a space for generating unanticipated possibilities as well as the appraisal of the history of a people embedded in the 'probable' testimonies before the TRC and the instance constructed in the play.[35] This process of designing material objects for representation conforms to the thinking of those who, according to

[35] Keir Elam submits that the dramatic worlds are taken as probable (possible), 'as if', "since they are 'seen' in progress 'here and now' without narratorial meditation" (p. 111).

Michael Smyth (2007:140), are creators and designers that are "thinking with their hands".

As indicated by the propositions made through aesthetic encoding and decoding above, *Ubu and the Truth Commission* is a significant re-enactment of the TRC. The re-enactment is investigative of how past evils were achieved and perpetuated. This is furtherance of the equivocal and ambiguous nature of the wooden puppets, representing witnesses as well as the possibility of mistranslation and ventriloquism[36] in the closed Plexiglas booth they occupied (Mark Sanders, 2007:x). Given the interrogation of the play that has been made so far, it is evident that *Ubu and the Truth Commission* is actualised based on the problematised relationship and physical confrontations between Pa Ubu and the Witnesses on the one hand, and the revelatory domestic squabbles between Pa and Ma Ubu, on the other. *Ubu and the Truth Commission* artistically unpacks the activities that characterise the past, during and after the Truth Commission, most especially the "convulsive death throes … violent networks" (Mark Sanders, 2007:iv) of the Apartheid state, with a great deal of sarcasm and irony. The various interactions between Pa Ubu[37] and Ma Ubu in a domestic sphere, and on the other hand that between Pa Ubu and his Trojan Horses, Brutus (the-three-headed-dog) as well as Niles, in combination reveals the various atrocities committed by Pa Ubu and his cronies. The reconstruction of the TRC made in the text brings Pa Ubu and the witnesses face-to-face in sustained contestations. While one of the witnesses recognises a particular instance of violation for which she will not be able to grant forgiveness, Pa Ubu and his allies are consumed with the determination to repress the truth and deceive the TRC.

When 'Truth' is 'Incomplete'

At another level, the play exposes the fallibility of judgment in the face of distortion and deception. Amidst profound attempts at simulating the TRC, certain revelations around the notions of confession and imputation as well as the limitations of such

[36] Sanders (2007), quoting the Truth Commission Report I:110, 112-113, 146-147; 5:4-5, 7-8), writes that "the goal of human rights violation hearings was to let victims speak, to grant them a hearing, to hear them, in their own languages" (19), even though profoundly and ironically, the "hearing meant to break the silence also bore witness to a self-silencing".
[37] An agent of the Apartheid state.

processes are revealed in the play. It is implied and arguable, therefore, that however diligent human beings have been in the search for truth, the realisation of such a wonderful idea would be challenged by circumstances that will not only make truth perpetually elusive, but constantly unattainable in human relations. However, this does not preclude a reliance on the characteristic principles of truth in charting a course across the murky waters through which people in general constantly navigate. Okwui Enwezor *et al* (2002:15) acknowledge this "governing principle" of truth but further opine that "it is also an ontological, ethical, juridical, and philosophical problem", leading, therefore, to "such notions as juridical truth, narrative truth, experiential truth, ontological truth, performative truth … with their own pressing demand for precision". If either conceived as a product of forensic or precise truth, a given truth would best exist as a cannibalised version of a particular event, thought, imagination or act. This complicated relationship between facts, lies and truth gains the attention of Michael Ignatieff, whose view was quoted in the Truth Commission Report, that: "[a] ll that a truth commission can achieve is to reduce the number of lies that can be circulated unchallenged in public discourse".[38] The reduction and, possibly, deduction of probable lies by the commission, both in the actual TRC and the parody achieved in the drama, are treated as if the commission has a magic wand to use to determine what is true from that which is false. This notwithstanding, lies have the nature to percolate truth as evidenced in Pa Ubu actions in *Ubu and the Truth Commission*. It is, therefore, difficult to subscribe to the idea of forensic or absolute truth as that would not only be misleading but would simply be ignoring the different disruptive tendencies highlighted so far in relation to the retrieval of memory.

Therefore, the graphic images of the activities of Pa Ubu and his subordinate agents in Taylor's *Ubu and the Truth Commission* expose the limitation of anchoring of amnesty on the idea of confession, full disclosure and remorse. These graphic images, achieved through the juxtaposition of Ubu's enormous intrigues and mischief as well as the naivety of the witnesses, are a foretaste of the complexities of necessary truth. Specifically, the signification of the several washings (showering) that Pa Ubu does every night is seen by Ma Ubu as a suspicious indication of Pa Ubu's licentiousness, which is later revealed to be an attempt to get rid of the "smell of blood and

[38] Sanders (ibid: 167).

dynamite" (*UTC*, 17) that hang on to him as a result of his diabolic and destructive actions. Geoffrey V. Davis (2000:69) further aptly captures this, that "in Ubu and the Truth Commission Kentridge uses the screen specifically to document Ubu's guilt (images of detention, hanging, torture, parcel bombs), to evoke the fate of his victims (the recurring image of death: bones, skulls, skeletons, gravestones) and to suggest his fear of exposure (the watching eye, the camera)". In spite of the different representations of Pa Ubu's brutality, using the destructive agency of Brutus, the three-headed dog and foot-soldier, he prefers the options of silence, repression and falsification:

PA UBU: Oh, Niles, such a vision I had. I saw the Great Truth approaching, a rope in its hand. It demanded I speak of the truth of our land.
NILES: Well, as I understand things, you have a choice. You can take your chances, keep silent, and wait to see if the law comes after you. But once they have unmasked you, you'll have to face the music. My advice would be to pre-empt it all. I hear there is to be a Commission to determine Truths, Distortions and Proportions.
PA UBU: I've heard of Truths, and know Distortions, but what are these Proportions you talk about?
NILES: An inquiry is to be conducted by great and blameless men who measure what is done, and why, and how.
PA UBU: And just what can these brilliant mathemunitions do?
NILES: They can beyond all ambiguity indicate when a vile act had a political purpose.
PA UBU: And if they so resolve?
NILES: Then they can and must absolve. The righteous have to forgive the unrighteous. It's the way of the world. But a full disclosure is what they demand. If they should find any dirt under your finger-nails after you have had complete manicure, they would chop off your hands.
PA UBU: So─ a full confession?
NILES: Quite.
PA UBU: Place my own neck in the noose?... But if I keep mum, how will they find out? I still have friends in high places (*UTC*, 17 & 19).

The conversation between Pa Ubu and Niles above typifies the obsession for truth in the transformative process of reconciliation, most especially as personified by the TRC and epitomised in the chairperson, Archbishop Tutu. Ironically though, while 'truth' is generally believed to have the capacity to set people free in Judeo-Christian circles, it is anthropomorphically treated here as a 'hangman'. As a result of the personification of truth, it will not only expose the guilt of Pa Ubu and Niles but it will make them susceptible to prosecution, mostly for acts not considered to have been politically motivated. It further demonstrates the intricacies that define the work of the TRC, most especially the delicate role of determining the level of political justification that is evident in a particular act of human violation. One thing that stands out in sorting these actions is the relationship an action shares with the interest

of the state and an attempt to protect the state from political attack, as opposed to those born out of personal interests.

This goes to say that the abusive dimension that certain operations attained under the Apartheid dispensation could be blamed on the excesses of the agent/aggressor. However, the fact still remains that the agent is largely functioning under the overall direction of the hegemony. The consequence of this development is the existence of a thin line of demarcation between the agent, created by the state, and the representative. The agent is principally an instrument through which power and authority are exercised. This complex process of differentiating, evaluating and categorising actions to respective classes of motives is demonstrated in the relationship between Pa Ubu and Brutus, on one hand, and Niles, on the other. While Brutus, and by extension, Niles, claim to be the pets of Pa Ubu, Niles justifies his actions as a performance of his state duties. However, it is obvious that drawing a line of demarcation between the actions of the agents and their sponsors might be somewhat challenging. This is explicated below in the suggestions Niles makes to Pa Ubu to cover his tracks:

SHADOW: I'm here with some advice. Would it be correct to say, that at present you've considered two options: conceal or reveal?
PA UBU: How economically expressed?
SHADOW: I have another suggestion: shift the burden of guilt. Take the initiative; find a name and remove yourself from all trace of blame. Extract yourself from the plot of your own history.
PA UBU: We have nothing to be ashamed of. We were only doing our job! (*UTC*, 53 & 55).

Shadow's suggestion that Pa Ubu should transfer guilt seems to be a middle line between the ideas of concealment and revelation. However, it falls short of the full disclosure that the TRC requires. The possibility that the process is an intention on the part of Pa Ubu to evade honesty is made clear enough by the various strategies that have been employed beforehand to construct silence, repression and concealment. The denials of Pa Ubu and his cohorts reveal a lack of respect that in real life characterised the participation of some of those called to partake in the processes of the TRC.[39] The

[39] For instance, it has been noted that some amnesty applications came from individuals who claimed to be "members or proxies" of Umkhonte we Sizwe and the Azanian Peoples Liberation Army, representing the ANC and PAC, respectively. "A relatively small, but significant, number of applications" were said to have been received from former apartheid security agents, while "only a handful of applications were received from the Inkatha Freedom Party, as well as former homeland security force members, and other groupings such as the right wing, the United Democratic Front and so on". See http://truth.wwl.wits.ac.za/cat. Accessed 20-01-09.

sarcasm with which Pa Ubu and his subordinates treat the TRC shows their level of disrespect and lack of commitment to the onerous process of reconciliation and nation-building. For instance, they refer to the TRC as a "show-and-tell business" (*UTC*, 59), while they also hope to "put Tu and Tu together" (*UTC*, 61) as part of their plans to cover up those acts of violence that are too awful to declare.

The reference made to the TRC as show business renders it inconsequential. This disparaging treatment of the TRC queries and erodes the perceived legitimacy and sanctity of this platform for reconciliation and purgation. The conduct of Pa Ubu and his factotums is reflective of the disruptive attitudes of some that are constantly affronting the sensibilities of South African newness. Therefore, Pa Ubu excuses himself by claiming post-traumatic stress disorder, which comes into place as a result of the discharge of his duties to the state. He goes a step further to claim that the violations he is expected to account for are done by, according to him, "those above me; those below me; those beside me" (*UTC*, 67). Little wonder that the unequal culpability found in the process leads to the death sentence that is imposed on Brutus, while Pa Ubu relishes in the ecstasy of amnesty. However, Brutus belatedly tries in vain to gain permission in a second opportunity to confess "nothing but the truth".[40] We are reminded of the fact that the notion that "Ubu acts with no sense of consequence" is one of the things Jane Taylor takes from Jarry. Geoffrey V. Davis (2000:66) argues that this is done "in order to represent through him what she perceived as the failure of the moral imagination in recent South African history rendered palpable through the Truth Commission".

One of the witnesses in Taylor's *Ubu and the Truth Commission* ties her unpreparedness to forgive Ubu to the gruesome manner in which he kills her son while another accuses him of torturing him/her to extract information about a particular 'fugitive', Edwin, who possibly must have incurred the wrath of the Apartheid agents for his anti-state activities. The position of the witness puppet who is too saddened by the death of her son to forgive Ubu, just like that of Tami in *The Bells of Amersfoort*, is representative of the space occupied by women during the TRC, most especially in the idea of Fiona C. Ross (2003:17) of women as "secondary

[40] A cliché credited to the TRC, which John Kani uses as the title of his play.

witnesses".[41] Women and the media were said to have been referred to as such by the TRC Commissioners. The vocalisation of the views of these two characters in the plays amplifies certain aspects of the conditions of women. This, in a way, is a departure from the fear of absolute silence expressed by Commissioner Mapule Ramashala, quoted in Ross (ibid:22-23), that "I have been very disturbed that women witness stories about other people, and are totally removing themselves". Therefore, while the testimonies of the female wooden puppet revolve around what she suffers directly and indirectly, that of Tami in *The Bells of Amersfoort* (to be discussed later) is expressly about her personal experiences.

Ubu and the Truth Commission attempts to spiritualise the process of attaining the truth in a manner representative of the church in the overall trajectory of witnessing and national life. Other than the involvement of the church at the level of exchanging forgiveness, and "the religious, clerical and moralistic identity" (Johan van der Walt, 2007:11) given to the TRC proceedings mostly by its president, Bishop Tutu, Ubu, as the major personification of perpetrators in Taylor's *Ubu and the Truth Commission*, engages "the blood of the lamb" (*UTC*, 69) in achieving total cleansing, having been contaminated by the various atrocities he commits in the process of discharging his official duties. The enormity of these crimes is reinforced by the screening of the images of evidence and of Pa Ubu's phantasmagorias. This is even done in the face of the denial of culpability in such violations. Ubu declares:

> How dark is my day at noon, Oh God,
> How unjust the sins that I bear
> Despite all the dangerous paths that I trod
> To save my own people despair (*UTC*, 69).

This is followed by the complementary role of the chorus:

> O the blood, O the blood,
> O the blood of the lamb sets me free
> Send a flood, send a flood
> Send your blood like a flood over me (*UTC*, 69).[42]

[41] Fiona C. Ross (2003:17) writes that "forty per cent of the victims about whom women testified were their sons, while husbands account for a further 16 per cent. Seventeen per cent of testimonies concerned other male kin, 6 per cent, unrelated men, and 14 per cent of women's testimonies concerned their own experiences of gross violations of human rights. Six and a half per cent of testimonies concerned women kin and a further half per cent concerned unrelated women".

[42] Jesus Christ is viewed by faithful as the Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the world, through the shedding of his blood.

The spiritualisation of the physicality or bodily construction of skin pigmentation, or race, is not entirely strange to the 'politics of religion'. It is no surprise that the church was part of the instruments used to confer legitimacy on Apartheid, starting with the popular notion that the preservation of white identities was an instruction from God. While some recognisable churches were directly involved, others were passive collaborators. In the RICSA Report, after showing the areas in which churches opposed the implementation of Apartheid, it is stated that:

> Christian churches gave their blessing to the universally condemned system of apartheid. The politicians that invented apartheid came from churches. Some of the apartheid laws, for instance the Mixed Marriages Acts, were motivated by churches (especially the DRC), and churches actively implemented apartheid policies (15).[43]

Added to the above is the fact that some churches benefited from the emptying of buildings from which people were evicted. In short, "the church was confused and silent" (Carl Niehaus, 1998:86) for the period Apartheid held sway in South Africa. Therefore, what Pa Ubu does could be interpreted as the desperate bid of an old privileged individual, as well as the conspiracy between the church and the Apartheid system. This is underscored when viewed in the context where Pa Ubu and his agents are interested in complicating things and confusing the TRC in its search for the truth. Analogous to the English Poet John Donne's fear of the unknown future in 'A Hymn to God the Father', Pa Ubu appears to be apprehensive of a possible moment of reckoning that might be adjudicated over by celestial powers with transcendental configuration, values and principles. Central to John Donne's request is that God should send his 'Son' and cause him to shine on him in order to be rescued at the shore, following which he will "fear no more".[44] The journey to the shore, after which John Donne would "have spun his last thread" (lines 13 & 14), is a reinventing of the Greek mythology of the transition from life to death, and judgement, which was symbolised by the journey across The River Styx. Pa Ubu's use of the blood of the 'lamb'/Jesus typifies his desire for cleansing or purification which is based on the Judeo-Christian religious belief that links the death of Jesus to vicarious sacrifice and

[43] The report is published under the title "Faith Communities and Apartheid: the RICSA Report", in *Facing the Truth: South African Faith Communities and the Truth & Reconciliation Commission*. Eds. James Cochrane, John de Gruchy and Stephen Martin. Cape Town: David Philip Publishers, 1999. pp. 15-77.

[44] See http://www.bartleby.com. Accessed 30/10/2009.

the initiation of transformation. His quest for the blood of the 'lamb', therefore, leaves us with an acknowledgment of his guilt.

Conclusion

Therefore, based on expository engagements undertaken so far, and given the fact that "any telling" is both deliberately and inadvertently "produced of silences and erasures" (Ross, 2003:5), it can be argued that the quest for the truth, most especially forensic or absolute truth within the TRC in Taylor's *Ubu and the Truth Commission*, is unattainable. While such truths are present to people outside the cocoon of the TRC, it is left only with the amount of truth made available to it. In the case of Ubu, what he achieves with the aid of his foot soldiers is a premeditated repression of truth. However efficient the orchestration of the truth used to consummate the negotiated transition appeared to be, the unaddressed lacuna left behind in the process would always beg attention. Such precariousness is encapsulated by Pa Ubu when he states that: "The Archbishop's plans may promise rainbows, but for us it's heavy weather" (*UTC*, 61). This development might explain the desire of the trio of Niles, Ma Ubu and Pa Ubu for "a clean slate, a new beginning, a bright future" (*UTC*, 73). Pa Ubu's statement in the above is reminiscent of the emergence of a form of order from the confused past through "the 1994 elections, which seemed to be a miracle and the herald of a new era" (Anthony Butler, 2004:28). Also, apart from the fact that Pa Ubu's suspicion of heavy weather within Archbishop Desmond Tutu's rainbows signals possible consequences of his past actions, it also signifies the uncertainties that await people of different races, most especially someone like Pa Ubu who has hitherto enjoyed privileges occasioned by his white skin and his position as a political foot soldier. The 'rainbows' and 'heavy weather' contrast with each other in terms of indexical signification. The rainbows, for instance, when viewed against the biblical assurance by God not to destroy with water, reinforce Nelson Mandela's notion expressed by his well-known post-Apartheid adage 'never again', while the heavy weather promises a flood that might either cleanse or erode the land. Therefore, even though the rainbow is often used to celebrate South African's diversity, it nonetheless "inadvertently highlights the degree to which the constituent colours of South Africa's rainbow have retained much of the 'apartness' they acquired during the segregationist and apartheid era" (Butler, 2004:30).

However, true to its commitment, the truth displayed at the level of form and aesthetics in *Ubu and the Truth Commission* typifies the multiple possibilities that define the idea and the quest for truth. But truth, in a substantial way, is needed for the stabilisation of the new South Africa being birthed by the violent and burdened past. The note on which the play closes provides some questions as well as some conjectures. The trio of Pa Ubu, Ma Ubu and the vulture are said to constitute a "Three Company" (*UTC*, 71) on a boat that "floats toward the horizon" (*UTC*, 73). This boat is said to be travelling at a very high speed towards the end of the play. While the three characters are certainly not nearly representative enough of the various racial representations in the new South Africa, they can be used to signify victims of violence (the vulture as the conscience of the society), perpetrators of vicious acts (Pa Ubu) and those believed to have occupied the middle line (Ma Ubu) in apartheid South Africa. One apprehension felt by Pa Ubu and which qualifies as a cautionary note to the new South Africa from within the metaphor of the sailing adventure is the possibility of capsizing. It is thoughtful, therefore, that as people savour the refreshing wind of the new dawn (*UTC*, 71), very clear and conscious efforts need to be made not to rock the 'boat'.

CHAPTER THREE

EXILE AND THE BURDEN OF REJECTION

> & this is the pain and the glory, said I:
> that, after bidding Africa goodbye,
> we still cannot leave her behind, said I:
>
> That even when we know her love has waned
> we can never stop her odors clinging on
>
> ─Okinba Launko[45]

This chapter deals with the experience of exile, both internal and external, which is often constitutive of migration. It unpacks the consequences of movement of people of different racial backgrounds, most especially from Indonesia, Europe, India, and elsewhere via the slave trade during the time of the Dutch East India Company to South Africa as well as the attendant socio-political imperatives. One such incidence is the racial interactions that have created certain socio-political multiplexes. Specifically, the chapter interrogates the different shades of the experience of exile that are explored in Athol Fugard's *Sorrows and Rejoicings*. Fugard's *Sorrows and Rejoicings* exemplifies the continuous dislocation of a character, particularly in relation to misplaced anticipated freedom in exile and the relatively unchanged socio-political space at home on his return. The chapter looks at how individuals respond to the questions and challenges of identity and especially the liminal space occupied by exiles while, in the first instance, being physically, socially, or psychologically dislocated from home, and, secondly, following their return or reintegration. It also interrogates the shifting processes of identity and citizenship in the new South Africa and some of their unique possibilities.

The operation and consequences of Apartheid have come to define some of the unique experiences contemporary South Africa relates with today. Central to such manifestations were the dispersal of people who stood against Apartheid. Such dispersals were informed by the extreme repression under Apartheid and the sustained insurrection by freedom fighters which led to many explosive encounters between the authoritarian apartheid regime and the liberation movements. Consequent upon these were police raids and banning orders from the state as well as detentions of dissidents

[45] Cited in Kofi Anyidoho (1997:1).

which occurred with increasing severity (Albie Sachs, 1992:9). As a result, many committed activists and citizens who opposed Apartheid went into exile while many others stayed behind to coordinate the home front. This development has been popularly used in recent times to draw a distinction between members of the African National Congress (ANC) and the United Democratic Front (UDF). The tendency is for the ANC to be accused of abandoning the struggle at home for the comfort of exile as opposed to UDF members who stayed to wrestle directly with the Apartheid regime. As much as this argument of exile as a comfort zone is plausible, engagement with *Sorrows and Rejoicings* indicates that exile is not always palatable. Even when it provides some comfort, it must be equally stated that life in exile consists of pain and anguish, "conflicting ideas of identity – cultural, existential, religious, etc" (Breyten Breytenbach, 1992:63).

There is a huge body of literature detailing the experiences of exiles of South African origin in different locations, most especially African countries.[46] However, Mark Israel (1999:3) argues that South African migration to the United Kingdom has received little academic attention. While stating that the history of migration from South Africa to the United Kingdom "dates back to 1613 when Gabriel Towerson of the East India Company kidnapped two Khoi-khoi from the Cape of Good Hope and set sail for London", Israel (1999:1-2) observes that the increased repression and confrontations under Apartheid led to an increase in the number of people that relocated to the United Kingdom. Israel warns of the difficulty inherent in the notion of exile as he argues that it is difficult to pigeonhole all exiles into a singular bloc without giving consideration to the importance of individual experiences. Such differentiating peculiarities that Israel contemplates will be found in the characterisation of Dawid, the major character in Fugard's *Sorrows and Rejoicings*.

[46] This includes: Hilda Bernstein. *The Rift: the Exile Experience of South Africans*. London: J. Cape, 1994; Lorna Levy. *Radical Engagements: a Life in Exile*. Johannesburg: Jacana Media, 2009; Patrick Heaven, Chris Stones and Coen Bester. "Attitudes toward a South African Liberation Movement". *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Vol. 30, No 3 (Sep., 1986), pp. 487-496; Ezekiel Mphahlele. "Africa in Exile". *Daedalus*, 111, pp. 29-48; Cosmo Pieterse (*et al*). "Writers in Exile: South Africans in London". *African Arts*, Vol.1, No. 4 (Summer, 1968), pp. 19-25.

The Ironic Conflation of 'Sorrow' and 'Rejoicing' in Fugard's *Sorrows and Rejoicings*

Fugard is undoubtedly one of the leading playwrights in South Africa. The political commitment in Fugard's respective anti-Apartheid plays positioned them within the parameters of art as a functional instrument for socio-political regeneration. *Sorrows and Rejoicings* differs from Fugard's earlier plays as it (attested to in the introduction to the play by Anthony Akerman) relies on the use of a non-naturalistic style. Central to this play is the anthropomorphic deployment of the 'stinkwood' as a character. The 'stinkwood' table is alive to the conversations between the three physically present human characters in the play: Allison Olivier, Marta and Rebecca. The play is set in a miniature room with few characters. This conforms with Akerman's description of Fugard as an "economical writer" who projects unique "circumstances and personal predilection" (xii). The plot of the play is driven by the narration of different aspects of the life of the three major characters, Allison, Marta and Rebecca, as they relate with the absent yet central character, Dawid Olivier. It is Dawid's actions, activities, and overall memory that are recounted by the three characters. The playwright seamlessly segues the narration of the three women. This leads each of these characters to undertake a fairly long monologue, one after the other. As a result, the narrators, according to Akerman, assume the responsibility of "the scene, which is to advance the actions through conflict" (xix). Even though it cannot be said that the play employs what Akerman calls "dramatic cathartic confrontations" (xix), it contains occasional outbursts from the physically present characters, Allison, Marta and Rebecca, which are characteristic of personal preferences, inclinations and assertions.

The room where *Sorrows and Rejoicings* is set can be taken as a metaphor for the Karoo and, by extension, the South African nation. The plot tells the story of a family retrospectively, starting from the burial of the man of the house, Dawid, and continuing to how he lived and passed away. Dawid is a white South African of Afrikaner descent who is married to Allison Olivier, a white South African with English ancestry. Dawid also has a lover, Marta, a coloured South African whose acquaintance with Dawid later develops into a sexual relationship. She subsequently has a child with him, Rebecca. Rebecca is described in the play as a 'bastard', whose

illegitimacy is predicated on the official abhorrence of sexual relationships between different racial groups. The vehemence of this disapproval is portrayed in the fact that the Afrikaner community does not only have revulsion for the relationship Dawid has with Marta but also his marriage to Allison. Marta is depicted in the play as having grown up in Dawid's house, where her own mother earlier worked as a domestic servant. Marta is forever committed to the cleaning and polishing of the 'stinkwood table'. She is introduced to the readers as forlorn, following the trip the lover and father of her daughter, Dawid, makes to London with his wife, Allison. This sense of abandonment (although Dawid promises to return and does fulfil his promise later) causes her to constantly shed tears as she cleans and polishes the 'stinkwood table'. This emotional torture and imprisonment, as well as the social rejection Rebecca suffers, causes Marta to indoctrinate Rebecca to hate her father, Dawid. Rebecca, in turn, extends her hatred towards the very room where the play is set.

The symbolic correlations between the 'room', 'stinkwood table', the 'Karoo' and the South African geographical space are most rife in the play. While there are apparent references made to the Karoo and South Africa, the stinkwood table and the room as referenced are highly significant. The room and the stinkwood table help the young Dawid to nurture his creative ability. The room also functions as a real space where he can challenge the dictates of the apartheid regime – concerning the restrictions it imposed on inter-racial sexual relationships and marriages. Some dramatic paradoxes are enacted around the table in the play. One such is the notion of ownership and accountability. While the ownership of the table, and by extension the room, is initially attributed to Dawid and his people, they are later bequeathed to Rebecca at the end of the play. The table also embodies the polarised relations of servant and master, which recalls the principal inequality promoted by the apartheid government. Furthermore, the privileged master position occupied by Dawid and the precarious identity of a domestic servant lived by Marta, reinvent the domination and oppression of blacks. Marta and Rebecca are not merely socially constructed as the underprivileged but they are also presented as representatives of the materially deficient, whose existence is tied to crumbs that fall off the master's table. Marta and Rebecca, who are coloured, are said to be living with their 'people' in the location. This probably explains why Rebecca advises that Marta should not have anything to

do with Dawid and Allison since her 'rightful' constituency is waiting for her in the location.

The table, apart from being a platform for Dawid's creative endeavours, can also function in the conventional manner as a place of sharing and identification. This sharing goes beyond gastronomic rituals to include issues like ideas, beliefs, desires and quests. Better still, it is also a place of negotiation. It is interesting that the process of sharing and negotiating at 'the round table' reverses the idea of Dawid's privileged ownership of the stinkwood table and the room to that of repossession and control. Marta, and possibly her daughter, are no longer merely expected to sweat and toil to preserve the table against their wishes, but are invited to own and improve the condition of the table. The symbolic tenability of the stinkwood in relation to the South African experience is further reinforced by the characteristic features of that type of wood. Known botanically as *Ocotea bullata*, or "regarded by many as the prince of indigenous trees" (81),[47] the stinkwood is mostly found in "scattered areas from the Cape Peninsula to the Limpopo Province … an endemic species with unique characteristics" (81).[48] The stinkwood, just like the multifarious colours of the South African racial 'rainbow', has an array of colours that make it special and beautiful; "from light cream to brown to almost black, sometimes featuring all these colours together" (82).

Furthermore, a huge similarity exists between the natural resources the South Africa landscape is endowed with and the exploitation, disturbance, destruction and decimation that the stinkwood has been subjected to. This is because of its "beauty and enduring quality" (82). Moreover, the stinkwood takes about 400 years to reach maturity and is now a "protected species".[49] As a way of symbolic interpolation, it could be argued that this captures the anticipated gestation period that the transforming South Africa needs to reach the ideal goal of equality, freedom, and development. However, it is ironic that this beautiful wood is also named after a sense of revulsion and repugnance, 'stink'. While the wood stinks with a strong smell at the point of felling, it undergoes transformation with time to perform aesthetic and

[47] See http://books.google.co.za Accessed 04/08/2009.
[48] See http://books.google.co.za. Accessed 04/08/2009.
[49] See http://dev.sanbi.org. Accessed 04/08/2009.

utilitarian functions. The purification process needed to rid the 'putrefaction' of the South African past might be necessary, after all, if the beauty of the stinkwood (and analogously and by extension that of gold) is dependent on the painful notion of pruning.

The different stories that are told in *Sorrows and Rejoicings* commence with the activities surrounding the burial of Dawid. As the plot progresses, the play sheds some light on his past life through flashback narration. Dawid has just returned from London after spending seventeen years in exile. His exile is precipitated by the ban imposed on his creative works by the apartheid state. This restriction is a result of Dawid's anti-government activities, most especially its retrogressive policies. The commitment Dawid shows is informed by his belief, as stated in the play, that poetry and politics are inseparable (*SR*, 24). The consequences of Dawid's confrontation and contestations with the establishment show in the reference made to the representatives of government as "those bastards", who attempt to break up the marriage between Dawid and Allison. In another vein, Allison declares that apartheid South Africa wrecks everything (*SR*, 32). The decision of Dawid and his wife, Allison, to go into exile is informed by the idea that exile will give them the freedom that is alien within South Africa, most especially the air for creative productivity needed by Dawid, or what Allison calls "the new beginning" (*SR*, 11). Dawid's opinion is that the ban imposed on his work at home will be circumvented by the possibility of writing about South Africa from London. Dawid further believes that this freedom will one day be experienced in South Africa. However, contrary to the expectation that London will give Dawid back his poetic voice and potency, he becomes disoriented, takes to alcoholism and later suffers leukaemia, which propels him home, even after the memory of home and the death of his father fail to do so. Dawid's sickness in turn undermines his ability to have a child with his wife, Allison. This incapacitation is also likened to the emasculation of the power of creative self expression that Dawid feels both in South Africa and London. While in London, Dawid requests that should he die, he should not be buried in England (*SR*, 23) but rather that he should be taken home and buried beside his 'oupa' (grandfather) and 'ouma' (grandmother), whose burials he could not attend.

As stated in the blurb of the play, *Sorrows and Rejoicings* is rife with "the themes of exile and the importance of place …", of belonging and home. The text reveals the heightened sense of nostalgia exhibited by the main character, Dawid. Dawid, apart from desiring to be buried at home, constantly laments his detachment from the Karoo.[50] The fondness Dawid has for the Karoo is contrasted with the hatred for it felt by his wife Allison, who prefers the city, Johannesburg, and 'civilisation'. Allison states categorically that: "I didn't belong here, didn't want to belong here …" (*SR*, 20-21). However, Allison regrets this belatedly after the death of Dawid. The characterisation of Dawid and Allison in their preferences for the Karoo and the city respectively, realistically reminds us of the notion of citizenship in South Africa. Dawid as a descendant of the Afrikaners is irrevocably committed to the Karoo while Allison of English descent, would like to be in London, or at least the city. This might be explained by her commitment to 'civilisation', sophistication, freedom and orderliness. The lackadaisical attitude Allison shows towards South Africa typifies the circumstances underlying the withdrawal of British colonial authorities and the handing over to the Dutch. Elizabeth Landis (1961:4) calls this a victory that:

> was signalled by last fall's referendum on the establishment of a republic, and the final symbolic act was completed when the Governor-General, representing Queen Elizabeth, gave his consent to the new constitution enacted by the South African Parliament. This replaced the entire South Africa Act of 1909, by which the British Parliament had created the Union of South Africa out of the four colonies of Natal, the Cape of Good Hope, the Orange Free State, and the Transvaal.

The attachment Dawid has for the Karoo is further reinforced by the desperate attempts he makes to preserve his 'soul' through the speaking of Afrikaans. Therefore, apart from the fact that Dawid fears the possibility of dying in exile, he detests much more the idea of living in exile without one's soul (*SR*, 44). As it shall be interrogated later in the chapter, Dawid walks the street of London and soliloquises in Afrikaans in an attempt to attain a continuous link with his mother tongue. However, this fanaticism introduced into his use of the language, just like his obsession for the Karoo, is reminiscent of the description of a regional writer that Akerman accords Fugard (2002:viii). Other instances of his attachment to Afrikaner 'identities' is the distaste that Dawid shows each time his name or that of his wife is pronounced without an Afrikaans accent. Furthermore, Marta has to speak to him in

[50] Rachel L. Swarns describes it as Fugard's "vast semi-desert that inspires much of his creativity". See www.racematters.org. Accessed 04/08/2008.

Afrikaans when he requests to be told what happened during his absence and informed about the new people he encounters on his return. Allison refers to this exercise as an attempt to help him "cancel out his exile" (*SR*, 19). Even though the Karoo qualifies as a metaphor for South Africa, the strong preference Dawid has for it and the bond he shares with Afrikaner identity betrays him as committed to sectional patriotism. This gets confirmation from Athol Fugard in a chat with Mary Benson who, speaking of Afrikaners, declares that "their love of the country has become a passionate but shrivelling emotion".[51]

Migration and Exile

Migration, as a process, is of utmost relevance to the idea of exile, most especially when physical movements are involved. People migrate for several reasons;[52] some of which are political and economical. Starting with the notion that migrants are people who "refuse to occupy a single space", Mae G. Henderson (1995:2) posits that the borders being crossed by migrants are "geographical, cultural, national, linguistic, generic, specular and disciplinary". Migration, as a concept, has been interrogated copiously in contemporary discourses. For instance, migration can be defined "as a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence, usually across some type of administrative boundary" (William B. Wood, 1994:607). Residence in this case is a subtle way of making reference to the homeland. However, the administrative demarcation discussed presupposes originally fluid or borderless geographical spaces that were subsequently appropriated for racialised socio-economic ends. But more than this, the latter highlights the importance of ownership. Migration, either done voluntarily or compulsively, entails movement away from or dislocation with a familiar space, people, and culture.

This, by extension, leads to an exile-like experience. Given the above, it might not be far fetched to use the two words, 'migration' and 'exile' alternately, depending on what is being emphasised. It should be reiterated, however, that such interchangeability is not absolute. More often than not, "exile, emigration,

[51] See http://findarticles.com. Accessed 22/09/2009.
[52] This is supported by William B. Wood (1994:607) that "a person can migrate many times, for varied durations, and across numerous territorial divisions".

expatriation, ostracism, and nomadic migration" (William B. Wood, 1994:607) represent different types of movements. They are atavistic in nature and are, therefore, "both ancient and modern" (James Whitlark and Wendell Aycock, 1992:iii). The encapsulation of exile presupposes a forceful detachment from 'the homeland' or a place the migrant considers home[53]. Starting by tracing the genealogy of the word 'exile' to the Latin word "*exilium*", (6), meaning to be "banished, uprooted, or displaced", Peter I. Rose (1993:9) conceives the themes of exile to include: "memories of persecution; wrenching decisions about leaving family, friends, and familiar surroundings; the ordeal of escape; constant thoughts of who and what was left behind; frustrations of existence in foreign environs; uncertainties of future prospects".

This is all the more so because of the nuances that define what home is. Such manifestations can, furthermore, be constructed through the use of "homeland and home-in-exile" (Janet Pérez, 1992:36). The first has to do with the place of origin while the latter is hinged on the "borders and barriers which enclose us within the safety of familiar territory …" (Mae G. Henderson, 1995:4). Exile indicates the mobility of people across geographical and political boundaries in response to overwhelming circumstances that make departure inevitable, as opposed to journeys conceived based on voluntary decisions. Exile also implies the notion of non-belongingness within a particular social configuration. That is, "the pervasive feeling human beings often experience that they do not entirely belong in the sublunar world" (Thomas Pavelin, 1996:306). Pavelin's view in relation to the position of Pérez above emphasises the religious notion of 'foreignness' or the identity of a stranger that is used to evoke the permanence of 'home' in heaven. The implication of this is the emergence of an opposition between migration and exile.

To this end, while the migrant could be credited with the decision to embark on a return at will, such a possibility for someone in exile is difficult, as certain parameters would first need to be taken into consideration. The reality of this possibility must have informed what Mark Israel (1999:7), responding to the claims made by Shu-Yun

[53] Edward Said (1984:54) holds that "homes are always provisional in a secular and contingent world".

Ma, tags as "an unproblematized idealization of exile"[54]. Israel's view is predicated on the elements of exile as identified by Shu-Yun Ma (1993) which are: "forced exit, dissenting voice and struggle to return". Israel later concludes that "exile is forged, in part, by physical and symbolic violence in the arenas of exit, displacement and return" (17). Nonetheless, it could be submitted that a state of exile, therefore, connotes a form of disintegration or dismemberment as a result of what Janet Pérez (1992:36) calls a "painful separation from the homeland", leading the "exiles to cross borders, break barriers of thought and experience". Both migration and exile connote the idea of dispersal that the word diaspora typifies. However, while diaspora "is most frequently associated with the voluntary dispersion which configures the Jewish Diaspora", another word, "*galut*[55]… refers to their forced dispersion, or what one might more commonly call 'exile'" (Mae G. Henderson, 1995:8).

However, it must be stated that the idea of exile is not in any way limited to concrete movement or visible displacement, as manifestations of exile could as well be psychological, emotional, social or political. This dynamism is corroborated by Dolora Wojciehowski (1992:11) who suggests that forms of exile could be "spatial, temporal, spiritual, social, and/or psychological". The seemingly abstract version in the foregoing encapsulates the experience of Marta who is physically in touch with a familiar space but is estranged and marginalised along the lines identified above. The characterisation of Dawid manifests some of the tropes of exile which include memories of persecution, the painful decision of leaving a familiar space, the hurt of living in a strange environment and uncertainty regarding future opportunities. However, Dawid differs from the group of exiles Winifred Woodhull (1993:7) categorises as "the uncountable masses of whom UN agencies have been created, or refugees without urbanity, with only ration cards and agency numbers".

[54] Mark Israel is obviously referring to the difficulty involved in categorising the different shades of South Africans that immigrated to the United Kingdom. He refers to them as invisible migrants.
[55] A Hebrew word.

Art, Censorship and Internal Banishment

As mentioned briefly earlier, Dawid's participation in the liberation struggle is through his writing, rather than physical insurrection.[56] Such a development correlates with the view of Ngugi Wa Thiong'o (2002:435) who holds that the state and the artist do occupy a space which is turned into "a magnetic field of tensions and conflicts". Following a review of the relationship between the tragic poet and the city of Plato, Ngugi wa Thiong'o (2002:435) ascribes to arts what he calls "some sorts of reformative effects". Wa Thiong'o earlier submits that:

> The war between art and the state is really a struggle between the power of performance in the arts and the performance of power by the state…The conflict in the enactment of power is sharper where the state is externally imposed, a situation of the conqueror and the conquered for instance in colonialism (2002:434).

Dawid's state of exile reflects a painful departure and a 'burdened' return, most especially in relation to the reference made to the Apartheid days in the play. Dawid's situation reminds us of some of the several reasons why people go into exile. The antagonism of the writer to the state, as seen in Dawid, leads him/her, therefore, to be dialectically set against a hegemonic power. The commitment shown by the creative writer oftentimes, just like that of the comrades in the struggle, earns them imprisonment, exile or death from a repressive state.[57] The possibility of exile, therefore, puts them far away from the land and the people to whose cause they had dedicated their lives, and for whose sake s/he had suffered so much personal misery (Kofi Anyidoho, 1997:3). Exile, for Dawid, has a "number of anticipated and unanticipated consequences" (Israel, 1999:7).

As typified above, Dawid chooses exile in order to free his creative voice, which is being silenced through the banning of his literary work in an attempt to prevent its dissemination to the internal and outside world. Dawid laments the impact of the ban on his work thus: "My writing is the only weapon I've got. Without it I'm useless. And that is what that bloody banning order has made me … useless! I can't be read. I can't be published. I can't be quoted" (*SR*, 26). However, Dawid appears to be

[56] Dennis Brutus (1992:76) posits that "unhappily is the fate of the writer to be a dissident. It is the fate of the writer to say the unpopular thing".

[57] The vulnerability of the writer, just like the precarious condition of a struggle hero, is illustrated by Ruth First, a leading white South African activist and intellectual who was assassinated in 1982.

personalising the creative and the writing enterprise for his own aggrandisement. Granted, he is one of the unofficial chroniclers of his community under the reign of Apartheid state, which could not stomach the observations he makes about his society since "such observations are the air he breathes" (Diane S. Wood, 1992:132), his statement above is more of a lamentation of his degenerating sense of self and his own relevance. It could be argued, therefore, that the process through which a writer engages with his/her world is also converted into the construction and glorification of the self. Such interplay queries the rigid delineation between the fictional and the autobiographical. The above is a reminder of the age-long tensions that normally exist between artists and hegemony. For Dawid, poetry and politics are inseparable. Most participants in the liberation struggle in South Africa went into exile with a one-way exit visa/permit. This calculative repression is noted by Kole Omotoso (2008:1) when he opines that:

> examples exist all over the world and in Africa of writers who have had to pay dearly, sometimes with their lives, when they dared to set right the men and women who rule the temporal world, when they dare to condemn their own people for doing wrong.

The implication is that the place of birth of the writer becomes a prison of a sort, as the writer is subjected to strict control and strictures by the state. Such tyrannical spatial manipulations are because "the state sees the entire territory as its performance area; it organizes the space as a huge enclosure, with definite places of entrances and exits" (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 2002:445). This marks the beginning of their exile experience at home as the walls and borders which should protect them, as citizens of the state are used to limit and imprison them.

Home, Exile and Creativity

Dawid in London exhibits a sense of dislocation at home and disorientation with familiar ways of life. Both the physical and psychical manifestations of this disjunction are felt, more often than not, emotionally. Exile is particularly counter-productive for Dawid who desires to be in touch with his readers, most especially the socio-political context that is the catalyst for his creative engagements. The relevance of these socio-political conditions is predicated on the belief that the root/home provides required nourishment for the writer. Even though he could achieve some

reputation through his published poems in London, Dawid constantly bewails his creative stagnation and disjunction with his readers. According to him, "the ink in my pen has clotted and dried up like the blood in a dead man's veins", the heart "has stopped beating" (*SR*, 34). As a result of the 'double jeopardy' of losing his creative fecundity and stable health, Dawid's constant longing to be reconnected to the familiar locus becomes extremely overwhelming. This shows that the respite that is often imagined and sought by the exile in his/her migration across borders is not always available. Therefore, exile, according to Micere Githae Mugo (1997:81), can be demonstratively "harrowing, draining, eroding, and imaginatively vacuuming…" as against the one-sided notion that it promises fulfilment and high productivity. As indicated previously, Dawid held the erroneous belief that "exile is going to give me back my voice, Marta. In London I'll have the freedom again to speak and be heard, to write and be read" (*SR*, 26). This statement, in a way, underpins the hope of freedom the writer in exile has access to, as s/he is removed from the climate of fear and repression precipitated by the brutish government at home. In what looks like an attempt to challenge old impressions, the discomforting realities of Dawid in exile and the longing he has for home, despite his 'privileged' white skin, undermine the argument that white South African exiles were more at home in London. In other words, "exile can become a prison of sorts, especially for the African artist seeking close communion with those of whom his or her creativity is likely to have the greatest relevance and usefulness" (Kofi Anyidoho, 1997:9).

In spite of the fact that South Africa has been turned into a prison of a sort, Dawid nonetheless maintains a strong inclination for it. Such nostalgic longing, among many others, is principally occasioned by his strong alienation, loneliness and detachment in London.[58] More often than not, the preponderance of such feeling is strengthened by the desire to retain his identity. The need for identification and its sustenance is natural in the sense that "human beings are identity-seeking animals, both as individuals and as collectivities" (T. K. Oomen, 1997:35). The individual, as a social element, forms his/her identity based on the prescriptions and directions informed by a social network. The negotiations and interactions made in social spaces impact on

[58] Lindiwe Mabuza (1989:vii) believes that "being on your own in exile can be dangerous. After some time you begin to fill the intense loneliness of not being among your people. Because you are there as an individual, the pain of being away from home is something you have to deal with alone".

how and which type of identity is formed in the process. This has been referred to as the in-group identity, which defines how the holder relates with people outside his/her own group, leading to the emergence of the self/other, us/them boundaries in the process. Smith (2004:248), however, argues against the idea of "eternal belongingness", claiming that the creation of the dialectical pairs of in-groups and identities are mere "ruses of the powerful, attempts to create unequal structures of order" which are always threatened by the "borderline between communities" (cultural difference) and "the cutting edge of translation and negotiation" (in-between space). The above is indeed very apt in capturing the Apartheid and post-Apartheid South African situations. For instance, while the focus in Apartheid South Africa was consciously upon racial purity, concerted and obvious efforts are now concentrated on dissolving old borders in order to facilitate inclusion and integration.

Interestingly, the pursuit of purity is significantly counter-productive because "once us-them boundaries form, they take on lives of their own as people on either side attach social relations, stories, and practices to them" (Charles Tilly, 2005:184). This is true of South Africa where "as a result of apartheid, South African society has been characterized by a plurality of groups who have either been 'named' in terms of specific identities by others, or have 'claimed' exclusive identities for themselves" (Arlene Grossberg, Struwig & Pillay, 2006:54). Dawid's demeanour in *Sorrows and Rejoicings* is in tandem with the two possibilities mentioned above. Dawid perpetuates whiteness in some ways, maybe at once as part of the inseparability of his skin along with challenges of the constructs of Afrikaner whiteness. Dawid's whiteness privileges him socially and economically, with his family having the history over time of lording over Marta's ancestors, who have been their domestic servants. This orchestrated superiority accounts for the repulsion with which Marta and Rebecca are treated by the Afrikaner community. At the same time, Dawid's interracial sexual association with Marta, therefore, debilitates this Afrikaner's 'place of pride'.

Dawid's attachment to the Karoo is similar to the love most Fugard's characters show to it in his plays. The characters often share some inclinations about home with him, most especially as the Karoo is considered (by Fugard and the characters) to be creatively inspirational. Fugard started using the Karoo as a setting for his plays in the

1980s. He paid a visit to a friend around 1973 and discovered the small village of New Bethesda, which he fell in love with, leading to his purchasing "an inexpensive house there as a rural retreat" (Andrew Foley, 2009:173). As a result, Fugard's character, Dawid, would never think of London as home. Partly responsible for Dawid's condition is the fact that Allison, his white wife, informs us that the excitement of the freedom they get in London suddenly disappears, substantially as a result of his disconnect with the Karoo and South Africa. The profundity of the love Dawid has for his home country is expressed in the request he makes to his wife that: "If anything happens to me, Allison, for my soul's sake don't bury me in England. Get my body back home" (*SR*, 23). The emotion that Dawid exudes towards his South African home is reminiscent of what Patrick Chabal (2009:27) calls "the many important dimensions of origin". Chabal recognises "land, ancestors and belief system" as forming "the core of … the constraints of origin". Chabal (2009:28) further describes land, in particular, as "constitutive of what 'being' means".

Fugard, according to Mary Benson, "spoke of the Karoo as beautiful, pure, spare, 'a landscape where man is always the right size' ".[59] Dawid's return to the Karoo after prolonged unproductive years justifies Fugard's belief that creative impetus in South Africa must come from cooperation between the races.[60] Talking further on the recurring theme of rootedness, Fugard states that: "I know that I have mastered the code of one time, one place … my life's work is possibly to witness as truthfully as I am the nameless and destitute of this one little corner of the world".[61] Other than Dawid's personal emotional faithfulness to his home, the creative inspiration that his home provides elicits in him what Cosmo Pieterse *et al* (1968:19) call "a sense of haunting loss". They conclude that a writer in exile "is cut off from those national roots which are the sustenance of any writer. His inspiration fails as he receives no nurture from the new surroundings of his foreign residence". Andrew Foley (2009:173) sees the Karoo as not merely a metaphor for contemporary South Africa but universally as "an appropriate thematic background for plays in which, typically troubled individual characters struggle to come to terms with a world as harsh and violent as the Karoo". As such, Dawid's past is constantly making a claim on him

[59] See Mary Benson's article titled "Encounters with Fugard: native of the Karoo – Athol Fugard Issue" at http://finarticles.com. Accessed 22/09/2009.
[60] See Mary Benson, ibid.
[61] See Mary Benson, ibid.

(Jeanette Rodrguez and Ted Fortier, 2007:7). Even upon his return, Dawid confides in Marta that what he requires as an invalid, craving hope and survival, are not only the medicines he brings from London, but "Karoo sunshine and fresh air", as well as her cooking (*SR*, 17).

Dawid's behaviour also shows the distinction between a place of residence and a place to call home. It is apparent that in spite of the fact that as an exile he enjoys membership of political citizenship in a political community, following the process of naturalisation, the desire for a cultural community is still highly irresistible. Two other notions that can be further deduced from Dawid's dispositions are the fact that the exile carries the memory[62] of his original home, which could impinge on the possible commitment shown to the new environment. Other than this is the possibility of non-acceptance by the British as well as the challenges of acclimatising to a new place. Acceptance within the borders of the new community is a function of the ascription of citizenship based on the policies of the nation-state. This physical and cultural mapping naturally leads to the notion of "exclusion from, as well as inclusion into the polity" (Keith Faulks, 2000:29). As a result, "individuals within state boundaries … as well as foreigners outside state boundaries, can be perceived as 'outsiders' or second-class citizens by the dominant culture of the polity" (Faulks, ibid).

The play is silent on the question of what probable social group(s) could help Dawid integrate into his host community. However, friendship and hospitality are enabling elements in any functional community.[63] Notwithstanding the fact that Dawid has a well-paid teaching job, which he loses due to drunkenness (*SR*, 38), he is simply engrossed in his creative work until his diagnosis with leukaemia, and the fire in him dies out and turns to ash (*SR*, 36). This setback leads to "his occasional bouts of heavy drinking and eventual break-up with Allison" (*SR*, 37). Akerman reminds us of the ongoing battle Fugard had with alcoholism and the destructive effect it had on his creativity (2002:xvi). The themes of alcoholism and creative placidity are recurring in

[62] Mark Israel (1999:151) writes that "exile is a jealous state. With very little to possess, you hold on to what you have with aggressive defensiveness…".
[63] This was part of the lecture entitled "Passages to England: Suez as Indian Channel" given at the Wits Distinguished Visitor Programme on 22nd September, 2009.

Fugard's writing such as in *A Place with the Pigs* and *The Guest*. Fugard also dwelt on fears of his creative stagnation in an earlier play, *The Road to Mecca*. At a different moment, Fugard has also expressed a fear about the possible exhaustion of his creative energy, most especially in view of the assailing effects of time (Andrew Foley, 2009:175). Ordinarily, the displacement of exiles within the host community constitutes a double tragedy for them since they now belong neither here nor there. Although Stephen Castles and Alastair Davidson (2000:15) believe a foreigner can become naturalised in a new community "through a long process", that is not true of Dawid because of his circumstantial challenges.

Land, Language and Nostalgia

The obvious detachment of Dawid from the new environment must have been engendered by his refusal to submit himself to cultural adaptation (Stephen Castles and Alastair Davidson, 2000:15). Hardly had he reached London when he started preferring, ironically, the solitary confinement in South Africa to the relative freedom London offers. Dawid tends to relate to his adoptive community with either suspicion or distance. Such alienation finds some explanation in the view of Mae G. Henderson (1995:4) that "living outside the border of the 'homeland' and inside the border of 'another country' often entails a border journey into the memory and imagination that negotiates between old and new, past and present, self and other, safety and danger". That Dawid finds himself within the borders of a politically stable, but strange, environment could not in anyway debilitate the memory of his homeland, which has taken several decades to become engraved in his mind. This is more so that "to be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul" (Jeanette Rodrguez and Ted Fortier, 2007:7).

Dawid's rootedness in the Karoo is unmistakable as he bemoans his sense of detachment from what could have been ordinarily considered insignificant, such as the fly. He uses the metaphor of the fly to evoke his entrapment by the thought of home, through the phrase: "flies for Africa" (*SR*, 33). Dawid ruminates over his past creative endeavours and confesses that he draws solace from the 'sacrificial' and inspirational potential of these flies when they die hitting a pane of glass (*SR*, 34). Flies are natural elements invested with huge significance. Apart from the fact that

some kind of flies can function as a vehicle to transfer diseases through contamination, certain others can also perform the role of an agent of 'fruitfulness' and productivity, as with pollination. As a result of Dawid's romantic nostalgia for the metaphorical richness of the fly, we are somewhat impelled to further see flies in a more positive light. This is more so because flies as "natural messengers" can also represent "stability even within indiscriminate and unhealthy environments" as well as "teach us how to manoeuvre and remain balanced when things are decaying or dying around us".[64] Flies to Dawid, in South Africa, were stabilising elements and harbingers of hope and positivism amidst the threatening Apartheid environment. Therefore, the instability Dawid now feels in exile might have been aggravated by the relative absence of flies in London as opposed to in the Karoo. This can also be taken as depicting the varying weather conditions, and the levels of 'sophistication' that have been achieved by the two locations respectively. Furthermore, 'Flies for Africa' also shows Dawid to be a 'fly' that is haunted by home. This is signified by the match box he uses to catch some flies in an attempt to reinvent the experience of home. Dawid further nostalgically reflects on memories of home like "the big black African night, dogs barking in the location, crickets blinking outside in the dark like little fallen stars" (*SR*, 34).

Dawid appears to take the celebration of the climatic condition of the Karoo, and by extension South Africa, further with the reference he makes to other elements like 'African night', 'the sky', 'stars', 'blinking crickets' and 'barking dogs'. Night as used in his statement does not only refer to the variation in the location of the Karoo (South Africa) within the globe, compared to London (Britain), but it is reminiscent of the 'dark continent' description of the African continent by "Europeans in awe of its massive size and impenetrable depths".[65] These phenomena are also a constructed form of imagery expressive of the closeness of the continent to nature. As such, they present a different form of humanism and civilisation, different from those in London.

[64] See "Flies, Newts and other Nature Messengers" by Livewell. http://onewomanwakingup.com. Posted October 12, 2007. Accessed 24/11/2009.

[65] See "Africa: Environmental Degradation" by Diana Thébaud. Posted April 16, 2009. Accessed 24/11/2009. http://www.dianaswednesday.com

All these elements combine to achieve a harmony that gives the inhabitants a sense of beauty, comfort, and healing. One curious thing, however, is Dawid's use of the word 'black' in the phrase of: "the big black African night". This evokes the idea of black consciousness that celebrated the 'colour black' to denote beauty, strength and courage in the dark days of colonialism and oppressions that were hinged on skin colour. Dawid's association with blackness in this way is illustrative of his possible rejection in London and a manifestation of that place where his umbilical cord rests, and which constantly makes a claim on him to return. The experience of a particular day in London is converted by Dawid as a reconstruction of "what that moment would be like back home" (*SR*, 33). That moment back home includes, according to Dawid, "the blinding brazen sunlight when you opened the front door and stepped out into the street. That fatal blue sky overhead …" (*SR*, 33).

Dawid's disconnect with London and craving for home is contrary to the "just like them" (Mark Israel, 1999:2) description given to white South Africans by their white neighbours in London. The reconnection Dawid seeks for his soul to his native land, if and when a physical return becomes impossible, is indicative of his strong attachment to his home. It must be noted, however, that the retention of the memory of home as achieved through the processes above is a challenging one as it requires a conscious effort. The memory of home can only exist faintly, considering the overwhelming attrition that present events can have on the memory process. For instance, the memory of home that exists in the mind of Dawid is vestigial in nature. Given his emotional commitment to the sense of place attached to the idea of home, however, he would do anything possible to constantly refresh his memories of those traces of his home space. As long as Dawid stays in exile, the retention of the sense of nostalgia for home appears to help his survival, until he is forced by leukaemia to return. However, the memory of home that Dawid relies on in exile is revealed by the intrusion the memory of London makes after his return to South Africa. This now overbearing memory of exile informs his desire to be told every detail of what happened in the Karoo on his return. The need for the rejuvenation of the memory of home and the cancellation of that of exile by Dawid is corroborated by Kofi Anyidoho's (1997:23) observation that "any reconstruction of events after a relatively long lapse of time must be fraught with immeasurable shortcomings", losing "their sharp edge".

Dawid goes beyond a mere nostalgic retention of the memories of home by constantly and consciously living by his Afrikaner identity. He tries to achieve a spatio-temporal belonging through language and faithfulness to his Afrikaner accent. Allison says of Dawid's reaction to the English pronunciation of 'Olivier': "Dawid of course hated it. He became paranoid about little things like that … saw them as an erosion of his Afrikaner identity" (*SR*, 11). This, in turn, could have made it difficult for him to achieve integration into the new community. Not overwhelmed by his skin colour, Dawid, despite the quasi-citizenship he enjoys, would rather live within his own culture than give in to that found in the host community. This is shown in Allison's assessment of him: "Yes! I think it was in the bus that I realised that no matter how hard I tried – and believe me I tried hard – he would never think of the place where we lived as his 'home' " (*SR*, 23). Such attitudes are enhanced by the fact that "the deeper the abyss of crisis is, the greater becomes one's connection to cultural memory and to past generations" (Jeanette Rodriguez and Ted Fortier, 2007:xii). This is more so because the space an exile occupies in the new place could be incredibly precarious; socially, culturally, economically and psychologically. The overall possible psychological disorientation is captured in Dawid's reference to the soul, when he declares that: "Of all the fears I lived with over there, that was the worst. Dying in exile was one thing, but leaving in exile without your soul?"[66] (*SR*, 44). Apparently and logically, the realisation and the struggle for the 'elusive' soul are reflective of the émigré's recognition and acknowledgement of the fact that "his alienation is not only from his foreign environment but from his very self" (Shoshanah Dietz, 1992:48).

However, Dawid devises what Mark Israel (1999:137) calls a "strategy, a quest for authenticity" by living with his soul through the use of his mother tongue. Dawid submits that:

> I mean your soul speaks with your mother's tongue. Couple of times I went out and just walked aimlessly around London streets speaking in Afrikaans to myself. Non stop! People must have thought me mad. But I was holding onto my soul you see (*SR*, 44).

[66] Mark Israel (1999:136) writes that the identity of the South African exile becomes synonymous to resistance and an affirmation that "they did not necessarily want to leave their country, that their absence was only temporary…and that they did not intend integrating totally into British life".

Through this, he attempts to achieve the unification of the "various fragments" (Israel, 1999:137) of his social and psychological being. The soul, in Dawid's circumstance, becomes a signifier and a connection with the ancestral home, and what Winifred Woodhull, (1993:9) calls "gathering the past in a ritual revival", as well as "the retelling of the past, imaginative rediscovery, production of identity" (Patricia Brett Erens, 2000:45). Dawid's reliance upon and deployment of language resonates with the synonymous and symbolic relationship that language and culture share. Therefore, language to him is a form of identification, preservation, and a link with the home from which he has been abruptly detached. The interaction between Dawid's soul and his mother tongue is allegorical. While his soul is the depth of his personality, the imagery of 'mother' or the grandmother figure connotes Dawid's psychological and cultural being, which is so strongly connected to his birth and nurturing by a caring mother.

It goes without saying that language shares an inextricable link with culture. This is predicated on the fact that the former does not just give expression to the latter, but it is a socio-cultural instrument used for ideological and political exigencies. This typifies the inseparability that Frantz Fanon believes exists between language and culture. As a result Fanon holds that a flight away from one's language is a departure from one's culture, and "to speak … means above all to assume a culture, to support the weight of a civilization".[67] Specifically, language enhances the process of identity initiation, negotiation and inscription. By implication, it serves as an identity marker when multiple identity relations are involved. The membership of groups achieved through linguistic permutations is held onto tenaciously in order for such a people not to "vanish into universal inconspicuousness" (Oswald K. Ndoleriire, 2000:284). Dawid's reliance on language for ideological expressions and social negotiations, therefore, typifies language "as a key mediator in human interaction, and as socially-grounded" (Elizabeth Mertz, 1988:662).

Further, Dawid is susceptible to the psycho-physical disintegration that is characteristic of mortality. This can be linked to what Janet Pérez (1992:37) calls

[67] See http://www.english.emory.edu. Accessed 13/02/2010.

"inter-cultural conflicts, and pervasive sense of rootlessness". Dawid's disconnect with both his place of origin and the place of exile, through his resolve not to accept London as home, is further reinforced by the fact that the condition of the exile is made more precarious by the fluid space he occupies in certain spheres. While the socio-political space Dawid occupies in South Africa is threatened as a result of his political activities, the space he occupies in London is made precarious by a combination of factors like cultural patriotism, nostalgia for home, an aborted marital relationship, and poor health condition. Dawid ends up with a double sense of loss as he fails to recapture and ameliorate the debilitated space he returns to after exile. Dawid's detachment with his acquaintances in London, even within the space allowed him by his short teaching job, does not leave room for rescue. This disconnection of the immigrant or émigré is reflective of the exiled, whose experience is analogous to the view shared by Helen M. Buss (1992:51). Buss believes that no matter how hospitable and friendly your host community is, your heart is not there "because you landed on these shores too late".

Dawid's psychological disintegration is both physical and psychical. Despite the fact that he secures for himself a good teaching job and a productive environment for his creative writing in London, and the profound wish to have children by his wife, Allison, he is suddenly attacked by mumps as "his testicles came up as big as cricket balls" (*SR*, 32).[68] The damaging effect of this attack, which could also be seen as a metaphor for the destructive old South Africa, propels him into drinking spree. The statement made by Allison below confirms Dawid's progression to alcoholism and the disjunctions experienced by other exiles like him in London:

> After his Oupa's death his occasional bouts of heavy drinking turned into one long pub-crawling binge in the company of a bunch of other lost exiled souls. It was disgusting. They were like a pack of hyenas scavenging the headlines for bad news and waiting for South Africa to drown in the blood bath everybody was predicting (*SR*, 37-38).

The above shows how the repudiated past and the unpleasant present of Dawid and the other exiles force on them a deep sense of pessimism.

[68] The disease, mumps, is also referred to as little pumpkins, pampoentjies or leukaemia in the text.

Even though Dawid's dependence on alcohol is to assuage the depression occasioned by exile, he is plunged even deeper into personal disintegration. Substances such as alcohol are erroneously considered to be needed to cover the gaps created along the praxis of literariness, memories and how the latter can be generated (Janet Pérez, 1992:40). The filling of these absences by alcohol and other similarly destructive substances can, at best, provide temporary escape as shown in Dawid's case. Alcohol, as a result of the capacity to alter one's psychological state, would generate under exile a form of repression and suspension of the haunting realities of the detachment from the homeland, to which return is a great mental agony. Kofi Anyidoho (1997:11) opines that "there are those unable to handle the pressures of exile: some commit slow suicide simply by drinking themselves to death". Dawid, as a writer, fails to explore the productivity he first sees in the freedom of exile, as the hope of plying and furrowing the free landscape of London becomes nothing but a mirage. As mentioned earlier, the problem with London is that it is devoid of the material realities and the people that have consistently provided the material conditions for Dawid's creative endeavour.

Although Dawid's return is said to be propelled by the attack of leukaemia, when other reasons like the death of his father fail, it is obvious that his dislocation within the space of exile and the continuous nostalgia he has for home would have influenced his return at one point or another. This is more so because of the fact that however creative or destructive the experience of exile is, or the comfort offered by "the perilous territory of not-belonging" (Mae G. Henderson, 1995:10), the émigré is always desirous of a return to the space, locality and territory that they are inextricably tied to, and to which they have lived in, hitherto, in their imagination. Conceptualising the host community as the New World, Patricia Brett Erens (2000:57) holds that exile is constituted, often times:

> … as place, a narrative of displacement, that gives rise so profoundly to a certain imaginary plenitude, recreating the endless desire to return to 'lost origin', to be one again with the mother, to go back to the beginning.

Dawid's longing and the decision to return are, however, not devoid of some challenges. This is because of the conditions that resulted in his decision to leave home in the first place. It should be remembered that Dawid's initial decision to use a

one-way exit permit was in response to the belligerence of the state. This in turn results in both a physical and an emotional death for Dawid. Dawid's degeneration in London, for instance, could not be arrested by his retention of the memory of home. This mutilation, both physical and psychological, signals the possibility of alteration in his person. At best, the thought of home for Dawid when in exile is robust enough since the 'home' is configured, in the words of Maeera Y. Shreiber (1998:274a) "as a stable, fixed entity, a securely boundaried place that has been lost and may be regained". The complexity of the ambivalent oscillation of Dawid between places of exile and home would have been better handled had he heeded the advice of Maeera Y. Shreiber (1998:275b-276a) that "to dwell in exile means to know the fundamental fragility of place and to cultivate a radical skepticism toward the condition called home". Dawid leaves us with the realities of unrealisable space in exile and the fragile space at the level of home. Given the pains that pervade the two spheres, Dawid's choice is informed by the need for a reunification between his soul and his home. He, therefore, seems to be conveying the thoughts of his creator, Athol Fugard, on the ambiguities of home and exile when he writes in a letter to his mother that: "South Africa is my soul. The thought of never getting back again was the most terrible thing I have ever known. I need my land and maybe, my land needs me … Never again will I forsake those sacred shores" (Anthony Akerman, 2002:xxi-xxii). Akerman concludes that "exile raised Dawid's love and longing to a similar pitch of anguish and ecstasy". As a result, it can be argued that the 'place' of exile is endlessly precarious.

Therefore, even though the fragility of the host space makes a return compelling for the exile, the uncertainty of what the homeland offers makes a return ordinarily undesirable. However, the calls for return are always hard to ignore. As shown from the engagements above, Dawid manifests different levels of fragmentation which resultantly undermine his stay in exile. These physical and psychological maladies, however, extend beyond the shores of exile and still haunt him on his return home. The myth of return is, therefore, devoid of "the absolutism of the pure" (Inta Gale Carpenter, 1996:362). The respective and continuous estrangement Dawid experiences in exile leaves him to take a decision between probable survival and death, either on the shores of exile or within the boundaries of home. Apart from the gaps created in his memories of the Karoo by his absence, the new South Africa he

anticipates at the point of going into exile seems to have been nothing but a ruse. Upon his return, while things have changed politically with the demise of Apartheid and the inauguration of a democratic government, not much change has been experienced with regard to persistent poverty and quality of life lived by disadvantaged groups.

Exile and the Agonies of 'Inescapable' Return

Dawid, in spite of these contradictions, benefits from a physical return from exile. The return is painful and full of agony – not just as a result of his physical and psychological mutilation and alteration, but of the dissipation of an assuaging feeling of freedom of expression and productive writing that accompanied his departure from home. Particularly, Dawid's creative engagement is compared to a dying ember which has receded to mere ashes (*SR*, 36). Furthermore, his return is not unexpected, as he earlier promised his daughter, Rebecca, raised by his despised coloured mistress, of a return to a 'new' South Africa. Surprisingly enough, Rebecca chooses not to see him because of his treatment of Marta, her mother. Going by the description given of Dawid's return, it is apparent that his expedited return at the time he chooses to do so is as good as coming home to roost. This is alluded to by the fact that he stands by the window, after choosing to be secluded, and gazes into the streets. Speaking out loud, this, no doubt, is a continuation of his fragmentation and exile as he realises that he has merely returned to where he started (Keorapetse Kgositsile, 1992:79). He is said to have refused to visit his Oupa's grave since "he already knew he was going to be lying there … in a few weeks' time (*SR*, 18). The premonition of death exhibited by Dawid is reminiscent of an aborted dream, when viewed against the backdrop of creative ingenuity and commitment to the struggle for a new South Africa.

The progressive demise of this character happens alongside the life span of Apartheid rule. By the time this play was "premièred at the McCarter Theatre, Princeton, New Jersey, USA on 2 May 2001"[69] and first published in 2002, Apartheid would have turned fifty-four. Fugard's description of Dawid in the cast is very apt in capturing this parallel: "we meet him at several points in his life: ill and dying in his early

[69] See the cast page of *Sorrows and Rejoicings*, p. 3.

fifties, vigorous and idealistic in his twenties and thirties, and a disillusioned drunk in his forties". In correlation, Dawid is full of vigour and idealism in his twenties and thirties when he engages in anti-Apartheid activism. When Allison meets him at Wits University, the Apartheid institution was at its height, with biting legislations and dictates. The disillusionment felt by Dawid in his forties, as a result of state onslaughts, correlates with the frustrations experienced by the Apartheid regime, following sustained antagonism towards it. Also, Dawid's allegorical slow death in his early fifties adequately symbolises the eventual demise of Apartheid. Fugard's obsession with the tropes of death is also revealed in his statement, according to Rachel L. Swarns,[70] that as he grapples with the new South Africa, he is constrained to examine the theme of mortality in his writing, mostly as he responds to the eroding power of time.

In his frail physical state on return, Dawid once again embarks on the recovery of memory and identification with the Karoo as he requests Marta to tell him about what has happened in the village during his absence, however insignificant this may be, and details about individuals, no matter how 'young' they are. Dawid's appeal (and intention) smacks of wilful or deliberate amnesia, which requires a conscious effort to achieve. The type of intentional forgetting contemplated by Dawid is conceivable against the prognosis that memory is layered in its composition, segmented in relation to the nature and period of occurrence of a given memory. Dawid's 'acquisition' of the memories of new happenings would be considered to have the capacity to repress those memories he has of exile, from which he strives to exorcise himself. Although Dawid's actions could be viewed as curious, since they negate the earlier attempts he makes in exile to deliberately recall some of the experiences of home, it nonetheless reiterates his affinities to home and his revulsion for exile. This request made by Dawid overshadows that made by Marta that he should tell her about his experiences of London. But Dawid's desire is more pointed than that as he becomes as good as a visitor on his return (Dennis Brutus, 1992:78).[71] A good explanation is given to Dawid's desperation by Allison, as mentioned earlier, that Dawid is attempting to get Marta to "do the impossible … cancel out exile … those years in London" (*SR*, 19).

[70] See www.recematters.org. Accessed 04/08/2009.
[71] Brutus, in an interview, believes that his return from exile is locked in deadlock and dilemma, as he sees himself as a visitor who is not ready to acknowledge that he has lost something before the people not ready to bestow citizenship upon him either.

Dawid's experience indicates that exile could characteristically be synonymous with dislocation, nostalgia and forlornness. However, deleting the memory of exile is as difficult as attempting to remove diseased skin off the body of a living being. This is so because any attempt made to attenuate the effect of the pain caused, would not only aggravate the existing pangs but engender new ones.

Fugard's *Sorrows and Rejoicings* also explores a certain aspect with respect to the several burdens of the past the new South Africa is trying to come to terms with in the area of human relationships, most especially sexuality. Racial segregation was core to the operation of Apartheid, which explains the grand plan and execution of various acts to reinforce the process. This is obvious from the 1937 Report of the Commission on Mixed Marriages in South Africa:

> During the South African War (1899-1902) and for some time afterwards, the presence of large bodies of troops in the country attracted numbers of loose European women, mostly of Continental origin, to the seaports and larger inland towns, to which they resorted for the purpose of prostitution. The brazen manner in which they paraded the streets and accosted men, extending their attentions also to natives and other persons of colour, became a public scandal and in 1902 and 1903 brought about legislation for the suppression of immorality, not only in the Colonies of the Cape and Natal, but also in the two new Crown Colonies. The general purpose was to check immorality, but it was also regarded as a matter of particular importance that the white women of the country should not, through the example of easy virtue given by this disreputable sisterhood, be brought into contempt in the estimation of native or coloured males, as appeared to be the case from the number of sexual assaults occurring at the time (Gareth Cornwell, 1996:443).

The above is reminiscent of the notion of the 'Black Panic' scares in the early 1990s in South Africa, the political intention of which was "the subjection of a woman of the dominant race to the power of a man of the subordinate race", whereas "the penetration of a white woman by a black man" was seen as "an act of insurrection" (Cornwell, 1996:442). Cornwell further opines that the first legislation directed against "the dynastic implications of race mixture was the Immorality Act of 1927" (443). However, after the commencement of Apartheid as an official policy, the immorality act became the first major piece of legislation to be introduced.[72] The construction of hegemonic purity within society is, therefore, challenged by the conduct of Dawid. Dawid, a white Afrikaner, sees himself blurring the racial lines that prohibit sexual relationship between people of Dutch descent and blacks (coloured)[73],

[72] See www.rebirth.co.za. Accessed 04/08/09.
[73] Reiterating the view of Conning on the use of 'bodily marker' for identity construction and the place of coloured people, who she has referred to earlier as "cocktails", "mixed people", in South Africa,

which were created in order to avoid a contamination of the racial purity which was considered as an instruction from God. This affront to a widely held racial norm leads to new eventualities, like the birth of Rebecca, which blurs the various divides hitherto created by these social constructions. This goes to say that the individual reserves the right to navigate the ontology of racial inscriptions imposed by his/her group in shaping him/herself for productive interactions with people from within and outside such a social categorisation. Dawid advances, through his relationship with Marta and in relation to Afrikaner ideals, the liberal conception of "the human person as an autonomous and rational individual", and by so doing exposes "the ongoing effects of miscegenation" (Andrew Foley, 2009:11&189).

The racial legislations mentioned above also attracted the attention of Fugard in plays like *Statements after an Arrest under the Immorality Act* (1972). Marta is one of the coloured Barends who have successively worked for the Oliviers as domestic servants. Marta's relations, according to her, live in the location.[74] Dawid's relationship with Marta is, to some extent, a betrayal of his Afrikaner identity, which is constructed on notions of absolute racial purity in Apartheid South Africa. As shown before, there is no doubt that he is enchanted by his Afrikaner identity. While Dawid is irresistibly committed to South Africa as a nation, he is also particularly faithful to the 'ethnic' configuration of Afrikaners. The play implicitly re-echoes the pressures and tensions occasioned by inequality and, as stated above, race and identity. While Marta belongs to the underprivileged class of coloured people who live in the location, and is locked in the cyclical process of domestic servanthood, Dawid and Allison belong to white groups who are socially, politically and educationally privileged. That explains why Allison talks about the idea of white liberal guilt (*SR*, 32). The less sophisticated form of the English language that Marta and Rebecca speak is in sharp contrast with that spoken by Dawid and Allison. This is in view of the fact that language – most especially that of a colonial master – is often deployed by some users as a social marker, as it "has larger implications for one's

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Helene Strauss (2004:34a) holds that "coloured people would have been God's answer, people who would form the bridge and prove that unity is possible" in once pure nations of the world.

[74] The location is designed for people with underprivileged racial groupings in Apartheid South Africa. Most of the people were blacks and coloureds. Indians, Asians and other whites were believed to be better treated than the majority blacks. Life in the location contrasts with that which is found in most South African cities and was also segregated in terms of the Group Areas Act.

consciousness".[75] This racial privileging notwithstanding, Dawid, just like Fugard, an Afrikaner, and a white South African, is representative of the liberal whites who are opposed to the operation of the Apartheid system, in spite of the fact that they were beneficiaries of the system. As such, he represents the group of whites who carry the guilt of whiteness. Zillah Eisenstein (2004:28) seems to be speaking the mind of Dawid and others in his shoes when she opines that "my skin is colored white and speaks a racial privileging that I do not believe in". Fugard unequivocally declares his liberal orientation and commitment in an interview with Andrew Foley (2009:169:

> the label 'liberal', is one with which I'm very happy. In political and philosophical terms, the values of liberalism are the cornerstone values of my life, the values that I believe in: education; a certain concept of freedom; a certain concept of society; an emphasis on the individual above group identities. Yes, I'm absolutely happy with the label, 'liberal'.

Dawid is, therefore, not just engaging the state as a dissident, but he is upsetting the beliefs and norms of the immediate community that nurtures him. Marta, apart from being given a new lease of life in the new South Africa in consonance with the liberal ideal of equality, has her personality affirmed as she is brought into the narrative of the play to give Dawid a child. Even though Allison cannot be blamed for the leukaemia that prevents the possibility of Dawid having a child with her, Dawid is merely hoping to have a 'life' after his death. Dawid resists Allison's advice to get them to adopt a child, as he vehemently expresses his satisfaction with the hope in his life offered by Rebecca. Allison's suggestion of adoption typifies a blurring or a negation of the 'presence' and integration of Rebecca into the Dawids. Allison's non-acceptance of Rebecca reminds us of the description of illegitimacy the Afrikaner community has earlier given to Rebecca. The commitment Dawid makes to have a changed South Africa and the promise he makes to the younger ones are only intimately conceptualised and personalised by having Rebecca. This is without prejudice to the label of a 'bastard' constructed for her. Fugard's *Sorrows and Rejoicings* helps us to interrogate the different polarities manifested between white on white relations, on the one hand, and white and coloured, on the other.

Apartheid South Africa demonstrated how race could be used as a divisive instrument and the creation of the 'we'/'them' polarity. This was equally reinforced through the

[75] This is the view of Frantz Fanon. See http://www.english.emory.edu. Accessed 13/02/2010.

preservation of distinction and difference in the matters of race and colour. The binary that was created as a result later became instrumental to the deployment of privileges in the old South Africa using, among many other discriminatory tendencies and tropes, mapped space and physical borders as guiding principles. Chris N. van der Merwe (2004:127) captures this succinctly when he argues that:

> Apartheid tried to freeze developments and maintain that a rigid opposition of Self and the Other, in which the Self could live safely and happily ever after … the concept of the 'homeland' was developed, where the Others could also live 'happily ever after' without bordering the Self.

In short, all these efforts helped in the building of the bipolar structure of the self and other(s), with the Afrikaners and other Whites occupying the privileged place of the 'self' while other racial groups were classified as 'the other'(s). However, the classification of the Afrikaners and the English by the other groups was more implicit than explicit. This does not, in any way, preclude a deeper classification or categorisation within the prescriptions of whiteness via skin pigmentation. Consequentially, the subordinate groups were used as labourers while some others were engaged as servants. This sequence impacted negatively on the social, economic and political standings of the denigrated groups. While this segregation gave the minority group access to limitless opportunities, the subordinate majority groups were left to struggle and strive for scarce advantages and privileges. Instead, all they were apportioned was servitude, poor living conditions, lack of access to qualitative education and infrastructure, and other similar forms of debasement.

Therefore, the hitherto utilised 'we' and 'them' categorisation later gave rise to the classification that favoured a distinction between the denominators of people who supported Apartheid and those opposed to it. The white liberals who were sympathetic to the liberation struggle were consistently seen by a certain contingent of the black population as part of the privileged few. A little complexity slipped into this polarity as a result of the fluidity that characterised the treatment of the liberals who were troubled by contradictions of 'us' and 'them'. This complication is reviewed by Michael Rustin (2000:184) as follows:

> identification with one 'racial group' and against another, oppression of one racial group by another, and resistance to such racial oppression by groups who define themselves in racial

> terms for this purpose, are among the most important forms of social cleavage, domination and resistance.

However, the end of Apartheid rule and the inauguration of a democratic government in South Africa have precipitated a rereading of the old order, as deliberate efforts are being made to dissolve the boundaries created by racial constructions in an effort to evolve and promote a new South Africa that is devoid of racial abuse and violation.[76] What this means is that a conscious effort is being made to appropriate the diversity that defines people positively – towards integration – as opposed to the hitherto disconnect experienced in human/racial relations. To this end, there was an "evocation of the identity 'rainbow nation' … worked to silence dissenting voices on the (then) state of race and racism in South Africa" (Pumla Gqola, 2006:6). However, as a "society in formation", (Gqola, 2006:6) states that "fragmentations, ambivalences, contingencies, hybridities, and multiplicities" could be listed as some of the defining indices of the "posts", as the new South Africa is often described (Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, 2003:230).

Although Dawid passionately believes and talks about a better future for the youth, including his daughter, Rebecca, whom he interacts with before his exit to London, the prevailing circumstances after his return are significantly contradictory. Part of Dawid's admonitions to some students at the Wits campus during the height of Apartheid was the need for "courage and having faith in the future". Dawid's opinion was predicated on the belief that "their world was going to change!" (*SR*, 7). However, the interactions between Marta and Allison after the latter's return to the Karoo show that what people have been left with subsequent to the fall of Apartheid are merely empty government promises. Furthermore, the estrangement between Dawid and Rebecca rekindles the old racial suspicions that are said to be receding. Dawid and Rebecca, therefore, represent the transformative negotiation between the old and the new, which inevitably ends in deadlock. The failure of this negotiation is captured by the metaphor of Dawid's letters to Marta and the manuscripts of poems to be published as an anthology (to be titled *Rejoicings*) that Rebecca burns. The burning of these 'letters' symbolically transcends a show of revulsion to assume the

[76] President Nelson Mandela states this unequivocally in his inauguration speech in 1994 when he declares that "never, never and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will again experience the oppression of one another and suffer the indignity of being the skunk of the world".

semblance of the destruction of archives and a rejection of the bits of love that should help to heal the wounds of the past. Even though the nation of South Africa, as created in the play, grapples towards socio-political and economic transformation, amidst township riots, destruction and anguish, it is committed to building a multiracial and cohesive community. This is attested to in the play by Dawid, whose thought is aired by Rebecca that "the young New South Africa standing on its still wobbly legs but determined to march fearlessly into another thousand years of recorded history" (*SR*, 46). This statement is an acknowledgement of the enormous challenges that the new South Africa faces on the path to 'newness' and nation building.

Added to the allegorical reading given to the 'stinkwood' table at the beginning of this chapter, some other specific symbols in the play speak to some of the issues that define the South African realities on which it is contextualised. Given the format of the characterisation in the play and the themes interrogated by the characters, it would be reasonable to take the stinkwood table or the room that contains it as a microcosm of the South African geographical space where issues around ownership and relevance, as mentioned earlier, have been potently at play; most especially in the Apartheid era and immediately after its dissolution. As we have been told at the inception of this chapter, whilst Allison and Dawid are depicted as having ownership of the room at the initial stage of the play, with Marta merely tending to its upkeep, and Rebecca having developed hatred for it, the play ends with Dawid bequeathing the room to Rebecca with love. This is similar to the process of the old brigade handing over the baton of responsibility to the new generation, with the onerous responsibility of sustaining the initiative. That also explains the emphasis that is placed on the indispensability of love in the quest to build a genuine new South Africa. Shedding light on the writing of *Sorrows and Rejoicings*, Athol Fugard submits that what matters to him "are the struggles of ordinary people finding their way in this (referring to post-apartheid South Africa) new democracy".[77] Allison reveals this when she tells Rebecca after burning the papers and poems written by Dawid that:

[77] Rachel L. Swarns. See www.racematters.org. Accessed 04/08/2009.

> What you turned to ash and smoke out there in the veld was evidence of a man's love, for his country, for his people – for you! … Because if you think you and your New South Africa don't need it, you are making a terrible mistake. You are going to need all the love you can get, no matter where it comes from (*SR*, 51).

The constant apprehension that Dawid exhibits, similar to Fugard's experience, about the demise (mortality) of his soul, is manifested in the burning of Dawid's archive (memory). Rebecca considers this archive as a record of the pains caused to Marta by Dawid, in spite of the latter's profession of liberalism. While the burning of the archive can be interpreted as a form of deliberate 'forgetting', it sounds more like a rejection of the 'liberal whites' by the coloured/black community. This argument is made more tenable because of Rebecca's advice to Marta to dissociate herself from anything that has to do with Dawid and return to her people in the location. Even though Dawid identifies with Marta and Rebecca across racial boundaries and seeks relevance through atonement towards black South Africans in order to expiate his liberal guilt, Fugard seems to be positing that the present and the future space the liberal white occupies in the new South Africa is bleak and doomed.

This rejection of Dawid shows that social cohesion is not being achieved after Apartheid. This rejection might be due to the internalisation of prejudices and discriminations "encountered and enacted under apartheid" which "has had an impact on the kinds of cooperation possible among different constituencies" (Annie E. Coombes, 2004:3). Furthermore, Marta's ownership of the stinkwood table and the future that is configured in Rebecca, typify not only the attainment of equality but the control of the future. Rebecca's overall action seems to echo the recommendation made by Steve Biko (1978:21) that blacks should build-up their consciousness so that they "can learn to assert themselves and stake their rightful claim". This explains Rebecca's repudiation of "a place at the white man's table" (Biko, 1978:22). In addition to the above stated, by her actions, what Rebecca seems to be saying of white liberals is that "their presence amongst us is irksome and of nuisance value" (Biko, 1978:23). Therefore, the trajectory of Dawid's exile, soul, and mortality, is a philosophical dimension to unpacking the place of liberal whites in the new South Africa.

In another vein, Allison's statement of advice to Rebecca oscillates between anger and empathy since she, like other liberals, tries to shy away from any form of "extremisms" (Biko, 1978:21). Specifically, the view expressed by Allison sounds condescendingly advisory and passes for Biko's evaluation of white liberals who like to claim "a monopoly on intelligence and moral judgement and setting the pattern and pace for the realisation of the black man's aspirations" (21). Further, Allison's counsel to Rebecca is consistent with the commitment of Fugard in his plays to courageously highlight and promote "the liberal values of freedom, humane reason and non-violence … to maintain the condition in which a just society could be peacefully created in South Africa" (Andrew Foley, 2009:190). Other than this, the statement calls to question the ongoing process of reconciliation in the new South Africa – most especially the place of liberal whites. Liberal whites have been received by some blacks with certain disdain. For instance, reflective of blacks' perspective about liberal whites, Steve Biko (1978) considers the concerns liberals show about the dismal conditions of blacks to be a curious one. He sees the white community as homogenous and privileged, notwithstanding the exception the liberals take to the dehumanising treatment accorded blacks (19). Biko rejects the "arrogance of the white liberal ideology" in wanting to provide leadership for blacks and the insistence on "a bilateral approach involving both black and white" in order to solve the problem of South Africa (20). Biko sees such collaboration or integration as artificial, unproductive and a re-enactment of master/slave, teacher/pupil relationship. Instead, he proposes that each group should be allowed to assert itself and attain "complete freedom and self determination" for a genuine fusion to take place (21). In a nutshell, Dawid's condition in relation to Marta and Rebecca is demonstrative of the ambivalence or double-mindedness of liberals. John Kekes (2000:162 & 166) has argued that "liberals are unavoidably and lastingly doomed to double-mindedness because they must acknowledge the strength of two mutually exclusive motives", that is the personal and the political, which routinely motivates "them to act in incompatible ways". As a result, Kekes concludes that the tension between personal and political reasoning "makes liberals either inconsistent, or conflicted, wavering, ambivalent, and thus double-minded".

Therefore, the interactions between the four characters; Dawid, Allison, Marta, and Rebecca, raise some complications around the issue of belonging in the micro

'community' around the stinkwood table as well as within the larger society. Dawid and Allison occupy a racially privileging space of benefactors when the stinkwood table is being left to Marta and Rebecca. However, Allison faces exclusion from this white community because of her non-Afrikaner identity. She, in turn, does not show any commitment to the stinkwood table, the room and the Karoo. However, Allison at a later time regrets her estranging attitudes towards the Karoo. Also, Dawid's actions constitute a journey to estrangement by acting contrary to the consciousness of his Afrikaner community. He does this to achieve belonging and inclusion across the racial line with Marta and Rebecca. His intentions are misconstrued and rebuffed, however, by both Marta and Rebecca who recede to existing isolation. Succinctly put, new attempts at achieving belonging are threatened by the old sense of estrangement and ostracism at both the micro and macro levels.

This provides a means by which to understand Allison's opinion. It seems no surprise that she sees love as the epicentre upon which the building of a new South Africa is based. While old players like Allison and Marta were engrossed in various contestations for socio-political inscription in the renewal and rebuilding project, the new ones are expected to imbibe love. This love is a product of 'forgiveness', which follows the redemptive initiative of Dawid through the keeping of his promise to return after exile. The above and the failure of Fugard's mostly male characters to live up to their ideals are common in his writing (Akerman, 2002:vii-viii). Akerman submits that Fugard's male characters are weak and usually fail to meet "the high ideals they set out to achieve" (vii). They therefore contrast with the females who "are strong, often earthy, and pragmatic" (Akerman, 2002:vii). Fugard's male characters mostly depict the personal struggles he has been involved in. They, like the female characters too, reflect quotidian attempts made by individuals "caught in a particular political or socio-economic environment"[78] and how they pull themselves towards self-actualisation. Fugard has specifically confirmed in an interview that:

> I am prejudiced in favour of women. All my female characters are powerful. They affirm life. Unlike my male characters who are all weak. I think it has a lot to do with my personal circumstances. My father was a cripple and an alcoholic. And my mother was a 'monument', with an innate sense of justice (Devi Sarinjeive, 2001:137).

[78] See Andie Miller's article: "From Words into Pictures: in Conversation with Athol Fugard". http://www.eclectica.org. Accessed 28/09/2009.

However, and in spite of the optimism shown towards national renewal efforts, the play closes with a speech which paradoxically bemoans the cruelty of the 'beautiful' South Africa. For instance, apart from the fact that Allison desires to dissociate herself from the Karoo in South Africa, the air of racial distrust displayed towards Marta by people of the white community leaves more to be desired about racial issues in the new South Africa. The possibility of these "unreconstructed whites" (Sarah Nuttall 2001:117) and their black surrogates still play itself out in some of the activities that taint contemporary South Africa. Making reference to a song by Eugene Marais, Dawid, who speaks through Marta, catalogues the various killings and anguish that South Africa has caused her people. South Africa, in a nutshell, is personified as being inhumane, harsh and apathetic as all she claims as her holy right are the fruits of endless pain (*SR*, 54). The personification of the land of South Africa as wicked goes beyond the geographical spatial constituents to the activities that take place on or within it. Furthermore, this once again reminds us of the repulsiveness of the 'stinkwood', most especially at its crude state and before it is worked into a finely crafted object. The pains and agonies of transforming South Africa might be likened, perhaps, to that of childbirth. The labour might be fraught with pains, but the gift of a new birth will be profoundly assuaging. However, it is hoped that the fruits of these endless pains will not lead to stillbirth.

Conclusion

This chapter has engaged the imperatives, contestations, and implications of trans-racial interactions, most especially in relation to the debris of segregated socio-political compositions. Particularly, an engagement has been made with the emergence and position of people of Dutch ancestry who achieved socio-political and economic hegemony through racial denigration and exploitation. As a follow-up to this, efforts have been made to investigate how the binary opposition of the 'self' and the 'other' was constructed in Apartheid South Africa through stereotypes and spatial-geographical manipulations achieved through the innocuous concept of separate development, which set the standard for the oppressed and the oppressor, the privileged and the underprivileged; this is in addition to the social engineering of citizenship and identity. Of great concern is the inability of the Afrikaner family/community to accept people from outside their immediate constituency. They

are ‘unreconstructed’ still and posing strong opposition to the change, in support of racial and identity status quo.

While one might think that the odds of cohesion are slight, this goes against the spirit and letter of the new South Africa. The assurances of the new government were reiterated in the words of Nelson Mandela[79] when he dwelt on the “spiritual and physical oneness” all South Africans share with the homeland; inalienable rights to human dignity of both blacks and whites, the building of “a rainbow nation at peace with itself and the world”. Mandela further states that “never, never and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will again experience the oppression of one by another and suffer the indignity of being the skunk of the world”. Rather than strive towards eliminating the gulfs set between citizens under Apartheid, towards integration and cohesion for nation-building, some ‘unreconstructed whites’ still see this as an affront to what they stand for. This attracts the attention of Ludger Schadomsky (2003:2) who contends that “it’s not easy for the Afrikaners to shake their image of diehard white-supremacists”. This trend played itself out in 2008, among many others, in the dehumanising video recorded in the University of the Free State, the racially motivated attacks suspected at the University of Johannesburg, and the racist Facebook Site supported by students at the University of the North West.[80] These resistances to integration and transformation come from a new breed that is considered insulated from the brashness of Apartheid, which has been blamed on families that still carry racist resentment and inculcate this in those they raise. These people might constitute part of those Mandela referred to as “bloodthirsty forces, which still refuse to see the light”,[81] in his inauguration speech.

Therefore, as the democratic South Africa grapples with the new realities of race and identity, it might be right to conclude by aligning with the view of Walker (2005:50) that the nation is caught in “an interpretive puzzle in which race seemed to be nowhere and everywhere”. As a result, as people discard the tendencies that promote racial privileging and stereotypical subservience, more openness is needed to engagingly subvert racial separateness and eliminate racially propelled diversity.

[79] These were contained in the statement he made at his inauguration as the President of the Democratic Republic of South Africa at the Union Buildings, Pretoria, on May 10 1994.
[80] See a report by Beauregard Tromp in *The Star*, Tuesday 0ctober 7, 2008. p. 6.
[81] Mandela (ibid)

While suspicions birthed by old indexes might linger on for some time, conscious and genuine rapprochement across racial lines might lead to the evolution of a South Africa that is indeed united in its diversity.

CHAPTER FOUR

SAMENESS WITHIN DIFFERENCE: BLURRING 'SELF' AND 'OTHER' LIMINALITY

> Homecomings are not only acts of actual return from exile. There are many homecomings in the lives of exiles, since memories of home are inevitable.
>
> –N. Chabani Manganyi[82]

This chapter looks at the life of a black South African female exile, Tami Walaza in Zakes Mda's *The Bells of Amersfoort*, who embarks on physical exile after a spiritual exile, occasioned by her participation in the struggle against Apartheid, becomes overwhelmingly threatening. Her participation in the struggle contrasts with that of Dawid in *Sorrows and Rejoicings*, whose activities are more intellectual than physical. Tami is caught in the web of multi-racial interactions that follow the overwhelming forms of engagement she hitherto had with members of the liberation struggle. Central to such is the encounter she has with Johan, a white South African, whose interaction with her heavily impacts the development of the plot of the play. *The Bells of Amersfoort* also emphasises and blurs the binaries of 'self' and 'other' that helped perpetuate racial discrimination and, subsequently, oppression in Apartheid South Africa. Mda's *The Bells of Amersfoort* reflects instances of social dismemberment amongst specific formerly close knit groups present in both exile and at home at the dawn of a new South Africa. The chapter examines the homecomings that the exile undergoes through a constant reinvention of the memories of home and the challenges and implications of the actual return. Other than this, the chapter interrogates the old tensions between whites and blacks, as explored in the play, and the specific shifts that are made to collapse racial divides. The chapter will look at the changing relationships in racial interactions and the shift in focus in South Africa from race towards class. This, no doubt, has certain implications for nation building.

The brutalisation of Tami by the pariah Apartheid government and her exile experience remind us of the role of women in national liberation and the emergence of women as a political cluster. While the article by Shireen Hassim (2004) details some

[82] From an interview with Thengani Ngwenya titled "Making History's Silences Speak" in *Selves in Question: Interviews on Southern African Auto/Biography*. Eds. Judith Lütge Coullie *et al*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006. pp. 160-171.

of the experiences of women in different liberation camps, it is more specific about the gradual movements women made from being social and apolitical domestic workers to becoming a politically conscious group of people who have made a mark in socio-political engagements. Shireen Hassim (2004) posits that "for most of the twentieth century, women were second-hand members of the ANC" (434), but that they have moved away from this "'apolitical social work' role" (435) as they now put to play the "lessons in organisational transformation learnt in exile" (436). An anticipatory conclusion was earlier made by Hassim to the effect that the "African National Congress (ANC) stands out as a nationalist movement that has gone further than most in transcending the tendency of nationalist organisations to reinforce women's status as secondary political subjects" (433). Given this, Tami, from the progressive transition women have in their participations in the liberation struggles, demystifies the stereotypical assumptions that construct women as unreliable and parasitic. Tami particularly typifies the mental agonies women went through at the various levels of undermining the Apartheid regime, and the betrayals that follow the dawn of democratic and majority rule. *The Bells of Amersfoort* rekindles the link between Holland and South Africa. While the former is representative of the root of white South Africans of Dutch ancestry, the latter functions firstly as a place of 'exile' and secondly a place that has been 'appropriated' as 'home' by them. The above scenario is reinforced in the play through the characterisation of Johan, a white-Dutch South African, and the way he relates with the two locales. Holland serves in the play as a purgatory for both Tami and Johan whose interactions personify the idea of social cohesion after Apartheid. Social cohesion "refers to a situation where citizens of the state share feelings of solidarity with their compatriots, and act on the basis of these feelings" (Ivor Chipkin, 2008:61).

Endless Seekers and Elusive Utopia: Exilic Paradoxes in Zakes Mda's *The Bells of Amersfoort*

Rob Amato's (2002:v) description of Mda's theatricality as "both African and modern" explains how he weaves real-life situations into what Amato calls Mda's grotesque "truthful exaggeration" (vii). Just like other writers in Apartheid South Africa, Mda mirrored the Apartheid regime and the implications it had on people in his writings. However, the demise of Apartheid has not diminished his creativity as he

claims to "see stories everywhere".[83] Aspects of Mda's art are reflective of the social and political happenings in contextual settings like South Africa, his place of birth, and Lesotho, where he once lived. In the introduction to the play Rob Amato portrays him as a satirical, magical realist, or "a literary *sangoma* (diviner) who … invents cosmologies and mythologies for his own purposes, implying them to be old and African" (xiii). *The Bells of Amersfoort*, like other literary arts by Mda, typifies an infusion of some of the personal experiences of the artist. These range from the experience of exile to the experience of child abuse, his challenges in marriage as well as the inclinations and revulsions he has for certain concepts, ideals and developments.[84] Dorothy Winifred Steele (2007:168) describes the play as "a musical piece on recollection and healing". The reconnection and healing that she has in mind transcend the physical to the psychological, and apply to both humans and objects within the trajectory identified in Mda's creative endeavours. Specifically, the story in *The Bells of Amersfoort* is told using the technique of the traditional story-telling of the Xhosa known as *intsomi*. This is seen, for instance, when Tami asks "grotesque figures questions about her lover", with "the figures punctuating their responses with an Intsomi song in the same manner as it would be told by storytellers around the fire in the evening" (Amato, 2002:xviii). Further, the features of *intsomi* include "verbal narrative, gesture, mime, dance, song, and chant" (Dorothy Winifred Steele, 2007:169).

Dorothy Winifred Steele (2007:31-37) identifies what she calls nine patterns that are discernible in Mda's works, which she sees as leitmotifs. According to her, Mda's arts reflect "flowing musical English-cum-African world combination … with backward and forward referencing … similar to that adopted in indigenous split-tone singing". Mda, according to Steele, also claimed to have been influenced by the musical pattern found in rural villages in South Africa and Lesotho as well as *griots* (praise poets) in Mali, West Africa. Steele further states that Mda is concerned with "women and their right to gender equality … love and sexuality and spiritual beings". The idea of the spiritual informs Mda's commitment to the use of magical realism. Other than the

[83] See "'I see Stories Everywhere': Interview with Zakes Mda". www.africultures.com. Accessed 30/07/09.
[84] See Dorothy Winifred Steele's "Interpreting Redness: a Literary Biography of Zakes Mda". http://www.artashealing.org. Accessed 18/09/2009.

above, Mda also critiques institutionalised religions through the "design of oscillation" (Steele, 2009:35) by which he challenges certain assumptions and ideas that are popular amongst some people. Mda achieves this in *The Bells of Amersfoort*, as he creates the character of Johan who becomes enmeshed in a different form of guilt and therefore has to come over to Holland to seek spiritual rebirth. Johan is also used by Mda to problematise the notion of citizenship and loyalty to the South African state, most especially regarding the idea of nation building. He does this by introducing Johan to, and excluding Luthando from, the evolving dynamics of healing and building the land. Aside from this, Steele believes that Mda's works, as seen in *The Bells of Amersfoort*, also touch on issues around identity. Mda, in the view of Steele, achieves this by "entering into African identity", recognises multiple identities and brings about "sameness-within-difference" (36). He situates his idea of sameness or connectedness on the concept of *ubuntu,* that is, "being a person through other people" (37). Mda does not lose cognisance of the aversion people have for the principle of cohesion or togetherness, as he similarly critiques the notion of "contra-*ubuntu* … the overbearing cruelty and deluded condescension of categorization" (Steele, 2007:37).

The Bells of Amersfoort is published in a trilogy where the other two plays dwell substantially on the themes of corruption and irresponsible leadership. The play centres on Tami who goes into exile[85] following her participation in the struggle for emancipation in the old South Africa. She is arrested at the point of getting married to Luthando who, at a time, was a comrade in the liberation movement. Her arrest and torture are predicated on her participation in the liberation struggle and her refusal to give in to identifying her fellow comrades in the struggle. While in Holland, the sounds of the bells of Amersfoort, which are meant to celebrate and encourage people to eschew racist acts, ironically constitute a painful reminder of the sounds of the mechanical torture she was subjected to back home. This affects her, until the encounter, confrontation and resolution with Johan (her past torturer in South Africa) and in the words of Martijn in the play, she is "haunted by the demons of the past"

[85] Mark Israel (1999:3) is of the view that the experiences of migrants who moved to the United Kingdom vary from one another. It is further opined that "their divergent experiences reflected their differing positions in hierarchies of race, class and gender in Britain and South Africa". However, Israel identifies the time between 1948 and 1990 as a horrific one for South African citizens as the government, as a result of its avowed repression and annihilation of dissidents, forcing "thousands to leave the country and rebuild their lives beyond its borders".

(*TBA*, 149). Even though the Dutch-South Africa Solidarity Movement tries very hard to make her stay in exile a comfortable one, Tami feels perpetually dislocated as she takes to alcohol and cigarette smoking. She does make a comparison between her home and Holland, and she prefers the smell of her home soil to that of Holland. Apart from the above, she is constantly tortured emotionally by the sense of abandonment she feels about the attitude of Luthando who is neither committed to the mutual promise of protecting their chastity nor the resolve to building a new South Africa. Tami chooses to return to South Africa when putting together a multicultural band that will not only help her project African values, but reinforce the all-racial interactions present in Holland. The outcome of the formation of a band by Tami and the contestations she has with Johan both show how a violated person could be healed emotionally after s/he must have had the opportunity to externalise his/her pent-up frustrations and bitterness. This is part of the therapeutic nature of 'voicedness' that formed a great part of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), as we shall see in the reading of *The Bells of Amersfoort* and in the subsequent chapter's reading of *Nothing But the Truth*.

The setting of the play traverses three worlds: the first one is the present world of the central character, Tami, in Holland, while the second world is the one she has left behind and which she will return to, located in South Africa. The third, which "she will never reach" (*TBA*, 114), is also located in Holland. The three levels of interaction in the play are structurally linked through the technique of segueing. As a result, the three worlds are not static but they may sometimes "collide or even merge and become one world (*TBA*, stage direction, Scene One, 114). The first world is Holland where Tami the protagonist is an exile and a guest of the Dutch-South Africa Solidarity Movement. It is also in the first world that Tami meets Johan, a white South African of Dutch ancestry, who is in Holland to attain spiritual regeneration after his involvement in the implementation of the inhumane Apartheid policies. Central to the plot of the play is Johan's participation in the torture and maltreatment meted to Tami which leads her to go into exile. Tami's experience, therefore, portrays the notion of "generational pattern of resistance and escape … journey into chilling exile" (Dorothy Winifred Steele, 2007:56). This first or present world also allows Tami and Johan to re-enact the TRC, with some contestations, following which they agree to jointly build a new South Africa.

In another way, the second world provides a space for Luthando, Tami's fiancé, and a former comrade of the liberation struggle, to update Tami of the recent developments back home in South Africa, after the demise of Apartheid. This update correlates with and serves as a microcosm of the entire artistic commitment of Mda to the South African experience. Mda believes that memory is what people make of their living as he admits in an interview that "we all construct our past as we go along" (Dorothy Winifred Steele, 2007:280). Luthando is depicted as having abdicated the promise he makes to Tami to be faithful in their relationship and to be committed to the rebuilding of South Africa. Rather, he now shows a certain penchant for material acquisition and avarice for the opposite sex. Figurines are used in the second world metaphorically to represent a group of constantly deprived people. The third world is observed by Tami from her window and allows her to satisfy her emotional need as she, a voyeur, participates in the love making between Heleen and Johan. Other characters in that world are Catharina and Fritz, who are so named by Tami. While both Catharina and Fritz hum and sing, Catharina also cleans the window and Fritz does some painting. The third world is described as an idealised one that is unreachable to Tami. It is a symbol of loss, deprivation and unfulfilled dreams.

The employment of the three worlds is allegorically representative of the past, present and future unfolding of the main character, Tami Walaza. While the first two worlds are palpably malignant, the third is reflective of the unattainable, the uncertain, the interregnum, or the tension-soaked state of morbid symptoms following the inability of the dying old to give birth to the new (Bhekizizwe Peterson, 2009:20). Dorothy Winifred Steele (2007:170&267) calls this technique "panopticon-like surveillance" and "Mda's swinging and defamiliarising device" respectively. Steele has earlier submitted that the back and forth referencing are "the device to bridge time (pre- and post-liberation situations) and space (what has happened and is still happening in South Africa, and what is happening in Amersfoort)" (Steele, 2007:168), as found in the introductory dialogues between Luthando and Tami on pages 114-115. Luthando's reference to the initiation ceremony in his comments signals some symbolic connections. The performance of the initiation ceremony personifies the regenerative processes that South Africa is passing through. The ceremony requires the cutting of the foreskin in order to transform 'boys into men'. While the process is

supposedly but questionably gendered in favour of patriarchy, the painful cutting also portrays the colonially induced physical and psychological erosions that defines the experience(s) of South Africa as a nation. This erosion is captured in the play through the personification of the rains which "continue to cut deeper into the already wounded earth …" (*TBA*, 114). Rain, here, is stripped of its usual imagery of sustenance, with emphasis put on its destructiveness.

The conjugation between rains and the earth that should ordinarily produce 'fruits' engenders nothing but loss. Dorothy Winifred Steele (2007:172) links Mda's concerns with the geographical space to the environmental degradation in his ancestral place in Lower Telle and the village of Qoboshane at the Telle Bridge, which have been cruelly scarred by erosion and neglect. Steele concludes that Mda uses the concept and image of these gashes and bleeding streams as an allegory of Apartheid's reign and its aftermath. However, as indicated in the dialogue between Tami and Luthando, amidst the reasons for pains and anguish, the oppressed people of South Africa are able to laugh as compared to people in Holland who wear sad faces in spite of the freedom they enjoy. The oxymoronic reference to pain and laughter in relation to the pains of the cutting of the foreskin and becoming 'a man' is a reference to something that is central to attaining freedom. Furthermore, the correlation between the theme and form of the play is indicative of the conflict and convolution that exist in the mind of the central character, Tami. The play is indicative of what Dorothy Winifred Steele (2007:83), reinforcing the view of Bhekizizwe Peterson in the introduction to Mda's play, *And the Girls in Their Sunday Dresses* (1994), sees as the deep complications caused by the implications of violence and war on the psychological makeup of individuals.

Communication in the play, both between the characters and in the stage directions, is broken and ruptured, "which sometimes seems telepathic and spiritual and sometimes ordinary and factual" (Amato, 2002:xviii). Apparently, the shift between the spiritual and the ordinary is an attempt to negate the idea of structured linearity in narration and it also permits the open sense of temporality and space, which allows for more artistic possibilities. The intermingling of the familiar and the unfamiliar is an instance of magical realism. Douglas Killam and Alicia L. Kerfoot confirm this when they opine that "Mda's plays are distinguished by the combination of a close scrutiny

of social values with element of magic realism"[86]. Similarly, Mda confirms his preference for this form when he says that: "I've always been fascinated by the magic … in traditional stories, and also by the facts". Mda continues that "the supernatural, the strange and the unusual exist in the same context as what you would call objective reality". An understanding of the shifting space and time in the play and the speculation about form is reinforced when considered against the backdrop that magic realism "tells its stories from the perspective of people who live in our world and experience a different reality from the one we call objective".[87] *The Bells of Amersfoort* is a fusion of the ordinary and extraordinary, the simplistic and the awesome, as well as a call to the reader(s) "to look beyond the limits of the knowable".[88] Specifically, the play uses flashbacks, segueing, or better still, "interlude … to encapsulate and disrupt the coherence of time and the certitude of experience and memory" (Bhekizizwe Peterson, 2009:22).

It is important to examine the metaphor and symbolism of the wire figures used in *The Bells of Amersfoort*, as identified before. The figurines' assumption of the personalities and attributes of human beings is achieved through mimesis. This connection coincides with the view of Neil Matheson (2007:47) on the allegorical emblematic tropes of images. According to him, images could "function as allegories dealing with privileged moments within cultural memory". Further to this, the use of the figurines could be given a transcendental interpretation. This is in line with the view of Jeanette Rodríquez and Ted Fortier (2007:2) that figurines, like other related vignettes, could be deployed symbolically as "… elements, which indicate a reference for life, sensitivity to another realm of existence, and awe for the human connection to the creative forces of the universe …". In this case the figurines function like mere props or accessories for the actor on stage, signifying in a denigrating manner "an iconic sign … but paying no attention to it as a true acting subject" (Henryk Jurkowski, 1988:39-40). Taken therefore as an iconic representation,[89] ─ with

[86] See 'Student Encyclopedia of African Literature'. http://www.books.google.co.za. Accessed 16/09/2009.
[87] See http://www.writing-world.com. Accessed 16/09/2009.
[88] See http://www.public.asu.edu. Accessed 16/09/2009.
[89] Annemarie Jonson (2007:425) seems to corroborate the impartation of life in animation by submitting that animation is ontologically and etymologically constructed upon the pragmatics of "voice", referred to as, citing Jacques Derrida, the "condition of consciousness".

"representation acting as a middle term between reality and appearance",[90] as initially implied in the play, the socially and economically depraved people that are signified by the figurines are painfully confronted by and responding to the sense of estrangement that characterises the relationship between them and their professed leaders. One can then argue that in there is an indication of the identification Tami and Johan share with the hitherto rigid wire figures that are used to represent the masses when they become mobilised. In another vein, the wire figures are indicative of the amazing resourcefulness that people find within themselves, most especially following a conscious effort that will take people beyond the bars of despondency and complacency.

The probability of the symbolic representation the wire figures have with the masses is reinforced by the historical place wire art occupies in South Africa, and by extension, Southern Africa. The origin of wire art is unclear,[91] but that does not detract from the fact that it is a popular art form in the Southern African region. For instance, Gavin McLachlan[92] claims that some authors have linked it with Zimbabwe and Zambia (3). McLachlan, however, further states that "from interviews with community elders it seems that community opinion is that wire art originated in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa in the Nineteenth Century" (3). In another vein, the production and sale of these art materials is said to belong to the rural areas and the townships. McLachlan, therefore, sees the dexterity deployed in making these art items as a transmutation of "traditional skills that have been adjusted to meet the needs of the contemporary market" (3). This must account for the reason why McLachlan claims that the wire art market is dominated "by the most disadvantaged people" (8). The disadvantageous link between the business of wire art and poverty is also accentuated by the fact that the evolution of the art has also been traced to the lack of resources to buy proper toys by "the young herdboys of the regions of Maputo and Zululand in rural Northern Kwazulu–Natal"[93]. The makers of these wire figurines, therefore, have merely made use of valueless objects to the ends of value and relevance. All the propositions about the origin and the processes of making wire

[90] See Damian Sutton, Susan Brind, Ray McKenzie (2007:9).
[91] Gavin McLachlan calls this an instance of a history "hidden in the unrecorded past" (3). See www.isocarp.net. Accessed 06/08/2009.
[92] See www.isocarp.net. Accessed 06/08/2009.
[93] See www.streetwires.co.za. Accessed 06/08/2009.

figurines reflect poverty, abandonment and lack of access to opportunities. Therefore, one can understandably argue that Luthando and his compatriots, from their action, have further neglected the vulnerable and isolated members of the rural communities and the townships in the new dispensation. The optimism implied in the collaboration between Johan and Tami notwithstanding, only time will tell if it will translate to an improved life for the figurines, as representative of the less privileged. As a result, it is tenable to state, based upon the portrayal in the play, that class, as against purely the emphasis on race, is a relevant index to define opportunities and deprivation in the new South Africa.

Luthando, a black South African, is the estranged would-be-husband to Tami, who resorts to avaricious materialism in contradiction to his earlier promised participation in the healing and rebuilding of the charred land, that is, South Africa. Luthando stands in contrast to his fiancée, Tami, who consistently lives by the ideals of the struggle and the rehabilitation of the 'wounded' land. Tami has earlier withstood the pressures of torture and resisted the temptation of selling out comrades of the struggle. Tami's resilience negates stereotypes surrounding the inability of women to keep secrets. Even though Luthando behaves well at Tami's younger brother's initiation ceremony, he betrays and deserts her thereafter, despite the good-naturedness, restraining himself from drinking, he showed before his future parents in-law at the ceremony. Luthando represents the pretentious attitude of some so-called freedom fighters and the emergence of a black elite class who does not mind abnegating the betterment of the masses.

Johan Van der Bijl is a middle-aged white Afrikaner who tortures Tami as part of his larger responsibility and commitment to the Apartheid government. Following the demise of Apartheid and the gaining of amnesty at the TRC, Johan embarks on a journey of spiritual regeneration to Holland, which he has hitherto been made to believe is his root/home. Although Johan is inducted as a dominee in order to attain such a renewal, he becomes notorious for sexual indiscretions with Heleen, a Black-Dutch woman. Johan, throughout his stay in Holland, is 'assailed' by a sense of isolation and detachment, but overwhelmed by his love and longing for South Africa. This is proved in the comparison he draws between the landscape of Holland and South Africa, just like what Tami does. This attachment to South Africa fires the

determination of both Tami and Johan to collaborate in the reconstructing of the new South Africa. However, such an agreement is only achieved after the confrontations that follow Tami's realisation that Johan was responsible for her torture back home in South Africa at the peak of the struggle, the disruption of her wedding and subsequent journey into exile. Despite Johan's strong attachment to South Africa, he tends to occupy an ambivalent position because of fear of attaining acceptance in the new order. Johan laments: "there is no place for me in Tami Walaza's South Africa" (*TBA*, 156).

Other than the fact that art allows the creator/artist to achieve healing, the audience is also popularly considered to be well placed to be positively impacted by the arts, most especially music. Drawing a link between externalisation and healing, for instance, D. H. Lawrence is quoted as having said that "one sheds one's sickness in (writing) books and in the process of creating repeats and presents again one's emotions, to be master of them".[94] Apart from the fact that art affords the opportunity to demystify the strangeness and anguish of one's grief, it also releases the body's healing mechanisms towards the unification of body, mind, and spirit.[95] Similarly, Mda's basic approach in his works is the idea of transforming the culture of silence into a public outcry (Dorothy Winifred Steele, 2007:142). In an interview with Steele, Mda acknowledges the personality disjunction he experienced as a result of dysfunctional upbringing. He admits to the fact that he was sexually abused as a child by his nanny and has had tense relationships with his wives even at a time when he was seen publicly as successful. As a result of his fraught personal life (Steele, 2007:198), Mda, therefore, chooses to write and create "out of this accumulated pain, as therapy" (203). Mda further states that "it's like a tide bustling through the protective banks damming my feeling, and my writing pours out … like a slime … a stink … translated into a story. After the writing, the reader takes up the hateful burden and I am relieved" (203). Even though Mda is more concerned with and only emphasises the transference of burden and therapy for his suffering, what to him is a burden could at best produce a cathartic effect on the reader, who in turn will share the artist's burden and simultaneously become healed of his/her own socio-political and psychological

[94] See http://www.myinsideout.co.uk. Accessed 18/09/2009.
[95] See http://www.artashealing.org. Accessed 18/09/2009.

malady. This is more so because empathy has the propensity to produce emotional manifestations like tears. Tears in turn have the potential to diminish sorrow and pain.

Just as we have seen in the preceding chapter the decision of Dawid to go into exile as a result of his opposition to the Apartheid regime, Tami in *The Bells of Amersfoort* has to escape into exile following her political anti-Apartheid activities and subsequent brutal repression from the agents of the state. While Dawid, a white South African, as seen in Chapter Three, is saved the pains of physical attack, that cannot be said of Tami, who spends all her exile life nursing the wounds of her past torture. On arrival in exile in Holland, Tami builds walls and boundaries between herself and the host community, thereby creating the sense of 'self' and 'other'. Rather than identify with the hosts and the new 'home', she stays withdrawn and concentrates on the preservation of her identity and link with her home in South Africa. This is done by comparing the memories of the fragrant world of the home she has fled away from with that of the new environment. The idea of opposites is further reinforced by the perception of Tami in *The Bells of Amersfoort* of issues of morality and purity. Tami's self-conceived faithfulness to Luthando leaves her with a mindset that sees in Johan and Heleen something sexually depraved. However, the border between Tami and Heleen is lessened by the colour they both share. In another sense, Tami's in-group membership or relationship with Luthando is sustained in the play through the segueing technique.

Tami's attempts to retain a hold on her home and insulate herself from the exiled community uphold Fanon's idea of the logic of "either-or",[96] and negate the critical, ambivalent and evaluative position of the exiled proposed by him and Du Bois.[97] Tami's condition in Holland negates the notion of ambivalence or ambiguity, as she glaringly rejects everything Holland stands for and contemplates a return. This, in a way, contrasts with the behaviour of Johan who initially exhibits an ambivalent attitude towards South Africa (he is made to believe that his home is in Holland). He later acts like a renegade by confessing South Africa as his root after realising that Holland does not offer him a sense of home. Apart from the nostalgia Tami has for

[96] Cited in Anita Haya Goldman (1995:107).
[97] See details in an appraisal of the work of Abdul R. JanMohamed titled "Worldliness-Without-World, Homelessness-As-Home: Toward a Definition of the Specular Border Intellectual", done by Anita Haya Goldman (1995:127).

the noisy streets back in South Africa, she also expresses her longing for, in her words, "ordinary things" (*TBA*, 141) or what Elleke Boehmer calls "rural aesthetics"[98] like the smells, the rain, and the thunder. Although these elements are not strange to Holland, as stated in the play, they are different in their frequency and character. It has been argued that many people find the scent during and immediately after rain especially pleasant or distinctive. Light or heavy rain is sometimes seen as romantic. These topographic and topologic reconstructions that Tami makes are a good way through which the victim of exile "reflects his homeland-in-exile" (Janet Pérez, 1992:37). This has also been referred to by Patricia Brett Erens (2000:47) as "engaging in a dialogue" with the past. Tami's attachment to home seems to draw some corroboration from the view of Ernest Renan (1990:19) on how the geography of the nation state could be configured in one's mind. In what appears more like a metaphorical encapsulation of the nation, Renan posits that "the nation, like the individual, is the culmination of a long past of endeavours, sacrifice, and devotion". The roles played by these elements are, therefore, profoundly significant in the negotiation made by an individual in matters that have to do with identification with the geographical space called home.

The concerns Mda has for straitjacket impositions of identities play themselves out at the different levels of interpersonal interactions between characters in the play. Tami's decision to remain faithful to her fiancé, Luthando, for instance, typifies her as one committed to the ideal of 'self' and 'other' in marital issues by eschewing other possible propositions. For instance, Tami does not contemplate a love relationship with Martijn, who is also of black ancestry, in spite of her sense of abandonment and frustration. Martijn's remarks when Katja hints at the possibility of a romantic liaison between the two of them are instructive: "If it were really my effect she would be reachable. I can't reach her, Katja. We play the music, we seem to gel, but she's as distant as ever" (*SR*, 148). Martijn's statement above dwells more on Tami's emotional withdrawal as opposed to physical proximity. Martijn is also guilty of the notion of difference as he distinguishes between himself and Tami by arguing that he does not possess the walking steps of Africans which he spitefully describes as expansive, as if, according to him, they are not descendants of slaves. Martijn's view

[98] Part of the lecture titled "Passages to England: Suez as Indian Channel" that she gave at the Wits Distinguished Visitor Programme on 22nd September, 2009.

is indicative of the complications and limitations that are inherent in popular social categorisations. Martijn's attempt at emphasising difference in this instance expands further the institutionalisation of fluid elements in fragmenting human relations.

Traits of stereotypes and racial superiority are also displayed in *The Bells of Amersfoort* by the journalist who chats with Tami on the new project of forming a multiracial group. Other than this, Tami is expected to be as vivacious as possible when she appears on the television as a role model to other blacks, who might be watching. In the estimation of the journalist who is acted by Martijn, black people are known to "have the gift of laughter" (*TBA*, 154). While laughter is a virtue and a desirable form of expression, it is used intriguingly in this case to connote inaction, complacency and perfidy. This thinking is reinforced by the sarcasm inherent in the music of the late Nigerian artist, Fela Anikulapo Kuti, on the notion of "suffering and smiling". Tami's condemnation of the attitude of the journalist speaks volumes: "Yet it was in this country that I was interviewed by a moron who has internalised all the racist stereotypes of Africa and the Africans you can imagine. Talking to me as if I was an idiot" (*TBA*, 154). The behaviour of both Martijn and the journalist are similarly reminiscent of how tropes of inclusion and exclusion are formed and promoted. This, often times, results from people within a particular inscribed group forming impressions about others outside it, and at the same time generalising those impressions. The specific questions asked by the journalist reiterate the old colonial constructions of 'primitive Africa' and 'civilised West'. In other words, such notions are reminiscent of stereotypes and prejudice. Stereotypes and prejudice, as manifestations of social categorisation, could be deployed positively or negatively, in order to help one to either earn or lose opportunities. Social categorisation, according to Charles Stangor (2000:2), "occurs when, rather than thinking about another person as a unique individual, we instead think of the person as a member of a group of people, for instance, on the basis of their physical characteristics (such as skin color, gender, or age)…". Such thinking has been used by colonisers to sustain notions of barbarism and subservience when regarding other races, on the one hand, and civilization-cum-superiority when regarding themselves, on the other. The separate development programmes of the Apartheid government in South Africa were predicated on such conceptions as a result of the country emerging as a melting pot of different cultural and racial extractions. The accompanying diversity is today seen as

a source of strength. Even though the view of Thabo Mbeki,[99] cited in Ivor Chipkin (2007:99), that is quoted below is overtly the recognition of a unique and positive form of cultural syncretism, the multiracial configuration therein is, however, nonetheless implicitly burdened by divisive dynamics:

> I owe my being to the Khoi and the San whose desolate souls haunt the great expanses of the beautiful Cape… I am formed of the migrants who left Europe to find a new home on our native land… In my veins courses the blood of Malay slaves who came from the East. … I am the grandchild of the warrior men and women that Hintsa and Sekhukhune led, the patriots Cetshwayo and Mpephu took to battle, the soldiers Moshoeshoe and Ngungunyane taught never to dishonour the cause of freedom.

No doubt, the metaphorical constitution of Mbeki as enshrined in this speech is reminiscent of the multi-ethnic nature of the country. It might be argued that the attempt in this speech is to inclusively map the different categories of people that make up the nation, both as a cultural and political entity. However, the trajectory that is painted is indicative of the different histories that led to where the nation is today. Incidentally too, the content of the speech is a subtle, but possibly an inadvertent, reminder to the entire locus each individual occupies in the wider space, predicated on the ancestral links shared by each of its progenitors. It could be concluded, then, that every attempt made to consciously inscribe inclusion is inextricably accompanied by a tendency towards 'othering'.

The idea of 'Othering' in Apartheid South Africa was particularly abhorrent considering the fact that the black majority who were victims had their citizenship suspended, so to speak, as their rights were denied and borders and boundaries constructed appropriately. Belinda Bozzoli (2004:20-21) captures this when she argues that "one of the defining features of black experience of Apartheid was indeed that of living within the legally, politically and socially restricted boundaries – the 'bounded space' …". From the implementation of the separate development policy to the struggles against it, the 'us'/ 'them' polarity becoming widened, leading to many egregious manifestations that new nation-building efforts are meant to redress or ameliorate. True to the 'rainbow'[100] nature of its conception, post-Apartheid South

[99] From a speech on behalf of the ANC in Cape Town in May 1996, on the adoption of the constitution.
[100] The use of the rainbow as a metaphor to configure the cultural diversity of the South African nation by Archbishop Desmond Tutu is apt, but negates the idea of integration desired in the new South Africa. Although the rainbow dynamics speaks of cohabitation, it speaks similarly of division.

Africa encompasses people with hyphenated identities, using white/black/coloured prefixes to designate their membership of South African citizenship. The challenge, therefore, as a result of this, is how to synthesise these varying 'branches' into a national unity. This whole process is governed by intrigues from both the representatives of the state and the individuals. It goes without saying, therefore, that however tenacious the drive for integration is, as perceived and conceived of by the state, the power of individual negotiation is overwhelmingly relevant in the process. While the constructions of inclusion and exclusion are more socially driven, sustaining the polarity and the binary is done by both the society and the individual. This tends to confer on the individual a form of vulnerability when one considers the fact that they are a product of their society. However, this helplessness of the individual cannot be total in view of the fact that they can still wrestle with the dictates made by the society, as part of "the politics of being" (Patrick Chabal, 2009:24). This is found in some of the decisions Tami makes with people of different ancestries, most especially Johan, as it will be seen later, as soon as she is healed of her alcoholism and schizophrenia.

The Bells of Amersfoort, which Amato describes as an attempt "… to rehabilitate the Afrikaner in the imagination of South Africa" (xviii), also investigates the relationship between black and white South Africans, the latter mostly of Dutch ancestry. This is firstly attained through the configuration of victim and victimiser. Tami, through a sudden recollection, momentarily recognises Johan as the Apartheid agent that disrupts her wedding and subjects her to inhumane torture. Even though Johan is a 'dominee', a theological student in Holland, he still participates in infidelity and betrayal as he engages in an amorous relationship with a black Dutch prostitute, Heleen. Johan's act of 'infidelity' both to his faith and his race (similar to that of Dawid in his relationship with Marta) shows how fickle socio-political prescriptions and constructions are. Other than this, Johan's salacious behaviour rekindles instances of racial hypocrisy and condescension as well as the transgressions of the act prohibiting mixed marriages in Apartheid South Africa. This is underscored by the fact that one of the first people convicted under the Immorality Act was a Cape Dutch reformed minister, who was caught having "sex with a domestic worker in his

garage".[101] Both Johan and Dawid in the preceding chapter share the characteristic details of this actual event.

Moreover, the theme of infidelity is problematised going by the way culpability is subjected to evaluation. While, for instance, Tami claims to be faithful and accuses her fiancé, Luthando, of unfaithfulness, she vicariously, as broached earlier on, 'participates' and draws some emotional satisfaction from the sexual acts of Johan and Heleen. Tami gives herself over to becoming a voyeur in this conversation she has with Luthando. Talking about how she satisfies "the need of the flesh" (*TBA*, 135), Tami informs her fiancé that "I satisfy them at my window … My body remains pure and untouched, waiting just for you. Yet my needs are fulfilled" (*TBA*, 135). The patterning of the stage into three worlds allows Tami to peep into the 'Third World' created in the play where the duo of Johan and Heleen are involved in sexual acts. Tami's attainment of emotional satisfaction through the 'acts' of two other individuals in the play re-echoes Mda's attempts to challenge assumptions and preconceived ideas around guilt, culpability and innocence. While Johan and Luthando are seen to be guilty of sexual immorality by Tami, the play seems to blur the line between the actual act and the act of 'seeing'. Such a redefinition points to the possibility of Tami's culpability. This seems to draw some potency from the biblical account that voyeurism, an activity which goes on in the mind, is as good as the actual act of love making. Johan accuses Tami of equal participation in this illicit affair thus: "You have taken pains to watch us twice a week. Whether you like it or not you are a participant in my sordid affairs" (*TBA*, 138). Johan concludes by informing Tami that a more powerful eye (eye of God) than hers is always there to see her. Tami's sexual satisfaction that she attains through her imagination also raises new thinking around sexuality. It is arguable from the sexual relationship between Johan and Heleen, and the remote collusion of Tami in the process, that there exists the possibility of people exhibiting their overwhelming libidinous traits by secretly participating or approving of certain sexual relations or behaviour, notwithstanding the socio-religious positions they maintain in the larger society.

[101] See www.rebirth.co.za. Accessed 08/08/2009.

Therefore, this licentious relationship between Johan and Heleen offers another platform to challenge familiar notions around race and sexuality. Johan's experience in Holland sees him blurring the racial-religious borders that prohibited sexual relationship between races back home in South Africa in order to avoid racial contamination. As highlighted beforehand, under the Apartheid regime, The Mixed Marriages Act made it an offence for people from different racial groups to get married or be involved in sexual relationship. Johan, who racially represents the Apartheid government that outlawed such relations, is now caught in the contradictions of the same offence he helped to institute. Johan's confession corroborates this: "But the moment I got to Heleen's window … I was struck by her golden brown legs. Black body parts. Forbidden fruits where I came from" (*TBA*, 138). Apart from the apostasy committed as a result of his relationship with the black prostitute, Heleen, the absolution that Johan seeks through his decision to enter the priesthood is debilitated by the sinful act of sexual immorality which leads him to sink even more into rejection and frustration. This is underscored, when considered on the basis of the prescriptions of his faith. Taken in another perspective, the involvement of Johan in this amorous relationship is a signifier of the fluidity of the once rigid border and the mobility of players that could facilitate enduring interactions to foster the bridging of the old schism in an attempt at nation-building. It is a great irony, for instance, that Holland, which is the origin of the culture white South Africans of Dutch ancestry claim to want to preserve, offers only an inhibited space for Johan to freely express himself. Johan's characterisation is used by Mda to make a statement about the indefinable nature of love and his "scepticism towards politics and religion" (Dorothy Winifred Steele, 2007:266).

This seemingly rebellious tendency by Johan is symptomatic of how individuals can assert themselves within the parameters of the existing social order. This correlates with the four elements recognised by Melanie (2005:42), as central to the notion of identity. These are: context, setting, individuals in interaction and the self. The context would mean the wider South Africa "historical and material trajectory and relations of power …", the settings are those configured in the texts, and by extension South Africa, while the self is "'the unique psychobiography' of each individual within the context of social experience … biography both individual and necessarily collective". In sum, the challenge of the old rigid order creates certain fluidity in

human relations. Apart from the positivism of Johan's action at subverting racial discrimination, it also exposes some of the hypocrisy surrounding racial matters. This is summarised by Lindiwe Mabuza (1989:11) that "white men hankered after black women in private while in public they avoided them like a plague. Such public aversion for black women was often a sham, a cover and a front to hide their lust". Holland, no doubt, functions in this play as a space of engagements for two individuals that previously conceive allegiance to two different countries, that is South Africa and Holland. The result of and transnational implications of such interactions are codified in the collaborative affiliation that is named the Dutch-South Africa Solidarity Movement. Even though this organisation is an amalgam that suggests an integrative relationship, 'the bells of Amersfoort' are a painful reminder and signifier of the trauma that facilitated such cohesion. Therefore, even though these bells are symbols of civilisation and human rights protection, they inadvertently become negative signifiers in relation to the reawakening of Tami's traumatic past. If taken as representative of the interventions made by the international community towards fostering peace and reconciliation, the realities constructed in and through Holland, therefore, connote both positivism and negativity.

The decision by Tami and Johan following their return to South Africa to cooperate across racial lines for the rebuilding of the charred land portrays Mda's idea of 'sameness within difference' and contrasts with the duality of citizenship that was encouraged under Apartheid. Such a division is a negation of effective citizenship which, in the words of Charles Tilly (2005:196), is meant to impose "strong obligation uniformly on broad categories of political participants and state agents. It thereby mitigates – but by no means eliminates – the political effects of inequalities in routine social life". Tami and Johan return to a new South Africa which has moved beyond the old compartmentalisations they used to know. Johan laments the fact that the leaders who benefited from the Apartheid regime have since melted into the new ruling class. In the same vein, Tami's aborted relationship with former comrades in the struggle, most especially her estranged fiancé, leaves her forlorn and alienated. To this end, Tami states that: "My loneliness continues. It is like I am still in Europe" (*TBA*, 160). In view of the new imperatives of freedom, Tami suggests that there should be "a new cohesion. The cohesion of free men and women" (*TBA*, 160), which would replace that which was introduced by Apartheid. Beyond the new-found

alliance, the fact that Tami does not give up after being betrayed by former comrades of the struggle seems to rekindle her belief that "ideological influence is crucial … in the exercise of social power" (James Lull, 2003:61). As enacted in *The Bells of Amersfoort,* the seeming polarity to be noted in citizenship under the new dispensation is driven more by class than race. One way in which race is used here is to achieve differentiation in an attempt to redress the imbalances of the Apartheid past, through the introduction of Black Economic Empowerment, which many critics have described as a mere ruse as far as the economic repositioning of the black majority is concerned. It goes without saying, therefore, that the coalescence of race and class in the creation of 'self' and 'other' polarities in post Apartheid South Africa has introduced into the process a huge sense of fluidity that calls for great caution. However tenuous this is, one can argue, based on deductions from the play, that class, or better still individual materialism and not purely race, appears to be more enshrined in the unbalanced accumulation of opportunities and privileges in the new South Africa.

At this point, it will be necessary to interrogate the characterisation of Johan further in this chapter. Johan could be taken as an individual confined within the social space of white supremacy in Apartheid South Africa. He invariably becomes a member of "a passive social collectivity whose lives are shaped at least in part by the racialized social system in which they live and operate" (Amanda E. Lewis, 2004:627). Critically speaking, Johan is an 'alien', having been born into a 'strange' land by his migrating parents, who view Holland as their home. This contrasts with the new initiative that sees a South African as anyone that is born and grows up in the country. But such post-Apartheid thinking also calls for commitment from the individual. Johan is constantly indoctrinated to believe that his ancestral home is in Holland. The above is in spite of the fact that his exiled parents[102] are able nonetheless to assume an advantageous socio-political and economic position in South Africa. This was started with their colonisation, and consummated in the "configuration of white supremacy

[102] The word 'settler' is used to designate the identity of white people in postcolonial contexts in Africa. Sarah Nuttall (2001:117) re-echoes Michael Chege's idea of referring to whites in this category as "Africans of European Descent". Specific African contexts/countries mentioned are: Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Nuttall believes that the configuration of settler is inherently "coming from elsewhere" instead of being "of the place" and continues that this is a process of transition "from the politics of conquest and subjugation to the politics of negotiation and belonging" (118).

and racial inequality" otherwise called "the sorcery of color" (Elisa Larkin Nascimento, 2004:861). This Apartheid regime recalls, in a way, the deployment of whiteness as social and legal constructions. Hence, whiteness, in the words of Gwendolyn Audrey Foster (2003:30), "defined citizenship, freedom" and "blackness connoted slavery, bondage". Although Johan and his parents, as created in the play, are now citizens of the new diversified South Africa, after the negotiation[103] of wilful citizenship carried out in order to deconstruct the status quo of inequalities and subordination, the memory of their ancestral home has left them an "ethnie".

T. K. Oommen (1997:20) sees the 'ethnie' as "a cultural collectivity which lives outside its ancestral territory ─ actual". But in this case, actual and ancestral territories become problematic for Johan who, for example, is familiar with the flora and fauna of South Africa as opposed to the deep sense of estrangement he feels in Holland, his supposedly ancestral homeland. As a result, the influence of and attachment to the environment allow Johan, just like Dawid in Fugard's *Sorrows and Rejoicings*, to deploy his affection, affiliation and identification with the geographical space of South Africa. This is in tandem with the view shared by Bill Ashcroft (2007:6), in his exposition on "transnational immigrants" that "the commitment to a homeland decreases rapidly for the second and third generation diaspora". Johan in this ontology is left to bear the burden of moral rectitude occasioned by the complicity of white as wild (Leon de Kock)[104] amidst the distrust of whiteness as "haunting as well as haunted" (Meaghan Morris, 2006:11). The immediate reality of Johan's situations following his concrete emotional detachment with Holland is the precariousness and fluidity of identity which is, however, resolved a little later, after his return to South Africa.

It is also obvious from Johan's experience that homogeneity and mapping are fast being challenged in postcolonial interactions as cultures and capital keep gravitating towards transnationalism. Such liberalism in socio-economic landscapes, however, has not diminished the potency of 'nation states', which is reflected in the prevailing

[103] Nuttal (ibid) posits that the TRC helps to record a movement from the register of conquest to that of negotiation, from settler to that of citizen. However, she concludes that for whites, "belonging could not be assumed: Rather, a process of mutual negation had to be replaced by a process of mutual recognition which could then lead to belonging".

[104] Leon de Kock made this submission at the 'Interrogating Whiteness Colloquium' held on May 10, 2008, at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth, South Africa.

reinforcement of political and economic borders. Johan's transnational sense is reinforced by his commitment to transformation and the interpolation of the state as well as "the erasure of simple binaries of power" (Ashcroft, ibid). As a result, Johan is occupying what Ashcroft calls "the in-between-space" where people, nation and a community's definitiveness is suspended for the sake of eclecticism. Ashcroft goes further to submit that "in-betweenness is not a state of suspended subjectivity, but a state of fluidity, of porous boundaries, of travel between subject positions" (3). By virtue of this liminal space, it is obvious that Johan is embarking on the project of self-reconstruction. This reconstruction is made necessary after the unmasking of his defunct identity in Holland.

By so doing, the collective memory of a social group fails to be overwhelming for Johan, as it cannot adequately perpetuate in him the identity and citizenship originally infused in him. When viewed against the backdrop of the attempt he makes to absolve himself of the complicity of the torture and marginalisation of blacks by the white dominated apartheid government, during the reconciliation he seeks with Tami before the TRC re-enacted in the play, Johan appears to be cutting himself off from the opportunities constructed by whiteness. He however displays association and identification with the project of rebuilding the new South Africa. In absolving himself of his complicity as an Apartheid agent and blaming it on the influence of his elders, similar to the attitude of Pa Ubu in Taylor's *Ubu and the Truth Commission*, Johan quips: "I was a foot soldier. I was used by the elders to fight their war, to do all their dirty work. I carried out their instructions to preserve what they claimed they had created for me … and my progeny … and all the future generations …" (*TBA*, 150).

Johan in this text exhibits the shifting nature of identity. The above is more particularly inscribed in the ambivalence that Johan displays in the face of the confrontation between the realities of his Dutch and Afrikaner identities. For instance, Johan unequivocally attests to his identity thus:

> I'm an Afrikaner, not a Dutch. It is an insult to call an Afrikaner a Dutchman…
>
> Of course they came from here. But the Afrikaner hasn't got an immediate sense of his Dutchness. The Afrikaner is an African and the Dutch are Europeans…

> I think of South Africa as home. I am a migrant. A buiterlander. Even though I speak the language. Even though I look like any Dutch person. I live for the day when I go back home (*TBA*, 144).

Johan, therefore, appears to be occupying what Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin (2007:108), quoting Homi Bhabha, call "the third place of enunciation", a "contradictory and ambivalent space" where cultures are constructed and as a result threaten a sense of cultural and identity purity. These processes of association and dissociation are reminiscent of the fact that identity is "not absolute or pre-given" but "is about belonging, about what you have in common with some people and what differentiates you from others" and "as becoming in a process of change and formation" (Melanie Walker, 2005:42). Going by the implicit constructedness of race and "the fear of hybridity and race mixing" (Gwendolyn Audrey Foster, 2003:33) as fulcrums for the institutionalisation of inclusion and exclusion in the Apartheid state, Johan is best conceived not as a signifier of the white population in South Africa but, in the view of Sarah Nuttall (2001:116), a representative of "… certain historical tension within the white population" as well as "the history of its relationship with black people". The configuration of an outsider personified in both Tami and Johan in Holland has a certain unifying force that galvanises between them the suspension of otherness and the precipitation of the commonality required for common goals and aspirations; and there is the possibility that this could be constructed as a form of new citizenship. Further to this, Holland offers itself as a public space to ensure close proximity, and later, intimacy between the formerly oppressed Tami and Johan, a defunct oppressor.

The sense of nationality displayed by Tami and Johan in this text is illustrative of the idealised cooperation required from all the citizens in the new South Africa, in spite of historical divisions. This is underscored by the fact that commitment plays a central role in securing a collective identity, which is principally identification with the nation (T. K. Oommen, 1997:33). This implied commitment of the characters to the nation is reinforced by the fact that "to be a citizen means to 'associate' oneself with the state, to share its purpose" (Alfonso Alfonsi, 1997:55). In what looks like an attempt to bring healing to the scarred past, Johan desires to do what is close to the performance of restitution when he offers to be the presiding minister in the wedding between Tami and Luthando that was earlier interrupted. However, the effort is a

belated one that could not mitigate the interruption of not only her plans of marriage, but the attendant disruptions. Tami's experience underscores the place of matriarchy in response to and negation of the domination and valourisation of patriarchy in the struggle for liberation. This must have been done, particularly, to dispel the silences that define the experiences of black women in exile, and to foreground the fundamental contribution that women are making in the emerging South Africa. Tami is not only given a voice in the play but her engagements with Luthando expose the latter's limitations but reveal Tami's unique strength, consistency and commitment. This is, however, without the continuous and quotidian exposure of women to exploitation, as shown in the love escapades of Luthando.

Contrary to her expectation of a productive return, following her delayed return to South Africa, Tami is faced with the senses of loneliness, disorientation and disappointment. Her return is considered delayed by Johan who accuses her that she fails to return when other exiles do and participate in TRC processes. Tami's disappointment and loneliness are not far removed from the fact that the old comrades, most especially her fiancé, Luthando, seem to have shifted their values once concentrated on the struggle for democracy and subsequent nation-building, towards a preoccupation with the depletion of the national treasury. This change in ideological leaning is indicative of changes in other spheres, occasioned by things like time and the need to take part in the appropriation of new economic and political opportunities. The 'changed' or transformed South Africa that is anticipated by Tami on her return later turns out to be a mere chimera, as nothing has actually changed, other than the fact that the operation of the machineries of the state have moved from the white minority to another minority group; a few privileged blacks and their white collaborators. These 'changed' comrades now ride exotic cars which contrast with the bicycles with which Tami and Johan are content. Other than the fact that the exotic cars confer a better but questionable social status on their owners, they also, as enacted in the play, debilitate the environment. The challenges posed by this dangerous gas emission in the community contrast with the erosion (a natural phenomenon) that is earlier traced to abandonment at the beginning of the play. It is reminiscent of the ironies that get unearthed as human beings move upward on the ladder of civilisation and development. Luthando, in particular, now invests his time and energy appropriating what should be deployed to address the deplorable living

conditions of a large number of the black majority, which was precipitated by the Apartheid system.

The Bells of Amersfoort, by evaluating this emerging order, raises some questions around lack of and the need for transparency and accountability. Mda has acknowledged that preoccupations in his writing include a critique of corruption and bad leadership in Lesotho, where he lived, of South Africa, his country of origin, and by extension the continent of Africa. The cooperation Tami secures from Johan, a white South African, and the masses, represented metaphorically in the figurines, is timely enough to lessen what would have been an aggravation of the solitude, alienation and rejection that characterised Tami's respective states of exile and return. Despite a new alliance with Johan, Tami is, however, alarmed by the seeming withdrawal of people to the background of inaction following the attainment of freedom. She condemns this passivity by expressing the irony that "it is painful to be free" (*TBA*, 161). The battle is now not against dispossession that is based on race, but against that exploitation that is driven by class. Added to this is the need to sustain the battle against the exploitation of women who are still reduced to objects of appropriation, as seen in the activities of Luthando. It is apparent from the return of Tami, as revealed above, that once the trend of exile is initiated, both internal and external, it becomes impossible to prevent.

The bicycle Tami and Johan ride reinforces their resolve to work together, while others like Luthando manifest their ostentation through exotic cars, brandishing the slogan "Democratic. Non-racial. Non-sexist" (*TBA*, 159). The actions of the emerging black elite class and the past Apartheid elders that have since entered into collaboration with them culminate into what Patrick Bond (2000:2) calls "exacerbated 'uneven development' ". However, the following conversation between Tami and Johan exemplifies the cohesion that evolves after the blurring of the idea of the self and other:

> TAMI: …Help me do what Luthando and I had vowed to do: rebuild the scarred land. Heal the wounds that still ache, that history has imposed on my people.
> JOHAN: I will be with you. It is not an easy thing to heal the wounded earth. But I'll be with you (*TBA*, 160).

Looking at the formation of class structures in the new South Africa, one can argue that the bond shared between Tami and Johan is not as suspect as that between Luthando and the former Apartheid 'elders'. The cooperation achieved by Tami and Johan starts and is negotiated when each of them still has some small sense of membership to the old order, but this is only brought to the fore following other pertinent revelations. This development is corroborated by Samuel L. Gaertner *et al* (2000:437) when they argue that "intergroup cooperation is a complex process that usually involves several features, including interaction, common problems or goals, and common fate between the memberships". The transformation experienced by Johan particularly embodies the notion of the subjectivity of and the making of the 'self'. This presupposes the fact that the creation of the 'self' as opposed to the 'other' is a conscious phenomenon which is subject to the agent in question. This explains the success of Johan in eliminating the old racial constructions which makes him to associate with Tami and her aspiration. The dynamics of cohesion witnessed between Johan and Tami are evidently defined by painful concessions, given the divergences imposed by socio-cultural dictates.

Tami interacts with different shades of masculinity in the play. But three such interactions stand out in her character development. Tami's engagements with Luthando and Johan at the point at which she is tortured for her unwillingness to give up Luthando and members of the liberation struggle to the police sees her sandwiched between two volatile walls; that of resistance and of Apartheid hegemonic repression, or, as it were, between 'the devil and the deep blue sea'. Tami's resolve typifies and is reminiscent of the notion of "revolutionary female consciousness" and significantly "demonstrates the positions of power that women are able to establish within patriarchal and racially discriminatory systems in order to actively alter their environment" (Hannah Britton and Jennifer Fish, 2009:7&11). At the end of the day, both Luthando and Johan turn out to be apostates and lose the consistency and perseverance that are some of the attributes by which patriarchy is often defined. However, the apostatsy of Johan is positive as it signals an efficient contribution to the ongoing reconciliatory process. The foregoing notwithstanding, the decision made by Johan is 'redemptive' following a 'knowing', the whole process reflects rashness and imperfection. Tami's stability in her ideological pursuits, first to see South Africa liberated from the hold of Apartheid and secondly to get the wounded land healed,

exposes the fickleness of Luthando and Johan. Patriarchy is challenged in the context of the play, not just to achieve gender equality but to consider the possibility of matriarchy triumphing over patriarchy. The third level at which Tami confronts patriarchy is the stereotypical conception by Martijn that the female agent would act in certain ways when romantic issues are involved. Tami's resilience at withstanding Martijn's proposition negates the notion of unflinching malleability credited to women. Her decision to remain faithful to the 'promise' she and Luthando make with each other typifies some sense of moral uprightness. Tami, in this wisdom, epitomises chastity and personifies accountability, while patriarchy fails.

Conclusion

The expositions in this chapter are in essence situated on the interrogations made in the play into the trajectories of migration, othering, exile, identity and new possibilities. It is suggested that the various migratory experiences witnessed within and outside of South Africa, as reflective of others all over the world, are vital to history making and the acceptability of difference in relations across racial lines. It has been revealed, using Mda's *The Bells of Amersfoort*, that the polarisation into 'self' and 'other', passes for a social weapon deployed to encourage the exclusivity of opportunity for members of a particular group, and at the same time put others in an underprivileged position. It has, however, been made clear that this wall, however hard or strong, is fluid and could be demolished depending on the subject or the human agency involved, as seen in the interactions between Tami and Johan. It is, therefore, proposed that a precipitation of this form of cohesion, based on the demolition of the hitherto maintained boundaries fashioned by the old South Africa, will engender common identification amongst the different groups that might still be harbouring vestigial racial divisiveness in the new South Africa. This is more so in relation to the attempt to achieve, through shared responsibility, the healing of 'the charred land'. Richard Ballard (2004:52a) emphasises this by declaring that "integration, therefore, is a spatial strategy that reflects an identity not founded on the sharp othering that was the basis for apartheid". The emergence of the exploiting rich and the exploited poor has introduced a new dimension to how the material condition of people is interrogated in the new South Africa. This is subsequent to the deconstruction of the previous "single congregation" achieved racially but rather

taking on the "volatile form of difference" found in a new culture of reconstruction of a new South Africa (Andrew Smith, 2004:255-256).

Apart from the polarity witnessed amongst the actors within the geographical space of South Africa, probable tensions between the community in exile and the host community have been interrogated. This exposes the identification and dissociation individuals make with a particular locale, not necessarily as a result of the colour of his/her skin, or ancestral affiliation, but the overwhelming force of familiarity with and belonging to the topography and the world of the senses. By so doing, the reality of the fluidity of identity as found in many instances occasioned by global migrations is demonstrated. Spectres of identity processes such as multiculturalism, hybridization, and nationalisation are seen in time. Apart from the fact that the individual is imbued with the capacity to embark on identity negotiation, it is made obvious that current identities are fast dissolving. More specifically, 'othering' has shifted in the new South Africa, judging by the dictates of the text studied in this chapter, from a purely racial dimension to other indices like class, individual subjectivity, will and commitment. As a result, race seems to have been blurred, leading to a certain cosmopolitanism. Tami and Johan in Mda's *The Bells of Amersfoort* personify the constitutional comradeship recommended by Kole Omotoso (ibid:3)[105] for the attainment of a future where belongingness and equality could be guaranteed for all citizens no matter the colour of their skins and their cultural, religious beliefs around sexuality. Nationhood turns out to be the major concern of the people, as enacted by Tami and Johan. But for these characters, South Africa has become a nation because of the emotional attachment they have for it, the investment of moral meaning to it and the essence of it being a homeland, both ancestral and adopted (T. K. Oomen, 1997:33). Therefore, the relationship between Tami and Johan offers some optimism for cohesion[106].

What we can glean from this text, as with the possibilities found in contemporary South Africa, reminds us of the actualisation or the politics of the self within a

[105] Constitutional comrades, in his view, are those committed to the rule of law. Tami and Johan, therefore, qualify for this description as their aspirations are in tandem with the wishes enshrined in the constitution as opposed to others, black and white, who intend perpetuating inequalities and poverty.
[106] This is analogous to what Sarah Nuttall (2001:121) calls an attempt to destroy one's whiteness, make invisible, and a separation from "a culture of repressive whiteness".

particular group formation; or what Patrick Chabal (2009:27) calls "constraints of origin … place of birth and burial". Melanie Walker (2005:46) also avers that "the gap between the constitutional mandate and social reality 'is still wide' ". Johan's 'baptism' in South Africa and rejection of Holland exposes the hypocrisy of some other white people of Dutch ancestry who are yet to see South Africa as home, but still see it as a mere alternative. We should not, however, lose sight of the apprehension expressed earlier by Johan about the possibility of not getting a 'space' in the new South Africa. This, no doubt, is the reality of present circumstances, both in the fictive and the material worlds. When subjected to critical enquiry, it will be seen that the different situations of white South Africans of Dutch origin reflect, either partially or substantially, the notion of loss of political power, and the disappearance of cultural sureties, threat as well as an increasingly uncertain future (Albert Grundlingh, 2007:208). This according to Grundlingh (ibid), who is reiterating the view of an Afrikaner commentator, has culminated into different forms of escapist strategies after the 1994 election. Grundlingh concludes that "some escaped into the other-worldly idea of nation-building, others fled overseas, whilst a larger number sought their salvation in individualism … economic prosperity and personal enrichment".

Through the characters in this play, this chapter reinforces the fact that identities are often constructed and reconstructed based on the whims and caprices of the social groups (and the individuals) that are involved, and the context in which such are negotiated. Instances alluded to in this chapter are indicative of the efforts being made to blur the various divides that exist between people of diverse races that constitute the new South Africa; the challenges to such attempts and the fact that individualisation plays a significant role in the building and renegotiation of identity. Melanie Walker (2005:44) captures the latter as "the preferences and choices of individuals in their micro-interactions". It is also discovered that the peculiar realities in the South African state informs the readiness of certain individuals to embrace integration and the evolution of a national identity that is not based on race. The implication of the above is the possibility of a middle-line between the local and the global, and as a result, a good platform for a confluence of people differentiated along class, race, citizenship and identity. This is more so when viewed against the possibility of South Africa as a microcosm of the globalising world, with its past

experience and the liberal economic and bilateral policies. Rather than for citizenship to be "deemed either a resident of a nation or of the world" (Ivor Chipkin, 2007:13), it should be viewed as both the resident of a nation and the world, with each of the two possibilities conferring requisite platforms for identity inscription. It is obvious that both the worlds in the play-text and the contemporary are "a complicated picture of both rainbow nation and new racism", as "older apartheid ideology has been subdued but not entirely defeated" (Melanie Walker, 2005:142).

CHAPTER FIVE

THE TRC, POLITICAL RELEVANCE AND CONTESTATIONS IN JOHN KANI'S *NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH*

Following the inter-racial tensions and subsequent resolution between two characters in Chapter Four, this chapter looks at the contestations that characterise the process of reconciliation, both at the level of national engagement as well as within domestic relationships. The chapter also examines the disaffection expressed in some quarters about the appropriation of opportunities offered by independence between freedom fighters who went into exile and their compatriots that stayed back in South Africa during the liberation struggle. The chapter holds that reconciliation, as conceived by the state, cannot guarantee the required peace in total disregard to the ability of individual agents to forgive and the import of micro level relationships on the wider national framework. The chapter also supports the conjecture in the play that the attainment of freedom for the black majority should not be appropriated by only the elite, as it was achieved by general effort. The place of the individual is underscored by the relationship between two siblings, Sipho and Themba in John Kani's *Nothing but the Truth*. Hinging its argument on the attitude of some characters in the play, the chapter foregrounds the commitment that is required of an individual in acknowledging guilt and the quest for forgiveness, on the one hand, and the capacity to forgive and forget,[107] however painful the process might be, on the other. This chapter looks at the configuration of public space surrounding the convocation of the TRC by the South African government, following the demise of the Apartheid order and the contentious position taken by the marginalised as a result.

The TRC was an aggregation of the investment of ordinary spaces in town and community halls[108] with symbolic meanings of social, legal and psychological regeneration. The chapter reveals that the state's employment of the public domain to achieve its programme does not preclude the marginalised in the public body from externalising its thoughts and ideas on such projects. Conversely, such possibilities of

[107] Forgetting is used in this case not in the form of amnesia, but as an instance of suppression. Forgetting could mean a suppression of the painful past, which would forestall the application of the past in present interactions and relationships, rather than absolute obliteration.
[108] Benno Werlen (1993:174) calls these "socially constructed artefacts".

engagement nurture and influence the attitude of victims of past violations, who are in this case active members of the South African TRC public. Through the characterisation of Sipho in the text, the chapter examines a sense of marginalisation alleged by the character in relation to the entire process of reconciliation and nation-building. The chapter observes that Sipho's insistence on some sort of compensation for the pains inflicted on him during the Apartheid regime is in line with what amnesty is to past violators and new opportunities to the elite class. According to Sipho, the deployment of compensation will allow him engage more actively in the new South Africa. The chapter, going by indices in the text, therefore, concludes that it is not enough that a victim is heard, but such an individual should be allowed to participate in all the processes of socio-political 'reengineering' and reconciliation. An absence of this would not just render efforts made in the direction of public interactions irrelevant, but the idea of nation-building and the desire for citizenship would become a mere ruse. Consequently, the show of resentment by the marginalised would continually minimise the successes of equality and fairness that the state 'claims' to have recorded in the new South Africa. Simply put therefore, the TRC served as a fulcrum for the "vaguely" conceived and open-ended notion of reconciliation through which South Africa in the post-TRC period tries to accord meaning (Annelies Verdoolaege, 2008:3).

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission

The South African TRC, which was headed by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, started its assignment on February 1, 1996, after the approval given to it by parliament in July 1995. President Nelson Mandela appointed seventeen commissioners of the TRC, who, together with eleven co-opted members, formed three committees: the Human Rights Violations Committee (HRVC), the Amnesty Committee (AC), and the Reparation and Rehabilitation Committee (RRC). The TRC proceedings ended on July 31, 1998, and the final report was submitted to President Nelson Mandela on October 29, 1998 (Rustom Bharucha, 2002:362). Out of several millions of people that suffered forms of violation, abuse, torture or persecution, "only 21,400 submitted statements in around 140 public TRC hearings countrywide" (Bharucha, 2002:364). Similar Commissions (15), according to Jay A. Vora and Erika Vora (2004:303), were established in countries like Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Germany, the Philippines, and

others.[109] The South African TRC was an attempt to interrogate past conflicts which also "reflected an accommodation of interests emblematic of the negotiated transition".[110] The TRC poses a difficult task of reconciling sensitive processes that required that victims get justice, which would be driven by reconciliation and the need for a new future. It relied on the cooperation of past offenders to discover the truth with victims of such truths given adequate reparation.[111] Central to the process was the idea of amnesty which was strongly opposed by some victims or their relations because of the implicit capability it has to safeguard past offenders from prosecution.

Amnesty was, therefore, seen as "an unsavoury, yet necessary step, posited as 'middle ground' between advocates of retribution and the champions of impunity".[112] It can be supposed that the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission was put in place to look at the various human rights violations committed during Apartheid in South Africa, most especially against Black South Africans who were oppressed "from the cradle to the grave" (Jay A. Vora and Erika Vora, 2004:302). Since the Commission required testimonies from the violated and confession from violators, the TRC tallies with the idea of the public space shared by Charles T. Goodsell (2003:364) as "'the stage upon which the drama of communal life unfolds'. Such places are seen as a social binder for current residents and a connector to the past through accumulated personal memories and showcased historical monuments". Among several other opinions, however, the TRC is conceived of as a socially and politically determined space while public testimonies function as "an integral part of the mythology and reconstruction of nation … the idea of a new nation built from the ashes of the old" (Nthabiseng Motsemme, 2004:912 & 914).

Narrating the Nation or the 'Self'?

Kani's *Nothing but the Truth* makes an interrogation of the TRC through the central character Sipho and his daughter Thando, who works as an interpreter at the amnesty hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, as well as the latter's cousin, Mandisa, who has just returned from London to bury the cremated ashes of her late

[109] Some countries have also set up their own commissions in response to that of South Africa.
[110] See http://truth.wwl.wits.ac.za/cat. Accessed 22-01-09
[111] See http://truth.wwl.wits.ac.za/cat. Accessed 22-01-09
[112] See http://truth.wwl.wits.ac.za/cat. Accessed 22-01-09

exiled father, Themba. Themba has earlier specifically requested that his body should be buried close to those of his parents, should he die in exile. His exile is consequent upon his involvement in the liberation movements which saw him retaliate against the Apartheid state. Sipho is however opposed to Themba's claims as a 'legitimate' liberation fighter. At the personal level, Themba is being haunted by the unforgiving attitude of his brother, Sipho. Sipho is enraged by the 'negative influence' Themba has on his late son, Luvuyo, the suspected sexual relationship that Themba had with his former wife and the memory of the wire toy he destroyed when they were very young. After a scathing remark regarding how people construct heroes and icons in post-Apartheid South Africa, Sipho gives his idea of forgiveness at the end with a commitment to write a letter to the president on why he should not be excluded in the area of service delivery which, no doubt, is core to pacifying or compensating the large group of previously disadvantaged blacks.

Nothing but the Truth is, no doubt, an attempt to tell the story about the subaltern community in the new South Africa; an endeavour to give a 'voice to the voiceless',[113] or those that Sipho in the play calls "the little people like me" (*NBT*, 58). While Kani holds that his interest in arts was preceded by his love for storytelling, he also submits that he had always wanted to be involved in plays that spoke to his people.[114] The experiences of Sipho, most especially the loss of his son Luvuyo, and how he struggles to forgive offenders in the play, share some verisimilitude with that of John Kani who lost his brother in a gruesome manner during the height of Apartheid repression. This explains, therefore, why *Nothing but the Truth* has been described as "a tribute to his younger brother, who was shot dead by the police in 1985, while reciting a poem at the funeral of a 9 year old girl, who was killed during riots".[115] The depiction of John Kani's personal experiences is equally seen in the play from the engagement he makes with the arguments and the "rift between blacks who stayed in South Africa to fight apartheid, and those who left only to return when the hated regime folded".[116] Kani confirms that he (due to the recalcitrance of his father) narrowly missed going to Tanzania, Zambia for anti-

[113] John Kani acknowledged this in an interview on SA FM on 25 November 2009.
[114] See 'Ubuntu': a Keynote by John Kani from the 2006 (International Society for the Performing Arts) ISPA New York Congress. http://www.ISPA.org. Accessed 2/12/2009.
[115] See http://www.whoswhos.co.za. Accessed 2/12/2009.
[116] See http://www.tvsa.co.sa. Accessed 2/12/2009.

Apartheid military training after his high school education.[117] In a general sense, Sipho's character development in the play, from his angst about the reconciliation process, most especially the hatred he has for the white man who kills his son, to the eventual conciliation, is reflective of both the anger and forgiveness Kani had towards Marx and Niewoudt – two white security police – that attacked him.[118] However, the dominance of personal experience notwithstanding, we have been implicitly encouraged not to see *Nothing but the Truth* as an autobiography, but, as found in the play's blurb, "a story of two brothers, of sibling rivalry, of exile, of memory and reconciliation, of perplexities of freedom".

The State and the Cries of the Marginalised

Sipho in this drama shows a sense of revulsion for what he perceives as sheer insensitivity to his painful past by the state. He sees the processes of full disclosure, forgiveness and the deployment of amnesty as simply selfish and as a calculated attempt to achieve a specific end, reconciliation, which merely gives a select set of people access to government machineries. Sipho's suspicion is predicated on the thinking that the exchanges of forgiveness and full disclosure, on one side, and amnesty, at another, are driven by reconciliation and done at the expense of past haunting memories and present negative realities and circumstances of the marginalised. For instance, this perceived lack of sensitivity from the government towards its victims is stated in the dialogue between Thando and her father, Sipho. Thando starts by expressing her frustrations at the numbness she and others at the hearings suffer, while Sipho offers that the pointlessness of the process informs his decision not to attend the hearings anymore. The two characters proceed:

> **THANDO**: The truth does come out, and at least the families get to know what happened.
> **SIPHO**: Their version of what happened (*NBT*, 6).

[117] See 'Ubuntu': a Keynote by John Kani from the 2006 (International Society for the Performing Arts) ISPA New York Congress. http://www.ISPA.org. Accessed 2/12/2009.
[118] Kani claimed that he survived two assassination attempts ordered by the secret police in 1986, and still has scars of eleven stab wounds. See 'Ubuntu': a Keynote by John Kani from the 2006 (International Society for the Performing Arts) ISPA New York Congress. http://www.ISPA.org. Accessed 2/12/2009.

It is apparent from the above that the victims are objectified and seemingly marginalised to achieve the desire of the state which, in essence, is a negotiated reconciliation for a democratic transition. The consequence of the above is that the TRC does not offer both the victims and the perpetrators the same access to its imperatives considering the fact that the interest of the former is undermined by the negotiation process. As a result, perpetrators, and by extension, the hegemony, are advantageously treated. This development is true of the conception by Henri Lefebvre (2003:85) that "in the chaos of relations among individuals, groups, class fractions, and classes, the state tends to impose a form of rationality, its own, which has space as its privileged instrument". Other than the fact that the full disclosure being sought by the TRC is ultimately a kind of chimera,[119] and this is because of the fact that perpetrators are not committed to it, that does not in any way assuage the pains and hurt caused by past actions. Further complexity found in the process of deploying amnesty and indemnity is the realisation that, as enunciated in Chapter Two, what the commission accepted as the truth cannot be taken to be the absolute truth. In another sense, the idea of an unattainable 'absolute' truth paradoxically contrasts with the ambition of the commission to be told 'nothing-but-the-truth', which the title of the play parodies. Truth, as far as confession and testimonies are concerned, is highly problematic and complicated.

As exemplified and treated in Chapter Two, this is understood against the backdrop of the unwillingness of people to state the truth and the difficulties of remembering and recollection, the latter being as a result of some of the limitations attached to the memory itself. Taken further, this is emphasised in view of what Jacques Derrida (1996:19) calls "*archive fever*", since, according to him, "there would indeed be no archive desire without the radical finitude, without the possibility of a forgetfulness which does not limit itself to repression". Little wonder that Thando laments the idea of putting 'something', that is amnesty, on 'nothing', which are lies, when she

[119] Jay A. Vora and Erika Vora (2004:309) re-echoed the fact that most perpetrators deliberately withheld the truth and told what they call "half-truths and lies". In another vein, Charles Manga Fombad (2004:198) notes that more than 7000 applications for amnesty were submitted to the committee before the deadline, most of which came from people already in prison. Fombad further claims that members of the former Apartheid government displayed impunity as they argued that they did not commit any crime. Jay A. Vora and Erika Vora (2004:319) further support this to the effect that some Afrikaners were opposed to the idea of the TRC. Specifically, P. W. Botha, former prime-minister and president of South Africa, was said to have refused to appear before the TRC.

declares that: “One gets confused sometimes. Especially when so many lies are told” (*NBT*, 7). Yadh Ben Achour (2002:127) encapsulates this type of pervasive and recrudescent ambiguity as “truth in the sphere of politics”.

It is evident from the reaction of Sipho in the play that he is not satisfied with only the relief and sense of belonging that the opportunity provided for victims to tell their stories will naturally engender in the new South Africa. This conceived and celebrated therapeutic narratological effect of their stories could best be recognised as an attempt to promote individual experiences to the status of collective memory of the nation as a whole. The lack of specific attention given to people who were and are still deprived of opportunities is reflected in Sipho’s statements: “I am not talking about the TRC and your amnesty hearings” (*NBT*, 52), “I want everything that was mine given to me now” (*NBT*, 54). This is in addition to the opposition Mandisa makes to the amnesty granted some perpetrators, making reference to the cases of personalities like Joe Slovo and to Ruth’s children. However covert these revulsions shown by the above personalities might sound, they are not just incontrovertible indications of dissension, but largely an indictment on the transitional processes in South Africa. The implication of this is that the amnesty given, the forgiveness dispensed and the reconciliation earned are a mere repression of a series of realities, leaving room for possible contestations. However, it should be noted that the bitter argument witnessed in *Nothing but the Truth* over access to privileges is not occasioned principally by race. On the one hand, the dispute inherent in Sipho’s reaction raises some moral questions around fairness and challenges the legitimacy and acceptability of the transformational and transitional process of reconciliation and nation-building. It further reinforces the possibility of this process being undermined considerably in the future. Arguably, the form of ‘publicness’ configured through the TRC is analogous to the institutionalisation of the bourgeois public space where egalitarian dialogue takes place (Goode, 2005:4&9). Jay A. Vora and Erika Vora (2004:305) give a hint of this display of dissension by first recognising the South African TRC as a political configuration, just like other TRCs, and conclude that “the TRC was controversial and met with resentments”. Part of the specific responsibilities given to the South African TRC was to, by law, “propose material and symbolic reparations, designed to restore the human and civil dignity of victims … payments of reparations would be the task of the government” (Sanders, 2007:115). The major challenge to the efforts made to

correct old imbalances, however, is the perceived imbalance and inequality pervading the former marginalised black majority.

Critically speaking, the quest for reparation and compensation in monetary terms by victims would have amounted to a commercialisation and commoditisation of their bodies, violated in different ways under Apartheid, and their attendant pains[120]. It can also be argued that the application of retributive justice wouldn't have fetched the victims any form of compensation that would not reduce the charred cherished past to mere materiality, either. Rather than target actual past human denigration, the reparation being sought, and to be given, should be based on past socio-political and economic deprivations, as embodied in the life of Sipho. Emphasising previous acts and experience(s) of violence would be tantamount to profiteering with precious human dignity. Furthermore, payments of compensations, in many places across the globe, have not proven to eliminate past ordeals but instead amend present realities. However, apart from the fact that retributive justice establishes crime and culpability which requires that at the end of the process compensation or punishment be awarded for the harm done, Kiikpoye K. Aaron (2005:130) has argued that "the idea of punishment or compensation … not only compensates the victim but it serves the additional purpose of being a disincentive to those who may contemplate committing similar offences in the future". As a result, one could argue that the best way to compensate the victims would be for the government to galvanise the process of transformation of citizenship in a way that victims of past brutality would be encouraged by the sacrifice they have made as it serves as a transformative guarantee for the future. Such thinking as has been expressed here is true of most democratic and civil communities which must have witnessed various degrees of sacrificial commitment from people in the past, who sacrificed everything they had to entrench a fair, free, and empowering atmosphere for people to exercise their rights and actualise their potential.

This trend would then denote the sacrificing of their past for the sake of their present and tomorrow, since "we have seen that the process does not always really alleviate

[120] Sanders (ibid:115) refers to this as "an aporia" in that reparation is needed for people that suffered and are still suffering, but this is negated by the fact that, quoting a victim advocate, Ntombi Mosikare, "we are not putting a price tag on our pain, we only want the country to acknowledge us. What they are giving us is too little".

the suffering and frustration of the victims" (Yadh Ben Achour, 2002:113). Sanders (2007:117-118) corroborates the arguments above when he reiterates the commission's report, to the effect that "while such measures can never bring back the dead, nor adequately compensate for pain and suffering, they can and must improve the quality of the life of victims of human rights violations and/or their dependents". Sipho's quest for denied 'opportunities' is reminiscent of the complexities that surrounded determining appropriate reparations. In order to avoid these difficulties, efforts were concentrated on symbolic and collective reparations which included improved infrastructure, provisions of medical and educational facilities in certain communities, the construction of monuments, issuance of death certificates, exoneration of the dead from past allegations, the holding of reburials, and the renaming of public physical assets after fallen heroes (Annelies Verdoolaege, 2008:16). Ironically, however, "even as the victims continue to wait for their meagre reparations, the perpetrators of violence have assumed their new roles as the beneficiaries of the South African global economy" (Rustom Bharucha, 2002:373).

The play touches on the relationships between past offenders and their victims in relation to forgiveness, most especially within the interplay of full disclosure, pardon and amnesty, which define the position of the state in respect of perpetrators. Mandisa, a cousin to Sipho, believes that people should be allowed to avenge the wrongs done them in the past, or at least, have the perpetrator pay for his or her wrongs. She specifically queries why the perpetrators of the deaths of people like Ruth First, the wife of Joe Slovo,[121] should not be made to face the consequences. Thando, her cousin, however believes that the South African nation is not ready to go the way of Nuremberg[122] as the struggle for liberation is personified as the struggle for and by all. The reference made to Nuremberg typifies the idea of the victor and the vanquished. She justifies the granting of amnesty to someone like Craig Williamson after his full disclosure.[123] Apart from this, Thando reminds Mandisa of individuals

[121] Slovo, an "outspoken communist and atheist", is considered by Carl Niehaus (1999:87) to be a "moral and intellectual prophet of the relatively peaceful settlement in South Africa", alongside President Nelson Mandela and Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, who should be given such recognition. So, the death of his wife would, ordinarily, be expected to be handled with some tenacity.

[122] The Nuremberg trials were the different military tribunals conducted by the victorious forces of World War II who were responsible for the prosecution of reputable political, military, and economic members of the defeated Nazi Germany, from 1945 to 1946.

[123] Put in another way, it means, Sipho parodying the TRC, saying "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth", from where the title of the play is derived (*NBT*, 49).

like Derby-Lewis, Janus Walus[124] and the police who killed the Pebco 3. Thando corroborates her position by making reference to the forgiving spirit of Nelson Mandela who was incarcerated for 27 years on Robben Island. It is a great irony that Mandisa who grows up in a supposedly stable environment of London would be inclined to wishing for revenge when a fellow contemporary of hers, Thando, who has had to live through so much back home in South Africa, is committed, in contrast, to forgiveness and reconciliation. One reason that could have informed the uncompromising position Mandisa adopts is the indoctrination she receives from her exiled father, Themba, and other African exiles like him. Mandisa is, therefore, limited in her engagements with the TRC dynamics as she is but an outsider in this regard. The binary opposition of Thando and Mandisa also inscribes the role of agencies within the socio-political space that produces and nurtures them.

Heroism Redefined

Mandisa is constructed as a character in this play as an agent of dialectics. She, a 'hybridised product' of Europe and Africa, challenges the Africanness taught her by her late father, Themba, and that lived by Sipho and Thando on her return to South Africa to bury her father. Such oppositions in belief system, norms and practices are representative of John Kani's apprehension about the erosion of African communal ways of life by western ideas of individualism. Mandisa does not only show the audacity that is a result of the kind of upbringing she had, she personifies the tensions that exist between siblings and, by extension, heroes of the liberation struggles who are lurked in the politics of importance and relevance after the demise of Apartheid . Sipho hinges his hatred for his brother, Themba, on the favour the latter enjoyed at his expense as a child from their parents, the stealing of Sipho's wire toy (the wire toy as a signifier is reflective of the humble background John Kani was born into, having grown up in "a very poor neighborhood of New Brighton")[125] when they were growing up, and the sexual relationship Themba had with Sipho's wife. However, Mandisa, reiterating what her father told her before his death, alleges that Sipho's hatred is the consequence of envy. In the face of these claims and counter-claims,

[124] They are said to have murdered Chris Hani. (*NBT*, 29).
[125] See 'Ubuntu': a Keynote by John Kani from the 2006 (International Society for the Performing Arts) ISPA New York Congress. http://www.ISPA.org. Accessed 2/12/2009.

Sipho poses a question to Mandisa questioning Themba's claims to the struggle: "If your father was a hero of the struggle why did he not come back when the exiles came back?" (*NBT*, 45). Even though Mandisa explains this as the inability of an exile to just 'uproot' him/herself, Sipho proceeds to describe Themba as a fugitive and a coward, not a political exile, that was haunted by the despicable sexual exploitation of women. Sipho continues that Themba only encouraged strikes and boycotts during the struggles for personal gain and to cover up his failures in personal pursuits.

The heights of Themba's failure, according to Sipho, were his inability to come home to bury his father and the transposition of the burial ceremonies to a cheap political gathering by the United Democratic Front (UDF), the subsequent disruption of the event by the police and his eventual return as 'ashes in a vase' (*NBT*, 45). The metaphor of ash is used principally in that it is the remains of a once vibrant ember. It is not only arguable, therefore, that Themba lost his acclaimed vibrancy as a liberation fighter, but his reduction into an object to be kept in a container also typifies his continued entrapment. Themba and other exiles like him are depicted in the play as hypocrites. For instance, they are accused of falling into the same errors of racial discrimination that was core to the Apartheid system that Themba was fighting against. Mandisa says of this group of exiles: "Even our own black community – the West Africans and West Indians in London – expected us to love and marry within our own. It was as if, like the Afrikaners, we all feared disappearing as a race" (*NBT*, 23). Mandisa's view above takes every racial group to task on the apprehension each has about the possible 'contamination' of itself, and the subsequent building of 'isolated' clusters. We should also be reminded though, that people have the tendency to naturally associate with others who share their own characteristics. John Kani's exposé on 'absolutism' about race matters might be due to his personal experience with whites. For instance, while he used to 'hate' whites for the dehumanisation of his personality and his assault by two white police, he is eternally gratified by the action of the white doctor who hid him away in the hospital and, therefore, prevented him from being killed by his attackers.[126] As mentioned in Chapter Three, the contestation between Sipho and Themba about their participations in the liberation struggles

[126] See 'Ubuntu': a Keynote by John Kani from the 2006 (International Society for the Performing Arts) ISPA New York Congress. http://www.ISPA.org. Accessed 2/12/2009.

reflects the quibbles between the African National Congress (ANC) and the United Democratic Front (UDF) on what they respectively see as the fugitive exile choice (life) of the former and the skilful resilience of the latter.

The fallibility of any claims to heroism by the exiles, most especially those made by Themba, is further revealed in the conversation between Thando and Mandisa below where Thando scolds the position of the exiles as "typical of someone sitting 6 000 miles away. In a comfortable house in London, observing the whole situation with a pair of binoculars. You and your periodic amnesia, choosing to remember and forget as you wish" (*NBT*, 29). However, while it is true that the exiles must have been estranged from happenings at home, the idea of 'comfort' ascribed to them by those at home is relative. Even though exiles were insulated from the physical brutalisation that was going on at home (South Africa), they were vulnerable to other forms of both physical and psychical attrition, as seen in the experiences of both Dawid and Tami in Chapters Three and Four, respectively. The selective double-natured remembering and forgetting that Thando talks about show that people might be deliberately falsifying facts for personal gain. The anger of the underprivileged, the marginalised, as represented by Sipho, might just result from the fact that the exiles "have always taken from" them (*NBT*, 32). Sipho becomes obsessed with the issue of fairness so much so that it provokes Thando's apprehension when she quips, "Why do you keep saying that? What is this 'taking' about?" (*NBT*, 45). It is obvious from Sipho's desperation to be heard that the appropriation and circulation of opportunities in the new dispensation are disadvantageous to the poor black majority. The crux of the matter, therefore, as far as the marginalised are concerned, is that the pains of many have turned to the gains of few.

No Ownership; No Amnesty: Where is Reconciliation?

Also implied in *Nothing but the Truth* is the lack of ownership of past violations. This shows, for example, in the confoundedness that, reminiscent of the death of the younger brother of John Kani, characterises the attempts by Sipho to know the policemen that were responsible for the death of Luvuyo. This leads Sipho to attribute the act to De Klerk, who was the president at that time. In relation to this, for instance, during the actual TRC, only few offenders were forgiven directly by the victims

because “people felt raw, angry, upset, the more so because not many of the perpetrators had been able to show much spontaneous human emotion” (Albie Sachs, 2002:55). The expectation that offenders should display human emotion invariably contrasts with the principles of the TRC because “the amnesty applicants were not required to show remorse when confessing their human rights violations” (Annelies Verdoolaege, 2008:15). Further to the above, the idea of emotional responsibility is strange to the reconciliation process since it was heavily and substantially driven by compromise and reconciliation, following the tensions created by the militant resistance of the liberation movements, amidst international condemnation of the Apartheid regime. The detachment of perpetrators like Craig Williamson from their past activities undermines the need for ‘nothing but the truth’.

Even though the confessions of people like the above character conforms to the requirement of the TRC, they do not say anything new but rather they provoke further outcries. Such behaviour is a reminder of how most of the unrepentant perpetrators justified their actions before the actual TRC based on the fact that they did not perceive their own culpability. They either claim they were merely trying to protect the state or simply taking commands from their superiors. More particularly, others like the former Prime Minister and President, P. W. Botha, would show veritable impunity for having acted on behalf of the state. Judging by this thinking, two oppositional groups are created between those who show remorse and those who do not. However, a little complexity slips into this split where the existence of the two sides is suspect, since it is difficult to determine whether one has shown remorse or not. That, and the idea of sincerity, is difficult to measure. This is added to the possibility that repentance, in the view of Yadh Ben Achour (2002:125), “loses its authenticity when it is performed under constraints, or out of purely material interest”. The above is almost the case in the South African situation (TRC) where past offenders either choose not to be remorseful or make an attempt in order to secure amnesty. The resultant effects of this unfair attitude and the contestations they lead to is explained by Mahmood Mamdani (2000:180-181) who posits that “the more beneficiaries appear complacent, indifferent, callous and lacking in empathy, the more victims are outraged. They feel forgiveness to be undeserved. The more they feel so, the more they demand: justice”. Mamdani concludes that “the TRC ends up fuelling the very demand it set out to displace: justice”.

It is implicitly stated in the reference Thando makes to Mandela earlier on in her discussions with Mandisa that the idea of forgiveness and the giving of amnesty are principally the project of the first democratic president of the country, Nelson Mandela, who has been promoted to the place of an icon of peace.[127] It is noteworthy that the singularising of the forgiveness and reconciliation championed by Mandela is to cast aspersions at other partners, who regardless of race and class joined to overthrow Apartheid. In another sense, the prescription of overarching forgiveness appears too easy and simplistic as Mandisa observes in the play (*NBT*, 30). Although the decision for reconciliation through restorative justice helps to halt the killings and violence that characterised the Apartheid era, certain individuals benefited directly from the establishment of a democratic government while others, most especially the majority of the underprivileged,[128] as previously mentioned, had only their painful memories put on display in the public domain. This is corroborated by Sean Field (2006:33) who posits that "while some victims who testified claimed to have experienced 'healing', others felt exploited by the appropriation of their stories for political aims". To people in the latter category, the TRC is, in a way, a reopening of the wounds of the past. The healing of the wounds might, however, be hastened by the 'knowing', the negation of prolonged silence, occasioned by the confessions of the violators and the externalisation achieved through their testimonies, as well as the open identification made with them by the hired comforters and members of the commission. It is on record, for instance, that Archbishop Tutu, the chairperson of the commission, cried during the hearings of the commission (Albie Sachs, 2002:49).

Commenting on the granting of amnesty in the South African TRC, Kiikpoye K. Aaron (2005:130) argues that:

> the real purpose of an amnesty statute is not to diminish in a new democratic society the debilitating desire for revenge, it is to enable government officials and military and police officers to escape responsibility for crimes against humanity which they ordered and committed.

[127] He was jointly given a Nobel price for peace together with F.W. de Klerk and Desmond Tutu.

[128] President Thabo Mbeki in his valedictory nationwide broadcast alluded to this as one of the challenges that his government was not able to tackle, which successive administrations would have to deal with. The paradox of the South African situation was captured by him thus: "poverty exists side-by-side with extra-ordinary opulence" in our country. The speech was relayed on the SABC on Sunday, 21st September, 2008. This followed his recall by the ruling party, ANC (African National Congress).

However true this may appear to be, it should be emphasised that a total disregard for the opportunity for restorative justice would lead to fuelling the embers of discord and animosity that still glow. Notwithstanding the elements that inform the desirability of either revenge or restoration, it is obvious that the deployment of either of the two within the restrictive socio-political space is not absolutely devoid of contradictions. The application for amnesty in the cases of murder conducted by Dirk Coetzee, David Tshikalanga, Almon Nofomela of Griffiths Mxenge and Craig Williamson, and Brigadier Willem Schoon for the death of the wife and daughter of Marrius Schoon, were opposed by Mhlele Mxenge and Marius Schoon, respectively. Justifying his refusal, Jillian Edelstein (2001:113) quotes Mhlele Mxenge as saying: "my main objection is that amnesty promotes the interests of the perpetrators, as once they are granted amnesty they are not criminally liable and no civil action can be instituted against [them], and that is totally against the interests of the victims". This realisation could have also accounted for the civil case and litigation sought in the constitutional court by the family of Steve Biko.

The logic of the quest for justice notwithstanding, it should be noted that uncompromising requests being made by some of these characters, most especially Sipho, will not reverse the negative trend of the past but could at least serve as a deterrent to individuals who still nurse the propensity for acts of violation, denigration, violence, crime, rape and arson, that the Apartheid institution so greatly enhanced. It can again be deduced from the decision of Sipho to resort to alcohol following his dashed hopes that the denial of justice might have the potential to traumatise an individual who might want to take solace in alcohol. Such recession can cause delirium and angst that might invariably negatively impact the larger society. Furthermore, Sipho's momentary decision to explode and burn down the library is a travesty of vented anger, anger most especially at justice being perverted. However, resulting to wanton destruction of lives and property under these circumstances might be outlandish after all. For instance, the spate of xenophobic attacks on foreign nationals in 2008 in some townships in South Africa attracted public outcry. One reason associated with these attacks was the belief that the attackers were victims of poverty and deprivation. Subsequent to these are also the various service delivery protests that have followed the inauguration of the fourth president of post-Apartheid

South Africa. Such acts of recklessness, however contemptible they are considering the freedom of speech allowed by the democratic South Africa, show the anarchy the subaltern can precipitate when they lose confidence in state institutions and representatives. The decision of Sipho to write a letter to President Mbeki to share his thoughts on the things that affect him in *Nothing but the Truth* appears to make juxtaposition (retributive and restorative) of the alternate ways by which justice could be sought. This, however, does not end without carrying out a review of the failure of government to meet its social responsibilities to its citizens, mostly the underprivileged majority. Sipho's words below touch on this as he states:

> …I am going to write a letter to President Mbeki. I want to remind him that I voted for him. I put them in power. I paid for this freedom. I paid with my son's life. My brother died in exile. They must never forget the little people like me. The little Assistant Chief somethings who make up the majority that had kept them in power and will still do so for a very long time to come. We have dreams too. Small as they may be they are important to us. We want the 'Better life for all' now! Today! It's our time now. (58).

Without any prejudice towards the desirability of efficient service delivery, the foregoing leads one to wonder, at times, how the death and other evils[129] people suffered during the dark days of the Apartheid rule are freely negotiated for one form of comfort or the other by the relations of the victims. As observed earlier, the emphasis placed on things like the provision of shelter, jobs, and general socio-political transformation of individuals, negotiated amidst the bereavement suffered by people at the hearings of the TRC, is inhumane. It is also a flagrant violation and a reduction to mere materiality or a trade-off of the sacredness of the supreme sacrifices the departed made. Those things being requested ordinarily fall within the purview of what the government should provide. It should be observed that the enormity of how people's existence was undermined requires a likewise enormous, concerted application of effort and resources to effect a noticeable change. Such great complexity and ineffectiveness is made plain in the effort of the government to build houses as part of the Reconstruction and Development Plan. The attempts made so far are still minor considering the persistent squalor and homelessness in black townships around the country. This development goes a long way in explaining the protests that have gripped various informal settlements even after fifteen years into democracy.

[129] Vladimir Jankélévitch, cited in Sanders (2007:89) captures these as "pure or ontological wickedness".

In another sense, Sipho characteristically demonstrates the outcome of the negotiations conducted by the agents of the state and those of the victims in the public domain of the TRC. Sipho's dream of becoming the Chief Librarian of the public library in Port Elizabeth is very unique here. It should be noted that the choice of public library is instructive as one of the functions of a library is that it serves the purpose of archiving the memories of the community. Apart from this, the library is also a place where knowledge is produced and preserved. Furthermore, the history, the past, of South Africa is constantly subjected to conjectural constructions that provoke accusations of 'silence', marginalisation, and unnecessary privileging of certain aspects of the past. It is stating the obvious to say that part of the commitment of the new South Africa is to prevent silences and gaps in the tragedy of the past in spite of the "specific silences imposed by certain historical conjunctions" (André Brink, 1998a:14). Archbishop Tutu reinforces this when he submits, quoted by Sean Field (2006:32), that "we are charged to unearth the truth about our dark past. To lay the ghosts of that past to rest, so that they will not return to haunt us and that we will hereby contribute to the healing of a traumatized and wounded people". The difficulty of Sipho's dream, however, is that he is believed to be too old for the position. After his lamentation that he was not considered too old in 1994 and 1999 when he voted for two democratic presidents, Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki,[130] he complains that: "… suddenly I am too old to be empowered" (*NBT*, 51). Sipho's objection is that some people have chosen to personalise the gains of the struggle, which they consolidate through the TRC compromise. As if reviewing and critiquing the conditions that have been 'set' to determine who should profit or benefit from new opportunities in the new South Africa, Sipho declares:

> I was part of the struggle. I too suffered as a black person. I went to the marches like everyone else. I might not have been detained. I might not have been on Robben Island. I did not leave this country, but I suffered too. The thousands that attended those funerals on Saturdays, that was me. The thousands that were tear gassed, sjamboked by the police, mauled by Alsatian dogs, that was me. When Bishop Tutu led thousands through the streets of white Port Elizabeth, that was me. I WAS THOSE THOUSANDS! I too deserved some recognition, didn't I? (*NBT*, 51-52).

Sipho seems to be challenging the privileging of certain individuals like President Nelson Mandela and others who, in spite of their 'old' age, had access to government and the accompanying opportunities by reasons of their involvement in the liberation

[130] Another set of elections were held in 2009 in which Jacob Zuma was elected president.

struggle. As a result, Sipho appears to attempt a deconstruction of heroism in the South African state. Apart from Nelson Mandela and others who had their unpleasant past 'memorialised' and 'compensated' for, Sipho makes a case for himself and other 'unacknowledged and unnoticed' thousands who have that which would get them a place in the state platform. Sipho's position takes the categorisation of heroes of the struggle against Apartheid beyond the familiar and popular notations of the incarcerated and the exiled, to include unsung thousands who had a taste of the everyday victimisation of Apartheid, but who are not recognised in post-Apartheid discourses. Although he might not be asking for a seat in Parliament or for a room in the State House, he nurses the expectation of a better life in the new South Africa. Apart from the recognition that Sipho plainly seeks for the lowly in the society, this statement assumes a certain air of sarcasm when viewed against constant reminders that certain people do make about the need for peace each time unity and freedom is threatened in contemporary South Africa. Be that as it may, the extended heroism Sipho constructs in his statement calls for a corresponding expansion in responsibility towards nation-building. Linked to Sipho's aversion in the foregoing statement is the redefinition of the strait-jacket 'absolutism' that Thando shows in the play: "We would never have achieved our democracy without all our people, black and white, coming together to overthrow apartheid" (*NBT*, 30). This is clearly in view of and a reaction to the tendency and preponderance of reducing whiteness in Apartheid South Africa to oppression and blackness to victimhood. It is common knowledge that there were black and white collaborators who helped perpetuate and subsequently dethrone the Apartheid regime.

Further to the above, Sipho evolves what he believes, in his own mind, is the appropriate process for the deployment of justice in his own case by alluding to the death of his son, Luvuyo, who gets killed as a result of his activities in the liberation struggle. Sipho claims that Luvuyo was shot by a white policeman under the administration of F.W. De Klerk. According to him, Luvuyo was responding to the initiatives of his brother, Themba, who also participated in the liberation struggle. Sipho wants the policeman to be sent to jail for some months while he awaits trial after which he would be found guilty for killing Luvuyo, something that was done simply because he was black. His being pronounced guilty should be followed by his incarceration at St. Alban's Prison outside Port Elizabeth, where he will be subjected

to the kind of treatment given to murderers. Sipho's desire for justice is commonplace in human beings, as most people ordinarily believe one has to eventually pay for what one does. Such a quest for retributive justice played itself out when a referendum was conducted on the South African Truth and Reconciliation. John Kani says of this: "we wanted perhaps some kind of jungle court that would actually make us do something about it"[131] (talking about the past). One is startled by Sipho's response to the probing of Thando on whether he will forgive the white culprit afterwards. Even though Sipho says he will be willing to agree that the policeman be given amnesty, he is not prepared to forgive the white Apartheid policeman:

> SIPHO: …It's not about me being happy or not, forgiving him or not. It's about justice. That's what it's about. So that my soul can rest. So that I can say to myself 'yes, justice has been done' (*NBT*, 54).

The reactions of Sipho towards the offender are a bit convoluted. While he does not expressly state that he will not forgive the erring white policeman, he is more committed to seeing justice done. Such justice will, at the very least, be punitive and reprimanding. This portends that on one level in the victim is the strong expectation that an offender be made to pay for his/her offence, and on another is the need to heed the general call for reconciliation. Sipho's emotions in this statement seem to define forgiveness as transcending mere verbal declarations, but which nonetheless have a connection with the soul. The soul of Sipho is already agitated as a result of the hurt it was exposed to in the past. Reflective of metaphysical ordering, therefore, the soul needs to witness the hurt that has been carried out on its past violators through justice for it to be relieved of its present burden and agonies. While Sipho is struggling to forgive the white policeman, he is, however, ready to forgive and reconcile with his brother, Themba, in conformity with the new chapter being sought through the TRC. He compares this with the forgiveness he extends to whites in spite of, according to him, "what they did to us in this country …" (*NBT*, 56). However, the fact that he finds it easy to forgive his brother after making a vicarious confession through his daughter, Mandisa, and that he refuses to forgive the white policeman responsible for the death of Luvuyo, raises some concerns. Critically speaking, the situation of Sipho in relation to Themba and the white policeman, who are both offenders, shows that

[131] See 'Ubuntu': a Keynote by John Kani from the 2006 (International Society for the Performing Arts) ISPA New York Congress. http://www.ISPA.org. Accessed 2/12/2009.

ethnic cohesion is more possible than national integration. This is because the idea of *ubuntu* exhibited by Sipho, as seen beforehand, is reserved for his black brother, Themba, and not the white policeman.

These manifestations query the singularity often attached to the Rainbow Nation and emphasise the diversity inherent in it. The gravity and protracted nature of the strained relationship between Sipho and Themba forms part of his inability to return from exile when others do. Sipho's double-standard approach to forgiveness is similar to the dilemma that John Kani experienced when his mother rejected his request that they should go to the TRC to find out the person that was responsible for the death of his younger brother. Although Kani heeded the call of his mother to let it be, he states that: "So I never went to the TRC, but I struggled in my heart with forgiveness … but still I could not forgive. I even had difficulty with the Lord's prayer"[132], which is predicated on forgiveness. The tension in the sibling relationship between Sipho and Themba is one of the areas that are often overlooked when issues about reconciliation are considered. Bhekizizwe Peterson (2009:21) has suggested that the pertinence of reconciliation "far exceeds the boundaries of black and white", and therefore opines that "relatives need to reconcile within families, relations between neighbours and communities need to be restored where these have been broken". Sipho's action towards the white policeman also portends a negative reaction on the part of the violated to reject the forceful repression of certain forms of memory prescribed by the state. Richard Werbner (1998:8) has warned that people "try to commemorate what the state suppresses in buried memory". Sipho is the epitome of those silenced voices who were once taught not to express their losses. This attempt to conceal the truth is counter-productive because, as observed by Njabulo Ndebele (1998:22), "the silencing of voices through various forms of brutality, torture and humiliation induced anger and bitterness".

[132] See 'Ubuntu': a Keynote by John Kani from the 2006 (International Society for the Performing Arts) ISPA New York Congress. http://www.ISPA.org. Accessed 2/12/2009.

Are Forgiving and Forgetting Attainable?

The centrality of the notion of forgiveness, its definition, conception and deployment, as part of the responsibility of the state and, by extension, the TRC, is quite a sensitive one. Forgiveness and forgetting are required from past victims in order to produce the requirements for reconciliation (Shahid Amin, 2002:97). While reconciliation could easily be flaunted for instance by the South African state in the project of nation-building, it proves nonetheless difficult to publicly forget and forgive. This must have led Es'kia Mphahlele (1997) to argue that "reconciliation is but a political, often mechanical public gesture, usually celebrated with fanfare and showmanship. But atonement and forgiving are moral acts, the real crunch". The assumption by the state is that the bringing together of the offender and the offended, torturer and the tortured, in the public domain and the 'openness' of the TRC should ordinarily precipitate pardon for the aggressor from their victims, as well as seeming to require compulsory amnesia on the part of the victim. This utopian expectation is not only suspect but impossible. As further efforts shall be made to interrogate this issue, it would be instructive to reiterate the view of Mark Sanders (2007:88) that however good reconciliation and the work of mourning are, "they do not amount to forgiveness". Responding to the polarity of positivism and negativity in the trajectory of reconciliation, Dilip Simeon (2002:147) has opined that "reconciliation is neither the perpetual nurturing of grievance nor the cultivation of amnesia" but is transcendentally situated within the realms of preservation and negation, needed as the panacea for mitigating "collective neuroses and emotional indigestion". This is to say that the process of reconciliation enhances the need to purge, for both the offender who gets loosed from the guilt of his actions and the offended who vents his or her protracted unheard anguish of suffering. The idealised feeling around reconciliation is expressed by Ginn Fourie and Letlapa Mphahlele who posit that "vulnerable feelings expressed to each other have the potential to establish lasting bonds".[133] It is, however, another matter entirely if people allow such potential to flourish.

No doubt, the South African TRC was a purgatory of a sort for both the victims and the perpetrators. Other than the above manifestations, Simeon (2002:149) further

[133] See http//:www.theforgivenessproject.com. Accessed 11/09/2009.

states that "reconciliation is only possible between equals ─ equals in spirit if not in substance". This desirable 'spiritual' and material equality is an exception rather than the rule in the South African TRC. Following the negotiation between the old and the new orders, most offenders, as enunciated before now, behaved conceitedly before the TRC, exhibiting pride and impunity as against the remorse and emotional penitence victims required for their actions. This was in opposition to the emotionally scarred condition of the victims who were made to enter the precarious situation of reliving their past experiences of violation. This obvious marginal position is reinforced by the fact that they did not receive anything 'concrete' before the TRC, while perpetrators received amnesty. Apart from the above, attempts were made to distort, manipulate and deny facts in the face of "a repudiation of collective guilt" (Simeon, 2002:148).

Between Forgiveness and *Ubuntu*

Amidst the vacillations on the part of Sipho regarding issues of forgiveness, the deployment of forgiveness which is seen as a prelude to reconciliation is problematised. Suffice to say that the ideal of forgiveness in the dealings between but not limited to black and white South Africans, especially as championed by the TRC, has been constructed on the traditional dictates of *Ubuntu*,[134] which more significantly advocate the need for the protection of human rights. Apart from the traditional prescriptions of *Ubuntu*, two major representatives of the idea of peace, Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu, have separately advocated the need for forgiveness. While Mandela hinges his call on what can be best described as a philosophical platform, Tutu's proposition is situated on Judeo-Christian principles. To Tutu, therefore, the vicarious suffering of Jesus and his willingness to offer forgiveness are instructive in these engagements, while Mandela's appraisal of unattainable victory for both oppressors and oppressed, is commendable. Mandela, whose view is cited by

[134] Mark Sanders (2007:25) claims that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report makes reference to the judgement of Judge Yvonne Mokgoro "[u] buntu, generally translated as 'humanness', express itself metaphorically in umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu─ 'people are people through other people' ". John Kani sees *ubuntu* as "the value of the human being, humanness, it is kindness, UBUNTU is tolerance, sensitivity, is respect … the life blood that pumps through your veins and informs the brain to think correctly, to think emotionally correct". See 'Ubuntu': a Keynote by John Kani from the 2006 (International Society for the Performing Arts) ISPA New York Congress. http://www.ISPA.org. Accessed 2/12/2009.

Yadh Ben Anchour (2002:133), argues that: "I was in chains, as you were in chains. I was set free, as you were set free. Therefore, if I can pardon my oppressors, so, too, can you". This statement is reinvented by John Kani in *Nothing but the Truth* when Thando frowns at Mandisa's insistence, as pointed out before, that people must be made to pay for past acts of violation. Thando submits that:

> You have no right to question that. Mandela spent 27 years in prison. Is he asking for someone to be sent to Robben Island to spend years there as a payback? If all those who suffered can forgive, then so can you. If our President can ask us to work for a better life for all of our people, so can you" (*NBT*, 30).

Mandela's view typically demonstrates a sense of identification with the black majority who suffered so terribly under the Apartheid rule. It must be pointed out, however, that such camaraderie does not recognise the different emotions of individuals and the unique ways they respond to things. Also, the difficulty inherent in Mandela's proposition notwithstanding, it is part of the extensive project of institutionalising forgiveness and, by so doing, achieving reconciliation. Mark Sanders (2007), taking a cue from Jacques Derrida, submits that forgiveness within the pragmatics of reconciliation is not tantamount to forgiveness.[135] Describing Derrida's view on forgiveness as "a complex response" to that of a philosopher, Vladimir Jankélévitch, Sanders notes that the preoccupation of the former is meant to, in dual approaches, determine whether forgiveness is not the cause of a disruption to the normal course of law and if "forgiveness is a human or divine capacity" (88). This dualism correlates with the respective notions represented by Tutu and Mandela, as mentioned above. As this further complicates this process, it should be emphasised that both the theological and philosophical approaches to forgiveness challenge the notion of what is conditional for the deployment of forgiveness, thereby making repentance a central desire. Sanders (2007:89) further opines that "before there can even be a question of forgiveness, it is first necessary that the guilty person, instead of protesting, recognize himself as guilty without pleas or mitigating circumstances". However, as pointed out earlier, the South African TRC context re-enacted in *Nothing but the Truth* is rife with dissociation and denials.

[135] Derrida argues that "forgiving is heterogeneous to the economy of mourning, and reconciliation", cited in Sanders (2007:88).

While it is obvious that the South African TRC required a form of conditional access to forgiveness and amnesty, through confession, such confessions and admittances were tainted by denial. This tends to explain why the aggrieved victim, Sipho, finds it difficult to openly give forgiveness. It is somewhat unsafe to argue that forgiveness is and should be unconditional.[136] Even Jesus Christ, who personifies the spirit and principles of the New Testament Christianity, requires the offender to make a confession of the negative acts of the past, renounce them accordingly, and subscribe to a new relationship that is going to be constructed on the new template.[137] This means that "forgiveness must be asked" (Sanders, 2007:89) and should be respected after being earned. This explains perhaps why Sipho, even though he claims to have forgiven his fugitive late brother, Themba, still insists to Mandisa that: "All I wanted was for your father to come home, stand in front of me and say 'I am sorry, my brother'" (*NBT*, 56). What Sipho is emphasising is simply the need to acknowledge one's guilt. As in Christianity, repentance has the capacity to prevent or block vengeance. It should be noted as well that the above provisos around assurances notwithstanding, repentance "loses its authenticity when it is performed under constraint, or out of purely material interest" (Yadh Ben Achour, 2002:125). Starting from the judgement that forgiveness is "something that can only properly take place between victim and perpetrator face-to-face" (Sanders, 2007:92), it might be right to conclude, agreeing with the submission of Sanders (2007:88), that:

> Derrida will have been heard by his audience as saying that it may not be within human power to forgive, and that any mediation by the law means that there will not, properly speaking, have been forgiveness─ and that, therefore, the process of reconciliation in South Africa is not well founded.

The lack of human capacity to forgive hinted at by Derrida seems manifest in the story of Carl Niehaus (1999:83) who narrates two personal life stories, one of which being his struggle with the request for forgiveness made by a policeman, who tortured him in detention. In his words:

> No matter how much I wanted to, I could not tell him that I could forgive him. All I could say is that I would try. Now, even after he has appeared before the TRC, I can still not say that I have forgiven him but I am still trying. Not a single day passes without me struggling with this question.

[136] Sanders reiterates the view of Jankélévitch to the effect that "forgiveness is unconditional" (89).
[137] See the book of Romance, Chapter 10, verses 9 & 10. *The Holy Bible*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1972.

Niehaus' view and experience remind us of that of John Kani, mentioned earlier. Following the contradictions and the dilemma that confronted him, Kani further submits that he was able to have a change of mind on the need to forgive his attackers because of *ubuntu*, which he summarises as "kindness", and the realisation that "that which was wrong cannot be replaced by us being wrong".[138] Kani proceeds further that it was after 1994 that he "embraced this concept of UBUNTU, it is then that I had to deal with my anger. Today I forgive the men who attacked me. Today I forgive the men who killed my brother".[139] While kindness, for instance, can be seen as a religious 'virtue', Kani believes that *ubuntu* (kindness) is not limited to that which exists in people's heads and minds, but that which flows in one's veins and defines one's actions. This, once again, raises the idea of double standards in the way people subscribe to and practice beliefs and ideologies. Given the way the ability to forgive is compared with *ubuntu* by Kani, one can venture to say that *Nothing but the Truth*, is therefore about the need for sincerity and transparency in human relationships.

The TRC, a Tilted Platform?

A particular element features prominently in the overall quest for forgiveness and transformation; that is reconciliation. Reconciliation in this case binds the togetherness that needs to be strengthened for future engagements in the post-TRC dispensation. So, it is obvious that all truth commissions, including the South African one, "seek to engage the dimension of the social and political space, a space of collective bargaining within civil society to spotlight terrible crimes and abuses, but also to animate public discussions and opinions" (Okwui Enwezor, 2002:17). Most particularly, the TRC approach is analogous to Mahatma Gandhi's experiment with *Satyagraha*, a non-violent protest strategy against racial discrimination, which he began exploring in South Africa. As submitted at the beginning, the convocation of the TRC and its activities have over time undergone severe criticism. These criticisms were based on the notion that the TRC project was conceived by the elite, most

[138] 'Ubuntu': a Keynote by John Kani from the 2006 (International Society for the Performing Arts) ISPA New York Congress. http://www.ISPA.org. Accessed 2/12/2009.
[139] 'Ubuntu': a Keynote by John Kani from the 2006 (International Society for the Performing Arts) ISPA New York Congress. http://www.ISPA.org. Accessed 2/12/2009.

especially representatives of ANC and the National Party and aimed at compromise. One of these intentions is the fact that the TRC was part of other measures put in place for securing assurances following the representatives of the two major parties' readiness to guarantee amnesty for white Apartheid leaders, who were scared and threatened by the possibility of revenge after the transition into a democratic regime. Therefore, it could be argued simply that "the TRC was born of political compromise, like most truth commissions" (Jay A. Vora and Erika Vora, 2004:302), or what Michael Shafir (2004:1) calls "the handshake tradition".

Therefore, even though the TRC seems to carry the identity of an "exemplary civic theatre, a public hearing of private griefs (sic) which are absorbed into the body politic as a part of the deeper understanding of how the society arrived at its present position" (Catherine M. Cole, 2004:219), it is largely seen as a move to secure power and protect former perpetrators. Cole (2004:221) further captures this when she submits that:

> even though the emotions expressed during the hearings were deeply felt, the Commission was not a public reckoning. Rather it was a symbol of a compromise that, most significantly, offered the possibility of amnesty to perpetrators who gave public disclosure.

It could succinctly be posited, therefore, referencing the view of Rory Bester (2002:164), that "the two outstanding features of the TRC process were the public nature of the hearings and the 'individualizing' of the application for amnesty". This propensity to individualise is reflected in Kani's *Nothing but the Truth*. The play, therefore, fulfils the notion that artworks, including literature, and drama for that matter, as "analogues of transitory realities have long established a space for reflection where subtleties of individuals, social, and cultural repetition get played out for all to see" (Barbara Maria Stafford, 2002:318). The oppositional nature of the spaces occupied by victims and the victimisers allows the former to give testimonies about his/her past violations while the latter makes a full confession of his past crimes. It is believed that through the confessions of the perpetrator, the violated would fully know what was responsible for their sufferings and how it was carried out. This, most especially, allows people who have lost their loved ones to know how

they were killed, and if possible, where they were buried.[140] Other than this, transparency, accountability and the ownership over past events is achieved. Most substantially, the TRC conforms to the notion of dramaturgical action as "there is a 'presentation of self', not spontaneously but stylized, with a view to the audience" (Abdul Raufu Mustapha, 2008:9).[141] The possible different manifestations of the 'self', therefore, generally define the notions of full disclosure, politically motivated acts, testimonies, remembering, reconciliation and forgiving, which were some of the core mandates of the TRC.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown the engagement that arts make with some of the tendentiously volatile issues that the new South Africa faces. These disenchantments include those found in the national/public space between victims and perpetrators of Apartheid's heinous crimes, disputes over relevance and 'compensation' among past freedom fighters, as well as wrangling in the domestic space. The explication done in this chapter of the interrogation of the TRC[142] made in *Nothing but the Truth* reveals how the privatisation of public space by the state is challenged, however subtly this may be done. Even though it is apparent that the state was able to achieve what it conceived the TRC public hearings for, such successes are being challenged by the previously marginalised, and whose cries of marginalisation and disaffection constitute a profound embarrassment to the hegemony. The chapter has also shown that it is important that priority be given to reconciliation across racial lines and that it be revisited to include interactions within each of the racial groups in South Africa, along with those between family members in their respective communities. This is more so because of the influence intimate or close dealings can have on the individual 'self', as seen in the personality development of Sipho, in the play, as well as in the life of John Kani, the playwright. Apart from the disenchantment shown by the majority

[140] Many secret graves were said to have been identified with the bones of victims removed to be given proper burial. Although this removal might, on the surface, be taken as disturbing the souls of the dead, this is less so when the temporary burial sites are in the first place viewed as a kind of prison. Therefore, the removal could be taken as a form of freedom and reintegration.

[141] The paper titled "The Public Sphere in 21st Century Africa: Broadening the Horizons of Democratisation" was presented at the CODESRIA 12th General Assembly, held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, between 7th and 11th of December, 2008.

[142] John Kani appears to be asking real questions in relation to the TRC.

towards the abuse of the public space by the government as represented in arts, other public domains found in the print and electronic media have been inundated with a show of revulsion that queries the notion and questions the efficacy of the state sponsored TRC process. Rather than for the South African state to believe that it has successfully reconciled groups and individuals within the boundaries of the nation state, it might be more plausible to subscribe to the opinion of Ruston Bharucha (2002:370) that "most reconciliations are fragile, partial, and in constant need of renewal". The imaginative possibilities proposed in this play, through heightened contestations, signal the directions where some renewals and re-evaluations are needed in the new South Africa. It is when these are achieved that the idea of 'unity in diversity' can be attained within and outside of racial delineations. More importantly, this development confirms the idea of Sanders (2007:143) on the existence of two racial groups with each other in a particular place. According to Sanders:

> the two groups form a unity and a single polity only as a result of wars, invasions, victories, and defeats, or in other words, acts of violence. The only link between them is the link established by the violence of war.

However, for this link not to be broken, people like Sipho, who were and are still repressed, should be empowered. The aspiration of Sipho to "move the three small shelves of the African Literature section into the main section of the library" (*NBT*, 59-60), suggests the centralisation of the process of cultural production that favours certain history and discourses. Arguably, Sipho (Kani) might be recommending a return to Africanness, as manifested in *ubuntu*, which promises hope in the face of other propositions that must have proven inadequate.

Therefore, it could be conclusively posited that while hegemony and its agents try to make a mere "public display" (Goode, 2005:4) of such important and delicate issues, the subalterns of this space might seize the opportunity provided to contest the ideas of the state and air their own opinions. It is then arguable, going by the engagements between characters in this play, that "only an overall process of reconciliation among individuals and peoples" (Boris Buden, 2002:65) in the South Africa nation can bring about stability and nation-building. We see both drama and the TRC exhibiting the fluidity, mutability and deviancy of truth as "the most illusory places in the world, where it is legitimate to lie knowingly … and yet truth matters" (Ruston Bharucha,

2002:362-363). The partial results achieved by the Truth Commission are contained in the summation of the speech by Archbishop Tutu when submitting the report of the Commission to President Nelson Mandela that "there has been some truth, some reconciliation. Now there is a face, there is a name for the cry of anguish" (Lolle Nauta, 2002:338). Therefore, the TRC, as a form of memorial construction, is "a form of retribution … a symbolic settlement of accounts that facilitates reconciliation without forgiveness" (Susana Torre, 2002:349). Although it was true that the TRC provided the platform and framework for a 'hurriedly packaged reconciliation', it should not be seen as the end, but as the beginning of the several efforts needed for harmonious relationships in the 'new' South Africa. In an attempt to grapple with these realities, however, reconciliation continuously provides the elements needed for nation-building, since both "are often – if not always – at stake in transitional processes" (Annelies Verdoolaege, 2008:192).

CHAPTER SIX

SOUTH AFRICA'S NEWNESS A CHIMERA: THE LONG WALK TO NATION-BUILDING

The texts interrogated in the preceding chapters offer different unfolding platforms where characters, and by extension South African citizens, engage with the manifestations of the painful past and the notions of citizenship and identity. These dramas fictionalise the tremendous efforts deployed towards harnessing the diversity that has for some time divided the South African people, as a potent source of cohesion needed for nation-building. Central to this are the efforts made to facilitate a national identity capable of diminishing the defunct inclusions and exclusions hitherto inscribed through racial bigotry. In another vein, while it appears that reconciliation is getting people talking and racial delineations are gradually fading, as exemplified in the texts under study, class seems to be widening the gulf that threatens unification and integration amongst citizens. Furthermore, and in spite of the noble drives to mobilise for the building of a new South Africa, the post-Apartheid transformation or transition project is substantially threatened by the twin elements of crime and corruption. These negative tendencies are satirically dramatised in Junction Avenue Theatre Company's *Love, Crime and Johannesburg*. It is necessary to acknowledge that crime and corruption are not contemplated as either purely contemporaneous or only peculiar to South Africa. However, it should be affirmed that the preponderance of crime and corruption in the transitional process has the capacity to negatively impact and compromise the safe, fair and just society that is envisaged.

The scepticism caused by the dominance of crime and corruption is predicated on the realisation that they are the bane of most post-independent African nations, but not limited to them. It is hoped, therefore, that the nation of South Africa, severely confronted by crime and corruption as it is, is not gravitating towards post-independence disillusionment, as witnessed in some other nations on the continent of Africa. The apprehension attached to this has played itself out and explains, for instance, the rationale behind Johannesburg being configured in contemporary literature "as an aesthetic, a political and an imaginary site, a vivid and explicit template for an entire array of social fears and possibilities" (Sarah Nuttall,

2008:197). The chapter relies on the travesty achieved in the text, most especially the manner narrations achieved through songs are used to represent Johannesburg and South Africa as "recognizable scenarios that express the struggle for self-actualization and the lived vagaries of experience that breed disillusionment, fear, joy, and terror" (Ato Quayson, 2004:46).[143] Specifically, this chapter aims to interrogate the dual notions of crime and corruption as follies in the new South Africa, the implications they have for the present and future, and the denouncement that the play achieves.

Colonial (Dis)Possession and Postcolonial (Re)Possession: Love, Crime and South African Democracy

The creation of *Love, Crime and Johannesburg*, according to Malcolm Purkey and Carol Steinberg in the introduction to the play, was informed by some of the "tensions and contradictions of post-Apartheid South Africa", most especially the life stories of three notable personalities: Mzwakhe Mbuli, "the people's poet" and a hero of the struggle against Apartheid who was "accused of robbing a bank"; Robert McBride, "a most controversial soldier of the struggle, a death row prisoner, and then a Member of Parliament in South Africa's first democratic government", who was accused of gun-running as well as Colin Chauke, former Umkhonto We Sizwe commander, who was arrested in connection with the bank heists that plagued Johannesburg immediately after the birth of democratic rule (*LCJ*, vii). The ironies inherent in the aforementioned developments caused Junction Avenue Theatre Company to ask questions around the reversal of fortune in the case of Mbuli, the necessity for the formation of a secret service by the new democratic South African government as portrayed in the case of McBride, and the propriety of the former members of the guerrilla movements, deploying their expertise to rob banks as outlined by Chauke.

The stories in *Love, Crime and Johannesburg* are woven around the central fictional character, Jimmy 'Long Legs' Mangane, who is a hybridisation or amalgamation of the events surrounding the three personages mentioned above (*LCJ*, x-xi). More importantly, Jimmy's character is informed by the life of Mac the knife, the fictional

[143] Mark Fleishman (2001:98) refers to this as a pointer towards smaller narratives which are personal, introspective, and reflective of the "ambiguities and contradictions which are at the heart of our new society".

hero of Brecht's *Threepenny Opera*.[144] Jimmy is introduced to us in this play as a former poet of the struggle and a friend to the new Chief of Police, Queenie Dlamini, and the new Chairman of the Bank, Lewis Matome, who are equally former comrades of the struggle. Jimmy is arrested and held in prison for allegedly masterminding the robbing of a bank. Jimmy has two girlfriends, Lulu Levine, who is white, and Bibi Khuswayo, black. The father of Lulu is antagonistic to her relationship with Jimmy because the latter is not just a gangster but black. Jimmy escapes from prison and chooses to move into the Bruma Lake Hotel with his black girlfriend, Bibi, instead of Swaziland as arranged for him by Lulu. Jimmy is rearrested and expected to spend the rest of his life in jail until he is released as part of the "general amnesty granted to all" (*LCJ*, 54), following the inauguration of the third president of the democratic republic of South Africa. Junction Avenue Theatre Company acknowledges the influence it received from the theatrical tradition of Bertolt Brecht, mostly the deployment of tools such as "song, dance, humour, wit, crudity" and the dictum that "a theatre that can't be laughed in, is a theatre that can't be laughed at" (*LCJ*, viii). One other influence the group acknowledges is that of David Mamet, an American playwright, screenwriter and film director, who proposes that "language hides what the speaker wants to reveal and reveals what the speaker wants to hide" (*LCJ*, xiii).

Love, Crime and Johannesburg as a work of art derives its robustness from its satirical bites. Even though the plots of the play look simple on the surface, they are woven with ironic twists that invest in the storylines some scathing evaluation of that which ordinarily looks unoffensive and familiar. *Love, Crime and Johannesburg* as work of art satirises, lampoons and ridicules both personal and political follies that define post-Apartheid South Africa. Satire is a literary technique that allows for the use of witty language to scorn, insult, ridicule, or generally expose human ridiculous inadequacies in order to provoke or halt change. Satire allows for the mixing of critical attitudes with wit and humour through which these "frailties and faults of mankind" are exposed. Even while "satire can be funny, its aim is not to amuse, but to arouse contempt".[145] Satire can either be direct or indirect. However direct a satirical

[144] He is a gangster who tangles with his old friend, the Chief of Police. He falls in love with two women, and relies on the protective influence of his prospective father-in-law. He chooses to take refuge in a whorehouse following this and gets re-arrested, and "taken to the gallows to be hanged" (see the introduction to the play, page xi).
[145] See http://www.google.co.za. Accessed 08/12/2009.

work is, such is replete with the use of irony and sarcasm.[146] More often than not, the characters used in satires and the principles they represent are characteristically cynical and sardonic.[147] It is, therefore, in this light that *Love, Crime and Johannesburg* can be read as a piece of satire within the context of the South African past and the claim to 'newness'.

The play also employs songs as veritable techniques to complement the thematic contextualisation it tends to achieve. Akin to the idea of intrusive and evaluative narration achieved through the use of the vulture in Taylor's *Ubu and the Truth Commission,* The Company in *Love, Crime and Johannesburg* makes a deriding narration and evaluation of the 'new' South Africa through music/song. Further, the play achieves its satire through the use of different dramatic devices such as asides and soliloquies, dramatic irony and contestations between characters. While The Company uses the asides more in its evaluative songs, Bokkie also employs what can be termed an aside or a soliloquy to reflect his relationship with the city of Johannesburg. For instance, Bokkie addresses the audience thus: "As for the rest of the cities – I find them all a bore. So I come back to Johannesburg. My little teenage whore. Every time I've gone away … But my Jo'burg calls me back. My sweet little teenage lover". (*LCJ*, 41-42). The dialogical tensions between characters are manifested through the accusations and negotiations between Lewis, Queenie, Bones and Jimmy, on the one hand, and between Bokkie and Lulu, his daughter, on the other. Songs are used in the play not only to propel the story but to make comprehensive evaluative comments on the socio-political nuances inherent in the interactions between characters and to "deliberately break into the action and provide distance" (Malcom Purkey and Carol Steinberg, 2000:xiv).[148]

Songs can be used to achieve several intentions; from the general to the specific. As a result of their reflective nature, songs engage, often times, with socio-political as well as historic variables that define the life of an individual or a people. Apart from the fact that songs could be used to praise and goad, they can also be used to mobilise, reprimand and disapprove at different levels of human configuration and interaction.

[146] See http://www.google.co.za. Accessed 08/12/2009.
[147] See http://www.thefreedictionary.com. Accessed 08/12/2009.
[148] They enthuse that the Company is set to make theatre that elicits pleasure even as "song, dance, humour, wit, crudity" are seen as their major 'tool'" (*LCJ*, viii).

Ogonna Agu (1991:5) argues this to the effect that songs, as general phenomena, have "a kind of strength that draws easily on the powerful symbols and resonances within a culture which influences present consciousness". True to this description, songs are deployed in *Love Crime and Johannesburg* to omnisciently comment on characters and appraise their actions as well as the interactions they have with one another. Apart from the particular attention that is given to individual characters, the songs used in the play also comment on the different plot developments. Central to such commentaries is the backward reference made to the socio-political events that prelude the present realities in South Africa, on which the play is set. Illustratively, an interrogation is made of *Tsotsis*, as a group, and the damnable consequences such have on the new South Africa thus: "Tsotsis don't gamble with dice any more … They rob banks and kill people … Guys with guns and car hijacking … The nation is finished" (*LCJ*, 17).

Other than the insurrections that manifested against Apartheid that were found in the use of guns, and political discussions, the use of song was also central. However, one unique attribute that music/song has over the two other media in the old South Africa was the fact that the former was more resilient than the latter in view of the attacks staged by the state. The respective spaces occupied by these instruments of insurrection are stated below:

> The role of music in the struggle against racial oppression is paramount. For every trouble there was a song, for every joy and every heartbreak, there was a tune. Nothing could quell the insurrectionary power of song. Songs were solace, encouragement and resilience. They signified the triumph of the spirit – the apartheid government took everything away from people but it could not stop them from singing.[149]

The quotation above shows that songs could be created, similar to the experience during the Apartheid days, to reflect different types of experiences; both positive and negative. Also, because of the fact that struggle songs are not limited in any way by the requirement for any particular sophistication, they can be seen as quotidian – particularly in relation to the common people who might not be privileged with the other platforms where 'intellectual' and militant battles were fought. This easy accessibility might account for the deployment of songs by Junction Avenue in *Love, Crime and Johannesburg*. This is more so considering the fact that political discourse

[149] See http://Africancreammusic.com. Accessed 07/12/2009.

and militant confrontations appear to have been 'spent' and 'expended' with by the South African state as soon as a 'compromise' on the new order was reached. Therefore, songs, when harmonised with rhythmic stamping of the feet, are still instruments used in post-Apartheid South Africa by the underprivileged to verbalise their pains and disenchantments within and about the project of the new South Africa. Although the view below dwells on the characteristic features of song in the height of the liberation struggle, it also elaborately reflect what songs are to the majority who are still engrossed in the struggles for attention, recognition, and betterment. Freedom songs were:

> used to hide protest slogans, banned materials and secret information, etc. By using the voice as the primary instrument, a powerful sound is created. These voices are fortified by the strong clapping or stomping dances. Music is universal; it can be easily understood by an outsider and adapted to changing political situations. The powerful sound of the songs themselves symbolise the strength of the African movement; a sense of community and the culture's strong cooperative spirit.[150]

The message, therefore, with the use of songs in *Love, Crime and Johannesburg*, is that there exists some "dark subjects" (Malcolm Purkey and Carol Steinberg, 2000:xiv) amidst some of the socio-political and economic 'newness' South Africa seems to have achieved. While music and songs were said to constitute every stage of South Africa life, for instance in celebrating the release of Nelson Mandela and to herald the post-Apartheid era, the use of songs to amplify negative symptoms in *Love, Crime and Johannesburg* presents a great irony about the nation. Song, in South Africa, therefore, bestrides the old and new regimes as an expression of the "rare ability" of "people to find humour and creativity in impossible conditions, in abject poverty – and in battle".[151] The songs that are used in this play are satirical, reflective of most arts, in line with how the entire work has been conceptualised.

Moreover, the equating of Jimmy, the Poet-of-the-Struggle, to the African bird (*LCJ*, 31) that could only sing while free, is symbolic. Although the idea of the poet-of-the-struggle is an open reference to Mzwakhe Mbuli, the people's poet,[152] who is one of the "fictional amalgams" (Malcolm Purkey and Carol Steinberg, 2000:xi) whose life stories informed the writing of the play, it can also be taken as indicative of the

[150] See http://Africancreammusic.com. Accessed 07/12/2009.
[151] See "Amandla! - singing down apartheid". http://www.southafrica.info. Accessed 07/12/2009.

[152] (Introduction to the play, Malcolm Purkey and Carol Steinberg, 2000:vii).

yearning for socio-political and economic freedom for some categories of people in the play. Their participation in the on-going process of nation-building is, therefore, a function of their freedom. The different choruses sung by The Company provide authorial interpretations of issues and visions of the future. Therefore, Junction Avenue has a place and authority that resembles that of the eye-of-God technique where the activities of actors in the counterfactual world, that is the dramatic world, are under scrutiny. Therefore, the involvement of Jimmy in the struggle and his subsequent incarceration, when taken further, could be used to illustrate the condition of people who participated in the liberation struggle but have been relegated to the background of abandonment and oblivion. Junction Avenue in one of its songs that are used to comment on the actions as well as characters in the play, pointedly warns the audience (the reader in this case) not to get carried away by the realism and verisimilitude of the characters and actions as they are, according to Junction Avenue, "not true" (*LCJ*, 5). Of course, this attempt to demystify the play does not detract from its being a dramatisation of the socio-political happenings in South Africa.

One of the main themes enacted in *Love, Crime and Johannesburg*, as the title indicates, is crime. The play opens with a scene at a public square where Jimmy 'Long Legs' Mangane is being interrogated, "a most bitter irony", and pronounced guilty "for robbing a bank with two AK47s and a hand grenade" (*LCJ*, 3 & 4). The accusation and culpability of Jimmy are shrouded in great paradox as the interactions he makes with the Chief of Police, Queenie Dlamini, oscillate between denial and covert confession. The ambivalence of the characterisation of Jimmy as portrayed in the play insulates him when he presents himself as a spy used to infiltrate the gangsters. Jimmy encapsulates this thus: "I was working for the secret service. I was infiltrating the criminal crowd. I got caught. Now they have to deny me. Three times they spit upon my grave. The bastards!" (*LCJ*, 28). On the contrary, the desperation with which Jimmy plots his escape from prison and the fact that he is escaping for him to return as a hero (*LCJ*, 49) poses some moral questions. Queenie and one other character, Lewis, reveal in their conversations that they are old criminals now saddled with the responsibility of fighting crime. Several reasons are either implicitly or overtly given in the play as being responsible for the high level of crime experienced in the city of Johannesburg, where the play is set and, by extension, the post-Apartheid or new South Africa.

Apart from the fact that "transition brings crime" (*LCJ*, 9), poverty, unemployment and the uncoordinated activities of remnants of former foot-soldiers of the liberation struggle is seen as contributing to the high crime rate in Johannesburg. The involvement of these freedom fighters in crime is confirmed by Queenie. Reacting to the apprehensions expressed by Bokkie, a white businessman, friend to Lewis, Queenie, and father of Lulu, about the crippling effects crime is having on South Africa, Queenie, who is The Chief of Police confirms that half of the gangsters fingered as criminals "are my comrades from the struggle" (*LCJ*, 11). The play tends to imply that postcolonial South Africa is caught-up in the paradoxes of its own actions, most especially the emergence of a certain polarity amongst members of liberation movements who are inclined towards either misappropriation or re-possession. Jimmy, the lead character in the play, allows for an interrogation of the diminishing profile of a former hero of the struggle who is accused of bank heists. *Love, Crime and Johannesburg*, therefore, problematises some of the convoluted ironies and realities that define the circumvention of the ideals of the struggle, issues around ownership, and the robbing of banks, which are ironically a reflection of the social and political conditions in post-Apartheid South Africa (Purkey and Steinberg, 2000:ix-x). Through a link between characterisation and thematic concerns, the play engages with the marginalisation which is cited as the reason behind corruption and the present progressive collapse experienced in the system.

Jimmy explicates the failure of both members of the older criminal group like Queenie and Lewis, and the efforts of the state to fight crime as he holds that all clever thoughts, plans and deeds have gone, leaving only ash and tears (*LCJ*, 53). The varying exploitative tendencies flagged in the play resonate the idea shared by Derek Attridge and Rosemary Jolly (1998:5) that the new South Africa, as realised in the coining of the term Rainbow Nation, "is always on the verge of becoming the Rambo Nation". This punning between Rainbow and Rambo underpins the challenges posed by criminality to the 'splendour' of multiracialism. The futile attempts made to fight crime as described in Jimmy's statement above are not without any ray of hope after all. Such a deduction is tied to the readings that can be given to the metaphors of 'tear' and 'ash'. It is not beyond reason to see tears as a show of pain, anguish,

frustration, and death.[153] The symbolism of tears and death is further reinforced in this process when considered in relation to ash, which is also the residue of a burning ember. Therefore, ash is a state of demise for an ember. As a result, the ash of the dying socio-political and economic South Africa has the capacity to give birth to 'newness', an offspring. This is informed by classical mythology about the phoenix, a bird that burns itself on a funeral pyre and incongruously rises from the ashes.[154]

Furthermore, and in an effort akin to a juxtaposition of the old and new South Africa, the crime that threatens the new South Africa, as created in the text, is traced to the past activities of the corrupt Apartheid regime, even as the new democracy is said to have brought filth, dirt and incompetence. The preponderant hold that the past is capable of having on the present is similar to the nuances of the discussion of the 'uncanny' made by David Huddart (2006:82). Reiterating the view of Freud, Huddart posits that "any repression is necessarily incomplete, and so any past is always just about to break through into the present". A dialogue between Bokkie and Lewis reveals this:

> LEWIS: Come on Bokkie! We negotiated a democracy with murderers and politicians, and we can't negotiate with a few gangsters!
> BOKKIE: With all due respect, since you and your new bloody democracy, there's never been so much incompetence, filth and dirt! It's as plain as day! (*LCJ*, 9)

The above raises some profound questions about patriotism[155] and is clearly indicative of a contestation between the duos, who have been constructed as dramatic representatives of two socio-political manifestations; the Apartheid regime and the ANC led, black majority government. Even though it is not evident that the play is driving us towards a particular opinion on the matter, it is obvious that it strives at making plain, as is characteristic of satires, the dark elements that ironically define South Africa's newness by providing relevant information to the audience (both viewing and reading).

[153] Tears can also express extreme joy.
[154] See Angus Stevenson. Ed. *Little Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
[155] Patriotism in the view of Simon During (1990:138-139) should be a show of commitment and love towards justice, the country, independence, peace and social happiness devoid of any socio-economic and political selfish aggrandisement.

The Link between the Past and the Present

The definition and period of the various stages of South African colonial experiences have been complicated by the various views shared by scholars. However, the inherent complexity that taints the evaluations of the South Africa state, and the concept of the 'postcolonial', most especially an attendant oppositionality, has been investigated by Graham Pechey (1994). Establishing the nuances of 'postcolonial' as "the sense of formal political 'independence', of having gone through a transfer of power, or of belonging to the period after the transfer" and an inscription achieved by "states that are both economically and culturally *ne*ocolonial" (152), Pechey argues that the idea of the postcolonial applies to South Africa which attained independence in 1910. But this borderline was, however, blurred by the recession to the worst form of colonial subordination as precipitated in 1948 via the entrenchment of Apartheid rule. It is noteworthy, however, that some scholars have argued that the period between 1910 and 1948 does not in any way differ from the post 1948 dispensation. This argument is, no doubt, predicated on the similar forms of repression of the black majority imposed throughout both periods. This convolution and paradox is further likened to, citing the view of Edward Said on the Palestinian experience, the configuration of "victims of victims" (153). These disputations notwithstanding, Pechey has suggested that the placement of these two South African colonial periods depends on where one is standing, that is, "where one is looking from and what one chooses to look at" (152). One constant thing in the two dispensations was how the minority whites and their surrogates colonised opportunities which inevitably led to dispossession and denial of opportunities to the black majority. Such disparities were achieved through racial segregation, positioning.

W. Gerrod Parrott (2003:29) describes 'positioning' "as the dynamic construction of personal identities relative to those of others …". Parrot goes on to identify emotion as playing a central role in the business of positioning. This generates expansive commitment to other members of a group that might not be directly linked to the centre. Obviously, the case of Apartheid South Africa finds an explanation in this concept. The opinion shared by Ciarán Benson (2003:61) below helps illuminate the racial configurations that typified the Apartheid era:

> Disgust, along with contempt, as well as other emotions in various settings, recognizes and maintains difference. Disgust helps define boundaries between us and them and me and you. It helps prevents our way from being subsumed into their way. Disgust, along with desire, locates the bounds of the other, either as something to be avoided, repelled or attacked…

The racial positioning made possible by the Apartheid regime automatically constructed the society as that of the privileged and the underprivileged. As a result, opportunities were hoarded for the privileged few at the expense of the majority that was wilfully excluded. Belinda Bozzoli (2004:10) captures this succinctly when she argues that:

> Black life in South Africa had, particularly since its establishment as a national entity in 1910, been ruled through political, legal and social means which, in addition to the myriad laws which dispossessed, disenfranchised and dehumanised black South African, embraced a 'spatialised' system of control and surveillance.

South Africa, past and present, has been configured, shaped and consummated within the "particularities of Apartheid and resistance to it" (Belinda Bozzoli, 2004:10). The grimness of the breeding of Apartheid and the implications of the opposition that was shown against it, for instance, in the confessions of violators and the anguish of the violated, are as dramatised in Jane Taylor's *Ubu and the Truth Commission*. Of particular note are the various histories of wars of dispossession and resistance fought between indigenous blacks and colonial whites in pre-Apartheid South Africa, which were exacerbated in the various insurrections staged to depose the Apartheid regime. Even though it might be right to argue that crime and fear of crime are as old as South Africa itself, the country got "stitched together with violence" and saturated with crime through "generations of estrangement between races, classes, and individuals" (Jonny Steinberg, 2001:2).

Presently, it might be necessary to examine the overlapping relationship and intersection that exist between the spates of struggles put up against the discriminatory Apartheid rule and the preponderance of corruption, crime and violence in post-Apartheid South Africa. The precarious security situations in the black homelands were worsened by the emergence of gangsterism amongst youths who would either want to join in the rebellious moves against the government to "which they have not consented, but which enforces its will unjustly and by

violence"[156], or be protecting their loved ones from the aggressions of other gangs. It might be misleading to argue that the level of crime in black communities under Apartheid was not as high as what we have in post-Apartheid South Africa. This is underscored by the fact that crimes in black areas were substantially isolated and not directly addressed. Police protection was concentrated in wealthy and white localities, with black people policed basically for the purpose of their restriction. In sum, the "apartheid order encouraged crime among poor black communities through social dislocation occasioned by Apartheid policies and which created conditions that were conducive to criminality" (Mark Shaw, 2002:1).

In another vein, apart from the general accusation of Apartheid as the source of crime and social disjuncture in South Africa, T. van Walt (1993) mentions certain other details such as political instability, fraught economic conditions, the resultant high rate of unemployment, that together combine to push the nation to an almost disastrous trend (van Walt, ibid). However, all these indices identified by Walt were principally generated, and promoted, by Apartheid policies. Therefore, Apartheid "as a generator of criminal victimization and violence" (Shaw, 2002:2&4) led to massive social dislocation and fragmentation in families and communities. Shaw further holds that such dislocation in families and communities did and does impact negatively on children because of the likelihood of their taking to crime (2002:6). Given the fundamental fact that social distortions created by Apartheid might "likely outlive the dismantling of the institutions that called them into being" (Shaw, 2002:9), the possibility of sustained political instability and violence as well as the loosening of "the bonds holding the society together" (Shaw, 19) are indicative of the challenges posed to the new South Africa.

The colonial settler experience that was witnessed in South Africa largely explains the rigour that characterised the various forms of resistance to it. Apart from the wholesale dispossession that was the hallmark of colonialism, there was also human denigration on a massive scale. The pressing need for freedom drove the initiation and sustenance of different peaceful struggles, which later snowballed into a violent quest

[156] Quoted in *Violence in Southern Africa: a Christian Assessment*. Report of a Working Party appointed by the Department of International Affairs of the British Council of Churches and the Conference of British Missionary Societies. London: SCM Press Ltd, 1970.

for the restoration of human dignity, equality and fairness. As part of the liberation struggles against Apartheid, Nelson Mandela[157] proposed the adoption of violence in June 1961, which led to the formation of the "military wing, MK, which operated semi-autonomously of the ANC's political wing" (P. Eric Louw, 2004:120). By extension, Umkhonto we Sizwe[158] were said to have devised more fierce strategies over and above the method of revolt adopted by the African National Congress (ANC). This trend progressively led to the emergence of residual social elements like *tsotsis*.[159]

The era of disorder and precariousness precipitated amongst gangsters (tsotsis) in all the townships as a result of the burden of Apartheid is an ever present part of the historiography of the South African nation. Obviously looking at a period preceding 1994, G.H.L. Le May (1995:245) submits that "… it seemed that the townships were breeding a generation that would be lawless and unlettered; the slogan appeared: Liberation before education". Therefore there is call for a critical reflection of why the trend has continued after the volatility witnessed in the 1980s for almost three decades. These restive youths, as mentioned earlier, are products of weakened social control, a violent environment where violence produces marginalised groups that rely on conflict as a form of livelihood (Shaw, 2002:20). Reflective of the restiveness of the youths[160] and the linking of the AK-47 with the ANC (Tom Barnard, 1999:44), the present/post-Apartheid South Africa, as captured in *Love, Crime and Johannesburg*, is depicted as a leopard which has refused to change its spots. These post-colonial but atavistic challenges do not just have the capacity to threaten existing peace but have the "combustive potential" (Barnard, 1999:55) capable of plunging the nation into a form of volatile disillusionment. It goes without saying, however, that although the

[157] Louw (ibid) claims that Mandela "had advocated armed struggle in 1952, at which time he was considered too radical".

[158] Apart from the Spear of the Nation (Unkhonto we Sizwe), another resistance movement is the African Resistance Movement, a group of white South Africans sympathetic to the African cause.

[159] Ulf Hannerz (1999:168b) holds that "tsotsis was a corruption of 'Zoot suits', as worn by American delinquent youths in a slightly earlier period, and the urban dialect associated with these criminals". Gavin Hood (2006), the writer and director of the film, 'Tsotsi', simply describes the word tsotsi as "a nickname meaning thug".

[160] Tom Barnard (1994:40) ascribes the creation of the unemployable youths in modern economy ('lost generation' that gave up education for the struggle) to the disruptions that characterised schools between the mid-eighties and early nineties, which led to poor education and stultified careers. In another vein, Leonard Thompson (2006:259) links the highly disruptive tendencies in youths to high divorce rate in families, teenage pregnancy and their socialisation in "lawless gangs, which contributed to the rampant crime that was a hallmark of the society".

allegedly culpable instrument of Apartheid has been put to rest, the life of the people, most especially the black majority, is still caught in a web of inequality and poverty and of denial and abandonment.

In spite of the avowed commitment that has been expressed over time after the inauguration of democracy in 1994, the limited access to amenities has continued unabated. The resultant effect is the creation of conflicts and tension at several levels. However, the new tension in what Loren Kruger (2004:165) first refers to as post-anti-Apartheid South Africa is, according to her, between "a new privileged class of black managers and the still-impoverished masses", most especially "young unemployed men whose acts appear to express their anger at a society that has not brought them the good life promised by the liberation movements …". This idea is suggestive of a strong link between politics and criminality. Similarly, Steinberg (2001:5) warns of how difficult it might be to distinguish between politics and crime, that is, the inter-link between struggle, as a process, and freedom. Steinberg, however, concludes that "like the youth organisations of the 1980s, today's gangs are an expression of a revolt of the young against the old". As a result of the implications of this socio-political and economic imbalance, the preparedness of members of the underprivileged black community to soften the negative impact of marginalisation of the past, of poverty, unemployment, and other such economic pressures have continually contributed to the highly explosive level of insecurity in South Africa. The significance of this trend is played out in, for example, the linking of past comrades of the liberation struggle with bank heists and other forms of criminality.

Specifically in *Love, Crime and Johannesburg*, an accusing finger is pointed at the state, that does nothing to rehabilitate and reintegrate the former *tsotsis* who take to crime because, as stated by Bones in the play, "no one makes things happen" for them (*LCJ*, 15). Interestingly enough, opinions are divided on the tenability or otherwise of this argument. For instance, Donnarae MacCann and Yulisa Amadu Maddy (2001:30) have uniquely argued that:

> The "tsotsis" (the young delinquents) in South Africa were, however, victims more than perpetrators of crime ─ victims of state ─ produced hardships, injustices, and gross violation

> of human rights. The Tsotsis were an offshoot of poverty, lack of opportunity, and lack of responsible channels for activity.[161]

This view seems to reiterate the position of Lewis, one of the characters in the play and a tsotsi who appears to speak for the gangsters, of which he is one, in proposing the need to engage them in negotiations just as it was done with people he referred to as "murderers and politicians" (*LCJ*, 9). No doubt, the individual could be rightly seen as a product of a particular society where s/he gives expression to the 'self', it becomes a difficult thing to rationalise untoward behaviour using the argument of marginalisation and deprivation. However, wilful belligerence is nonetheless a reflection of the evolving strands of "counter-hegemonic" forces bent on fighting against prevalent exploitation and dispossession (Couze Venn, 2006:2). More often than not and when other conciliatory measures fail, the predilection towards violence and other anti-social behaviours become the singular way these socially, politically, and more particularly, economically constructed subalterns give expression to their frustrations. By so doing, violence becomes the instrument of power to the underprivileged that reserves, in his/her own little way, a particular amount of the power that defines human relationships.[162] The extenuating nature of this disorientation played itself out in 2007 when a man came out publicly to accept responsibility for the series of ATM bombings that had terrorised people. The reasons ascribed to this diabolical act are analogous to that shared by MacCann and Maddy above. The fluid line of demarcation between the state and the gangsters raises some fundamental questions about governance in the new South Africa. Bones makes this emphatically clear in the play when he advocates that Jimmy should cease to see himself as a hero of the struggle but concentrate on how to take care of himself since no one cares to do that or celebrate his past commitment to the struggle.

However, Bones also reveals that the spate of crime, rape and reckless inflictions of brutality is due to the renewed greed and lawlessness in the criminal world where

[161] Emphasising the significant implication socio-economic dislocation is capable of having on an increase in the crime rate, Mark Shaw (2002:6) further opines that the violence witnessed by delinquent children who are victims of "dislocated communities" occasioned by "parental conflict and strife" could constitute another reason.

[162] Igrid Palmary, Janine Rauch and Graeme Simpson (2003:104) believe that violence and crime can not be severed from "experiences of marginalization" during and after the Apartheid era. It is however submitted that while the violence that was meant to challenge Apartheid was ascribed a political definition, that which erupted at the earlier part of the new democratic order was termed "criminal" and "antisocial".

young gangsters become more bloodthirsty than their predecessors, who are known to be committed to God and to their families. Bones submits that "we went to church schools. We learnt respect. We fed our children, looked after our mothers" (*LCJ*, 29). The categorisation made in the above underpins the retrogressions that every stratum of society is receding to, and a legacy of Apartheid not yet addressed in the new South Africa. Bones' statement also justifies the apprehension people feel for the level of crime in South Africa. He seems to indicate that crime is getting exacerbated when viewed against past statistics. Therefore, the aggravation inherent in such a development portends doom for the future if not taken seriously enough.

Furthermore, Bones makes a statement that is reminiscent of the traditional way patriarchy is asserted in South Africa. He links the "burning, suffocating, raping, shooting" by these new "vampires" to their desire to "… feel like men" (*LCJ*, 29). As reflected above, the South African society is familiar with the notion that manliness is demonstrated through the show of courage and authority, most especially using force and brutality. Benita Moolman (2009:185) says it all when she submits that "within dominant meanings of manhood in South Africa, a physical display of manhood symbolises values of strength, dominance, power, control, conquest, achievement and bravery". Women and children end up being victims of such rages in both public and domestic spaces. Apart from the fact that this assertion of manliness is without foundation, Bones also reveals the rootlessness of such thinking when he describes the gangsters as "dunno" with "no balls, nothing inside" (*LCJ*, 29). Going by Bones' description of the gangsters, one can argue that violence is not always a show of force, authority and strength, but an indication of weakness, emptiness, vulnerability and misdirection. Other than the need for gender domination, the perpetuation of acts of violence by gangsters is linked to the notion that "contemporary sexual violence in South Africa is fuelled by justificatory narratives rooted in Apartheid practices that legitimised violence by the dominant group against the disempowered, not only in overtly political arenas, but also in social, informal and domestic spaces" (Helen Moffett, 2009:155).

Johannesburg: the Irony of 'Success' and 'Failure'

Another theme that is engaged with in the play is that of the city of Johannesburg, which is ironically described as "the largest city in the world not built on a river!" (*LCJ*, 16) but "built on crime" (*LCJ*, 43). The root of crime in Johannesburg is traced to the discovery of gold and the establishment of the first factory which signalled the presence of washer men, prostitutes and brick works (*LCJ*, 43). The attributes of the city of Johannesburg are reinforced through the symbolic use of the image of a woman. This denigrating reference to Johannesburg as a 'whore' and an object to be possessed is reminiscent of the traditionally entrenched notion and attendant stereotypes that favour masculinity and patriarchy. Just as women could be condemnably reduced to an object to be used and abandoned at will, the city of Johannesburg, using the representation of a 'teenage whore', is left only to be returned to after the visits people made to some other cities around the world have failed. Bokkie's song in the play, however, touches on the number of successful people that the city of Johannesburg has produced. Therefore, the city of Johannesburg is not only known for crime, brutality and prostitution, but also creativity. Taking stock of the demands Johannesburg places on herself in her day-to-day engagements, Lulu sees Johannesburg as a "Wild city! Damned city! City of every pleasure and every pain!" (*LCJ*, 25). The reality of this bitter-sweet oxymoron is captured in the opening song by The Company in the play when Johannesburg is described as a place, a cosmopolitan enclave, "where dreams are made and broken down" (*LCJ*, 2).

Closely linked to Apartheid's segregating policies are the benefits that accrued to the urban centre from the recruitment of workers from rural communities. This brings to the fore the role the city of Johannesburg[163] has consistently played within the curve of corruption and crime in South Africa. Johannesburg, as it is presently configured, is a legacy of Apartheid, out of which the struggle for liberation continues (David M. Smith, 1992:9). The "dislocation between residence and workplace" (Smith, 1992:8) preceded the 1870s that marked the huge and aggressive recruitments for the mines,

[163] Jo'burg, as it is equally called, according to Dawid Dewar (1992), belongs to one of the four major metropolitan areas: Pretoria– Witwatersrand–Vereeniging; Durban; Cape Town; Port Elizabeth–Uitenhage.

construction works and other urban activities (Alan Mabin, 1992:14). Mabin concludes that "rural dispossession lies behind almost every form of urbanization" (22). Specifically, Ingrid Palmary, Janine Rauch and Graeme Simpson (2003:101) argue that Johannesburg, which is "believed to be the 'crime capital' of South Africa", was configured based on racial segregation, which "resulted in the *ghettoization* of urban townships", and resulted in dramatic disparities, producing two poles of extreme wealth and intense poverty". The metaphor of *Egoli,*[164] meaning the place of gold, often used to describe Johannesburg, is reflective of the significant impact the discovery of gold in the Witwatersrand had on its growth. Therefore, the influx of black South Africans and people from some other contiguous countries as labourers[165] helped to define and sustain Apartheid segregation and political divisions. The Free Settlement Act of 1988 was said to have enhanced certain movements across racial lines that were ordinarily prohibitive, thereby leading to the "existence of so-called grey areas" for "services and employment opportunities" (André P. Czeglédy, 2003:25). After the "booms and slumps of gold mining" there was a flooding of the city by foreign capital which signalled the transformation of "Johannesburg into a little New York or, if not New York, then at least Chicago or Saint Louis" (Richard Tomlinson *et al,* 2003:4). Tomlinson *et al* further their admiration for Johannesburg as they assert that "post-1994 Johannesburg was a product of broad-based, democratic negotiations around how best to build an integrated city" (8).

The foregoing reference to negotiation implicitly supports the notion that the construction of cities under Apartheid was entirely race based. This is, however, not entirely true, as such a process was cemented and is continuously being strengthened through complementary capitalist tendencies. Malcolm Lupton (2009:65) captures this when he opines that "South African cities, despite the specificities arising from race, are shaped by the process of capitalist urbanization", achieved through the "accumulation of capital and its corresponding categories such as labour and capital, as well as the struggles between classes". The building of cities, especially Johannesburg, in South Africa seems to parade economic elements that are similar to that of Apartheid. Similarly, both the city and the country as a whole are capable of

[164] André P. Czeglédy (2003:23) writes that this is an Nguni name which is a root word for gold. He refers to Johannesburg as "European derivation" and "Jo'burg or Jozi" as informal names for the city.
[165] Leonard Thompson (2006:118) describes Johannesburg as "a den of iniquities" for African labourers.

providing the space for socio-political and economic contestations. This gives justification to the argument of Lupton (2009:70) that "the state itself is not a neutral force external to class relations but reflects class conflict and is also the site of class struggle". It, therefore, means that the new South Africa inherited by the ANC, just like the city of Johannesburg, is a space for continuous inequality. As a result, Johannesburg is continuously evolving, disregarding "totalizing perspectives" but subjected to "both centripetal and centrifugal forces" (Martin J. Murray, 2008:vii). Achille Mbembe and Sarah Nuttall (2008:24) similarly see Johannesburg as elusive and metropolitan going by its "aesthetic of plenty". However, despite the 'aestheticism' of beauty and abundance, Johannesburg is also seen as the epicentre of opposites which makes it "a city of monumental architecture and abysmal slums; a city of luxurious playgrounds for the rich and empty wastelands for the poor; a city of utopian fantasy and dystopian anxiety; and a city of collective memory and intentional forgetting" (Martin J. Murray, 2008:vii).

One character that exemplifies the spate of love and prostitution the city of Johannesburg allows in the text is Jimmy, who navigates through the intricate web of his relationships with two women, Bibi and Lulu, with some deviousness. The characterisation of Bibi and Lulu moves beyond their relationship with Jimmy and makes extended remarks on the individual's engagement within a larger space, most especially in the politics and intrigue that characterise amorous relationships. Bibi is presented to us in the play as highly materialistic and sexual person, who is determined to do anything to achieve self aggrandisement. Bibi demonstrates this of herself when she visits Jimmy in prison. In a chat with Jimmy, she informs the latter of the expensive phone and designer shoes she buys at a time she cannot pay for her rent and is threatened by eviction (*LCJ*, 18). This aspect of Bibi and Jimmy's lifestyle is used to represent the actual circumstances of Colin Chauke who lived a glamorous life and rode exotic cars, only for his girlfriend to fail "to produce a small amount for bail or even the rent for her flat in Nelspruit" (*LCJ*, viii). The notoriety that Bibi is credited with must have informed the suggestion Lulu makes to her to try and sexually seduce Lewis Matome, Jimmy's old friend and new Chairman of the Bank, in order to secure his help and facilitate Jimmy's release. Apart from this, Lulu's incitement can be taken as a reflection of her tricky, manipulative and desperate character.

Some other contemporary issues, like fashion, love, empowerment and remedies for social ills are also treated in the text. These socio-economic varieties found in Johannesburg are indicative of the cosmopolitan nature of the city, which emerges as a melting pot for people from different ethnic-religious and racial backgrounds. Although the above indicators might not be peculiar to cities, the probability presented by their denseness make it more common to cities. Men are portrayed in the text as only interested in the sexual and material exploitation of women. This is evident in the relationships Jimmy keeps with Lulu and Bibi, the duo he incorrigibly claims to love faithfully and deeply at different occasions, and the illicit affairs Bokkie has with different women. Lewis, who is to be trapped sexually by Bibi, is also known to have a record of infidelity as he is accused of having slept "with half the women in town already and no one gives a damn!" (*LCJ*, 32). Lewis' attitude personifies another shade of moral bankruptcy which tends to remind us that corruption, as painted in the play, is not necessarily driven by lack and dispossession but irrepressible greed. Lewis' sexual behaviour, just like that of Bokkie in the play too, also coheres with the appalling obsession for sex that forms one of the viable challenges to the South African community and that is fictionalised in Lara Foot Newton's *Tshepang*: *the Third Testament*.

As a follow-up to the reference made to the gendered designation of Johannesburg above, women are satirically seen in *Love, Crime and Johannesburg* as materialistic and opportunistic. The use of the image of a woman to designate pervasive materialism is, however, a violation of women. It also re-echoes the notion of "loose women" and "delinquent children" (Jennifer Robinson, 1992:295) credited to the city. Women have always been situated as the receivers of the flowing tradition ("culture of violence")[166] of violation and commoditisation that the South African state is known for. Various literatures have attempted to interrogate the vulnerability of women in South Africa: from rape to violence, homelessness to social degradation.[167] Anthony Butler (2004:83), for instance, holds that even though the participation of women in government has increased, they still contend with restricted opportunities to

[166] See Igrid Palmary, Janine Rauch and Graeme Simpson (2003:107).
[167] See *Women's Activism in South Africa: Working Across Divides*, edited by Hannah Britton, Jennifer Fish and Sheila Meintjes. Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2009.

justice, health services as well as being constantly sexually harassed and physically violated. Other than the emphasis Bibi puts on material acquisitions, at another time she desires the release of Jimmy to allow him to become enlisted in the civil service and begin to partake in 'the mother of all eating'. It should be noted, however, that this display of avarice is not peculiar to women, but rather, a manifestation of the fallibility of any and all human beings. It goes without saying, therefore, that any attempt at ascribing such a materialistic tendency to women alone is in itself prejudicial and counterproductive. The factitious dressing of the girlfriend of George described by Bibi to Jimmy shows women's passion for popular fashion, characteristic of Johannesburg and other city scapes. The description of these ornamentations as 'fake' passes for an attempt to expose and denounce the cosmetic and idealistic manner in which democratic dynamics are flaunted in post-Apartheid South Africa. However, the liberal constitution of the democratic South Africa, as depicted in the play, gives a recognisable place to women, and this makes it possible for Queenie, a woman, to head the police force. This is an indication that even though there appears to be a propensity for paternalism and patriarchy, it is obvious that there are constitutional provisions, however inadequate the application is, to protect and guarantee the rights of women. This does not detract, however, from the fact that women are still facing enormous challenges as individuals.

Between Johannesburg and South Africa: a Satire

Love, Crime and Johannesburg also makes a general appraisal of the social, political and economic situations in Johannesburg and the South African state in general. One of the outcomes of the appraisal done of the new South Africa is the collapse of infrastructure. Such systemic deterioration is reflected in broken down sewage pipes, dried taps and depreciating malls. In addition to these, stock markets are said to be folding-up amidst the danger and general rottenness caused by gun running and drug peddling. This institutional collapse is also witnessed in the operation of the police force, which lacks the necessary equipment to take photographs and conduct fingerprints as part of the essentialities of their crime fighting and investigation. High level corruption adds to these problems to worsen this negative trend within the police. This is seen, however, as an extension of the pervading realities during the Apartheid era, as shown in the dialogic contestations between Queenie and Bokkie.

As pointed out earlier, while Bokkie argues that the new South Africa is tantamount to "incompetence, filth and dirt!", apparently referring to the 'failure' of the black majority ANC government, Queenie retorts: "You bloody whining whites! We blacks walk into a dark room full of stinking apartheid corruption! We turn on the light! And you blame us for the shit!" (*LCJ*, 10). When considered against the elements of satire found in the play, 'dark room' as used in the above statement stands as a metaphor of a repulsive enclave that needs 'purification'. The overall deficiencies seen in the system could be metaphorically encapsulated through the scatological description of the stinks or rottenness of the prison-cell-toilet that is given by Jimmy in the play. On another level, even though the new South Africa provides the opportunity for the actualisation of constitutional rights (*LCJ*, 52-53), the justice system is accused of paradoxically guaranteeing more protection for criminals than victims (*LCJ*, 50). Ironically, such suspicions seem to breed impunity and authenticate the resort to criminality by some in order to get their own share of available opportunities. In a nutshell, the rottenness witnessed in the land is a product of the economic depravation and paucity of ability and know-how imposed by the apartheid rule as well as the hugely morally bankrupt country inherited by the new government.

However, the democratic South Africa appears to offer different promises to the people, most especially the black majority who are considered to be previously disadvantaged.[168] In spite of the efforts made by successive post-Apartheid governments, there have been a series of violent protests against the poor or lack of services at townships and informal settlements across the country. Amidst these disenchantments and dissensions, there have been accusations against the ruling party of tokenisms and cronyisms. These are predicated on the fact that the ANC facilitates privileged access to opportunities. Substantially, the challenges faced by the new leadership provided by the ANC-led government, following the "middle-ground" dealings between the ANC and the NP, were defined by the great expectations of change from the majority black and the white Right as well as the threat posed by "skills exodus through white emigration" (P. Eric Louw, 2004:176). Other than the

[168] This contrasts with President Thabo Mbeki's 'two nations address' ─ rich whites and poor blacks ─ it is believed that there are poor whites whose condition can be equated with with that of poor blacks. This was brought to the fore during the visit of the ANC president, and the president of the republic, Jacob Zuma to Bethlehem, a poor white settlement. The visit occurred during the run-up to the elections in 2009. See *The Star* 25, July, p. 1.

above, the new regime is said to be characterised by "blurred racial capitalism", which, like racial capitalism, "is characterized by systemic exploitation, systemic exclusion, and systemic neglect of the underclasses" (Louw, 2004:179). Even though Louw's view has been contested for lack of fair assessment, Patrick Bond (2000:253) seems to have previously signalled this when he refers to this new trend as a "durable replacement of racial apartheid with … class apartheid", which involves "systemic underdevelopment and segregation of the oppressed majority, through structured economic, political, environmental, legal, medical and cultural practices largely organised or codified by Pretoria politicians and bureaucrats".

In a study of African cities carried out by Bill Freund (2007), he ominously submits that "one plant which the *apartheid* gardener certainly did nurture was crime" (136)[169]. Although the ascription of the prevalence of crime in the present to the old Apartheid past might not be without its difficulties, an absolute dismissal of such a possibility is similarly dangerous. This is more so considering the psychological developmental processes of an individual and his/her emergence as the product of a social process. It might be appropriate to submit that the failure recorded by the two dispensations, Apartheid and democratic South Africa, more or less, leaves us with a precarious existence, and a wobbling nation that might be threatened or endangered. At a more microscopic level the degradation in the prison, referred to tangentially earlier on, is implicitly constructed as a representation of the general appalling situation in the country. This is found in the repulsion shown by Jimmy 'Longlegs':

> The toilets are not working. The food's rotten. The rats are everywhere!
> I've spoken to the head of the prison. They are dragging their feet!
> The toilet is not even covered. There's no privacy in here! (*LCJ*, 6)

The correlation between the city of Johannesburg and the South Africa nation is reinforced by the industrial, economic and political contributions of the former to the latter. For instance, spatial manipulations characterised life in the city under Apartheid as within the country at large. Richard Tomlinson *et al* (2003:ix) succinctly

[169] Freund argues that the segregation and alteration found in the Townships led to the promotion of gangsters which affected the impoverished working class initially and later turned out to be a thorn in the flesh of everyone as the borders constructed by *Apartheid* dissolved on the advent of democracy. In his own contribution, Mark Shaw (2002:1) avers that crime in South Africa "is not a recent phenomenon", even as he argues that the "social dislocation" caused by the Apartheid policies "gave rise to conditions conducive to crime".

captures this interrelatedness when they posit that "how Johannesburg fares will also be seen, unfairly or not, as indicative of the success or failure of South Africa". Even as the city of Johannesburg[170] assumes an allegorical representation of the South Africa nation, the prison scene makes certain propositions that could relevantly paint the entire general sense that is being investigated in the play. South Africa, as a nation state, is evolving like the city of Johannesburg into a site "where more complex activities take place" (Bill Freund, 2007:vii). At the same time, Johannesburg, just like South Africa, is defined by some morbid symptoms of convulsions (Bhekizizwe Peterson, 2009:20). Specifically, some of its failed attributes, human frailty and vices exposed in the play, in the excerpt referred to just now, include the metaphor of: the dilapidation of the toilets, rotten food items, and the invasion of the space by destructive rats, synchronised with the collapse of public infrastructure, the deterioration of morality, as well as the devastating misappropriation of opportunities by former comrades who are new members of the bourgeoisie. This also includes a constant rise in crime rate and the insensitivity displayed by leaders. For instance, in what appears a reaction to the latter, in an appraisal of the debacle that characterised the discussions on the AIDS pandemic in South Africa, most especially the perception that it is "a post-apartheid 'joker in the pack' ", Michael Chapman (2006:133) queries the preparedness and unimaginativeness of the ANC to "desert its best ethical sense and resort to the remedies and language of quackery …". Chapman concludes that "words, no less than deeds, remain less important".

The morbid events that are satirised are reminiscent of the convolutions and divisions that are witnessed amongst the old heroes of the struggle against Apartheid. This development is reminiscent of the attitudes of most idealistic leaders and nationalists in most nation states in Africa who sooner than later abandon the ideals of the struggle for personal gain and aggrandisement: jettisoning the propagation of "African Socialism" and embracing "clientelism and despotism" which are worse than colonialism (Francis Njubi Nesbitt, 2005:143). More often than not, the various efforts nationalist leaders make to attain self-determination for their people, mostly in Africa, are fraught with betrayal, self-centeredness, and tyrannical tendencies, which in most cases lead to anarchy. It then becomes difficult to delineate between the quest

[170] Igrid Palmary, Janine Rauch and Graeme Simpson (2003:101) refer to Johannesburg as the "crime capital of South Africa".

for personal achievement and pure patriotism and national commitment. This is reinforced by Joshua B. Forrest (2004:10) to the effect that many of the ambitious leaders "… are motivated principally by prospects for their own advancement, rather than by collective interest". It is common in post-liberation eras for the victory attained to be personalised by some actors in the struggle. This is reflected in the overbearing and larger-than-life tenacious hold of the ZANU PF, led by Robert Mugabe, on Zimbabwe, as well as the ascription of the whole victory over Apartheid to the ruling ANC in South Africa.

Apparently, even though no individuals have assumed the position of a dictator in post-Apartheid South Africa, although there were signals that Thabo Mbeki attempted such within the ANC, that could not be said about the ruling ANC which has hitherto taken up leadership responsibility in South Africa. With disapproval from opposition not producing violent repressions yet, disenchanted citizens do not hide their feelings each time they have the space to vent their emotions. Central to these angered individuals are the youth who, like we have been told earlier on, gave up education for the struggle and now desire not just compensation for past denials, dispossessions and sacrifice, but full integration into the mainstream social-political and economic spheres. However, a binary of differentiation has slipped into the relationships between the characters that represent this marginalised and disenchanted group in *Love, Crime and Johannesburg*. While Lewis and Queenie have joined the few beneficiaries of the emerging black elite class, that is not applicable to Jimmy 'Longlegs' who feels excluded by his old compatriots.

The foregoing is indicative of the fact that exclusion could be achieved using the instrumentalities that are not limited to race as witnessed under the Apartheid era. The exclusions found in the new South Africa, as reflected in this text, are driven more by individualism, class and personal interests. Andrew Horn (1999:77a) refers to this development as "a subtle shift … putting more emphasis on class and economic stratification" in the new South Africa as opposed to race that was central in the Apartheid era. Just like what is found in transnational migrations, the major concern at this point appears to be the imposition of a number of restrictions and the policing of borders (Dhooleka S. Raj, 2000:186). However, in order for Jimmy to negotiate for a space in the new order, he chooses to go into bank heists to get his 'own share' from

the wealth the old comrades have 'illegally' acquired at the expense of the majority have nots. The conundrum precipitated by this clash of interests and socio-political and economic negotiations is reminiscent of the pervasive corruption that has beclouded the new South Africa.

In a study carried out by Benjamin Roberts (2006:124), it was concluded that the government in post-Apartheid South Africa has demonstrated a high level of commitment to "reconstruction and development" in the face of the infrastructural decadence that confronts it. However, Roberts opines that this is not absolute as "… high levels of poverty and inequality appear to have persisted",[171] most especially in "areas such as employment creation, crime reduction and health care" where "the prognosis is more sobering". It could be accepted that the attenuation of poverty would be more gradual than swift, most especially when viewed against the backdrop of the ANC vision to drastically reduce poverty by 2014[172]. However, the prevalence of a rising "impoverishment as well as mounting inequality in both incomes and opportunities"[173] is appalling. The urgency to concentrate on this area of development is reinforced in the Financial Mail (2007:36) where it is argued that "Jobs remain the SA economy's Achilles heel", and South Africa's intractable dilemma being "… the need for a growth path that will mop up SA's mass of unskilled labour". Incidentally though, the absorption of the greater number of the mass of the unemployed who are without required skills presents an overwhelming challenge. The commitment of government and the optimism it elicits notwithstanding, Altman (2007:37)[174] has opined that "poverty is something that we are likely to see in SA for many generations". This argument is linked to the fact that the reduction in unemployment would not in any way be tantamount to diminishing poverty because of the low wage paid to the "working poor". This trend is exacerbated by the current global economic crises propelled by fuel and food price increases, and the ultimate: global recession.

[171] Igrid Palmary (ibid.) refers to the efforts made by the new government as "the snail's pace of change in the post-1994 period …"
[172] In a survey carried out by John Daniel, Roger Southall and Sarah Dippenaar (2006), only 33 per cent of respondents felt they have recorded some significant changes in their life since 1999, in spite of the "low but consistently positive level of economic growth" (26) achieved since the ANC took over in 1994.
[173] Benjamin Roberts 2006, citing Roberts 2004.
[174] See *Financial Mail* October, 2007.

Further to the above indictment of the state/government are other elements such as the inefficiency of the police force, broached earlier, to be blamed principally on the lack of the required equipment to discharge their duties. However, apart from the lack of relevant tools, the police are also said to be corrupt. This is captured in the play as follows:

> LEWIS: How can the goddamn police do any work, where there isn't any infrastructure to take a photograph or a finger print…
> BOKKIE: Listen, Lewis, we have to face the facts. Even if the police could take a photograph or a fingerprint, they are so bloody corrupt … (*LCJ*, 10).

It would seem reasonable to assert that the provision of the needed logistics may not necessarily stop the indolence of the police, considering the accusation of greed and corruption that is levelled against them in the play. No doubt, corruption of any kind would erode the ethics of the profession and colour its activities as suspect. This re-echoes the way the police were deployed in Apartheid South Africa. For instance, white areas were said to be heavily guarded during Apartheid at the expense of the black communities which were "policed for control and not crime prevention" (Mark Shaw, 2002:1). Specifically, the dialogues in *Love, Crime and Johannesburg* see characters speaking for and against the Apartheid government and the present dispensation, respectively. Such comparisons allow the present regime to be measured by past 'successes'. In the long run, the ordeals that the present government faces are blamed on the social and economic disjuncture introduced and perpetuated by former apartheid leaders. It is important to note, however, that the adjustments made by people after the negotiation for independence, as seen in this play, have blurred the different group affiliations that were created purely through racial considerations. The fluidity occasioned by this has led to a new positioning where a group of old dissidents are now left with the onerous responsibility of curtailing the debauchery and exploitation that are staged by their old comrades in the struggle. As a result and ironically, the commitment to challenge the new spate of exploitation is being achieved through criminality. This approach is similar to the presence of criminal taints as part of the overall struggle against Apartheid. However, the culpability of the state is reinforced by the prevailing high prices of commodities as well as the skyrocketing cost of basic utilities. The latter is referred to as a case of 'robbery', carried out through some essential services on a society who are "robbed right to the

bone" (*LCJ*, 12). This justification is done in relation to the satirical denouncement of the robbing of the banks owned by former comrades of the liberation struggle.

Other than the aforementioned weaknesses highlighted in the running of the new South Africa, the play takes further its elements of satire by forwardly looking at an event like the TRC. On the eve of the presaged inauguration of the third president of the new republic of South Africa, a general amnesty is announced in the play. This development contrasts with the actual South African TRC amnesty process which was aimed at interacting with past Apartheid violators. This general amnesty, as contained in the excerpt below, is predicated on the social and religious tenets that were popular to the TRC, components such as ignorance, culpability, and reconciliation:

> given that none of us knows what's right and wrong, given that we put our brutal past behind us, given that only a few pass through the narrow gates of heaven, and given that reconciliation has so perfectly been achieved – there will be … a general amnesty! (*LCJ*, 54).

This statement satirises the actual TRC and, in the process, exposes human frailties and follies as inherent in the South African transition from degradation to reconciliation. In line with the proposition of general culpability which informs a wholesale pardon, the play also dwells on the need for overall purgation and cleansing. Such a sweeping 'condemnation' is demonstrative of the binaries of the offender and the offended. This is because of the cyclical nature of actions and counter-actions, 'offence' and 'revenge'. While Jimmy seeks divine forgiveness for anything he must have done wrong, he recommends cleansing and expiation of guilt for all: "Let us wash our sins away, we clearly need the rain" (*LCJ*, 53). Jimmy's suggestion raises the relevance of the imagery of rain. The symbolism of water/rain is copiously used in Ngugi Wa'Thiongo's *A Grain of Wheat*, just like in many other texts, where characters seek penitence, expiation and forgiveness following a series of betrayals that characterise their interactions in the novel. The notion of 'washing' has a strong link with both ablutions and baptism in both Christianity and Islam.

However, the place of water, other than the fact that it helps in the process of identification at baptism, lacks the power to 'wash' off sins. Symbolically, blood is considered in Judeo-Christian tradition to be able to blot out sins. The blood, specifically, must be a 'sacred' one, as symbolic of that of Jesus. The indispensability

of the symbolism of the blood of Jesus among Christians, for instance, is predicated on the limited efficacy of the blood of animals in the Old Testament, as stated in the bible, to achieve perfect cleansing. It can at best cover or repress. Ordinarily, the choice by Jimmy of the natural element of rain/water could have been informed by the contradictions inherent in the spilling of blood at the different stages of the formation of South African nationhood and the failure of such 'sacrifices' to bring about total restoration. Junction Avenue reviews the state of affairs in the new South Africa in a closing song and concludes, reflective of satire to denounce and deride what has happened hitherto and to chart a new course, that nothing has changed, "the rich are still rich, the poor desperately poor" (*LCJ*, 54). This is happening in the face of betrayals that are felt within specific socio-political and economic groups. The Company ends on an optimistic and redemptive note that peace would have been achieved in hundred years' time with the proposition that forgiveness should be extended to everyone.

Love, Crime and Johannesburg and the Ideas of Opposites

The play can also be interrogated in terms of oppositional conflicts between respective characters. One such conflict is that between Bibi (Black) and Lulu (white) mentioned beforehand. Apart from the fact that they are both 'contesting' for the attention and love of Jimmy, they are opposed as black and white, which echoes the endemic racial tensions that define human interactions in South Africa. Ironically, while Lulu shows more commitment towards the release of Jimmy from incarceration by lobbying and blackmailing her father, Bokkie, as well as providing the car, fuel and cash to make Jimmy's escape from prison to Swaziland possible, Jimmy opts to seek refuge in the bosom of Bibi at a hotel where he is later rearrested. The love triangle sees all the players losing out at the end. As recognised in the polarity created between the privileged and non-privileged, old and young comrades of the struggle before now, there is another instance of conflict between the agents of the state who are tasked with the responsibility of fighting crime that tends to force the new South Africa to its knees. It is ironic enough that law enforcers that were previously categorised in the same group along with gangsters are not catered for after the privileged ones begin to own banks and secure appointments in government offices. Lewis seems to be more patronising towards the gangsters, both old and young, when

he proposes dialogue to be the best way out to Queenie, the new Police Chief, rather than the harsh route of force and brutality. He underscores this, as mentioned a while ago, by making reference to the negotiation they had with murderers and politicians in order to have democracy (*LCJ*, 9).

Also, there are some traces of racial confrontations between Queenie, who is black, and Bokkie, a white South African. Bokkie begins the stand-off when he insists that the gangsters should be 'blown up' for their recalcitrant and criminal activities in order to safeguard the new South Africa. Bokkie also accuses the new democracy of ineptitude, incompetence and filth (*LCJ*, 9). For his part, Queenie replies to Bokkie by blaming the whites for generating the "stinking apartheid corruption" which the blacks have merely revealed by turning on the light (*LCJ*, 10). The play's deployment of irony is also seen in the conflicts that are found at the level of father/daughter relationship. This is seen in the action of Lulu when she makes recourse to some documentary evidence of the past infidelity of her father, Bokkie, to blackmail him to give his support towards securing Jimmy's release. Bokkie is said to have been suspiciously placed under prying eyes by Lulu's mother, following Bokkie's licentious dealings. Lulu takes the option of coercion after trying in vain to persuade her father amicably. Bokkie does not just see Jimmy as a gangster who Lulu should not have anything to do with, but as "a shwartsa (*black*)" (*LCJ*, 21) who, according to him, makes fun of the training Lulu receives in a Jewish day school. Lulu's attempts to remind Bokkie that they are in a new South Africa does not persuade him to change his mind since he claims that "there are limits" (*LCJ*, 21). Bokkie typifies the recent socio-economic inter-racial permutations in social relations in the new South Africa as he is presented to us as a friend to both the former Apartheid government and a standing member of the ANC and a trustee of the president. His association with the black elite and distancing from Jimmy makes him a double-faced and opportunistic character in the new South Africa.

The racial stereotyping made by Bokkie, in relation to how he receives Jimmy, is analogous to the defunct strategies that were used to achieve socio-political and economic configurations in the Apartheid days. To think that Apartheid has totally disappeared is misleading. Bokkie's attitude is also an overwhelming negation of the Desmond Tutu's 'Rainbow Nation' or the concept of "rainbowism" (Natasha Distiller

and Melisa Steyn, 2004: 1) that are usually used to celebrate the diversity of the new South Africa. One can then agree with the view that the embodiment of the 'Rainbow Nation' is a mere attempt at cohesion and "containment" deployed to brand the country, 'deceptively though', to itself and the outside world (Natasha Distiller and Melisa Steyn, ibid). Some of the various racial negotiations that go on globally are reflected in the characterisation of Bokkie. Bokkie manifests both the principles of Alice Walker's "colourism" and Gayatri Spivak's idea of "chromatism" (Helene Strauss, 2004:36b). Even though Bokkie promotes whiteness in an attempt to dissociate himself from Jimmy, with some "stability and finality", and as well justified for the authority it wields (David Huddart, 2006:49), whiteness does not preclude Bokkie from associating with the new emerging black elites. As a result, a new negotiation is made for space ─ economic, social and political ─ not based exclusively on race. It goes without saying, therefore, that the use of race as the instrument of social construction could be personalised and exploited for personal gains. Jimmy is, therefore, subjected to a dual violation of his personality, firstly as a gangster and secondly as a 'lowly' black. Evidently, Bokkie's behaviours show the disruptions and negotiations that are inherent in identity politics and they are also indicative of the fact that time and space have the capacity to rework identity and ethnicity (Dhooleka S. Raj, 2003:185) with the individual making choices along the way. Consequently, one could safely say that individualism plays a great role in the deployment of ideological strategies.

Bokkie is constructed in the play as a great beneficiary of the Apartheid regime. Unlike the liberal whites, he visibly concentrates on the building of opportunities for his wife and daughter when others deployed their resources and agility for the liberation struggle; even though he professes belief in social justice. He, like others in his shoes, has since joined the emerging leaders in the new South Africa where their interests and businesses are protected. However, it becomes obvious that the creation or, better still, hoarding of opportunities is not purely based on race. What Bokkie achieved for the wife and children in the face of the inequality created by Apartheid is synonymous to what the old comrades of the struggle are appropriating by acquiring banks. But the actions of the latter are said to be targeted at correcting the mistakes of the past through the redistribution of wealth and opportunities. The transformation of identity invented for Jimmy by his white girl friend, Lulu, raises a strong moral

question. Lulu has secured a travelling passport for Jimmy where he is expected to assume the personality of Zwelakhe Levine in order to facilitate his escape to Swaziland. Although it is evidence of the deep love she has for Jimmy, it makes a statement about the pervasive corruption in the land. Unlike the condition of Sizwe Bansi in Athol Fugard's play, *Sizwe Bansi is Dead*, informed principally by the need for survival, this action is meant to allow Jimmy to evade punishment for a criminal offence. However, the essence of the two scenarios is criminality. It then becomes prejudicial for one to justify the behaviour of Sizwe Bansi in the face of the condemnation from Jimmy. Taken further, this reveals the institutionalisation of crime to achieve both dispossession and repossession at different periods in the South African nation. Jimmy's decision not to escape with this travelling document is a covert rejection of the falsification of his identity and an engraftment to 'whiteness'. The name, 'Levine', which is Bokkie's surname, amounts to a superficial identification with whiteness and its institutions, most especially considering the fact that Jimmy has been earlier socially cum racially despised by Bokkie.

Love, Crime and Johannesburg does not only reflect the interplay of the past and present regimes and the attendant attributes, but it also dwells on certain initiatives that are conceived to be relevant for addressing the inconsistencies of the Apartheid past. Central to such propositions is the bid to empower blacks in the new South Africa. This is reflected in the institutionalisation of the Black Economic Empowerment programme meant to take care of previously disadvantaged people, most especially blacks who were affected by Apartheid policies. As it has been argued copiously by some other scholars, this arrangement has not proven to be capable of effectively managing the process of wealth creation and circulation without falling into the error of selective patronage or cronyism. Arguments are rife to the effect that such empowerment was undertaken without recourse to the acquisition of the required and relevant skills. While it might not be true that standard is compromised for this policy to thrive, it is obvious that such skills were denied blacks in the past. In this text, Lewis, an old comrade of the struggle and presently a bank owner, justifies his involvement in the new spate of 'dispossession' and new status on the need to heed the call by the black leaders to prevent whites from taking or owning them all (*LCJ*, 24).

This new dispensation is concerned with the issue of ownership, dispossession and repossession, which could be problematically reminiscent of the condemnable hoarding of opportunities that characterised the 'old order'. It also clearly shows the innocuous but inadvertent manner policies could be considered one-sided, most especially when racial considerations are involved. Painfully enough, it also promises to be further counterproductive as it attenuates Lewis' commitment to justice and to ensuring the gains of the struggle reach the underprivileged, whereas he now concentrates on and worries after his own bank accounts. The obsession that has taken over people like Lewis justifies the accusation against the ANC for having personalised the new administration. For instance, P. Eric Louw (2004:179) has observed that "the ANC is effectively at the center of an ethnic patronage system that distributes hand-outs and facilitates wealth transfer and opportunity creation for members of the black elite".[175] By implication, the majority black masses are pitched against the elite class for a betrayal of trust and the misappropriation of what rightly belongs to them. This trend, therefore, is highly long-winded across the pragmatics of race and class but highly propelled by individual participation. By and large, the view of Colin Bundy (2007:78) captures it all when he holds that "when former activists turn into instant millionaires, they not only bury their own history but confirm the triumph of non-racial capitalism". It is instructive to note that part of the bane of the dissension and violent show of disenchantment in most postcolonial nations in Africa is ineptitude, avaricious greed, nepotism and misappropriation.

As observed earlier, this has led to civil-socio-political disruptions, agitation, and creation of ethnic and racial subnationalisms. In keeping with the satirical commitment of literature, *Love, Crime and Johannesburg* extends its satirical exaggeration by prescribing some remedies to tackle all the social ills threatening the new South Africa as follows: chopping off the hands of people who steal, pulling off tongues of those who lie, castrating those who rape, *etc.* (*LCJ*, 42). However crude and strange these suggestions might appear to be, they raise awareness of frustration in the face of the 'unspeakable' and the desperation to contain the trend of violent

[175] Louw (ibid) refers to this group as the "patriotic black bourgeoisie". This development was also condemned in the declaration adopted in Durban, South Africa, on August 28, 2001, and used as a message of solidarity with oppressed people all over the world. Part of the declaration reads that "half of all Black children in rural areas go hungry every day and, although a few Black people in the upper echelon of the ANC have become fantastically wealthy, South Africa now has the greatest divide between rich and poor of any country in the world" (Ashwin Desai, 2002:151).

crime. Further, it denotes the recommendation of greater forcefulness that has been advocated by some as opposed to the constitutional 'conciliatory' approach to saving the new South Africa from the claws of life-taking and peace-threatening challenges.

Conclusion

Johannesburg, as a melting pot, passes for a miniature or metaphoric representation of South Africa. The explication of *Love, Crime and Johannesburg*, as work of satire, reveals the ironies of the socio-political as well as economic negotiations that started from Apartheid South Africa to the new dispensation. Johannesburg, as depicted in this play, is seen as a city-scape with a sustained cosmopolitanism. Given the characteristics of restlessness, crassness and novelty, "opportunities and insatiable appetite for material gains", Johannesburg "still bears the enduring imprint of the Apartheid spatial order at a time when its racially codified rules, regulations, and restrictions no longer apply" (Martin J. Murray, 2008:1). The city, like the South African state, is continuously undergoing transformative processes on all fronts. It might be difficult to argue that things have changed dramatically in the new South Africa, the success recorded notwithstanding, in the face of corruption, greed, crime and various forms of conflict that challenge the new South Africa. Johannesburg in particular is being haunted by foundational tropes of crime and violence. To a great extent Johannesburg, as depicted in this play-text, conforms to the description of Sarah Nuttall (2008:195) as "an intricate entanglement of éclat and somberness, lightness and darkness, comprehension and bewilderment, polis and necropolis, desegregation and resegregation". Only time will tell if the case of Johannesburg, and its metonymy, South Africa, would evade the ascription of the platitude 'as it was, so it is, and so shall it be', most especially in view of the avowed extreme place given to violence by some of the citizens.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE UNSPEAKABLE 'MORBID SYMPTOMS' OF THE 'EMERGING'SOUTH AFRICA

The human race is constantly confronted with one form of horror or the other. While some are caused by natural occurrences or failures in the systems human beings put in place for an improved environment, some others are perpetrated by 'dissenters' showing aversions for one belief, ideal, etc., or another. As a result, debilitating occurrences repeatedly challenge human existence, hopes and aspirations. Specifically, Jean Jacque Rousseau (1941:412), while taking to cognisance the complexities that do taint human relations, has observed that even though man "was born free everywhere he is in chains".[176] These chains of horror, annihilation, dispossession and outright physical and psychical depletion have been interrogated artistically at one time or another. This is part of the expanded attempts at charting a course for people or exposing innocuous elements using what Louise Bethlehem (2004:96) calls "trope-of-truth" or "trope-as-truth". This chapter takes further the transitional challenges that confront South Africa in its quest for nation-building. However, just like the experiences of crime and corruption examined in Chapter Six, rape and sexual violence are other social maladies that are foregrounded in the text to be read in this chapter, Lara Foot Newton's *Tshepang: the Third Testament*. The text typifies an instance of "intractable connections between the past and the present" as it embarks on the dramatisation of the phenomena of rape as a portrayal of the unethical social morbidities that define the larger predicaments of post-Apartheid South Africa (Christopher Heywood, 2003:x). The play emphasises the implications of the 'burden' caused by the trauma of the past to an individual and a community at the present, as well as its import for the future. In reading the play, therefore, the chapter argues that the subjection of an individual to horror and trauma has the capacity to influence his/her psychological development and inform his/her action(s) at a later period. Newton's *Tshepang* implies that the new South Africa is still beset with the antics of the Apartheid past. As a result, even when it is patently true that Apartheid has been 'pronounced' operationally dead; its vestigial effects are still felt by the democratic

[176] See http:www.quotationspage.com. Accessed 20/01/2010.

South Africa. Other than the institutional culpability that is highlighted in the play, the attitudes of individuals to social responsibilities, within the larger society, are brought to the crucible. Put succinctly, the play shows that the material conditions of the black majority in post-Apartheid South Africa do not reflect the anticipated results of past struggles. The play is written using the allegory of the 'wounded past/land', economic exploitation, family dysfunctionality and apathetic silences which are advanced very vigorously as thematic tropes. These tropes are explored in the play through the use of relevant symbols and imagery. More particularly and based on how these tropes interlink, it is argued that the maltreatment of children and women, which has counterproductive tendencies in the family system and society at large, should be discouraged. Similarly, it is submitted, as a result, that respect for human dignity would help avoid the plotting of violence which would produce more horrors. The South African experience that the play contextualises, most especially the linking strands of violence, and what the playwright does with them, are similar to the opinions that are shared by Michael J. Scott and Stephen Palmer (2000:xiii, xv) that "much of human distress is a reaction to extreme stress" and "it is perhaps more probable that our ancestors coped with extreme trauma by constructing stories around them …". Furthermore, what Lara Foot Newton has done in this play is analogous to the theorising of Abdul R. JanMohamed (2005:2) in what he calls the "archeology of 'the death-bound-subject" where children, most especially the female folk, are configured as living within "the structure of social death" (19).

Textualising Horror: Newton's *Tshepang* … Hurting Presence of the Wounded Past

The writing of this play was based on the real life story of a nine-month-old baby, Tshepang, representing many several other infants that have been raped. Gerhard Marx, in the designer's note, claims that images were created in the play principally because of the horror and atrocity associated with "events that were primarily impossible to imagine" (*Tshepang*, ix). Such images are realised through the use of objects such as a bed, salt, loaf of bread and a broomstick. For instance, the bed symbolises the poverty and the desperate situation of two of the central characters,

Ruth and Simon,[177] while the loaf of bread and the broomstick stuck into it are symbolic of baby Siesie, the raped child, and Alfred Sorrows, the rapist. They are also reminiscent of a traumatised country and brutalised community, starting with the "exploitative practices of first settler-farmer in the Cape".[178] In light of the inaction of human characters in the play, figurines are used metaphorically by Simon, the narrator, as "townspeople, giving himself 'characters' to interact with and talk to" (*Tshepang*, xi). Further to these, salt is both given biblical and contemporary allusions in the play. The use of the image of rubbing salt into animal hide conveys an attempt at preservation. The salt with its preservative power will protect the skin from infection. It could be argued, therefore, that the herd is expected to assume the signifier of the debilitated society while the salt becomes the healing element, there to rid the society of its rottenness. At another point, reference is made to Lot's wife turning to a pillar of salt to show the numbness of the people who are gradually loosing their value as 'the salt of the world'. In essence, Adrienne Sichel acknowledges that this "imaginative realism" or the distilling of "factual essences into immutable revelations about the human condition" helps *Tshepang* to be a "part of the canon of conscientising drama" (xv), or what Tony Hamburger, in the introduction, calls the presentation of "the darker side of human nature" (*Tshepang*, 1). *Tshepang* collapses religious-ecological processes and social relations as it "exhibits environmental, political, and cultural instabilities" (David Lambert and Paul Machon, 2001:199).

Drawing huge thematic similarities between *Tshepang* and some of Fugard's Apartheid plays, Tony Hamburger, in the introduction, submits that the former can pass for a morality play, a political play, a sociological play, a psychological play, and above all, "a play about love" (*Tshepang*, 16-17). The stories in the play centre on the sexual violation of a nine-month old baby, Siesie, later called Tshepang, by her mother's lover, Alfred Sorrows. This incident leaves her mother, Ruth, dumb and passive from the beginning of the play, until a little time before the end. Through a flashback narration of the events that precede her present state, we come to know that the longing to have her baby causes Ruth great existential angst. The play explores

[177] See the designer's note written by Gerhard Marx, page ix.
[178] See the foreword written by Adrienne Sichel, page xiii.

violations of various degrees in a small South African rural community. Such abuses range from children that get involved in sexual activities involving teenagers, to physical brutality that has later negative impact on the sufferer.

One distinguishing literary element through which *Tshepang* engages with the familiar thematic concerns raised in the play is allegory. Andrew Foley (2009:101), in reinforcing the view of M.H. Abrams, posits that a conventional allegory is:

> a narrative in which the agents and action, and sometimes the setting as well, are contrived so as to make coherent sense on the 'literal' or primary level of signification, and also to signify a second, correlated order of agents, concepts, and events.

Added to the elements referred to tangentially earlier, central to such allegorical tropes is the reliance on Judaeo-Christian principles like the testament, sacrifice, and the use of certain popular biblical names. The use of a mythic-religious object such as bread reinforces through symbolism the implications of brutality and the limits of sacrifice. For example, the metaphor of bread draws a link between the battered bodies of Jesus and that of baby Tshepang, which have failed to prevent other dismemberments. Jesus refers to his blood as "the new testament" (Luke, 22:20) to drive home his sacrificial role to his disciples. Newness (second) in this case is predicated on the idea of the first testament woven around Adam and the place of the spilling of animal blood to atone for sins. The encapsulation in the title of the play to reflect 'the third testament', after the first and second contained in the bible, puts forward the expectation of the coming of the sister of Jesus who represents, in the person of the infant, hope and deliverance. The mutilated body of Siesie is seen as a sacrifice on the altar, similar to that offered directly by Jesus in himself to achieve the liberation of his 'followers'. Just like the death of Jesus could not stop violence in our world, most especially against children, the death of Siesie has failed to abate violence against infants as several of such violations still adorn contemporary societies, and South Africa is not an exception.

Furthermore, three of the biblical names used in the play offer some hint with which we can easily conjecture. For instance, the name of Ruth, who is the leading sufferer and character in the community, amongst some other things, signifies comradeship,

companionship, friendship, and filial attachment, with some feminine colourations.[179] Just like the biblical Ruth is configured to possess the such as piety and fidelity amidst circumstantial challenges, Ruth in *Tshepang* is implicitly represented as pious, but also as inhibited within her socially defined space. Her loneliness, however, contrasts with the companionship and friendship the name typifies. This sense of isolation forms one of the concerns of Foot Newton in her engagement with the issue of rape. Another similarity between the story in the book of Ruth in the bible, as a novella, and *Tshepang* is that the former, just like the latter is based on the life journey of two women in a precarious condition withinb a patriarchal order. Ruth's female compatriot in *Tshepang*, Sarah, is similarly left to respond to patriarchal dictates in the community. Her characterisation in relation to the biblical Sarah is highly suggestive of this. Sarah, the wife of Abraham, is known in the bible for her extraordinary beauty and hospitality. She is caught in the role of child bearing where the presence of Hagar her handmaid, used here in a sense analogous to a *houvrou* or mistress, changes the course of things in her family. Furthermore, in this biblical allusion, the effect of male domination is portrayed in the conjectural linking of Sarah's death at Hebron to the furore surrounding the alleged sacrifice of her only son, Isaac, by Abraham. Even though Sarah in *Tshepang* does not die physically as a result of violation, her demise is seen in the psychosocial order, especially in the loss of her beauty, piety, reasonableness and hospitality. The third name, Simon, is shared by the narrator in *Tshepang*. This name occurs in the New Testament (bible), with variant forms. However, the narrator's role in the play conforms principally to that of Simon Peter, one of the disciples of Jesus. Peter in the bible is popular, intrusive, and audacious. One central meaning the name signifies, and which is relevant to the ideas *Tshepang* represents, using the view of Herbert Lockyer, is to hear or listen.[180] Simon in *Tshepang* is daring, blunt and sagacious. Therefore, the story he narrates in the play is not merely to entertain and inform, but to get people to reflect and act.

At another level of signification, the idea of the third testament credited to *Tshepang* serves as a proof, evidence, and an archive of violence, brutality, guilt and culpability. This explains why Adrienne Sichel opines in the foreword to the play that "no one can accuse the creator … of looking the other way. Nor of failing to make brilliantly

[179] See http://www.bible-history.com. Accessed 22/10/2009.
[180] See *All the Apostles of the Bible*. http://books.google.co.za. Accessed 22/10/2009.

articulate art" (xvi). *Tshepang* is a Setswana word meaning "hope"[181] (Tshepo/hope, -ng/place). It is about hope, in the face of unthinkable cruelty. It is inspirational, and, like Foot Newton acknowledges, an attempt "to promote understanding".[182] Talking about the performance of the play, Foot Newton expresses the hope that people would not get upset by the content of the play but rather allow the theatrical experience to help them deal with the phenomenon of rape through which to attain catharsis.[183] However, the play is suggestive of the fact that rather than await more testaments of these horrific acts, the dissolution of all the elements that encourage and feed into violence and rape in society, and the proactivity from communal individuals within society, are seen to be capable of healing the land as a guarantee towards hope and liberation. Another allegory used in the play is that of the wounded land, which can be taken as a statement on the contemporaneous global challenges of climate change, environmental degradation, and its negative implications. An analogy could be drawn between the malformations of human agents in the scarred South African geographical space in the play and the warped psychological and physical development of human beings, as well as poor agricultural proceeds in both South Africa as well as globally. While the current crime in the South African contextual community in *Tshepang* is already manifesting some negative implications, an ecological revamping initiative is required to limit existing tendencies and guarantee a more rewarding future . Therefore, *Tshepang* dwells on the experiences of the people – those of violence and annihilation – as well as the effects of the trauma that goes along with such incidents.

Art and the Representation of Violence

Considering the horrendous nature of the Holocaust, Lawrence L. Langer (1991:38) agrees that "if that tentative gesture teaches us something about what it meant to have been a victim of the inhuman during that abysmal period, it also teaches us something about what it means to be human in the post-Holocaust era". However, contrary to the fact that "numerous strategies are available to individuals who wish to escape the burden of a vexatious past: forget, repress, ignore, deny, or simply falsify the facts"

[181] See http://www.newsfromafrica.org. Accessed 2/10/2009.
[182] Quoted by Carolyn Dempster. See http://www.newsfromafrica.org. Accessed 2/10/2009.
[183] See http://joburgnews.co.za. Accessed 2/10/2009.

(Langer, 1991:96), *Tshepang* is an excavation of the fragments of the ruins of the past, complimented by both the traumas shared as a community and the traumatic moments of other individuals (Langer, 1991:13& 128). The past, then, becomes not just a period to be mourned but an informal legislation of how the future should be lived. Meanwhile, the axiom that one thing human beings have learned from history is that nothing has been learned from it, holds sway here. Apparently, although the content of the memory of the past might be weird and painful to think about, the horror therein is meant to help in the construction of a better present as well as a rewarding and stable future. However, given the instructive engagements made with memory so far in this thesis, it is necessary to examine the treatment of 'Holocaust Testimonies' done by Lawrence L. Langer (1991), considering relevant nuances that are useful for our present discussion. Discussing in depth the testimonies of former Nazi victims, Langer makes reference to forms of memory, among many others, such as deep, common, and wounded memories. These memory descriptions shall be brought to the fore either implicitly or directly in this chapter.

The controversy around the representation of events of the Holocaust is often inclined towards the voicing of disapproval at any venture intended to reduce the 'sacred' traumatic memories to material for artistic engagement. Generally, any fictionalisation of the Holocaust is seen as sacrilegious to the horrific memories, that are argued must be preserved in their originality. One such person who took this position, according to André Brink (1998a:19), is Wyscogrod, who argues that "art takes the sting out of suffering … it is therefore forbidden to make fiction of the Holocaust". The foregoing is a resonance of the binary that has been created between historicity and textuality on the one hand, and language/speech and silence on the other. However, neither historicity and textuality are absolutely committed to a recapitulation of an event, even as language tends to create some silences in spite of the communicative potential it offers (André Brink, 1998a:16). The expediency in human beings to talk about their experiences, however horrific they might be, has afforded literature the opportunity "to give to reality the greater permanence of the imagined" (André Brink, 1998a:19). Therefore, literature heightens the ways in which these experiences are perceived, intensifies their textures and transforms them into what will be accessible through the imagination in order to prevent a reoccurrence of such sufferings (André Brink, 1998a:20). As a result, *Tshepang*, as a post-apartheid

text, does not just transcend the idea of the "sugaring of the pill"[184] but helps forestall "the silence, avoidance or even outright denial …" (André Brink, 1998a:21), associated with the painfulness of South African realities. The play is, therefore, a "texture of the lived experiences of self, family and community fragmentation" (Nthabiseng Motsemme, 2004:910).

Lara Foot Newton reveals that the writing of the play was influenced by "the life story of Baby Tshepang and others like her" (*Tshepang*, vii), who have been violated and raped. When viewed against this backdrop and the eponymous use of the baby's name, the text becomes a form of testimony which, like other re-presentations, is made fluid by the participating dynamics of the agent remembering and the unrepresentable nature of the past. The writer who textualises history as well as the historian who serves as the 'remembrancer' and "custodian of the memory of public events" (Peter Burke, 1989:97) is socially conditioned to make "conscious and unconscious selection, interpretation, and distortion" of the collective memory which is preserved for the public, not to be "locked in vaults" but used "to expand consciousness" (Langer, 1991:36). Akin to what Langer calls "contemporality", as "the controlling principle" of testimonies, Andre Brink (1998b:31) holds that "the individual constitutes and invents her/himself through the constant editing and re-editing of memory; the confluence of innumerable records and recordings of memories, determines the publicly sanctioned account, which debouches into history …". Langer has, however, earlier described testimony as "a form of remembering" and goes on to posit that "the faculty of memory functions in the present to recall a personal history vexed by traumas that thwarts smooth-flowing chronicles" (2). In a nutshell, the engagements made of memory in *Tshepang* are revelatory of the wounded time and space as well as the wounded psyche of individuals and a community haunted by the memory of the past. It specifically exposes the traumatisation of a character, Alfred, and the overwhelming control this has on his personality development and his capacity to do evil in adulthood. It also reveals the sense of guilt and traumatic frigidity seen in other personalities affected either directly or indirectly by the violation. This is particularly so because any form of violence or abuse is constitutively traumatic both to the victim or the witness because of the

[184] The phrase, in the words of André Brink (1998a:21), is used by critics to describe anti-Apartheid literature.

capacity it has to alter emotional states.

Rape and the Past and Rape in the Present

Post-Apartheid South Africa, fifteen years after democracy, is still trying very hard to engage with, and at times wrestle against, many social problems and pathologies that it inherited from the Apartheid past (Bhekizizwe Peterson, 2009:20). While it is a fact that such vices did not start with the Apartheid era, they were bolstered by the spate of violence and brutality that were commonplace under the regime. Part of the Apartheid's vestiges or the unfolding terrain of the evolving new South Africa (Mbye Cham, 2009:viii),[185] is the "current climate of sexual violence" (Helen Moffett, 2009:157), that is, rape. Benita Moolman (2009:185) sees rape as "a complex construction of power and power relations given meaning through personal and social identities, specifically identities of masculinity and femininity". Starting by positing that rape is often "intracommunal (that is, it is usually committed by 'insiders', not 'outsiders' " (Moffett, 2009:162), Moffett furthers her argument by suggesting that the conceptualisation of rape in the new South Africa in relation to Apartheid legacies should include the "paradigms that acknowledge that there are men in every stratum of South African society who enact sexual violence" (165). Moffett's (2009:165) specific location of this in the South African context was heralded by the opinion that sexual violence is rife in "the construction of dominant masculinities found in all patriarchal social systems". Emphasising the negative consequences the Apartheid labour dynamics had on the family and the enormity of work as well as household chores that women were subjected to, Anthony Butler (2004:83) opines that "violence and rape are often characteristic of established relationships or marriage" and that "the rape of young children has become an increasingly widely recognized scourge in South African society".

This endemic social ill is what Newton has reconstructed in this text using a fictional setting, characters and events. The entire story in the text is told by Simon, who acts out aspects of the other characters, apart from Ruth, when necessary. Apart from the fact that this device allows an economy of actors when the play is put on the stage, the

[185] See foreword to *Zulu Love Letter: a Screenplay* by Bhekizizwe Peterson and Ramadan Suleman. Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2009. pp. vii-x.

strategy confers an air of believability or "imaginative realism"[186] on the story, since Simon is acting here as a first hand witness. At the level of signification, the use of two cast members typifies the ostracism or what Gerhard Marx in the designer's note calls "outsider status" (ix) of Ruth and Simon. Apart from these, the narrative form used reinforces the communal authorship of stories, which also raises questions around responsibility and ownership in the face of overarching silence. The foregoing is underpinned by the story-telling tradition which presents the story-teller as a veritable part of the history that s/he has memorialised, and which s/he now attempts to share with people who are both insiders and outsiders to the event. Just as the process of recollection leads to the reconstruction of the actual event, the story told by Simon is a reinvention of the actual story that Foot Newton interrogates. Tony Hamburger in the introduction to the text succinctly describes Simon as:

> the artist who carves figures, who contains the memory of the events and the history of the community. He is the narrator, the user of words and our hope as audience that 'something' will be seen in the distance. He is the possibility of knowing.

Simon lives up to this apt description in the text as he takes us through the narrative of the rape of baby Siesie. Simon, in this case, functions as the reservoir of the community/nation, the latter which shares its authorship of the story with the former in order to achieve certain ends, one of which is didacticism. Simon's memory is a repertoire of both good and bad happenings. For instance, he harbours some dreadful memories of loss, abuse, suicide, exploitation, loneliness and frigidity. His positive or good memories revolve around love, the recollection of which helps him to dispel or tolerate the assailing effect of the anguish and onslaught that his horrific memories subject him to. Giving a record of the different events that constitute debilitating memories, Simon exposes the inaction and passivity of people as a result of the rape of, and violence done to, Siesie. The rape of the child is interpreted as a beacon of hope, "hope through pain", capable of stemming the currency of or putting a stop to this detestable act in the future, but not a solution (*Tshepang*, 16). The play dramatises how different characters handle and react to memory. Principally, most people in the play, apart from Simon who identifies with Ruth, and the white medical worker who shows empathy towards the violated body of Siesie, carry on with their lives as if 'nothing' has happened. Ruth is left marginalised with the open dissociation that is

[186] Adrienne Sichel, foreword to the play (xiii).

shown by the community. Ruth's condition shows how people can be excluded, marginalised and isolated, both in the interior domestic space and the larger social/public arena. It is implied in the play therefore that memory is repressed and that people are left numbed and bereft of the ability to think, feel and reflect. Ruth's frigid behaviour throughout the play is particularly carved not only to express anguish, but to function as a form of expressive signifier. The play assesses people in the community, and accuses them of being morally bankrupt, but fails to castigate them in a direct manner. However, these people are reprimanded, implicitly, for the silence that they show towards the threat posed by sexual violence.

Ruth, Gendered Silence and Trauma

Other than the negative deduction of the repressive silence made of Ruth's frigidity, there are two other connotative possibilities. Firstly, when linked with the implications it has for the guilty silence the community shows towards varying degrees of repeated violations, the 'dumbness' of Ruth becomes an allegory of the concealment of a particular malady which in turn prevents healing. It is a common idea that the release of pain and anguish has the capacity to lessen the effect on the bearer. Don Maclennan supports this when he states that "many sorrows can be borne, if you put them into a story".[187] Other than this, an engagement with a particular problem would generate some solutions to such a challenging situation along the way. The description of *Tshepang* in the blurb as "a committed act of remembrance" principally shows that it sets out to break the apathy with which people receive the news of violence against children in South Africa. While it is true that such events are reported, for instance in the media, it is not beyond reason to argue that such reportage is distanced and perfunctory. This is to say that verbalisation might at best end at the level of superficiality in intent and protocol. At the second level of connotation, silence in *Tshepang* can be interpreted as transcending the notion of complicity in the characterisation of Ruth to denote "women's articulation of their languages of 'pain and grief' through the language of silence" (Nthabiseng Motsemme, 2004:910). Motsemme's view brings to the fore the negation of the western oppositional idea of silence and speech. As a result, rather than for silence to

[187] See http://findarticles.com Accessed 23/09/2009.

be construed as an indication of repression, the themes of silence, among others, include resistance and courage, illusion of reality, a site for recovery and the reconstruction of self (Nthabiseng Motsemme, 2004:910). These identified nuances are obvious in the experiences of Ruth, most especially as she engages with the realities of her harsh environment, at both the micro and macro levels. At the two levels, she has been subjected to profound physical abuse, which in turn negatively affects her psychological state.

Ruth's placidity could, therefore, be a deliberate attempt to undermine those she perceives as perpetrators of her ordeals or an expression of the total loss of the ability to capture her anguish in words. The centrality of silence in this regard is reinforced by the fact that language, as useful as it is as a social integrative instrument, lacks the capacity to give expression to some traumatic events; that is 'the unspeakable'. Nthabiseng Motsemme sees unspeakability as "part of a struggle and a longing to speak fully about the experience of violence against the human flesh, and the near impossibility of doing so" (915). Ruth is not depicted in the play as either languageless or mute. Her silence, therefore, can be interpreted in relation to some of the manifestations recognised by Nthabiseng Motsemme (2004:914-925), "to formulate new meanings and enact agency in constrained surroundings" (Motsemme, 2004:914). Ruth's silence, within a patriarchal and socio-politically repressive space, as a result, could be expressing one or all of the possibilities identified by Nthabiseng Motsemme. These possibilities include an attempt to protect others, and keep a secret or pact in order not to submit to those historically positioned to interpret both speech and silence (Motsemme, 2004:918). Others are the instance of silence as a form of survival strategy (Motsemme, 2004:921), as a connection or common experience and a tool to label and exclude those considered to be dangerous to one's wellbeing (Motsemme, 2004:922), and as a reconstitution of one's sense of being (Motsemme, 2004:924). Going by the above indices of silence, therefore, Ruth's attitude in *Tshepang* can be interpreted as both an attempt to condemn the society she has found herself in and protest against the condition that she has been plunged into. Ruth is, therefore, present and speaking and not absent and voiceless (Motsemme, 2004:926).

As mentioned earlier, Simon, in his story, links the overwhelming sense of emptiness in the village with the symbolic gang-raping of the community in the past.

Reprimanding the lady journalist and her cameraman who visit the town to do a story on the rape of Siesie merely for the purposes of reporting, condemning the people and absolving themselves of guilt, Simon quips that "this town was raped long ago. This town was fucking gang-raped a long, long, long, long time ago!" (*Tshepang*, 40). Simon's reference to and criticism of the "reporter from Johannesburg" (*Tshepang*, 40) above, typifies the distance in the relationship between people in the city and those in villages, the latter where 'queer' events are exported to the cities. Other than this, this 'suspicion' also shows the limitations inherent in media coverage of child abuse. Therefore, while reporting is beneficial in itself, such is implicitly done with a sense of detachment and 'forgetting'. This negates the engaging 'knowing', the burden of constant remembrance that will get people to constantly talk and act against sexual violence. The link between the rape of the town and Siesie sees Simon constructing rape as "the metonymic sign for *all* violations" (Abdul R. JanMohamed, 2005:83). The sexual violation of individuals in the present is, therefore, traced to the individualisation of general debasements occurring in the past. The rape of the infant by Alfred is considered to have been influenced by the devaluating treatment given to him by his father's *houvrou* (this is captured symbolically in the broom that is stuck into the loaf of bread). The broomstick is used in the play as a metaphor for Alfred's physical abuse by Margaret, while the loaf of bread is a signifier for baby Siesie's body.

Individuals in the town are believed to have been driven to social ills by unemployment and the absence of healthy communal relationships. As mentioned earlier, although Simon tries as much as possible to avoid direct indictment of people for the unfortunate prevailing situation, efforts are made to expose the inaction of individuals who should have acted in order to challenge one form of violence or the other. Sarah, Ruth's friend, for instance, witnesses the rape of Siesie by Alfred and chooses not to intervene at the scene. She reports this to the mother, Ruth, who dismisses it nonchalantly and continues with her pastime in the tavern. One expects that Ruth should confront Alfred or report the matter to the police. Ruth's implied idiocy is not merely a portrayal of dysfunctional personality, but an indictment of the patriarchal domesticity run in the community and the suspicion with which people relate to the police. Therefore, her decision not to confront Alfred or report him to the police is indicative of protracted devaluation and repression occasioned by male

domination, as well as an embodiment of the distrust regarding the ability of government agencies to adequately intervene in the prevention of rape. At another level, Ruth in her withdrawn state demonstrates how memory could be repressed to frustrate the possibility of extracting truth by choosing not to divulge the truth, even when people are wrongly arrested in connection with the crime. The case of the six young boys suspected earlier in connection with the violence against the infant is indicative of the misapplication of justice based on mere suspicion. As mentioned above, the text is critical of the untoward attitude of agents of the state like the police, just as in the wider South Africa, towards the issues of rape. This is coupled with a high degree of corruption and the paucity of facilities as highlighted before in this thesis. The ineptitude of police is bemoaned thus:

> There was supposed to be a proper investigation. The police were supposed to conduct a proper search with dogs and helicopters. But it didn't happen. Because here nothing ever happens. Nothing at all (*Tshepang*, 25).

Different studies of child abuse in South Africa have consistently accused the police of giving tactical 'support' to rapists by choosing not to believe and rather to blame the victims. The inadequacy of the law enforcers to curtail insecurity is further revealed in the play in the loss of the son of Dewaal, an affable personality and one of the characters in Simon's story. Furthermore, the judiciary in contemporary South Africa is not spared of this accusation, as revealed for instance, in the widely publicised case of rape taken up against Jacob Zuma. Following the acquittal of Zuma and the open solidarity he received from his supporters, survivors of rape were said to have expressed apprehensions about the negative consequences the judgement poses to them. During the judicial process, the sexual history and sexual violence of the 'rape' victim, Kwezi, were considered to have been amalgamated to arrive at "stereotypes of hysteria and neurosis" which constructed her as emotionally disturbed and unstable, and her testimony, therefore, unreliable (Helen Moffett, 2009:175). The thinking, therefore, is that the judiciary is not doing enough to protect rape victims.

The Historical Burdens: Rape and the Past

Tshepang dramatises different levels of abuse, most especially that of childhood, across the spheres of physical wellbeing, ethics and politics. However, the

perpetuation of abuse is given a layered reading as men, women and children are listed as abusers. This is a redefinition of the notion that men are predominantly responsible for abuse and violence. Significantly, the traumatic experiences of people in the text lead to different levels of alteration in their personalities. More specifically, it has been revealed that physical and particularly sexual childhood abuse is perpetrated on both boys and girls, but the former tend to undergo physical abuse while the latter are more susceptible to sexual abuse. It has also been argued that the abuse perpetrated by an individual outside the family setting has a lower impact on the sufferer than that done by the parent or caretaker, which strips the sufferer of the "refuge or support that might help to mitigate the effects of the trauma" (Chu, 1998:12). Chu (1998:21) further states that the detrimental effects of such an abuse are hinged on "severity, chronicity, early age onset, and intrafamilial abuse". Either committed at the micro level of the family or at the macro level of the society, the issue of abuse and the recognition of perpetrators are always complicated because of challenges posed by how members of society construct who a culprit is. This results in some categories of people being exempted as a result of socio-religious considerations.

The wounded spatio-temporal setting, as related to gang rape in this text, is implicitly linked to the many violations that are taking place at different individual and collective levels. These implosions at the level of the individual and the community are a reflection of the "deep psychological and economic scars that are the results of a society structured on racial domination and exploitation" (Bhekizizwe Peterson, 2009:20). More specifically, it typifies dislocations in the family system. The family setting in the old South Africa was subjected to the strains of dislocation and severance as men were subjected to the imperatives of moving from locations to the suburb and cities where economic means were sought to keep family members out of the perpetual grips of poverty and hunger. Graeme Simpson (2001:13) captures this when he holds that "apartheid had systematically decimated the alternative sources of social cohesion and places of belonging which young people … would have ordinarily enjoyed in other societies". This trend led to women combining the onerous dual responsibilities of home-keeping and child nurturing. Such separations also culminated in disrupted families that were further challenged by the culture of violence that characterised the operation of 'separate development' and the resistance

to it. Simpson (2001:13) further represents this when he submits that:

> a combination of migrant labour, rural poverty and dispossession decimated the cohesiveness of extended family and kingship networks as a source of social authority and belonging, whilst urban squalor, pervasive unemployment and political defeat of the parental generation destroyed the holding capacity of the urban nuclear family unit.

This development, in turn, has a way of impacting on the development of children. Looking at the circumstantial dislocations during childhood in the South African context, Andrew Dawes and David Donald (1994:1) opine that such disjunctions could be ascribed to structural factors like poverty and political oppression, most especially for black children who are faced with the "… barriers to social and economic advancement …" (Dawes and Donald, 1994:2), resulting in the risks of: "sexual or physical abuse, expressing the distress of divorce, and living with parental psychiatric illness or alcoholism" (Dawes and Donald, 1994:2). It is thus implied, that the family "is a recognised social unit" that is instigated by marriage (L.P Chidammodzi, 1994:125). However, it is important to note that this heterosexual description of the family is being complicated, challenged and deconstructed by new thinking and postulations around gender, sex and sexuality. Identifying men as "a necessary problem to women" in an effort to reflect on the "brutalization, problematization or neglect of women and children" (12), Neo Malao (1994:14) recognises the family as the basic centre or unit in African society and observes that "if the centre – which is the family – collapses, then the rest of the concentric circles which are clearly related to the inner concentric circle equally become degraded". This might account for the argument shared by some that disruptions at the family setting are responsible for the erosion of morals and the reign of social disorder. It is true that the infiltration of western values into Africa, most especially South Africa which witnessed settler colonialism and is inclined towards westernisation, has played a significant role on the family system. This is more so as cultures are dynamic. Acknowledging the centrality of dynamism in the family structure in South Africa Diane Fine (1995:2) opines that "… family structures are heavily influenced by unusual economic factors, traditional lifestyles and a blend of first and third world experiences". Fine (1995:2) looks further at the boundlessness and fluidity of boundaries in the definition of relationships between siblings in the society and concludes that:

> The harsh and conflictual political and economic realities of the past decades have also disrupted traditional family life in South Africa. Adult men, traditionally the providers of material and emotional support for their families, have lost this position both through urbanization and the economic recession.

Therefore, the political and economic disruptions of the past, in their violent nature, have formed a great influence on individuals as members of the family and the family as a unit, distinct from other units recognised in the society. This fragmentation at the level of the individual and the community is also core to the configuration of *Tshepang.* For instance, the ultimate experience of abuse baby Siesie is subjected to is a function of two disoriented individuals. These are Ruth and Alfred, who are left to grow in a 'scared' socio-political and economic space, either acting abnormally in the case of Alfred or failing to act in the case of Ruth, to Siesie's rape.

Alfred's Genealogy and Social Configuration

It is obvious from the expositions done so far that traumatic events are not strange to human existence. Either at the level of the individual or a community, trauma has a haunting propensity and the capacity to limit viable and sustainable social engineering. To this end, trauma is hard to ignore in the drive towards development. Trauma can affect, and is therefore relevant to, all human engagements. It therefore becomes a descriptive element in films, games, music, and print. Starting from the belief that: "traumatization is part of the human experience whether by acts of nature or by acts of man", James A. Chu (1998:7) submits that "chronic childhood traumatization poses a particular problem in our society" as it leads to "… alterations in personality development" (8). Chu (1998:7), in an engagement made with the place of trauma in the abuse of children, further argues that:

> Psychological trauma is an affliction of the powerless. At the moment of trauma, the victim is rendered helpless by overwhelming forces. When the force is that of nature, we speak of disasters. When the force is that of other human beings, we speak of atrocities. Traumatic events overwhelm the ordinary systems of care that give people a sense of control, connection and meaning… They confront human beings with the extremities of helplessness and terror, and evoke the response of catastrophe.

David Westbrook, Helen Kennerly and Joan Kirk (2007:215) in an exposition given on trauma posit that "psychological trauma can be evoked by many incidents: for example, witnessing atrocities, being in a natural disaster, sexual assault (in childhood

or adulthood)". As we have seen so far, the stories told in *Tshepang* touch on how horrific happenings could cause people trauma at both the communal and personal levels. These stories also show how such traumatic memories could break through the walls of either wilful amnesia or repression, to control and shape latter behaviours. While the consequences of the violation of the community by way of Apartheid and the violation of baby Siesie by Alfred cause in the people, amongst them Ruth, a state of amnesic apathy, individuals, as a fallout of this, constitute a form of threat to their acquaintances as they exhibit anti-social characteristics created in them by the experience of their past violations and abuse. The possibility that trauma can erupt to influence a victim at a later period gets further corroboration in the opinion of Westbrook, Kennerly and Kirk (2007:15) when they state that "childhood trauma, especially if chronic, can impact on a person's fundamental sense of self, of others and of the future, which can result in the development of powerful belief systems (or schemata) which, by adulthood can be both rigid and unhelpful". This could culminate in the disruption of the environment that would chaotically lead to "massive disabilities" in the sufferer (James A. Chu, 1998:1). The foregoing position is suggestive of manifestations in contemporary South Africa in relation to the social 'miscreants' produced by the apartheid rule and the disruptive tendencies they have for socio-political stability.

Apparently, these expositions aptly capture the personality of Alfred. This takes us back to the imagery of the loaf of bread and the broom-stick that is thrust into it. The bread as a sacrament – like that of the body of Jesus – must have been broken, as with Alfred and his experience of being beaten with a broomstick. The result, therefore, will be interference in the 'wholeness' of the loaf of bread, which functions here as Alfred's body. The probability and possibility of the interconnectedness of the actions in this play is further reinforced by the argument that the latent residual memory of an individual at childhood, most especially negative ones, could implode later in adulthood, to affect his/her personality development and ways of doing things. To Bruce M. Ross (1991:54), the implications of such a residual memory end up as "impressions … which will govern their actions … decide their sympathies and antipathies" as well as "quite often determine their choice of love-object". In what appears an implied castigation of the emphasis given to "physical disease, which can dramatically and catastrophically affect the world's history" at the expense of mental

illness which is considered non-contagious, Vivian Green (1993) emphasises the negative consequences that mental disorders in those in positions of power, authority or responsibility can lead to. Green achieves this by arguing against the notion that the dictatorial deployment of power and authority only explains the excesses of a leader, but rather foregrounds the developmental processes of personality. Green advances his investigation in this regard by drawing illustrative details from the work of Freud where he traces "mental disintegration in terms of childhood … back in some instances to pre-natal experience" and concludes that "a deprived or damaged childhood may be of critical significance in the evolution of future neuroses or psychoses". Green further avers that "childhood and adolescence are, then, a formative process in the development of the psychopath or sociopath, some of whose features most … dictators display". Therefore, as Alfred has demonstrated, the trauma experienced in childhood attains a greater inscription in personality development because of the criticality of the periods when the child forms opinion and assumptions of "self, others and the world" (John N. Briere, 1992:17).

The overwhelming reliance on alcoholism by the people in the town where the play is set does not help, in any way, to arrest the different disconnects witnessed at various levels. Given the personality emasculations suggested by the experiences of these characters, alcoholism would simply cause more havoc, even when these bibulous individuals take it to be an escapist device. This sequence of the story by Simon is instructive about the overbearing influence of alcohol on the people and the concomitant negative consequences:

> Alfred was drunk. He wanted sex. Ruth wanted to drink and wasn't interested. She left her baby on the bed and went to the tavern … Later Sarah … came to the house to look for Ruth. She walked in, heard Siesie screaming, and lit a match. Alfred stopped for a moment. Sarah looked at him, at the baby, left the room … and did nothing. Then Alfred continued. Later he dumped her in the veld … Sarah went to the tavern, found Ruth and told her the story. They drank vaalwyn and ended up having a hell of a fight (*Tshepang*, 42).

The disturbing personality tendencies associated with alcoholism, and foregrounded in the play, are encapsulated in the characteristic propositions made of the alcoholic family precinct by John N. Briere (1992:14) to the effect that "chaos, inconsistency, unpredictability, unclear roles, arbitrariness, changing limits, arguments, repetitious and illogical thinking, and perhaps violence and incest" appear to be the hallmarks of the family that is overshadowed by alcoholism.

Further to the notion of individual, family and societal dislocations, Simon, who at the moment of narration is the only person that identifies with Ruth in the play, is saddled with the responsibility of looking after his daughter for a period after Mary, his former wife, separates from him. Ruth has also been engaged to Alfred, Simon's cousin, as a *houvrou* who later becomes a central player in the perpetuation of abuse, horror and sorrow (trauma) in the play. Petrus, Sarah's brother and Pieter, Ruth's brother, and their indulgence of Simon and his friends in childhood show how a dislocated social structure could negatively influence young children which may filter through later into society. It goes to say therefore, that a morally bankrupt society has the tendencies to produce delinquent children/youths. Simon and his friends in the play are made by Petrus and Pieter at different occasions to open up their private parts and to show them that they have got at least three bristles of hair. With this condition fulfilled, they are encouraged to sexually assault Sarah and Ruth at different moments. These two categories of children are, therefore, abused with the male children inadvertently initiated into a social vice and made vulnerable to personality derangement. This development is reflective of others found in the larger society, among adults and as a manifestation of "psychological disturbance in the short and intermediate terms" in a child raised by "unloving, unresponsive, or otherwise emotionally neglectful parents" (John N. Briere, 1992:12).

Obviously, the "generational categories of childhood, youth and adulthood" manifest certain elements that are similarly reflective of the generally pervasive societal tropes, most especially in marriage and sexual relations. This linking strand is understandable when the child is seen as a genetic and social construct where s/he grows to become a youth, a social "state of becoming" that is "internally and externally shaped and constructed" (Catrine Christiansen, Mats Utas and Henrik E. Vigh, 2006:11). The trio later state that "the movement from childhood to adulthood is a movement not just between developmental positions but between positions of power, authority and social worth" (12). Looking at the long-term impacts of abuse on children, Briere (1992:57) avows that empirically constructed research points to the fact that the aggression shown by children in the form of physical attack and bullying of other children generally "represent a generic externalization of the child's abuse-related trauma and dysphoria, as well as, perhaps, the effects of modeling the abusive parent's behavior".

The above provides a platform that informs a certain understanding about the horrendous institutionalisation and promotion of horror and bestiality in *Tshepang*; from the abused child in Alfred to the abuser at adulthood, as illustrated before. The illicit 'reproduction' in this community reminds us once more of the imagery of the exploited land and the production of malnourished animals and withered vegetables that was referred to earlier in this chapter. Therefore, when conceived against the backdrop of the capacity of the past to inform and influence the present, some apprehensions are generated by the possibility of the present to negatively impact the future. The silence(s) and the refusal to challenge these heinous activities are, as a result, an invitation to an endangered 'tomorrow'. However, it is noteworthy that yesterday is gone; today could be rescued; and tomorrow stands to be secured.

Houvrou: the Subservient Conditioning of Women

One social construct that reinforces the abuse, and links up with other sparks of violence in the play is the *houvrou*, or mistress tradition. The concept of *houvrou* in this society is seen as a fall-out of broken marriages, leading to the idea of single-parent households. The single-parent family is increasingly common today in most nations of the world, and particularly South Africa. This could be occasioned by separation, divorce or death (Diane Kayongo–Male and Philista Onyango, 1984:14). The increase in the number of single-parent families, as mentioned earlier, is largely as a result of the socio-political and economic disruptions precipitated by the racialisation of the old South Africa and subsequent quests for survival. This idea is supported by Diane Fine (1995:48) who identifies employment and accommodation as the major reasons for cracks and separation in families in Apartheid South Africa. Using the concept of dissolution in a manner reminiscent of this disruption, L.P. Chidammodzi (1994:128) observes that "the ethical tie of marriage is liable to an ethical dissolution on ground of death …" and "… irreconcilable differences or estrangement …". As a result, anger, sense of loss and other forms of emotionally distressing outcomes that usually taint the personalities of individuals that are socially constrained to function within such a family. The consistent 'outsider' position that is given to women, most especially as seen in the phenomenon of the *houvrou* tradition, is reflective of women who are caught in the web of the debasement within the family system. The creation of the *houvrou* subjects women to a particular sense of

humiliation and exploitation. Apart from the fact that Simon reveals in his narration that the *houvrou* promises so much trouble, he proceeds to intimate us to the social configuration of the *houvrou* as:

> …a woman that you keep, but she's not your wife. But here it is better to have a houvrou, because you can't get rid of a wife. A houvrou you can let go (*Tshepang*, 20).

Apparently, the social location and space offered the *houvrou* by the society would naturally impel her to desire a revolt against the system, which to her is responsible for her woes. Apart from the fact that she lacks commitment to the social entity, her attempt to hit back at the frustrating order would impact negatively on people both as individuals and a group.

The idea of the *houvrou*, a process indicative of the commoditisation of the female, normally leaves the woman to assume the place of a foster mother to the child, as seen in the case of Margaret and Alfred. Therefore, the foster mother and the child are left to automatically occupy a precariously 'tendentious' space, so to speak, to negotiate a relationship that is more often than not suspicious and explosive. These implicit challenges notwithstanding, the two players (the fostered child and the woman in question) are expected to discharge socially defined duties and responsibilities. This is seen, for instance, in the consciousness that Margaret displays to reprimand Alfred for a socially unacceptable behaviour like urinating on one's pants. It should be noted, however, that Margaret abuses such responsibility in this case. It is not just a matter of social control, but the venting of pent-up anger. A study done on parenting, particularly fostering, has shown that one of the reasons for the displacement of children from their mothers is divorce, which leaves the child with the father under the care of the mistress, but in this case the *houvrou* (Jónína Einarsdóttir, 2006:188). The implication of this is that love and affection that ordinarily characterises the relationship between the mother and child and vice versa, would be lacking.

This is all the more so going by the submission of Alison Jill King (2007:48), in an attempt to challenge prevailing stereotypes, that "both childcare and the care of the elderly are still primarily a female responsibility …". However, it is not the intention of this work to help perpetuate the deployment of cultural and social constructions in

the marginalisation of women. This is particularly because culture, in the view of Jude Clark (2006:13), "works in pervasive and powerful ways in the (dominant) national imagination in South Africa, normalising and naturalising a strategic set of relationships linking historical time, spatial sites and subjectivities, and in so doing positioning women in particular ways".[188] The importance of the family and by extension the observation of Diane Fine (1995:7-8) that "members of a family have strong feelings about each other …" are being brought to bear here. Fine further states that "feelings within families are far stronger, and attachments more enduring, than those with friends or non-family members". Added to this is the tendency that the new woman coming into the home of a divorced man conceives of the children as emblemising of their own mother. The child in such a circumstance, therefore, stands the risk of being seen as a competitor, being the vestige of another woman. The results are obvious; contests, intrigues and acrimonies.

The picture of the tense relationship between Alfred and Margaret that was painted earlier is adversely affected by the vigour with which Margaret chastises Alfred for messing-up his pants as a result of excitement. Even though this act is unacceptable, the manner in which Margaret physically abuses Alfred is certainly condemnable. We should also be reminded that Alfred is created in the play to be simply responding to the social imperatives that are made available by his immediate community. For instance, as noted earlier, the over concentration on licentious manifestations, age not withstanding, reflects the personality disorientation and disjunction that have bedevilled the society. Margaret's decision to violently scold Alfred for urinating in his trousers as a child is not just indicative of her wickedness but an absence of love and care. The inhumanity shown by Margaret and lack of commitment to Alfred's wellbeing are further demonstrated by her refusal to take Alfred to the hospital. Instead, Alfred is helped to the hospital by Simon's mother. Simon says this of Margaret:

> From nowhere she grabbed a broom and started to beat Alfred … and I saw her face. She had become the devil … and watched as she pummelled Alfred until his small body lay quietly in a pool of piss. Then she stopped and, for a moment, reflected on what she had done and then … then … she began to beat him again … It was my mother who took him to the hospital, and it was my mother who nursed his broken body for many months (*Tshepang*, 29).

[188] Jude Clark (2006:10) is of the opinion that women have been culturally constructed, mostly as nurturers and carers.

The use of the imagery of the devil betrays the notorious reputation that Margaret has earned for herself amongst Alfred's group. This is further reinforced by the vulnerability of members of the group who are socially incapacitated to speak out against abuse. Although one might be tempted to link the portrayal of Margaret as the devil to children's exaggeration and a recycling of old myths or stereotypes, Margaret's reflective sustenance of her physical assault on Alfred, her decision not to take him for medical attention, and her refusal to nurse his wounds after Alfred is discharged from the hospital, are strong signals of pathological viciousness. Therefore, Margaret's disposition towards Alfred as the latter's father's *houvrou* shows that "real care … is a voluntary gift by a giver, which cannot be bought or coerced" (Alison Jill King, 2007:49).

This locates the deployment of the emotional exercise of care-giving within the ambit of the operational commitment of the individual concerned. The discharge of parental responsibilities, apart from being triggered emotionally, could be enhanced or hampered by factors that can be social, psychological or economical. Arguing that the manner in which poor parents bring up their children is not borne out of their lack of belief in and value for the best in life, Linda Richter (1994:36) submits that it is "rather because of their circumstances" which "frequently leave them few options, economically or personally". Specifically, when a separation is socially propelled it automatically results in the child being put in the custody of either of the parents or, in some uncommon cases, close relation(s) of either of the parents. In another vein, good care is undermined by the economic inability of parents to give the child a good lease of life even when such is greatly desired by them. Worse still, a mother or father might be psychologically unprepared to assume the position expected of him or her within the family setting. In the case of Alfred, the transferral of parental responsibilities is precipitated by the absence of the mother and the sheer irresponsibility of the father. The concentration on 'drink' and '*naai*' (sex) by the average parent in the play erodes the place that could have been given to parental care. It is implied that the overbearingly negative treatment Alfred is subjected to would be left unchallenged by the inebriated and sex-obsessed father. Thus Alfred's father would have placed more emphasis on the sexual 'exploitation' of his *houvrou* over the wellness and well-being of his child. The place and space of the child in that

circumstance forms a platform for Alfred's father and his *houvrou* to further negotiate their relationship. Alfred is not only physically violated, but his right, even as a minor, is heavily eroded.

It goes without saying that the exercise of power on Alfred by Margaret has the ability of imbuing the former with the quest for and exercise of power, using the precipitation of what Wole Soyinka (2004:52-53) has called "the climate of fear". Soyinka argues that apart from the "horror of bodily violation" suffered by the victim of rape; the rapist exudes avaricious greed, which is an acted acknowledgement of his domination of the victim in the face of the subordination the victim is subjected to. The emerging dysfunctional personality of Alfred after the subjugation done by Margaret is akin to the explication made by Brian McKendrick and Wilma Hoffman (1990:103) that : "If a boy is raised in a violent family, and is seldom responded to with love, it is to be anticipated that he will at a later stage resort to violence". Violence as a function of rape is very relevant in coming to understand the personality of Alfred. Among other things, Brian McKendrick and Wilma Hoffman (1990:99) arrive at two generalisations about rapists. These are that "they have a strong desire to assert their power through coercion, and … they are unable to perceive women as people". The latter more than the former is absolutely based on social constructions that are found both during and after Apartheid in South Africa. Pursuing the notion of violence to include physical violence such as assaults, rapes, fights and beatings and non-verbal, or psychological violence such as the refusal to provide resources and support, J.C. Kotzé and C.S. van der Waal (1995:3) opine that these indices are traceable to the institutionalisation of inequality and domination as well as the authoritarianism found in the implementation of the Apartheid policy.

Scholars have established that the child or an individual as a psycho-social being is largely configured not only by the genes of the parents but nurtured by the genetics of the environment. This thinking is given some relevance by the perennial institutionalisation of the *houvrou* tradition as a way of life and the endemic bibulous 'enterprise' found in this text. This submission is without prejudice to the clear reality that the *houvrou* is socially constructed and the spate of alcoholism being a response to both social and economic exploitations, respectively. The way society nurtures an individual is shown particularly through what Alfred grows up to become in society.

Both Alfred and Ruth, just like other characters, live their lives between sex and alcohol before the eventual rape of the baby by Alfred. The excerpt below from the text indicates this:

> Alfred was drunk. He wanted sex. Ruth wanted to drink and wasn't interested. She left her baby on the bed and went to the tavern (*Tshepang*, 42).

As guessed before now, Alfred and Ruth, as well as others in the community, are responding to some socio-economic and political pressures. This suspicion is somewhat reinforced by the knowledge that the society, according to the narrator, Simon, has been violated in the past by Apartheid. It is incredible that Ruth will abandon her baby for the tavern and unimaginable that Alfred will choose to satisfy his sexual urge by violating the baby. It is more worrisome that Ruth chooses not to be bothered by the act when told about it by Sarah. However, the whole scenario snowballs into a psychopathological abyss when the baby is dismembered. Although this sounds close to an unbelievable tale, it is not an unknown occurrence in contemporary South Africa, and this trend has generated more questions than answers. However, popular opinions seem to recognise the palpable nature of violence, abuse of children, alcoholism, and drug abuse as the instigators of anti-social acts like crime, murder and rape. As speculated in this play, the tenability of the socio-political and economic factors in the perpetuation of violence notwithstanding, holding these as the only reasons would amount to mere reductionism. It would be relevant to argue that political and criminal violence should not be ascribed as the root cause of the deployment of violence by children and adults in their engagement with society (Andrew Dawes, 1994:216). It is more overarching to think that other than social-economic reasons, political and criminal violence also account for the violent propensity of people in particular societies. The conclusion drawn by Dawes is highly instructive:

> There is thus the risk that in the absence of other sources of identity identification, and in the contexts of socio-economic deprivation, young people with few life chances who have been actively engaged in political violence may carry forward a violent career in order both to survive and to retain a sense of worth.

As part of the attempts being made to find an explanation for the high prevalence of sexual violence in South Africa, Carolyn Dempster posits that "the answers lie in a complex mix of factors to do with male identity and sexuality, gender inequality,

distorted cultural practices, the legacy of Apartheid and the spread of the AIDs pandemic".[189] Undoubtedly, the presence of the Aids pandemic in the list evokes a sense of double jeopardy for a society desperately in need of healing and social stability. Dempster traces the link between child rape and Aids to the growing assumptions that "HIV positive men still believe the myth that they can cleanse themselves of the virus through sexual intercourse with a virgin, preferably a child". This myth is a pointer to the limited access people have to adequate government propelled social support and the susceptibility of cultural beliefs to misinformation. Such mythical escapism stems from a charged space of the incurability of the pandemic combined with incoherent policies by government, as well as the views expressed by government functionaries and the body language of notable politicians.

Arguably, the suspicion that leads to the erroneous arrest of some youths in connection with the rape of the baby in the play and the eventual discovery of Alfred as the culprit leaves us with the actual paradox that defines the misplaced identities of rapists in contemporary South Africa. As broached before, outsiders are often suspected of rape whereas rape is mostly perpetrated by a known person, or an insider.[190] Helen Moffett (2009:62) has also advised that sexual violence should not be arrogated to only social and economic misfits, but that "ministers of religion, teetotallers, university professors, doctors and lawyers" are just as equally potentially culpable of rape. Moffett's view is a deduction from the outcome of her interactions with victims of sexual violence. Alfred represents two significant stages of development; childhood and adulthood. At these two stages, he exhibits potent recklessness and irresponsibility that are manifestations of the negative environment where he functions. He, just like the other members of the adult group, is conditioned to do things in certain ways. Such positioning explains his role as an interstice in social engineering. The youth stage and the developmental transition stage to adulthood in the play are characterised by unemployment, violation, exploitation, licentiousness and gluttony. This is evident in the sequence of youth evolvement and adult disorientation found in the text:

[189] See http://newsfromafrica.org. Accessed 3/10/2009.
[190] Sarah Nuttall (2009:135) observes that "of the 21,000 rapes reported in 2001 most were committed by the victim's relatives". See *Entanglement: Literary and Cultural Reflections on Post-Apartheid*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2009.

> The only things those guys are good for is drinking…Wake up at about twelve, have a wipe or a wash, eat some food- bread or pap- meet under a tree and put their cents together. Work out how much they can drink that day. Then they go to the tavern and drink till late, then they go home to the houvrou, or maybe find another girl for the night. Naai, fall asleep, and the next day start again.

He acts it out:

> Wake, wipe, eat, drink, naai, sleep.
> Wake, wipe, eat, drink, naai, sleep (*Tshepang*, 27).

The suspicion and arrest of the youths also re-inscribe how certain social groups are attached to specific behaviours. For instance, Nadia Lovell (2006:228) has argued that "'youth' is often associated with processes of exclusion, marginalization, violence and social modes of behaviour perceived as threatening to the (adult) social order". However, perpetrators of rape, arguably, are eclectically found within different societal groupings. In line with Moffett's submission, and going by existing records, unsuspected members of extended families, religious groups, filial peers, even connubial agents, have turned out to be perpetrators of heinous crimes of rape against innocent children. This, however, does not rule out the activities of serial rapists and abductors who are not just 'derelicts of society' but products of the violent past and debased present. In short, the alarming proportion of violence against women and children, most especially sexual brutalisation, rivals the HIV/AIDS pandemic, poverty, and crime, in its wholeness, posing a great challenge to the new South Africa.

The community in *Tshepang* is rife with and allows the marginality of youth in a society which deploys "abduction, seclusion, physical punishment, regular beatings and other forms of structural violence" as seen in the experiences of Alfred and others. However, the attitude of Alfred and the other youths shows that "… the condition of youth is often associated with irresponsible sexuality, unemployment, the use of drugs, unsettled mode of life, the spread of diseases and many other negative plights" which invariably turn out to affect the larger society negatively (Nadia Lovell, 2006:231). Lack of employment opportunities, and most centrally perhaps the debilitating memory of torture and violation, as seen in the play, construct for the youth high level of exclusion which in turn could be challenged through violence and rage. While violence might not be a deliberate and favoured intention by the youths, a preparedness to cut a particular type of identity through which to stage a protest might

inadvertently spill out of control. Going by the reading of the play, one can argue that one of the stages of showing revulsion towards a system and seeking integration into it is the venting of frustration through violence. The consequences of such outbursts, therefore, could be borne by any member of the community. The disempowered youths in the play are a personification of the 'wasted generation' or a group referred to by Graeme Simpson (2006:116) as "powerless victims of an historical politics of exclusion". Viewed within the dictates of social institutionalisation, the youthful stage as the link between the past (childhood) and the future (adulthood) requires serious attention. If the youths who should serve as the pulley in socio-political and economic advancement are abandoned, such raises some questions around the commitment needed to engage with the past in order to restore the present and build a strong future. The economically marginalised and excluded, like the youths in the play, are a painful thorn in the flesh of the new South Africa. Reviewing the attitudes of South Africans to poverty and inequality after a decade of democracy, Benjamin Roberts (2006:124) acknowledges the commitment and doggedness of the government to provide social amenities for citizens, but noted that while the government has recorded some successes in the creation and provisions of social services like water, sanitation and electricity in certain areas, such could not be said of other areas where the "prognosis is more sobering".

Trauma and Its Implications

The creation of the character of Ruth in *Tshepang* affords us the opportunity to achieve a juxtaposition which later reveals the level of hurt felt by individuals who respond to the rape and dismemberment of the child in various ways. While the narrator, Simon, and other citizens are able to respond to the battering of baby Siesie, however misplaced their response is (they use the occasion to obtain cheap publicity), most especially when the event assumes the proportion of national news and the subsequent visits of all people from different shades and colours, Ruth shows varying signs of altered emotions such as depression, anxiety, dissociation, disengagement, detachment/numbing and amnesia. Ruth is doubly caught in the circumstantial contradictions of the situation, first, the abusive life she lives as a child and the violated existence in her adulthood, and secondly the rape and mutilation of her baby. Depression sets in as a result of the horror of abuse and brutality when humanness is

degraded. Dissociation then dictates that she should try and suspiciously avoid people with whom she comes into contact. This goes against the notion that amnesia is understood as removing oneself from the unfortunate memory of the horrific event whereas anxiety is nursed about the unpredictability of the future. The monotonous engagement in the rubbing of salt into the hide enhances the detachment sought by Ruth, while the hallucinatory waiting for the return of her baby, and the eventual looking into 'nothingness' by her and Simon is indicative of the disruption and disjunction in the personality occasioned by horror, and a stare into a blurred future. The physical, emotional and psychological state of Ruth is analogous to the proposition of Matthew J. Friedman (2000:2) that:

> PTSD[191] patients develop avoidant/numbing symptoms… to ward off the intolerable emotions and memories recurrently stirred up by…intrusive recollections. Sometimes they develop dissociative or amnestic symptoms which buffer them from painful feelings and recollections. They also adopt obsessional defenses and other behavioural strategies such as drug and alcohol abuse…workaholism, to ward off intrusive recollections.

Although Ruth and others like her were able to suppress the experience of their abuse in childhood by depending on alcohol, what follows is a far worse occurrence of the rape and murder of baby Siesie. It goes without saying, therefore, that the later suppression and amnesia sought through overwork or workaholism to ward off the reality of the circumstance would lead to a more distressing situation. Worse still, it appears, going by the extremity of her traumatic condition, that Ruth's hippocampus would have been affected. In the view of Michael J. Scott and Stephen G. Stradling (2000:70) "one of the functions of the hippocampus appears to be to co-ordinate the various sensory aspects of an experience, the smells, sights, etc., locate the experience in space and time, and provide an overall meaning".

Unending Morbid Symptoms

The martyrdom of baby Siesie in the construction of the third testament has failed to either abort or abate the rape and killing of children in South Africa in particular and the global community in general where it occurs. However, the endemic nature of this trend is not only worrisome in contemporary South Africa but an inscription of the precariousness of people's existence and the challenges facing humanity. The

[191] Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

traumatising effect of and the threats being posed by this nebulous act are underscored by the spiralling rise in the cases of rape. For instance, in what appears a catalogue of woes, the following reportage, among several others, in *The Star* newspaper of July 16 2007, captioned "Girls as young as 6 being raped, murdered countrywide", is reminiscent of the constant assault of the sensibility of helpless readers by this news item:

> The decomposed body of 13-year-old Elizabeth Martins was found in a water tank in a farm; on July 2, the body of 2- year- old Sonja Brown was found in a manhole; on June 23, the body of 6-year-old Mikakla Rossouw was found in box; about a month earlier, on April 13, the body of another 8-year-old was found in Modimolle; the body of an 8-year-old girl was found in a field at Breipaal, on March 12, the body of 6-year-old Naledi Ndebele was found wrapped in sheepskin under a bush at Brandford; the body of Anastacia Wiese (11) was found at her mother's Mitchells plain home on March 11; on January 10, the body of 10-year-old Londi Ndunge was found after she had been raped and apparently thrown off a cliff in Durban's Molweni area (p.8).

This reportage is similar to and reflective of the quotidian attitude by which this social challenge is handled in the case of baby Siesie. Newton seems to be suggesting, therefore, that the issue of rape should not be seen as just an item of news but as a 'burden'. This burdened development is enacted through Ruth, who as a tragic and traumatised character, "carries a miniature crib on her back, a symbol for the burden she must carry for the rest of her life".[192] This approach queries the culture of 'silence' that hitherto looks like an option in the play and the South Africa context that is being reflected.

The global scope of this nefarious trend is reported earlier on page 5 of *The Star* newspaper referred to above. This is similar to other cases of domestic sexual violence and slavery, like the case of an Austrian, Josef Fritzl, who held his daughter, Elisabeth, captive for 24 years and fathered seven children by her.[193] *The Star* newspaper also recalls the intention of The Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles to pay people who were sexually abused as children the sum of $660–million (R4.6-billion). Such a development casts aspersion on the sacredness attached to the church as a private/public space, most especially the great expectations around propriety, austerity and reasonableness. Other than this, the commoditisation of the trauma of the past inflicted on the victims further expands the scope to which humanity has been

[192] See http://www.joburgnews.co.za. Accessed 3/10/2009.
[193] See http://www.abc.net.au. Accessed 12/10/2009.

reduced to mere material and the justification of exploitation of various kinds. On this same page of the newspaper is the story about the decision of families of children who were deliberately infected with HIV in Libya to collect $460-million (R3-billion). This, like the first case, is used to negotiate a diffused treatment for the perpetrators of these heinous acts. The lives of the children that are involved are made inferior and inconsequential. This is more than enslaving the innocent and helpless in a climate of fear. The argument in this chapter appears analogous to that shared by Nurse Mary Ferrell who was abused as a child by a Catholic priest and was to be compensated financially. She declares that: "I appreciate the size of it *(the financial gesture (reparation),* emphasis mine*)* because it shows the culpability and guilt of the Catholic Church ... It will change my life in that my life will become easier financially but I don't think it is going to cure all the pain and suffering".[194] Incidentally, it is the incurable pain and suffering that have the capacity to define her personality and determine her actions.

Conclusion

Through the reading of *Tshepang*, it is obvious that even though South Africa has been consistently described using the 'trademark' of newness, there are several challenges that reflect its transitional experiences or that continuously depict it as "the landscape of the dispossessed"[195]. Newton's *Tshepang*, through the use of imagery, tends to piece together some 'hope' in the face of exploitation, sexual violence, alcoholism and general anomie. Other than the need to continuously confront headlong the monsters of crime and corruption, there is the need for sustained inspirational mobilisation and conscientisation of all and sundry to challenge several assumptions and traditions that undermine human rights. Specifically, this chapter has looked at some of the ongoing transitional 'morbid symptoms' which are reflective of the tensions, both at the individual and community/national levels, between the present and the past in South Africa. Through the reading of the play, different propositions are made about how people dislocate as a result of the physical, economic, social-political and emotional exploitations they are subjected to, and the

[194] *The Star* Newspapers, July 16 2007, p. 5.
[195] The Swedish Academy used this phrase to define the work of Herta Muelles, who won the 2009 Nobel Prize for Literature. See *The Nation* newspaper, 09/10/2009.

spiralling, multiplying effects they could produce. Such cyclical consequences are demonstratively seen in the pervasiveness of violence and rape, most especially against women and children. The chapter anticipates that the precarious condition of the present, as indexed in youths in the play, has a threatening relationship with the future. It is believed that more decisive efforts need to be made to mitigate all the factors and elements that nurture violence and rape as they are simply toxic to the health and stability of a nation, in particular a fledgling one like South Africa. The government should also be reminded again that it is outlandish for the law to protect culprits more than victims. The new initiatives and strategies employed to mark the 2009 campaign for the awareness of violence against women and children, are noteworthy. Among many other things, the new dispensation seeks partnership with men to confront, headlong, women and children abuse. It also emphasises the need for everyone to take responsibility rather than being silent and apathetic about violence against women and children. At any rate, something must be done in order that the implied 'nothingness' speculated in *Tshepang* ceases to persist.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONHOOD: TOWARDS A CONCLUSION

The preceding chapters reinforce the perception of the world as a story that requires retelling and reshaping. This is more so when "the world is perceived as story, with an endless capacity for renewal, metamorphosis, and reinvention", leading literature to be "more, not less, potent" (André Brink, 1998a:19). Therefore, "when law and scholarship convene around the aporias of trauma and testimony, works of art and literature have emerged that give form to the remnants" (Okwui Enwezor, 2002:17). The engagements made with the play-texts in this thesis reflect, among several other concerns, the suspicion that shrouds the relationship art makes with, as in the plays, elements of trauma, truth and reconciliation. The ineluctability of discourses around citizenship, identity, sexism, racism, governmentality, and classism in postcolonial studies has not only helped to map the aforementioned trajectories, but has created several other ambiguities and possibilities in the process. This is not unexpected when viewed against the backdrop of human nature which is dynamic in itself, and adaptable through the process of politicisation. Following the many migrations that have been witnessed across the globe, most especially those done in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, accompanying social-cultural compositions have been significantly altered with new configurations emerging in the process. As it has been indicated in the initial chapters of this work, the South African nation has 'benefited' profoundly from this reconstruction, as it boasts of citizens who bestride the divides of Europe, Asia and Africa. However, this conglomeration led to specific socio-cultural and political transformations of its constituent parts. Even though the compartmentalisation of South Africa was achieved through the instruments of brute force and human rights violations, under the dark regime of Apartheid, the 'new' South Africa was achieved through negotiation. This was conceived in the spirit of a world that was seemingly tied to violence, having hosted a 'climate of fear' – from the initial pillaging of what was once seen as 'the dark hemispheres', to enslavement and the ultimate partitioning of the annexed geographical space. The continent of Africa, as an enclave of post-colonies, houses various postcolonial nations that are making efforts that could at best be referred to as unstable, in coming to terms with their different colonial experiences. This explains, therefore, why South Africa, in the

twentieth century, had to strike a negotiated compromise in order to precipitate a democratic system reticent to revert to past brutalities. However, the practice of democracy on the continent has been hugely problematic. This precariousness is personified by the rakish formation of unity governments following the debacle that characterised the ousting of incumbent regimes by the oppositions in Kenya and Zimbabwe. The most recent is the dethronement of a democratic regime through an alliance between civil insurgency and military intervention in Madagascar, not to mention another era of military brutality in Guinea.

Even though it is seemingly inconceivable that most shortcomings in postcolonial nations are blamed on the colonisers, it should be stressed that that is not too far from the truth. However, rather than for the nation of South Africa to turn its colonial experiences into a historical burden, it has memorialised it through the reconfiguration of individual memories into a national collective, attained through the TRC as engaged with in three chapters of this work. It is hoped for the past to guide those in the present to forge ahead; although only time will tell if the past will not filter into the present and future, most especially in the face of the 'unfinished businesses[196] of the TRC. South Africa is supposed to have also made unique use of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission through which restorative justice was emphasised within the larger push for transformation and reconstruction in the new South Africa. Whatever are the gains of colonial interruptions today in South Africa, the attendant challenges loom large in all aspects of contemporary life. Central to this is the 'stultification' of citizenship and identities in a space that could be likened to a global porch. In a way, such manifestations of national identity and interaction underpin the notion of Roland Robertson's 'glocalization' which is a "foregrounding of local agency against a seemingly relentless global culture".[197]

The characteristic configuration of South Africa is asymmetrically related to the global world, most especially from the standpoint of identity, citizenship and the pervasive 'climate of fear'. The different alignments that characterise the present global world are best illustrative of what happened in South Africa. But other than

[196] This refers to the details of the TRC that are yet to be implemented. This term was used again by Antjie Krog on 30th Octbober, 2008, during a Talk Show 'Eric M After Dark' on SAFM.
[197] See Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin (2007:104).

this, globalisation is a portrayal of the constrictions in space negotiations: social, political, and economical. Some of the ideals of globalisation are well illustrated by the realities of the South African situation. Central to these are the effects of migrations, and the ambiguities of identity and citizenship. In a way, the foregoing brings to question the tendency from some quarters of limiting global interaction in the wake of the overwhelming technological revolutions of the twentieth century. If taken at a basic level, globalisation borders on the possibility of interactions between people of different geographical locales. This being so, therefore, the various colonial adventures made into what were then turned into colonies and the consequent interactions that followed, occurred throughout the globe. The enhancement of this process by technology[198] in contemporary dealings is a development of the physicality and spatial proximity that reduced South African space to a 'laboratory' of a sort. As a result of the unique experience of the South African nation, it could be plausibly argued that the different tensions, conflicts and pressures of citizenship and identity are verisimilar of what happens elsewhere in the global platform. As this correlation between the global and the local is nuanced with regards to the propositions of globalism, it is reinforced by the relationship between globalisation and post-colonialism which is, in the view of Simon Gikandi (2001:627), that:

> they are concerned with explaining forms of social and cultural organization whose ambition transcends the boundaries of the nation-state, and they seek to provide new vistas for understanding cultural flows that can no longer be explained by a homogenous Eurocentric narrative of development and social change.

Demonstrative of the 'climate of fear' and apprehensions that the global world is enveloped in, the new South Africa is making concerted efforts to grapple with the escalation of crime and the corruption that poses a great threat to the new democracy. This is taking place within the broader space of economic contraction and the activities of agents of multinationals who carry out various self-serving negotiations to foster their business interests on the African continent. Therefore, the discourses generated in this thesis signal a renewed commitment of art to social development. The intentions of the playwrights seem to cohere with that which represents the place of intellectuals generally. One aspect of the relevance credited to intellectuals is that their "thinking and talking might actually help improve the world". Intellectuals do

[198] Helen Nicholson (2005:33) calls this "the compression of space and time through digital technology".

further think that "without us, power would be exercised irrationally; with us, there was a chance for the rational exercise of authority" (Dick Flacks, 1991:4). One other unique role that art plays in the new South Africa is in shattering of the silences which loomed large under the repressive dispensation of Apartheid, through the foregrounding of the unpalatable experiences of the past. In correspondence, this research has been able to locate textual material which representatively and imaginatively makes various impressions of the immediate past of the South African nation needed for initiating and sustaining a reconstructed national space.

This work has unpacked various trajectories such as memory, identity and citizenship, crime and corruption. Exploring the cooperation between form and content in the texts used, a multifarious interrogation of the socio-political and economic spectrum of the new South Africa has been put forward. The interrogation of the peculiar aesthetic properties used most especially in Jane Taylor's *Ubu and the Truth Commission* is made in an attempt "to find a way out of the cul-de-sac created by Realist/naturalist tradition and its 'slice-of-life' aesthetics" (Günter Berghaus, 2005:24). This is in tandem with the thinking of Berghaus (ibid) that Alfred Jarry believes in the re-theatricalisation of the stage, where artifices, sets, properties are made "iconic, suggestive and evocative". However, contrary to the view of Jarry that such material could not be limited to narrative, psychological and contemporaneous significations, the deployment of animations and puppets by Taylor in *Ubu and the Truth Commission* achieves the distinctive timelessness and abstraction that Jarry's archetypal images are often credited with. The play also cogently refracts the specificities of the TRC, most especially the idea of truth and its implications. Looking at the reconciliatory process of democratisation through the TRC, it is evident that the new South Africa is poised to explore the memory of its unique past to forge ahead in all spheres. Also, "a common past" (Lolle Nauta, 2002:333) is recognised as a shared property through which identity could be fostered, however fictive or "imagined" this might be (Benedict Anderson, 1983).[199]

The thesis interrogates the South African TRC, based on the elements that come to play in the construction and utilisation of the public space/domain as an enduring

[199] This is well interrogated in the title: *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*.

instrument of hegemony. This research attempts to problematise the various expectations of the state in the deployment of truth as a prerequisite for amnesty, and of testimonies as an externalisation of pains, which is also conducive for forgiveness. Given the various contradictions inherent in the process, it is argued that the negotiation and integration secured through the TRC is nothing but a fluke because of perceived inequalities. This is all the more so judging by the fact that the majority of the victims of the past regime, realised in the characterisations of the plays used, do not just have their own idea of justice and forgiveness, but resent the state's idea of justice and reconciliation, and instead desire adequate compensation for their suffering. Members of this underprivileged majority do not just stop at condemning the unacceptable posture of the hegemony on the issues of justice, reconciliation, forgiveness and reparation, but proceed to challenge the monopolisation of the gains of the struggle, which was achieved through what Leon de Kock (2002:4) calls a "negotiated revolution" by certain individuals within the black majority ruling class and their white collaborators.

While it is believed that specific compensations for the violations of the past would lead to a commoditisation of the supreme sacrifice of torture and death, it is probable that the provision of the services and opportunities denied the victims by the past government might attenuate the disaffection of the majority towards the project of nation-building. Polemics around this development are commonly displayed within public spaces, offered in both the print and the electronic media. The implications of such resentments are not only grave in themselves, but they have the capacity of reverting back to the vignettes of the inglorious Apartheid past that the new South Africa is strenuously attempting to avoid. This is more applicable to other manifestations of violence, when viewed against the backdrop of Christopher Lane's (1998:5-6) idea that:

> people frequently experience their neighbors as not only a 'potential helper or sexual object, but also someone who tempts them to satisfy their aggressiveness on him, to exploit his capacity for work without compensation, to use him sexually without his consent, to seize his possessions, to humiliate him, to cause him pain, to torture and to kill him'.

This is, no doubt, South African's "own special burdens of animosity" (Lane 1998:8). However, though, the supposed "strangeness that confronts each subject with a

trauma that haunts the fragile process of socialization" (James Penney, 1998:128) would be, at least, significantly lessened.

Other crucial areas of human interactions in relation to nation building that this research examines in the South African dramas are the ideas of citizenship and identity. These are recognisably fluid and ambiguous terrains of human relationships that are particularly delicate in the South African case. Setting out from the contextual familiar terrain of racial purity and division (Christopher Lane, 1998:12), the thesis evaluates the various connections that people from black and white racial groups share in the spirit and reality of building a new South Africa. This unique configuration is seen as a successful experimentation with racial diversity by Achille Mbembe.[200] Mbembe sees as commendable the new process he refers to as a're-imagination' towards building a polity devoid of race. Going further on this within the terrain of the emancipatory ideal of nationhood, Mbembe encapsulates the state of inclusive belongingness in the new South Africa as having Afropolitan tendencies, i.e. a tolerable space for African and cosmopolitan manifestations. Further to the preceding notions, the process of identity in particular is seen in this work as problematic, as a result of the shifts in people's attitudes, most especially against old rigid racial delineations. With illustrations drawn from the activities of characters in the plays used in this research, it is argued that individuals tend to assert themselves more, leading to a reconstruction of the 'self', in order to discard the jaundiced personality that their societies have produced in them. This is more so in view of the liberal order that is present in the new South Africa, and the fact that "the human spirit thrives on creativity and freedom", even as "people will always find ways to subvert the bureaucrats and politicians who seek to subdue them and tame their souls" (Leon de Kock, 2002:4).

Identity issues are mostly convoluted as a result of the decisions individuals take within other social prescriptions and categorisations. The result of this conflation is the recalcitrance of the group identity that an individual subscribes to within the national one. This leaves us with the fact that national identity is diverse, often times,

[200] Mbembe was speaking at the 'Words on Water: India & South Africa in Conversation' lecture, held at The Origins Centre, University of the Witwatersrand on 16th September, 2008. The programme was held between September 15 and 17, 2008.

along the pragmatics of social and economic class. By implication, therefore, it is out of place to read identity, most especially the national one, based on the co-existing and referential relationship it has with that of the group. This goes to say, then, that identity and citizenship in the new South Africa are open to negotiation and permutation along the fluid or fragile path of opportunity, acquisition and ideological tenacity. To a great extent, the centrality of ideology is supported by the fact that "ideological influence is crucial now in the exercise of social power" (James Lull, 2003:61). The South African space has witnessed identities being hyphenated while those of people with remote ancestries are made more ambivalent, fluid and ambiguous. The South African state is an instance of David Clarke and Marcus Doel's (2004:37b) idea of "glocalization" which "implies more than the simultaneity of deterritorialization and reterritorialization, or the reassertion of space-time compression". The longing for a 'lost' global outside as shown by a character, Johan in *The Bells of Amersfoort*, and the nostalgia he has towards an 'abandoned' locality, expose the complications that might be inherent in such an oscillation. Further to the above, the trend in the new South Africa is indicative of Bauman's notion of the polarisation of mobility as some identities, most especially those of Afrikaners, are atavistically global in outlook, while those of black groups are "chained to place". The idea of being "chained to place" should, however, not be viewed as a form of fixity as such can not be guaranteed in the face of contiguity and openness that individuals across groups share.

One of the ways through which territorialisation can be altered is reflected in the dual mobility into and out of the geographical space of South Africa: emigrations of people of Dutch, British, Indian, Chinese descents and the exile of people from different racial groups, mostly blacks, who had to respond to the consequences of resisting Apartheid. The duality of this situation is interrogated by John Agnew and Stuart Corbridge (1995:185) in relation to Said's "generalized condition of homelessness" (1979) and Salman Rushdie's notion of "imaginary homeland" (1990), with the implication that identities are created across nation-states, leaving us with great ambiguities and possibilities.[201] Specifically, the idea of exile has been evaluated in

[201] This development is further captured by John Agnew and Stuart Corbridge (1995:185) to the effect that "in a world of diaspora, transnational cultural flows and mass movements of people, old-fashioned

Fugard's *Sorrows and Rejoicings* and Mda's *The Bells of Amersfoort* leading to the revelation and realisation of the central role the exile plays in the face of his/her estrangement. The various strands of exile recognised also reveal how misleading it might be to reduce exile merely to physical displacement. Simply put, exile could, arguably, be taken as comprising all senses of exclusion and marginalisation.

Apart from the tensions created by exile in forms of identity differentiation and negotiated citizenship, this research has also shown the precarious space that the offspring of an exile could fall prey to. It is believed that time and season could have a transforming influence on the existing borders that hitherto separated people along racial lines. A foreseeable proposition could also be the emergence of interactions between people of different races, even though old suspicions of racial abuse and stereotypes might be difficult to obliterate. The multiracial nature of the United States of America and the unfolding realities of its current situation offer some hope in this direction. It is noteworthy that such permutations and cross-racial movements have started taking place as exemplified in the relationship between two characters, one white and one black, Johan and Tami in Mda's *The Bells of Amersfoort*. More specifically, it is apparent that this 'cohesion' between Tami and Johan is indicative of the 'we-ness' or what Doreen Massey (2007:4) calls a "mixity" which culminates in "an identity of place". However, in a radical departure from the popular encapsulation of diversities as 'multiculturalism', Massey (ibid) alternatively encased the mixture of identities as "a convivial demotic cosmopolitanism", which is "the juxtaposition of, and negotiated relations between, mutually boxed-in communities". Therefore, the ongoing 'simulations' of identities portray the consequential inclusivity of "spatiality and temporality" (Massey, 2007:178).

The dominance of "patriotic mobilisation" needed for "desirable social stability" (Hans Erik Stolten, 2007:42) as promoted by successive post-Apartheid governments has turned out not to be a magic wand after all. One such strategy is the notion of 'rainbowism' touched on earlier in the thesis. The deployment of this concept "as an ideological and political project" (Colin Bundy, 2007:80) by both Mandela and Tutu indicates their commitment to the TRC, specifically, and ultimately to the building of

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attempts to map the globe as a set of culture regions or homelands are bewildered by a dazzling array of post-colonial simulacra…".

a new society. The constitutive nature of "the possibility of a harmonious, common identity …" (Bundy, ibid) of this concept is fast fading, partly but strongly as a result of white South Africans' "refusal to own the past" (Bundy, 2007:81). The implication of this is the snowballing of the idea of difference or pluralism contained in rainbowism into the adoption of the African Renaissance by Black intellectuals. Bundy (2007:81) observes that defining an African Renaissance calls for great caution. One of the several cautions he cited after some others emphasise the idea of equality, nonracism, nonsexism and justness, describing the African Renaissance as "the discovery of 'Africanness' … the re-invention and revision of a black legacy in search of a new, a particularly African way forward". By so doing, and amidst the various initiatives taken to inscribe a common South African identity, "the rainbow notion is repudiated" for its inclusivity of "whites who pay allegiance to Europe, Indians who pay allegiance to India and, Coloured somewhere in the undefined middle of the rainbow" (Bundy, 2007:82-83). The paradox that defines citizenship in present day South Africa is constantly reviving division in the midst of the process of integration. As a result, as 'recommendations' are made to people to forget the fraughtness Apartheid caused in race relations, there are similarly hues and cries on the need to correct the unfairness of the past. For instance, the efforts that have been made to redress the inequalities of the past through the introduction of programmes such as affirmative action and black empowerment policies are generating a level of anxiety. Bundy (2007:83) gives attention to this when he opines that there are "tensions associated with inequality or with racialised redress pitting ethnicised Have-nots against ethnicised Haves". The above is further a manifestation of the fluidity that consistently characterises interactions and negotiations for the desire for renewal in post-Apartheid South Africa, where a common identity is sought in the face of multi-racialism.

As hinted at briefly earlier on in this concluding chapter, other than the conflated issues of identity and citizenship explored in this research, crime and corruption are seen as further twin challenges in the new South Africa. Although it is not contemplated that crime and corruption are either peculiar to the South African state or strange to the Apartheid era, it might be tenable to hold that certain cumulative pragmatics of the old era have the potentials to threaten present realities. A justification is fundamentally found in the link that has been established between

poverty and crime, and disruptions in the family. Arguably, the culpability of the old era is reinforced by the impoverishing nature of the Apartheid system on the black majority and the divisive implications of the segregation laws which did not just cause separation between whites and blacks, but caused this also amongst blacks whose filial connections were adversely affected by imposed labour migrations. Even though the current South African constitutional provisions have unequivocally defined the rights of women, increasing their sense of independence, black women in Apartheid South Africa were charged with the responsibility of home-keeping and childcare following the enslavement and estrangement of men in the mines and, in some cases, by women in the city. The negative results of these disruptions are made more explicit in the various debased acts of child abuses and violence against women identified in this research. The reading of Lara Foot Newton's *Tshepang: the Third Generation* allows us to argue that the vestigial memory of the trauma of violation has the capacity to becloud and influence him/her in other human interactions. Amidst efforts made to confront the negative influences the youth are currently able to incur from the internet, the influence the immediate society has on them proves to be enormous. The level of violence against women and children, and those perpetrated by children against one another, are alarmingly high. Apprehensions in this regard are heightened by the cases of killings in schools across South Africa.

Newton's *Tshepang: the Third Generation* also reveals the profundity of peer pressure and the consequences this holds for the new South Africa. The orgy of sexual violence child characters in the text carry out on one another and the obsession that youths and adults have for alcoholism are illustrative of the worrisome behaviour of teenagers and children in contemporary South Africa. *The Star* newspaper once reported that parents were getting increasingly worried by the fact that teenagers take to drinking, even in schools. These developments lead to several horrific stories as these teenagers/students put "themselves in compromising and dangerous situations". This situation is more so because the adult world, according to Liz Norman (2008:3), has created "an 'aura' of social coolness and sophistication connected to alcohol". It is believed that the existing legislation put in place to protect the rights of children would require them to be as responsible as possible in the ways and manners these rights are carried out. Subordinating children and teenagers to the whims and caprices of the adult would not in any way achieve this, since the adult is by him/herself still

grappling for a way out of his/her anti-social attitudes. However, putting in place necessary warnings for children and teenagers might be more than is desirable. This opinion, however, takes into account the dangers that may be posed to their rights. As such, any measures being contemplated to stop the excesses of children and teenagers should not end up violating their fundamental rights, most importantly that of their freedom. Alcohol[202] is central to the issue of violence and abuse against women and children. Specifically, other than the need to curtail the exuberance of children and youths, what constitutes the push and indulgence in rape is a source of great worry. Anna van der Hoven (2008:13), for instance, categorises serial rapists to be "exploitative, compensatory, displaced" [in their] anger [and] sadistic.[203]

Therefore, it is obvious that the challenges posed by this social malady require an eclectic approach. Apart from the requirement for stringent legal provisions, there is the need for an aggressive re-orientation of people, most especially young men, whose minds should be cleansed of the many erroneous beliefs that drive them into committing this nefarious act. Further to this, people need to show more alertness as they exhibit the spirit of *ubuntu*, being their brother's keepers, most especially to break the silences around rape at all times. This is more so in view of the fact that most rapists are known by someone in the community. Further to this, would-be victims of abuse and rape should inculcate a culture of self-security and responsibility by steering clear of places and locations that can make them easily vulnerable. However, the foregoing suggestion precludes helpless agents like baby Tshepang. It is painful, for instance, that the violation of baby Tshepang takes place while she is abandoned by her mother for the tavern/shebeen. Also, going by the allusions that have been made to unemployment and poverty as possible causes, it is expected that a greater effort should be made by the government in the effort to create employment opportunities. It is important that able-bodied individuals should be gainfully

[202] The correlating relationship that exists between alcohol and violent crime is by the experiences of Myles Meyjes, Ernst Sekete and Jairos Seiso, who gave a graphic account of how alcohol and drugs influenced them significantly in carrying out violent attacks, and murder. See Thandi Skade in *The Star* of Tuesday, October 7, 2008. Skade further reiterates this to the effect that, quoting from the research conducted by the Medical Council, "alcohol is often linked to violent crimes, including family violence". p. 7.

[203] It must be acknowledged that the reasons for the rape and killing of helpless babies as young as three, six months and three to ten years are perplexing (however, this is not to say that rape of someone at any age could be condoned). Psychological enquiry undertaken in this regard did not produce any evidence that might explain the peculiar pervasive instances in South Africa.

employed rather than for such energy to be deployed in ways that are counter-productive. With this said, it must be acknowledged that there is pointedly a psychopathic dimension behind the occurrence of rape, most especially child rape and murder, which cannot be easily tackled using a simple prognosis.

One other challenge to the emerging South Africa that this research probes is corruption, which is not just considered cancerous but in turn combustive. This is reflected in Junction Avenue Theatre's *Love, Crime and Johannesburg* where, apart from fulfilling the characteristics of many other cities as "most enormously pleasurable and a site of serious deprivation and despair" (Massey 2007:11), social mobility is used to achieve new permutations for material acquisitions and appropriation. Apparently, the new developments show how power percolates, in its different manifestations. This is most especially when power is constructed with additional meanings, using either social or economic indices. Even though corruption cannot be seen as a peculiar albatross to the African continent, it is the bane of development in most countries on the continent. The debilitating effect of corruption on the continent is further sustained by the absence of strong institutions and structures that will protect fledgling countries from both internal and external predators. As mentioned earlier, the scramble for raw materials on the African continent is perpetuated by western multinationals who constantly assert themselves towards their own ends in vulnerable developing countries. Often times, these natural resources are exchanged for arms and ammunition, through which already tenuous political relations are further undermined. Other than the pogrom precipitated by these illicit activities, the resultant effect, most especially for the affected countries, has been a perpetuation of the subaltern position of such countries that will continually be more on the receiving or consuming side than a contributor in global social, economic and political engagements. The implications of economic exploitations perpetrated both internally and externally are instructive for South Africa, with its colonial experiences and the drive to sustain democratic ideals and economic prosperity for its citizens. The need for South Africa to learn from the perils of corruption in other post-colonies in Africa is reinforced by the spate of corrupt tendencies that define the activities of the representatives of the state in contemporary South Africa. The grab of one's share of the 'national cake' as demonstrated in *Love, Crime and Johannesburg* is a close affirmation of the deterioration that has held other postcolonies in Africa in

turmoil, and which must be fought vehemently if the new South Africa is to attain its ideals and aspirations. Added to this, all the plays used in this thesis depict the South African state as a "space in general, a field of multiple actors, trajectories, stories with their own energies- which may mingle in harmony, collide, even annihilate each other" (Massey, 2007:22).

The preponderance of a climate of fear around the world is a portrayal of the engagements precipitated by the capitalist desire for domination and subordination. The concentration of efforts at taming acts and intentions of terror within the dictates of narrow definition of terrorism is problematic. Rather than limit the acts of terror to a deliberate intention to inflict harm and cause damage to fellow human beings, mostly unprotected civilian populations, it should be extended to all actions that are capable of impacting negatively on people in every sphere of life, however minute that might be conceived. This redefinition would include any overt and covert attempts and intention to impoverish people in any way. The deliberate creation and perpetuation of the subaltern group, for instance, might be considered viable in economic engagements, but it has the capacity to proliferate social miscreants who end up as a thorn in the flesh of peace-loving individuals. On another plane, the persistent conflicts between certain super powers and some designated zones of terrorism call for a prompt strategic re-evaluation. If these animosities were caused by the need to foster human rights and ensure human freedom, the spate of the pogrom this has occasioned is simply condemnable. If the resources deployed in fighting this so-called terrorism were channelled towards human development and poverty eradication, there might emerge better ways of advancing the frontiers of global peace.

Specifically, in the case of South Africa, a concerted effort needs to be made to ensure the redistribution of economic wealth so as not to allow for abject poverty amidst huge opulence. The opportunistic strategy being used at present for wealth distribution will only help a few people to cross the line of disadvantage, while the greater majority of the hitherto disadvantaged would remain in perpetual economic subjugation. Georgi Verbeeck (2007:219) sees the ongoing process of economic inequality as an indication of the First World and Third World meeting in one country. He also notes that in spite of the fact that the hypocritical façade of Apartheid

has been demolished, “the social and economic contrasts, which stem from this, are still largely maintained”. Verbeeck further argues that the white communities who were beneficiaries of the old system are now an “ethnic minority within a culturally plural society” after they have been “politically condemned to powerless and fragmented opposition”. Meanwhile, the emergence of the black bourgeoisie has not led to any reduction in the prevalence of poverty within the black communities. The socio-spatial configurations that define the current South African state are rife with “make-believe fantasy realm of … ‘hyper-real’ image spectaculars, safely cocooned behind material fortifications and the symbolic denial of the persistent poverty of the truly disadvantaged” (Martin J. Murray, 2007:229).

As South Africa, no doubt, manifests the traits of a global microcosm, it offers experimental processes in terms of citizenship and identity, as part of the novel way through which outcomes of constant mobility across mapped borders are incorporated for sustainable growth and development. This is particularly so in view of the transposition between what Stephen Legg (2007:268) calls “necropolitics” and a democracy with all race inclusivity. While democracy dictates free participation from citizens, it inadvertently results in the congregation of people of certain colours in particular parties. This is, however, part of the carry-over from a racialised past. As the South African new democracy reaches for stabilisation, it is expected that the gradual invisibility of whites in the national political sphere will at a point in time give way when the highest position in the land will be occupied by a white South African, not through previous Apartheid antics, but by means of political cohesion. This great possibility is signalled by the emergence of President Barrack Obama in the United States of America. This young South African democracy also reserves the opportunity to avoid toeing the path of disillusionment that earlier democracies on the continent were plunged into at one time or the other in the past. It is not enough to imagine that the South African nation has the human and material capacity to engender cohesion as it has been demonstrated in the reconciliation and peace efforts in countries like Sudan Somalia, Congo, Kenya and lately Zimbabwe (with the precariousness and controversies that trail the last). A nation like Nigeria has also indisputably exhibited such feats on the continent even when it is greeted by various economic and political instabilities on the home front. As the South African nation relishes in the prosperities of its diversity, with all its imperfections notwithstanding,

and grapples with the cancerous propensities of crime and corruption, only time will tell if its metaphoric boat is not swimming against the tide and if it has indeed been exorcised of the 'indispensable' past. Amidst the need to build more democratic institutions (Kole Omotoso, 2008),[204] individuals still reserve the right and power to determine what they want to be within other socio-political phenomena. Garth le Pere and Kato Lambrechts (1999:32) make a summation of what they consider necessary for the new South Africa when they posit that:

> out of its tragic past, its people can live responsibly and autonomously yet on common ground, in culturally self-determining communities that are somehow open to others, with tolerance and mutual respect, yet with a firm sense of their own values. Citizenship and civil society, whether global or national, come first.

South African literature, drama centrally inclusive, is continually poised to refract the experiences of the emerging South Africa for greater attention and commitment. The plays chosen in this research, just like many others, will continually "make possible wider and deeper visualizations of the multiple identities, and the subjective spaces in between, that are part of the grand and complex picture of being South African" (Jacqueline Maingard, 2007:178). Arts, as reflected in the concerns of some of the plays, would continually harp on the rejection of inequality and injustice. The refractions of memory undertaken in these texts do not just reconstruct the past but encase how the present is constructed with indication towards future possibilities, which are based on manifestations from human interactions. Thus, these playwrights are functioning, in the words of Rob Amato, as servants of the people as well as arbiters of the society, storytellers and dream merchants who carry "forward the mythical world, so that it passes the present world and implies the future world" (xix-xx). South Africa, as a nation in transition with a unique configuration, offers the traits of new possibilities in many areas; social, economic and political. As the country moves away from the 'burdened' past and contends with the extreme difficulty of some present challenges, the future needs to be uncompromisingly and jealously guarded.

[204] This remark was made on SAFM, during a talk show to interrogate "Liberation Movements and Transformation to Political Parties in the 21st Century". Omotoso is a researcher with the Africa in Diaspora Group.

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