(Dis)Locations, (Dis)Placements and (Un)Belonging in Zimbabwean White Farmers' Auto/biographies, 1995 to 2010

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any other university for a degree.

Signature……Date …….

ABSTRACT

This study interrogates white auto/biography and exposes the ambivalences, ambiguities, paradoxes and dilemmas that arise in the claims for belonging and the premises for the authority behind such claims. It gestures to white autobiography and biography writing as an opening to what in Zimbabwe has been suppressed as dangerous apocryphal writing. The thesis focuses on the interweaving of autobiographies and biographies and that although this interweaving generates polyphonic narratives that refuse totalizing discourse, this compromises claims to belonging by the authors' claiming to be legitimate figures whose writing espouse the white community's contestation of the abrogation of their citizenship and mastery in economic production while that legitimacy is queried by counter narratives in the same books. Through poststructuralism, deconstruction and Levinas's alterity theory, identity and (un)belonging are posed as unstable and schizophrenic. Both autobiography and biography are investigated as already primed to disband centers of totalizing discourses which are discourses that restrict or mute the voice of the subaltern. Identity as heterogeneous is promoted as this thesis privileges identity as provisional and seeks to oppose teleologies and ideological closures. Using the selected texts, the study explores and analyses concepts and conceptualizations of ideology and space, intertextuality as the intersecting of biographies and autobiography, fiction and nonfiction and authorial detachment/attachment.

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Contents

Chapter 1

Questions of (un)belonging: The dilemmas of white auto/biography writing in Zimbabwe

1.1. Introduction

For centuries now and coming from the West has been taken for granted that writing falls under the jurisdiction of an enduring metaphysics of presence that has always proclaimed the possibility of rendering events, truth and experience as accessible, stable and unified: that all obstructions in the quest for truth can be obviated through rigorous thematizations and theorizations. This thesis confronts and subverts such a jurisdiction by proposing a reading of both autobiography and biography in conjunction with methods of reading and philosophy advanced by both Derrida and Levinas. To the metaphysics of presence that privileges the speaking subject over the written text, Derrida (1978) proffers *defferance* [1] which promotes the impossibility of meaning, events or words ever assuming a sedentary, locatable and unified settling, since the filling of the gap between the signified and signifier is forever deferred without remit. Levinas (1961) proposes, as does Derrida after him, a radical departure from the egology, egotism and closures emanating from and constituting Western metaphysics of presence. He proposes, against Husserl's (1973) phenomenology and Hegel's (1977) historicism and dialectionism, an alterity [2] that cannot be submitted for inspection and subordination within the space of dialectics or the constraining ontology inherent in Husserlian phenomenology. By extending the topic of identity to the animal other, for in instance Derrida (2008) in *The animal that therefore I am* opens discussion on how to balance the summons of anthropocentricism and biocentricism: an issue that shall be elaborately investigated in this study. In this text the 'animal is the wholly other, more other than any other' (p. 11) whose animal 'gaze offers to my sight the abyssal limit of the human of the inhuman and the ahuman' (p. 26). *Totality and infinity* (1979) is the book that encapsulates Levinas's vigorous criticism of the totalizing thematizations of Western metaphysics of presence. In it he employs the figure of the 'face' to denote the incomprehensibility of the other [3] and therefore a prohibition of any

[1] Here I refer to a neologistic combination of diferral and difference.
[2] Reference is being made to the difference of the other and in Levinas' case, the utterly incomprehensible difference of the other.
[3] As in race, gender, identity, the natural environment and the animal other.

program that seeks to assimilate the other. In Levinas' postulations '[t]he term face denotes the way in which the presentation of the other to me exceeds all idea of the other in me' (Hand, 1989: 5). Instead of subscribing to totalizing discourses, Levinas argues for the 'proximity of this face-to-face relation [which] cannot be subsumed into totality [but] concretely produces a relation to the commandment and judgement of inifinity' (Hand, 1989: 5). The notion of infinity can conjointly be posited with terms like infinitude, plenitude, multiplicity and heterogeneity: terms that in Derrida's deconstruction project and Levinasian philosophy are deployed in the context of describing identity and belonging as fluid, contaminated and irretrievably dispersed [4] and as evincing an elusive alterity, for Levinas. Derrida and Levinas's positions in relation to identity and belonging are indispensable in the study of white auto/biography writing in Zimbabwe since both autobiography and biography present dilemmas and aporia in the writing of identity, whiteness and (un)belonging: terms that are fraught with ambiguity, ambivalence, fissuredness and heterogeneity in writing positions and constructions of meanings. In the post 2000 period in Zimbabwe, several writers have advanced the need to include white writing in the cannon of writing in Zimbabwe arguing that such an inclusion will provide a counterweight to the narrations of 'patriotic history' [5] promulgated by the ZANU PF government. This study endorses such an inclusion but does not stop within such an exhortation [6] for inclusion: it also seeks to interrogate white autobiography and biography writing to expose the paradoxes and dilemmas that attend such writing.

Demanded by such a topic as already stated and the promised investigations of the self as autoschediasm and nation as narration, is a synopsis to the background of the land invasions (white auto/biographer's view) and land reform (ZANU PF's historiographical view) that, provide substance to white auto/biography in Zimbabwe. Such a background can be traced to the scramble for Africa, a period during which European governments made vigorous moves to colonise African territories as a way to possess natural resources and markets. Hence the Pioneer column, mobilized by the ardent colonialist Cecil John Rhodes, [7] on arrival in

[4] As evinced by Derrida in *Dissemination*.
[5] As investigated by Ranger in 2004 in his article "Nationalist historiography: Patriotic History and the History of the nation, the struggle over the past in Zimbabwe".
[6] So ardent has been the call for this inclusion that the publishing world has released a plethora of books on life writing by whites which, nonetheless, still demand more scholarly attention.
[7] Cecil John Rhodes was a British Empire builder, a mining magnate and politician in Southern Africa who served as Prime Minister of the Cape Colony from 1890 to 1896. He was an ardent believer in British imperialism. Rhodes founded the southern African territory of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe).

Mashonaland in 1890, first laid claims to gold deposits and subsequently, after the deposits proved to be too meagre, proceeded to seize land, some of which was already occupied and utilized as agricultural and pastoral land by indigenous people. Land seizures by white colonialists and the resultant relegation of indigenous peoples to arid and semi arid lands provoked long running ire among blacks that culminated into the first and second Chimurengas. [8] The second chimurenga was quelled by the Lancaster House Conference in 1979. It was a conference convened under protest from the leaders of the Patriotic Front: prodded by the Front line leaders Kenneth Kaunda, Julius Nyerere and Samora Machel the Chimurenga leaders were caught up in a bind. They either had to aquesce to a ceasefire or risk the abolition of their war bases in Mozambique, Zambia and training centres in Tanzania. This protest bears continuity with the present bellicose attitude by the leaders of the third Chimurenga who interpret the Lancaster House agreement and constitution as a fraudulent ploy by the Lord Carrington led British delegation to secure and perpetuate white privilege in Zimbabwe.

It is this part of the Lancaster house constitution that is most pertinent to the present study in three ways: (1) the Lancaster house agreement promised land redistribution on a willing buyer willing seller basis but deliberately or by error, overlooked the fact that such an approach would be agonizingly slow for a country whose impoverished and bludgeoning population was largely landless and heavily underprivileged; (2) the Lancaster house conference promised equality and human Rights among races and citizens yet left unresolved the question of white privilege versus black did privilege;(3) The Lancaster house constitution laid down the provision that the British government would supply funds for compensation of farms acquired by the Zimbabwe government but retracted their promise on the basis that the Zimbabwe government, instead of resettling landless underprivileged citizens, was using or abusing land resettlement as a political tool to prop up its narrative of legitimacy. Hence, in 2000, after the Svosve people occupied or invaded a farm, Robert Mugabe announced the fast track land reform that involved

[8] Chimurenga is a Shona word practically meaning revolutionary struggle or uprising. In Zimbabwean specific historical terms, it also refers to the insurrections against the British South Africa Company during the late 1890s commonly referred to as the First Chimurenga. This was followed by the war fought between African nationalist guerrillas and the predominantly white Rhodesian government during the 1960s and 1970s – the Second Chimurenga. The concept is also occasionally used in reference to the land reform programme undertaken by the Government of Zimbabwe in the post 2000 era, which assumed the term Third Chimurenga. It was regarded as the final phase in what its proponents hold to be the liberation of Zimbabwe through economic and agrarian reforms meant to empower indigenous people, irrespective of the economic collapse that soon followed.

the contravention of the Lancaster house constitution. These violations were escalated by constitutional amendments that provided a veneer of legality to lawless acts: the later which were accelerated from the announcement of the Fast track land reform or the farm invasions.

The Mugabe government's failure to get approval to a formulation of a new constitution, especially one containing radical amendments to the land question and the nature of presidential powers, and the emergence of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 1999, as a political party to contend with, stoked the anger of the government, since the 'No vote' [9] and the MDC were interpreted as the machinations of the British government. It is such a background that provides paradoxes and questions of citizenship, (un)belonging and identity as becoming, as this study shall examine and investigate in the following chapters. The sudden dispossessions of land borne by the majority of whites, this study argues, is not limited to identity as constrained by indegeniety or whiteness but extends to the investigation of being and beingness. This extension, which should be taken as fundamental, examines identity as a concept and process that exceeds the ontologies of topography and toponym as these are quickly dispersed into disjunctive semantic constituencies by linguistic acts within auto/biographical protocols that forbid rehearsed selves as models. In the place of the latter is, by this study, proposed the self or selves as autoschediasm. Thus the fresh intervention of such a study to the study of auto/biography in Zimbabwe is to investigate life writing as thanatography, autoschediasm and drawing from both Levinas and Derrida, as incomprehensible alterity.

This thesis, by focusing on (un)belonging, (dis)location, (dis)placement and identity, takes its cue from the farm invasions that occurred in Zimbabwe, beginning with the years immediately after 1995 and gathering momentum and intensity up to 2010. Adduced from the title of the thesis are unstable and provisional designations and consignations of terms of reference. Available for exemplification are terms such as (dis)location, (dis)placement, auto/biography

[9] It was largely believed within Zanu-PF circles that the 'NO' vote of 1999, was sponsored by the white commercial farmers in order to obstruct proposed provisions in the Draft Constitution on Compulsory Land Acquisition without compensation. It is important to note that after the expiration of the 1990 moratorium entrenched in the Lancaster House Constitution, which barred the Mugabe Government from compulsory acquisition of land owned by white farmers, for redistribution to landless blacks for purposes of agriculture, the British Government reneged on its undertaking to provide funds for compensation. This therefore meant that, the Zanu-PF government found it difficult to acquire land even with the willing-buyer willing-seller policy, because the Constitution then provided for the compensation of the 'current' land owners who were largely white.

and (un)belonging. Such terms mark the ambivalence, ambiguity and the 'undecidable' positions and operations of white identity as evinced through the controversial genres of auto/biography. Auto/biography suggests the indeterminacy in demarcating a boundary between autobiography and biography (Lejeune, 2000; Smith and Watson, 2009) and is also an opening to the possibility of this genre's potential to stage a mutiny against the metaphysics of presence that subscribes to generic laws as fixed and the contents as presented in a diaphanous envelope, suggesting a reading confined within a teleology.

(Dis)location or (un)belonging designate the impossibility of a departure from identity terrains that promise a return to such sites. Rather, proposed here, is the unstable and uncertain modes of (un)belonging attributable to the whites and in particular white commercial farmers who, after years of privilege, find themselves to be harried by a government whose policies and laws have suddenly divested them of citizenship and human rights. Such identity terrains provide the flux and fluidity that characterize hybrid or indeterminate identities that make the tissue of Bhabha's disquisitions in *Location of culture* (2004).). Such an assertion is tethered to this study's cardinal stance that auto/biography, in this particular case, white auto/biography in Zimbabwe, must be read as autoschediasm, thanatography and incomprehensible alterity.

To investigate identity, (dis)location and (un)belonging, a set of white autobiography and biography writing is, here, proffered. Peter Godwin's two books, *Mukiwa: A White Boy in Africa* (1996) and *When a Crocodile Eats the Sun*, Eric Harrison's *Jambanja* (2008), Douglas Rogers' *The Last Resort: A Memoir in Zimbabwe* (2009), Christine Lamb's *House of Stone: The true story of a family divided in war- torn Zimbabwe* (2006) and Buckle's *African Tears: The Zimbabwean Land Invasions* (2001). These books offer narrations that provoke discussions on nation as narration (Bhabha 2000). In this context, '[t]he address nation as narration' stresses the insistence of political power and cultural authority in what Derrida describes as 'the irreducible excess of the syntactic over the semantic' (Bhabha, 2000: 4). Such a view collaborates this study's insistence that, the infinitude of voices and views on self narrations in the autobiographies and biographies, refuse entry to final arrivals in relation to (un)belonging and identity.

The positing of nation as narration necessitates some elaboration on this issue's relation to autobiography and biography. Zimbabwe as a bounded territory that can inspire imaginings of identity, presents problems that stem from the judicial marking of boundaries and the conferring of citizenship and identity on those who imagine identity as sufflated with

authenticity through identification with the landscape, anthems and entitlements. As Anderson in *Imagined communities* (2006) has shown, nations evolve from the way differently positioned people in a bounded territory imagine their positions and their allotment of resources and life chances in the imagined nation. This implies that, the notion of nation as imagined, gestures to nation as a heterogeneous positioning of strangers who subscribe to correspondingly multiple nations within the borders of one country. The nation, according to Anderson, is 'imagined because the members of the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them or even hear of them, yet in the mind of each lives the image of their communion' (Anderson, 2006: 6).

White writing in Zimbabwe then, must face the paradox that the nation the authors imagine to exist as a locatable and stable entity does not exist. Apparently the paradox goes deeper in that, the very people who introduced the idea and concept of citizenship, documenting and archiving it, with a view to (dis)placing, (dis)locating and bunching people into identity silos, are the ones facing the same predicament of displacement when their once 'superior' identity is tried and tested and is found wanting in some form of historical recurrence at play albeit with a haunting effect. This kind of paradox, as shall be investigated, is at play in the moments when whites' citizenship rights are erased: this point proves national identity, which comes by collecting fragments of myths and historical narrations, as fiction, or rather a construction. Bhabha, in *Nation and Narration* (2005) poses this ambivalence in selves being subjected to performing the nation as the phenomenon of the self, narrative and the nation's being haunted. The haunting, is the absence of stable and unified meanings on which identity can be fixed. The ambivalence that infests the core of the self in moments of life threatening events like farm invasions shall be analysed in the context of subjectivity, self mutability, nation and (un)belonging.

1.2. Justification for the study

The study is auto/biographies by white Zimbabweans, especially those white farmers displaced by the fast track land reform programme. It draws attention to the summons to enlist such life writing to the demanded and demanding (re)conceptualizations of the white farmers' identity and (un)belonging in Zimbabwe. Such a study, by investigating issues that emanate from problematics of residues of colonialism and postindependence inequalities, seeks to offer a way on how including white farmers' voices in the discussions on nation, inheritance, justice and citizenship, opens room for forgiveness and reconciliation. In addition, this study proposes something that has not yet been attempted even by the scholarly studies on offer so far. It insists

that the study of identity and (un)belonging has always been done *in media res* once the fundamentals of identity (beingness, being and the other as nonbeing) are neglected. In addition and at the core of this study is the advancement of auto/biography as autoschediasm, thanatography and utter or incomprehensible alterity. Read in tandem with Derrida's concepts of hauntology and spectrality, evinced in Spectres of Marx (1993), the core of this study promotes the argument that all auto/biography, whether written from a vantage point that recognizes the other's difference or that written according to a program, is always already supplanted by the reminder that it cannot constitute a complete text. Hauntology, in its French form hantologie, supplants its close homonym ontology by unraveling and disrupting narratives or identities that center presence alone, neglecting that, the present is so interpreted in conjunction to absences. Hence hauntology and spectrality are compatible with investigations and discussions of white auto/biography as autoschediasm, thanatography and radical alterity, since these encompass identity as becoming, both physical and metaphoric death as a fecund field from which acts of writing can be informed, and alterity as that schizoid phenomenon that multiplies the self: not only the self but the supposed originary site of the self.

1.3. Goals and theoretical framework

To succeed in the task allotted to the thesis, multiple theories are employed in order to accomplish four goals. The theories include *inter alia* poststructuralism, postcolonialism, postmodernism, critical white feminist studies and deconstruction. This panoply of theories has been largely designated as primed for possessing and detonating incendiary activities against totalizing and universalizing discourses, even though each is marked differently in certain ways that allow a distinct constituency. It would be prudent to proceed by a concurrent explication of the theories and the goals. These goals are:

• To domicile white farmers' auto/biographies within the canon of white life writing in Zimbabwe.

•To deconstruct and thus place an interdict on androcentric, anthropocentric, universalizing and totalizing discourses and methods prevalent in autobiography and biography writing and studies in Zimbabwe.

•To interrogate the positions of whiteness in connection with ambivalences and paradoxes which are eluctable in projects of life writing by whites suddenly turned into subalterns in the postcolony (Zimbabwe).

• To call attention to the urgent need to include fundamental disquisitions on being, temporality and beingness in scholarly research on autobiography and biography writing in Zimbabwe.

The first objective beckons to the company of postcolonialism. In the *Postcolonial Studies Reader* (2005), Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin pose that, to define postcolonialism by imposing temporal demarcations between colonial and postindependence period(s) run(s) the risk of losing sight of the resilience of coloniality in the postindependence period. Ashcroft et al postulate that:

> Postcolonial theory involves discussion about experiences of various kinds: migration, slavery, suppression, resistance, representation, difference, race, gender, place and responses to the influential master discourses of imperial Europe such as history, philosophy, linguistics and the fundamental experience of speaking and writing by which all these come into being. (Ashcroft et al, 2005: 1)

Significant here is that, postcolonialism affords the subaltern in positions of gender, race, citizenship and studies of human rights to breach the stifling circumscriptions of both Whiteness and the patriotic history prevalent in Zimbabwe, the latter as noted by Ranger (2005). Despite the criticism, pointed out by Ashcroft and company, that postcolonialism has a proclivity for amorphousness like postmodernism, Huddart in *Postcolonial Theory and Autobiography* (2008), provides a cogent case for postcolonialism as adequately primed to engage in situated confrontations and contestations against totalizing and universalizing discourses. Huddart offers ample evidence to the complementary relationship between autobiography and postcolonialism. To exemplify, he poses that, 'it is possible to state that autobiographical moments have become common in postcolonial theory, along with other forms of literary and cultural theory' (Huddart, 2006: 6). This study endorses this view and shall demonstrate later the occurrence and situatedness of such moments and how examining them will illuminate complications surrounding issues of race, gender and citizenship within the broad topic of identity, (dis)location, and (un)belonging. The domiciliation of white auto/biography writing in Zimbabwe is discussed in tandem with the way postcolonialism conduces to heterogeneity and fluidity in the face of persisting and resurgent modes of local

and global political and ideological discourses and practices.

Poststructuralism, critical feminist white studies, postmodernism and deconstruction are deployed in the investigations on the three remaining objectives. Poststructuralism, defined by its proclamation to the necessity of exceeding structures [10] in the service of innovation and semantic or semiotic emancipation, is inseparable from names like Lacan, Derrida, Kristeva, Cixous, Deleuze, Bhabha and Spivak. This array of scholars, beginning with Lacan, advance the absolute separation between the signifier and signified and thereby champion the arbitrariness of meaning constructions: a recognition that forms the robust arsenal to the deconstituting of totalizing discourses. Lacan's studies on language and formations of political ideology and positions is attested in his postulation that the phallus, [11] by some hegemonic ruses develops discursive fields in which individuals are positioned and can position themselves. This contribution will be used in the context of feminist and patriarchal and whiteness investigations in this study. Lacan's argument that alterity is resident within the self terminates the insistence by the metaphysics of presence to demand a locatable address that confirms a stable and unitary subject. Derrida's deconstruction project is used, as he defined it, as a reading strategy that is mobile, flexible and vigilant to how a text's internal contradictions leads to its deconstitution. I demonstrate later in this study that such deconstitution does not entail or imply a wanton destruction of textual meaning, rather, to be promoted is the point that, this deconstitution constitutes an opening of closed and enclosing or adamantine discourses to allow plenitude as justice. Derrida, by developing a formidable panoply of neologisms like the supplement, excess, and the trace, sought to overthrow the barricades habitually installed by parochial discourses in the studies on race, gender, anthropocentrism, identity, existence and alterity. This study is cognizant of the often-strident protestations to deconstruction, accusations akin to those levelled against postmodernism and poststructuralism, that its ploy is to make a turbulence amid the teeming and unruly signs it untethers from received epistemes, it impedes the viability of knowledge practice. Derrida has on several occasions addressed this accusation by stressing the fact that deconstruction exceeds the 'critical analysis of systems and structures'. And that such accusations, notwithstanding:

> [T]he deconstructive thinking of *differance*, trace, supplement, arche-writing, etc, remains highly receptive to an asystematic reserve, a non present reminder or

[10] In the form of ideological, methodological and epistemic structures.
[11] I refer to the space of dominance in interhuman relations.

> heterogeneous other which exceeds all structures and systems even while making them possible. Deconstruction is not, therefore, as rumour would have it, negative, nihilistic or destructive, but instead affirms an inappropriable difference, or the repressed other, as that which may yet come to transform whatever we inherit. (Wortham, 2010: 32)

Derrida's deconstruction is therefore deployed to defend the speaking positions of the subaltern with the caveat that great attention be paid to the complications in subjectivity, whiteness, white privilege and its concomitant inheritance of white culpability in colonialism and coloniality persisting in the postindependence period in Zimbabwe.

Both Derrida and Levinas' theorizations on alterity shall be employed in the analysis of subjectivity, anthropocentrism and biocentricism, thus stressing the assertion that identity, (un)belonging, (dis)placement and (dis)location exceed the interhuman. Levinas in *Totality and Infinity* (1979) poses, for example, that the sense of the human is not either to be measured by presence or even by self-presence and observes that the meaning of proximity surpasses the confines of ontology of the human essence and that of the world. Here Levinas' repudiation of the Western metaphysics of presence is confirmed in that he accuses it of its ploy to sublate other difference or identity within its own projects. Additionally, the following quotation sets Derrida and Levinas' optics on difference and heterogeneity as distinct from the dialogism proposed by Bakhtin in *The Dialogic Imagination* (2008). Levinas poses:

> The infinite in its absolute difference withholds itself from presence in me; the infinite does not come to meet me in a contemporaneousness like that in which noesis and noema meet simultaneously together, nor in the way in which the interlocutors responding to each other may meet. (2002: 46)

To be remembered is that Bakhtin invests substantially in arguing that dialogism, which from its Greek etymology refers to the site of two parties or interlocutors, encompasses reciprocity in the moment of interlocution. In contrast, Levinas's argument proposes asymmetricality in interlocution and in the self's being in the world. Such an argument is aimed at rupturing the circle of totalizing ideologies and epistemes in the sense that reciprocation in interlocution, in the auto/biographical texts, permits the more powerful interlocutor to assimilate the less powerful under the guise of symmetricallity, for example, by proposing that the more powerful interlocutor and the subaltern share some common missions while, in fact, the construction of sameness is a ruse by the totalizing discourse to advance its project by appropriating the subaltern. In this study, it shall be argued, therefore, that in relation to gender, race and the

animal other, radical alterity offers an opening to avenues of justice and the possibility to invent fresh selves in every moment that demands identity as becoming as opposed to identity as defined within fixed taxonomies.

Critical feminist white studies present feminism from the West as ill-equipped to deal with feminist issues affecting females in Zimbabwe. White feminism from the West has been subjected to vigorous criticism and has been accused of reductionist habits in its hubris to speak for all women in the world, despite the heterogeneity posed by differently positioned females across the globe. Accused here, for example are Adrienne Rich (1979), in her widely circulated paper 'Disloyal to civilization', Nancy Hartsock in her 1997 article 'The feminist standpoint: Developing the ground for a specifically feminist historical materialism' and Baumgardiner and Richard in their presentation entitled 'Manifesting feminism' (2010). Riche, as McFadden (2011) argues, stands accused of deluding herself that, since she has been audacious enough to mount a critique of white civilization for its exclusionary and brutalizing dispositions towards the Other, she stands on legitimate and moral grounds to announce a remedy for the muted black woman, who for centuries has been doubly oppressed under patriarchal and imperial domination. Here, Riche confuses her vocation with the actual emancipation of the subaltern.

Sullivan (2015), in her book *Good White People: The Problem with Middle Class White Anti-racism*, argues that most liberal educated middle-class women suffer this ill disposition to believe that they care for women of colour despite lacking interhuman experience with them. While Hartsock can be prosecuted for reductionism and presenting whiteness as the norm to which other identities must conform (and in the act brutalizing the other's difference), Baumgardiner and Richard confuse the inclusion of a selected few subalterns in the discussions on race and privilege with the inclusion of all subalterns across the globe in conversations on race and gender. According to the project of this study, such whiteness manifestation is criticised by bell hooks, in 'Black woman: shaping feminist theory'(2001), Audre Lorde in *Sister Outsider (*1984*)* Linda Alcott in her 1998 article 'What should white people do?' and Jennifer Lisa Vest in her 2008 article 'The internally globalized body as instigator: Crossing borders, Crossing races'. This whiteness inscribes itself with the metaphysics of presence that privilege what Derrida calls logocentricism or phallocentricism, the later after Lacan's formulation of the phallus. These two neologisms announce a component of the metaphysics

of presence's obnoxious penchant for investing in the study of the Other [12] for reducing that Other to the discourse of the Same. Vest's penetrating critique, for example, exposes how the crossing of borders by whites and the claim that feminism is global instead of being situated according to cultural and geographic difference, reinscribes the supervening of whiteness since 'the eradication of borders and boundaries is something only the powerful can celebrate' (Vest 2008: 80). This affirms Levinas's refusal of the illusion of positions of symmetrical interlocution between the self and the other.

Review of literature related to primary texts

This literature review encompasses the critical appraisal of extant scholarly literature on white auto/biography related to the primary texts deployed in this study and the positioning of the core ideas (autoschediasm, thanatography and radical alterity) within the study. Thus it shall proceed by subsuming relevant literature review under the subheadings: Autoschediasm, Thanatography and Alterity.

Autoschediasm

Autoschediasm, according to Roget's Thesaurus, is a derivative of the the Greek *autoschediasma*, with the resultant noun suffix *ma,* of *autoschediazein* means to extemporize. *Autoschediazein* is drawn from *autoschedios* which translates to hand to hand, improvised or offhand. *Schedios* is a derivative of schedon which means near, close by, near at hand or akin to. Such a word suffuses this study with a conceptualization of auto/biographical identities and acts of writing as antifoundational: As Derrida, Foucault and de Man insist, entities can never be moored permanently to some originary site. It is this originary site that is questioned but, however, reinscripted by Tagwirei in his unpublished dissertation and article 'The nucleation of Zimbabwean white writing' (2016). Tagwirei (2011) also offers a detailed interrogation of white writing in Zimbabwe, expending much attention on the ambivalences and contradictions that trouble particular white farmers' writing in Zimbabwe. This ambivalence, Tagwirei argues, emerges in the moment of the farm invasions/repossessions when the white farmer's self straddles the border: uncertain whether to leave or stay, this self begins a reflexive inventory of the options available to the self. This uncertainty is what is posed by Tagwirei as the site where the simultaneity of presence and absence is written. 'Despite the detailed investigations,

[12] There is a resonance with Said's idea of orientalism's acts here where the Other is discursively reduced and their episteme inferiorated.

Tagwirei's thesis can be accused of inadvertently readmitting the endorsement of Whiteness and White privilege by recommending a dialogic approach to textual reading and by implication, to urgent issues of forgiveness, reparations and reconciliation. A dialogic approach, my study protests, insists on symmetrical and reciprocal relations between interlocutors. But as already theorized by Derrida and Levinas, such symmetrical and reciprocal positions culminate in the subject of hegemony being assimilated by the one who possesses more power and resources that shore up the self. At a more fundamental level, reciprocation in the dialogic space proposed by Bahktin, from whom Tagwirei draws his theorizations, means translation of meaning in the interhuman interlocution is reduced to a mere game of the selves' specular images being reflected in the optics of the other and thus reproduced and in a circular way returned to the self from whence the specular image comes. In reciprocation, to phrase it another way, no difference is staged since interlocutors are busy with affirming that in them that is simultaneously affirmed by the other.

While this study endorses the conceptualizations of simultaneity of entities in Tagwirei's disquisitions, it refuses the ontological grounding of identity in dialogue as it intervenes through writing and identity as autoschediasm, thanatography and radical alterity. Autoschediasm as denoting improvisation , extemporization and near at hand advances an order of interpreting auto/biography as writing which is equivalent to on site invention. The site and occasion of writing selves becomes a site of invention that despises any pretence to plotting the act of telling before the inauguration of the auto/biographical protagonist's narrative.

Javangwe's (2011) 'Contesting narratives: constructions of the self and the nation in Zimbabwean political auto/biography' engages in investigations of autobiographical methods and theories and concludes that autobiography in Zimbabwe is marked by contradictions. Nevertheless, he appears to impose demarcation pointers when he argues that certain whites are Rhodesians who are expelled from the Zimbabwean space of identity because they are not Zimbabwean. Javangwe seems to re-inscript the parochialism he set out to exorcise at the beginning of his study. My study posits identity as uncontainable within a country's territorial borders. After Anderson and Bhabha, the nation is equivalent to heterogeneity.

Whereas Javangwe posits positions and postionings of narrative contestations as unstable because they are constructed, this study seeks to go beyond mere citations of unstable narratives to foreground incoherence and instability in writing and auto/biography as the staple of being and beingness. The demarcations imposed by Javangwe presuppose the tendency to see being

and beingness as entities that are locatable in the assumed friction between presence and absence, being and non being and the long running battle in the West between writing and non writing. This study ,however, drawing from Derrida's ideas of hauntology and spectrality advances the position that names, assumed unified entities and written texts are always already interrupted by traces of other names , identities and texts and thus routing the optimism in meaning ever congealing to inspectable identities.

Chennells (2005) in 'Self representation and national memory: White autobiographies in Zimbabwe', interrogates ethnocentrism in Godwin, Ian Smith and Doris Lessing's works and concludes that such ethnocentric narratives mount a subversion of patriotic historiography. Chennells can be criticised, however, on the point where he proffers white ethnocentrism as a unified identity resource. Konloch (2014) has cogently argued that ambivalence rives the group or the community after consequential changes like revolutions in the country and thus even ethnic identities do not remain fixed. In addition, Chennells, his insightful analysis notwithstanding, is blind to the Janus face of subversion. My study promotes the view that subversion of the other is a subversion of the present self staging the subversion. This means no self remains unfissured after a revolution or experience of subverting the other since such subversion transports the self beyond the presubversion time and space.

In the The authority of presence: Reading Judith Todd's Through the darkness as diary, Chennells sets out to argue that Todd invents authorial legitimacy and veracity by recording only such events (speech and actual) as her presence at the site of the occurrence can validate against mendacity. He posits that the meaning constructed by composing a text from disparate entities 'refuses easy categorization' since such categories are the received or 'conventional categories' that are closed to happenings and meaning constructions outside their orbit. This study complicates this assertion by positing even the categorisations themselves as simulacra invented through language and that they are invariably becoming the other all the time. This marks a departure from Chennells' postulation of categories as entities that remain long enough in time to 'refuse easy categorization' (Chennells, 2009: 89). This becoming without remit is aligned to auto/biography as autoschediasm, thanatography and utter alterity since selves, in this study, are investigated and discussed as inventions on the spot or site of happenings. To be admitted is that, selves are never rehearsals anterior to the occasion or event and neither is it applicable to consign selves to temporal categories of the past, present and future. Contended here is that, temporalities are inventions that attempt to exclude the other, the trace, the spectre of the other different event or thought. Unlike Chennells who poses categories as 'break[ing]

in on each other' and thus defying narrative stability, this study argues that such a breaching of boundaries is a seductive illusion since all entities, in the prediscursive phase, are bounded by a namelessness that always haunts binaries and demarcations in nation and identity studies.

Alterity

Alterity is a philosophical and anthropological term that denotes otherness, difference or strangeness. In this study, alterity as derived from Emmanuel Levinas' Alterity and transcendence is deployed. Accordingly, alterity refers to the irreconcilable difference between entities because, these entities which emanate in naming activities can never be known since haunting them is anonymity, that namelessness that defies categorizations of functions and intentionalities. Following on this, autobiography can be read as the inscription of irredeemable difference in the act of writing and identity. This means, as is argued in the coming chapters, the author is transmogrified beyond recognition the moment a text is announced as a representation of the auto/biographer. In the context of this assertion can be reviewed Josiah Nyanda's PhD thesis (2016) on autobiography in Zimbabwe in which he argues that autobiography is political machinery closely aligned to functionality and intention. While Nyanda's argument is cogent in terms of paying attention to semantic plurality and the instabilities of meaning inherent in auto/biography and acts of writing, this study intervenes on the scene where Nyanda seems to advance the possibility of reading the nation from autobiographical inscriptions. He poses:

> I put forward the argument that autobiographical narratives in Zimbabwe can and have served as research tools into personal and national history, and as political tools used by autobiographers to derive national and personal agendas (Nyanda, 2016: 14).

If nation is freighted with the problematics of defining the qualifications of citizenship, sovereignty in its national and individual sense, then it may be deemed too preposterous to claim that autobiography (evincing schizoid selves as it does), can ever mend matters at the point where the nation, as Bhabha has vigorously argued, is always already a contrivance achieved through narration. This means both the nation and autobiography are each multiplicities whose alterity defies the teleology of research and the cartography of national politics. This study argues that the functionality and intentionality raised by Nyanda are concepts that are already cliches in the study of auto/biography. The enterprise of auto/biography studies, this study offers, is to investigate alterity with a view to: (a) allow legal

argumentations that recognize the utter difference from which prosecutors and defendants may seek to assert their identities; (b) prohibit the imposition of agendas in the field of race, gender and citizenship and (c) place an interdict on the mythologies of the location of origins and possessions of those origins. To extend this refusal of totalizing discourses derived from ontological grounding, auto/biography as Thanatography is discussed in the next segment.

The limiting problems that emanate from assuming that auto/biography can be cogently used as research tools can be illustrated by examining Ruby Magosvongwe, Abner Nyamende and Tavengwa Gwekwerere's article Black Zimbabwean women and 'jambanja' in Eric Harrison's Jambanja (2006): An Africana Womanist Exegesis. The trio set out to 'deploy Africana Womanist critical rubrics to advance the contention that Harrison misconstrues and misrepresents the struggles, experiences and motivations of black women during the land reform programme' (2013: 125). While the contention that white writers of auto/biography do not necessarily subscribe to the notion of asking for forgiveness on behalf of their pioneer ancestors is valid, it comes as somewhat of a surprise when Magosvongwe et al assume that autobiography ought to heed fidelity to representation as replication of events and character in writing. A cursory inventory of critical works on auto/biography, for instance , works by Olney Metaphors of the self (1980), Derrida (2002), de Man (1999), Micaela Maftei *Fictions of autobiography* (2013) and others, will afford one to create a robust argument against the tendency to assume that one 's identity can be reconstructed or retrieved through autobiography. The second issue that invites criticism in Magosvongwe et al's article, which this study seeks to remedy, is the re-inscription of totalizing discourse through mistaking counterdiscourse as discourse that ought to be elevated to universal pedestals. Erected throughout the article are the pillars of Afrocentrism, the opposite of Eurocentrism (according to the research schemes of the article). Proposing Afrocentric views on events and history as a program to unsettle Eurocentrism ensures the vitriol the subaltern usually displays before a hegemony that remains invincible (as evinced by the attitude of the article writers) throughout time. This study's project is to dismantle all such binaries as black/white, Afrocentrism/Eurocentrism, masculine/ feminine, the living/the dead, absence/presence and others. To achieve this disbandment of binaries that enclose meaning in the circles of ontology, [13] this study keeps on returning to Levinas' postulations of alterity as transcendence. Transcendence opens space for selves and nations to morph into the other - not anticipated. This means the accommodation of cultures,

[13] This is the idea that, it is possible to locate, inspect and appropriate identities in auto/biography

entities and meaning constructions that do not necessarily have to be subordinated under a single discourse.

Thanatography

Thanatography is derived from the Greek words thanatos (death of god of death) and graphy (by now well understood to be the acts/mark of writing). Thanatography can be rendered thanato- autobiography, to mean that the act of writing oneself is the writing of the other posthumous self that is already present [14] in the living. The idea of autobiography as thanatography is drawn from Derrida's (1984) theorizations on myths of origin, death and writing and for de Man's (1990) autobiography as disfigurement: a metaphoric rendition of death. It is on this basis that Muchativugwa Liberty Hove's article 'Imagining the nation: Autobiography, memoire, history or fiction in Peter Godwin's writings' can be reviewed. In this article Hove proposes to 'examine the inconsistencies of imagining self and the appropriation of identities in autobiography and memoire'. This is a laudable enterprise in autobiography studies. Despite its positive poise, Hove's article does not examine the potential in the metaphors of death inherent in acts of writing, a long running theme and problematic first identified by Socrates whose elaboration of this problematic is borrowed form the story of the Egyptian god's commentary on writing.

This study advances the position that the act of writing auto/biography is the writing of the other as death in three ways: (a) Writing subsumes a contrived self within its acts and the product of writing is not a replication of the identity of the author. This meaning that, the textual self is an annihilation of the embodied writing self. Derrida is on record arguing that writing, though it ought not be exceeded by the oppressive ontology [15] of the speaking person, obliterates the writing self through the inscriptural acts that produce an other of the author who becomes unrecognizable. This is especially once the auto/biography as disseminated text is appropriated and interpreted differently by others who speak as multiple voices; (b) Auto/ biography as Hove notes, is imbricated in acts of selectivity of events, retrospective constructions of events and projections of the self into the future. Deliberate selective acts on events and memory gaps means certain people, certain others both of the schizoid self and other

[14] This is according to clarifications through hauntology and spectrality.
[15] Here reference is made to both the biological body and textual corpus.

others are interred in these gaps and the inscriptural murders plotted by writing as selection; (c) the third way is autobiography as one's estate: It is the inheritance that the living auto/biographer inherits both in the present time and posthumously. The fact that selves are constantly becoming other, means the self that writes the autobiography is an other different from the other of the Same who reads the autobiography and attests through name and signature (Lejeune, 2000) that, the autobiography belongs to the same. This difference authorises one to argue that the self inherits its book both in the present and posthumously. The idea of Thanatography examined here is both metaphoric and actual and is explored in detail in the coming chapters.

1.4. Auto/biography

By interrogating white auto/biography, this study exposes the ambivalences, ambiguities, paradoxes and dilemmas that arise in the claims for belonging and the premises for the authority behind such claims. This argument rests on three premises: first, the interweaving of autobiography and biographies, although generating polyphonic narratives that refuse totalizing discourse, compromises claims to belonging by the authors pretending to be legitimate figures whose writing espouse the white community's contestation of the abrogation of their citizenship and mastery in economic production while that legitimacy is queried by counter narratives in the same book. Second, the ideologization of space by most white community members indicates, in a telling way, how the whites still privilege themselves over the blacks by installing themselves in the hub of capitalism production and as guardians of the environment while, paradoxically, voiding the land of the black people. This is done synonymously with an interrogation of the Zimbabwean government's patriotic historiography's performance of a 'catachresis of democracy' (Spivak, 1991: 70) and reinscriptions of grand narratives in nation narration (Bhabha, 2005). Third, the authors' deployment of fictional narrative strategies interposes contradictions between generic modes and their desires to be responsible for writing the historical of the other whom history has erased. This study, concedes to the as yet unresolved problems in distinguishing fiction from nonfiction. In the context of the distance marked by fictional strategies between the historical and imaginative configurations the autobiography and biography deploy, one can add the ambivalence that the reader feels, caused by the authors' emotional and spatial detachment from the site or sites that subtend auto/biography. I discuss that while emotional detachment satisfies the objective researcher/author's tablet of professional conduct, it can either be a

fiction or may disguise a cunning and egotistic appropriation of others' narratives [16] to promote the author's own project.

The study proceeds by introducing the concepts and conceptualizations of ideology and space, intertextuality as the intersecting of biographies and autobiography, fiction and nonfiction and authorial detachment/attachment which frame the analysis of selected auto/biographies. In conjunction with an investigation of these three premises, the study discusses and evaluates authors' objectives for writing their autobiographies and biographies, and this is the right moment to limn them: to depict white farmers' struggles to retain and stay on their farms in the face of death and violence; to prove white farmers' legal entitlement to the land against the Zimbabwean government's claim that all white owned land had been gotten through colonial usurpation; to legitimate whites' contestation of evictions on the basis that they had a commendable record of economic production beneficial to the national economy and as employment space for blacks; to prove that whites were ecologically oriented and that since they attended to the care of the biosphere, they had earned the right to keep their farms; to demonstrate that the land and resources expropriated from whites largely benefited the black political elites contrary to the government's narrative that such land and resources were to benefit the ordinary landless Zimbabweans and that therefore, such a narrative constituted the politically embattled government's survival strategy; to expose the trauma, caused by the violent land grab that marks the white community and finally; to document that blacks, especially farm workers, also bore the brunt of the chaotic land invasions and evictions of whites. A point to note: although these objectives appear to be independent from one another, this thesis treats them as interactive.

1.4.1. Memoir as amphibian: truth as fiction in historical, cultural and cognitive sites

> [I]n autobiography the truth of facts is subordinate to the truth of the man, for it is first of all the man who is in question. The narrative offers us the testimony of a man about himself, the contest of a being in dialogue with itself, seeking its innermost fidelity. (Olney, 1980: 60)

[16] As in Godwin, Rogers and Lamb's books.

> Of course, the distinction between 'fictional' and 'nonfictional is notoriously problematic these days (Rimmon-kenan, 2002: 25)

This segment of the introduction introduces the meaning of fiction and objectivity or emotional detachment in autobiography and biography and situating them in the self's historical, cultural, geographical and cognitive sites. The title of this segment points to the amphibian stance of autobiography which allows the cohabitation of both the nonfictional and fictional in its acts and hence, it transgresses generic boundaries: therefore, it is beyond 'truth and falsity' (Olney, 1980: 63). Its transgressive acts across genres even compels a substitution of hybrid for the metaphor of amphibian to allow for the multiple generic acts performed by autobiography. In this case, fiction (as both act and noun) refers to the construction of meaning on an object (both abstract and non-abstract) without heeding the restrictions of grand narratives or generic strictures. Fiction's posture is different from objectivity in that the latter attempts to pay strict fidelity to reality as independent of subjective semantic constructions.

The autobiographies and biographies in question (as I will elaborate in the analyses of the texts) deploy 'fictional strategies such as dialogue, interior monologue, autodiegetic narration and [their address] to the readers' (Smith and Watson 2010: 1). These strategies engage with the historical facts of farm invasions, evictions, death and trauma and this engagement creates an intersection between the historical (that which happened in time and space) and the fictional, thus bringing to the fore the amphibian or hybrid nature of autobiography.

The self that constructs these auto/biographical narratives gains its authorial validation within history and culture: its enunciation stances, however, are marked by ironies and paradoxes and these two unsettle the performance of auto/biographical narratives by exposing contradictions that refuse a stable and unified self. This incoherence is what Bruner points out when he writes:

> In any case the reflexivity of self-narrative poses problems beyond those of verification, beyond the issue of indeterminacy (that the very telling of the self-story distorts what we have in mind to tell), beyond 'rationalisation'. The whole enterprise seems a most shaky one, and some critics, like Louis Renza, even think it is impossible. (1960: 10)

The question raised by such an assertion, which is one pertinent to this study is: What is the value of auto/biographical narratives if the autos itself, through its reflexivity, distorts its own narratives and renders this performance 'an endless prelude'? (Renza, 1980:100). While Olney limits his examination of autobiography to exposing its acts of indeterminacy, incoherence and

its itineraries as beyond truth and fiction, Renza, impatient to take on board these acts, dismisses autobiography altogether as impossible, if not absurd and thus, renders autobiography an utter fiction. This study navigates between two extremes: the critics who would recommend holding up autobiography to the rigorous methods of science [17] and a position held by scholars like Renza. This navigation redeems autobiography by interposing the idea of autobiography as acts by the Self that show that the self is responsible for the other: as I will discuss in forthcoming segments. Here, it suffices for me to point out a comparison between this idea and 'narrative integrity [as] the coherence and depth of one's ethical commitments, as evidenced by the shape of one's life' (Freeman and Brockmeier 1984: 75). In this mode, the selected books show that selves are beyond fiction as they stage an alterity that relentlessly vexes positivist methods and totalising narratives. Since this alterity leaves behind traces of signifying that swell into a corpus of signification as in the texts, the self slips outside the brackets of utter fiction.

The mode of this study's navigation, one underpinned by the self's ethics, can be better comprehended if shown as a phenomenon already present and operating in the compilations of histories and constructions of historiographies. By deploying biographies, interviews, excavations (both for material and archaival artefacts) and ordering the results of such research into a story or stories, the historian installs an autobiographical signature in this ordering or narrativizing. The historian attempts to shore up certain chosen hypotheses by recruiting to his/her projects evidence and other selves' narratives. This study deals with narratives in which the writers' already fractured, inauthentic and incoherent stories are paradoxically hoisted up to disprove and discredit yet another set of invented and incoherent stories strung together by the ZANU PF government and, such stories were melded into an obstinate and obfuscating 'patriotic historiography' (Ranger, 2011: 47). Both the historian (a masked autobiographer) and the self-conscious autobiographer seem to have no qualms with setting aside fixed and exacting truth claims as they marshal discordant stories and alibies into a semblance of credible history and this is telling with reference to the formation of historiographies in that, as Dilthey, 'one of the founders of modern [criticism] on historiography' argues, 'universal history is an extrapolation of autobiography' (Bruner 1990:201). The self simultaneously inserts itself into history or autobiography as it narrativizes since 'autobiography is not a simple recapitulation of the past: [but] also the attempt and the drama of a man struggling to reassemble himself in

[17] This would be by way of using truth tables, equating it to strict verificationist and validity standards: something Le juene attempted.

his own likeness at a certain moment of his history' (Gusdorf, 1956). Gusdorf's allusions to 'drama' and the self's 'assemb[ling]' of itself attest not only to the artifice of autobiographical narratives but also to the self's deployment of a range of narrative devices in its quest for an ontological grounding and a justification of the same narratives that are mobilized to bring it into existence.

The examination of fiction, nonfiction and the writing self's attachment or detachment in autobiography can be extended to the self's cultural and cognitive sites. Such a situating of the self in these sites is germane in this way: first, the self's genesis, despite its refusal of foundational fixities, owes a debt to culture and cognitive structures in evolving language, frames of norms and values (culture) memory, psychic, perceptual and modes of self-referential acts. Second, this debt is always paid in how the self draws on its cultural and cognitive bank in it's conceptualisations of fiction and attachment/detachment. The location of the locution of the narrating self within culture and cognitive sites opens a conversation between sociology, psychoanalysis and anthropology. For example, in modern, times the self's origins, structures of identity and self-interiorizing and exteriorizing acts have been theorized as schizophrenic from its inception (Freud, 1989; Lacan, 1990). Emphasis is on the impossibility of a split self to generate and consolidate coherent truths or objective narratives. Theorems have also been proposed as to how the self's enmeshment with group/family and culture will unavoidably lead to its constructions of the profane and sacred (evil and good) and concepts of the functional and interactive self (Strauss, 1970; Durkheim, 1983). This implicates notions of ethics and frames of truth and lies since the binary of the sacred and profane bids the self to interpret reality with reference to a normativity and abnormativity standard. A standpoint like this casts light on the narrating self's source of motives and the mechanics of its hewing of a trajectory of the sovereign self (Taylor, 1987), a self grounded in the bios but whose gaze and gait relentlessly gravitates to that ungraspable interiority constituted by subjectivity. This study deploys the subjectivity of the self as fissured and argues that it is through the porous seams of subjectivity that the interstitial conversation between biography and autobiography is enabled. In his examination of the relationship between autobiography and culture, Bruner posits that:

> The heart of my argument is this: eventually the culturally shaped cognitive and linguistic processes that guide the self-telling of life narratives achieve the power to structure perceptual experience, to organize memory, to segment and purpose-build the very 'events' of a life. In the end, we become the autobiographical narratives by which we 'tell about' our lives. And given the context to which I referred, we also become variants of

the culture's canonical forms. (1983: 45)

What Bruner poses here can be drawn into this study to illuminate the cognitive and linguistic structures from which an articulated and articulating identity arises and how and why, subsequently, the narrating self evolves ruses to canonise certain narratives as it simultaneously demonizes others. One can add the point that Bruner's assertions corroborate this study's view that language, a fecund ground for identity, [18] invents this identity which is paradoxically rooted in bios and routed in the autos through language's discriminating enunciations and the ambiguities and ambivalences which are notorious for generating narrative aporia, as I will show through the selected texts, which produce contradictions. Such a tissue of cognitive and lingustic issues has already received rigorous investigations by Freud (1985) and Lacan (1984; 1990), especially around childhood development and its ramifications for adult identity.

Freud, in his investigations on consciousness and identity dismantles the unified Cartesian subject by decentering the ego and thus paving way for Lacanian insertion of the subject's instability at this subject's core within language. The implications of such a view to this study are that any attempt at stringing diverse narratives into a coherent whole, approximates only a semblance of that whole since the agent of assembling the narratives, is always already a 'split' subject (Lacan, 1990). Therefore, such a schizophrenic subject does not placate the demands of positivist objectivity. This study argues that there is perceptual discordance between the assembling of narratives and the way these narratives reflect on the author's perceptual standpoint and its discourse of white subjects as victims. Lacan breaches the symmetry Sartre installs between the subject and object's gazes by transferring the gaze from the subject to the object and concluding that 'You never look at me from the way I see you' (1990: 103). However, though he wrests knowing authority from the subject, by extrapolation, the auto/biographer, Lacan limits his analysis by not unsettling this gazing back by the object, for example, showing that the spaces of subject (author) and object (the narrated) are interchangeable and thus the author becomes, in the same instance of authoring, the authored.

Does this mean that there exists no organizing agent beyond the narratives? While this study admits that there exists no 'prelinguistic' and 'presemiotic' self and that 'narratives are forms inherent in our ways of getting knowledge that structure experience about the world and ourselves', it proposes that the interdiscursive spaces between narratives breach the assumed insularity of particular narratives. Since the subject invents his identity and epistemic

[18] This is where the speaking self as subject brings himself into being and otherness.

foundations through his relation to the significant others (parents, friends, neighbours and others), he constructs a specular image of himself (Lacan, 1990), an image whose grasp on concepts like truth, reality, ontology and others is no less slippery than a claim to wielding totalizing discourses. Nevertheless, although the self is attached to its family/group at the sites of biology, myths of origin, history and culture, through its singularity in experiencing such encounters, such sites will inevitably rupture the cords of such an attachment, thus, paradoxically the attached self is a detached self, since, as Olney (1982) postulates, the autobiographical self must strike a distance between itself and its object of narration in performing its stories. An analysis of narrations on farm invasions and evictions prompts the pertinent discussion of the intertextuality between discarded and newly invented versions of self and nation. Such a discussion has the potential to expose contradictions between selves, time(s), ideological underpinnings, detachment, attachment, truth and fiction and ontological orientation.

1.4.2. Intertextuality as auto/biography

The task here is to examine what emerges when disparate texts/narratives, in seeking an audience, overlap and the implications for auto/biography and by extension self and nation narration in the context of (dis)location, (dis)placement and (un)belonging. The selected texts of this study, drawing on Allen (2015) in *Intertexuality*, are *a* reference to the physical assemblage of words in writing and speech and, after Foucault, the discourses that arise between the act of writing/speaking in regimes of knowledge making and appropriation of space in the interplay of power and meaning making. This discourse approximates what Barthes (1981), calls ‘work’ and is distinguished from ‘the fabric of the words which make up the work’ (p. 32). Intertextuality, as Allen notes, is a notoriously difficult term to tame within a single definition. For this study, intertextuality refers to both the proximal and interwoven modes in which narratives negotiate, in the interstitial spaces of intersecting and allusive texts’ enunciatory positions. The acts of the self's navigations and negotiations, this study underscores, constitute no reciprocity to other selves’ promotion of their meaning constructions. This means the writing or speaking self, despite the debt of language, culture, biological/embodied presence, psychological apparatus and history it owes to the other and others, is marked by a singularity whose alterity breaches group or national identity formations (Levinas, 1969; Kristeva, 2002). This is the point, in relating intertextuality to auto/biography, where it becomes crucial to lay down the three key points through which intertextuality can be

inserted as an enabling concept in this study.

The first key point revolves on the singularity of selves and events. Singularity here refers to that irreducible or undistributable quality attributable to only one embodied self or event in time and space. This quality bears directly on auto/biography in that it obviates the quandary generated between the self's multivoiced speaking within the heteroglottic (Barkhtin, 1996), speaking of other selves and the difficult of assigning the spoken or written text to identifiable selves or stable enunciator and disseminatory sites. Being able to lay uncontested claims to certain acts done, re-membered or inaugurated by the agentive self invests that self with what this study proposes, to formulate, as speaking capital. Singularity, this deviating though not necessarily deviant alterity, can best be understood in conversation with the philosophical ideas of Levinas, Kierkgaard and Derrida on the relations between accountability, responsibility and singularity. Kierkegaard (1993) makes the postulation, by showing the biblical Abraham rapturing the law of God and his community's ethical conventions in his readiness to offer Isaac as sacrifice, that the individual evolves into an irreducible singularity by pioneering in incorporating the taboo/crime and by accepting as viable any external (outside group normativity) mode of positioning acts and meanings of such acts into a code of behaviour which spurns the urgency that compells the binary of normative and abnormality. This means the self that undertakes to compile an auto/biography is a self, as Gusdorf (1957) says, that believes that it has something worthy to say or a self that believes that it has accrued worthiness in its acts and that such acts must be recorded to memorialise or monumentalize such acts.

In the illumination of Kierkegaard's intervention, the self is of the community but is also paradoxically not of the community. The self is of the community because its morality and ethics are oriented towards the consensus of modes of group disapproval and approval. Nevertheless, the same self, through contingency, can evolve a novel way of interpreting reality whose ruses catalyze the rupture of this consensus. Contingency, as Rorty (1991) poses, irrupts in the course of individuals' routine or banal acts as encounters that expose the irony of the self's myth of being secure in group identity and the vulnerability of the self to unknown and external forces against which the group/community has not yet erected or cannot erect stockades. Such a view can be read into the way the writers of this study's auto/biographies discover that experience as contingency - that which eliminates all others but the involved selves rend the community's discourse (text) as each demands that his/her call must be accorded a different interpretation. It is this call that places a ligature on the self to narrate experience from multiple and divergent views. Both Levinas and Derrida's overthrowing of

mere difference as foundational to identity articulation gestures to radical alterity although, as noted by Caputo (2012), Derrida tempers his mode of alterity by compromising it in the space of undecidability. The notion of radical alterity implies, in the context of self -writing, that the speaking self takes it upon itself to refuse divergence as an anachronism: in fact, the radical self deletes divergence from its vocabulary since what the self comports to is not founded in neither the polyphony or babel of divergent views but to that reality which is coming and whose coming mocks the human calendar and tables of logic and predictions. This alludes to Walter Benjamin's (1963) notion of messianism which expresses indeterminacy, aporia and paradox as already always inseminated in the condition of human existence in the context of reality.

The farm invasions in the analyses of texts, are exemplary of the contingent and that which defies the tablets of established logic and consensus. The self is isolatable from both the heteroglottic and group consensus by the impossibility of it being only itself and itself alone that cannot escape accounting for certain acts (omissions and commissions) and the responsibility that arises because of these contingent contexts and acts. This view is corroborated by both Levinas and Derrida who argue, with some remarkable alacrity, that the singularity of the self comes in the open on the occasion of the self's reckoning on its being responsible for the other and, as any staple textbook on self-writing would concede, accounting for ones' acts is an integral part of auto/biographical writing. But since the writing self is embodied like others, affectivity [19] compels the self to write the other. This compulsion is born in the recognition that the other which is embodied like the same is vulnerable to that which will ineluctably come and whose coming, like the beginning or ending of a narrative, is unknowable.

The second key point, aligned to the project of this study, is the meaning of intertextuality in the space of the acts of the writerly and readerly. To rephrase: How do we account for the possible tensions and misreadings between the text as inscription and interpretation? That there is a space between the writing self and the unknowable or anonymous reader is a fact interposed by the written text. But unlike Bakhtin who employs the term/phrase 'the dialogic' to describe the reciprocal acts of addressor and addressee in specific social and linguistic sites, this study's examination of auto/biography occupies itself with the consequences of the impossibility of there being a transparent text from which both the writing self and the reader will ever be able

[19] Affectivity is Levinas' word for that unworded and unwordable primary force that relates the self to the face of the other.

to draw meaning. Like Bakhtin, this study allows, after Saussure's seminal essay, that the signifier is rived from the referent by the arbitrary assignations of the sign. This means that the act of reading auto/biography or any text refuses both transparent and reciprocal/symmetrical readings of meaning. This packaged and transparent reading is what Bakhtin poses as possible through his privileging of diachronic over synchronic reading.

This study approves of the Bakhtinian diachronic reading minus the attendant reciprocity. This stance can only be possible after a revaluation of Bakhtin's key term heteroglossia which means multiple voicedness (a direct translation from Greek). While uncountable commentaries by differently positioned authors celebrate, mostly in markedly exuberant tones, the heterogeneity of entities associated with heteroglossia, this study, after a cue from Derrida (2003), that 'infinite difference is no difference', is cautious to admit the emancipatory value of multiple and different voices being allowed enunciatory voices and sites without the possibility of novel worlding beyond the present heteroglottic worlds. Advancing heterogeneity or difference, without remit, as Derrida points out, will lead to a regression in which difference is muted by undifferentiation: the very phenomenon that the selected auto/biographies here eschews. The intertextuality promoted here is one that wrests the text and intertext from both diachronic and synchronic readings: from the former for reasons now made obvious and from the latter to elude and prevent totalizing knowledge regimes, national patriotic historiographies/ hegemonies and autobiographies that privilege the masculine figure, especially the Occidental male figure (Huddart, 2012) over the other of a different biology, culture, psychology and geography. The self's text and the reader's work can inaugurate narratives or texts outside totalizing narratives because, contrary to the Bakhtinian belief that 'after' the 'Adamic' project of naming - as in discourse formulation and imposition, the world or text can be inaugurated outside the already preexistent texts, the contingent which flings the self out of the rut of routine (as already noted) behaves in the same way as the moment of the creation of the world ex nihilo: to refuse this ex nihilo creation is strangely to refuse that Adam invented language prior to any text and therefore ex nihilo. Forbidding the play of this hypothesis opens way for the reentry of grand narratives which, ironically, Bakhtin had sought to disallow through presenting reading as 'dialogism'. Here the autonomy of the writing self is not presented in 'antithetical' relations to the heteronomical forces that impose themselves on individuals who dwell under political states and interfering institutions 'but in existing without a genus, without being the individuation of a concept [because] the ipseity of the 'I' consists in remaining outside the distinction between the individual and the general' (Levinas, 1969: 118). The writing 'I' does

not necessarily need to formulate a program of resistance against totalising narratives: its punctum of heteronomy is already always resident as ungraspable interiority prior to the arising of heteronomical forces and it is this untotalizable interiority that guarantees 'the break-up of totality' (totalizing narratives) which leads to the presence of the absolutely other' (Levinas, 1969: 118) as auto/biographer.

To the ipseity of the I can be added the concept of the 'secret' of a phenomenon 'shared' among ethical beings, yet not the closedness of something known only by the self but the secret of the self as the bearer of the irreducible mystery 'of not knowing' (Derrida, 2005: 84). This concept is different from the already examined idea of singularity in that whereas Singularity approaches ethical responsibility and accountability through previous experience and knowledge, the Secret approaches the question of identity through the act of knowing that the self knows that it does not know and will never know why it does not know. This notion of not knowing, in the absolute sense, if deployed as an analytical tool, can cast light on the auto/biographer's knowing that he/she knows, he/she does not know and will never know and, to extend the point, cannot know its birth; [20] secondly, its disposition to make particular decisions/choices at critical junctures in its lived experience. [21] The third site of the Secret is in knowing that one cannot know, to some certain degree and in the absolute sense, of what will irrupt or emerge in the immediate and long run of the future. This void looming on the future horizon has been attested to by Gusdorf (1981), Olney (2000), Derrida (2011) and Paul de Man (1990) as the impetus behind auto/biography which is aimed at securing the self's experience and memories against death. To provide elaboration and elucidation, the thanatographical acts in auto/autobiography, are examined and explored in this study.

Reading auto/biographical narratives as already departed from the limits of dialogism and the pre-Bakhtinian reading, [22] this study views the reader as the other writer whose reading entails not necessarily fidelity to supposed original meanings intended by the author of the text but one who constructs multiple versions of the distributed text and can offer interpretations of the text that perplex the writing self in ways that render the text unrecognizable to the auto/biographer. Since the writer of the text/narrative may be perplexed to the extent that he/she rejects versions of his narratives generated by acts of reading, the writer is not necessarily

[20] This is a scenario that leaves a void that renders narratives of origin and belonging as merely imaginary.
[21] I refer to the self writing itself and the other and how it shows guilt, shame and remorse about the ramifications of certain of its choices/decisions.
[22] This is a reading which supposed that the writer installed labelled packages of meaning in the text for the convenience of the reader.

bound to the text and once the text loses its supposed moorings, the author vanishes in the space of the intertext's refusal to gesture towards a unitary, traceable and fixed referent. The concept of the vanished author beyond text finds a kindred voice in Derrida's (2003) signature phrase that there is 'no meaning outside the text' (p. 102) and Barthes' famous pronouncement that the 'author is dead': dead in the sense that what is written as text cannot be original to a single site, rather, the text, through reading makes multiple calls to innumerable sites. This study seeks to show that although reading forbids tracing semiotic lines to a unitary author, the author can still speak beyond the intertext, because as long as multiple readings of his/her text have been done, is being done and shall be done, the speaking voice that inaugurated all these readings remains alive in the debates and versions of the text generated by these readings.

The third set of concepts and praxis related to the phenomenon of intertextuality is one that involves modes of autobiographical and biographical acts of writing. The investigation of these modes is pertinent to this study in that, first, one has to reconcile self-writing and biography, in one book, and this immediately compels one to imagine the consequences of such a diachronic presentation of lives, especially bearing in mind that auto/biography's inclusion of the others refuses sublation of these included selves, against the habit of more traditional autobiographies that privilege an autonomous narrator. Secondly, self-writings that undertake to record and preserve the lives of others, cross beyond the boundaries of geography, culture, psychology and history to become ethical projects whose comportment is to invest value both to the physical bodies, memories and histories of such narrated lives. Third, by narrating others, the self invents the foundations for supposedly stable legitimacy and authority to speak. These three issues, to demonstrate their place in intertextuality, are to be examined in relation to autobiographical memory, history and truth.

At this point the definitions of self-writing and biography become crucial in the order for this study to determine the interpenetration of lives and by extrapolation, intertexts. This study poses that biography, is a compilation or compilations of a life or lives [23] by the external observation or study of such lives or that life. In self-writing however, the self, in a reflexive mode, invents itself through writing about itself from both the interior and exterior vantage points. [24] In corroboration, Smith and Watson postulate:

[23] I refer to a single biographer's making of multiple versions of a single subject.
[24] The speaking positions of the self are more fluid and inventive than those under biography since the 'I' can speak under camouflage in the third person narrative voice as Harrison does in *Jambanja*.

> In biography, scholars of other peoples' lives document and interpret those lives from a point of view external to the subject. In life narrative people write about their own lives (even when they write about themselves in the second or third person, or as a member of a community) and do so simultaneously from externalized and internal points of view. (2001: 5)

A reading of Smith and Watson within the parameters of this study will show that the reflexivity of the 'I' is marked by a convexity or interlinked convexities - the reflexive acts always moving from the interior to encompass others (selves, experiences, memories and histories) before returning to itself, and this is relevant to auto/biographies like those selected for this study, which compile and transcribe lives of others as simultaneously as it invents itself. This study, nevertheless notes that, such convexities assume the subordination of the writing self community discursive means of group identity and, in the same moment, individual identity which, in such a case is viewed as logically a derivation from group or national identity. This view is crossed by the study whose position is that writing selves, despite relating themselves to some mythical foundations of origins and imaginaries of identity constructed through cultures, geographies and histories, performs the punctum [25] by rupturing the closure erected by these convexities of relations. This breaching of these enclosures raises the possibility of the self's agency in creating other worlds beyond the reach of present totalizing narratives. The auto/biographies that I analyse already break the tablets of a fixed taxonomy by permeating the space between biography and autobiography and thus assumes both amphibian and protean acts which, despite attempts at 'distinguishing life narrative and biography, contemporary practices often blend them into a hybrid' (Smith and Watson, 2001), thus, demonstrating that the generic stance is compatible with the mutabilities of identity and belonging.

The agentive overrunning of the circumscribing master narratives introduced above make the first subject of this segment, a topic which can be conveyed as a question: How do we contest the privileged Subject of autobiography? The examination of the concept of the privileged Subject in auto/biography prods one to determine how the agency of the Subject interacts with that of others, especially in a postcolonial context in Zimbabwe in which White writing has proliferated since 'the post 2000 era' (Manase, 2014) to contest laws and policies that reconfigure property rights and thus destabilizes the master discourses on identity the Whites

[25] This is done through modes of criticism: mockery, irony, humour and both physical and psychological distancing of the self.

had invented for themselves.

The privileged autonomous self is located in the genealogy of the Cartesian self who privileges his narrative of ordering knowledge regimes that advance his self project by designating the other as object of the Subject's knowledge and by universalizing this knowledge. In this context, Anderson (2001) has argued: 'In so far as autobiography has been seen as promoting a view of the subject as universal, it has also underpinned the centrality of masculine and, we must add, Western and middle class modes of subjectivity'(p. 14). Such a subjectivity who is 'born out of Enlightenment secular humanism' inscribes an 'abstract unique individual agent moving through time and space' against particular/exotic/other selves. Accordingly, such a writing self sets tensions between it's use of canonical/universal epistemes that oppose local/indigenous/particular modes of life narration. This tension must be investigated because Postcolonial theory [26] does not always think about selves in a way that fits the discourse of autobiography. For example, the White writing that makes a resurgence in Zimbabwe after 2000, is marked by demands for the respect of the rule of law, human rights and property rights [27] which are, however, '[in]applicable to every situation, especially when the situation involves a colonial legacy that has not been adequately dealt with or resolved' (Pilossof, 2008: 272-273) as the land issue in Zimbabwe. In this case, the selected narratives provide the occasion for an interrogation of the intertexts that emerge as the white autobiographical selves position themselves in a post colonial context to negotiate their identity and belonging.

The second topic addressed by this study in relation to auto/biography as intertext, is the concept of ethics as responsibility for the other. Such a mode of responsibility, applies to the selected auto/biographies in the disposition of the author to narrate the other's lives/experiences. As can be observed, this concept of responsibility originates its formulation from Emmanuel Levinas who postulates that the other is constitutive of one's identity and purpose [28] by virtue of the other's primal presence before the emergence of the self's own projects. Levinas (2001) proclaims: 'I understand responsibility as responsibility for the Other, thus as a responsibility for what is not my deed, or for what does not even matter to me; or which precisely does matter to me, is met by me as a face' (p. 95). The face, though it derives its name from the physiological face, refers to the space between humans; a space charged with the consciousness that the presence of the other provokes and confirms difference in identity

[26] A theory whose tools fits the scrutiny of colonial and postcolonial issues in Zimbabwe.
[27] These attributes are themselves the canon of international/universal law or discourse.
[28] I refer to the accumulation of acts that promote the self's own self advancing projects.

since the Same can only approach the Other through a heterogeneity of difference and sites of reference (identity, belonging, gender and nationality amongst others) which, because of their infinite difference, elude total comprehension by the Same. The 'Other's face disturbs me', says Levinas, and this 'disturb[ing]' is what inaugurates discourse as the self invents itself through auto/biography and auto/biography itself being a set of acts in negotiation and navigation as the self performs itself in relation to the Other's difference. The 'face' of the Other is the supreme authority (Levinas, 2001: 215). This primal presence of the other is related to one in terms of demand as affectivity and encounter in proximal relations. Thus, for Levinas, the self is a moral event, that is of a deeper sensibility than rationality, the kind of rationality that is resident in Cartesian totalizing thought. The proximal relations pointed out above forbid the invasion and reduction of the other to the Same (totalizing discourse) by keeping a distance out of respect for the other in the acknowledgment that the other's self projects, though not comprehended by the Same, matter since it is through them that the other affirms the identity and humanity of the Subject/Same.

The implications for Levinas' ideas of the face to this study are crucial as: first, Levinas (2001) abhors totalizing acts which are opposed by the discourse of heterogeneity relentlessly performed by the face and auto/biography. Secondly, the face of the Other makes the Self/Same to construct meaning in the encounter with the incomprehensible Other. This meaning making, as in auto/biographical writing, provides an exit and escape from the meaninglessness of existence examined by Nietzsche (1990) and Sartre (2000) as existential nihilism: the barren space devoid of viable self-referential and relational cognitive and performative acts. This nihilism results from the claustrophobia engendered by the semiotic/semantic vacuum. It can only be evaded by the recognition that, 'the true exit from [this vacuum] is in obligation, in the, for the other, which introduces meaning into the nonsense [vacuum]' (Levinas, 1984: 75-78). It is at the center of this thesis, for example, to investigate how my selected texts create existential meaning (identity and belonging) through the auto/biographers' encounters with Others and how they reconstruct the meanings of Others in their community: those whose previous sites of meaning construction and self invention have been dismantled by the traumatic farm invasions and evictions.

Furthermore, especially on the idea of responsibility as demand, and the role of affectivity, this study proposes that the mutual recognition of mutual vulnerabilities (to physical harm, death and pain wh) between people, calls (makes a demand) upon both the self and other, through the extraordinary sensibility/affectivity pointed out above by Levinas, to imagine their relations as

inviting 'homage' to each, other instead of acts that objectify the other by reducing this other to a mere appendage to the Same. This homage conjures, though with some noted differences, Mead's (1988) and Cooley's (1990) views on how the self constructs meaning and self identity by referring its self configuration to the given interpretative table of normative and ab-normative acts. This study shatters the specular image of the self offered by Mead and Cooley by foregrounding a self already split and whose identity is best reflected and disfigured in the move of the metaphor of the broken mirror. It is the self who multiplies texts as discourse by writing the other into existence and therefore evincing responsibility for the Other(s), especially where this responsibility entails retrieving the Other from death, a position from which they have been utterly denuded of the agency to negotiate their claims in relation to the justice system or, as in the case of the murdered white men in the selected auto/biographies, how to navigate through a justice system which is in fact an injustice system.

This study argues that the ethical concept of responsibility for the Other, in its Levinasian sense, means that, the authors of my selected texts, in writing their auto/biographies, inscribe themselves with the authority to speak about the past, for 'not everyone has authority to speak about any subject' (Foucault, 2004: 134). As if by a move of exceptionality, they alone at the moment of writing, have individually answered the call of their obligation to write Others into existence. It has also been noted that the writing self's alacrity in answering this obligation foregrounds the intertext of discourses of difference (differences in identity, belonging and imaginaries of home and nation) whose habit is to multiply its meanings in ruses that rupture the circles of totalising narratives. This responsibility for the other and how it confers the authority to speak shall be investigated in conjunction with how the selected texts weave or attempt to weave an intertext out of multiple stories/experiences (exemplified by the interviews) which emerge from differently positioned geographies, cultures and times and examine how this weaving exposes a set of objectives.

1.4.3. Auto/biography or thanatography? Contestation for the authority to inherit stories by and about the dead and the past

The task of auto/biography, as in the proffered white narratives, is to realize not only that 'I shall die one day', as Heidegger (1960) says of Dasein (human being/self) but that 'people around me [have died] will die one day' (Levinas, 2001: 45). This recognition of the Other's death is already a responsibility for the other as restitution through a recovery of the murdered's

memory. The inscriptions of narratives of justice as 'fairness' (Rawls, 1990) or as retribution as in Mosaic-judeo laws. It is, in a material sense, also the recognition by the auto/biographer that, he has already been the surety to the estate of the dead. This estate, both material and non-biodegradable, refers to the cadaver of the dead and the narrative that had positioned these dead in relation to the nation, race, heritage and the future. I will argue that, responsibility for the Other confers not only the authority but also legitimacy requisite to narrating self and Others through the substitution of the self for the other. This substitution circumvents the reinvention of the Other through tools that reduce the Other to the Same since inhabiting the other's space in this way performs not usurpation but acts of mourning as re-membering and rescuing the dead from the oblivion or void of death. Accordingly, one of the concerns of this study is the investigation of the thanatographic imperative in self writing. Related to this context, is the examination of the confluence of memory, history and death. The argument here is that the thanatographic imperative ignites the graphic acts and suffuses, though without suffocation, all gestures by these graphic acts to recuperate the dead from the ligatures of terminal and disfiguring discourses.

The basis of this view is twofold: a retrospective foray into the past through memory already exposes lacunae (the metaphor of death) and irretrievable bodies of knowledge (self-knowledge) and the corpus of the bios or the biodegradable somatic text. The second is that the writing self, as a temporal being, does the graphic acts as one cognizant of terminal horizons which insist that, one desist from inscribing oneself in neither decomposable corporeal bodies nor historiographies of family, community, nation and the global imaginary, since these bodies do not even approximate the interiority of the self's singularity in experience. The position held here is that, the self unhinges itself from death (death as terminus) by reposing its stories in or surrendering itself to the Other. Thus, life and death form a chiasmic intertext whose constant bringing forth of the dead in the living [29] as in the iteration of the Other's life every time the book is read or even when its closed. In this way, this study marginalises that conventional diremption imagined between life and death as it cedes 'life in its non-oppositionality to death' (Berezdivin, 2005).

The image of the cadaver in auto/biography and the acts of mourning attendant to the image or the empirical presence of this cadaver imposes on the writing self to vicariously die in three ways. The first way is in the reduction or transfiguration of both the corporeal and mnemonic

[29] I refer both to the book and living bios.

(the mnemonic operates within the psychic hub) to text on paper or digital devices: a transcription of the self that disallows the self to appear again in the same configuration. Since the transcription involves the reflexive acts of the self examining itself, this turning on itself by the self is in fact a simultaneous reconfiguration of its previous selves and the present self constitutes, as de Man (1979), poses a defacement of the writing self.

Death is a displaced name for a linguistic predicament and the restoration of mortality by autobiography (the prosopopoeia of the voice and the name) deprives and disfigures to the extent that it restores. Autobiography veils a defacement of the mind of which it is itself the cause. A reading of de Man in this context confirms the reducing of the self to an absent entity in the moment of writing since prosopopoeia gestures to the figurative representation of an absent self through masks, roles and the name. Autobiography, as Huddart (2012) points out, already always presupposes the absence or death of the writing self and in another version Derrida poses and elaborates this idea: 'Only the name can inherit, and this is why the name, to be distinguished from the bearer, is always a priori a dead man's name, a name of death. What returns to the name never returns to the living. Nothing ever comes back to the living.' This cryptic postulation means autobiography reduces the self to a name. This is the name of the writing self and it is the name affixed to the autobiography that inherits this affixation in the absence/death of the self. This converges with Lejeune's notion that autobiography, in its integrity, relies on the legal signature and name of the autobiographer. This means the autobiography must necessarily bear the name of the narrating self. The signature and name of the absent writer guarantees that between the writer and reader, an 'autobiographical pact' has been established. Death in this case is 'installed from the beginning at the heart of [all autobiography]' because it 'is necessarily possible' (Huddart, 2012).

The second mode of death in relation to autobiography is marked by the impossibility of memory to ever retrieve previous selves in narrative acts. This impossibility is brought about by another impossibility: the impossibility of the self ever to narrate itself. This study links the 'bios' in Smith and Watson's (2012) study to memory for the purpose of proving the impasse or paradox of using memory to recapture a lived life. Earlier, I noted the curious impossibility to narrate: this impossibility emerges between a relentlessly changing self attempting to retrospectively retrieve some selves or experiences from the past: a feat not rendered impossible not only by memory gaps (caused by forgetting) or acts of selectivity (selecting certain memories at the expense of others) as pointed out by Smith and Watson, but more importantly by the protean nature of the self.

To clarify the above dilemma, Heraclitus' assertion that 'one cannot step into the same river twice' (Plato, Cratylus, 402a) will be used here. This means both the past and the present are viewed as a perplexing flux of changing identities.This involves ceaseless changing both the bio40s (life) as both the body and experiences in history) and the psychic hub that attempts to create a coherent and stable self. As is obvious now at this point, such a past never exists because in its time or advent, it was itself undergoing change and the psychic hub in the present lacks the tools with which to discipline that flux into a fixed narrative and that, at the moment of this hub's narration is also its ceaseless change rampant in the face of any coherence. Thus 'the past never really existed: it has always been an illusion created by the symbolizing activity of the mind' (Mandel, 1987: 48).

The word the 'past', in Mandel's interposition means the telling of a self's life is a temporized process done by a temporized being (Heidegger, 1970). Being closed in time limits the self to the linearity of past, present and future. This is a closedness that can only be opened by an atemporal being, event as contingent or death as both irruptions and eruptions. The 'symbolizing activity' posed by Mandel refers to how, through memory, the self attempts to tell a retrospective narrative of the past and to position the present in that empirical history. This retrospection involves reinterpretation which points to the fact that, what is narrated is a past that apparently may never be fully recovered (Smith and Watson, 2012) and that, 'memories are records of how we have experienced events, not replicas of the events themselves' (Schacter, 1987: 126). In view of the above views, this study concedes that memory fails irredeemably to reproduce the past as it was. Nevertheless, while Smith and Watson (2012) and Schacter (1987) leave room for the recovery of 'fragments', as said by Schacter, the position of this study is that, no recovery of the past is achieved. Rather, what is attainable is the recovery of how memory is imagined to recapture the past.

In this case an apt metaphor that expresses such an impossibility is the self's utter perplexity at how to reconstruct the exact moment of its own birth. The metaphor of the unknowability of one's birth implodes all myths of originary knowledge and thus, already and before the self narrates, there is a void or an absence which symbolizes death in birth or birth in death. The implication is that, like in Hereclitus' philosophy, memory circulates within and around *ta onta.* [30] This means that, nothing comes from the past. The position here is that, past and future have been put under erasure (the act of using words for lack of substitutes despite their semantic

[30] Greek for: being as present now, this moment.

inadequacy (Heidegger, 1960; Derrida, 2011) and only the construction of the past is done in this moment, thus 'the river where you set your foot just now is gone those waters giving way to this, now this' (Hereclitus, 42).

The face of thanos (death) appears in acts of auto/biography in the void that unremittingly disturbs the imagined acts of recovering or reconstructing the past. This void is installed by events viewed as flux: relentless change that pays no heed to scripts or grand narratives, rather, reality is the change itself. The thanatogaphic metaphors such as absence and void or meaninglessness have been incorporated into presence and the active arrangements of this presence by the self in relation to its projects. Absence and void as metaphor and indeterminacies not in what is remembered but in the activities of memory itself. How and why does death matter in relation to time or temporality in autobiography? And what possibilities does concern with its own death and the death of the other matter to the self? Death is the ceasing of behavior and the stopping of expressive activities and functional movements or processes that are dissimulated by them. This type of death is closed irredeemably in time. This means that escaping time emerges between the self experiencing the other's death and that other's nonsubstantiality coinciding and persisting to reside in the self (Same).

Death matters to the autobiographical self because:

> [T]he reader of [an autobiography], like the author will die [physiological decomposition]. If there is one thing about which we can all be certain, it is exactly this: that we will die. But if there is one thing we can all be uncertain about, it is precisely the same fact: that we will die. Death's certainty leads out towards the uncertain, and death's uncertainty leads us to the absolute certainty of our own death. (Maajaland, 2008: 63).

The above convoluted way of placing death in relation to both the writing self and the reader of autobiography means the self knows it will one day/night die but cannot know when and how it will die. Furthermore, the self, in the moment of dying cannot comprehend its own death and hence what only remains unquestionably present is knowledge that it will die. The impossibility of ever being able to experience its own death puts the self under the compulsion to desire transcending that incomprehensible experience of death. [31] This desire, which the self attempts to appease by creating a posthumous narrative (autobiography by nature is supposed to survive the self) arises out of the self experiencing the death of the other, another person.

[31] I refer to death as cessation of physiological and psychic behaviours.

The utter destitution or helplessness that death evokes and writes on the dead body of the other is then affectively transferred from the dead to the self who witnesses such a death and since the desire to go beyond death is suggested (not by the self's own impending death) but by that of the other, writing autobiography becomes the writing of the death of the other. In this context:

> If death comes to the other, and comes to us through the other, then the friend no longer exists except in us, between us. In himself, by himself, he is no more, nothing more. He lives only in us. But we are never ourselves, and between us, identical to us, a self is never in itself or identical to itself. (Derrida, 2006: 49-50)

By intersecting the self's death with that of the other, Derrida demonstrates that it is impossible to write life outside death and vice versa. By pointing out the translatability of selves Derrida distances the split subject of autobiography from the imagined uniquity of the stable unitary self and, in the same moment emphasizes that death multiplies the self for the profit of the other. The profit accrued by both the writing self and the dead is the alterity in selves and between selves that eludes death and makes the self not desire [32] to return to the same mode of life or worldview that soon gathers itself into indoctrination/master discourses. This avoidance of being the same or absorbing others into the Same is a 'detour' that 'shares me in the other's mortality, or rather the other's mortality establishes the minimal conditions for my life and autobiography, and in this removal I am reapplied to my self [reflexive acts] without narcissistic recognition' (Derrida, 2002: 67). Here one notes that, Derrida labours to overrun the impasse of the self as split into selves and locating the narrating self that makes the narrated selves into objects and yet he ends by returning to an identifiable site (self) despite having postulated that the self is not identical to itself. However, his point that the death of the other intersects with the life and death of the other still remains valid and thus 'autobiography as identity through alterity is also writing against death twice: the others' and one's own'. For this reason, 'every autobiography, we might say, is also an autothanatography' (Miller, 2005, 12), or since 'I bear my own life in coming from the death of the other', autobiography is 'auto-hetero-thanato-graphy' (Derrida, 2002:67).

Anticipating death, therefore, rouses the self not to the experience of death but to its preparedness to this death and it may, as part of this preparedness, be engaged in: '[P]erforming several rhetorical acts: justifying their own perceptions, upholding their reputations, disputing

[32] This is after that reflexive distancing of the narrating I from the narrated I and others.

the accounts of others, settling scores, conveying cultural information, and inventing desirable futures among others' (Smith and Watson 2011: 56). A close reading of Smith and Watson, to go beyond the obvious, summons one to comprehend 'accounts' and 'scores' as not limited to pressing matters of the materiality of livelihoods. Accounts and scores should be related to questions of being and potential: a gesturing to questions like 'how did I happen to be?, What am I?, Have I lived my life to the standards expected by me and others? While Heidegger limits this self-examination and positioning to 'dwelling between the sky and earth' and to a seeking or erection of habitation (egogological circumscription), this study proposes after Levinas, Derrida and Kierkegaard that death does not place an ultimate limit to the self and thus, autobiographical 'writing is that thing which, intolerant of finitude, repeatedly opens the end [death], not as its final limit, but precisely as the impossibility of that final limit's absolute impossibility'. Self writing, since it is foreign to human-beingness, can only absorb the human by 'reformulating' that human-beingness into something that 'is not the human in itself' but the being whose disposition to mutability and heterogeneity breaches all limits by its refusal 'to be reduced to an end' (Smith, 2011: 37). What the self anticipates (in eschatological terms) therefore, is not death as decomposition but the adventure of morphing into something else that surpasses mortality and oblivion and that is achieved through the 'autobiographic function of writing' (Smith, 2011: 45).

Death and eschatological anticipation matter to autobiograp hy in that self writing and reading are always done on the horizons of absence: here the absence prefigures (and is) death. The autobiography is written in the absence of the reader and the reader reads it in the absence of the author, hence the life writing bears 'the signature of a memoir from beyond the grave' (Derrida, 2012:78). Death and birth both place a void anterior to the lived life and thus both install lacunae in the self's narrative and since such gaps forbid completeness and coherence, the self lays no claim to being a stable and unitary being. The implication of this is that autobiography in this unstable mode opposes the totalizing self in certain master discourses by allowing a heterogeneity of entities to evolve. Death, as I will prove through my selected texts, is not a limit to the self especially as the death of the other is vicariously borne by the living and by bearing it as the living, they also bear the life of the dead beyond death. Self writing as autobiography is a function that transmutes the human into something not entirely human [33] but an alterity that defies all forms of closure. In my selected texts, this refusal of closure will

[33] I refer to a life being woven into a story on paper as signs that never refer to the human but only to the name.

be linked to the definition of Lefebvre's idea of the ideologization of space.

1.4.4. Ideologization of space

Ideologization of space refers to how ideology as 'a system of ideas' (Williams, 2010: 90) that structures reality constitutes space. Here space, is 'an interlinkage of geographic form, built environment, symbolic meanings and routines of life'. Additionally, 'ways of being and physical landscapes are of a piece, albeit one filled with tensions and competing versions of what a space should be. People fight not only over a piece of turf, but about the sort of reality that it constitutes', thus poses Molotch (1993), as drawn from Lefebvre. This means ideologization of space is, by the internal logic of its constituting acts, related to culture and modes of autobiographical, national and global narratives.

Lefebvre's (1991) philosophy on space and ideology becomes significant to this study in a number of ways: first it provides ready theoretical tools for an investigation of the farm as the turf over which contesting ideologies vie for ascendancy. Secondly, it can be used to examine the contradictions between the local and global modes of democracy, especially in the event where the international community [34] queries the legality of certain acts by the Zimbabwean national government. Third, the raw landscape itself [35] is a contested site over which multiple narratives seek to impose meaning. Fourth, this philosophy can be engaged in investigating how global capital may create friction between indigenous and global modes of development. This investigation will be done in the context of the questions: Did the white farmers, in their agricultural production, benefit (in a substantial mode) the local market or global one? Did the ordinary farm worker transform their livelihoods in this agricultural production space? How do white discourses on land, citizenship and home relate to questions of identity and belonging? As can be seen, such questions speak in the ambit of the white author's objectives for writing his/her auto/biography.

Space, in the context of this study refuses the equivalence of a passive landscape rather, this study brings to the fore the dynamic modes of meaning constructions that are generated between the physical landscape (natural and built) and the Subject who takes it upon himself to so discipline this landscape through chosen epistemic regimes and by this, create space. In this way, a distinction can be made between 'those who produce space for domination versus

[34] Reference is being made to elite nations and those that do not contest these elite's authority.
[35] I refer to landscape which was reconfigured through a different lens of ideology by empiric naming systems.

those who produce space as an appropriation to serve human need' (Lefebrev, 1991: 164). Such vocabulary is relevant to an examination of how Rogers deals with how the ZANU PF government creates legitimacy around its leadership and how, at the same time, it justifies the land reclamation and evictions and the murder of some white farmers. The space for domination, to follow Lefebvre, is the abstract one whose face and voice in my seleceted texts is patriotic historiography (Ranger, 2013) and propaganda that promotes party politics. Space as an appropriation would refer to how the whites and later the black government seized land to answer the desire of human need or for other uses. Apropos to Lefebre (1991), appropriation of resources like land is questioned as to whether 'by destroying nature and nature's time [is] there not a danger that the economic sphere, fetishized as the world market' and its synonymous 'space' and its political power 'turned absolute might destroy their own foundation namely land, space ... and thus self-destruct?' (p. 326). By raising this ecocritical issue, Lefebvre anticipates Mckibben's 'end of nature' proclamation in which he argues that anthropocentric reconfigurations of nature have subordinated such nature to exploitative and manipulative technologies, thus effacing nature's originality and capacity for self- regeneration. This study postulates that outside produced space, one lacks negotiation and navigation agency, thus Lefebvre (2015) writes that modes of life, normativity constructs and ideas

> which do not succeed in making their mark on space and thus generating (or producing) an appropriate morphology, will lose all pith and become mere signs, resolve themselves into abstract descriptions, or mutate into fantasie … the production of space has … nothing incidental about it: it is a matter of life and death. (p. 417)

A reading of this in tandem with the chosen auto/biographies opens a discussion on how the space of dominance, previously wielded by the white community, was palimpsested by the ZANU PF space and why, notwithstanding the absurdities that attended the land repossessions by the black government, this government succeeded in transforming identities, identifications and taxonomies of race and power (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000). Lefebvre's postulation that the production of space is imbricated in matters of life and death is reflected by the murders of both black and white individuals who are condemned by the exclusionary ruses of spaces of dominance. Lefebvre's ideas on space invokes Foucault's (1972) formulation of discourse as that mode of relating to reality in which the Subject is constituted simultaneously as the object is constituted in a subject-object relationship. Focault makes a timely intervention where he takes 'space' to refer to the emergence of discourse formations in the relationship between specific 'institutions, economic and social processes, behavioural patterns, systems of norms,

techniques, types of classification, modes of characterization' which discipline the object. Such disciplining is done through 'enunciative modalities': acts or 'types of discursive activities that involve describing, forming hypotheses, formulating regulations' (Foucault, 1972: 47), and others.

However, Foucault (1972) limits the agency of the object/subaltern by restricting them to the regulating power of discourse. Lefebvre (1991), in contrast, envisions spaces that countermand the power of dominant spaces by showing that rebellion from grassroots spaces always contest the legitimacy of such domination. This rebellion succeeds if the 'state's ability to intervene in space can and [is] turned back against it, by grassroots opposition, in the form of counter-plans and counter-projects designed to thwart strategies, plans and programmes imposed from above' (p. 383). He also argues that despite capitalism's incision of 'its imprint upon the total occupation of all pre-existing space and upon the production of new space', capitalism space will, through its internal contradictions, create contestations oriented to a break with homogeneity. Hence, the 'resulting movement prevents stagnation and cannot help but produce differences' (p. 395). This reminds one of Marx's theorization on capital's prodigious capacities as bearing the mark of irony: that a system that mobilises resources to transform lives in a vast way must at the same time be countered because it creates grave inequalities and, in some cases, irreversible damage to the landscape through its extractive and reconfigurative acts.

1.5. Methodologies

> We shall not cease from exploration
> And the end of all exploring
> Will be to arrive where we started
> And know the place for the first time
> T. S Eliot, No 4 of Four Quartets, 1943

This study deploys the interpretative or qualitative research and constructivist methodologies. Cooper and White in *Qualitative Research in the modern era* (2012) posit qualitative research as a method that involves constructive understanding of phenomena and posit that:

> [The search for meaning as understanding] is directly related to the concept that meaning is socially constructed by individuals interacting with their world, rather than a

> recognition that truth is a singular and fixed quality from which all understanding of the world emanates. In short, qualitative research considers reality not as a fixed, objective and constant construct but as a more fluid, ephemeral and ever-changing thing. (Cooper and White, 2012: 6)

By approaching meaning as understanding, the qualitative research method interdicts dealing with meaning as appropriation, leaving apertures open for the entry of new ventures of knowing as implied by the epigraph from T.S Eliot's *Four Quartets*. This means that, the analysis of autobiography and biography in this study, is not aimed at arriving at some final destination of reality, truth or knowledge, but that emphasis is largely on ways of questioning how autobiography and biography perform their meaning construction(s). This analysis of texts will be done paying attention to the major objectives adumbrated already. Even as I write this section on methods, this study is already evincing the fluidity of qualitative analysis, a method that complies with radical alterity by pointing out that the second reading of Eliot's quotation refuses to be fixed to the constructions of meaning of the first reading: opposing Eliot, and affirming the urgent need to be vigilant for internal textual contradictions. This study forbids the possibility of ever arriving at any locatable beginning. Research of this mode, as Derrida's scheme of reading recommends in *Dissemination Of grammatology* (2001) and *Writing and difference* (2005), will be better primed to approach texts and meaning as a heterogeneous assemblage of signs bound together by the event of writing or signification. The assembled and bound, as I will demonstrate, can always be unbound, disbanded or unraveled as space is made for other ways of assembling and binding the signs into a semiotic system.

In connection with the biographies and autobiographies selected for the study, enough attention was paid to gender and geographic difference in the positions of the authors. Such a recognition of the heterogeneous poise of authorial difference, as I will show, inflects the research with the infinitude [36] that this study advances. By not including autobiography and biography by black writers, the study deliberately aims at creating that asymmetrical reading postulated by Levinas and Derrida. Despite running the risk of exclusionary moves in a study that privileges inclusion over exclusion, it is the position of the present study that the absence of autobiography and biography by black writers finds compensation in studies by other scholars. In addition, the

[36] I refer to an infinitude in identity - being in the world and being with others or mitsein, to draw from Heidegger.

exclusion was deliberate but not invidious since including black writers of autobiography and biography in Zimbabwe would have been tantamount to including largely male writers (any inventory on life writing by blacks is in Zimbabwe will reveal a predominantly male authorship) and thus put into disarray the well laid scheme of gender's inclusion as heterogeneous.

It must be admitted at this point, that by confining myself to white autobiographical and biographical writing, the study restricts itself to only life writing and this restriction can also be read alongside the realization that, the textual contents of my selected texts, also further confines autobiographical topics to one main issue - the farm invasions. In mitigation though, it should also be simultaneously taken into cognizance that even this single theme has the prodigious fecundity to enable differently positioned authors to write and read on this issue in multiple, different and infinite ways.

1.6. Chapter Delineation

The thesis is composed of seven chapters. Chapter One declares the purpose of the study and provides the thematic and theoretical background of the research. The chapter poses the objectives of the study and offers a justification for the study. In the main, chapter one confronts totalizing discourses and places an interdict on them, simultaneously it argues for a recourse to epistemes that deconstitute such discourses. Against universalizing ideologies that thrive on teleology, closure, pretence to objectivity and authenticity, the chapter privileges episteme and theories that nourish and deploy fluidity, unremitting constructions of meaning as provisional, identity as becoming and belonging dispersal.

Chapter Two, premised on Godwin's *Mukiwa* and *Crocodile* interrogates Godwin as that modernity or enlightenment self, a descendent of the Western autobiography's masculine protagonist. The chapter addresses the problems of self narration by a Cartesian self. To the extent that the self, as previously privileged individual, attempts to revive the past through monumentalizations and museums and in the act, incite ambivalences and paradox, *Mukiwa* becomes significant, as I will elaborate.

Chapter Three derives its analysis of auto/biography from Rogers's *Last Resort*. By combining self narration and interviews of others on their experiences of the political turbulence in

Zimbabwe, Rogers's book puts to test the viability of discussing autobiography as auto/biography. The book, will attest to the writing of auto/biography as affording corroboration to the postulation that writing autobiography is also simultaneously the writing about the other (Coullie et al, 2009). The chapter offers the venue for disquisitions on radical alterity, especially since it allows autobiography as thanatography.

Chapter Four's interrogations of auto/biography are shored up by Buckle's *African Tears*. Buckle's book, as I will demonstrate, opens analysis on issues of the interhuman, anthropocentrism, digital identities and biocentricism, and hence beckons one to interrogate the fundamental issues of being (Heidegger, 1968; Satre, 1983; Levinas, 2001) 'being-in-the world' and 'being with others' or *mitsein* (Heidegger, 1968). Digital affordances and the anthropocentric and biocentric engagements in Buckle will open space for the analysis of identity and (un)belonging as inventions: here visions of being human are troubled by versions of the human as both animal and other, as in virtual identities.

Chapter Five on the predication of the analysis of Harrison's *Jambanja*, introduces the complications involved in a schizoid narrator. While the act of narration is itself fraught with its own dilemmas and aporia, it is an act or acts encountered in all the texts. *Jambanja* experiments with voice, especially the third person in autobiography and thus raises the issues of veracity and authenticity. By analyzing this schizophrenia, this chapter offers the occasion on which comparisons and contrasts can be made between Chapter Two's insular or Cartesian self and the extroverting schizoid narrator in Chapter Five.

Chapter Six draws its analysis from Lamb's *House of Stone*. Lamb's book provides a fecund site for the interrogation of feminist and archive discourses. Derrida in *Archive Fever* (2003), offers the insight that the archive is domiciled in a space that is accessible to the public but this same archive hides itself, effaces its ennunciatory acts through internal upheavals and overhauls, thus its contents and meanings prohibit fixed articulations. Lamb, I will argue, affords investigations into problematics of subjectivity, objectivity, neutrality and gender in biography writing. Chapter Seven summarizes and concludes the thesis. It presents the findings of the preceding chapters and proposes a newly conceived way of reading auto/biographies which contribute to the construction of a critical and historically informed constellation of public opinion. Based on the findings, the thesis recommends the inclusion for study of the autobiography and biography in both university and secondary curricula as these two are a genesis of appreciating any group ethos.

Chapter 2

(Dis)placement and Contested Belonging in Peter Godwin's Autobiographies

2.1. Introduction

The previous chapter posited that white farmers' life narratives are subsumed in the political as their lives are located within the context of nationalist politics. The chapter observed that auto/biography is invariably concerned with the processes of narration which is implicated in acts of selections of vocabulary, excisions, view points and subjective renditions. The chapter went further to review relevant literature that defined concepts of self identity, whiteness, (dis)location, (dis)placement, (un)belonging, provide a justification of study, theoretical framework upon which the study is based, research methodologies and chapter delineation. This chapter discusses Zimbabwe white farmers' (dis)placement and their contested belonging through an analysis of Peter Godwin's two autobiographies, *Mukiwa: A White Boy in Africa* (1996) and, *When a Crocodile Eats the Sun* (2006).[37] *Mukiwa* is an autobiographical account of Godwin's childhood and young adulthood as a privileged white person in colonial Southern Rhodesia and how those privileges were threatened by the liberation war and the coming of black majority rule in 1980. On the other hand, *Crocodile* (2006), which can be viewed as a sequel to *Mukiwa*, is a meditation on questions of (un)belonging induced by the catastrophic and tragic displacements and land dispossessions suffered by Zimbabwean white commercial farmers from year 2000 to 2006.

In the earlier narrative, Godwin explores the problematic issues of identity and belonging or lack of it of white people in Africa and in Zimbabwe in particular. In the later text, while still interrogating issues of identity and belonging, Godwin is preoccupied with showing how the displacements and dispossessions of white farmers of their land was premised on the racial category that they did not belong to Africa. Godwin shows that the embattled Mugabe regime thrived on propagating the myth that all white farmers had illegitimately inherited their land from their ancestors who had invaded and colonised Zimbabwe and displaced and dispossessed indigenous people. In *Crocodile*, one of Godwin's objectives is to show that this was not a correct view. Secondly, his other objective is to show that, even those who had inherited their farms from their colonial ancestors had earned their legitimate right of belonging by turning

[37] From now on the first narrative and its sequel will be referred to as *Mukiwa* and *Crocodile* respectively.

what was largely bush into lush productive farmlands which economically benefitted not just the white farmers but also the black indigenous population. In Hammer's (2012:216) words, in these two autobiographies Godwin challenges the exclusionary politics of the Zimbabwean post-independent government and claims full belonging to the country by exploring and depicting several ways in which white Zimbabweans were and are full citizens despite the government's propaganda which suggested otherwise.

Therefore, *Mukiwa* and *Crocodile* interrogate and explore the self as negotiating a narrating stance imbricated in national politics and nation making. Both texts present the narrator, a white boy, negotiating a home in Zimbabwe and simultaneously the deferment of the arrival of such a home. This postponement of home is staged in the ambivalence of the narrator's claim of belonging to the landscape and his realization that such a landscape presents a space of the incommensurability between the narrator's heritage (race and history) and the discourse of emancipation espoused by the 'bush war' and subsequently, the historiographical closure imposed by the nationalist government of the new order. Memorials, monuments, landscapes, burial sites, farms and estates are deployed by the narrator to configure a national identity, collective memory and counter memories to the memories presented by the Portuguese, the Afrikaners, the African liberation movements, and in particular Rhodesian configurations of nation making.

The trajectory taken by Godwin's life, from the Rhodesian era when he belonged to the dominant white colonialists, as seen from *Mukiwa*, up to the slipping away of this privilege and to its subsequent disintegration and despair evident in *Crocodile*, all show the dynamics and the problematic of the construction of the prototypical self. The titles of both autobiographies suggest the permeation of personal story telling and that of the family at large whilst at the same time revealing a wider background of the African history and in particular that of Rhodesia and later Zimbabwe. Both narratives recall the private family story but also can be viewed as political autobiographies as they encapsulate the Rhodesian and Zimbabwean history with its political tensions. The narratives also explore Christianity and education as components of modernity and civilisation in relation to white colonial epistemologies in contradistinction with the black African epistemologies.

In *Mukiwa*, Godwin engages with reactions and understandings of the crossover and transitions to independent Zimbabwe. He narrativizes his and other white people's experiences in a country previously hailed as a model of post-independence political and economic success,

reconciliation and harmony in Africa. Godwin follows Zimbabwe's steady decline in the 1990s which was aggravated by the ruling party's targeting of white farmers' land which saw the creation of an international platform of sympathy and concern for this country's small yet significant and influential white population. Therefore, *Mukiwa* can be viewed as Godwin's memories of a colonial past where he was a fighter on Ian Smith's[38] side in the defence of white minority regime. In this earlier narrative, Godwin seems to suggest that white Rhodesians fought a wrong war which situated them on the wrong side of history. Godwin suggests that the younger generation of Rhodesian fighters were misled and manipulated into war. Godwin's *Mukiwa* has two narrating selves – the self, the narrator as explained by Anderson (1997:220) about the many 'I's which occupy many positions and has many voices. There is the child Godwin and older Godwin as both narrating and narrated selves. As a result, Godwin is able to narrate a past childhood in ways that allow intimate connections with such a history whilst simultaneously distancing himself from the same history as an older person who has gained perspective on events.

Chennells notion of 'the authority of presence' is useful in exploring the different selves that Godwin inhabits in *Mukiwa*. By contrast, in *Crocodile*, Godwin relies on what can be termed the authority of presence of others such as the displaced and dispossessed white farmers that he interviews to expose the injustices and crimes that the Mugabe regime tolerated and even sponsored against white farmers. His strategies in both texts allow for the exploration of the elusiveness of mediated identity relative to the privileges, sites, authority and systems of power. In narrating a genealogical self and inscribing its position relative to political, social and power spaces, the autobiographical insists on transitory rather than permanent identities. This exemplifies Hall's (2000:17) argument that 'the concept of identity does not signal that core of the self, unfolding from beginning to end through all the vicissitudes of history without change'. In *Mukiwa*, Godwin reinterprets personal experiences of the bush war while in

[38] Ian Douglas Smith (born 1919) was the last white Prime Minister of Rhodesia before it became the independent nation of Zimbabwe. Between 1970 and 1979, war broke out in Rhodesia between Ian Smith's settler government and the African nationalist parties opposed to colonial rule. For black people in the country, this was a war of independence but yet for most whites, however, it was a terrorist war sponsored by the forces of international communism. The increasingly militant nationalist organisations had begun their guerilla activities against white power. To resist African majority rule, Smith led his extremist white government in a unilateral break with Great Britain and declared Rhodesia a republic, the first such anti-British revolt since the American colonies declared their independence in 1776. In 1976 they formed an alliance to negotiate access to power for the black majority, which materialised in 1980 with the first free and fair elections that would bring Robert Mugabe to power. On 18th April 1980, Rhodesia legally achieved independence under the name of Zimbabwe, 90 years after British colonisation.

Crocodile he focuses on farm invasions and the debilitating turmoil and economic collapse of Zimbabwe following these farm occupations.

Despite their differences in emphasis, both texts depict an influential minority - white farmers - being at the centre of the persecutions and positioning their misfortunes as central to the economic collapse of Zimbabwe. The autobiographies depict what Hammar (2012: 216) calls the project of (white) belonging wrought through a cultural politics of identification, emplacement and representation. These narratives also allow for the interrogation of white Rhodesia, the colonial and colonized space, whiteness, and the privileges enjoyed by white Zimbabweans and how these privileges were slowly threatened by the coming in of black majority rule. The changing of identity of Godwin as the autobiographer narrator from the 1996 narrative to the 2006 follows not only the political developments in the country but also the waning economic fortunes of the formerly influential white minority. The events of post-2000 problematise Godwin's initial assumptions in *Mukiwa* of racial harmony within independent Zimbabwe, to the point of despair and he cynically concludes that whites will never fully belong to Africa.

2.2. Child narrator as a distancing strategy and authority of presence in *Mukiwa*

The childhood narrativisation of the Rhodesian past by Godwin enables an ambivalent condition wherein the reader gets part of a past characterized by innocence and naivety. Events and occurrences are interpreted and remembered through a gullible child Godwin which creates some distance between himself as the author and the Rhodesian racist colonial pursuits in which he supposedly participated unwittingly. 'I think I first realized something was wrong when our next door neighbor, Oom Piet Oberholzer, was murdered. I must have been about six then' (p. 3). The quotation not only calls attention to the complications of remembering so far into childhood through the phrase 'I think', it also creates distance between the subject narrator represented by the first 'I', and the narrated child's consciousness in the second 'I'. However, the irony is that it is the adult Godwin now writing in 1996 who excavates childhood memories for the present needs and contingencies. As a boy, he depicts himself as dealing with Africans without prejudice. He also suggests that as a boy he was unaware of the wider and hidden political agenda of the racist white Rhodesian government. Through this strategy, Godwin refuses to accept any responsibility for colonial injustices perpetrated against the Africans.

Although writing about a Rhodesia that was characterized by racial segregation and discrimination, the strategy of childhood innocence enables Godwin to maintain distance from such evils. Ironically, this strategy also enables Godwin to expose colonial injustices that severely implicate Rhodesian white people without himself taking the blame. He provides a glimpse into the Manichaeism of Rhodesia in his descriptions of the African/ European worlds, as suggested in the observations that, the black people's clinic in Melsetter is 'a small ramshackle building, easily overwhelmed by the swell of humanity that swarmed there' (p.86), whereas the white European clinic is 'a smart three bedroomed bungalow' comprising 'one or two [patients] sitting in the waiting room paging through old copies of Illustrated Life Rhodesia, Scope and Fair Lady' (p. 103). At Mangula, where his family later stayed, there was a 'bright and carpeted' bar for whites only and 'a beer hall' (p. 189) for black people, to which young Godwin could go even though he is white. Blacks were condemned to perpetual servitude - Godwin remembers that his 'days were filled with dogs and servants' (p. 23) which servants, at all times were 'black', 'illiterate', 'without surnames' and 'preferred to live in tree kennels' (p. 36). Godwin retrospectively reconstructs the child in him or the child in the past to engage with the present of his autobiography. Between the present narrating self and narrated childhood, the settler norms and attitudes towards black people are reconstructed. However, uncomfortable slippages occur when the adult writer and the child narrator seem to converge in reproducing of the racist settler norms which subalternise African cultural norms. It becomes apparent that the adult narrator manipulates the child's experiences to fit the agenda/exigencies of the present autobiographical self.

In *Mukiwa*, it is obvious that Godwin tries to distance himself from the racist colonial injustices and prejudices of the adult world of the white people of his childhood. This is seen in his use of the collective 'we' when talking about racial prejudice. He observes: 'In those days *we* called African men Boys [and] '*we* had cook boys and garden boys however old they might be' (p.14; my emphasis). For example, 'Sixpence the lantern boy – [he] was actually a very old man with a bushy grey moustache' (p. 66). About an early freedom fighters group that called itself the Crocodile Gang, Godwin poses that: 'In those early days before the real war started *we* didn't call them terrorists yet. *We* didn't really have a name for them yet' (p. 11; my emphasis). The use of 'we' implies community responsibility by the larger white Rhodesian society. By exposing the infantilising of African men as something that, he merely participated in because it had been institutionalised by the white adult world, Godwin tries to avoid direct personal responsibility for these injustices. Moreover, his candidness in talking about these past evils

serves a confessional function which apparently absolves him at a spiritual level of any guilt and wrong doing as he positions himself as deserving of forgiveness. This is what Harris (2005:108) refers to as a process that slips 'between confession and exculpation and redemption'. The child narrator thus is a historical presence through whose eyes the Rhodesian past is articulated, yet the older Godwin seems to narratively disavow any responsibility to these past injustices. Remembering childhood events in which he participated and witnessed, Godwin is able to appropriate Chennells' (2009) idea of the authority of presence, which allows him to simultaneously reveal the 'truth' whilst at the same time ideologically and narratively distancing himself from the narrated events.

Chennells' notion of authority of presence or authoritative evidence is useful in exploring the different identity positions that Godwin occupies in *Mukiwa*. In this autobiography, Godwin authenticates events through this notion of authority of presence. About Todd's *Through the Darkness* (2007), Chennells argues that by diarising her narratives, Todd is able to speak with authority and conviction about what happened to prove that hers is an experiential narrative. Chennells argues: 'Her authority derives from her presence; [and] from the fact that she records nothing that she has not directly experienced' (Chennells 2009: 98). Chennells also refers to this authenticity as 'authoritative evidence' because Todd's narrative method does not necessarily allow her to include evidence she has not witnessed and or experienced. According to Chennells, an autobiographer is worthy of belief if she or he provides 'authoritative evidence'. Godwin invests himself with the aura of the authentic testimony bearer by positing his mysterious entry in the narrative of the security agent (Godwin, 1996:382) and the old woman who claims that she has 'been told that [he] reports the truth' (p. 340). Godwin's narrative purports to be a record of collective experiences where he sincerely deploys the second and third narrative voices when in fact the irreducible singularity of his experiences resist collectivity. For instance, the childhood experiences where he diagnoses leprosy, tuberculosis and attends unnerving exhumations and post-mortems, are repudiated by the prototype childhood even in Rhodesia. This demonstrates that the historicization of memory via national narratives forbids the entry of subjective memory which is invariably marked as recalcitrant and non-conforming to the national project.

On the other hand, the subjective memory of individuals in national political positions can constitute hegemonic memory by way of pretending that their subjective memories are the collective memory. It is impossible to mark the boundaries between collective and subjective memory in any narration that involves the first person narrative voice conflating its acts and

motives to what it would have invented as collective memory. Godwin exercises the hegemony of the reflexive self who invents himself as the prototype of memory and knowledge and proceeds by turning this invention into the norm. Godwin's acts of navigating his childhood memory landscape and of his writing the autobiography are synonymous. They are acts that seek to re-inscribe the symbol of the previous existence of the settler self and the displaced and dislocated white farmers.

The foregoing suggests that Godwin's narrative invites the reader to think about the ambivalent relationship between collective and subjective memory. The narrative shows that the use of memory in the claim of truth telling is both contestable and problematic. In this regard, Hodgkin and Radstone (2003) observe that the privileging of memory in the authentication or otherwise of narrativised representations of the past is problematic as the past in inevitably 'constituted in narrative' and 'narrative is always representation and always construction' (p. 2). Memory is also manipulated by those in power to authorise certain discourses hence Margalit (2003) argues that memory 'like any other form of knowledge, is power [and that whoever] controls it and forgetting gains power' (p. 275).

Apparently, in *Mukiwa*, Godwin articulates and relates what happened to him and what he witnessed and experienced. Issues of objectivity and partisanship are however overlooked in this perception for there is the issue of biases associated with self-representation/re-presentation in narratives of the self. This form of narrativisation of life events presupposes that because the autobiographer was present, therefore his/her account of events is correct and accurate and consequently true to life. The claim to truth associated with autobiography is subjective since one's personal life and experiential journey always and more often than not surfaces in the autobiographical narratives as Godwin's autobiographies reveal.

To legitimize his experiences as authentic and authentically reproduced, in the Preface to *Mukiwa*, Godwin writes:

> In *Mukiwa* I have written as I remember with all the foibles and imperfections brought on by the passage of time … I have tried not to be wise after the event but to describe things as they seemed at the time, even where that may have portrayed us unattractively. I have tried not to preach or to politic. I have tried not to be sentimental or censorious (Preface)

This suggests that Godwin is a self-conscious writer who is aware of the complexities of the autobiographical genre and its reliance on memory as a repository of the lived experiences. In

the above quotation, he acknowledges that his autobiography is a reconstruction of reality which he undertakes narratively through the workings of memory which is fraught with its own challenges as highlighted by Hodgkin and Radstone (2003) who observe that, 'to privilege memory as a tool of the truth, through which the statements of authority may be subverted or contradicted, we must assume a direct correspondence between the experience and how it is remembered [but this is not the case since] the past is constituted in narrative' (p. 2). Indeed, Godwin is being wise after the event as he now uses hindsight to account for events in a way and manner that suits his current agenda. No writing is innocent. Godwin's memory sites and remembering are projects of reconstruction, remembering and reinventing and not the event per se but the thing or truth purportedly (re)produced. In this case, these remains, like the Derridean 'cinders', show that something happened or existed in the past, but is irretrievable beyond the 'trace' (Derrida, 1994: 96). Godwin's assertions in the above quotation are dichotomous as in *Mukiwa* he exhibits an ambivalent claim that his text is a genuine record of the collective settler community's past, and is a disavowal of a seamless merging between the self and the collective. His claim that he has not been 'wise after the event', which means he has not revised and or fine-tuned his past, points to the troubling gap in every autobiography, the gap where 'the truth' is always a vanishing point. Weintraub (1975: 826) aptly observes that an autobiographer, owing to retrospective recreation of events, 'imposes on the past the order of the present. The meaning of the past is intelligent and meaningful in terms of the present understanding'.

Therefore, Godwin's texts show an endeavour to sanitize and decontaminate the colonial past to meet the exigencies of the present. Gusdorf (2004) asserts that every autobiography is a revision of the writer's past and reordering of the same past to fit the exigencies of the present and the future self's project. The *Mukiwa* preface reproduces the speaking stance of the Empire's civilizing episteme which thrives on binaristic classification and the construction of hierarchies of naming that divide. Jan Mohammed (1985: 63) posits:

> The dominant model power - and interest relations in all colonial societies is the Manichean opposition between the putative superiority of the European and the supposed inferiority of the native [and the opposition is always between] white and black, good and evil, superiority and inferiority, civilisation and savagery, intelligence and emotion, rationality and sensuality, self and Other and subject and object.

By claiming that he is not 'sentimental or censorious', Godwin, despite his satire's unsettling of some of the settler's norms, names his recording of his life experiences, encapsulated in his autobiographies, as ideal. Godwin denigrates the glory and heroism of the Smith regime about events around the battles that it fought against the liberation forces of ZANLA and ZIPRA.[39] He remembers Smith as the 'bastard' who 'screwed' the commencement of his studies at Cambridge by not having 'the imagination or leadership to sue for peace' (p. 394). However, his ambivalence towards the Smith regime and his undermining of the bush war that he was active in, in trying to preserve the settler civilisation and heritage, do not exonerate him from appropriating imperial discourse. He reproduces the imperial discourse and deploys it to privilege exclusionary modes of onomastics and other forms of politics. Godwin inscribes ambivalence or tension between memory and history. He suggests that memory is infused with the irreducible primal conception of experience while history, via archiving memory, imposes a monopoly on how experiences are to be narrated. His memory of the settler experiences sometimes breaches containment of the official history of that community.

2.3. Denigrating African Knowledge Systems

Although trying to absolve himself from collective white colonial guilty, Godwin in *Mukiwa*, paradoxically adopts a tone and attitude which elevate white settlers' knowledge system by employing strategies which denigrate African practices and customs. Deleuze and Guatarri (1994) see territorialisation, deterritorialization and reterritorialization as the outcome of dynamic physical or psychosocial forces. They further posit that territories and territorialisations may not be only physical but also psychological and spiritual and that philosophy and ideology have historically reterritorialized land as 'nations', Homeland or Fatherland (p. 68). Territorialization thus provides an explanatory framework for how the social forces impinge on individuals or cultures from the stratifications of class, gender, race and ethnicity through the construction of subjectivities of such groups as women, husbands, farmers, patients, risk takers, politicians and many more. Deleuze and Guatarri (1994) observe that, these social territorialisations entail 'somewhere in the process – some of the interpretation of ascribing meaning to an act or action' (p.68), as indeed is the case with Godwin's meaning

[39] Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) was the military wing of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), and Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) was the armed wing of the Zimbabwe African People's Union and both military wings participated in the Rhodesian Bush War against white minority rule of Rhodesia (modern Zimbabwe).

making of monuments, graves and African epistemes. Similarly, Goffman (1968) describes the stripping of identity in the case of a person who becomes a patient as better understood as reterritorialization into a different identity defined by the cultural setting and achieved reflexively by the embodied self of the subject. Godwin's *Crocodile* suggest that the same process is what the white farmers and white land owners go through when their properties are expropriated and their identities are 'stripped' from commercial farmers, land owners and employers to refugees and the landless fugitives.

Derrida (1978) refers to the endless possibilities for de- and reterritorialization and that language offers the potential for humans to interpret the world with infinite variety as is seen in Godwin's endeavours to explicate his different life exigencies as a deterritorialised self. Deleuze and Guatarri (1998: 23) argue that a deterritorialised narrator is given to 'replacing monolithic definitions of reality with a multiplicity of narratives' as appears to be Godwin's scenario in the two texts being explored here. Godwin is depicted as a nomadic subject who is free to roam, untrammelled by the territorialisations of power and indeed free to resist the fixing of a Rhodesian identity. Godwin resists the essential conceptions of race and what it was supposed to mean to be white in Rhodesia and even in Zimbabwe, owing to his capacity of reflexivity and response to his unfolding and changing relations vis-a-vis his past and future intentionalities. Goffman (1968) sees deterritorialisation as a separation from a given purpose and reterritorialization as re-purposing in another domain thus disrupting the established forms of meaning and offering the hope of liberation. It is this state of separation from the given meaning of being white and Rhodesian that Godwin pursues that takes centre stage in his narratives.

In *Mukiwa*, Godwin subscribes to the impermanence and the transient nature of meaning and ideas. *Mukiwa* writes both white and black peoples' identities outside the spaces authorised by the prevailing Rhodesian discourses. Godwin revisits his experiences and that of other white families to question whether it was worth going to war for the sake of protecting whites' privileged status in the country. Deleuze and Guattari (1986) state that the self invariably views realities differently from the versions offered by official authority. Through their notion of 'deterritorialisation', Deleuze and Guattari present the possibility of ideas, identities and individuals to be displaced from the locales of assumed origin meaning that, meanings are mobile and their deterritorialization exposes both the possibilities and the limits of their actuation. In his first narrative, as a narrator without a fixed topography of loyalties, Godwin makes himself a candidate for a new Zimbabwe unmarked by the scandals of both the colonial

imperialism and ZANU PF [40] projects in suggesting that 'not all [whites] were whinging Rhodies. There were thousands of whites and blacks who came back from abroad to take part in the bold new experiment of constructing a multiracial society' (p. 327). In this assertion, Godwin proposes some form of multiracialism that is different from postmodernism in that the multiracialism would not only speak to the parallel existence of many races and therefore deficient in the multiplicity of selves and races in an individual played out in hybrid acts and spaces but one that went above the closures of tradition, regimes and inheritance. It is difficult to territorialize a self that moves in the unpredictable or unmapped zones of satire because like in the Derridean deconstruction, this self, mutates into positions where it speaks as one that is always already deterritorialized. This is typically the case mainly in *Mukiwa* and to a lesser extent in *Crocodile*, where Godwin occupies an ambivalent role of not completely championing the imperial cause or completely inscribing into memory sites of the conviction that white rule was better than black rule.

It is this experimenting deterritorialised self that permits Godwin, in some instances, to ridicule certain settler/imperial norms and yet simultaneously appropriate some of these norms in his (re)imagination of both self and national/collective identity. Godwin's project is to re-imagine a new nation in which a reinvented self has debunked the Ian Smith, ZANU PF and War Veterans regimes as scandalous. However, in this re-imagination, he privileges the discourses which sometimes collude and connive with the imperial discourse. Godwin indicates that as part of his training as a British South African Company security agent he had to attend 'classes' in 'African languages and customs' (p. 221). Such classes were structured on ethnographic collations of what this settler episteme had (re)constructed on the assumed nature and meaning of the black African culture. Said (2002) and Mudimbe (2010) have postulated that this episteme points to the discovery and knowledge of the physical, cultural and spiritual environments of the other as its prerogative.

Gramsci (1971: 57) underlines the role of knowledge in supporting and sustaining hegemonic power. He states that knowledge is intertwined with a mode of thinking that is conditioned by particular interests; in this case, the interests of the white settlers in Rhodesia. Gramsci further observes that the content of knowledge and epistemic contents are influenced by different perspectives that inform them. Godwin's *Mukiwa* exemplifies the Foucauldian notion that

[40] ZANU PF, led by Robert Mugabe, was exclusively at the helm of Zimbabwe from 1980 until 2008, when a Global Political Agreement was signed between ZANU PF and two MDC political Formations (MDC – T and MDC – M).This resulted in the 'Inclusive government' of 2009 – 2013.

power determines knowledge and that hegemony is the ideological predominance of the bourgeoise values and norms over the subordinate Africans who are to accept them as normal. Foucault (1972), on the subject of subjugated knowledges, refers to historical 'facts' and 'contents' that have been hidden or passed over by the hegemonic discourse that has sought to order coherent bodies of knowledge. Language, according to Foucault, constructs discursive formations in identity as the subject's becoming, through 'ennunciative modalities' (Foucault, 1990: 216) and demonstrates that the power of the superordinate is not absolute. The African knowledges are those that Foucault (1972) aptly refers to, as having been disqualified by the hegemonic discourse and named 'naïve knowledges, hierarchically inferior knowledges, knowledges that are below the required level of erudition or scientificity'. Alcoff (1996) acknowledges that Foucault 'believes that hegemonic knowledges always have to exert a violence (in both an epistemic and political sense) on local and particular knowledges in order to sustain them within their universal structures' (p. 119). According to Foucault (1972), epistemic violence on the indigenous knowledges is exerted by the hegemonic discourse and the production of power, its legitimation, consolidation and dissemination is caught up in the power relations and the dominant discourse.

In showing the superiority and subordinating nature of the whites' episteme, Godwin, as a student at Melsetter school, mentions how he went for 'nature study walks and caught insects in jars and pinned them on the board on the classroom wall' (pp. 58-59), in a bid to subdue nature through knowledge systems. The pinning of the trapped insects to the wall constitutes knowing by decimation of the organism reduced to an object and therefore subordinated by the episteme. The subordination of nature by the white episteme is extended to the area of diseases although these diseases mainly affected Africans. The knowledge that Godwin had as a child about diseases is exhibited to authenticate the white settlers' episteme as privileged in the control of death and health, while the African episteme is ridiculed, mystified and or antiquated. Javangwe (2014) observes that in *Mukiwa*, the African is depicted as living in a world full of maladies and apparently living on the precipice of death. He further notes Godwin's fascination with the images of disease, leprosy and death as mainly affecting the African subject. For example, Godwin makes arbitrary conclusions such as: 'Only black people got leprosy' (p. 96). Leprosy in *Mukiwa* thus becomes more than just a disease but a discursive trope that is used for the exclusion of blacks from mainstream human activities metonymic of lepers' removal from their respective societies. Javangwe (2014) further argues that the disease metaphor is intended to emphasize the binaries: civilised/barbaric, Christian/pagan, black/white, poor/rich,

illiterate/literate and healthy/unhealthy, with the Africans in this case being pinned, as in the insects, alluded to above, to the negative side of the binary wall. In the above example, Godwin constructs the white subject on values of literacy, education, science and technology in contrast to the African who is characterised by a lack of these. The alleged failure by the African other to appreciate life and higher human aspirations relegates him/her to lower levels of existence. Dialectically, the self-identity of Godwin is mapped on a higher pedestal of human existence. Godwin even submits: 'Lots of people were struck by lightning in Rhodesia - although they were mostly Africans, it was true … At school we learnt that more people were killed by lightning in Rhodesia than in any other country in the world' (p. 168). In these depictions, death does not only disqualify the African other from the contested space of Rhodesia but also establishes disharmony between the African and his/her environment.

Godwin seems to use the shared collective memories of white Rhodesians, and in particular white farmers, to gain access to the past through the reconstruction of past lived events. However, these selected events seem to perpetuate the notion of subjugating and subordinating nature to white hegemonic discourse. For example, in *Mukiwa*, Godwin says Harry Lovat, the white manager of Spitskop Estate in Silverstream, claims that Isaac's (a black employee on this estate) African proverbs, maxims and teachings are 'half-baked munt philosophy' (p. 127). This avowal is reiterated by Godwin himself who also claims that the Shona proverbs and folklore that he encounters whilst herding cattle 'weren't like the English fairy tales' (p. 124). Lovat trashes and ridicules black epistemes at an all whites gathering by dismissing traditional healers as practitioners of 'bloody voodoo nonsense' (p. 48) and 'witchcraft' (p. 49). This is reiterated by Godwin who laments the advent of political independence as having transformed identities in 'unthinkable terms' as 'witchdoctors had become traditional healers' and 'old devils had suddenly become gods' whereas whites could be prosecuted for calling an adult 'boy' or 'kaffir' (p. 326). It is Lovat, who speaking for the white farmers, when some black Estate workers had converged to see the leopard which had been killed by his dogs after it had allegedly mauled to death a black child, says: 'When are you munts going to be civilised? We send you to school. We teach you to read and write. We vaccinate you against disease' (p.51). This was in reference to the African elders who had asked for the leopard for some appeasement ceremony for the dead child. Lovat makes African knowledge systems an object of erasure and ridicule.

Mudimbe (2010:86) posits that Christian missionaries, priests and hunters compiled pseudo-ethnographic studies on Africans teleologically structured to 'know the African' and this

enabled colonization and subalternization and resultant subjugation of black people. We see this in *Mukiwa* when Godwin speaks of Father Kennedy, a Carmelite priest who provides students with knowledge about African religion in a ridiculing and disparaging mode that erases all differences among Africans (p. 75). The white farmers/settlers are represented by the collective 'we' and are portrayed as entrusted with the onus of civilising the African through education, health and reason. Blacks are depicted as infantile and as having only cared for 'three things in life: food, fucking and beer' (p. 192). In *Mukiwa*, 'Africans often died of spells' (p. 79) and 'Africans were forever falling into rivers' (p. 83). The African space is narrativised as always lurking with danger including hippos, Matabele thorns, tokoloshis, bilharzia, tsotsis and rivers (p. 139). This is juxtaposed with the magnificence and splendour of the Birchenough bridge which Godwin describes as, 'not just a bridge, but rather an apparition from a different more modern world … the third largest suspension bridge in the whole world, and it was *ours* (p. 135). The emphasis here is on the 'different more modern world' and the possessive pronoun 'ours', which represents the dialectical difference between the white settlers of British descent on one side and the African on another side. It is this identification with this modern apparition and its specific belonging that informs Godwin's identity and superiority.

2.4. Claiming Belonging through Memorial Sites, Death, Symbols and Monuments

In *Mukiwa*, Godwin constructs his identity via the monuments and landscapes that generate narratives of belonging, conquest and legitimation of settler authority. The deployment of the postcolonial theory, enables the reader to see a hiatus in the inscription of memorials as sites of memory that authenticate the legitimacy of the settlers in Godwin's autobiography. Godwin allows the ambivalent and ambiguous narrative trajectories to enter and emphasize the multiple signification of memory sites which are highlighted when counter memorials, for instance the Heroes acres, are created, when a new ethnic authority comes to power. He shows the black government's displacement of the white Rhodesian one, and the Zimbabwean government's new interpretation of the memorial which is different from the interpretations of the white people who constructed and erected it. This poses the multivalent stances of monuments and memories in that while they stage the settlers' narratives of legitimacy and belonging, they erase the memory of the subaltern, in this case the colonized Africans.

The ambiguity of memorial sites and monuments, provoked by their multiple meanings urges one to dismiss a simplistic classification of colonial monuments, buildings and memorial sites

as only pro-settler agenda but that the monument itself, as in the Pioneer monument for example, instead of evoking mythologies of white claim to legitimacy and belonging, can disrupt that mythology by exposing its constructedness. In its scaffolding of the legitimacy of settlerism, the pioneer monument as site, sign and or symbol claims that the settlers pioneered settling in Manicaland. Such pioneering suggests that there were no previous human inhabitants in the landscape subsequently occupied by white settlers. The word pioneer evokes origins, beginnings and the heroism of crossing into the unknown and undocumented, as the first human beings to do so.

Godwin shows that colonial sites in Zimbabwe do not mark continuity as one would presuppose. In *Mukiwa*, there are sites of memory embodiment portrayed as memorials, monuments, recorded speeches, graves, heroes' acres, bridges, farms, schools and certain buildings named after the Pioneer Column [41] leaders and the Chimurenga leaders. Memorials become what they become or mean what they mean as written by the political agenda of the benefactors of their erection or as understood by the viewer or reader. Lefebvre (1991), in reference to what he calls global space, advances that 'monuments like language produce effects of violence and persuasion, of political legitimation and delegitimation' (p. 228). Indeed, Godwin shows that like language, monuments and memorial sites also serve communicative purposes as they disseminate and carry meaning. In *Mukiwa*, he shows that monuments, memorial sites and symbols are thus marked by multiple competing purposes among which are nation building, reconciliation, reparation, political legitimacy and the 'pedagogical tool to inculcate the preventative lessons of 'never again' (Moore, 2009: 70).

Further, Godwin endeavours to show how memorials and monuments reconstruct the routed identities of the Zimbabwean whites and in particular the white farmers. The symbols of such an existence are embodied in the farms, memorials and landscape that serve as signposts to a maimed glory, and displaced identity. Memory is 'torn', as Nora (2012) observes, by the mobilities of instabilities inherent in the human condition. The annulling of a memory environment thus necessitates sites of memory, and this is validated in *Mukiwa w*here such an environment has been decimated. Godwin laments: 'White society was seriously wounded' (1996: 326). This is in reference to the lack of the sanctity of African life to the white settlers. The settler memory sites had been disparaged and maimed by the war, the self's interior memory environment had been made worthless. The exterior sign, image or symbol, therefore,

as shown in *Mukiwa* can reinvent this disparaged interior and can fill it via the symbolism of the monuments and memorials. In *Mukiwa*, the Rhodesian identity is plotted from the small village of Melsetter wherein strategically located at the centre is a 'wide, grassy central square whose middle is occupied by 'a pioneer memorial' (p. 57). Godwin notes that the white residents of the village would visit this memorial 'as part of [their] history lessons' (p. 57). The existence and indeed the commemoration of the pioneer memorial constituted a narrative of a new beginning in this contested space for this was done in defiance of all other precolonial histories, symbols and or monuments that already occupied this space.

Godwin's detailed depiction of memory sites suggests that *Mukiwa* is partly constructed to celebrate settler identities at a period when political instabilities have set them into disarray in Zimbabwe. The masculine hegemony of the pioneer column subordinated both the landscape and black people in its project of nation making. Subordination here enters as marring the subaltern's references of meaning by way of indigenous people's cultural episteme in the process of formulating new knowledges since there was ferocious destruction in this process. Bhabha (2006: 202) aptly refers to this process as a disfiguration which however did not utterly write out the subaltern's epistemes, but rather imposed a palimpsest. Godwin's (1996) description of pioneer memorial is very revealing. He states:

> The memorial was a statue of a wagon pulled by a span of oxen. It was carved from Chimanimani granite and set on a plinth made up of river pebbles from the Sabi river crossing, one of the main barriers facing the pioneers. Underneath was a plaque which said simply: Erected in memory of the Pioneers of Gazaland. Next to the inscription was a list of twelve names of people who had died on the treks. (p 58)

Notably, the erection and imposition of this pioneer memorial is done on a contested space and leaves an indelible mark on the landscape as well as on the colonised imaginary. It does not completely destroy what exists but rather disfigures it or alters it by standing as a structure of power and domination. The 'carving' and 'hewing' of granite from Chimanimani is symbolic of the conquest and subsequent subordination of not only the colonised subjects' space but also their worldview. The palimpsest processes theorised by Bhabha (2006) is suggested by the fossilization of the Sabi river pebbles onto the memorial edifice. The affixation of the pebbles symbolises the conquest of the river which had once posed as barrier to pioneer invasion. In

the same manner, the tsetse flies had decimated the pioneer numbers, hence the petrification of insects to the wall for epistemological purposes.

The inscription on the memorial enforcing the imperative to remember the Pioneer invasion and the twelve dead and the fact that the memorial commands the centre space of the square is all calculated to legitimate the mimesis, to adapt Palambiu-Pio's (1996: 211) ethnic autobiography theory, which argues that if an ethnic history is 'to carve out an area for revision [it] must legitimate itself by laying claim to a firmer epistemology than that claimed by the dominant history'. Epistemology configures the way a people creates values and a hierarchy of those values. The statue thus marks some deeper and more enduring claims upon a national past as part of Godwin's present. The values of the dominated or subalternized are thus subordinated by the colonizer. The Pioneer project was plotted to undermine the values of both the Shona and the Ndebele people whose epistemes were vying for dominance before the invasion. The statue is therefore not some ornamental feature of the landscape but a highly symbolic signifier conferring some palimpsestic meaning on the modern day Zimbabwe. This instantly transforms the space on which it stands into some ideologically charged site. The statue thus silently voices Godwin's white Rhodesian identity whilst denying and eroding the identity of the African who is conspicuously absent from the statue. The statue thus invoked and staged Godwin's and other white Rhodesians' belonging by virtue of conquest. However, its presence in an independent Zimbabwe, in the same manner as Rhodes statue at Rhodes University in independent South Africa, marks recalcitrant residual presences of the colonialist at the level of ideology and cultural domination.

Godwin's description of the pioneer memorial edifice suggests that it is more than just a symbol or sign from the past, but one that displaces, replaces and distorts local narratives of identity in favour of the dominant white narrative. This is because pioneering presupposes absence thereby giving way to the new. Pioneering thus gives and provides the authoring and imposition of new discursive realities on the already existing space. It is essentially a process of naming, terming and taming the unfamiliar so that it eventually conforms to the familiar. Said's (1978) orientalism thesis posits that the dominant thrives upon deploying their vocabulary so as to define, manage and exercise power over their subjects. The naming of the strange is therefore done in the familiar parlance obtained from the discourse of empire. The pioneer memorial thus becomes a symbol that synchronises the totality of the white Rhodesians' (of British descent) aspirations and identity. For example, at St Georges, Godwin refers to the 'jealously

guarding of the white Rhodesian history and the obsessive observance on tradition' (p. 175). In this way, the pioneer memorial is an embodiment of white colonialists' values both past present and have potential to be carried even into the future.

Godwin shows that during white colonial rule, it was easy for black people who were subalterns to suffer an erasure through an illegal death at the hands of racist white people. For example, he remembers the Oberholzer boy who said that his 'uncle shot a kaffir once' and naively observed that 'it was OK because he had a license' (Godwin, 1996: 30). While white colonialists could immortalise themselves through memorials that bore the name of their dead heroes, Godwin's narrative shows that black Africans suffered a death that left no trace. Heidegger (1968) states that death is the horizon of the ending of possibilities. Colonialists' monuments, landscapes and memorials are therefore an attempt to transcend the horizon of death by symbolically multiplying meanings associated with identity, belonging and legitimacy beyond the event of death.

In *Mukiwa* and *Crocodile*, Godwin invents belonging through the landscape. The sheer density of the land, especially the Chimanimani Mountains and the farms/estates provide a site for generating narratives of home, identity and belonging. In *Mukiwa*, Godwin relates an excursion up the mountain wherein he is trapped in a storm and somewhat wills the lightning to strike him down so that death would immortalize his belonging to the mountains (p. 168). His desire for immortalization via the landscape is reminiscent of Cecil John Rhodes whose grave was burrowed out of rock at the Matopos hills in Southern Zimbabwe. In Rhodes' case, death immortalized his name, aspirations and endeavors by marrying his name to the spirits dwelling in the hills and the names of Ndebele kings buried there. Here, belonging is thus appropriated by grafting the self on the other to enable admission into a supposed immortality. Rhodes named his burial spot 'World's view', and it was here where he used to escape to 'contemplate his imperial vision' (Godwin, 1996: 284). The appropriation of the local religion and physical environment exalts Rhodes and inscribes his presences and achievements onto what already exists in a palimpsest way as suggested by Bhabha. Rhodes' aspirations and visions will dominate until another conqueror comes along to create yet another palimpsest which will however still leave traces of Rhodes' presence.

In *Mukiwa*, especially in his childhood narration, Godwin does not as he later does in *Crocodile*, pledge any fixed loyalties to the pioneer ethos because he never views himself as invader although he clearly privileges the imperial project over the aspirations of the

indigenous Africans. That he does not avow fixed loyalties to the settler norms does not necessarily inhibit him from appropriating imperial sites of memory to claim belonging. This suggests that acts of memory are always ambivalent. The ambivalent voice of memorials in moments of political instability or change, mark the ephemeral nature of identity and life narratives. For example, the image of the laager in the shape of the Williemes' house and the white pioneer memorial at the entrance of the Earl Grey building, renamed Mukwati in post-colonial Zimbabwe, memorialize the impulse by whites to protect themselves against what Godwin terms 'marauding natives'. This revokes the meaning of pioneering as entering an empty space, a meaning the majority of the pioneers projected to the world. Laagering in fact inscribes the project of pioneering with criminality. It suggests a conscience aware of transgressing the values of the other, hence the need to laager out that conscience and its embodiment.

Ironically, Godwin's visiting or reference to memory sites profits his project of auto/biography. This leads to complexity in narration and identity construction created through ambivalence and ambiguity premised at certain instances on satire, humour and ridicule generated simultaneously against the subject and object of satire. This is clearly configured in the narrator's visit to and inspection of the Filabusi war memorial (p. 417), a monument erected in memory of some white troopers killed during the 1896 war when the Ndebele people tried to expel and repulse the invading colonialists out of their land.[42] Godwin juxtaposes the neglect of the white colonialists Filabusi memorial with the derelict nature of heroes' acre of those who died in the 1970s fighting for independence in order to convince the reader that the ZANU PF government has no higher ideals and lacks the will to celebrate those who paid the ultimate price for liberating the country.

Godwin advances his autobiography by placing himself at memory sites composing his narrative as the umpire for both the imperial ethos and the new order constructed by the black rulers. As arbiter and adjudicator, the narrator can negotiate and advance his position as he satirically comments on the politics of value and meaning construction. He ridicules all and sundry, the imperial order, the subaltern's episteme or the new order's politics. This has the effect of privileging the narrator as a centre of rational sound moral values and the exemplar of a new Zimbabwe that dismisses as obsolete both the imperial and ZANU PF ideals.

[42] The Second Matabele War, also known as the Matabeleland Rebellion was fought between 1896 and 1897 in the area then known as Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. It pitted the British South Africa Company against the Matabele people who had revolted against the authority of the British South Africa Company.

Highlighting the neglect and trivialization of memorial sites by the new black government, Godwin says that it was his urge to piss that led to his discovery of the Filabusi memorial site (p. 417). That '[t]here was no longer a signpost' (p. 417) to point to the memorial exposes the de-centering of the imperial order. And the fact that '[t]wo of the troopers, Johnston and Koch, were without Christian names' shows that 'a hundred years on, the memorial was unfinished' (p. 418). This incompletion which marks 'gap(s)' where their 'Christian names should have been' (p. 418), exposes the pioneering ethos and white rule as assemblages of white mythologies. Godwin observes that 'in those [colonial] days Africans did not have surnames for white people' (p. 23). So, by highlighting the absence of Christian names of Johnston and Koch, Godwin ridicules the very ethos of the civilising mission of the pioneers by showing that they have suffered a fate similar to that of the Africans they had come to subjugate. Godwin laments: 'Above the names there was no patriotic message, simply the words *In Memorium* 1896 … Imagine that, fighting for queen and country, and then no one can even remember your bloody name' (p. 418). It is as Chennells (2000:150) puts it: 'We are returned to empire, and satire registers futile deaths among loose ends of imperialism's grandiose schemes'. In this regard, Torres (2013: 348) argues that the disseminatory acts of memorials go dormant with the cessation of rituals or commemorations that keep the memory site active by constructing narratives that iterate the re-inscription of the memory.

Godwin also satirises the periodic compulsory visits to Matopos by mainly white students during colonial times to commemorate Rhodes' imperial achievements. He states that teachers were keen to inscribe settler values and claimed heroism onto the impressionable minds of the students. To borrow Deleuze and Gauttari's (1994) concept, the teachers provided a manual on how to interpret the memorial. However, Deleuze and Gauttari claim that the artistic dynamism evident in memorials is uncontainable and exposes the artifice and bias of state sponsored interpretations of memorials. Deleuze and Gauttari argue that interpretations of artistic constructions like monuments constantly elude manuals because they operate at an irrational level where the artistic object's indeterminable meanings connive with the viewer's subjectivity to de-stitch the weaving of metanarratives. This means the affectivity, the emotive impact of the monument on the viewer, refuses the given meaning(s) of state grand narratives because affectivity or the emotive transgresses the borders of language and therefore opposes Platonic utopic fixations of meaning. This is evident in Godwin's post-independence reading or interpretation of colonial memorial sites. Godwin mentions the dismantling of the pioneer memorial by the ZANU PF youths who were 'armed with picks and slegdehammers and

smashed it down' (p. 409). This indicates the arbitrary construction of meaning attached to memorials and the fact that the legitimacy disseminated by a memorial site in the nation hinges on the political 'agenda of the ruling group' (Torres, 2014: 389).

Godwin is critical of the way the post-independent Zimbabwe neglects both the colonial and post-colonial memorial sites such as the heroes' acre and fallen heroes' cemeteries. As already mentioned, his commentary on the unkempt Heroes' acre in Meseltter makes him an adjudicator who discerns that ZANU PF has never been and will never be a revolutionary movement that protects the ideals of humanity and heroism it verbally champions. Godwin is disturbed by the Zimbabwean government's neglect of the memorial sites of those who fought for the liberation of the country against colonial rule. He indicates that one would have understood and excused the government's neglect of colonial memorial sites but the carelessness about its own recent history of fighting for freedom is what Godwin's censures the most. The modern Heroes' acre is in a terrible state of neglect according to Godwin. He observes that 'the new cemetery' is 'overgrown and neglected … had faded sign at the gate: *Heroes' Acre.* This was where guerrillas who died in the war had been buried ... The graves had rough cement headstones without crosses, without names even' (p. 410). On one of them, he laments noticing a rotting plank and that when he turned it over he observed that there amidst termites and red ants was carved the words: '*UNKOWN COMRADE'* (p. 410), reminiscent of a nonchalant and indifferent ruling ZANU PF. The manner in which Godwin depicts the Heroes' Acre through images of destruction and absence, for instance, the mentioning of 'ants', 'faded sign', 'rotting plank' and the phrase 'Unknown Comrade' exposes ZANU PF as an uncaring entity because it neglects the ideals it verbally proclaims. Godwin shows that unlike in the white cemeteries articulated earlier, where the fallen heroes were each named on the obelisks the ZANU PF's heroes' acres did not acknowledge and prioritise the identity of its heroes. Since it is shown to be a morally bankrupt government, this is posited as what de-legitimatises this regime. This means Godwin deliberately selects memorials to present and through irony, satire or omissions generates his own narrative he wishes the reader to accept.

2.5. Strategies of Absolving the Self from Guilty of Racial Crimes

Despite employing strategies that absolve him from guilty of racial crimes committed by racist white colinialists, Godwin's autobiography exposes him as embedded in a white superiority

complex where black people are viewed as inferior. White people are depicted as ordering the natural and physical environment to make maximum use of it. Godwin suggests that Rhodesian whites were responsible for transforming and taming the African wilderness into a productive modern Western space. Ironically, this taming of the African wilderness involves the dispossession of the black inhabitants of their land. For example, Godwin indicates that black villagers were forcibly relocated to poor lands to give way for the construction of Lake Kariba. He writes: 'The local Tonga tribe, who had to be shifted out of the way when the dam was built … still, believed that he [Nyaminyami] would strike down the wall one day and return the river to its natural state. The few Tonga left in Kariba town were reduced to selling carvings of Nyaminyami, once a powerful god, respected and feared by the Tonga, now reduced to a decoration on top of a tourist souvenir' (p. 198). Godwin trivialises the Tonga's displacement by referring to their forced evictions as having been 'shifted out of the way'. His tone of mockery reverberates again in the way he describes the Tonga's river god, the Nyaminyami, believed to be resident in the dammed river whilst exalting the Western religious belief system. In this regard, Hughes (2006: 838) observes that white people destroyed the wilderness in order to remake it in their own image.

Furthermore, to appropriate Spivak's (1998) formulation, the subaltern does not speak and when he/she does, his worldview is articulated by Godwin through the lenses of the occident. The case in point is that of Chipikiri, the tracker, who is described in contradictory terms. Chipikiri and Godwin were both Rhodesia policemen. Chipikiri is described as an extraordinary man who was originally 'from Namibia from the nomadic people they called the Khoi … Chipikiri was his nickname and meant a small hard nail … He always went barefoot and refused to wear a proper uniform' (p. 285). Godwin goes on to acknowledge that Chipikiri was 'a truly gifted tracker' as he was endowed with a multiplicity of talents that enabled him to follow a track over the most difficult of terrains. Godwin notes that Chipikiri could find clues in everything from 'the time it took for a blade of grass to spring back into place, or for termites to rebuild their mounds, broken cobwebs, the alarm calls of various birds' (p. 285). He could even smell humans and had an acute sense of hearing. Chipikiri was also 'well versed in the cunning arts of anti-tracking' (p. 285). Yet, despite all these impeccable attributes that Godwin credits Chipikiri with, he concludes by portraying him in the most negative manner. He defines Chipikiri, the Khoisan expert tracker as an experienced scrounger and one out of sync with modern technology and relegates him to the stone age together with people of his tribe. Chipikiri detests guns, preferring bows and arrows and when he eventually accepts the gun, he

never uses it. This reinforces the stereotype that the Khoisan, despite historian Ranger's (1989) observation that they are the original/aboriginal inhabitants of what is now modern day Zimbabwe, are illegitimate as providers of a guiding modern episteme. In the same way of anachronizing and antiquating the other`s history, the Great Zimbabwe is reduced to 'a ruin' (p.158) as Godwin refuses to acknowledge the name change from the Zimbabwe Ruins to Great Zimbabwe. This refusal relegates black people's knowledge into a past without history and cultural heritage.

As already pointed out, Godwin appropriates the roles of arbiter and adjudicator of values and morals when it comes to the failures of Zimbabwe's post-independence government. His ambivalent role as testimony bearer of the bush war, farm repossessions and the Gukurahundi mass murders which resulted in what others have called the Matabeleland genocide, [43] resonates with the conviction that the physical or embodied presence of a self at a site of an event validates the veracity of his narrative, in this case as a participant observer. Godwin's journalistic style is infused with moral urgency and he attains the status of an emissary of a collective conscience which prods him to investigate what he had already concluded to be a genocide in Matabeleland as well as the farm invasions. This provides an instance of the reflexive self who avers the truth and ironically proceeds by 'investigation' and compilation of information to prove that truth while not heeding that the acts of investigation and subsequent information compilation constitute the very construction of truth.

Godwin also attempts to underwrite his autobiographies as authentic in a curious and humorous way. While inspecting the Filabusi memorial, for example, a vicious bolt of lightning reminds him of another white man struck down by lightning on his way to testify against Chief Maduna's grandfather in a political matter in court, and he 'wondered briefly' if he too would be struck down 'before he could bear witness' (p. 418), obviously through the publication of his autobiography. Since Godwin survived the lightning bolt, by implication he is thus supposedly invested with divine appointment to give testimony of the bush war, Matabeleland genocide and farm reclamations through interviews with the affected farmers. This lightning survival takes the form of a leitmotif as it is utilised in both autobiographies to suggest that

[43] Essentially, *Gukurahundi* was a militarily-executed vanquishing of perceived dissidents in the Midlands and Matabeleland areas by Robert Mugabe's Korean-trained Fifth Brigade which was known as *Gukurahundi.* This was soon after the independence of Zimbabwe on 18 April, 1980. The death toll caused by this act is estimated to be at around 20 000 mainly comprising civilians.

Godwin's narrative enjoys divine approval above and beyond other competing narratives by both black and white people.

Godwin captures one of the acts of resistance to white domination in Rhodesia as African spiritualism which he juxtaposes with the civilising mission of Christianity. In this comparison, prominent is the superiority of Christianity over African spiritualism. Godwin remembers once attending an Apostolic sect church session after having accompanied his African house maid who was a member of the church. Godwin had earlier on dismissed this religion as mere 'African animism' although camouflaged with 'morsels of Christianity from the old testament' (p. 29). Godwin seems keen to distance religion from the civilising mission of Christianity as he goes on to say that he had witnessed some congregates falling into trances as well as getting possessed during sessions. Interestingly, Godwin himself gets possessed and starts speaking in Shona, a language he had not learnt at all. In this way, Godwin transgresses into the subjectivity of the black African and inhabits that space albeit in the subconscious.

The scenario above is contrasted with the cross on Moodie's rest (p. 134) which reflects the Christian civilizing mission in 'fighting a good fight' of faith. The tradition of Christianity assumes the mission to bring values of love, peace, rationality, civilisation, charity and brotherhood amongst others. But the fact that the pioneers mowed down natives by the gun and dislocated them into arid areas which the colonizers named Tribal Trust Lands or Native Reserves destabilises this narrative. Moodie's rest is marked, but the deaths of the natives killed or driven to obscure Native Reserves are not. The vexing absence of these unmarked deaths inscribe partiality in the semiotic system of the empire. The phrase 'for Queen and empire' invokes the master code that disarticulates other codes and the inscription from the Bible legitimizes and sanitises the violent enterprise of the pioneer invaders by asserting that it was a good fight endowed with divine authority and blessings. Moodie's Rest, to borrow Slemon's (2010: 10) comment on imperial monuments, is 'less a historical monument than a monument to history, and as such it works not only to construct the category of 'history' as the self-privileging inscription of the colonizer, but also to legitimize a particular concept of history, that is history as the record of signal events, the actuations of great men upon the ground work of time and space'.

2.6. Emplacement and Strategies of Claiming Belonging Versus Physical and Psychological Displacement

In Godwin's *Crocodile*, place, emplacement, (dis)placement and belonging are integral organising concepts that are central to and dialogically entangled with the author's race and his parents' identities. In this text, Godwin writes as an international journalist under siege from an African regime he had earlier on in *Mukiwa* anticipated would do better with regards to racial relations. He writes from a position of subordination and indeed marginalisation of both the self and white people of British descent. *Crocodile* assumes a reportage mode in that Godwin employs investigative journalism to bring out issues that were also affecting other farmers who were, like his parents affected by the land occupations orchestrated and often times choreographed by the veterans of the liberation war. The tragedy of Zimbabwe is thus focalised through the viewpoint of an international journalistic lens that privileges fact and oral interviews rather than memory excavations. Godwin also employs the first person narrative style to articulate both his and the other farmers' experiences. He articulates from a position of personal witness as he went about interviewing farmers and in the same vein experiencing contact with the war veterans and the shared lived experiences of the affected farmers. Godwin particularly explores racial tensions, African political leadership and the topical white land/farm dispossessions by ZANU PF and in particular by Mugabe.

Crocodile thus grapples with what it means to be a white male for Godwin who is of British descent and had wielded political and economic power and then saw these privileges slip away. The text is a response to repression and dispossession and also where space, identity and in this case place/home, is threatened or has been lost. For example, Godwin concedes: 'For much of the twentieth century, whites possessed over half of Rhodesia's/ Zimbabwe's agricultural land, even though they made up barely one percent of the population and this land disparity was seen as one of the main causes of the country's civil war' (p. 28). Despite this, Godwin refuses to be 'accountable for the sins of [his] fathers' (p. 28). Like other white farmers, in his claim to belonging, he insists: 'Chimanimani is my true north the fixed point by which I situate all other points, the closest place I have to a spiritual home' (p. 33). *Crocodile* is thus permeated with images that appropriate civilisation and accomplishments as residing in whiteness. The autobiography becomes a tool for political and ideological resistance in response to the tyranny of the Mugabe government.

Unlike his stance in *Mukiwa* where there is changeability in meaning, deterritorialisation and satire, Godwin employs the omniscient first person narrator to lend both credence, spontaneity and authenticity to his depiction of farm dispossessions. He seems entangled and unable to extricate himself from the trappings of a history that has culminated in the British's humiliation of Africans. For example, about the dispossessions and persecutions white Zimbabweans are subjected to during the post-2000 period, he writes: 'I am not used to being the one pitied. I am the one who pities others' (p.59). The superior gaze he casts on the other is uncompromising and his tone is infused with and marinated in anger and bitterness. Godwin becomes a critic of the Mugabe 'choreographed' crisis that saw the 'wovits' (Godwin's reference for the war veterans) moving onto the white farms. Godwin engages in naming and labelling and employs language, images and metaphors suffused with intensity, despair, loss, pain, suffering and humiliation.

Crocodile focuses on displacements and disjunctures of identity arising from temporal and physical dislocations and relocations. The text also explores the emplacement process of white settlers. According to Hammond (2009: 9), emplacement 'is a process through which an alien or neutral space can be transformed into a personalised social place and it routinely involves forging relations with particular sites through stories or narrative configurations'. The narrative also shows that various notions of 'place' in its embodiment as home are narratively constructed. In this text, Godwin endeavours to show how Zimbabwean white farmers initially inhabited an unfamiliar space which they ultimately transformed into something familiar and comfortable. Lefebvre (1991) posits that space is produced and reproduced through human intentions and that it influences those who produce it. Notably, Tuan (1997) makes a distinction between space and place when he argues that 'place is security' and space is freedom; we are attached to the one and long for the other' (p. 3). In Godwin's view, white farmers, through human intentions, turned the African uninhabited bush into a liveable space. The white farmers thus turned these places into what Lefebvre (1991: 164) calls 'dominated and dominant space'. According to Lefebvre, 'dominated' and 'dominant space' is space that has been transformed and indeed mediated by technology, as Godwin highlights from the descriptions of the various white farms and estates in his interviews with evicted white owners.

Godwin (2006: 53) argues that 'land is something of a paradox in Africa and that it was not always precious'. He observes that, hard as it might be, 'to believe today, the continent's historic curse was under population which hinders centralized rule and state-building'. Godwin refers to empty spaces in most of Africa and in particular Rhodesia therefore putting credence

to the white farmers' claim that they inhabited an empty land. Godwin (2006: 54) states: 'To early white visitors much of Africa seemed 'almost' empty. For the most part, an unpeopled country'. It was the impression of emptiness which was according to Godwin accentuated by the African system of shifting agriculture as bush was cleared and land prepared mostly by hand in preparation for agricultural purpose. The reliance on rain and the use of ash for fertiliser is also cited as a cause of soil exhaustion which inevitably led to farmers' ever changing of agrarian fields. Godwin (2006) claims that land ownership was alien to the African inhabitants before colonial invasion and occupation.

Notably, Godwin in *Crocodile* is ambivalent about the Western colonial enterprise and its achievement in Africa. He writes: 'It is sometimes said that the worst thing to happen to Africa was the arrival of the Whiteman. And the second worst thing was his departure. Colonialism lasted long enough to destroy much of Africa, indigenous cultures and traditions but not long enough to leave behind a durable replacement' (p. 153). On the one hand, this quotation, which Godwin clearly subscribes to seem to condemn colonialism by calling it the worst thing that ever happened to Africa. On the other hand, it suggests that, had the colonial enterprise lasted long enough, it would have completely destroyed African cultures to the extent that they would not have been any violent agitations for independence. This complete annihilation of whole societies is posited as what could have been a permanent solution to white invaders' problem who subsequently faced the wrath of those that they had subjugated in the form of wars and land dispossessions as was the case in Zimbabwe.

Godwin also shows that the total and complete collapse of the social services in Zimbabwe was precipitated by the land invasions and dispossessions. He divides Zimbabwe into two; the - orderly white serene governance pitted against the corrupt primitive black administration. The latter is under this white gaze that contemptuously polices and supervises the way the black government runs even its bankrupt and cash strapped institutions albeit from a towering position. Early in the text, the reader is introduced to a hospitalised Godwin senior, at Parirenyatwa hospital, a 'cash strapped government hospital', with 'an ex-guerrilla … bush nurse' in attendance, 'where for once, Georgina says the lift even worked', where 'Dad lay for ages on a trolley' and there was no linen for Mr Godwin's bed because 'they have all been stolen' (p. 14). Godwin's language here is invested with contempt for the seemingly inept black government which has its essential services manned by unqualified personnel and thieves who steal even the bed sheets meant for the patients. Infrastructure is always malfunctioning as Georgina is surprised with the working elevator. The liberation fighters are called 'black

insurgents' who fought in a 'civil war' against 'white rule' (p. 21), insinuating that the freedom fighters rose up against a 'lawful' white authority and thus engaged in armed resistance against a 'legitimate' government.

Godwin shows that white Zimbabwean farmers' belonging and their ownership of farms became complexly entangled with the waning popularity of the country's ruling party. He depicts the shift of fortunes and privileges of white Rhodesians of British origin which in turn inform the discourse of the white farmers' victimization that emerge in the narrative. He suggests that it was the white farmers' visible affluence and to some extent their social isolation that were amplified in the period of the land reclamations that became a catalyst for the anti-white rhetoric. About white people's homes he writes: 'The sprinklers were softly puffing over the lawns … there were squash and tennis courts, a bowling green, a rugged field and a swimming pool with diving boards' (1996.186). Godwin highlights the implications of the land repossessions especially as they led to white farmers' physical displacements. He writes of his visit to 'a farming community nestled among the Mvurwi range, north of the capital' (2006: 63). This range had once been home and a commercial farming hub to over sixty white farmers. Yet now, 'four farmers of sixty remain … And the same thing is happening all over the country' (1996: 406). Similarly, on revisiting the farming surroundings of his childhood, the narrator looks 'through the phone book for names [he] recognized but there was not much continuity to be found there'. He notes that '[t]here had been more than three hundred white farmers here once. Now there remained only three' (Godwin, 1996: 406). This is an emphatic indication of the massive scale of white farmers' displacement and dislocation as a consequence of the land reclamation. Godwin strategically uses these shocking statistics to represent the wider crisis affecting the entire country. Hammar (2008) attributes the massive displacements as emanating directly from the referendum that ZANU PF lost in the year 2000. Hammar (2008) states:

> Starting just weeks after the referendum, violent state sponsored invasions and occupations were undertaken on a massive scale across the country and in the years that followed thousands of mostly white commercial farmers and hundreds of thousands of black farm workers and their respective families were often brutally displaced. (p.245)

Godwin also uses nostalgia as a strategy of eliciting sympathy for the displaced and dispossessed farmers. This surge of nostalgia involves idealizing images of the past that clearly celebrate colonial rule. Davis (1979:16) observes how the 'good past/bad present' contrast is

so central to nostalgia so much that he calls it nostalgia's 'distinctive rhetorical signature'. Yet as evidenced in Godwin's narratives, nostalgia can be more complex than this simple dichotomy would seem to imply. Davis posits further that nostalgia is fundamentally about yearning for some other time or place. However, Stewart (1993) and Boym (2001) refer to nostalgia as implying the irretrievable loss in time of the yearned for and that it is a phenomenon which exposes the past as much as it does about the present and the future. Davis (1979) suggests that nostalgia becomes prominent at certain critical times of human history especially moments following unexpected changes, happenings and misfortunes such as those that attended the white farmers' land dispossessions. In *Crocodile*, nostalgia is a narrative mode as seen in the particular arrangement of ideas based on the white farmers' lived experiences and encounters with the 'wovits'. Godwin invokes nostalgia as a narrative strategy via the use of selective interviews as only white farmers are interviewed. The farms in this manner are not only used as a gaze responding to the past but also as a literary technique responding to Godwin's, and by extension, the white farmers' needs, anxieties and circumstances.

Godwin's autobiographies present an ambiguity between their criticism of colonial rule and their nostalgia for the past. In retrospect, Godwin's nostalgic memories take on a sacrosanct quality in juxtaposition to a defiled present. They describe the internalization of racist attitudes, as when Godwin in *Mukiwa*, as earlier noted, refers to a boy who casually remarks that during colonial times his uncle shot a black person without any adverse consequences to the offender. And yet, whilst the adult Godwin distances himself from this racist portrayal and his own participation in the racist practices, his nostalgia about his childhood is suggestive of a desire, albeit an impossible one, to return to this past where the white people felt secure. It is via the contrast to a grimmer present that we sense his longing. Interestingly, Davis (1979) argues that nostalgia is triggered by the present and not by that which is nostalgically remembered in itself. The prominent feature of this contrast is the white family farm/home. The appropriation of the white commercial farms by the war veterans signals a disintegration of order and a violation of the sanctity of the white domestic space. It was whiteness under siege. This lack and disruption of order marks the transition from a fondly remembered past to a dystopic present. This breakdown of order is depicted on a family farm/home that also stands in for the white body and the country at large.

The bougainvillea flower is ubiquitous in *Mukiwa* and *Crocodile* and represents the presence of white people and their orderliness. Its disappearance consequently signals the disruption of

that order. Most white farms' homesteads, including Godwin's parents', had this hedge surrounding their homes. Yet, during the occupations, Godwin's parents hedge was incinerated by vagrants who lived on the street outside thus leaving the Godwins 'totally exposed; anyone [could] peer straight into our inner sanctum' (p. 71). It is noteworthy that the bougainvillea flower that marks the boundary of Godwin's parents' home, which is used to represent whiteness, is further mentioned during Godwin's air flights. In *Crocodile*, Godwin describes flying over the 'bursts of gaudy bougainvillea [which] mark the houses of white men … From the air, you can trace the progress of the European by the bright scarlets, mauves, and pinks of bougainvillea' (p. 63). The idea of the white farm/home as separate and sacred, is depicted now as vulnerable and under siege. Apparently, the flower, just like the white man, is exotic to Africa and it represents the perceived 'progress' brought by the white farmers. Godwin seems nostalgic about the colonial order, and directly points to tragic connections between the past and present. Nostalgia, in both texts, is mainly achieved through the child Godwin, as his childhood allows for romantic and innocent account(s) of the past. Godwin's romantic idea of past white farmers' contributions gains impetus from its contrast with the present as he reminisces and rues the destruction of farm equipment and property and machinery which is clearly visible during his air flight at the height of farm invasions. The contrast between the before and during the farm reclamation aerial views, points to an apparent regression in the 'progress' and civilisation brought about by European colonial civilisation.

Moreover, in order to draw sympathy for the dispossessed white farmers, in *Crocodile* Godwin relies on newspaper reports which he probably regards as incontroversially factual, to highlight the violent acts against the famers which occurred during the land dispossessions. For example, he uses print media articles that his father had clipped for him. He notes: 'My father has carefully clipped articles he thinks will be of relevance' (p. 61). These print media cuttings were of white farmers who had been attacked and violated by war veterans during the invasions. The cuttings are conveniently chosen to serve the required purpose. They are an authentication strategy meant to validate his narrative. Even when his father sends him newspaper cuttings Godwin goes on to give the graphic details of the first recorded farmer to be killed by the invaders; David Stevens.[44] An interviewed eye-witness to Stevens' death explained: 'I saw a

[44] David Stevens was the first recorded white farmer to be killed as a result of the land invasions. His death is articulated by almost all the authors examined in this thesis showing how white farmers valued white lives as it is apparent that quite several black people also lost their lives as a result of the land reclamation but with seemingly less publicity. Stevens' death is therefore central to the white farmers' narratives as it marked the intensification of their woes and persecution. The death of David Stevens and how it is publicised is ironic given the local and internationaL silence on the death of an estimated 20 000 people during the Gukurahundi

man step forward and shoot Dave in the back and then in the face with a shotgun – he literally blew him away' (p. 61). These gory and shocking details of the violence against white farmers are meant to highlight the brutality of the Mugabe regime. Mulder (2005) and Selby (2006) state that, levels of violence escalated in the post-2000 period with numerous reports of forced evictions, beatings, arbitrary arrests and political killings. Intolerance and intimidation became the order of the day leading into an economic implosion, food insecurity and general instability. In an interview with Maria, Steven's widow, Godwin shows that the Stevens had bought their farm from a 'black man in 1986' (p. 62). This detail intends to controvert the state propaganda that, all white farmers had illegitimately acquired their farms through the violent colonial process. The interviews and multiple narrative voices that Godwin uses, have been referred to elsewhere as 'converging voices'which purportedly are to provide facts as opposed to state propaganda.In this way Godwin intends to show that the majority of white farmers were mere victims of government orchestrated and sponsored violent racism.

Furthermore, Godwin seems to perpetuate the white myth of hard work, via the taming of the 'bush' and occupying empty spaces in Africa at the time of acquiring their farms. For example, in an interview with Godwin, Maria explains how she and her now late husband had acquired a dilapidated and run down farm but worked hard to transform it into a productive business entity. She laments:

> We bought our farm from a black man in 1986. It was a rundown overgrown mess, no rivers flowed there. It was called Arizona because it was arid and rocky. Now all rivers flow. We grew tobacco and maize and I bred Ostriches. We employed seventy-five families. (p. 62)

Through this interview, Godwin shows that, not all white farmers were descendants of the early colonial settlers. Like most of the affected white farmers, the Stevens had acquired their property legitimately well after Zimbabwe's political independence in 1980. They had actually bought their farm 'from a black man in 1986' emphasising the idea of buying from a black man in 1986 well after political independence. Godwin's interview with Maria also suggests that the invasions had nothing to do with redistributing the land to poor black people since it was

massacres.The publicity and prominence given to David Stevens death is analogous to the declaration by Donald Trump that there is White Genocide in South Africa when a White Farmer is murdered in stark contrast to over 42 000 Black people aremurdered annually.

characterised by greed and pure criminality. For example, not only did Maria tragically lose her husband at the hands of a state sponsored mob, she also lost all her valuable items. She says that war veterans took 'the bag in which [she] had packed all [their] valuables: birth certificates, passports, jewellery. So now [they had] nothing' (p. 62).

Furthermore, Godwin observes that 'not all [whites] were whinging Rhodies. There were thousands of white and black people who came back from abroad to take part in the bold new experiment of constructing a multiracial society' (p. 327) that would be a model for Africa. Through Steven's murder and Maria's now destitute condition, Godwin debunks the idea that what happened was a fair land redistribution process but an act of cruelty bordering on crimes against humanity. As already noted, Godwin's interview with Maria helps expose the state propaganda that all white farmers were descendants of colonial land grabbers and by so doing he elicits sympathy for them by showing that their eviction, and at times murder, were crimes and a huge loss to the Zimbabwean economy.

In some instances, land invaders psychologically terrorised the white farmers instead of killing them. This was the case with Peter Hulme, the owner of The Range farm. The sheer numbers of the shouting and singing invaders who surrounded a farmer's house was enough to break the farmers' resilience. Hulme relates his traumatic experience: 'A group of two hundred and fifty wovits has just pegged the whole of the Range and subdivided it into one hundred and one plots of twenty acres each' (p. 68). The subdivision of the entire farm was meant to show the owner that he was fighting a lost cause. Hulme's account goes to show that the occupiers engaged in 'antics, beating drums, and chanting war slogans and threatening [them] with axes and cudgels and pointing sticks at [them] as though they were guns, shouting Bang! Bang! You are dead' (p. 68). Chitiyo (2003) points out that these actions were a 'ritual humiliation, violence and destruction of status; a disempowerment' (p. 164), meant to displace the white commercial farmer who had traditionally been the big man of Rhodesia and Zimbabwean society.

However, even in the case of those farmers who had inherited their farms through the act of colonial invasion, Godwin shows that, they had over time earned a legitimate right to those farms. Godwin has an interview with Mr Boshof, who as a child had been part of the pioneer column, and had come up to the then Rhodesia in an ox wagon all the way from Transvaal. When the Boshofs obtained their farm in Melsetter area, it was just unproductive bush which

they transformed into a viable farm according to Mr Boshof. Godwin who himself had been to this farm as a child, supports Mr Boshof's version saying:

> It was indeed a beautiful farm they had carved out of the bush at Lemon Kop, with orchards of apples and lemons and avocados, pears and big-eyed Jersey cows in the meadow. In the stables where small woolly lambs that I was allowed to feed with milk from a baby's bottle. (p. 103)

The idea that they had carved this beautiful farm out of the bush, supports Pilossof's (2012) observation of what he calls the myth of hard work which legitimises the belief that, whites had earned entitlement to land by virtue of subduing the African uninhabitable landscape. According to this view, Mr Boshof had transformed Lemon Kop from a sheer bush to a lucrative enterprise of a variety of fruits, dairy farming and sheep rearing. Through this strategy, Godwin shows that, the so-called Zimbabwean land redistribution programme was nothing but an act of envy and greed on the part of black land grabbers and their government which tolerated and even supported their actions. In this regard, Selby (2006: 14) is of the opinion that the land reclamations were but 'one element of a wider set of political tactics' that amongst others involved 'intimidation, strategic violence and wealth transfer, designated to secure power and control of the ruling party'.

Therefore, in *Crocodile*, Godwin shows that the land redistribution were simply aimed at disenfranchising white farmers who had become both economically and politically threatening to the black ruling elite. The white farmers' systematic and systemic repression included the sale of their farming equipment, residential properties to the ruling elite and occupation by the ruling party loyalists. However, Godwin points out the irony that in the process of disenfranchising white farmers, black farm workers and their families and dependents became the greatest losers. To prove this point, Godwin relates the case of Rob Webb who owned Ashford farm in Centenary district situated a hundred miles north–west of Harare and employed six hundred and twenty people, and with their families some two thousand lived on his property wherein he also ran a junior primary school for his workers' children and a fully staffed clinic. Godwin's description of the farm is quite telling in terms of the farm's capitalisation. He writes:

> The drive takes you through the lands of milk and honey; neatly trammelled fields of maize standing eight feet tall, manicured groves of fruit trees … black headed sheep and plump Hereford cattle shining with good health. (p. 63)

Godwin further observes: 'Periodically bursts of gaudy bougainvillaea mark the houses of whiteman' (p. 63). Godwin also notes that 'huge metal irrigation gantries spritz the contoured grooves of the earth with water' (p. 63). One can tell the immensity of emotional yearning for the beloved past from the journey to Ashford farm by Godwin. Godwin continues to show how productive these white farmers were, when he observes: 'Coming in the other direction straining back up the escarpment towards the capital, Harare, are trucks piled high with bales of golden Virginia tobacco, destined for auction floors'. Godwin notes that this scenario had been made possible because of Mugabe's appointment of a white minister of Agriculture and his subsequent touring of the whole country with him, appealing to white farmers to stay on and contribute to the new country.

Godwin suggests that since white farmers' agricultural produce brought in forty percent of the country's export earnings, Zimbabwe could not afford to lose such farmers. He observes that, the Centenary farming district, where Ashford farm was located, was a major contributor to Zimbabwe's position as 'the world's second biggest producer of Virginia tobacco' (p. 64), a crop that provided nearly half of the country's foreign exchange. Therefore, according to Godwin's evidence, one can conclude that, it was for political expedience and survival that, the ZANU PF-led government sanctioned the land appropriations that cost white farmers their investments, land and belonging and as a result cost the country dearly. Selby (2006) argues that, ZANU PF homogenised white farmers in the post-2000 period and stereotyped them as racist and recalcitrant in order to neutralise a political threat (p. 282). Through Webb's story, Godwin seems to support this argument by showing how viable farming ventures were destroyed for political gain at great loss not just to the farmers and their workers but to the country's economy as a whole. Moreover, some white commercial farmers had been engaged in training black farmers in tobacco farming using their own resources. For example, Webb and other white commercial farmers had committed a farm into 'a tobacco training centre … [where] more than a thousand black farmers pass[ed] through every year' (p. 66). Despite all these efforts, most white owned farms were invaded and taken over by 'occupiers who spent much of their time drunk or stoned' (Godwin, 2006: 67). Godwin's words indicate that the country's economic collapse was inevitable under these chaotic conditions.

2.7. Conclusion

An interrogation and exploration of Godwin's narratives show that the autobiographical subject negotiates a narrating stance imbricated in national politics and nation making. This is largely shown through Godwin's life experiences and white farmers of British descent who were once at the centre of economic and political power, first in Rhodesia, and then in Zimbabwe. Godwin places himself in the proximity of certain landscapes, multicultural spaces and colonial memorials in order to claim and occupy certain identities which legitimise his belonging to an independent Zimbabwe despite having enjoyed white privileges during colonial times. Therefore, in both *Mukiwa* and *Crocodile,* it is the simultaneous (im)possibility of belonging and of renouncing one's perceived inheritance that are issues of contestation. Godwin's narratives can be read as sophisticated strategy that has a capacity for self-criticism in order to advance specific agendas. Through these autobiographies, Godwin constructs multiple identities and comments on the realities he would otherwise not have language to talk about. He often adopts a satirical stance which allows him to criticise the imperial project from which he benefitted by virtue of his ancestry and race. His ambivalent relationship with settler norms in which he was active, position him as a reflexive figure who can cross the borders of nation, community and ethics. It is this ambivalence and self-reflexivity that also give him the moral ground to openly criticise the glaring failures and abuses of the post-independent black government. In both narratives, Godwin insist on being viewed as a narrator without a fixed topography of loyalties. In his view, this allows him to occupy multiple positions of articulation.

However, despite Godwin's endeavours to position himself as an ambivalent self-reflexive postcolonial figure, his autobiographies exhibit a troubling nostalgia for a lost era where white people reigned supreme in all aspects of life. Godwin casts himself and other white settlers as both flawed heroes and vulnerable victims. The underlying message of this postcolonial nostalgia is that white rule might not have been perfect, but at least it offered a solid economic infrastructure. The effect is also achieved through the juxtapositioning of the past and present and the reiteration of tropes about primitive black Africans versus ingenious and benevolent white farmers. Godwin contrasts romantic accounts of his childhood with dystopic descriptions of the violation of the national and domestic spaces by the post-independent Mugabe regime. Although Godwin condemns imperial injustices, he also downplays his role and that of white farmers in the inequalities of the past and present. Instead, he stresses the positive contributions

of white settlers and how these have since been destroyed by the recklessness and corruption of the black rulers.

Chapter 3

Auto/Biographical Accounts: Ambivalent Narratives of Dispossession and Displacement in *The Last Resort: A Memoir of Zimbabwe*

3.1. Introduction

While the previous chapter examined Peter Godwin's narratives and concluded that they largely construct images of the self and the nation within the discourse of Rhodesian whiteness, this chapter engages auto/biographical narratives in Rogers's memoir to investigate the imbrications of self narratives in auto/biographical narratives. This is coextensive with an examination of how the self's emplottment in group, national, and global narratives either invests it with or divests it of selfhood coherence. Whereas Godwin's narratives were largely limited to the geographical terrain of Rhodesia and, by change of name of the same terrain, Zimbabwe, and their white discourses marked by ambiguous and ambivalent polemics on the *other* of identity, history and culture, Rogers's narratives take a cosmopolitan turn as the self speaks simultaneously within the local (its group) and global and fluid situatedness of culture, space and identity. Both Godwin and Rogers are disposed to the promotion of a sophisticated self-serving agenda that shows a proclivity for self-criticism whilst in the same vein privileging Occidental knowledge projects over the contested others.

This chapter investigates the interpenetration of the autos, the bios; including that of significant others and the graphy; the performative acts of writing the self/selves and others, by analysing farm occupations and evictions and how these rewrite the Rogerses' and the white farming community's values as well as their views on belonging and otherness in Douglas Rogers' *The Last Resort: A Memoir in Zimbabwe.*[45] The coherence of Rogers's negotiation for belonging and stable unified identities is disarticulated by the ambivalence, paradoxes and contradictions that arise in the claims for belonging and the premises for the authority behind such claims. This argument rests on three premises: first, the interweaving of autobiography and biographies, although generating polyphonic narratives that refuse totalizing discourse, compromises claims to belonging by Rogers's assertion to be a legitimate figure whose writing espouses the white community's contestation of the abrogation of their citizenship and mastery in economic production while that legitimacy is queried by counter narratives in the same book.

[45] From now on I refer to this text as *The Last Resort.*

Second, the ideologization of space by white commercial farmers indicate how the white people still privilege themselves over the black people by installing themselves in the hub of capitalism production and as guardians of the environment, while paradoxically depicting black people as absent from the land. This white people's stance will be simultaneously examined with an interrogation of the Zimbabwean government's patriotic historiography performance of a 'catachresis of democracy' (Spivak, 1991:70) and re-inscriptions of grand narratives in nation narration. Third, Rogers' deployment of fictional narrative strategies interposes contradictions between generic modes and his desire to be responsible for writing the history of those whom history has erased. In the context of the distance marked by fictional strategies between the historical and imaginative configurations the memoire deploys, the ambivalence the reader feels, is caused by Rogers' emotional and spatial detachment from the site or sites that subtend the auto/biography. Rogers points to the double stance of autobiography which allows the cohabitation of both the nonfictional and fictional in its acts and hence, its transgression of generic boundaries: therefore, it is beyond 'truth and falsity' (Olney, 1980:63). Rogers' transgressive acts across genres shows hybridity via multiple generic acts performed by his autobiography which deploys 'fictional strategies such as dialogue, interior monologue, autodiegetic narration and its addresses to the readers' (Smith and Watson, 2010:1). These strategies engage with the historical facts of farm seizures, evictions, death and trauma and this engagement creates an intersection between the historical and the fictional, thus bringing to the fore the hybrid nature of autobiography.

Rogers, in *The Last Resort,* sets out to counter the conventional and anachronistic Zimbabwean narrative of the land reform which apparently projected white farmers as foreigners and not entitled to the land by relying on several strategies. He conducts interviews with those who have experienced land dispossessions and other victimizations. He uses his journalistic skills to interview those who have the authority of presence - the evicted farmers. The interviews, narratively are an advocacy strategy to assert belonging and citizenship. An analysis of these interviews on farm appropriations and evictions prompts the pertinent discussion of the intertextuality between discarded and newly invented versions of self and nation. This investigation will show how such a discussion has the potential to expose contradictions between selves, time(s), ideological underpinnings, detachment/attachment, truth and fiction and ontological orientation. The investigation of these modes is pertinent to this study in that, firstly: one has to reconcile self-writing and biography, in one book, and this immediately compels one to imagine the consequences of such a diachronic presentation of lives, especially

bearing in mind that Rogers' auto/biography's inclusion of the others refuses sublation of these included selves, against the habit of more traditional autobiographies that privilege an autonomous narrator. Secondly: This investigation will endeavour to address auto/biography as intertext, in relation to the concept of ethics as responsibility for the other. Such a mode of responsibility applies to Rogers' auto/biography: to the interviews in particular and to his disposition to narrate the other's lives/experiences.

It is at the center of this chapter, for example, to investigate how Rogers creates his existential meaning (identity and belonging) through his encounter with Others and how he reconstructs the meanings of Others in his community: those whose previous sites of meaning construction and self invention have been dismantled by the traumatic farm invasions and evictions. It is the self who multiplies texts as discourse by writing the other into existence and therefore evincing responsibility for the Other(s). This is especially where this responsibility entails retrieving the Other from death, a position from which they have been utterly denuded of the agency to negotiate their claims in relation to the justice system or, as in the case of the murdered white male commercial farmers in Rogers's memoir, how to navigate through a justice system which is in fact an injustice system, ironically. Rogers, in writing his memoir, inscribes himself with the authority to speak about the past, for 'not everyone has authority to speak about any subject' (Foucault, 2004: 134). As if by a move of exceptionality, he alone at the moment of writing, had answered the call of his obligation to write Others into existence. The writing self's eagerness in answering this obligation foregrounds the intertext of discourses of difference; differences in identity, belonging and imaginaries of home and nation, whose habit is to multiply its meanings in ruses that rupture the circles of totalising narratives. This responsibility for the other and how it confers the authority to speak shall be investigated in conjunction with how Rogers weaves, or attempts to weave an intertext out of multiple stories/experiences - exemplified by the interviews, his family and individual narratives which emerge from differently positioned geographies, cultures and times and examine how this weaving exposes a set of objectives.

Furthermore, a reading of Smith and Watson within the parameters of this chapter, will show that the reflexivity of the 'I' is marked by a convexity or interlinked convexities - the reflexive acts always moving from the interior to encompass others, in the make of selves, experiences, memories and histories, before returning to itself. This is relevant to auto/biographies like Rogers', which compile and transcribe lives of others as simultaneously as it invents itself. The examination of the concept of the privileged Subject in auto/biography prods one to determine

how the agency of the Subject interacts with that of others, especially in a post colonial context in Zimbabwe in which White writing has proliferated since the post-2000 era (Manase, 2014), to contest laws and policies that reconfigure property rights and thus destabilizes the master discourses on identity the Whites had invented for themselves. White writing that makes a resurgence in Zimbabwe after 2000, is marked by demands for the respect of the rule of law, human rights and property rights - themselves the canon of international/universal law or discourse which are, however, '[in]applicable to every situation, especially when the situation involves a colonial legacy that has not been adequately dealt with or resolved' (Pilossof, 2008:272-273), as is the case with the land issue in Zimbabwe. In this case, Rogers' narrative provides the occasion for an interrogation of the intertexts that emerge as the white farmers' autobiographical selves position themselves in a post colonial context to negotiate their identity and belonging.

Rogers' objective for writing his memoir is to depict white farmers' and Rogers' parents' struggle to retain and stay on their farms in the face of death and violence. He also wants to prove white farmers' legal entitlement to the land against the Zimbabwean government's claim that all white owned land had been obtained through colonial usurpation. Rogers also wants to legitimate white farmers' contestation of evictions on the basis that they had a commendable record of economic production beneficial to the national economy and because they provided employment for black people. Furthermore, Rogers wants to prove that white farmers were ecologically oriented and that since they attended to the care of the biosphere, they had earned the right to keep their farms. Through his memoir, Rogers also seeks to demonstrate that, the land and resources expropriated from white farmers largely benefited the black political elites contrary to the government's narrative that such land and resources benefited the ordinary landless Zimbabweans. Lastly, Rogers' narrative exposes the trauma caused by the violent land grabs and documents that black farm workers also bore the brunt of the chaotic land invasions and evictions of their white employers.

The title *The Last Resort* is double centred. Rogers' parents owned a resort called Drifters where before the land redistribution, travelers, neighbouring white farmers and locals went and frequented for drinks and accommodation. All white surrounding farmers had been subsequently evicted from their properties but the Rogerses were not dispossessed owing to the Resort and the unsuitability of their land for farming. The Rogerses had managed to keep some animals on their land as well as keeping the resort itself. Literally, Drifters was the last resort in the area where people frequented for relaxing and subsequently evicted white farmers

sought refuge. Secondly, *The Last Resort* seems to derive its caption from Rogers' parents' resort to defiance and even joining politics in order for them to retain their land as a 'last resort'. They viewed Drifters as the only place that gave them a sense of belonging and citizenship.

The Rogers family is the prism through which political, social and economic meaning of the dispossession and displacement faced by some white farmers is seen. Rogers uses the farms as a metaphor of Zimbabwe though he particularly ascribes this metaphor to his parents' farm. The narrative is set between 2000 and 2009, a period critics refer to as the lost decade or a decade of crisis. It is evidence of white farmers' day to day struggles to keep and retain their land. Rogers' narrative shows that the effects of politically orchestrated occupations of the white farms accounted for the debilitating economic meltdown and a multiplicity of declines in the various sectors of the economy and people's livelihoods. The reader experiences the anxieties, fears and attitudes prevailing within the entire farming communities during this time of the land appropriations. This is the period of economic meltdown characterized by high inflation, the plummeting of the Zimbabwean dollar, fuel shortages, electricity cuts and increased migration by young and old job seekers.

3.2. The hybrid auto/biography: constructions of the third space beyond truth and fiction

Rogers' memoir blends fiction and truth as the author arranges his narrative to coincide with his objectives. This section proceeds in three stages: firstly, I argue that the self, as author, in autobiography is elusive and can best be described as fictive; secondly, the memoir's narrative strategies coopt strategies employed in fiction writing and thirdly, the autobiographical discourse operates outside and beyond the truth/fiction divide.

3.2.1. The fictive self

In recounting his visit to the 'chicken farm where [his family] had lived' (p. 189), Rogers shows that the narrating self's acts of recollection stages the individual as a site of multiple selves and the impossibility of ever retrieving the past. His recounting merits full quotation:

> I pulled up to the house … or at least what was left of it. The stone walls still stood but the roof was mostly gone. In my mind's eye it was a mansion on a high cliff overlooking a vast estate. It turned out to be not more than a stone cottage on a few hectares of gently

> undulating ground. The 'cliff' was a brief slope down to a grassy vlei, now wildly overgrown. (p. 190)

By having an imaginary copy and image of the house whose presence (cognitive) is discrepant in relation to the actual house, the self's acts show two crucial things. The first can be accessed through the categorization proposed by Smith and Watson (2012): they postulate that the individual houses multiple selves namely: the historical self, the narrating self, and the narrated self. In the case of Rogers, the narrating self; in the present, is a foreigner to the self of his childhood which mistook an architecturally simple 'cottage' for a 'mansion' and a 'brief slope' for a 'cliff'. The problematics of the self or selves' speaking positions and the results of recollection can take an even more complicated turn here: to exemplify, how does one locate that childhood self in a way that goes beyond the acts of imagination? How is it that the adult Rogers, at this point, still cohabit with the childhood self, if at all one can say so, in the same individual? The autodiegetic narrator in Rogers' memoire is dependent on narratorial memory since most of the events he narrates happen in his absence or are already in a past whose recovery is impossible, thus 'narratorial memory is a fictional convention for disguising narratorial inventiveness' (Maltz, 2010: 304-313).

The reference to imaginative acts brings us to the second point - the problematic/ambivalence provoked by falling back on defective memory. The obvious recourse here is to refer to memory, all that is recollected, but since memory itself has to reflexively turn and inspect the supposed repository of its previous experiences and cognition dynamics, a task that presents insurmountable hurdles, one soon realises that the autobiographer, in the performative acts of writing, cannot but generate 'epistemological ambivalence' (Gusdorf, 1987:68). This is because '[t]he autobiographer of necessity knows as well as writes about his past from the limiting perspective of his present self' and that the 'autobiographer cannot help sensing his omissions of facts from a life the totality or complexity of which constantly eludes him … the more so when discourse pressures him into ordering these facts' (Renza, 1982: 270). Thus, between the imagined 'mansion' and the humble 'cottage' is set up a tension between the narrated past and the present mode of accessing and re-imaging of facts, as Starobinski (1971) says 'the content of the narrative [sets] up a screen between the truth of the narrated past and the present of the narrative situation' (p. 186).

The paradox of attempting to retrieve a past through under-resourced memory's performed acts can be obviated, to some extent, if the acts of retrieval; as supposed that memory returns to the

past, which is nothing other than its own invented past, are substituted by the idea of memory as spontaneous constructions of the past in the present. What this alternative achieves is to get rid of the misty screen between the past and the present but it creates another ambivalence - the construction of the past in the present without reference to that past; the present modes of signification in the present gestures at no referent since the referent is unknown, is the construction of something without a precedent. The implications on the self's memory and this memory's underwriting of belonging, entitlement to the land and identity are tremendous in that such underwriting is crossed by acts which are neither true nor outrightly false and thus are opposed by the strictures of a juridical reading of the situation.

This fluid boundary between truth and fiction shoots through Rogers' autobiography in a way that shows one that the epistemological ambivalence referred to above does not only gravitate to the past as site or object of reference. The narrator, soon on his arrival in Zimbabwe from nine years of being away says:

> I was smacked square in the face by the bright fist of an African sun. My pasty skin, from another English winter told me that I was a *foreigner* [emphasis mine] in my own country. My travel documents said the same thing. After nine years in London I had finally qualified for a British passport and put my *useless* [emphasis mine] Zimbabwean one … the old green mamba … back in my desk drawer. (p. 4)

This immediately raises the issues of citizenship and belonging but more fundamental is the issue of the self, announcing the indeterminacy that disarticulates a coherent claim to belonging, the sort Heidegger (1962: 214 - 233) refers to as 'unheimlich' in his description of that 'uncanny' feeling the self (Dasein in his vocabulary) experiences in its situatedness or thrownness in the world.[46] This anxiety, according to Heidegger (1968), is the facility that together with the cognitive posture of beings toward safest, prods the self towards the opening of its potential as an agentive being comported to attending to the full actualization of its being. In Rogers' context, his foreignness is contested by the recorded particulars of his birth which indicate that '[he] was born and raised in Manicaland': the Eastern highlands in Zimbabwe' from which [he] had been in a hurry to leave' (p. 7). Since Rogers is unsettled in the site of his birth and upbringing, it can be argued that the registration of particulars of birth are not

[46] The notion of the uncanny (Unheimlich) plays a central role in the analysis of Angst in Being and Time and is a central theme in Heidegger's (1962) analysis of the kind of being particular to the human being, that is, Dasein. The uncanny argues for its paradigmatic importance in the account of human existence. I argue that according to Heidegger, to be human inherently involves being uncanny.

sufficient to the creation and authentication of home and belonging. To this 'unheimlich' is opposed the 'umwelt', Heidegger's (1968) concept of being-at-home in one's environment, an idea that can be deployed to analyze the self's relationship to home or a place. At a primordial level, it can be employed to show that the self's sense of identity does not begin at the moment the self reconfigures nature to make home but in the settling of its interior narrative on identity first.

Heidegger's vocabulary can be deployed in the discussion of one of Rogers' objectives: that whites had legal proof of entitlement and by conflation, belonging. The narrator's confession that he was perpetually awaiting the exotic in Africa is evidence that he is existentially dislocated since his Umwelt supplies the familiar through the uncanny. To exoticize an environment is to exteriorize oneself, to view that place from a distance through foreign eyes: a detachment that is both an existential dislocation and a voluntary departure from a place. If as Hughes (2014) argues, most whites create entitlement to land by taming it and by possessing it but not by being-at-home in it, then even a legal document cannot construct belonging in this context. In this case, the argument by white farmers, and one of Rogers' objectives to prove that white farmers possess legislative or legal rights to the land is vitiated by the 'unheimlich' and exoticism that troubles their narratives of belonging.

This settling or, to draw on Freud (1989), Lacan (1990), Foucault (1972) and Derrida (2002) - advocates of the now fashionable decentered subject, this unsettledness can also be created by a long running uneasy coexistence of selves in one psyche. To this, is added the point that the narrating self in returning to a site of imagined origin, always perceives the site as something different and new. This implies that on encountering phenomenon or in being in some experience, the self redraws the world, its world afresh, hence the mutability of identity which is not premised on retrospective acts but on the constitutive acts of being a reflexive agent whose core of beingness is always open to phenomenon (Heidegger, 1968). On driving into Mutare after a long absence, the narrator says '[I] was ... surprised by how the sight of my *former* hometown, the city where I was born in 1968, took my breath away, as if I was seeing it for the *first* time' (p. 29; emphasis is mine). This is no simple enchantment by a place or sight, something more profound is happening: it is the moment of becoming - that gap between the formation of selves and before the self, settles for belonging. One is compelled to say the self is a river whose ceaseless flux of fluidity refuses being named or pinned down to some logos (discourse). The significant point here is that Rogers' own split self: divided between the metropolitan centres of Europe and America, cannot mobilise adequate legitimacy in the script

of autochthony to advance the call by the white commercial farmers/community to contest the abrogation of their world on the farms. However, in the order of a hybrid Self that appropriates global discourses on human rights and international law, the narrator's hybridity 'displays the necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination' (Bhabha, 2010: 34), by mounting a counter discourse in the space produced by ZANU PF narratives of nation, citizenship and belonging.

Additionally, the narrator's hybridity, instability and indeterminacy that marks notions of the self, narrative discourse and narrative strategies interpose aporia and paradox between Rogers' project to construct whites' belonging, legitimate ownership of land and other resources and that project's completeness. The self that constructs these auto/biographical narratives gains its authorial validation within history and culture. Its enunciation stances, however, are marked by ironies and paradoxes and these two unsettle the performance of auto/biographical narratives by exposing contradictions that refuse a stable and unified self. This incoherence in the discourses like the notion of the self is what Ndlovu (2014) points out when he writes: 'It is equally true that discourses like the notion of the self, while giving the impression of being stable, are also, in fact, in a continuous state of malleable mobility, always allowing compatible ways of seeing and jettisoning the incompatible ones' (p. 1246).

At this point, this section now turns to the second segment that addresses Rogers' autobiographical discourse and its overtures to fiction and nonfiction. This calls for a preliminary definition of narrative discourse in this context: 'A narrative is the semiotic representation of a series of events meaningfully connected in temporal and causal way' and any 'representation involves a point of view, a selection, a perspective on the represented object, criteria of relevance, and, arguably an implicit theory of reality' (Fludernik, 2006: 45). Discourse, to paraphrase Foucault (2014), refers to the arrangement of certain strategies of formulation that seek to constitute both the subject and object in a constitutive and transformative relationship. These definitions ascribe to narratives, the latter's constructedness and thus raising polemics against advocates of objectivity whose surprising habit is to be blind to the role of narrative as mediation between subject and object. Rogers' narrative discourse comprises the formulation of the autobiographer that privileges its epistemological singularity beyond that of others and the appropriation of objects in a place to create amphibian and hybrid identities. Rogers inadvertently inserts certain components which destabilize his text by querying or refusing its pretense to coherence and closure.

In addition to the self being marked by indeterminacy and instability is also the characterization of certain objects of the environment as incongruous and unsettling in the site of home. For instance, the 'pair of ghostly baobab … knobbly, stout trunketed trees' in his parents' yard, appeared to him as 'more suited to arid lowlands' and were thus, 'strangely out of place among the lush explosion of dahlias, vlei lilies, roses and geraniums that made up [his] mother's garden' (p. 8). Linked to this phenomenon of incongruity, is the idea that the narrator's parents' estate 'was a farm but it wasn't farmland' (p.11), and the impression that the farm invaders in Frank's place defied a single definition, so the narrator puzzles over their presence: 'Were they war vets? New farmers? Settlers? Squatters?' (p. 15). Such 'incongruence' in the 'discourse of a narrative' is what announces the impossibility of ever being able to bring 'closure' (Renza, 1982) to a narrative. In Derrida's vocabulary, instead of closure, a narrative is deconstructed by its own aporia or paradoxes. An insertion of contradictions or incongruence into a text, whether wittingly or unwittingly, implies that any claim to unified identity and stable belonging is impossible. To draw on Derrida once again: the object, in this case, the 'baobab tree', the 'farm' which defies 'farm land' and the 'milling' people who disallow naming compose the 'supplement' that causes the 'deferring' (Derrida, 2012: 103) of meaning and thus a foreclosure of a master discourse that seeks to apprehend and reorder the object in accordance with its teleology. The bearing of such a reading on fiction and nonfiction is that it becomes 'undecidable' to fix categories of being and thus the object, which must be protected from a totalizing Subject becomes inaccessible to reductive acts.

The use of verisimilitude and dialogue to fill the gaps in narration, signal Rogers' deficiency in relation to experience and presence on sites that provide coaxers to the writing of the memoire. Verisimilitude is the approximation of reality through fictional renderings (Smith and Watson, 2012), that attempt, through figurative significations to draw an event, a place and other phenomenon to the point where the narrated becomes believable. In most of the places where Rogers is absent from home, he fills in the gaps by imagining his parents' actions, facial expressions and even thoughts and feelings. It is at this point that the boundary between novel and memoire dissolves. By using dialogue, the author attempts to retrieve a moment by exploiting language's capacity to imagine reality. Since Lacan (1990) positions the subject or the person in language it means the versatility of language that can describe facts and the fantasmic may not be able to distinguish fact from fiction because the subject is immersed in that language. Human attributes like emotions and motives can be imagined as when the narrator describes his father's vigils over the fuel drums. The implications for employing

verisimilitude is that the past is reanimated but the author also runs the risk of detachment from historical truth.

The second mode of narrative discourse in Rogers' memoir revolves on his discursive construction of narrative authority and legitimacy. The mechanics of such a construction involves formulations of sites of authority and legitimacy and the recruitment of resourceful people in the course of the compilation and final production of the book. In commenting on Drifters as a sanctuary, the narrator evinces a prodigious capacity for formulating discursive authority, for example he says:

> And it *suddenly dawned* on me that their farm was more than a piece of land, it had become *a stage set*, a metaphor for the state of the nation. You could literally see the fortunes of the country unfolding in microcosm from their front lawn ... I was now filled with admiration for my parents. What they had built here out of virgin bush fifteen years ago had become central to the events of the country. *Things could rise or fall depending on what happened right here* (emphasis is mine). (p. 116)

The deployment of the phrase 'suddenly dawned' is intended to constitute the narrator as a subject who generates, in a spontaneous mode, unprecedented knowledge. In addition, while the words 'metaphor' and 'microcosm' inscribe substitution and case study respectively, their substance is dwindled by the rhetorical reduction of the country to a space whose major events are surveyed and regulated from the vantage position of the narrator's parents' farm. A difference is demanded between the farm being a substitution, in the order of linguistic discursive acts, for the country or it being a small version of the country and the farm being a privileged site that constitutes all modes of experiences and reality in the country.

From a castigation of the hubris of the narrator in supposing that events on the farm could dictate events in the country, one can easily move to accuse him of ignoring that 'the necessity of understanding consciousness as something produced rather than as the source of ideas and the social world - as constituted and not constitutive' (Henriques et al., 1984: 7-8) has compelled such hubris to abdicate its position to the realization that the decentered subject has come to replace the Cartesian individual. In the course of this enterprise of accusation, one cannot but note that such a Cartesian Self allows the reentry of inscriptions of a master discourse narrator who espouses a fragmented metropolitan speaking position by seeking a home in the metropolitan space and deploying this space's human rights, legal and democracy discourses to counter the Zimbabwean government's acts. Probably, as Huddart (2012: 15) has

suggested, the masculine figure of autobiography, has lingered in Enlightenment and colonial discourse spaces and, therefore, it can be proposed here that speaking from the privileged space of metropolitan discourses is either a disguise or the schizophrenic mode of a decentered subject announcing its hybridity.

In presenting himself as a knowing Subject whose source of knowing is epiphany for the word 'dawned' reminds one of the Latin etymology of narrative, narrate, narration as 'knowing' (*gnarus*) and relate or tell from *narrow,* the narrator invents a 'privileged beginning' (Henriques et all, 1984: 9) of a narrative: one that is in risk of casting the individual in the role of a coherent author of his/her vocation, while concurrently treating social processes as the workings of incontrovertible necessity. Yet, as usual with a narrative, especially one that postures its modes as uncontestable, aporia opens this immutability by exposing the underlying strategies of acts of narrative 'not as a series of events' but 'the representation of a series of events' (Fludineck, 2006: 23). Representation means 'translating knowing into telling' (Barthes, 1992: 201) and since, according to Jean Leotard (1968) translation creates discrepancies between the original and its copy, aporia are bound to arise. Such aporia that install the fictive components in Rogers' narrative come through his use of 'metaphor' and referring to the farm as 'a stage set', since metaphor, in its proclivity to disseminate more than one meaning (Derrida, 2012: 234), opposes the homogeneity dictated by totalizing discourses and 'stage set' proclaims improvisation rather than hermetic rationality.

The other mode of Rogers' narrative discourse involves his frequent use of the notebook and tape recorder; implements of the supposed objective journalist or researcher. By using them and reminding the reader that he was present in the taking of notes and recording he creates the 'authority of experience' (Smith and Watson, 2010: 36) which approves discursive capacity for the narrator. While recorded voices may seem to confer some authenticity and evidence of the recorded participant's 'authority of presence' (Chennells, 2009:13), such assumed authenticity is always vexed by the performing of the interviews according to some regulations which ascribe asymmetrical roles between the interviewer and interviewee, since '[by] opening the conversation, the interviewer defines the roles and establishes the basis of narrative authority' and 'the [interviewer] ostensibly speaks as little as possible … providing connections, briefly suggesting ways of reading … yet is very much in control, and at key moments enters the stage to include the experience of the interview as a key to its meaning' (Alessandro Portelli, 1998: 47).

In the chapter entitled 'The refugees', the displaced white farmers whom Rogers interviews are already constituted by the regulating procedure of interviews. Hammy, one of the interviewees, shows that he has rehearsed for the event by selecting from his private archive 'papers, documents and magazines' (p. 98) and in the course of the interview, the narrator/interviewer applauds him for having the 'statistics' (p. 99). Unita, another displaced farmer, assumes what Goffman (1989) describes as a self or actor who is primed for the stage. For example, after noticing that Rogers had brought a tape recorder to the interview, she inflects her voice with the pathos of a victimised white woman so as to evoke pity or sadness in the listener. By recording such pathos and documenting the broken spirits and dislocated bodies disfigured by stress, for example, the 'stress' on Hammy and Annie 'had taken a heavy toll' on Hammy who 'had suffered a heart attack' (p. 98), Rogers mounts a case to scaffold his objective to prove that dislocated and dispossessed farmers are traumatized. Selecting material that shores up presupposed theories reminds one that the evidence Hammy uses, answers to the objectives of both narrator/interviewer and the former which are that the majority of the whites suffered terrible injustices. For instance, the interviewer/narrator says: 'The bitterest irony for Hammy, though, was that he had bought his farm in 1985 after attending a meeting the president called to ask white farmers to stay in the country' (p. 100). In the context in which both the narrator/interviewer share common objectives, the boundary between interviewer and interviewee becomes transgressible and thus the enterprise of objectivity is thrown into disarray and the results of the interview, which renders the participants as homogeneous, bear the marks of fiction.

The collusion between the interlocutor and the interviewee's objectives is the provenance of bias. This collusion is seen when Rogers, to confirm his support for Hammy's testimony mobilizes his own family's experience by placing immediately after the former's testimony this: 'My father made sure, before buying drifters, that it had a Certificate of No Present Interest … confirmation that the government didn't want it' (p 101). Infecting Rogers' anthropological project, to record and study the lives of displaced, dispossessed and traumatised farmers, is the compromised identity of the researcher as a white male whose parents are beleaguered by an imminent invasion that spells a disruption of family life and the interruption and muting of generations of family voices. This infection shows its symptoms in Rogers' outright bias when he says: 'Everyone has their truth in Zimbabwe but Hammy was correct' (p. 100), in support of Hammy's theory that the whites did not possess seventy percent of land. The bias though

ironically, unmasks the narrator's conviction that truth is a subjective invention and thus puts even the truth of his own autobiography under suspicion.

As can be noticed, this section presents the narrator and interviewer as one Subject and this provokes the problem, as in autobiography, on how to distinguish the object or objectified from the Subject: an entanglement that Smith and Watson (2013) and Renza (1990) fail to resolve. The narrative here, much as it pretends to originate from an unbiased narrator, is exposed by this absence of the autonomy of the Subject as set apart from its object. Hence Portelli (2008) queries as to who speaks in the History narratives compiled through interviews and inquires as to how many voices are included and how they are broken down and put together. These pertinent questions serve to point out the connivance between the interior object/subject selves of the narrator and between the narrator/interviewer and the interviewee, as a connivance against truth and objectivity. The narrator/interviewer is immersed in the narrative that white people are victims and that this victimhood is enough basis for him to take a stand against the Zimbabwean government. To exemplify, one of his objectives that the whites are made to take the fall by a troubled government whose legitimacy is politically troubled, is blithely inserted or made to be conveniently proven by Hammy: 'The government had run the economy so badly into the ground that they needed a distraction for all the people without jobs. And who took the hit? Us whites' (p. 101).

The transcribing of interviews and editing of copies or versions of Rogers' memoir before the final publication puts the truth and origin of the autobiography into question. The author, on the disclaimer page, notes that his 'book is a work of memoir; it is a true story based on interviews, conversations and my best recollections of events' and that some fictional names have been used to disguise the identity of some participants. In addition, he points out that some voices and transcriptions have been 'compressed' to match the strategies of 'narrative'. That the author vouches for the truth of the memoir is a paradox that lies in acts of subjectivity since editing and transcribing deface the first copy (voice and textual) of the book as editors and transcribers construct a version that confirms the author's objectives.

One way to discuss the method, contents and implications of the interviews to autobiographical constructions of truth, belonging and dislocation is to draw a comparison between Rogers' interviews and the testimonio or cued by the porous boundaries between genres already established through Smith and Watson, treat the interviews as testimonies (testmonio) assimilated by the memoir. A testimonio is a 'narrative told in the first person by a narrator who

is also the actual protagonist or witness of the events she or he recounts' (Ashcroft, Griffiths, Tiffin, 2008: 230). A testimonio, as in Rogers' interviews, generally involves tape recording, transcription and editing of an 'oral account by an interlocutor who is a journalist, writer or activist' (Beverley and Zimmerman, 1990: 173). The significance of this comparison is hinged on the transcribed testimonies in the interviews and the question of authenticity and authority common between a testimonio and interviews in Rogers' memoir. As has already been discussed at the beginning of this section, recollections are notoriously unreliable sources of the self and events since memory selects and by selecting it invents the truth that acquires legitimacy through editorial and authorial signatures. In this context, Portelli (2008) poses the transcribing of voices to text as 'a creative job' which entails 'selection, choice, even artistic judgment, in harmony with the [author or editor's] interpretation of what [they] hear and [their] strategy of presentation' (p. 34).The final version of the book then, is a hybrid copy composed, as it is by disparate copies of voices and text that conform to subjective truth, something suggested by Olney (1980) in his labours to delineate the fluid contours of truth and fiction.

It is the contention of this section that such subjective truth is privileged, through devices of negotiation, as a universal narrative by the hybrid self. A testimonio, for instance, 'appropriates dominant forms of ... discourse to create subaltern voices', those 'excluded from authorized representation' in narrating stories that 'involve a problem of repression ... subalterneity ... or simply struggle for survival, which is implicated in the act of narration itself' (Vidal and Jara, 1986: 3). This universalizing is undertaken to create ideological space that protects and privileges the writing self. Rogers, as a journalist of some international standing, uses his dominant disseminatory position to construct the white farmers'/community's struggle for survival as they suddenly find - a mark of the ironies of the postcolonial world wherein their mastery is turned into subalterneity. Since Rogers is implicated in the recording, transcribing, editing and publishing, by race and historical situation, the authenticity and authority of the book are compromised.

3.3. Questions on the genealogy, biology and geography of belonging

In the life and death project of defending lives in peril, white commercial farmers in their differently positioned subjectivities, are called upon by contingency to invent narratives that contest other narratives that have dislocated their sense of belonging. This subsection explores some of the narratives and evaluates them in conversation with Rogers' objectives. Narratives

of belonging by whites in postcolonial Zimbabwe, one can argue, are soon made to stutter and stammer as the ambivalence traced to their colonial ancestry and inheritance comes at odds with a postcolonial and national discourse that accuses such ancestry of usurpation and eyes the economic inheritance with, in Fanonian terms, an envious eye.

In reacting, with a high degree of vehemence, to a speech in which Mugabe, the then president, was recasting the identity of white people as British, the narrator's father attempts to ground his belonging in terms of genealogy, biology and geography. For instance, commenting on his father's outburst the narrator says: '[He] sat there stunned' by the realization that 'his ancestors had been in Africa for three hundred and fifty years', having 'arrived [in Africa] in the time of Cromwell and William of Orange' (p. 34). He further notes that their arrival in Africa had preceded the American war of independence, 'longer than Grace's (his girlfriend) ancestors had been in the United States' (p. 35). The ambivalence in such a grounding of belonging stems from such a narrative omitting the event of the violent colonization of spaces in Africa by the said ancestors. The fact that the arrival is silent on the precedence and indigeneity of the colonised bespeaks the palimpsesting of local histories and geographies by the colonizer's discourses of power.

Through the discourse of pioneering, some of the white farmers interviewed by the narrator lay claims to belonging that are, however, opposed by a contrapuntal reading of belonging and identity in postcolonial spaces. In the context of cathecting: investing the geography with genes via 'blood', emotions by the 'heart' and grafting belonging through 'roots' (p. 97) as Unita does, can be dismissed on the basis of her narrative's shifting belonging between her 'place of birth' (South Africa) and Zimbabwe. Hughes (2013) has shown that most white people had the privilege of the simultaneous holding of South African and Zimbabwean citizenship: the South African one being derived from ancestry and the Zimbabwean one from birth. Lady Charlotte who confirms one of the narrator's objectives to prove that white people got their land legally, asserts: 'Land was cheap then ... This government says we stole it, but the country was empty back then. No one around. We had to recruit workers from Mozambique and Malawi. We cleared the bush and planted tobacco' (p. 103). As one of colonization's justificatory strategies, inhabited land could be declared empty (Bush, 2006) and such a 'terra nullius' (Ashcroft, Griffiths, Tiffin, 1998: 96), according to these strategies' internal logic, would be open to inscriptions whose telos was to civilize: meaning to order reality according to the colonizer's objectives.

In the orbit of the quotation above, can be discussed the 'othering' (Spivak, 1998) of the black people whose presence is marked by a void and eco-imperialism as concomitant to colonization: the othered, the colonized, was fixed on the wrong side of the binary savage/civilized and, as Fardon (1990) poses: 'To counterpoise to an enlightened Europe we produced an African heart of darkness; to our rational, controlled west corresponded an irrational and sensuous Orient' (p. 6). The clearing of the 'bush' is the discourse of colonialism emptying the land of the colonized since, according to the scheme of the 'allegory', the moral superiority of the colonizer 'means that he will not be inclined to expend any energy in understanding the worthless alterity of the colonized' (JanMohammed,1985: 18). Othering was supported by ecological imperialism: the subordination of the physical environments of the colonized by the colonizer for purposes of economic production and exploitation of an array of resources (Crosby, 1986: 6, Grove, 1994). Thus, in *The Last Resort*, clearing the 'bush and 'plant[ing] tobacco' (p. 43) became a mode of disciplining the land to the commands of the 'civilizing mission' and capitalist production. To confirm, the narrator poses: 'The history of development in Africa is one of clearing bush. My father had to clear the bush to build Drifters. *That was progress*' (emphasis mine) (p .43).

Eco-imperialism and orientalizing interrupt the civilizing discourse and dislocate the settlers. Hughes (2011) posits that there are scenes in the documentaries of settler's attempt to create niches of belonging which show the landscape bulking at the violence of a new naming. Colonial desire, a term drawn from Robert Young, shows how colonial discourse is infected by sexuality, for example, 'rape, penetration, impregnation' and 'sexualized exoticisms' (Ashcroft, Griffiths, Tiffin 1998) indicate violent acts performed to discipline a landscape, that especially to the first generation of settlers was uncanny (Huggan and Tiffin, 2010), for example, the baobab trees in Rogers' parents' yard exude, to him, a disconcerting alterity among the dahlias and roses. If turning the house and Drifters into a modern day Biblical Noah's ark, as done by Rogers's father, is a ploy to prove, as is one of Rogers' objectives, that white people are ecological oriented, then the endeavour is exposed as one that shows the irony between being ecologically aware and, at the same time, excluding (Hughes, 2012) the human other, the black people from the economy of such an ecological project.

In the history of the postcolony, there is written, in disturbing signs, the ambivalent stance of the 'hegemonic centrism' of the settlers' ecological projects that 'animalized' the black people and turned their world into 'empty spaces' (Plumwood, 2001:4) but at the same time was economically prodigious. The Kondozi farm in Rogers's memoir, for example, shows that

white commercial farmers' land use connected the farms to both international and local markets. However, the blacks who benefit from the school bus, the clinic and agricultural training at Kondozi are involved in a 'globally integrated system of resource use over which they cannot exercise control' (Brohman, 1996: 55). By juxtaposing Kondozi farm's agricultural prodigiousness to Transsau which was government owned and 'where nothing grows' (p. 108), the narrator shows that white commercial farmers, here represented by De Klerk, are great farmers whose enterprise benefits both the nation and local black people. The implication, from the narrator's standpoint, is that white people are therefore entitled to remain on the land by virtue of productivity. The ambivalence that interposes an impasse in any endeavour to resolve such an issue - a residue of colonialism - operates through a dilemma. On one hand, the productive farms were either gotten by displacing the colonized or, even if they were bought legally, the legality 'a fiction' (Huggan and Tiffin, 2010) of a law written by the colonizer is, by the reason and effort of the revolutionary war, abrogated at independence and therefore cannot apply to the postcolonial constitution. On the other hand, the majority of the black people themselves lack capital and resources to run farms at the same productive scale as that of white farmers like De Klerk. For instance, the paramilitaries who have taken over Frank's farm are growing nothing but 'snakes' (p. 52). Thus, one is caught between dispossessing white farmers of the farms they own and thereby disabling production in the same act and abandoning the effort to correct the colonial injustice of relegating the black people to infertile lands, classified as 'tribal trust lands or reserves' (Ranger, 2011). It is beyond the scope of this study to resolve this impasse. However, it is significant to note that such constitutions as the one that endorsed the Lancaster house agreement that white farmers would sell their land on a willing seller-buyer basis, are some of the unresolved colonial issues that, Huggan (2010) and Pilossof (2014) conclude, have to be settled if the spectre of colonialism is to be buried.

3.4. Ethics of the decentered subject: autobiography as posthumous justice

This section sets out to analyze how Rogers's memoir evinces qualities and acts of the ethics of the responsibility for the other. The analysis will provide occasions where the author's objectives (those not yet discussed) are analyzed and criticised. Responsibility for the other as an ethical imperative, is investigated as ultimately the writing of one's death through the death of the other. Death is the horizon against which autobiographical recollections, which are in fact constructions, and reconfigurations are done. Responsibility for the other calls forth the simultaneous exteriorization and interiorization of selves and this opens space for the

examination of the autos, bios and graphy in auto/biography: specifically, the possible results of intersecting biographies and self-referential narratives. Belonging and dislocation, instead of being mere acts, are simultaneous inscribed, in a primordial sense, in homo sapiens' core of existence. Rogers's memoir becomes a responsibility for the other by first, preserving the memories of the dead; second, demanding restitution of the land inheritance expropriated; third unmuting the voices, especially through interviews of those dispossessed, dislocated and traumatised (both black and white). The unmuting of voices through interviews has to be accepted, as already discussed in the foregoing section, with the caveat that it presents the problematics of ascertaining the source and motive behind the speaking since these voices are heard through the uniquity of the author's objectives.

3.4.1. The face of thanos and strategies of autobiography

This subsection examines how the death of others and the anticipation of that death are inscribed in strategies of auto/biography. In Rogers's memoir, these strategies are recording, recalling or recollection as mourning, the dispersal of the writing Subject among others, deconstruction of discourse, and the recuperation of justice as restitution. The subsection examines these strategies simultaneously with a discussion of Rogers' objectives to show that white farmers, through their struggle to stay on the land in the face of death, violence, dispossession and dislocation and that white people, contrary to the Zimbabwean government's claims, are entitled to the land both by legal entitlement and cathexes. The argument is that death installs the auto/biographical imperative in the author with the result that mourning acts of memory and the cathexes that death brings forth become inseparable from modes of belonging and dislocation.

By laying the cadaver, in this case that of David Stevens the first white farmer to be killed during the land invasions, right at the beginning (p. 1), Rogers's narrative gets one caught up in an interminable conversation with death and this conversation, instead of stalling one, hurries one beyond death in that by witnessing or recording the death of the other into memory, the narrating self's narration becomes a double inscription of the autobiography as bearing the death of Stevens and others beyond the terminal horizons of death and the narrator's navigation of the incomprehensibility of one's own impending death through the death of Stevens and others. But how is this self's navigation of these terminal horizons linked to belonging and

dislocation as existence? How does one relate death to autobiography as the responsibility for the other?

The memoir's opening sentence: 'I was eight thousand kilometers away, drunk and happily unaware at a friend's birthday in Berlin, when I learned that the first white farmer had been murdered' (p. 1), inscribes that the narrator is responsible for the other without prior demand for that responsibility by that other. By not stating Stevens' name immediately, but dwelling on death instead, the narrator makes Stevens' death metonymic of all other deaths and of death in general. The death of Stevens, and in the space of metonymy, is the seminal event that begins autobiography as responsibility for the other because Stevens in his death cannot demand justice as retribution or restitution or both, but the autobiography that is also his biography, demands justice, in fact becomes the justice through its restitutive acts. Smith and Watson (2013), in their descriptions of qualities of autobiography, pose that a memoir is a kind of life writing that historically situates the subject in a social environment, as participant/observer whereas the memoir's attention is mainly directed towards the lives and actions of others than those of the narrator and that in modern-day parlance autobiography and memoir are used interchangeably. In a cautionary stance Smith and Watson point out that this interchangeability does not, in an absolute mode, elude distinctions. Lee Quinby (2012) offers the distinctions:

> Whereas autobiography promotes an 'I' that shares with confessional discourse an assumed interiority and an ethical mandate to examine that interiority, memoirs promote an 'I' that is explicitly constituted in the reports and utterances and proceedings of others. The 'I' or subjectivity produced in memoirs is externalized and ... dialogical. (p. 299)

In the intersections between Rogers's externalisation of himself in recruiting the biographies of others to the project of his objectives is the transference of the focus of the 'ethical mandate' from Rogers's private or interior discourse, to the confessions and utterances of others as they happen in the events of interviews and conversations. Hence, biographies and the self-narrative, meshed together, become an intertextual process. Oliver's (2001) intervention here becomes relevant to how ethics is involved in memoir writing and she postulates:

> Subject positions, although mobile, are constituted in our social interactions and our positions within our culture and context. They are determined by history and circumstances ... Subjectivity, on the other hand, is experienced as the sense of agency and responsibility that are constituted in the infinite encounter with otherness, which is fundamentally ethical. (p. 17)

By situating the self in culture and history, a reading of Oliver coincides with that of Olney and Gusdorf but what she additionally supplies here, 'circumstances', goes beyond history and culture to become, once again in Derrida's words, the 'supplement'. In this case, the responsibility behind Rogers's inauguration of the narrative, within the liminal spaces of the intertext, is the circumstance of Stevens' death or contingent event of his murder. Rogers also becomes responsible for Stevens' estate and to be exact at a fundamental level, Stevens' estate, in a primal sense is his dead body. The immediate question is how does he accomplish this?

A detour through a quotation will illuminate how this estate is retrieved from the utter void created by death. Rogers says:

> I would wake up in Brooklyn to long essays sent from the front lines of another world, detailing his daily struggles, his meetings, the impossible tedium of it all. Dad wanted a record for himself, but I also came to realize he wanted me to have a record in case anything happened to them. He had his file and I had hundreds of e-mails he had sent me about what was going on. (p. 211)

The most significant idea here, in relation to auto/biography is the act of recording and the preservation of that which is recorded. To record means literally to call to mind, to call up from the heart. It is crucial here to note the other meaning of record as, to set down in writing and to make official. What subsists in the interior of the heart is also what is revealed in the public space of the world. The implication is that by recording Stevens' murder Rogers does the double act of recalling and writing the life and death of a stranger. But immediately on saying this, one is queried on how the narrator can record things from the other's heart, a stranger's heart, in this case Stevens? Adopting Levinas' discourse on alterity whose famous symbol is the face of the other, one can pose that from the affectivity that all homo sapiens are immersed, an affectivity that makes the narrator's approach to Stevens's murder in the mode of an approximation in the field of experience, the death of Stevens is recalled 'from the heart' by substituting him with Rogers. Exceeding simple sympathy and empathy, the recording bears the life of the dead beyond death, and together with Derrida one can say auto/biography is a posthumous itinerary that paradoxically returns the dead from beyond the grave as it opens the story of his death iteratively. This is also the occasion one can assert together with Smith (2012) that, 'This life, this death which does not die, but survives before its conception, goes also by the name of a nonbiodegradable, which lack the organic, entropic matter that is the stuff of life'

(p.170). Stevens' primal estate then, his cadaver, is retrieved from death and the memoir is the thing that returns his name to the living every time the memoir is read.

The iterative returning of Stevens' dead body is performed seven times: three times on page one alone and subsequently on pages 3, 6 and 175 and such recording which is a recalling is also the act of mourning. Mourning, through Derridean etymology, is a mode of memory. One can therefore argue that by calling up Stevens' name in a metonymic mode, Rogers, keeps the dead alive. This resembles Philipi Arries' notes on the acts of 'conclamation' in which the name of somebody who is presumed dead is repeatedly called up as if to confirm whether they are dead or still alive. In any event, the dead begin to live between the living through mourning or memory and thus: There is an apparition of what passes 'before memory, persisting as the living dead, in a scene which misrecognises person for thing. It announces itself with a kind of excess of renown' (Smith, 2012: 154). The meaning of this is that mourning the dead, as Rogers does through auto/biography, makes the dead immortal by affixing to the dead's name the mourner/narrator's bundle of morality, a mode of existence and a narrative of these. This, in a paradoxical way, becomes a mourning for the narrator since it is his morality, existence and narrative at stake in the death of the other. What the paradox also spells or hides, so to say is the impossibility of mourning (Derrida, 2011), not in the mode of grieving for the loss of the other but of recalling up and recording the dead who are within and between the living. This impossibility derives from the discrepant rewriting of the referent/the mourned and the signifier's always misreading of the mourned by reproducing itself within its structure. As Smith (1984) poses the person is an 'apparition' in both the living and dead mode. An apparition because of two reasons: first, the identity of a human being is notoriously and relentlessly protean and thus exceeds any naming discourse; second, this embodied being is incomprehensible as to its origin and end/destiny. Therefore, death, it can be asserted, is not the end of Stevens since Stevens, alive, is an apparition and Stevens, dead, is still an *apparition*.

This apparition that is retained by the iterative acts of auto/biographical memory becomes a more potent mode of contesting the government's claim that whites, in particular white farmers are neither entitled nor do belong to the land than the legal applications for re-entitlement done by, for example, De Klerk, Hammy and Rogers' father. This claim by Stevens' cadaver that he belongs in an irrevocable way to the land, is uncontestable because a posthumous claim of identity and belonging over a piece of land lies beyond the disarticulating tools of the government's historiography. Putting it in another way: the thanatographic and cathexes in the narrative of Stevens' murder may provoke multiple versions of descriptions and causes of the

death. Nevertheless, such heteroglossia cannot undo the death on the land and the emotions invested on that land through the pain suffered by the murdered. Rogers reports: 'He had been savagely beaten, and then shot in the face and back at point-blank range with a shotgun, after a mob abducted him from his farm in the district of Macheke' (p. 1). If Spivak's (1993: 90) commentary on the behaviour of the 'Other' who 'cathects' and 'occupies' space is drawn into this context, then Stevens' dead body, written by violent or as violent history can only be exhumed only to be fixated to the land by the terms of memory's restitutive acts. Hence, through the struggle of the white commercial farmers against violence and death, the memoir becomes an uncontestable testimony that Stevens, through this unending narrative of death that fixates his body to this land belongs to this land. As Hughes (2010: 1) postulates, through 'fiction' and 'memoir' whites construct cultural and historical authority and '[b]y writing and in writing, then, Extra-European whites have forged senses of belonging more enduring than empire'.

While the above paragraphs were focused on actual death and how it becomes the muse to the author of autobiography, it is time to turn to the anticipation of death as a sort of vigilant awaiting not for death as the utter cessation of bodily functions but as the creation of a void where once privilege and power sheltered the white farmers. By figuring anticipation of death as 'holding tickets to an execution' (p. 16) and underscoring: 'You are never sure who is next or when it's your turn, but you know it's going to happen … and soon' (p. 14), the memoir through Rogers' mother demonstrates the white farmers' existence as 'held over an abyss' (Heidegger, 1960), in that perpetual pre-given knowledge, is that, one dies at some time. In this instance, Rogers' auto/biography accomplishes two significant things: first it shows the white farmers that the recording or calling up of their lives is not sufficient to guarantee a future in which their narratives are protected from vitiating acts; secondly, the impossibility of knowing the future as to what it brings forth and when it creates an existential ache - the pretention to become or change and to know the mode of this becoming. The recording or recalling up that appears deficient in countermanding the Heideggeran abyss is however, saturated with restitutive affectivity as exemplified by attentive care in reviving by memory, degradable bodies whose emaciated frames suggest decay and the ache towards death: as in the suicidal symptoms exhibited by the narrator's father (p. 57). Since the narrator's parents, like other whites/white commercial farmers, still hold their posts against invasion, despite this abysmal existence, it can be concluded, as one of the memoir's objectives, that, most white farmers struggled to stay on their farms in the face of death and harm.

If the recording or recalling up (introduced in the preceding paragraph) is a vitiated record when held against the times, then one of the narrators' objectives is to prove that the white farmers had a commendable record in economic production that was beneficial to the country, meaning even to the black people, is opposed by such times. Its disarticulation by the government through chaotic seizures engenders meaninglessness that bonds with Nietzschean nihilism. This means that this study of reading Rogers' objectives is a double act of analysis and evaluation of the said objectives with the aim to show that narratives like memoirs never complete their telling and that this telling itself is made incoherent by internal contradictions. The nihilistic overtures notwithstanding, the narrator notes that most whites who lost their land had been 'forced to reinvent themselves' (p. 261), thus implicating the contingent (farm seizure) in the redrawing of identities and worlds. As the world, in its Spivakan mode of inscribing discourse on space, refers to the white farmers'/community's space of psychic and physical habitation without which they are left denuded or destitute on the margins of a national discourse that bespeaks that their world is dying. The enunciative position of the narrative thus employs an apocalyptic tone as the discourses of the white farmers are relegated to levels of obsolescence as death.

3.5. Configurations of space: ideology and unstable sites of belonging

This section examines how both the Zimbabwean government and the white community create space in which speaking positions vie to invent meaning and worlds. This invention is enabled by ideology. Space and ideology is investigated as synonymously implicated in the constructions of belonging and identities. Both space and ideology are themselves constructions resting on unstable foundations since these foundations are created by a semantic 'nomos' and 'logos' whose foundation, for the sake of avoiding an infinite regress, is assumed to be true and dependable (Derrida, 2011). Since subjectivity is constituted in language (Lacan, 1985) ideology (Althusser, 1989) and discourse (Foucault, 1998), this section argues that the constitution of belonging, dislocation and identities is simultaneously the constitution of space. Constructions of space are invariably exclusionary since they forbid other identities and modes of belonging to emerge. Nevertheless, this closing of spaces is contested by counter narratives and other spaces that defy totalizing discourses. This argument is premised on first; the patriotic historiography invented by the ZANU PF government; second, the invasion of farms; third, ecological configurations and dis-configurations; fourth, colonial discourse; fifth, the camping

mode of homo sapiens (not limited to whites) but the general camping mode of existence already always installed at the birth of human beings and sixth, global and local capitalism.

By extending the meaning of space beyond a setting for landscape and, landscape modifications and architectural erections to the way the symbolic order intervene to mediate between subject and object in the construction of meaning, Lefebvre's (2015) notion of the production of space can be employed to interrogate how spaces of 'domination' and 'appropriation' are represented in Rogers' memoire. The production of spaces of domination in the memoire, refer to how the ZANU PF government invents its version of nation through a patriotic historiography (Ranger, 2012) that excludes subjectivities and groups like the MDC party and the white people in general that refuse subordination. Spaces of appropriation refer to the production of goods, services and real estate for the purpose of answering the call of human needs. Such spaces, in Rogers's memoire, allude to capitalist farm production by the white commercial farmers and the attendant demarcations of landscapes into bounded spaces into which entry is forbidden unless one is entitled as either farm owner or worker. Both these spaces - domination and appropriation, operate through abstract spaces, and this is the terrain for discourse and ideology.

The ZANU PF government invents a nation by narrating (Bhabha, 1993) that nation thereby constituting this narration as the constitution of reference markers of belonging and identity. The invention of a patriotic historiography and its being put into operation is a violent undertaking because it is underpinned by a dislocating, displacing, dispossessing and disarticulating ideology exemplified by the abjectification and objectification of the whites/white farmers and farm workers as dissidents and aliens. The dislocating and disfigurations of the identities of those named dissident, involves a reordering of demographies of both blacks and whites, an operation that falls under what Focault (1972) calls biopolitics and to a 'camp' mode of existence, 'barelife' and 'state of exception' (Agamben, 2010: 170). Biopolitics is the disciplining of both the psyche and bodies of those constituted by a political discourse as a means to regulate space in relation to production, distribution and consumption. Agamben's (2010) theorizations on barelife refer to the stripping of subjects of protective rights and laws by the political Sovereign, thereby creating chaos as that on the farms in Rogers' memoire. Grace, in describing the condition of sleeping in a house whose boundaries could be transgressed at will by both wild creatures and the marauding war vets says: 'I feel like we are camping … Camping inside a house' (p. 258), thus putting into metaphor the unpredictable and unstable mode of existence to which the whites/white farmers in particular are subjected. The murder and harassment of white farmers happens when the farm space is turned into the camp,

as the space that is opened when the state of exception begins to become the rule. Here the state of exception refers to 'a temporary suspension of the rule of law' which, however, is then 'given a permanent spatial arrangement, which as such nevertheless remains outside the normal order' (Agamben, 1998: 169). This state of exception is that indistinction between barelife and the juridical order which arises in spaces ruled by 'totalitarian' regimes in which 'everything is possible' (Arendt, 1984: 56). This implies the chaos on the farms in which everyday life operates outside the commonsense: the sudden appearance of invaders in one's yard claiming their ownership of a farm and its fixtures and other resources on for example, Kondozi farm, the poaching and slaughtering of game on Drifters and the invasion of Frank's place. Written as paradox in the denuding of the white people of their status as citizens and the laws that ought to protect them is that, the political Sovereign purports to derive his actions from the law at the same time he maroons the other in conditions 'in which power confronts nothing but pure life, without any mediation' (Agamben, 1998: 179). The government, for instance, invents laws on the spur of the moment to deregister the citizenship of black people who, in previous years, had migrated to Zimbabwe from the sub-region and strips white people of dual citizenship; arbitrarily seizes farms under 'Section 5', a policy that was used to notify farm owners of the government's intention to expropriate a farm. Hence, the Sovereign (government) speaks the law and revokes it at the same moment - it is simultaneously inside and outside the law as it disarranges lives by dislocating/displacing these lives from the firm ground of juridical certainty and adherence to the rule of law.

The historiography through which the ZANU PF government rewrites identity and belonging is a palimpsest of colonial discourse simultaneously as it reinscribes, in a paradoxical way, the othering in colonial discourse the revolutionary war had sought to erase (Terdiman, 1985). For example, in commenting on the politics and elections in the country the soldier, a staunch member of ZANU PF proclaims:

> Rogers junior ... tonight we have spoken of whoe (sic). Let me be certain with you. There are three political parties in this country, but only one party has a history. Only one party went to whoe (sic): ZANU PF. How can you feel if some puppet party comes that has no history of whoe (sic) and wants to rule? How can you feel? We fought for this country, we cannot just give it. (p. 234)

The vocation of the soldier is ventriloquism in the service of an elite that imagines a nation on the basis of a revolutionary war whose legend and legacy is monopolized in the writing of a

new version of nation. History, in this context, is a version of the war and revolution rendered in narrative and over which ZANU stands guard. The subtext of a totalizing discourse comes forth through a vocabulary that equates history with one party, excludes and vilipends other versions of history and closes entry against other parties. The elite who monopolize the telling of history know or show that 'the production of space has nothing incidental about it: it is a matter of life and death' (Lefebvre, 2015: 417), and this is the truth that confronts the black and white people who are murdered and dislocated. Rogers' memoire argues that the ideology behind legitimating and discrediting identity on the invented foundation of war recruits and excludes those outside the centre of political power in a ruse that entrenches the leadership in power as others are marginalized. For instance, the narrator says:

> It was clear by now that the war veterans and settlers had been used by the Mugabe regime. They were the shock troops, sent in to do the dirty work. They were never given title deeds to the land they occupied and they never qualified for bank loans to get funding to farm ... Instead, the best farms were being picked off by the chefs: ministers, generals, brigadiers and senior party officials. (p. 42)

By arguing, contrary to ZANU PF's claim that the land redistribution/seizures did not benefit the ordinary Zimbabweans, Rogers formulates a counter discourse from subaltern spaces whose resistance Lefebvre (2015) endorses as necessary to countermand the monologue of ideology that disallows heterotopic spaces. The MDC party also mounts, as shown through their rallies and anti-ZANU PF rhetoric, a 'counter discourse' by interposing a confrontation between ZANU PF's constituted reality and the utopia the former promised, thus creating subversive spaces, 'the very locus at which cultural and historical change occurred' (Terdiman, 1985: 13).

To clarify on the paradoxes and ironies that are within nation narration and the dislocations and unstable belongings, the formation of the nation itself should be taken on board. Nations, from their inceptions are not stable entities and this instability is an inevitability that emanates from its foundation in invention or social construction. The originary site of nations is a myth (Brennan, 1998; Bhabha, 2003) thus nationalists who write historiographies always confuse an immemorial past for a verifiable foundation. Instead of nations being locatable in stable geographies and histories, what obtains are different groups (ethnic, tribal etc) that inhabit the space bounded by arbitrarily created boundaries. Hence, the nation becomes 'an imagined community' mediated by 'stories of the nation' (Anderson, 1983: 30). The modern western

nation itself evolved out of the scramble for colonies as national pride was created through conquests in far flung places (Brennan, 1998). If the modern Western nations were formed in conditions that subscribed to inequalities, as those written by colonialism and slavery, then it is ironic that ZANU PF as a revolutionary party that staged Fanonian violence in the name of liberation, would later on take as its model the nation state of the West that colonized what now is Zimbabwe. This also means the invented nations from which explorers and white settlers came could not have supplied stable narratives of identity and belonging to these settlers who, according to the narrator cleared the bush and staked a claim on the land. A reading of belonging as a series of migrations without end confers on human existence, in the absence and impossibility of an authentic originary site, the inherent mark of homo sapiens as condemned to an eternity of nomadism in which the boundary between dislocation and belonging all but vanishes.

In addition to spaces produced through national historiographies, spaces produced through capitalism are produced as spaces of appropriation (Lefebvre, 2011). In Rogers' auto/biography, this is evinced through the productive spaces of the farms and diamond mining fields. The carving out of farms, the installation of machinery and capital on a massive scale such as on Kondozi where for example; 'millions of dollars' worth of equipment, including forty eight tractors, a dozen high tech-buses, twenty-six motorbikes' (p. 109), the construction of Osborne dam for irrigation purposes (p. 107), and where 'Kondozi earned US15 million a year in vital foreign currency for the country' (p. 108) where 'the De Klerks had invested all their money in their farm' (p.111), and the demarcations that marked space turned the farm into a habitable place. This turning of land into farms/estates is a conquest of homogeneity, homogeneity primed for agricultural production. Like Marx before him, Lefebvre (2011) underscores the prodigious energies and capacities of capitalism by noting that capitalism now has laid 'its imprint upon the total occupation of all preexisting space and upon the production of new space' (p. 326). The local and global markets are spaces of remunerative capacities although they also create inequalities and injustices.

The injustices and inequalities created on the spaces of capitalism produce identities. The white commercial farms, before their worlds crumbled during the seizures, were spaces of exclusions as can be seen by the enclaves of white privilege that Rogers documents. The narrator about whites and his parents in particular, for example notes, 'I had come to see my parents as typical white landowners in Africa: business-people *... lived a life apart, a privileged minority behind the high walls of their sprawling homes and sports clubs*' (p. 19; emphasis added). Conceding

to this, one can argue that '[t]he idea of privilege is at the heart of the colonial relationship, and that privilege is undoubtedly economic .... deprivations of the colonized are almost directly the result of the advantages secured to the colonizer' (Memmi, 1990,1957: 10). The black workers lived under a paternalism dominated by the figure of the masculine white (Hughes, 2015), and could never aspire to establish their own productive spaces since they could not raise the massive capital required to start and run farms.

The farm and diamond fields also had a global reach. In this case the imagined boundaries of the nation are erased since capital, in its multiple and varied itineraries and engagements across the world recognises no boundaries. The Kondozi farm (p. 107) and the Marange diamond dealings illustrated from pages 249 to 276, for example, are connected to global networks and markets that hold up the artifice of national identity as a fiction invented by politicians who do so as according to the subterfuges of a 'national allegory' (Jameson, 1986) that cannot separate the private space of individual economic projects from public or national economic projects. Jameson's thesis helps in the theorization of the seizures of farms and diamond fields by black elites as an exercise done for the individual's self-enrichment rather than national development, especially in the instance of Kondozi farm, which having been looted and stripped of all its critical machinery and fixtures, collapsed after being carved into smaller plots for individual farmers.

The erasure of invented national boundaries by mobile capital is synonymous with the dislocations of identities from their locales (Giddens, 1992), as the local space is overwritten or reconfigured by the transformative acts of global culture. This rearrangement of the world into one place enabled by the simultaneity of time and space is globalization (Axford, 1995). The diffusion and interchange of cultures, for example, the diffusion of American hip hop music as that played by Sydney, a disc jockey and bartender in the memoire, has culminated into 'the compression of the world and the intensification of global consciousness' (p. 8) and the homogenizing of cultures by this interchange is supplanted by the heterogenizing acts of local culture to produce space as 'glocalization' (Robertson, 1995: 8). This global space, is dominated by a growth of interconnectedness of both political and economic activities, migrations and culture cutting across national boundaries and continents. It is facilitated by communication technologies like the internet on which Skype and e-mail ride. The narrator, for some of his assignments as a journalist, is funded by The Telegraph, a media player of global reach. Such media giants may/can collude with the interests of global capital and thus

produce spaces shaped by the ideology of world systems that seek to control the flow of capital across the globe.

The versatility and mobility that mark global capital and its consequent production of spaces of simultaneous exploitation and in some cases, devastation of landscapes and development, are seen in the way ecological projects reconfigure topographies in a reading attentive to profit and economic dominance. The construction of Osborne dam, narrated in *The Last Resort* for instance, like that of Lake Kariba in *Mukiwa,* involved the disruption of ecosystems and the dislocation of both human and animal demographies.

3.6. Conclusion

This chapter interrogated the intersecting of biographies and self-narratives by analysing Rogers' memoire, especially the stories on (dis)location, (dis)placement and (un)belonging. The memoire constructs both whites and blacks as victims. Blacks are the farm workers who, together with the whites, have also lost their homes after being dislocated and displaced by farm repossessions. The chapter concluded that, as shown in the memoire, genre boundaries are porous though Smith and Watson's (2010) cautionary reminder for the need to still mark distinctions between genre is to be heeded to avoid the utter dissolution of boundaries that would lead to untheorizable undifferentiation. The memoire as auto/biography, it was noted, is a hybrid or amphibian genre that accommodates the interviews and conversations in the book since it exteriorizes the narrating self whose position becomes enmeshed in the intertext or polyphony of the interviews. The inventive interaction of genres dismissed the hubris of objectivisms as the fusion of fact and fiction created space for selves to imagine other modes of truth.

Deploying the memoire as his genre, Rogers answered the summons of his narratorial ideology which, in turn, were linked to his objectives. This narratorial ideology, to draw from Althusser (1989), interpellated the narrator as a hybrid figure who speaks from multiple enunciatory positions: the cosmopolitan, a Rhodesian (his colonial reference to the bush), the figure of enlightenment and other positions. The multiplicity of these speaking positions was traced to the Freudian splitting of the subject into several selves, thus refusing the homogenizing Cartesian self, closed in the *cogito* from whence egocentric anthropomorphizing emerged to name the world. This chapter, however, accused such a self of withholding restitutive justice since it totalizes the other and, thus denudes that other of the space to become other selves or

other possibilities. Totalizing narratives were discussed in relation to the production of space, ecological discourse, eco-imperialism, global capital and colonial discourse. In opposition to such suffocating discourses, auto/biography can create spaces of restitutive justice, self-criticism and the allowance of a heterogeneity of identities.

Chapter 4

Navigating spaces of (un)belonging and (dis)location by activism: autobiography as political narrative in Buckle's *African Tears*

4.1. Introduction

Chapter three interrogated auto/biography as narrative that is always vigilant in the promotion of the projects of the self by this self's recruiting of others' stories in a way that corroborates by vindications of the self and approximations of the veridical. The chapter concluded that the narrator is a veritable child of the enlightenment by his subscription to binaries of savagery/civilization; the metropole/post colony and the Subject and the Other. This enlightenment self, it was surmised, is dislocated by its interpellation by metropolitan discourses of politics, identity and development that deploy othering taxonomies whose telos is to create topographies of geographies and epistemes that are a palimpsest on the Other's history and nation narration. The chapter also examined how autobiographical strategies like retrospective acts of memory, the inventive colonization of both the past and the future through narrative, scaffolding the self, excusing the self and other strategies are employed in the promotion of autobiography as responsibility for the other, especially the other as the murdered, the dispossessed and all those made to circulate in subaltern spaces. These strategies, it was concluded, were aligned to the foregrounding of several objectives whose stance was to depict the whites and black farm workers as victims of farm invasions.

Chapter Four interrogates how the self, through electronic mail, print and offline activism, navigates political anarchy, terrains of ecological disfigurations and the subterranean evolutions and contours of shame in the time of a national emergency. The chapter argues that autobiography is a political project (White, 2011; Huddart, 2014; de Man, 2012) in the way in which the self reaches out from its gendered private space to the public sphere (Butler, 2015) to effect change, mobilize others to public causes and to retrieve and recuperate justice. This is premised on how Buckle lobbies for a reconstitution of the legal constitution of Zimbabwe, her mobilization of farm workers to vote, her mustering of other whites to help her and others during the emergency, the way she makes it her vocation to call attention to the pressing need to nurture and preserve the animal as other and her passionate opposition to ecological disfigurations.

The chapter examines the complex relationship between law/lawlessness, the negotiating

positions of the activist, feminist strategies of autobiography, the interrogation of self-identity and the core project of being in the presence of shame and constructions of narratives of the self and the public sphere in conjunction with digital technologies of communication and the anthropogenic project of transforming or preserving ecological elements in the enlightenment project of progress or development. Buckle's autobiography is a site into which the self, by the disposition of character and will, intervenes to inscribe how the public sphere or the domain of national politics exteriorizes the self as it simultaneously opens occasions for plumbing the complex mazes of the interiority of the self. Buckle endeavours to show how self-reflexivity and private orientations catalyse her activism in the public domain and how the law is exposed as fundamentally unstable and therefore, in most cases, arbitrary and poised to promote unitary/totalising entities/identities as opposed to democracy and judicial authority (Derrida, 2011) in its application and interpretation in national emergencies.

The second site of the interrogation of (un)belonging and (dis)location is explored via a series of questions: How does the self appropriate available technologies of communication, especially electronic mail as based on the internet and print media to construct deliberations on norms and values that gravitate towards universalistic qualifications and privilege? To what extent can the deployment of these technologies enhance capability and self-narratives? This latter question calls upon the discussion of activism and agency and fate in relation to activism without providing fixed avenues of discussing these issues. How do technologies of communication as prosthetics compromise and corroborate narratives of capability (Foucault, 1988; Heidegger, 1977/1974) and coherence since such technologies, in interfacing with human agents and agency, impose their own protocols of operations that both mark a lack and extent of human capabilities (Gualeni, 2015; Florid, 2014).

The third task this chapter undertakes is to interrogate the way in which Buckle appropriates gender roles as mother and woman in her campaign against ecological 'rape' or destruction. Such an appropriation incites ambivalent glares from feminist emancipatory projects that view this persistence of accepting stereotypes and the imaginaries in the wake of Butler's (1990) effacement of the biological and cultural construals of the categories male and female and of sexes and gender as obstructive to the feminist cause.

The fourth occasion for investigating autobiography as political narrative is the refrain and reference Buckle makes about shame as a phenomenon that in its uniqueness, only a human experience, interposes in either its absence or presence in the drawing of present and future

projects, consequential decision making in both the public and private spheres. Shame is a bioneural phenomenon that suffuses with both a disabling and enabling disposition. It is in this context that sovereignty as cored by the capabilities and political sanctions to murder, maim and decimate demographies, what Achille Mbembe (2003) designates as 'necropolitics' emanating from 'necropower', can be discussed as a (dis)locating and difference erasing presence in Buckle's book. Sovereignty as both individual and collective (as in governments and political groups) is interrogated in how selves impose their will against identities that exceed containment by the ipseity (Ricouer, 2012) of sovereignty.

4.2. Autobiographical invention of the political self: advocacy for the rule of law in a time of anarchy

Buckle deploys the resources of autobiography to (re)construct the coming into being of a political self and how such a self can be evaluated in the ambit of agency, activism, fatalism and self-reflexivity. The self does not possess an inherent political constitution but that the political disposition of the self is, in relation to the emergent and exigent, an invention subject to constant revision and reconstruction (Giddens, 1992). This is premised on first; Buckle's retrospective (re)construction of herself and members of the white community as selves, who before the emergency of the farm seizures, had lived secluded and privileged lives (Hughes, 2015) in cocoons that protected and distanced them from social and material demands - the topoi of political inventions and (re)constructions) that open space for the coming into being of a political self. Second; Buckle's activism as a mode of navigating spaces of (dis)location and (un)belonging is interrupted and disrupted by aporetic autobiographical moments that question and take as an option the evacuation of the viability of a political trajectory, thus, precluding the Aristotelian innateness of the self as political. Third; autobiography as political narrative, by foregrounding the act of writing as a moment of recollection and (re)construction and writing itself as self-examination, shows that Buckle's recourse to writing was a strategy to capture the political self as an advent: a phenomenal set of acts as opposed to a self whose biological and neural structures were already, before the 'state of exception' (Agamben, 2005: 2) inscribed by a political script.

This section builds on Giddens' (1992) theorizations on the 'dilemmas of the self' in situations that lay siege to the mythologies of the self and, in the context of this section, one of these myths is that modernity, with its array of development philosophies, departments or institutions that are presumed to be constantly primed for expertise and security, the self is assured of self-

actualization and insured against emergent and exigent circumstances; (2) Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, doxa, capital, field of action and hysteresis; (3) philosophy on the social contract: the latter as a hypothetical (re)configuration of the origins of the state, sovereignty, the conception of the self and others in society and the constitution of laws and other institutions in which the self either intervenes as agent or is written as victim, citizen or subject. Autobiography, as Buckle's memoir, always rightly presupposes the author to adhere to 'the autobiographical pact' (Lejeuine, 2011) which attests to the historicity of the author and the recounted events. Historicity gestures to time and space as continuums of the events and a people's *habitus*. Habitus is significant in the investigation of (dis)placement, (dis)location and (un)belonging and in the explication of Buckle's activism, therefore it merits a complete definition. Bourdieu (1994) defines habitus as a property of social agents (whether groups, institutions or individuals) that comprises a 'structured and structuring structure' (p. 170). It is structured by one's past and present circumstances such as family upbringing and educational experiences. It is 'structuring' in that one's habitus helps shape one's present and future practices. It is a 'structure' in that it is systematically ordered rather than random and unpatterned (Grenfell, 2008; Maton, 2008).

Buckle is a social agent who is situated in a white community whose present circumstances are menaced by the violent invasions of their farms by war veterans or mercenaries as it is later shown that the war veterans were organized by the government. Buckle's upbringing as a privileged white person includes educational training in social work as attested by the photograph between pages 83 and 84 of her memoir. Such an education provides Buckle with the knowledge and practice resources or assets which, in Bourdieu terms, can be posed as *capital.* Buckle, even before her seminal letter in activism, already had the 'disposition' to mount opposition against acts of injustice. 'Disposition' is to be read here as that state of being primed and resourced to make decisions and choices about emergent and quotidian events in a certain way (Bourdieu, 1990; Moore, 2014). This predisposition, as can be read in Buckle's mother's letter, is traceable to her social work and her parents' earlier involvement in the activism against 'the Smith regime with its evil policies of racial superiority and domination' (p. 45). Buckle's mother's recounting of this activism which includes her 'first' husband as 'lawyer', 'defend[ing] men who have since risen to the very top of ZANU PF'; her 'family's commitment to the concept of a free Zimbabwe' which enabled 'many of today's cabinet ministers to receive their prison education'; her assistance in the authoring of 'some of the books and pamphlets that were smuggled out of the country' to expose the injustices in

Rhodesia and sustaining an 'atmosphere of passionate belief in justice and truth, of endless interchange and discussion among the black and white visitors to the family home' (p. 45). This recounting, as autobiographical recollective acts accomplishes two things: the first is that it reconstructs the habitus from which Buckle derives her resources for her present activism, the second is that it marks a continuity with the mother's earlier activism and since the letter underscores that her children, Buckle being one of them, were brought up in an 'atmosphere' that opposed injustice, it inaugurates a genealogy of activism in the family. Bourdieu (1994) relocates capital from the narrow instance of mercantile exchange away from economics into a wider anthropology of cultural exchanges and evaluations of which the economic is only one, though the most fundamental type (Moore, 2008: 102).

As a strategy for her activism, Buckle, appropriates the internet, the print media, white 'paternalism' (Hughes, 2012: 6) and her education as assets. These assets enable her to record her activism in the genre of autobiography. There exists a link in the orders of autobiography and capital symbolic exchanges in that autobiography is a record of an experience or experiences worth of recognition or recollection (Gusdorf, 1990). Buckle positions herself at sites of critical historic junctures and in spaces charged with political maneuvers. The appropriation of such capital evinces her ability to manipulate email affordances, the internet and the public space which affords debates on topical issues (Herbamas, 1995) and ensures constant constructive critiques of the violations of the rule of law and possibilities of inventing alternative belongings and locations of the self in the face of the invasions. This capital is also the source of her 'desire for the recognition of distinction' and 'desire for peer recognition through innovation' (Moore, 2008: 106). An example of this is Buckle's writing a seminal letter to a weekly paper in which she made 'pleas for the government to let white farmers farm in peace'. This letter elicits recognition in that the columnist 'had applauded' Buckle's 'sentiments and compared [her] hard work with that of a young black Zimbabwean farmer' (p. 8). The recognition of Buckle by the columnist in a weekly paper whose readership spanned the geographical space of nation, becomes an occasion for rehabilitating her difference and an affirmation of her belonging, in the wake of being stripped of her rights to citizenship. Activism, therefore, becomes a mode or device of belonging, especially when the comparison the columnist makes creates an exemplary peerage and inserts Buckle as a member of that peerage.

Buckle's autobiographical capital points to inventive and innovative acts (Bruner, 2011) that

construct Buckle as a mutable self and the nation and community as entities that outlaw circumscriptions. The farm reclamations destabilize the order and or configuration of the white community's privileged existence and, to draw on Giddens (1992) vocabulary, punctured 'the defensive carapace of the cocoon of their ontological security' and introduced 'existential anxieties' which in turn become the muse behind the autobiography (p. 42). This carapace is composed of 'basic trust' in human expertise and institutions, for example, the legal system, and 'the interdependence of taken-for-granted routines' and it operates 'by bracketing, on the level of practice, of possible events which could threaten the bodily or psychological integrity of the agent' (Giddens, 1992: 40). The puncturing of Buckle's family's 'protective cacoon' is shown by how Buckle's son - Richard, because of invasive stress, projects his vulnerability in the act of protecting 'all his teddies under the blankets' as 'he was already under stress because of the disruption to his routines and our lives' (p.13). But what constituted the taken-for-granted routines? Bourdieu's terms, *doxa* and *field*, can be employed here to answer this question. Broadly, 'doxa' refers to the misrecognitions of forms of social arbitrariness that engenders the unformulated, nondiscursive, but internalized and practical recognition of that same social arbitrariness' (Deer, 2015: 119-120). Significant here is how this term, unlike Giddens' 'routines', is deployable in the explication of how the white community, to which Buckle belongs, could be conscious of the material gap between most black and white people and could, at the same time, bracket or suspend that discrepancy.

The misrecognition, in simultaneously knowing and suspending corrective action by most whites, was arguably because of the collusion between the persistence of white paternalism (Hughes 2013) and the Mugabe regime's reconciliatory stance, at least in this regime's early years. However, the transformation of the *field*, Bourdieu's term for social space, constituted by different and either collaborative or conflictual positions by the farm invasions brings forth, as articulated by Buckle in *African Tears,* the demand for a discursive attention to the arbitrariness of the injustices of the inherited Rhodesian land distribution acts which had dispossessed the blacks. As an activist, Buckle notes these inherited injustices but fails to formulate any discursive strategy for the resolution of the problems. Instead, her narrative is freighted with a discursive formulation of, ironically, the victimhood of whites on one hand and the morbid revengefulness of a regime that has come to realize its political and economic incompetence on the other hand, which, ultimately, leads to this regime's loss of legitimacy. Her belated berating of herself and the white community for not having formulated solutions on time is evidence of autobiographical retrospective reordering of the past whose aim is to

rearrange priorities and the economy of the normative and abnormative. In this act, her 'deferment' of formulating solutions to the arbitrariness in politics, economic and social space before the invasions was a result of her 'remoteness in space' (Giddens, 1992: 80) from those on whom the injustices were imposed. In an email entry entitled 'The Rape of the land', Buckle writes:

> As we were in the month before the elections, we are again a country in limbo; no cabinet has yet been appointed; parliament has still to be called. There is still no one giving orders, no one making policies and we remain a country without law and order. No one is answerable to anyone … yet. (p. 154)

In signifying the aberrant as colonizing the space of law and order, Buckle describes anarchy as the interruptive and disruptive other against which modernity models, by opposition, myths of the self's ontological security and a life insured against the emergent and exigent, and thus takes it upon herself to appropriate the available role of an advocate for the reconstitution of the rule of law. In this mode '[t]he autobiography' becomes 'a corrective intervention into the past, not merely a chronicle of lapsed events' (Giddens, 1992: 60). This suggests that narratives that mobilize 'corrective' strategies in the space of the nation and the self, assume the mantle of the political. Here, the terms emergent and exigent are deployed to describe happenings that lay siege to the self like an ambush. The 'limbo' alluded to is evocative of the 'state of nature' (Hobbes, 1987; Locke, 2000; Rossoueu, 1989 and Rawls, 2002) discussed as a hypothetical lawless and unhierachized state in the human condition and specifically in the context of the genealogy of laws, sovereignty and society. As discussed in Hughes (2013) Pisoloff (2014) and Raftopolous (2009), the Zimbabwean crises or what this section calls state of emergency, was circumscribed by acts of horrendous violence, the suspension of the rule of law and order and a pervasive insecurity for both blacks and whites. On the anarchy that prevailed, Buckle notes: 'No one is answerable to anyone'. Kaulem (2004) posits that, 'this polarization threatens to exclude a sense of the common good, that is the nation as a community of people that is mutually at the service of each other' (p.77). He points out that the consequences for this are that '[n]ational institutions and processes have been so politicized along party lines that their national character has been undermined (Kaulem, 2004: 77). Both Buckle and Kaulem, in ominous tones, gesture to the condition of the Hobbesian state of constant war or conflict which bring into being intolerable fear, insecurity and uncertainty that become the compelling sites

on which humans decide to submit themselves to other sovereignties like monarchs and the state/governments.

Buckle's advocacy for the rule of law follows her realization of the dilemmas of the self to which Giddens (1992) alludes. Giddens lists the dilemmas as (1) powerlessness versus appropriation; (2) unification versus fragmentation and (3) authority versus uncertainty. These, when deployed in the examination of Buckle's autobiography as activism, show that whereas the violent farm repossessions denuded the self and both the black and white communities of political and human rights and thus rendering them powerless, the authoring self, by appropriating its capital, reinvents herself as champion of the rule of law and human rights. In her autobiography, Buckle invents a political self that emerges in the contingencies and exigencies in history's axes of time and space. Buckle confesses at several points in the narrative that she should have attended to the issues that escalated into anarchy earlier to prevent such a state of emergency. She poses: 'I am just so angry … Angry at myself for every meeting I didn't go to, angry at each letter I didn't write, every debate I didn't take part in. We should never have let it get to this stage' (p. 12). At a fundamental level, here, is the self, comporting towards both its interiority and exteriority: to merge private projects of the self and causes that can only be played out in the public sphere of 'emancipatory politics' (Giddens, 1992: 96). It is a self that Giddens (1992) posits that constantly monitors and revises its acts in the mode of reflexivity. The fundamental point is where the self, documents or narrates the omitted acts and acts committed, as a mode of constructing an identity that belongs to the normative in the community.

Emancipatory politics is 'a generic outlook concerned above all with liberating individuals and groups from constraints which adversely affect their life chances' and this mode of politics strives to 'shed shackles of the past, thereby permitting a transformative attitude towards the future and the aim of overcoming the illegitimate domination of some individuals or groups by others' (Giddens, 1992: 211). Significant here is how Gidden's point designates selves like Buckle as adherents of modernity's conviction that methods can always be devised to circumvent problems in the secular world. It is also an inscription of modernity that the self, the autonomous self is independent and is resourced with capabilities to refuse illegitimate domination. The self's autonomy, however, is not equivalent to that Aristotelian inherent disposition of the 'political animal'. Significantly, Derrida (2012), Foucault (2000) and Lyotard (1990) advocate the substitution of the autonomous self with a decentered subjectivity.

In the context of the difference between the self's subjectivity and the inherently political self and Giddens' powerlessness versus appropriation dilemma, Buckle's narrative supplies the evidence against Aristotle by marking the narrator's pre-activism phase and the seminal point at which her great awakening happened. In her pre-activism phase, she does not register any possession of political capabilities: instead, she is terrified and helpless - a refrain that punctuates every chapter of the book. For instance, on hearing, through rumour, that her farm has been targeted for invasion, she says: 'My initial reaction was to get out, evacuate the farm and hide somewhere, run away from the confrontation that so many others had already encountered. How could I do this though?' (p. 1). While it is arguable that feigning fear and retreating to mobilize resources for overcoming a menacing presence can be located in a Machiavellian resource book, Buckle's reaction to the impending invasion evinces panic and fear. Panic and fear are not necessarily symptoms that precede flight and marks of helplessness, a counterpoint can still be raised that if Buckle had been inherently a 'political animal', then she would have, in the habit of such an 'animal', immediately devised an emancipatory program, not only at the moment of the impending invasion as a coming event that defines her singularity of selfhood and experience, but also at the beginning or before the farm invasions that 'others had already encountered' (p. 1).

The response of an 'animal' to a menacing presence to its 'umwelt' [47] is inherently instinctive or instantaneous while political acts are usually deliberate acts based on premeditation and orientation towards a set of goals. In a converse move, Buckle's narrative shows us that she experiences her awakening into activism by a fortuitous reading of a newspaper columnist's applauding her as providing a 'cue' to action during this state of exception. Here is Buckle's reaction to this comment:

> Suddenly I felt ashamed of my earlier thoughts of defeat. Here I was, along with others, being held up as an example to the country. How could I give up now? What hope was there for my country of birth if I couldn't take more pressure, hold up just a little bit longer. (p. 8)

Theorizing about the beginning of autobiography acts in the space of the self, Smith and Watson

[47] Umwelt - A German term meaning environment, surroundings or the outer world

(2001: 53) call such a point of awakening a 'coaxer', - something, an event or anything that prods the self towards assembling a narrative. Exemplarity, as alluded to in the quotation, is a mark of approval that slides over the stigma of (un)belonging. Despite it not holding fast to the self, the mark of approval energizes the autobiographical impulse in Buckle. This coaxing moment shows the gradual construction of the identity of an advocate for human rights and the rule of law and at the same time illustrates the dynamism inherent in the mutability of selves in their encounter with the event that facilitates this mutability. Hence Giddens' proposed dilemma afflicting the self in modernity is also, paradoxically, an enabling dilemma. The self, initially, is powerless in the presence of the impending invasion but by appropriating both print and digital technologies, Buckle begins to campaign against a government she is convinced is illegitimate. Briefly, this is her dilemma: if Buckle chooses to remain muted, history will archive her as eternally powerless, a self closed forever in oblivion. If, however, as she does, chooses to intervene in the public space to both oppose acts of injustice and retrieve and recuperate justice, she cannot obliterate the stigma of the (dis)located self since by assuming the name of the (dis)located in moments of opposing the stigma, she paradoxically entrenches the mark because the apprehension of the belonging or identity she invents is also an iteration of the stigma she opposes.

4.3. Exemplarity and aporetic latitudes of the self through the rule of law

Hayden White, in an interrogation of history and narratives and narrativity, posits that 'a list of events' lacks 'regularity and fullness' because of the absence of 'a notion of a social center by which both to locate them with respect to one another and to charge them with ethical or moral significance' (White, 2010: 56). Utilizing White's view, Buckle can be seen as an activist who, in rendering a narrative on the disruption of the rule of law, becomes the centre of a moral consciousness that seeks to convene the meeting of disparate voices for the purpose of mending the Social Contract. By inventing herself as the centre of moral and ethical consciousness, Buckle provides exemplarity for her community, the nation and the global spaces where such a consciousness is cherished but has not yet been quickened by such experiences that Buckle, in her singularity, has encountered. The space of exemplarity she creates compels (1) An interrogation of the self's referentiality to the community simultaneously as its singularity sets it apart from that very community; (2) An examination on how Buckle invents herself as such a center of ethical and moral consciousness and (3) An evaluation of such a self project and the

identity that emerges, especially in spaces marked by the aporetic nature of law and its application.

Buckle, by phoning the police on multiple occasions, despite their repeated lethargic responses, evasions of duty and, most of the times, their refusal, prevarications or incapacity to intervene as law enforcement agencies to stop unlawful acts, takes it as her prerogative to defend the law. This becomes ironic since the rule of law is commonly understood to be the enforcement of law to protect the subject or citizen against the violation of his/her rights and dignity by a rogue state and other citizens, who because of privilege and power, may overreach into the private and public spaces of the underprivileged to redraw lives according to the summons of egotism. However, such an ironic state of affairs can easily be dispelled when Plato's pointing out of the double structure of law is taken into recognition. This recognition emphasizes the coercion and persuasion that renders law application duplicitous. This duplicity also characterises the ruses of autobiographical narratives' attempt to coax on one hand, experience into readable form and compel the excess of experience, - that which cannot be contained by form, what Derrida calls the, 'supplement' (Anderson, 2008: 9) to narrative, into an iterable and predictable act. Buckle's desire to invent a narrative is therefore also a desire to reinstitute law not only in the public domain of state politics but also at a fundamental level: the ontological foundations of the self that have been shaken out of its habitus by the state of exception. But this desire is traversed by aporetic scenes in the acts of authoring the autobiography: the activist who desires the reinstitution of the rule of law herself deploys a genre that outlaws the rule of law by its radical disdain for containment in generic laws.

Derrida points out that it is the habit of genre to constitute itself in terms of 'norms and interdictions' and 'thus as soon genre announces itself, one must respect a norm, one must not cross a line of demarcation, one must not risk impurity, anomaly or monstrosity' (Derrida, 1980: 203-4). One can ask: Does it mean that autobiography as a 'disreputable' (de Man, 1979b: 919) mode of writing is unsuitable for representing activism for the reconstitution of the code of laws that govern human behaviour? As a way of answering this question, one can point out that autobiography is a genre that slips through generic laws and is suitable for the representation of activism against violations of the rule of law since its versatility and contempt for closure matches 'the *argumentations*' (Waldron, 2007: 91), which are central to the procedures of implementing the rule of law. Such *argumentations* 'can really do justice to the value we place on government treating ordinary citizens with respect as *active centers of*

intelligence' (Waldron, 2011: 20-24; emphasis is mine).

Waldron's (2011) and Mckomack's (1979) postulations resonate with the operations of the fluid strategies of autobiography that refuse the arbitrary designations of generic laws on subjective experiences that irrupt in emergent and contingent context; reposes all veridical authority in the authoring self as, to redeploy Waldron's words, 'a center of active intelligence'; allows the subject or authoring self to contest other views or interpretations of reality that, because the source of their trajectory may be overreaching, have to be forbidden encroachment on the 'dignitarian' (Waldron, 2011: 18) concept attached to the self. According to Giddens' (1992) formulations of dilemmas that vex the self in modernity, the application of law through its formal rules of coherence, predictability and determinacy (Hayek, 1960) performs the unification of legal rule application, and by extrapolation, generic rules. The application of the law, through allowing argumentation and contestation entry into legal procedure, performs fragmentation. In the context of Buckle's autobiography in which truth and determinacy are denied anchorage, only the certainty that there is an authoring consciousness unifies Buckle's name to the book, while the genre's 'unruly' and transgressive acts point to a decentered subject whose quest for justice is yet to rest since the hysteresis [48] in the text still forbids closure to the questions: How is the land redistribution to be done? and Who adjudicates in a country in which the government has adjourned its own laws?

In this volatile situation that defies location and situationality, the autobiographical self-experiences hysteresis as the site that is the source of the desire to narrate: to know and to rehabilitate the human form of rationality - something that always comes from the spirit of modernity/enlightenment, into the anthropological space it had colonised after abandoning the Hobbesian state of chaos. This means between the privileged habitus enjoyed by Buckle and the deffered settling into a new one, hysteresis as the Hobbesian chaos, disrupts the disposition to settle for a single interpretation of reason and reality. The economy of this desire as noted above, to know or narrate is captured in the quotations below:

> For Ian and me, our financial future as farmers was almost finished. We were both middle-aged and had sunk everything we had, and didn't have, into Stow farm. We

[48] Hysteresis, one of Bourdieu's cornerstone terms, it refers to the temporal and spatial gap between the event that disrupts a habitus and the settling into a new or different habitus. As a thinking tool hysteresis provides explicit links between the objective nature of systemic change as in field transformation and the subjective character of an individual response to that change (altered habitus).

> thought we were set for the future. We had obeyed the three L's that my sister said were the prerequisites of to life: to live, to love and to leave a legacy. Lived … we had; loved … we had, but the legacy was sitting on the edge of a precipice. (p.102)

Additionally, Buckle writes:

> This little farm was going to be the legacy we would leave to our son ... My emails attracted a lot of attention and before I knew what was happening, this book was born. This, perhaps, would be the legacy I could leave for Richard and to the people of Zimbabwe. Someone once told me that I wrote from the heart and it was obviously this that people wanted. (p. 102)

These quotations coax an interrogation of the imbrications of time, which in this case appears as 'the future' and of course, the past as alluded to by 'finished', 'lived' and 'loved' and the concept of legacy which appears in both quotations in the examination of exemplarity. It is on such an occasion that autobiography evinces itself as a guarantor of the self's accomplishments, aspirations and record of the reasons for failures and victories (Smith and Watson, 2014). If selfhood, though fractured and incoherent, is to attain the status of exemplarity, then as in the embodiments and monumentalizations of private and public ideals in statues and mausoleums, autobiography in the mode of memoir intervenes to be the site at which the legacy or 'traces' (Derrida, 2012) reference to a past which refuses total recollection and whose presence among the living is this 'iteration' (Derrida, 2012: 64) of the narrated in the trace provide a rewriting and rereading of the past which is paradoxically reading and writing of the present by virtue of it being invented through the trace. If the project of self monumentalization is approved as not narcissistic and here, Buckle redeems it through the genre of the memoire's disposition for exteriority and contextuality, in this case by the placement of Richard and Zimbabweans as recipients of the legacy: the trace, the cohabitation of italicized newspaper excerpts, her email ledger and journal entries and activities in the public domain. The first quotation invents exemplarity by referring to accomplishments and impediments that, by convention, mark one's identity on the scale of human or self-realization, as separately explored by Aristotle and more recently by Malinowski (1944) in his pyramid of self-actualization stages. For example, it is within the doxa of Western and post-colonial cultures that by middle age one is expected to have settled somewhere in life by: staking a piece of the earth and reconfiguring it into a home;

reproducing the human species by procreation; having to satisfy the libidinal economy of human existence by 'living' a life that exudes pleasure and pain - the inescapable equation of this economy and; transcending the burden of embodiment and materiality by 'loving', something that resonates with Plato's scale of reality as that which inheres the uncontaminated realms of ideas/*idein* - a realm which is at once significant as a repository and reference point of invisible values, of for example, virtue, goodness, beauty and truth. This list of examples if actualized by a human being, as Buckle's narrative positions her, will mark that human being and in this instance, Buckle, as unquestionably inhabiting the space of exemplarity.

The second strategy Buckle employs is positioning herself in the orb of Human Rights Organizations and the International community, which means the most powerful and privileged countries, Amnesty International, the European Union and others. Buckle's sense of connectedness to these entities is so strong that when she feels menaced by the invaders in her yard, she writes 'dozens of letters to Human Rights Organizations, begging for help, for intervention' (p. 16). Her connectedness inscribes a self 'disembedded' from her 'locale' by 'global' forces of change (Giddens, 1992: 87). The fact that '[not] even one of the Human Rights Organizations answered' (p. 16) to her begging or appeals is perhaps a symptom of a disproportionate investment of trust in the agency of such organizations. Significant here is a scene where the self appropriates the image and reputation of such organizations as champions of law and order. This is exemplified by the contents of the letter the narrator writes to Tim Sebastian, a BBC Hardtalk presenter, in which she vituperates the Commonwealth and the European Union's apathetic attitudes towards the Zimbabwean crises, especially the state of exception, the denuding of rights and torture in contravention of the law to which the subaltern is exposed.

By posing that the EU and Commowealth 'don't deserve to hold positions of world leadership', that is 'if they honestly believe that we can have free and fair elections after [the documented anarchy]' (p. 98), Buckle appropriates the political rhetorical and verbal strategies of her times to recruit these organizations to her cause. Here she deploys the public and political verbal device of the dilemma to prod the EU and Commonwealth into action: if these organizations remain lethargic then they abdicate their positions as adjudicators and repositories of the global nomos. Hence to secure this privilege and power, they would be roused into action, at least in the scheme of Buckle's narrative. But to heed Buckle's call would be an admittance of their abdication since if they had not abdicated their post, they would not need prodding. Buckle

attempts to mobilize the symbolic resources: the law, the international court of justice and planetary consciousness and conscience of these organizations and by that act writes herself as a cosmopolitan who celebrates the efficacy of some international agencies in reordering lives across territorial borders without being disconcerted by such crossings. Her activist identity, therefore, is not confined to Zimbabwe as she invents herself as a guardian of the global nomos through her philippic against world leader's lethargy in the face of documented and presently occurring violations of the global and national social contracts.

The self that sets out to navigate a political terrain and negotiate a speaking or subversive position in the name of a cause that mobilizes sections of the public domain, symbolic resources and the people is at once set apart from the people and intersected with these people's habitus and all modes of capital. By deciding to champion advocacy for the Rule of Law, Buckle, for example, becomes 'a symbol of human kind, a mark of distinction within it' (Cohen, 1993: RV,173/149). In Buckle's autobiography, the marks of her singularity and status of symbol are exemplified by the contents of some emails from some of her followers she receives after announcing her decision to leave Stow Farm:

> *This will be one of many, many letters flooding in to you. You have become somewhat of a symbol of everything that is happening ... I am sure it's a wise decision ... Your lives, your welfare, your health are of the most importance now ... take care of yourselves, you brave people.* (p. 189; italics in the original)

And:

> *To be honest, I don't know what to say. I certainly admire your fortitude but was relieved to hear you have decided to move off your farm ... Good folks are impossible to replace and I know you are among the finest ... Having never been in your situation, we can only imagine how trying it must be to have your work destroyed by lawless, ignorant bandits especially when there is no recourse.* (p. 200; italics in the original)

A symbol operates by way of representation and this representation demands the recognition of the difference of the symbol and its immanence in the semantic configurations of the represented. Buckle represents, as a singularity, the aspirations of both the white community

and huge sections of the black community who oppose ZANU PF's contraventions of the Rule of Law. The paradox of exemplarity as representation is posed here: the singularity reconfigured as the sum of heterogeneity as in differently positioned people or heterogeneity reduced to the singular. In seeking to enlist the intervention of metropolitan Human Rights Organizations in the opposition she mounts against the government and by acknowledging the 'world leadership position' (p. 98) of these metropolitan organizations, Buckle's actions perform a paradox of her exemplarity: 'that national affirmations are neither simply particularistic, since they take place in the name of universal values, nor simply universal, since they make their claims in the names of cultural particulars' (Hollander, 2008: 4). Buckle holds affirmations of the Zimbabwean legal constitution simultaneously as she elevates the particularity of this constitution to the height of universal values.

Her altruism, in volunteering to oppose the abrogation of the rule of law on behalf of others similarly terrorized and stigmatized, can easily slide into enlightened egoism, since she herself is in dangerous situation, she can lose all her property to the invaders, be maimed or even lose her life. Hence, it is notoriously difficult to place a line between altruistic and egotistic motivations in cases like Buckle's. On the same point, this can implicate her character as manipulative and calculative under the guise of mobilizing those in subaltern spaces in the name of activism against injustice. This can be illustrated by the calculated ruse she uses to mobilize other whites in inundating the police with phone calls (p. 18), when the police, in their evasive and lethargic mode, refuse to attend to her appeals for their intervention since she felt terrified by the invaders' rally on her farm. Buckle also confesses that most people in the country including herself, because of fear, had withdrawn from the political platform to concentrate on immediate self and property preservation. She says: 'Fear was our dictator and looking after personal interests had become the only priority. *Looking after our own affairs became my priority soon after the disastrous strike* (p. 167; italics are mine). As noted above, instances like these that incite ambivalence in the reader, refuse closure as to whether Buckle's subscription to altruism is intermittent according to the calculus of an enlightened egotist or whether insurmountable contingent irruptions forbade altruism in the context of the equation of what can and cannot possibly be endured by a human being in states of exception.

Buckle, in the context of her reinvention of herself as an exemplar, makes frequent references to the function of shame in shaping identity, national and personal projects. 'Shame bears directly on self-identity because it is essentially anxiety about the adequacy of the narrative by

means of which an individual sustains a coherent biography' (Giddens, 1992: 65). By inventing herself as a reference centre of positive morals, Buckle appropriates the space of the adjudication of the evil versus the good. For example, she proclaims that she is 'ashamed to be a Zimbabwean' (p. 20), because this Zimbabwe, marked by mayhem and all sorts of injustices does not fit her idealizations of human and social goodness. Since capacity to evolve and feel shame is attributable to humans alone (Nussbaum, 2009), shame, in Buckle's scheme of activism, becomes a resource that can be appropriated in a political sense to advance the normative as counter-posed to the abnormative. Thus, by reprimanding the government for lack of shame (p. 165 and (p. 182) and chastising individuals for not acting to remove the shame that marks them (p. 170) and (p. 183), Buckle becomes one who provides an alternative narrative of being human and of law and order.

4.4. Environmental justice advocacy: an ecocritical investigation of activism

This section discusses how mothering is synonymous with authoring and thus is posed as a site of fecundity in Buckle's autobiography. In this endeavour, tropes and images of environmental destruction are opposed by those of nurturing. Buckle's appropriation of motherhood or *mothering,* is well poised for a convocation of authoring, mothering and reproductive acts. The mother is the figure whose vocation is recollection on behalf of the child (Heron, 2007) and if this child is a book, one can approve the conclusion that the author, once having written and published a book, must lose it in its dispersal of multiple and varied readings by known and anonymous readers. Nevertheless, in this scheme of events, the mother or author retains the authority derived from the experience of giving birth, to be the reference point in narratives of origins, being and becoming. Buckle as mother figure, indicated by the birth of the book (p. 102) as site of fecundity is implicated in the production and reproduction of narratives and this reproduction, when alluded to autobiography, gestures to autobiography as a second reading of lives. In performing this second reading, one is reminded of postnatal nurturance: the kind Buckle performs on and for her son Richard, the vegetation and animals on her farm.

Buckle explicitly refers to herself as mother and this position's contextualization is significant. In the context of documenting criminal acts done by invading paratroopers and delineating the normative from mayhem or abnormative, Buckle writes: 'As a mother, I was trying to raise my son to have principles, to love his fellow man, tell the truth, help people when they were in

trouble' (p. 190). In her letter of condolences to Mr Fidesi whose son had died in a stampede incited by the police she states: 'I am the mother of an eight year old boy and cannot begin to think of the anguish you must be going through' (p. 157). In this case, Buckle's mothering performativity is employed, as a 'technology of gender' (De Lauretis, 2010: 236) to cross the divide between the private and public spaces: a divide instituted and placed as a marker of seclusion and inclusion by modernity's production and imposition of hierachizing taxonomies. On the point of the private and public dichotomy and how it has been transgressed by mothering or authoring females, Dale Spender in her book *Man made language* (2010) observes:

> The dichotomy of public/private becomes significant in any consideration of writing and the sexes: males are associated with the public sphere (as is published writing) while females are associated with the private sphere. Females who take up their pen have, at least the potential to enter the public sphere and thereby to cross … and confound … classification boundaries. (p. 191)

The significance of this crossing of the divide and the trespassing of masculine speaking positions by the female figure constitutes neither substitution of the masculine narrative by that of the female, nor a mimesis of the masculine enunciative acts by those of the female author. This is because first, the female author will always find it impossible to translate her own experience to create compatibility between her own experiences and those already made available and circulated within the masculine domain. Second, the female as mother already knows that copulation and fertilization between the private/public dichotomy staged by the crossing of this divide always produce a third entity or difference that refuses the proclivity of masculine narratives to return to the same site of reference through universalizing and reductive discourses. A scene that provides Buckle's subversive moves against reductive discourses is her parodying of Mugabe's self-aggrandizing speech on purported successes achieved by his party (p. 56). For every success flaunted by Mugabe, Buckle inserts a counterdiscursive interruption of the speech. Writing in this context Sheila Rowbotham declares: 'We can't just occupy existing words, we have to change the meanings of words before we take them over' (Rowbotham, 1973: 33), and it would be a blunder, says Mary Daly, 'to imagine that the new speech of women can be equated simply with women speaking men's words' (Daly, 1973: 8). In marking the acts of her crossing to arrive at the site where the book '[is] born' (p. 102), Buckle proclaims:

> By then most of us [on the farm] realized the *power of the pen* as everyone had read my last letter to the paper. My words in print for thousands of people to read, had caused much excitement on our dusty little farm, particularly those about the children. (p. 22; italics mine)

The above quotation and the assertion: 'I was determined though [after her forbiddance of CNN cameras], not to be silenced. I knew my words were already having an effect' (p. 22) gesture to an emancipatory vision. The pollination of the public speaking space by Buckle's mothering acts through a different idiom from the one invented by masculine narratives is done by the author exteriorizing herself in the name of 'the children'. The realization that the pen was a political tool that incited a recognition for the transformation of the conceptualizations and itineraries of debates and policies in the public sphere is evidence that Buckle's agency as an activist was efficacious. But what is the mode of this idiom that matches the summons by Helen Cixous who argues:

> And it is time to change. To invent the 'other' history. There is 'destiny' no more than there is 'nature' or 'essence' as such. Rather there are living structures that are caught and sometimes rigidly set within historiocultural limits so mixed up with the scene of history that for a long time it has been impossible to (and it is still very difficult) to think or imagine an 'elsewhere'. We are presently living in a transitional period one in which it seems possible that the classic structure might be split. (Cixous, 1986: 83)

Cixous, dismisses all the essentialisms that have been attributed to females and the environment as nature. She proposes rupturing the closures of these essentialisms by inventing alternative modes of being as 'elsewhere'. Buckle's relocating of the word 'rape' from its usual legal provenance in which it refers to the sexual penetration of a female without her consent to the context of the destruction of the environment and the whites' being stripped of rights and liberties by the Mugabe regime, is an act of inventing this 'elsewhere' by manipulating a resource at the core of phallocentric and logocentric regimes of knowledge and power: language. However, immediately Buckle revises language this way, the charge of reinscribing the stigma of inferiority, irrationality and submissiveness that are ascribed to the environment and females by Western naming modes is laid. This is because, as some feminists argue, such language acts fail to question phallocentric discourses' pretense to legitimacy and power. The chapter entitled 'The rape of the land' animates debate on how the environment and the

nonhuman other demand a new naming and with this naming is introduced a new relationship between humans and the environment that urges that humans not reduce the former to mere instruments in the name of progress. 'The plantation was being raped' (p. 24) and 'The rape of the land' transcend the troping device to formulate a criminal charge on the invaders when Buckle says:

> The mental and psychological stress is phenomenal. The anguish and anger at our powerlessness increases every day. I have worked so hard these last ten years and know every inch of this farm, and the pain of seeing these people destroying it is intolerable. *I feel as I imagine it must feel to be raped.* Always day after day, having to see that blue tent and the flag makes me feel *violated*. (p. 28; italics added).

By feeling, the imagined Buckle emphasizes that, troping as device has gone beyond mere personification of the environment as woman or female whose body is violated by the invaders and the regime's vitiation of the legal constitution by its permission of mayhem. This troping substitutes the environment by the human; substitution goes beyond symbolic or metaphoric representations to mark the presence of the human body in the animal other and the environment. To illustrate this point Buckle says: 'They stripped the bark off nearby msasa trees to strap their shelters together. I too feel completely stripped now, of all my human rights' (p. 19). This means the rights accorded the human are instantaneously inscribed in the nonhuman in the moment of the substitution. To extend the analysis of this issue, contextualization is to be interpreted as the idiom of inclusion that despises monologues in public spheres which must be the site for debate and the negotiation of meanings and positions as different, than the turning of this space into a monolith of one political party's projects. Contextualization, by bringing the other who has been excluded to immediate attention opposes the exclusionary moves by the enlightenment rationalism whose telos reduces the other to an instrument. By contextualizing newspaper extracts, voices of the excluded, journal and ledger autobiographical entries, Buckle creates a space for debate. In this space, truth is indeterminate and solutions, especially unilinear ones, are outrightly outlawed or perpetually postponed and deferred.

The third autobiographical strategy adopted by Buckle is her writing her narrative in relation to the consciousness of her mother, her son and Trevor Ncube, the editor of an independent paper. 'The grounding of identity through relation to the chosen other seems ... to enable

women to write openly about themselves. This relation is established on the basis of an alterity or irreducible difference thus the autobiography traces an evolution and delineation of an identity by alterity' (Mason, 1984: 23). By routing narrative through the other, women's autobiography differs from masculine narratives that seek to exhibit an unassailable autonomy: the nomadic self that Descartes pronounced to be self-sufficient. For instance, on this point, Chodorow (1978) notes: 'The basic feminine sense of self is connected to the world, the basic masculine self is separate' (p. 169). This compels her to conclude thus: 'Masculine personality, then, comes to be defined in terms of denial of relation and connection [and denial of femininity], whereas feminine personality comes to conclude a fundamental definition of the self in relationship' (Chodorow, 1978: 169).

Buckle chooses to relate her autobiography to Trevor Ncube, the editor of an independent paper. The evidence for this is that she names him her hero (p. 35) and avoids the frequent and public saying of his name as if to preserve his consciousness in the privacy of her interiority. The second basis for this claim is that Trevor Ncube gets the privilege to write the foreword to her autobiography and in it he records the point of the intersection of their consciousness: 'Cathy is white and I am black. But we have a lot in common. We belong to the same human race and ascribe to the basic norms that have made this race different from animals' (Buckle, 200: ix). By being the author of the foreword, Ncube relates to Buckle through the proximity of consciousness as pointed out and at a more fundamental level, both share similar existential questions and an experience of history as the struggle to tell how to preserve the rule of law and other pillars of civilization on which human rights are inscribed. This relatedness is traced to the dependence imposed on women by the patriarchal system and through repetition, is seemingly espoused as though it were an essential value of the female. The writing of autobiography by women who live within patriarchal orders that silence, interrupt or disarticulate women becomes 'therapeutic' as it opens discursive space 'to constitute female subject' and in which 'autogynography' (autobiography by a woman) gives the female 'I' substance through the inscription of an interior and anterior' (Stanton, 1984: 139). In a patriarchal country like Zimbabwe, Buckle's relating her autobiography to a public intellectual like Ncube becomes a political act in that by being foreworded by such a male, she invites the approval and support of all the thousands of citizens who subscribe to Ncube's paper.

Her relating her autobiography to her mother is based on the biological and cultural ties between them. The mother's letter to a newspaper editor which is reproduced in the memoir,

traces the activism Buckle does to the family precedent in activism: the activism done by the mother's husband and the mother in opposing the Rhodesian regime's imposition of injustices on the black subalterns. Thus, the confluence of their consciousness is in the atmosphere of activism, democracy and justice that Buckle's mother created in the family home. In the psychoanalysis theorizations by Lacan (1990), the mother is a significant other in the 'Symbolic order' in reference to a referential system of meaning constituted through language and dominated by the Law of the father. In this way, she (the mother) becomes a figure of symbolic reference to Buckle. Such a Lacanian reading of the complexities involved in women's autobiography locates the seminal site of women's relational consciousness at the mirror stage, when the individual realizes that the 'I', as reflected by the gaze of the other is from another perspective. This realization is synonymous with the acquisition of language which constitutes the individual as both external and internal and language use is a constant mediation of the relationality between this interiority and exteriority. Such language use is implicated in autobiography by its being 'the symbolic system that both constructs and is constructed by the writing subject' (Benstock, 1988: 150). This alludes to Buckle in that since her mother has had more than one husband, Buckle finds an abiding sense of reference in the mother and not, therefore, in the father. In any event, while the 'girl' identifies with the mother the 'boy' raptures this connection and identifies with the father on the point of positionality as different from relationality (Chodorow, 1978: 44).

Buckle's writing in relation to Richard, her son, is in the context of the recognition of temporality in autobiographical narratives. Autobiography, as the site where the self recollects itself and revises its positions and projects, invests in the future as it attempts to establish an equilibrium between the expenditures and profitability of the past and the future. Buckle writes her future in Richard. This happens at two levels: the first is that Buckle's DNA is sustained and transferable, just like narratives, through Richard and thus Buckle's tracing with her finger of Richard's name incised on the trunk of a tree (p. 79), is a performance of this inscription of her temporal coordinates: the past, present and future. The second level concerns Buckle's projection of her material investments and profits on Richard: Stow Farm, as an inseparable story of Buckle's life and legacy, can be sustained through rebirth via autobiographical reinvention through Richard. Hence belonging and location have been transubstantiated from staking entitlements on the environment that she reconfigured to become Stow Farm to a belonging by the ethics of inheritance: both biological and the one Locke (2000) formulate: that the capability and investment used in transforming a piece of virgin land into livable and

productive space endows the agent with a legitimate claim to that piece and the innovations thereof. But to revise this position, it is arguable that since the rule of law is in limbo and her innovative securing of Stow Farm through leasing is troubled by uncertainty, the only residual ethics of inheritance is installed in the autobiography.

The fourth resource Buckle has recourse to, is the appropriation of the feminine as that which inherently resides in the female. But by installing it in the autobiography, Buckle proposes that belonging by fixed geographies in a world whose calculus of certainty and security has been put out of joint by the contingent and has been rendered unviable is to be, instead, placed in the fluid and versatile vocations of the feminine. But what is the feminine? And what are its sites and subterfuges in Buckle's book? The feminine in a woman is that part of her that proclaims itself to be a function of civilization as a whole. It is that portion of her that would not exist without civilization or without the Other. And by extending this point: Richard (1997) posits: 'Femininity as autobiography must therefore not be construed as an autobiography of an ego: it is the unfurling of the subject of the unconscious, which is, strictly speaking, subjected to the infinite … femininity is the autobiography of the world' (p. 47).

The implications here are that first, the feminine eludes moorings by discourses undergirded by egoism; secondly, in clarifying the how part of the question above, it deploys protean ruses that match the irruptive moves of the contingent. In Buckle, the sites of the feminine therein located are performed through hysteria, tears, nausea and the ubiquity of questions in the memoir. The modus operandi of these is the crossing of linearity, the female/male divide, the norms of hierarchy in human civilization, the Same and Other dichotomy, the autonomous individual and rationalism and its apparatus of taxonomies. In short, it implodes essentialisms and totalizing discourses. Hysteria, nausea and the barrage of questions that mark the narrative as refusal of closure install discontinuities in the autobiography.

The discontinuities for example are: Towards Mugabe's confirmation that the invaders would not face legal penalties and that the state of limbo would persist, Buckle 'felt a combination of hysteria and nausea and was more than a little tempted to rattle the gates of state House, push a few pegs into the lush lawns and see how [her] peaceful demonstration would be taken' (p. 14). Both nausea and hysteria are from the provenance of irrationality: something that bankrupts enlightenment's investment in rationalism, as inscribed in scientific methodologies and legal constitutions. By being driven by this compulsive urge to demonstrate: to raise a

counterdiscourse to the state's permission of this limbo by 'rattling' the gate and impaling some pegs on the lush lawns, Buckle evinces hysteria and nausea. A compulsive urge of this kind allows violence which ironically is what Buckle takes as her project to oppose. Therefore, there is a discontinuity between Buckle's normative situated action (Boas, 2002) and the re-inscription of violence and the limbo. But here we face the question: what are nausea and hysteria? Hysteria is the irruption of the unconscious into the space of the conscious and rational as the self's monitoring and reflexive securing of the basic ontological perimeters and foundations of the said self, in the event the subject is threatened by utter nihilism in his/her umwelt. Hysteria, from its Greek etymology as alluding to an unpredictably itinerant womb or uterus, has always been a term that reduced the female figure to 'stigma of instability and disease' (King, 1993: viii). Nausea as the overwhelming suffusion of the body and mind with revulsion as a mode of the rejection of some external acts or objects which perforate and contaminate the self's economy of the normative: an economy closely tied to the self's ontology (Bruhl, 1980; Strauss, 1979; Durkheim, 1986; Kristeva, 2013). The normative economy here refers to constitutionalism, human rights and the rule of law. The perforation and contamination of this economy is performed when the invaders pitch a blue tent, rabidly chop down trees and dig open latrines that are a metaphor for the revulsion that Buckle feels against the Other whose alterity troubles the author to the point of retching. In addition, the discovery of the dead Reedbuck (p. 156): dead, bloated and suppurating, contaminates this economy. By inscribing such odiously repulsive necromantic and decomposition metaphors, Buckle appropriates language and the dualism between the profane and the sacred/normative in her 'folk psychology' (Bruner, 2002: 10) to stimulate debate about such environmental injustices.

Emotions, in Buckle's book, are deployed as a contagion in an interpersonal and contextual setting to jolt the community or nation into proactive acts to resist the marginalization of minorities: black farm workers, whites, the environment and animals. The production of emotional tears in the context of anger, pain, fear, despondence and terror call for an investigation that dissolves the rational/irrational dichotomy since this production forms coherence with the situatedness and normativity in the context. Buckle's book provides a ubiquity of scenes of the production of tears: the significance of this ubiquity is underscored in the title of the book. For example, Buckle produces tears **when**: she heard news of the 'impending invasion' (p. 2) she watched 'the video footage' of a rally after the invasion (p. 19) she is threatened by two drunken invaders one of whom pulls out a gun (p. 21), she gathered her farm employees to bid them farewell (p. 196), she 'cried for the farm and Zimbabwe' (p.

197). Buckle produces tears and exhibits fear in situations that threaten her mortality and normativity and if tears cohere with these then '[e]motions are not blind animal forces, but intelligent and discriminating parts of the personality, closely related to beliefs of a certain sort, and therefore responsive to cognitive modification' (Nussbaum, 1994:78). Buckle's tears as a symptom of emotions can be justified at three levels: First; emotions as 'forms of intentional awareness ... are forms of awareness directed at or about an object, in which the object figures as it is seen from the [agent]'s point of view' (Nussbaum, 1994:78). Second; emotions are bound up with beliefs, for instance Buckle's beliefs in human and animal rights and the rule of law. The third: emotions, Nussbaum argues, 'may appropriately be assessed as rational or nonrational ... depending on the character of the beliefs that are their basis or ground' (Nussbaum, 1994: 80-81). Since Buckle's emotions correspond to situation and context, they are rational. By inserting emotions in the narrative, Buckle implodes the masculine rationalism that disables a comprehensive recognition of the Other's rights and difference that includes inter-alia - minorities, children, flora and fauna, since this masculine rationalism lacks that which enhances interpersonal communication: emotions.

The third component of Buckle's book that gestures to the feminine is the ubiquity of questions in the context of the violation of the rule of law, and the injustice to the subaltern and flora and fauna. In response to the farm take overs, Buckle writes a letter to a weekly independent to rouse Zimbabweans to resistance and she points out: 'I ended with a series of questions that no one was able to answer but which I hoped would make people think' (p. 14). 'If questions are the linguistic form that seeks to involve the interlocutor by necessitating a response' (Tannen, 1994: 166), then Buckle deploys them as a political device. A question, before any answer is given, opens debate on an issue and keeps this debate going endlessly and thus disallows the unilinear and syllogistic habit of rationalism or universalizing discourse's imposition of closure. This is closely followed by the realization that questions, because of their own reflexive redrawing of parameters and implosive moves within discourses, also open spaces for renegotiations of positions and convictions. Tannen (1994: 86) postulates that questions create 'camaraderie' and 'involvement'. This then suggests that questions are inherent to all narratives, discourses and ideologies: a phenomenon similar to the Derridean deconstructive acts within a text that collude with the infinite or 'transfinite' (Cantor, 2012: 89) to resist closure and thus sustain debate or discourse. Questions as political devices are reposed in the feminine because they themselves are open to reformulations, fluidity and versatility.

The strategy of questioning installs discontinuities in Buckle's narrative since the nature of questions, though eliciting responses, may in fact bring forth something unanticipated by the questioner. For instance, after writing the letter noted above questioning Zimbabweans in a bid to involve them in resisting farm invasions, Buckle says: 'Perhaps it was my letter published in the independent or perhaps it was coincidence, but the war vets returned to our farm within days and this time they came to stay' (p. 14). Questioning the self and the order of things is at the core of the autobiographical enterprise as pointed out by Socrates in his Apology (defense) of his life projects. The greatest question Buckle grapples with endlessly is to evacuate or not: to keep on belonging by holding on to the land or be (dis)located/(dis)placed. Unlike in male auto/biographies, for example Godwin's, Rogers' Harrison's and Hough's in the context of decisions, Buckle's decision to remain on the farm is not marked by an inflexible resolve. It oscillates between powerlessness and the urge to keep holding on. In any event, the decision to evacuate at the end, is discontinuous with her earlier resolve and optimism. The decision to evacuate at the end is not the closing of the question but a redrawing of the parameters of the question and the order of things in a mode that matches the demands of matters close to mortality and eudemonia.

The autobiographical inclusions of nostalgia in Buckle's book provide the location of other modes of narrative discontinuities and symptoms of ontological insecurity. The Greek words for return and suffering are nostos and algos, respectively. The literal meaning of nostalgia, then, is the suffering caused by the yearning to return to one's place of origin (Sedikides, Routledge and Arendt, 2006: 975). Davis (1979) defined nostalgia as a 'positively toned evocation of a lived past' and poses that 'the nostalgic ... experience is infused with imputations of past beauty, pleasure, goodness and ... and love (Davis, 1979: 18). Buckle's nostalgic acts, are evocative of the ambiguous and ambivalent nature of nostalgic memories in autobiography as 'for a moment she [loses] herself in the memories of a decade' (p. 79). The ambiguity and ambivalence is marked by both positive and negative affects (Johnson-Laird and Oatley, 1989).

For instance, Buckle remembers the beauty and satisfaction of the past in the context of a present that bears imputations of an affliction, and hence, as Isaac Ndlovu has argued elsewhere, 'the reviewing of the self's personal and national history is triggered by present necessities, with the desire to be in control of present selves and to influence future national trajectory' (Ndlovu, 2014: 1246). The content of Buckle's nostalgia includes, the self as the protagonist, the objects of her memories (in this case her son, the beauty of the environment

and the animal Other) and both the positive and negative effects. Her nostalgia is pointed out by phrases as, 'I had always loved', or alternatively, the use of 'adored' in relation to flora and fauna. Chapter 14, 'Siya', juxtaposes nostalgic memories of pleasure and sadness. In fact, like Peter Godwin in Chapter 2, Buckle accomplishes the invocation of this beauty of the past and the sadness of the recognition of the impossibility of a return to that past. This juxtaposition evinces what Ndlovu (2014) refers to as the recruitment of the 'compatible' and the 'jettisoning of the incompatible' (p. 1240) in that Buckle's sadness at her irreversible loss of the beauty of the past prods the reader to the conclusion that the present affliction is incompatible with her present and future self projects. The discontinuities implied by an urge to return to an irretrievable past and the demand of activism to redraw the present in the service of a utopia are absent in masculine autobiographies which stage protagonists as autonomous individuals. Nostalgia is also discontinuous with a quest for belonging in that while the protagonist returns to the therapeutic sites of the past, the pharmacology of these sites is dislocated from the present demands which necessitate a different remedy.

4.5. Activism through digital technology: autobiography as prosthetics and poetics of the self

This section investigates the interaction or interfacing between Buckle and the internet as digital technology with the aim of establishing the effects of such human-technology interfacing on autobiography theory, activism and self-identity. The intersection of autobiography and the internet in Buckle's memoir must be delineated early in this section. Poletti and Rak (2014: 3) posit:

> Nowhere is the power and diversity of the autobiographical more visible than online, where it is the raison detre for many of the activities and practices associated with web 2.0, and where acquiring and maintaining online identities make up the core activities of many users.

Vegh (2003) posits online activism, alternatively known as or closely connected with digital activism, cyberactivism or e-activism, 'as a politically motivated movement relying on the internet'. Vegh argues that this activism is proactive, targets specific goals, and invariably

targets 'the controls [inhibiting self-actualization] and authorities imposing them' (p. 72). In Buckle's case, such 'controls' refer to the monopolising of the public and ideological sphere by ZANU PF, as seen in the attacks on independent media organizations and the suspension of the rule of law.

In the foreword to Buckle's narrative Ncube observes: '[Cathy]'s family ordeal [was first] told via the email and now this book, add[ing] a human dimension' (p. x) to scenes in which the state of exception denudes the subaltern of human rights. In the vicinity of this assertion, Ncube writes: 'Cathy's emails and now this book tell the story of one family's struggle against state-sponsored terror' (p. xi). Buckle herself confirms that this book - her memoir, was 'born' (p. 102) out of the emails she sent to her virtual communities. This is significant in that the hard copy book is to be viewed as a copy or a version of the email narrative instalments Cathy sends to her local and global communities. Since these email narratives exteriorize the author by investing more in others and national issues than in matters interior to Buckle, it can be argued that these narratives qualify as memoiristic recordings

Buckle's narrative instalments cannot be the final repository of memory since archiving these instalments already tells that they were written by a human consciousness that selected particular events to fit into narrative instalments that denounced lawlessness, human rights violations and contamination and destruction of flora and fauna. By Buckle's standards of telling events, standards that Rob Cover (2014) associates with antifunctionalists Foucault, Lacan, Derrida and Butler, narrative coherence is invented out of assembling fragments of stories or 'pieces' into a coherent series of narratives. Here, coherence is performed through an ongoing process of shoring up or responding to any incongruities so as to present an intelligible, distinguishable self. This can be illustrated by the quotation below:

> Interesting isn't it, that as I write the Foreword I have never set eyes on Cathy. But thanks to the internet and email I have come to know her as if I had met her in person. I got to know Cathy through her weekly email briefing to the world and city folks like me on what was happening on largely white-owned commercial farms. Cathy used her email to publicize her ordeal, which mirrored the situation on the majority of commercial farms in Zimbabwe. (p. ix).

A reading of this interfacing with the internet in conjunction with autobiography raises several

issues: First; that virtual subjectivities can substitute the historical and embodied ones. On this occasion, Smith and Watson (2014) state: 'Both online and offline, the autobiographical subject can be approached as an ensemble or assemblage of subject positions through which self-understanding and self-postioning are negotiated' (p. 71). The implication here is that both the online and offline selves are decentered and therefore the Cartesian autonomous individual is forbidden in the space of the interhuman, human and the living other (flora and fauna) and the human-technology interface: a space which calls for relational and collaborative gestures rather than detached undertakings. Second; this also shows that autobiography theory, since it already allows the contamination of difference in the context of the heterogeneity of entities and subject positions, can or has already accommodated virtual identities as those that correspond, in approximation, to offline ones. Hence Ncube can claim that despite having not seen Cathy in person (embodied), he already relates to her as one known - thus dissolving the offline/online divide. On this point, Helen Kennedy urges autobiography theory and internet identity research theories to examine the anonymity, fragmentation of selves and narratives online in conjunction with their 'continuities in offline selves' (Kennedy, 2006: 860-69). Third, in the foreword, the writer poses that he attended to emailing for considerably long hours and points out that Buckle's email activism was viable for a global community and 'city folk' like him. This provokes discussion on how email can be deployed to mobilize citizens to a cause in a country or world marked by unequal distribution in internet affordances. Buckle herself alludes to this unequal distribution in her memoir: the postscript to the book is a catalogue of impoverishment, famine and shortages of basic human needs among the black communities. The implication of this, therefore, is that her email activism is confined to urban areas, especially the 'suburban' areas, where only the well-resourced citizens can plug into the internet. Colin Sparks has argued that 'without electricity, none of the other technical prerequisites for internet connectivity can possibly be employed' and 'the global dimensions of both the old and new media are predominantly means of elite communication' (Sparks, 2014: 44-45).

In the chapter 'Hondo' [49] in which Buckle is under siege by invaders, by pronouncing that her 'computer is her *lifeline* to the world' (p. 4), she conveys not only the bare affordance of connectivity that the computer implies but a mode of existence: a worldview in which technological affordances are written in the code of her identity. The word *lifeline* connotes affordances that not only promise to sustain one's biological (*bios*) existence but also the *graphy,* as is implied by 'line', a word which gestures both to source and destination of a life

[49] A Shona word meaning War

since 'line' evokes the lines in alphabetical writing and thus introduces coordinates that define a life trajectory. In opposition to Heidegger who views technology as 'limiting' (Hernandez-Ramirez, 2017: 45-57) to human agency, Foucault endorses the affordances of technology as encoded in humans' desire to transcend the limitations of mere biological existence. He posits that technologies of self 'permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own ... souls, thoughts, and way of being' (Foucault, 1988: 18). Taking this cue from Foucault, Galen (2015) argues that the allowance of internet affordance of accessing and interacting with the virtual worlds by ICTs discloses 'new human kinds of ontologies' technology's 'inherent' capacity to extend cognitive and operational abilities. He further notes that the use of technologies can create 'specific forms of self-reflection and self-discovery' (p. 73). This therefore means that Buckle's relating to her computer as a 'lifeline' is a means of 'self-fashioning' (Galen, 2015: 75), something that confirms Foucault's endorsement of technology's transformative or poietic capability.

But how is Buckle's lifeline linked to efficacy in the context of her activism? As noted already, Benford and Snow (2000) propose the framing theory as a source of conceptualization tools and here our enterprise concerns 'diagnostic framing', 'prognostic framing' and 'motivational framing' as already introduced. In the context of diagnostic framing Buckle, in her emailing acts identifies the suspension of the rule of law as the key problem. In her email entitled: 'The Rape of the land' (p. 154-156), her most comprehensive letter since it encompasses the effects of lawlessness on citizenship, the nonhuman other and the environment, she identifies problems and attributes them to the government. Here she condemns the government for the littering of the environment, wanton poaching of game and the creation of a political space that excludes by stigmatizing the Other as noncitizen and therefore one whose claim to belonging precariously hangs in the balance. In the context of 'motivational framing' (Bedford and Snow, 2000), Buckle composes homogeneity or collaborative space by identifying with the rule of law, a planetary consciousness and ecological care.

In addition, by the affectivity of her emotions in the letters, she draws sympathisers who in turn are recruited to her cause. Gergen (2015) and van den Ven Meijs and Vingerhoets (2017) have argued that emotions, especially those associated with victimhood, incite prosocial responses from others and thus the terror, disgust and hysteria with which Buckle infects her letters is a powerful strategy of constructing a space of homogeneity in activism. In the case of prognostic

framing, Buckle at first professes a lack as she still lives in the cocoon of privilege and just wished that '[s]omething was bound to happen ... someone was bound to put a stop to these invasions; the police were sure to begin doing their jobs; the world would not allow this to continue ... How wrong I was about everything!' (p. 9). However, despite discontinuities in her activism as noted in the preceding section, Buckle proposes and engages in activism that involves stay aways and strikes as exemplified by the chapter entitled: 'The 3000 wish list' in which she excitedly writes 'emails were flying backwards and forwards, as section by section, community by community the country tried to decide what to do and where it stood' (p. 164). In a preceding chapter to this, Buckle, with reference to 'counterpublics' (Frazer, 2015) resistance says '[f]orty farms, apparently employing 10 000 people among them closed down. Owners (of farms) remained in their homes, workers did not report for duty in a united attempt to demand a return to the rule of law' (p. 162). The climax of this reportage is the point at which Buckle, with modesty, designates herself as the 'email activist' who receives '[t]hree hundred and fifty messages of support from across the globe: England, America, Australia, New Zealand and seven countries in Europe, Namibia, Mozambique, Kenya and Uganda' (p. 163). This demonstrates that the internet affordances can create communities (Fuchs et al., 2011) and online affordances have become nodal sites for collective action (Lievrouw, 2011; Segerberg and Bennett, 2011). Through the internet affordances of connectivity, rapid sharing and forwarding of emails (Lejeune, 2014), Buckle can create a homogeneity or consensus around values and viewpoints (Dahlberg, 2001). Since this consensus is primed for actions that enforce changes in 'governmentality' (Foucault, 1990) this ultimately leads to political perspectives (Wilhelm, 1998) that cohere around shared objectives.

4.6. Conclusion

This chapter investigated the self as a political protagonist in activism as evinced by Buckle's autobiography. The quest of the political self is to effect change and in Buckle's case, change in the social order: a quest that invites the rule of law and the recognition of human rights. Like in all autobiography, the self has been viewed as an invention that dismantles, by its inherent instabilities and mutabilities, the autonomy, certainty and determinacy implied by totalizing discourses. Examining agency and exemplarity, the chapter arrived at the conclusion that though Buckle's appropriation of the office of adjudicator of morals and the law is aimed at the human good, it provokes aporia in the attempt to impose particular morals or laws on those who reject such legal and moral codes. By investigating Buckle's environmental activism, the

chapter showed that her activism is a counterdiscourse that creates a counterpublic discourse that seeks to create emancipatory spaces for the human subaltern and the nonhuman Other, for example, animals.

Buckle's activism through the internet, specifically email, has been analysed as a mode of self-reinvention through the affordances supplied by the internet. The internet, it has been shown, creates virtual identities that possess the capabilities to effect change, similar to their offline counterparts. The appropriation of the internet by authoritarian regimes has been examined and the discovery that it can limit the activist's quest for emancipation, has been marked as a possible impediment. Belonging in Buckle's autobiography has been delineated as belonging by activism. The paradoxes that are raised by such belonging, such as the self-dislocating acts of demonstrating that one is 'ashamed of being Zimbabwean', have been discussed and no unitary solution to (un)belonging (dis)location and (dis)placement have been supplied.

Chapter 5

Confession as dissemination: unstable locations of the narrating self in *Jambanja* [50]

5.1. Introduction and theoretical framing

The interrogations and explorations of the previous chapter posed the protagonist, Buckle, as one who evolves into a political self within the contingency of the land reclamations. The chapter concluded that Buckle establishes belonging through her activism which encompasses her championing for the recognition of the rights of both the subaltern and animals. Since the chapter proved that Buckle's recourse to the law was crossed by the aporetic application of the legal constitution, her activism is left in abeyance. This abeyance, it was noted, enters the scene, the moment the protagonist attempts to assuage legal particularity to universal status: an act that activates totalizing discourses. While the viability of her digital activism was proven on the basis of her capacity to mobilize followers, it was concluded that the virtual mobilization of a movement does not instantaneously translate to actual or embodied confrontation with authoritarian regimes. The chapter suggested that the issues of the imperialism of the Same rival the singularity of the Other, as shown in the vexed and vexing aporetic relations between the particular and the universal, emanating from the narrating 'I' as first person narrator. The first person or homodiegetic narrator (Genette, 1972) is simultaneously the intradiegetic narrator and the focaliser (Genette, 1972). From an examination of such a narrative apparatus, the consequences in the epistemological limitations and narratological compromisations are enormous. Consequently, Chapter Five is concerned with the third person confession as dissemination in autobiography by interrogating the confessions in *Jambanja*. The enormity of both ontological and epistemological limitations and compromisations pertaining to narrative view suggested but unexamined in the previous chapter are examined and discussed in this chapter.

[50] Harrison in *Jambanja* conceptualises jambanja as 'this chaotic process' (p. 95). Matondi's (2012; xi) calls it 'mayhem', whereas Pilossof (2012: 44) terms it 'state sponsored lawlessness. Jambanja is an ordinary person's term to describe the chaotic and lawless manner of land occupation witnessed on the formerly white commercial farms. According to Chimhundu (2001: 405) jambanja, pertains to a state of violence, disagreement, and disorderliness. Jambanja has been popularly adopted across the racial divide to explicate Zimbabwe's post 2000 white commercial farms invasions. Scoones et al (2010: 190) posit that '*Jambanja* literally means violence or angry argument, but the term has been used in many different ways to refer to the farm invasions'. Thus *Jambanja* as concept and practice demonstrates the complicatedness of the history of land ownership in Zimbabwe.

Chapter Five is concerned about how contemporary autobiography in the mode of confession deconstructs (Derrida, 2012; Hillis, 1997; de Man, 2005) the assumed prototype of confession as exemplified by Augustine's *Confessions* and Rousseau's *Confessions*. The argument that wields this prototyping view of confession, as held by Berggren in the *Psychology of confession* (1975), posits continuities between this assumed prototype and modern autobiographical confession. Through the interrogations of confessions in *Jambanja*, there exist discontinuities between the alleged prototype and modern autobiographical confessions. Such discontinuities as noted by Hartle (2008), appear firstly; in the way the prototype confession gestures to a viable and verifiable location of truth while contemporary confession disavows such a possibility; secondly, in the way the prototype confession does not self-consciously problematize the narratological aporia and dilemmas that arise the moment the first person inaugurates a confession; thirdly, the ontological security that is taken for granted in prototype confession all but vanishes the moment one shifts one's gaze from this prototype to contemporary confession; fourthly, while Berggren poses a teleology of confession – 'transgression, confession, penance and absolution' (Kelley, 2008: 9), contemporary confession refuses a locatable and available origin like transgression and the closure of absolution or forgiveness. Following this point, confession is not confined to acts of transgression. Rather, confession as understood here are 'statements which claim to explain the being of the subject who is speaking, which are introspective, utterances which change [the subject] in manners' (Taylor, 2009: 95), which is what this chapter shall show.

Confession in Harrison's *Jambanja,* refuses a teleology whose destination is redemption by reconciliation or narrative coherence that arrives at any consoling closure. The chapter draws from McAdam's (2006) theory of the redemptive self in the analysis and interrogations of the protagonist's generative acts and disposition and the contamination of such a project by the invasions and, subsequently, his ambivalent tone of redemption. This argument is premised on (1), the ambivalence in the protagonist's realization that the dehiscence of the colonial wound in the form of the farm seizures gestured to unresolved injustices and his adamant stance, which is steeped in self-delusion, that black people deserved to remain in the subaltern position since they could not reach the heights of development and success achieved and enjoyed by whites; (2) the grammar of the protagonist's self-reference is broken by anacoluthic interruptions that forbid or postpone a complete and coherent narrative. I argue, that this resides in the indeterminacy that mark designations of the speaking voice between: (a) the narrator as visible and the narrator as receding or vanishing (Fludernik, 2009), (b) direct speech and free indirect

speech: the latter, as shall be demonstrated, collocates with psycho-narration, (c) the parataxis and parabasis which, operating through irony, open space for the protagonist's self-contradiction and positively, to self-criticism: parataxis and parabasis, it should as well be posed, can be analysed and discussed in tandem with anacoluthon though nuanced differences are noted; (3) the narrator's deployment of humour and irony is simultaneously self-enabling and self-hobbling since humour, according to superiority theories of humour (McDonald, 2012) can erect barricades between social groups: one group appropriating its privileged position as justification for the reductive deployment of humour in which the subject, by verbal violence, disfigures the Other's difference; (4) the deployment of humour is an explicit admission that the self's lived experience is marked by incongruities or disparities between actual experience, actual self-positioning and the imagined counterparts of these.

This deployment of humour, then, grants permission to one to conclude that a writer, narrator or protagonist who analyses the self and events through humour must be one who has already endorsed that speech acts and narratives, as noted through deconstruction theory, are inherently dirempted by structural incongruities; (5) Similar to the deployment of humour, the inclusion of nostalgic passages in *Jambanja* is ambivalent: while it can positively be part of retrospective and introspective acts as autobiographical apparatus and a resource for psychological therapy, nostalgia, can also be a site where the self is deluded by the lure of authentic ontology, some primal source of the self or event that, in a retrogressive mode, forbids other becomings. Nostalgia, in its most dangerous manifestation, occludes complete self-criticism as it descends into a pernicious narcissism.

The theories to be deployed in this chapter thus include humour theories: the superiority, relief or therapy and incongruity theories, poststructuralism (especially deconstruction), speech act theory and narratology and Foucault's genealogy theories. The chapter comprises three sections. The first section (5.2.1. & 5.2.2.), through humour theories, argues that Harrison's use of humour is intended as a confession that the self's and the human condition in general, is marked by inherent contradictions that disallow truth as that which appears in correspondence theories (Straws, 1990), and ontological coherence. Drawing from this, I will argue that humour, especially that whose signification is through incongruities to expose other incongruities, marks the events and episodes in *Jambanja* with aporetic poises that countermand formulations of immutable truths and memories. Following on this, I will further argue that though immutable truths are forbidden, subjective truth or autobiographical truth is

constructed by the self in the context of irreducible or nonsubstitutable singular experience (Olney, 1988; de Man, 2012).

Consequently, events like the birth and orphanage phase, and the *Jambanja* itself, are to be investigated in the full knowledge that these become metaphors for the subtraction of any essential, locatable and primal meaning from human life and existence. Foucault's genealogy theory and deconstruction theory is deployed in all sections in the analysis and investigations of subjectivity, truth, memory and history with reference to confessions in Harrison's memoir. The author's use of humour, in tandem with relief or therapy theories of humour, is intended to diffuse the anxiety and tension incited by the self's ontological and physical insecurity in the orphanage, the war and Jambanja (farm invasion) phases. Despite the positive attributes of relief theory, I will discuss that the catharsis attained through humour may be at the expense of the butt of the humour or joke and hence, in this case, one is returned to the injurious tone of humour: suggested by superiority theory or some other dark humour (Holm, 2007). The second section will also argue that nostalgia, as it is inscribed in *Jambanja's* passages, is (a) part of the staple of autobiographical retrospection and introspection; (b) a metaphor of reversion, ontological infantilism and narcissism; (c) a therapeutic provision for the self in that it counters moments and events that catalyse tension, fear and both physical and mortal danger. A reading of both humour and nostalgia in the first section, is also a prefiguration of the concerns of the second section (5.3.)

The second section (5.3.1. and 5.3.2.), subtended by poststructurist, narratology and speech act theories, investigate the ontology of the self, the methods of narrativity, the possible reason behind a choice of such methods and consequent to this and the issues that are raised by the deployment of such narratological methods. Significant here is how (1) the third person narrator approximates or inhabits the space of omniscience or unlimited knowledge concerning events and the subject of narration (Genette, 1972). This has the effect on why the author chooses the third person over the first person. The third person inscribes undecidability with reference to location and locutions by the narrator and protagonist. Through narratology and speech act theory, I will demonstrate that psycho-narration through free indirect speech fissures the self's ontological unicity and introduces arbitrary (re)constructions of events and identity; (2) the third person narration provides the occasion for an assessment and evaluation of the tension between objectivity and subjectivity in most confessional narratives. Harrison's valorization of the self's immersion in community involvement opposes or sets a tension

between interiorization and exteriorization of the self. Hence, the boundary between subjectivity and objectivity is presented as already perforated; (3) the third person is also a device by the author to circumvent charges of verification of events or th`e truth and accountability in relation to some acts done and focalised by or through the protagonist; (4) the third person narrator is a device usually deployed in fiction writing and thus its cooption in Harrison's book can, as there shall be ample evidence given, be an allowance of fictionality in *Jambanja*. As a result of this, the issue of the non-knowability and knowability of the confessing self's interior will be raised and discussed.

The third section (5.4.), the post-invasion period of *Jambanja* whose meditative tone invites reflection on the immediate and long past, is concerned about the impossibility of confession (Derrida, 2012; de Man, 2005) and the possibility of overcoming this impossibility by recourse to grace (Coetzee, 1998), despite the spectre of cynicism that troubles that grace. This is premised on the protagonist's refusal to accept the black people as equal to whites, especially white farmers. The protagonist, instead of seeking space and creating the discourse of reconciliation, documents and archives the crimes done by the Zimbabwean government and certain individuals. This documentation inscribes the possibility of retribution through the legal code and thus performs an explicit metastasis of the necessity of first correcting the legacy of colonial injustices. This accusation, is however mitigated by the realization that the protagonist himself is caught up in a dilemma: to resort to distributive justice means he must lose some of his wealth (which he rightly created through hard work) and to refuse this proposal is to risk being accused of being inconsiderate. The second issue in this section concerns the incommensurabilities between the protagonist's generative poise (McAdams, 2001) and the demand that this generative adult whose ideologic provenance is colonialism, must make a break with such a generative capital and profit if complete redemption is to be possible. The third topic in this section asks the reader, by its intimations of ethics, whether it is possible and right for the self to confess on behalf of the other and the nation. The fourth site of engagement involves the irony and disparities that irrupt between the protagonist and other whites' confession of belonging and the disturbing fact that he does not consider himself indigenous.

5.2.1. Confessing lived experiences' contradictions: humour as pharmakon

In 'Plato's Pharmacy', Derrida traces the composite and ambivalent meaning of the word 'pharmakon' through Plato's dialogue the *Phaedrus* to Thoth who refuses Thumus' gift of writing on the basis that instead of reviving his memory, it would cause forgetting. In this case, writing ceases to be a remedy and assumes the quality of poison. Derrida's tracking of the etymology of pharmakon yields not a unitary meaning but a dissemination of pharmakon that can mean philter, remedy, poison, paint and others. This reference to the undecidable meaning of pharmakon is significant in that it sets the tone of this subsection whose investigation of humour and nostalgia is undergirded by the theory of deconstruction and genealogy theory: both resist totalizing discourse. Both the terms confession and humour can be presented as pharmakon since their respective meanings refuse arriving at assumed sites of originary and unitary meaning. If together with Foucault we define confession as: 'To declare aloud and intelligibly the truth of oneself',[51] it soon becomes imperative to interrogate how the autobiographical truth constructs the confessor's character as it deconstructs it. *Jambanja*, as marked by written confessions, also, in the orbit of deconstruction and genealogy theories, becomes a pharmakon. As pharmakon, the autobiography speaks between genres, insists that it's business is not truth in the propositional or quotidian posture: having disdained formal truth, it draws us close (a drawing that is a dispersal) into textual passages that presage imagined coherence but, as intimated already, will soon have a rendezvous with squabbling contradictions.

Adopting the third person narrative point of view, the author creates distance between himself and the focalizing agent and thus enables self-criticism through humour (I will elaborate this point in the next section). The protagonist's valorization of humour belies the conviction that the capacity to create and enjoy (at least if one is not the butt of the joke, the target of satiric ridicule) is an inherent human trait. Accordingly, the deployment of humour across a range of social encounters is involved in the constitution of human identity. The protagonist's valorization of humour, ubiquitous across the autobiography, is attested by the approving tone

[51] This is the chapter's definition of confession.

of the narrator, for instance, in the evaluation of character. This can be exemplified by selected quotations: Van Zyl, whose English, through mangled grammar, creates absurdities as when he says 'Hey you three … *the pair of you* come here … I want to ask you a blerry question!' (p. 16). The locus of the humour here is not only atrocious English grammar: this tortured grammar, in turn, produces friction between the standard or norms of language and the unexpected impious violation of such standards. The narrator singles out Van Zyl as a model soldier: 'For all his oddities and rough manner, Van Zyl was a damn good soldier and, underneath all the bullshit, he meant well. He was excellent in the bush and Harry could see why the Brits had such a tough time with the Afrikaners in the Boer War at the turn of the century' (p.18). The narrator's endearing tone with reference to Van Zyl is significant beyond character evaluation by introducing some qualities of humour and the deployment of the latter. Humour, for instance, is depicted as a social lubricant in human interaction by the way it diffuses tensions and mitigates the austerities of military training and service. An analysis of the confession that humour is an inherent human quality will soon be compelled to investigate the motive of such a confession. The 'motives of confession writers are not likely to be conscious, but when an attempt is made to speak them, the attempts appear more as symptoms of desires' (Foster, 2012: 2). Here, the word desire is deployed in its Lacanian mode to signify motive - drives in the subconscious mind, drives that though unapprehended by the subject are marked by an enormity in that, once performed as acts, they fall in the ambit of ethical responsibility (Lacan, 2004). Hence, it must be noted early on that this chapter's investigations does not deal with the Christian, legal or religious confessions, which according to Tentler (1986) and Foucault (2000) adhere to a formal structure of confession whose teleology demands absolution, imprisonment or conviction as terminus. *Jambanja* is marked by secular confessions whose location and meaning can be adduced by a Derridean reading strategy:

> The reading must always aim at a certain relationship, unperceived by the writer between what he commands and what he does not command of the patterns of language that he uses. This relationship is not a certain quantitative distribution of shadow and light, of weakness or of force, but a signifying structure that the critical reading should *produce (*Derrida, 1984: 158; emphasis in the original).

This strategy, as Foucault's genealogy strategy, refuses to presume that the interpretation of a text or narrative must subscribe to a structured reading that presumes that there exists some explicit coincidence between writer and reader. Thus, while some confessions are explicit

others are covert or oblique.

The ability to create humour is appropriated by the author as one that validates his installation in the human community. 'The consensus is that humour is an exclusively human activity' and '[w]hile many mammals exhibit bared teeth displays akin to laughter, most agree that only humans have the requisite cognitive capability to create humour' (McDonald, 2012: 12). This means that by valorizing humour and using this humour to validate character as human, the author, whether deliberately or by the inadvertence of the slippage of the Lacanian desire, is foregrounding his humanity immersing himself in the human community. This immersion constitutes textual seduction whose ruse is to evoke the humanity of the reader who then, as according to this seduction, makes overtures of approval to the author. '[T]he writer and reader meet in a discourse, less in a generous desire to share than in contention: the writer wanting to perpetuate his discourse, the reader attempting to appropriate it to his own uses' (Foster, 2012: 8). Examples of this supposed reciprocal evocation of writer-reader humanity abound in *Jambanja* but for space it is prudent to dwell on a few. The narrator, especially in the war phase, has a penchant for swiftly drawing the characters of the protagonist's fellow soldiers in ways that suggest his need of the other, the reader, to approve of these characters. For instance, 'Sandy scum bag Hamilton [is] a humourous, slightly built scruffy Scotsman, a mechanic by trade, who never brushed his hair but kept them amused by his jokes' and 'he could adopt to anything, never complained and could sleep anywhere, anytime' (p. 58). The first implication here is that a human being who possesses capabilities of humour or creates it is a superior being than one that does not subscribe to humour since the human being who possesses it survives better by a flexible or fluid disposition that matches the irruptive coming of events, especially contingent ones like war or times of deprivation and insecurity. In the contemporary world 'to claim that possessing a sense of humour is ... deemed desirable, while [to] say that someone has no sense of humour is to utter a criticism ... lacking a sense of humour is up there among the modern undesirables' (Billig, 2005: 11). A void in the department of humour marks such a void as an adequation to a void in the moral dimension, an absence of a vital human quality (Wickberg, 1998). The second implication is that, through the versatility and fluidity the textual norm subscribes to in the ambience of humour, humour collocates with creativity and innovation. Capabilities of humour are fundamentally linked to the 'development of our cognitive and creative faculties too' (McDonald, 2012).

Jonathan Miller's commentary on the positive 'biological payoff' for humour capabilities

merits full quotation; humour has:

> Something to do with the exercise of some sort of perception which enables us to see things for the first time, to reconsider our categories and therefore to be a little more flexible and versatile when we come to deal with the world in the future ... The more we laugh the more we see the point of things, the better we are, the cleverer we are at reconsidering what the world is like. [We use] the experiences of humour as sabbatical leave from the binding categories that we use as rules of thumb to allow us to conduct our way around the world. (Miller, 1985: 21)

By advancing a positive contiguity between humour and the versatile and flexible self, Miller can be drawn into a conversation with McAdam (2006) who proposes that the redemptive self's resources of trust in human capability and resilience, creates spaces for revival and recuperation, especially in the aftermath of a crisis or calamity. The humour in *Jambanja*, especially the first half of the book, prefigure Harrison's ability to survive the invasion of Maioio farm and to be optimistic about compensation for his loss. The quotation from Miller can also be used in tandem with superiority theory's position that humour or laughter, as Hobbes (1987) argues, is deployed by one to show how better or cleverer one is beyond the reach of the other by showing one's condescension towards the other in laughter. If the cleverer and superior person is one whose mode of existence is humour, then the protagonist in *Jambanja* privileges himself above those who lack it.

An illustration of this redemptive self can be performed through two jokes the protagonist tells: the first during his wedding and the second at the end of his interview for a loan application for the purchasing of a farm. On delivering his wedding speech he thanks the audience from the 'bottom of [his] heart' and then gesturing to his bride, he adds 'and from my wife's beautiful bottom too' and the narrator points out that 'the invited guests cracked up laughing' (p.30). Superiority theories of humour argue that the teller of the joke suspends his recognition of the butt's of the joke's feelings. In the present event, the protagonist, Harry, jokes about his bride's bottom by setting the incongruity between 'heart' and 'bottom'. Incongruity theory sees humour as something created by mismatched juxtapositions and contradictions. In [Cicero]'s view it is 'the disappointment at having an expectation undermined that creates laughter' (McDonald, 2012: 29). Harry, can be accused of flouting gender literacy, though one has to place his joking about his wife's bottom, as Bruner (2001) and Gusdorf (1980) would posit

about an autobiographical narrative - within his culture, time and space as he reduces his wife to a sexual object through the metonym of the bottom. The heart, which Harry appropriates, humanizes while the bottom has intimations of the nonhuman animal: is the bottom not in the vicinity of other vocabulary like defacation, faeces and posterior? Words on the negative side of the binary: sacred and profane. It can even be argued, by adopting Foucault's terminology, that the joke disciplines, especially in a patriarchal society and culture, the bride who must be reminded of the tacit compulsion (according to patriarchal hegemony) to accept her presumed lower status in marriage. Hence the laughter that cracks up the audience is at the bride's expense and 'situations in which laughter occurs are invariably hierarchical' (McDonald, 2012: 23).

The second joke is located in the context of the selection interview on pages 46 and 47 in which Harry, after Carol Heurtly inquires about his hobby, replies: 'I blow my own trumpet'. The narrator notes that '[t]he whole board cracked up, slapping their sides in laughter. *And that's what turned the tables for us*, thought Harry, years later' (p. 47; italics in the original). Significant to the collocation of the redemptive self and humour here is how a contamination instance, [52] is converted to triumph over adversity. The paroxysms of laughter in both the first and second joke indicate a subversion of the assumed inflexibility of solemnity and the ability to 'ameliorate potential offence' (McDonald, 2012: 29) and embarrassment. In Cicero's words 'it mitigates and relaxes gravity and severity, and often, by a joke or a laugh, breaks the force of offensive remarks, which cannot easily be overthrown by arguments' (McDonald, 2012: 29). By diffusing tension, the humour excuses the protagonist from the nervousness that assails him in both the wedding and interview events. Harry's nervousness is palpable through references to Carol Heurtly's severity in character and the solemnity of the occasion. The narrator, by pointing out that Harry's 'heart [misses] a beat, that Heurtly has 'steely blue eyes', that throughout the interview, he is constantly under the mocking gaze of Heurtly and that 'sweat [pours] down his newly acquired suit' (p. 47), underscores Harry's ontological insecurity. This case presents ontological insecurity as something that matters to the self since both events are what Giddens (1991: 113) would call 'fateful' events in that their respective courses potentially lead to life-changing repercussions: and in Harry's case, they point to negative repercussions until his redemptive self, through humour, rehabilitates his deranged ontological coherence through deflection and diffusion of threats and tension. Embarrassment, Billig (2005) argues,

[52] In this case I refer to an event that crosses the optimistic disposition of the redemptive self.

is used as a disciplinary device on those who cross the norm. In the wedding event, Harry's friends endeavour to 'bring him down' just as Heurtly does in the interview case by exposing Harry's unsuitability for selection. In both cases, embarrassment dislocates the self from the norm by pointing out that he does not belong to the group of married men and prosperous farmers respectively. Harry engages 'rebellious humour' (Billig, 2005) or contestive humour (Holmes, 2000) against outraging conventionalists like Heurtly and the disciplining, according to Foucault's (1972) conventions of discourse and ideology linked to privilege, status and prestige.

By describing Barry Gutridge who 'at 50 years of age was the old man of the team' (p.58) and, in addition, as one who 'had a hell of a sense of humour' and 'always sported a bushy moustache and eyebrows' and [whose] infectious laugh sounded exactly like a puffing steam engine' (p. 58), the narrator poses humour as a social glue. By reconfiguring the bodies of Sandy and Barry Gutridge to caricatural figures, the narrator draws the readers close to characters who, though far from being perfect, engender social bonding through their humour.

The use of humour to create social cohesion is also configured through comic episodes or comedy. Social or group cohesion it can be suggested, is privileged over social disintegration or factionalism to demonstrate that the integrative, privileged and progressive redemptive self is more successful than the nonredemptive one. This read in the context of Harry's confessions on racial difference and supposed superiority of the white race, becomes significant in the discussion of the 'tall poppy' (p. 120) theory Harry ascribes to Mugabe's regime and black people in general. The 'tall poppy theory' designates the bringing down of the more successful and prosperous in a bid to create equality while the ethos of the redemptive self is to create equality or its approximations by pulling up the less privileged by donating resources to them, initiating them into the prosperous and guiding them. The social cohesion that is constructed through comedy prefigures the propensity of the whites to come to Harry's assistance as a posse, during the invasion of Maioio. While a joke produces its humour through the verbal juxtapositions or contradictions of the norm or expected with deviant and the unexpected, the comic episode is narrated but the narration is inscribed with acting. Irony which suffuses the human condition (Derrida, 2012), underpins the noted juxtapositions.

The narrator in his description of the Mkwasine variety show, expends more energy on the way comedy is used to punish Jurgen, the German, for his abominable conceit than on any other

episode during the show. The vulgar pantomiming by Frazer Hansen, who mimics an idiot tugging at a rope and imperiling his life by putting his head in a hangman's noose, is juxtaposed to Jurgen's magnificent and high-art singing of 'Mario Lanza's immortal version of 'I will walk with God' (p. 69). The pantomiming by Hansen constitutes a subversion not only of the high art but also Jurgen's ignoble conceit. Jurgen's crime, seen through the narrator's palpable mocking tone towards Jurgen, is that his conceit contaminates the community's cohesion with his disruptive and burdensome solecism. While the audience's laughter and tears of merriment are mistaken for enjoyment rupture by Jurgen, the pantomime mocks his inflexible and obnoxious manners. Jurgen is contrasted to Dick Tyndale-Biscoe, 'descendent of the RN officer who first raised the flag at Cecil Square in 1890' (p. 50). By marking Biscoe with a 'face like a rubber mask', and ascribing to him a 'legendary' (p. 50) repertoire, the narrator constructs a character open to flexibility, creativity and positive transformative acts. By his 'rare ability to extract the best from whatever limited talent he had at his disposal' and his 'cajoling [of] people to believe in themselves' (p. 50), he constitutes a redemptive self. In being a descendent of a member of the Pioneer Column and being an ex-Royal Navy soldier who worked on the 'illustrious Ark Royal' (p. 50) Biscoe becomes, according to McAdams (2001: 395), 'a generative adult' who, having learnt from his predecessors, is positioned and primed to pass on to the present and posterity the heritage of the heroism of the Pioneers.

Such a construction of the genealogy of history and heroism, is intended to preserve community, ethnic or group memory. Hence to belong to such an ethnic group, as Harry belongs to the white community, is to possess an imagined coherent history and a self-assured/assuring physical and spiritual continuity. Harry's preoccupation with belonging, emanates from his childhood fear of being orphaned when his father, in Lacanian terms of the reference of the phallic centre, suffers a mental breakdown and his mother abandoned him and his brother, George when he (Harry) was an infant. While integrative and generative acts as proposed by McAdams are crucial for community cohesion and development, one is reminded by Foucault (1987), Heidegger (1962) and Derrida (2012) of the possibility of this cohesion to morph into a space of limited and limiting horizons. Harry, like Biscoe, also performs McAdam's (2001) 'generative adult' by mentoring the children, particularly the boys in his family and neighborhood. However, his sense of community cohesion limits his vision of the nation: he tenaciously believes that whites are entitled to unquestionable privileges since, according to his subjective scheme of things, they are superior to blacks. In *Jambanja*, linked to humour as a resource of the redemptive self, is nostalgia. The next subsection examines this ambivalent

autobiographical resource.

5.2.2. Ambivalent confessions: nostalgia as metaphor for the simultaneity of contamination and redemption

> There is no greater pain than to recall
> A happy time
> When miserable (Dante Alighiery; *The Divine Comedy*)

This subsection interrogates the ambivalent poises of nostalgia passages in Harrison's *Jambanja*, focusing on the continuities and discontinuities in autobiographical coherence in the context of memory, contamination and redemption. Nostalgia is ambivalent in that the self's content of nostalgia is posed as a resource, like the pharmakon, that simultaneously constructs and deconstructs the protagonist's narrative: it is marked by both parabasis (a step/no step) and parataxis: this is premised on (a) a disjunctive conjunction of both the past, the present and future in nostalgia and memory (b) a belonging by nostalgia which gestures to a simultaneity of the absence/dislocation and presence/location of the protagonist in the present. This is the terrain of postmodern irony or what Long (2011) calls Derridean irony. In the context of the content and functions of nostalgia, in her book *Nostalgia: sanctuary of meaning,* Wilson (2014) notes:

> The word 'sanctuary' is a feel-good word to 'Meaning' what life is all about. Nostalgia, in its ability to facilitate continuity of identity, can help to provide a sanctuary of meaning … a place where one feels she knows herself; where identity has safe harbor … Experiencing and expressing nostalgia may help to restore both meaning and identity. (p. 10)

The argument of this subsection is opposed to a view of nostalgia as metaphor for 'sanctuary' or 'harbour' since Wilson's argument apparently metastasises the (1) temporary disjunctions, (2) ontological disconnections between the narrative point of view in the narratogical present and the narrated events and subject/protagonist in the past, and (3) heterotopic dislocations. Advancing the argument that nostalgia is composite - simultaneously continuous and discontinuous, this subsection disallows the closure and stability imputed to notoriously problematic terms like nostalgia and identity. Instead, promoted in this subsection is the third

category [53] taken after the negative and positive affect theories of nostalgia - a mixed affect theory of nostalgia. After defining negative and positive affect theories of nostalgia, Wildschut et al (2006) posit:

Still, a third category of theorists emphasize the affectively mixed or bittersweet nature of nostalgia. Johnson-Laird and Oatley (1989), defined nostalgia as positive emotion with tones of loss. They viewed nostalgia as a complex emotion, characterised by high-level cognitive appraisal and propositional content. In their opinion, nostalgia is a happiness-related emotion, yet, *at the same time* it is thought to invoke sadness because of the realization that some desirable aspects of the past are out of reach (p. 996; emphasis added). The italicized 'at the same time' constitutes simultaneity and compositionality of nostalgia and hence these, altogether, oppose arguments like Wilson's.

The inaugural episode of *Jambanja*, a proleptic episode since its placement before the section entitled Salisbury station April 1959, breaches temporal linearity, gestures to the trigger of Harry's nostalgia. While the inaugural episode registers negative affect the second section at Salisbury is suffused with positive affect since it revolves around the two lovers enjoying their reciprocal vows of love. The negative affect in the inaugural episode is indicated by the allusive configuration of the invaders who are reduced to a 'snake' and a tense atmosphere invoked by the 'menacing' presence of the invaders (p.10). The claim that this episode is a trigger of Harry's nostalgia is consistent with Davis's (1979) postulation that nostalgia occurs in the context of present terrors, displeasures, concerns, and insecurities. It can be argued that the protagonist is, in the face of a life destabilizing episode, 'retrieving nolstagic memories in an attempt to counteract negative affect' (Wildschut et al, 2006: 982). This assertion coincides with the conclusion by Josephson, Singer and Salovey (1996) that the '[autobiographical self] in a sad mood condition who retrieved positive autobiographical memories frequently described this as an attempt at mood repair' (Wildschut, 2006: 982).

Having established the simultaneity, in the examination of nostalgia of negative and positive affect through a trigger that becomes inseparably connected to the positive nostalgic affect, I focus on nostalgia and the social self. Nostalgic recollections in *Jambanja* construct a social

[53] Wildschut et al (2006) note that the third category invariably dismantles oversimplified and oversimplifying binaries.

self, through the narrator's positive tone, which is marked by remarkable social connectedness. These recollections revolve around sports, especially rugby, Harry's wedding, school days, childhood days, wartime and the itinerary he takes across the United Kingdom in a quest of his roots. Harry's nostalgia, is linked to the proneness to nostalgic acts in the elderly: a proneness not restricted only to psychosocial challenges, but also to the demands placed on the autobiographical self by closing temporal horizons and thus rapidly dwindling life options, opportunities and capabilities. Davis (1979) poses that 'in the case of the elderly, their nostalgia, rather than being a transient or episodic response to a problematic life situation, tends to be assimilated into a larger and more continuous process of reminiscence and assessment' (p. 69). The autobiographical acts of reminiscence and assessment find confirmation in Smith and Watson (2019) and Taylor (2002). Taylor's notion that selves undertake an evaluation or revaluation of their acts in orientation to moral and ethical being, elucidates Harry's nostalgic recursions. The positive socio-emotive connection between rugby playing and the self's eudaimonia is early pointed out in the memoir:

> While Harry only had one season of rugby in England, he learnt that rugby is a game that doesn't stop on the field. It is something that is in your heart forever. *The most beautiful memories he had of those days in England were of the spirit that the team and their opponents enjoyed together*. (p. 23; emphasis added)

A reading of the above quotation can be enriched by a concurrent reading of McAdams's notion of the 'integrative self' whose disposition is to be initiated and to initiate others into social groups, for instance sports and other social clubs. The confession that rugby spills into social life off the field and that it resides permanently in the heart connotes passion for the game, a positive emotion that marks nostalgia. By phrasing his 'memories' as 'most beautiful' in conjunction with the harmony between the teams, the narrator configures Harry as a socially connected protagonist. The physical prowess and pleasurable exertion associated with sports, especially a physically demanding sport like rugby, would produce enormous amounts of endorphins in the bodies of the players. Endorphins, as most research in biomedical and sports psychology, has amply shown, are hormones that elevate happiness levels and engender a positive outlook in the individual so involved in sports. Such physical well-being, when nostalgically recollected, will confer happiness and optimism to the self (Kiersten, Cox, & van Enkevort, 2015). Nostalgia is marked by positive emotion triggered by a negative encounter. However, the positive affect seems to predominate in moments of recollection because, as

Davis (1979) proffers, the negative elements, the 'hurts, annoyances, disappointments ... and irritations are filtered forgivingly through an 'it was for the best' (p. 2014) attitude. For instance, the narrator refers, in a tone that renders it innocuous, to seeing 'plaster from someone's injury come floating by' (p. 24) in the communal bath. Nevertheless, strenuous sports' exertions may also lead to serious/permanent physical disability or if not disability, extreme pain that contaminates the well-being or happiness that sport is primed to provide. This is significant in that it evinces human life's structural irony: an irony which, following the theorizations of Rorty (1993), de Man (2012) and Derrida (2006), forbids the apprehension of the positive elements of an act without the negative. This negative affect that is elided by nostalgic recollection is lost in the spatial and temporal distance between the event and the moment of recollection. In a self whose project is to create an integrative adult or model, the focus is on the imagined comfortable and warm ambience created through partaking 'in a communal bath', 'the jokes', 'singing', the 'warm swimming pool water' and the 'sipping of the beer shandies' (p. 24). Such a nostalgic ambience 'makes it difficult to assess the extent to which autobiographical narratives are free of systematic bias, because of selective encoding and /or retrieval (Sedikides et al, 2006:996).

Nostalgia, in addition to being a composite emotion that creates an imagined bonding and connectedness, can also be analysed in the context of childhood and identity construction(s). Here reminiscence is closely tied to nostalgia and this therefore, provides the occasion to distinguish nostalgia from notions of reminiscence, homesickness, and recollection. While nostalgia involves memory to construct the past like reminiscence and recollection, unlike them, it is marked by an emotive valence (Wilson, 2015), a longing for an irretrievable past. Homesickness can be distinguished from nostalgia in that while the former is an ache for returning to a home, a geographical site, the latter is a longing for the past, revolving on certain events or episodes of that past. Distinguishing nostalgia from the other terms is significant in an analysis of Harry's childhood and school days since 'merely to remember the places of our youth' is not similar to 'nostalgia', nor 'does active reminiscence … however happy, benign or tortured its content … necessarily capture the subjective state we associate with nostalgia feeling' (Davis, 1979: 21). To illustrate this: while Harry's 'mind's wondering back to the dusty little place [home] ... a few stores, a police station, the post office' (p. 13), confirms the acts of recollection, his memories about his father and how the latter played his 'banjo' (p.13), constitute nostalgia. Of significance, here is that this nostalgia is a yearning for an origin - the self-striving to locate its source and hence the staking of identity markers and ontological

orientations.

Through Ernie's (dad) music, Harry is located in the Irish tradition of the bards. Nostalgia, in the context of Ernie's music is evinced when the narrator poses: 'Always when he played his last tune, his eyes softened as the memories of his mother and the emerald green land of his birth came back to him' (p. 14) and Harry 'would sit there spellbound' (p. 13). At this point, Harry's nostalgic enterprise is a confession of his Irish heritage, which, through a number of passages in the book is attested by a predilection for parties (conviviality), social connectedness, humour and love. This is also the point at which Derrida's question as to whether one can confess the other or for the other demands attention. By recounting Ernie's music induced nostalgic reveries simultaneously as he (re)constructs his childhood through his own nostalgia when Ernie played his banjo, Harry confesses or avows that Ernie's heritage is Irish and that at the time he played his banjo, he profoundly longed for that heritage and home. Nostalgia for childhood, in Harry's context, is implicated in the generativity of memory that becomes the site and acts by which the past is made present in the present (Derrida, 2012), thereby constituting the dimensions (past, present, future) of temporality as a simultaneity: different from temporal linearity that imagines distance and boundaries between tenses. In confessing Ernie's nostalgia, Harry's natality and childhood serve what Arendt (1984) professes as the site of the revivification of memory, heritage and being in its multiple forms (moral, ontological and spiritual being): the site for the continuity and being but not beingness; for beingness is singular and unreplicatable in its manifestation. To be exact between the site of natality, the spirit that reconstructs by deconstruction, this Irish heritage gets dispersed in Harry who is Irish, Rhodesian and Matabele as he identifies with Matabeleland, the location of Gwanda: the site of one of Harry's multiple homes.

This dispersal of identity and the disavowal of stable sites of home (Bhabha, 2002), is aligned to postmodern acts of refusing totalizing discourses (Hutcheson, 2014) and thus foregrounds the continuity of discontinuities and not the continuity of identity. Harry's nostalgia for his childhood is marked by 'the bittersweet recall of emotional past events. Nostalgia is a type of autobiographical memory' (Mills and Coleman 1994: 11) which is a 'confusing emotion, full of paradoxes. It is painful and yet in the pain there may be a peculiar sweetness defying description' (Howland, 1962: 14). The paradoxes attached to nostalgia in the context of natality and childhood in autobiography are first, the contradiction in what Zora Neale Hurston poses as that ancient human ache to narrate lives despite the narrator being cognizant of the

impossibility of a complete and coherent narrative as argued elsewhere by Eakin (1988), Derrida (2006), de Man (2012) and second, the inherent alterity in the self. This contradiction or what Derrida terms aporia, is constituted by an epistemological void at the imagined origin of the narration. For instance, regarding Harry's father's mental breakdown, the narrator says:

> No one ever told Harry and George what had happened to their father then or even how long he had been hospitalized for ... Most of Harry's memories at that stage of his life were a blur, seeing that he hadn't even started talking when his mother left them. What he could remember, though, was the odd occasion when his Dad came to visit them and then the terrible pain when he left. Harry remembered how they had to prise his screaming body from his father's arms when it came time for him to go back to Ngutshene, [54] and he saw the misery on his father's face and that he was crying too. (p. 31)

This serves to exemplify the paradox of the bittersweet nature of nostalgia and thus as a confirmation of the simultaneity of the ache and pleasure attending the acts of nostalgic work. Some of the critical themes evoked by this quotation, for example the mediation of language and the resident meaninglessness of the human condition implied by Ngutshene shall be examined in detail in the next section. Here it is sufficient to note that since Harry is 'mersmerised' and 'deeply affected by the beauty of the haunting song' (p. 14) on behalf of Ernie, one can confess the other or for the other since Harry's father's nostalgia, though not reducible to Harry's subjective experience, is 'circumfessed' [55] in the protagonist's memoir as a phenomenon conveyed by the father's music whose invocation of the past in relation to distant geographies and culture, is also a convocation of temporal and spatial dimensions whose heterogeneity dismiss stable and coherent narratives. Hence confession is infected by parabasis: it confesses but does not confess.

The third occasion at which nostalgia can be examined is on Harry's schooldays and army training. Nostalgia at this point is a mode of mythologizing the self and Rhodesia as both lost country and home. To illuminate the investigation of this nostalgia one can ground it in the

[54] Ngutshene refers to a mental health institution located in the city of Bulawayo in Zimbabwe.
[55] Circumfession - for Derrida (1993a), life and death co-exist and this is best captured in the short yet strong pronouncement in Circumfession. When one is alive, he or she already lives with death. To live as if one is already dead means to survive not only those who are deceased but also the self.

text: the narrator, in the context of Harry's last day at Allan Wilson Technical School, says:

> At the last assembly at that great school, they sang their final song, and if ever there was a moment of *nostalgia*, it was then, as they all looked around at each other, knowing full well that most of them would *never meet again'.* (p. 178)

This quotation matches the next one by its import and relevance to the investigation of the content, functions and paradox of nostalgia here.

> It seemed like 50 years had passed since Harry and the rest of the rookies caught the train from Salisbury to come to this Godforsaken dump for most them, a feeling of *nostalgia lingered*. It would be their *last day together*'. (p. 20)

Ortony, Clore, and Collins (1988) 'viewed nostalgia as part of the subset of well-being emotions. Specifically, they categorised nostalgia under the distress and loss emotions' (Sedikides et al, 2006: 996). In addition, Hertz (1990) endorsed the view that nostalgia 'involves the wounding realization that some desirable aspect of one's past is irredeemably lost' (Sedikides et al, 2006: 997). As can be adduced from the narrator's words, nostalgia is an emotion that affects one in a moment of the pressing realization of an absence or a void that can never be filled. One can admit the irredeemability of the lost and promptly offer the mode and reason for such irredeemability. The irredeemability which comes through the italicized words 'never meet again' conveys meaning through the prospect of departure and dispersal from the school, which involves spatial and temporal distance. Nevertheless, a close examination of this shows that these spatial and temporal distancing, happen in language; for language tenses and assigns space through its lexical resource, and may not therefore be what is on the ground before language translates experience through narrative. Since language invariably mistranslates experience (errida, 2006; de Man, 2012) and time's tenses have already been proven to be a simultaneity instead of some linear arrangement, what calls for redemption is neither time nor the places, for instance, the school, the training grounds and the battlefield but the affordance in humans to narrate a complete and coherent self.

The nostalgia evinced by these schooldays and army service days draws on momentous events, as in passing out parades at school and in the army, weddings and, in addition, one has to consider that 'the role of sensory input is consistent with findings that tastes and odours can

trigger vivid, affect-laden memories (the Proust phenomenon; Chu & Downes, 2000). Such sensory input is exemplified by music, odours and tastes of meals and drinks. Nostalgic (re)collections, especially those revolving around schooldays, are simultaneously narrated with the negative affect of loneliness and loss [56] as registered by the narrator: '[T]hat evening, already the 30th of August, winter was now well and truly over, and the usual air of optimism that always prevailed in the lowveld was missing' (p. 167). The protagonist, as shown by the narrator, is positioned at sites of momentous events and people, in a mode that inscribes him with epistemological and political competence relative to others who never attended the '*great school*'- Allan Wilson Technical; those who never played for a remarkable rugby club; those who never took part in the liberation war and tacitly, those who were not white. The political competence referred to here does not necessarily concern national politics but also the politics of autobiographical discourses in naming events according to an ineluctable subjectivity: a subjectivity that creates its own truth, myths and legends that may or may not coincide with those created at nation or group level. The first myth created by the narrative is that Allan Wilson Technical is unsurpassably exemplary since it is a monument to the Rhodesian or white community hero Allan Wilson who, according to legend, was ambushed and killed by a Matebele regiment during his mission to capture Lobengula. Mythologies, it must be underscored, are not necessarily false despite their being open to contestations. Through the mythical figure [57] of Allan Wilson, Harry sets out to invent himself as a brave man and a hero, as exemplified by episodes where he singlehandedly confronts angry mobs of his farm workers and invaders. Thus, positive emotions of pride in the work of nostalgia are linked to the '[generation] of positive affect, [the bolstering of] social bonds and the increase in positive self-regard' (Wildschut et al, 2006: 983).

Harry's self-invention can be further explored on the occasions he adopts myths or invents them in the service of the integrative and generative self. For example, the inclusion of Victor or Oupa's story telling prowess is an admission of fabrication as a mode to deal with the world and emergent realities. In the 'leopard story' (p. 34-36) for instance, Oupa, at the end of the dramaturgy, reveals that his story has been a fabrication. Fabrication in *Jambanja*, it can be argued, is intended to produce heroes, in the context of storytelling, and a subversive mode that refuses truth hewn in stone and totalizing discourses. Harry's fabrication and rendition of the

[56] Joan, Harry's wife, at this narrative point has left the farm. Russell and Trevor his Sons are also not at home.
[57] Here I pursue the notion that Harry's historical translation of experience into the narrative mythical figure of Allan Wilson is prejudiced since historical narratives, because of bias, reconfigure historical figures into myths.

'Mkwasine Giant, the man who built the Manjirenji dam with his bare hands' (p. 94), supplies truth as constructed and contextual since the fabula resists the teleology of realist story structurations. Harry, by replicating Oupa's story telling style (dramatizations and fabrications) performs his nostalgia in relation to his childhood. At the end of his story telling, in the absence of his audience, he pays tribute to Oupa by saying 'Oupa, you would have been proud of me' (p. 94). Oupa, as the narrator tells, was a disciplinarian and a model of strong character and morals to Harry the child, therefore, the adult Harry's replication of Oupa's story telling style and strength of character configures Oupa as model and symbol for Harry's imagined masculinity.

This is corroborated by Davis (1979) who posits private nostalgia as a phenomenon emanating from:

> Those symbolic images and allusions from the past which by virtue of their resource in a particular person's biography tend to be more idiosyncratic, individuated, particularistic in their reference: e.g., the memory of a parent's smile. (p. 37)

Harry's performativity of nostalgia in his replication of drama, fabrication and idiosyncrasy in his demand of a drink before story telling, alludes to the symbolic image of Oupa as both accomplished story teller and disciplinarian. This image, nevertheless, is crossed by Oupa's egocentrism which sees him thrown out of the house by an enraged Ernie. Slipping through the contrivances of autobiography, for Oupa's leopard's story is autobiographical, this textual deconstruction reveals the possibility of the imperialism of the story teller or confessor whose ruse is to circumscribe his audience or reader with his version of truth and in the process, impose closure. However, the contrivances in a confession, perform an infinite regress in opening and closing narrative discourse and hence the self is redeemed from confessions that seek to enclose it in social and epistemological entropy. By constructing truths that circumvent the restrictions of conventions, fabrication in story telling coincides with the construction of subjective truth in confessions. This coincidence, consequently, sets a tension between objective and subjective truth which cannot be resolved by the easy entry into the available theorems offered by metanarratives but by recourse to embedded irony in the human condition and the questioning poise, like that of Derrida, which regards truth as 'undecidable' (Derrida, 2006).

At the level of the nation, mythologization assumes secular avowals or confessions of fidelity to a state, that in historical terms, is now irredeemably lost. Like Augustine in *Confessions* confessing his fidelity in an elusive God, in *Jambanja*, the protagonist performs his confessions of trust and pride in his community and country by being involved in the war: as soldier and pilot. The nation he confesses by performativity is 'imagined' (Anderson, 1983) as Augustine's God. It is based on myths that are temporal, whose past is closed but whose future is open. Such myths, it can be asserted, emerge from a group's culture as Hobsbawm (1990) and Gellner (1998) have written. The latter, despite his unquestioning endorsement of homogenizing acts of culture and nationalism, provides the clue that such homogenization occurs through the school and other national institutions, for example the civil service. The passing out parades at both school and army level in *Jambanja* constitute the performativity of the simultaneous canonization and carnivalesque subversion of confession through confession. Harrison's memoir stages the performativity of the Rhodesian nation and by identifying with this performativity, the protagonist confesses his trust and fidelity in it by replicating this performativity at individual or subjective level. Once again, such a performativity of confession is traversed by slippages installed in irony in the way historiographical narratives are interrupted by unorthodoxy episodes. At the passing out parade of the army recruits, 'Number 9 Platoon broke all regulations' (p. 21), as they sang a vulgar song about Hitler and his henchmen's 'balls', despite the solemnity of the occasion and the presence of the prime minister 'Roy Welensky' and the 'legendary Regimental Sergeant Major Jan Erasmus' (p. 20). The vulgar song performs a carnivalesque subversion of not only the artifice in the formation of Rhodesia but also of the Commonwealth since such subversion is done in the presence of Jan Erasmus 'the man rated as the top Commonwealth Regimental Sergeant Major at Queen Elizabeth's coronation in 1952' (p. 20). This slippage coincides with what Foucault analyses as spontaneous confession different from the institutionally [58] coerced confessions made to submit 'to a constant discursive filter of life' and to 'the practice of permanent autobiography' (Foucault, 2002: 45). The eluding of discursive ruses, especially those of authoritarian governments, deflates arguments that attempt to seize the genre of autobiography and freeze it into some predictable and measurable undertaking, a move opposed by Anderson (2008), Derrida (2012), Eakin (2014) and others.

[58] Here Foucault (2002) had the church and secular authorities in mind when referring to institutionally motivated confessions.

Similarly, canonization and carnivalesque subversion of a confessed event is repeated during the '1956 Cadet Camp' (p. 172), during which Sir Godfrey Huggins, the presiding guest speaker, had his speech interrupted as most of cadets who had eaten copious amounts of prunes '[broke] rank and [rushed] to the latrine' (p. 176). The same event is however canonized as the narrator poses: '[t]he pride of all this young nation's [Rhodesia] schools, marching together as one on a crisp cool evening on the dusty parade ground of Inkomo was enough to make anyone proud' (p. 173). The positive intonation of nostalgic affects here are marked by the emotion of pride and the sensory input of the 'crisp cool evening'. In the same context '[t]he night before the passing-out parade the cadets had a gorgeous meal of roast chicken, potatoes, green veggies served with copious amounts of gravy' (p. 174). Here, the tastes of meals alluded to by Wildschut et al (2006) as pointers to positive emotion in nostalgia are exemplified. Yet even this sumptuous or 'gorgeous meal' is underlain by an 'unpredictable' episode - the diarrhea that disrupts Sir Huggins's speech the next day. Hence, despite the self's confessions, the self knows that there is always a possibility that an unpredictable episode will always interrupt a narrative: the canonization of the narrative notwithstanding.

5.3.1. Confessions via the heterodiegetic narrator?: questions of ontology, truth and objectivity

To narrate means to know. This epistemological project that is the enterprise of autobiography, and in this case, confession, involves a narrator who is expected to reveal some secret, to make an avowal or as Foucault has been quoted, to tell the truth about the self. Confessions, since they ultimately seek redemption, exoneration, pardon or the resolution of the self into wholeness as presumed to be constituted by narrative, demands that the confessor knows the truth about oneself. [59] The moment confession is promised or expected, the interlocutor or reader assumes that the confessor shall speak or write from an adequately resourced vantage point. Consequently, the question of the narrator seizes our attention and places certain demands on one: What is the dispositive [60] of the person-narrator? How is this dispositif deployed in explicating or complicating the subject of the narrative? What is the effect of such a deployment [61] and why does such an effect arise? Is it possible to resolve arising

[59] This scenario apparently presents a paradoxically endless enterprise.
[60] Michel Foucault generally uses the term 'dispositif', to refer to the various institutional apparatus and knowledge structures which enhance and maintain the exercise of power within the social body. I use the term to refer to the apparatus/device and or knowledge the narrator uses in his narrative.
[61] Here attention is drawn to how the narrator uses the 'dispositif' in matters of meaning, transformative acts, ideology etc.

complications in the context of such a deployment?

This section argues that the third-person narrator in *Jambanja* provides a space for negotiations on justice, judgement, self-criticism and criticism targeting the Other, exoneration and redemption. This is premised on the third person's haecceity: (a) its impersonal poise that is lauded for being objective and the enormous possibilities for justice and arbitration afforded through its impartiality; (b) its epistemological reach that approximates or matches omniscience/presence and thus enables constant surveillance, monitoring, censuring, arbitration, exoneration or accusation of the self. In this way, the third person in *Jambanja* is compared to the God in Augustine and Rousseau's respective confessions: a God in whom all significations of justice are reposed and thus a reference point for the self's judgement and redemption; (c) following Levinas and Episto, the nonperson haecceity of the third person introduces, in a postmodern mode, the entry of heterogeneity which opposes totalizing discourses.

In third person autobiography, 'the narrating 'I' refers to the narrated 'I' in the third person as he or she. Philip Lejeune characterises this as a situation in which one narrator pretends to be two' (Smith and Watson, 2010:185). While Smith and Watson suggest that the third person interposes narrative distance between the narrator and the narrated subject (and thus the possibility of objectivity), Lejeune's conflation of the author and the pronoun designations he or she, is a dismissal of such suggested distance and therefore a refusal of narratorial objectivity. This subsection examines how the third-person in *Jambanja* is imbricated in the issues of truth, history and objectivity. These issues, it has to be noted, have already been suggested by the first section (5.2.) in connection to nostalgia, a topic that involves memory and recollection. An early engagement with the confession before the confession is necessary. As part of the autobiography's paratext in the preface, Harrison confesses:

> This [autobiography] is a true story and like all stories the storyteller is a part of it too. It is my story, my life but I have told it from the outside. It is a complex and difficult time in Zimbabwe and I had to take a step back from the intensity of it all to give you the fullest and fairest picture that I could, so you could make up your own mind about the justice or injustices done in the name of "land redistribution" ... There were over 4 500 commercial farmers, their workers plus families at the start of the land invasions. 4 500 stories … this is just one of them. (p. 8)

This confession on why he settles on the third person narrator is implicated in a fundamental question of the self's ontology and the alterity that inherently resides in the self, a point Lacan has already exhausted. In its vocation of autobiography, the self, invokes a dilemma and paradox: if the self is to write its life, it has to first contend with either the present self, writing about another past life which is not the present self's life but something inaccessible to this present self or to put on hold or depart from the vocation of writing altogether. The paradoxical aspect comes in at the site where signification as acts within language do not guarantee fidelity to some original event in autobiographical (re)collection acts. In his quest for objectivity, Harrison realizes that it is impossible to confront himself in his project to tell the truth about himself since '[t]here is no such thing as the impossibility of communication except in a single case: between me and myself' (Ionesco, 1968: 74). Unlike the writer in self-conscious fiction, the autobiographer cannot close this gap between himself and the discursive 'I' in a sustained event of writing. This schizophrenia for instance is illustrated in the episode in which Harry has a confrontation with a threatening crowd of the youth Brigade, wherein the third person recedes to allow his interior monologue play, in which his split self stages a debate: He says: '*Are these guys going to get rough or are they just playing? You never can tell. One thing is for sure, show any fear and you are dead Harry boy'* (p. 109; italics in the original to mark interior monologue). Here, Harry contains both the interlocutor and the audience. He is the simultaneity of these and this simultaneity registers an unsealable fissure within the self. On this point, Renza (1980) observes:

> And where spoken discourse minimizes this discontinuity, the ambiguous anonymity of the 'I' in a written work radicalizes it and raises the issue of privacy, the pressure of sheer pastness, as imminently invading the autobiographer's necessary acts of recollection. (p. 276)

Harrison's confession before the confessions is a recognition of the impossible possibility of confession, truth and objectivity. As posited by Renza (1980), that 'to persist in the autobiographical project' in the face of such an inherent ontological schizophrenia, 'the autobiographer must come to terms with a pronominal crux': how to circumvent the sustained deployment for the first person pronoun, his sense of self-reference, without its becoming in the course of writing, something other than strictly his own self-referential sign … a defacto third person pronoun?' (p. 279). Hence, Harrison's first act of confession is to avow his

sincerity in admitting the third person from the beginning. Harrison's avowal and promise to give the 'fullest' and 'fairest' account of events, however, is contestable since the promise of a complete and coherent story to the reader is given simultaneously with the nomination of the reader as interlocutor and judge. This disjunction between promise and the equivocation of that promise constitutes narratorial ambiguity and ambivalence. Fludernik (2009) notes that 'there is *disagreement* among researchers as to whether there is such a thing as an unreliable narrator or 'discordant' third-person heterodiegetic narrator' (p. 162; emphasis added). This disagreement, it can be argued already infects the third-person narrator's status with Derrida's undecidability, already confirmed in deconstruction and poststructurist theory. This undecidability can be illustrated by the way the third person reports on the confession of Harry's terrible lie to Bitros, his Matebele friend and Foreman on the occasion when the latter gets anxious about the dangers posed by the invaders. The narrator says:

> Harry assured Bitros that he knew what he was doing and watched him reluctantly leave again. He felt slightly guilty about lying to such an old friend but told himself that it was close enough to the truth. He *did* know what he was doing … didn't he? (p. 108)

The third-person deploys a reporting mode where: it represents speech and mental acts in direct speech, indirect speech and free indirect speech. The quotation above concerns both indirect speech and free indirect speech: the former begins with 'Harry' and ends at 'again', while the latter occupies the rest of the quote. Free indirect speech 'is a form of speech and thought representation which is characterised by the freedom of its syntax and the presence of deictic and expressive elements' whose task is the 'reflecting [of] the perspective of the original speaker or consciousness being portrayed' (Fludernik, 2009: 154). Here the third-person representation of Harry's thoughts and feelings demonstrate that he is omniscient in the circle of Harry's interiority: the site from whence confession issues. For instance, the admittance of a guilty conscience is accompanied by excusatory acts. Since truth (as correspondence) cannot be measured by proximity but exactitude, a lie cannot be 'close enough to the truth'. The report that Harry 'did know what he was doing' operates by omitting to pointing out that what Harry knew was autobiographical or subjective truth which was of no use to Bitros. The question 'didn't he', betrays equivocation which rests on the unstable view within autobiographical subjectivity. This instability, as noted, arises from the self's inherent schizophrenia. Equivocation refuses to settle issues of truth and objectivity and thus the third person witnesses and endorses this equivocation and at the same time dismisses or postpones the possibility of

confession. What is endorsed is the impossible possibility of confession since one admits that a confession has been made but since (a) the confession is crossed by excusatory acts, following de Man, one can conclude that the intended confession becomes 'self-exoneration excuses' (de Man, 2012: 67); (b) Harrison's writing self is not, according to alterity/schizophrenia theory, the same self that lied, hence if the executive author, who is one who puts the confessions into text before the revisionary and other authors edit it (Bloom, 2002), is the self that did not lie, then confessing the lie becomes an act of perjury.

The questions of justice, arbitration and redemption relentlessly call for attention in the face of the implacable schizophrenia noted above. Derrida, in *Circumfession*, poses the complicating point that confession involves the self-witnessing for itself and that because of its already examined inherent alterity, it is impossible to make confession in the mode proposed or imagined by Berggren and other scholars who recommend a teleology to the acts of confession. The complication is raised the moment one comes to terms with the caveat that witnessing must be by another person for the self. In the case like confession then, Derrida concludes that since one cannot witness for oneself, every event of confession becomes a confession of another. Harry's confessions, therefore, are confessions made for his previous selves or other present selves who are evident in the holding of a debate in their host: confessions done by the writing or speaking self, at the moment that speaking or writing, is done for the other selves within the human as host of lost and present selves. The postponement of settling the paradoxes of confession means the opportunity to allow debate and argumentation, as the debate and argumentation in Harry, is provided and more importantly, protected from epistemological monologues that attempt to rearrange autobiographical truth into a teleology that forbids the spontaneous coming of other modes of existence.

In secular confession, unlike juridical and religious confession, the self that undertakes to confess redeems itself the moment it recounts the wrongs done. Harry does this for example when he gives Alistair, his neighbor, an excruciating and atrocious haircut. The third-person, through mocking irony accuses Harry simultaneously as it excuses him. In the distance set by the third-person between Harry and the reader, the reader can read Harry's culpability at the same time this culpability is dissolved in subjective truth. For example, Harry absolves himself from turning Alistair's head 'into a moonscape seen through a telescope' (p. 49), by accusing the latter for being 'a bit of a wimp' (p. 49), the opposite of the masculine values that Harry valorizes. Once again, this is a case in which the difference between truth and lying is

indeterminate. Alistair asked for 'anyone who could give [him] a haircut' (p.49), but did not qualify whether the person should be experienced or mediocre. Below is an example wherein Harry seeks justice for the wrongs done to him by the invaders and the government in which, in a memorable interior monologue he ruminates:

> *Can I really blame the individual new intruders? What would I have done if I'd been born black? Wouldn't I have had the same attitude, especially having seen the "rich white man," who for all these years had driven around in his fancy cars and lived in nice fancy houses? What about my children, shouldn't they have what the white man has?" After a long war against white rule and the land he possessed, the white man still dominated the land, the mining and the wealth Who, in their right mind, would turn down an offer to become a rich man, especially when there was no cost involved at all? And refusing to take a farm that had been offered, would mean you were a sell-out or worse, an MDC – the Zanu-PF's only real opposition to power.* (p. 104; italics in the original to mark interior monologue)

In this monologue, Harry concedes to the wrong of the material or economic inequalities between Blacks and Whites and to some extent justifies the blacks' envious gaze on white farmers, their anger and desire for redress. He however, at the same time, exonerates and exculpates the whites for any culpability in the state of affairs in which blacks are penurious: large sections of Blacks are impoverished relative to the large sections of affluent whites. Once again, even here, some contradictions do not permit a coherent indictment of the whites of Harry's generation since they were not pioneers in the colonial project that first imposed these inequalities.

But why is the narrator configuring events and character this way? Before answering this question one must have a question before this question. Who and or what is the narrator here? Genette calls a narrator like the one in *Jambanja*, an extradiegetic narrator, meaning he is outside (extra) the story (diegesis). A homodiegetic - the first person narrator, the one Harrison in the paratext avowedly sets aside as inadequate to the task, is both intradiagetic and extradiegetic: he is simultaneously a character and narrator. The extradiegetic narrator, the one Harrison approves, usually, is omniscient/present and because of his noninvolvement is deemed

objective and reliable. However, if Lejeune's postulation [62] is applied to *Jambanja*, then the homodiegetic and heterodiegetic (in this case extradiegetic) narrators are conflated and the unreliability of the homodiegetic narrator, therefore, infects the extradiegetic narrator. This can be exemplified through what Cohn (1978) calls consonant and dissonant representation. The third-person's tone is consonant (empathetic) and ironic (dissonant) at the same time. At this point, however, the task is to analyse the consonant tone. But before that a brief examination of the term focalization becomes necessary since consonance and dissonance revolve around who sees? Focalizor (Genette, Bal, Jahn, 1990) and who speaks? (Genette, 1980). Fludernik (2009) points out that Genette and Bal have shown that the focaliser shows what happens in the narrative and as Nunning (2008) argues, this showing includes what, how and why events happen. Here the narrator and Harry's perspectives coalesce into one view though the voice belongs to the narrator. The third-person, as it fuses its voice with Harry's interior monologue, becomes a device reflecting Harry's interiority, since according to Genette's theory, the extradiegetic/heterodiegetic narrator as the one in *Jambanja,* is a reflector of the protagonist's thoughts and feelings. The consonance in the narrator and Harry's thoughts is exemplified by the narrator's affirmation of which Harry affirms and the narratorial justification or rationalizations of thoughts and acts. In this case, Lejeune's argument gains traction and this compels one to question whether such a narrator [63] can create space for the protagonist's self-evaluation or not.

This question can be answered by referring to passages in the memoir where the third-person deploys irony to criticise Harry. First, there is an ironic friction between what other characters like his wife and children think about him which he comes to know in the instance of alethea. [64] For example, while he stubbornly persists in upholding the values of tenacity and courage in the face of a world that misrecognizes them or dismisses them through posing mortal danger to him, those close to him see no hero. For instance, Joan, his wife, against his stubborn refusal to leave Maioio calls his argument 'rubbish' and screams 'to hell with your pride' (p. 99). In a letter to her sister Doreen, Joan points out the irony that Harry may even be killed by his

[62] Lejeune (1992) postulates that, in the event that an autobiographer deploys a third person as narrator, the narrator and autobiographer constitutes one person pretending to be two.
[63] Here I refer to the one Genette (1980) says, keeps a distance between himself and narrated events.
[64] Heidegger interprets 'alethea' the Greek term for truth, as having the etymological sense of 'dis-closing', 'un-covering', 'dis-covering', 'revealing', that is: 'making manifest that which in some sense lies hidden' (Heidegger, 1927: 56–57; 33). Heidegger (1962) claims this traditional understanding of truth is a derivative from a more fundamental understanding of truth as self manifestation, revelation, disclosure.

stubborn clinging to his values of courage and tenacity and that another one of them is that the family is 'too honest' (p. 150) to clandestinely move goods off the farm and start a new life. Joan's most damning criticism on him is to call him 'dumb' (p.150). Trevor, Harry's son too, is portrayed criticising Harry for his uncalculated tenacity and courage: 'Dad you are crazy … surely you have no say anymore. Why don't you just leave?' (p. 148), he laments. In addition, in passages where the third-person recedes temporarily, Harry's interior monologue or 'psycho-narration' (Cohn, 1984) exposes his shortcomings and confusion despite his sometimes rabid holding onto the farm and misplaced values. In the face of the invasion Harry, in interior monologue says: '*Why didn't you pull your horns in? Do you think you can go out and play your trumpet? Twit! And as for your starting farming again … wake up Harry. So what will you do? … Come on boy … get with it!'* (p. 99; italics in the original to mark interior monologue). The third-person narrator's temporary invisibility here, indicated by absence of reported speech, acts and representation of thoughts, does not imply absence. The third-person recedes so that Harry's thoughts are approached by the reader as unedited and untranslated through the narrator's acts of reportage and commentary. This quotation confirms the inherent alterity within Harry: one person who can have a conversation or dialogue within oneself. Noteworthy is the mocking ironic voice that exposes and undermines Harry's values of 'tenacity and courage'. In this case, the third-person's ruse of invisibility and presence affords some space for approaching objectivity (as it is imagined). But since the interior monologue is punctuated by questions rather than decisions, it can be concluded that the approach is aborted: perhaps because there is no objectivity to the approach. The other implication is that the objectivity in historical narratives, through its imagined coming in the abdication of subjectivity is an impossible possibility: it is always coming but will never arrive.

5.3.2. Confessions of heroic episodes: the ambiguous and ambivalent third person narrator

In accordance with the redemptive self and especially how the narrator shows Harry aligning his self-concept with heroes and disciplinarians like Victor or Oupa, the masculine orphanage matron, Van Zyl and Jan Erasmus as shown in Section 5.2., of this chapter, the third-person narrator evinces both empathy and irony in Harry's invention as hero. While in Section 5.2., the narrator undertook to draw Harry's character as acolyte or disciple of heroes, here the focus is on the ambivalence and irony attached to Harry's self-fashioning as hero. The status of hero is closely associated with Aristotle's theory of tragedy which ascribes an inherent flaw to the

hero: this shall become significant shortly. In his first confrontation with his demonstrating farm workers and covert ZANU PF functionaries or spies on Maioio farm, Harry, as the narrator shows, saves himself by unprecedented martial prowess and the hyponotization of the mob through humour/comedy: parody and pantomime. Section 5.2., has already made this predictable by the conclusion that the ability to create humour or comedy marks a character with versatility, fluidity of cognitive functions and the capabilities of drawing empathy from both spectators and adversaries. This episode, deftly drawn by the narrator as stage for drama - a frenzied mob, a lone white man surrounded by this mob, a tense atmosphere, has the narrator empathizing with the protagonist who is presented as an unjustifiably threatened victim since 'he was laying his head on the block' (p. 78). As in most drama, Harry's sudden martial prowess is a feat that involves surprise and the ability to turn the tide of the event to his orientation: this ability is available as theorized by Aristotle and practised by first Greek tragedy writers like Sophocles (Oedipus answers the syphinx's riddle and stems the tide of the plague) and latter and most notably by Shakespeare, as a mark of the hero. The narrator says:

> He (Harry) rushed forward to the first man in the front row and with all his might he shoulder charged him, knocking him flying onto his back. He grabbed the next guy by the shirt collar and sleeve of his scruffy shirt and hurled him to one side, his fury giving him the strength that not even he knew he possessed. (p. 77)

To be underscored here is, first, the construction of superhuman courage, strength and fury reminiscent of the Homeric hero; second, the absence of the narrator's empathy towards the victims of this violence and third, the empathy shown by the narrator towards the protagonist. Here, either Harry's being invented as hero, has to collapse or comedy has to be merged with tragedy to compose or recompose qualities of the hero. In any case, the composition of Harry's hero status becomes ambiguated and the reader who evaluates this status against the canon of tragedy so far quoted, will become ambivalent in attitude towards Harry and the narrator. This ambivalence can be read in the way the third-person narrator delineates the character and reaction of the mob especially in the first and second confrontations.

The mob in both these confrontations is depicted as infantile, gullible and exceptionally malleable or docile. For example, the mob is faceless - a mere undifferentiated mass that is configured as mesmerized by the zoological imagery that is played out by the protagonist: Harry is portrayed as 'swaying from side to side ducking and weaving like a cobra as he beat

the same constant rhythm and taking little jumps like a cock in the farmyard early in the morning' (p. 78). Since the truth of autobiography is undecidable, to borrow Derrida's term or unverifiable (Olney, Derrida, de Man, Renza, Eakin), it remains an issue of undecidability here whether Harry could '[i]n a matter of seconds ... [change] the mood and tension in the crowd' (p. 78) by the mere spectacle of comic/parodic drum beating, especially if, as the narrator tells the reader shortly before this that '[t]he gang was worked up and in an angry mood, the likes of which Harry had never seen before' (p. 77). By marking Harry with 'the powers to mass hypnotize' and the creation of 'drama' that is 'unbelievable', while the mob is marked by hysteria, to be specific, 'hysterical' laughter, the narrator stages Harry as hero and the mob as infantile and gullible. This unbelievability and gullibility is replayed in the second confrontation (p. 110) in which, in Conradian imagery, the mob of blacks is beguiled by mere digital photo shots, Harry makes of them and as the narrator says, '[t]hey broke into howls of laughter ... jumped around, fell to the ground squealing with delight and came back for another look' (p. 110). In contrast, the protagonist '[b]razenly' manipulates the mob by commanding them to stop marching, to come and have a look at the digital photos and to sit down. Harry's presence collocates with deictic vocabulary (stop *there,* come *here,* 'now sit *down*') that point to him as the centre of attention and power while the mob collocates with irrationality, violence, hysteria and infantilism. According to Buhler (1934), deixis locates the centre of reference from which coordinates of direction and semantics are inferred: in this case Harry creates that centre and embodies it in the process, while the mob is objectified by a deliberate undifferetiation attributed to them and bovine docility.

The height of Harry's invention as hero, or self-glorification is configured when he is eulogised by the Maioio song 'the Maioio lion belongs to us/everybody listen … listen/the Maioio lion, he belongs to us' (p. 79). Significant here is the zoological vocabulary and its discriminate use by the narrator: while the mob is figured as 'a swarm of bees' (dangerous but ignoble), Harry is figured as cobra (lethal and imposing), cock (masculine and authority figure), then lion (majestic). Nevertheless, this invented image of the hero implodes itself the moment one takes into cognisance the fear that like a vicious current, runs beneath Harry's pretended composure. Marking Harry's 'heroic' acts are episodes in which fictionality cannot be indeed distinguished from purported truth. For example, the third-person's representation of Harry's fighting back with 'Mace Pepper spray' (p. 121), and later pretending in the same episode, that he still had Mace in the empty canister, erodes the boundary between truth and fiction: just as that boundary is erased in Oupa's leopard story and Harry's Mkwasine and Manjirenji giant myth. By

depicting White Hat and his compatriots cringing at the empty mace canister, the narrator, through a mocking ironic tone, proves that there is not such a thing that resides and is active between truth and fiction: something beyond both fiction and truth (Eakin, 2008).

5.3.3. Confession as accusation: lacunae in post-invasion autobiographical latitude

Attending to the confessional act is 'the presiding demand to engage with ideas of a transparent culture and a culture that sees a prerogative for expression … free expression … of the self' (Dotcherty, 2012: ix). But immediately one reads this one comes across a paradox: if ideas are transparent then the need to express them ceases to be a prerogative. The demand for transparency becomes an anorexic substitution for truth and this demand is undergirded by the assumption that this transparent revelation prevents 'unjust, unethical or simply unfair behaviour in organizations and individuals. The philosophy of transparency goes hand in hand with a demand for accountability in our decisions and judgements' (Dotcherty, 2012: xi). The second issue is that the act of confession is simultaneously a dissemination or dispersal of the confessor [65] in the text and between text and the reader. Thus, the confessional act is a kenosis of the self and or subject. The paradox is that the writing of a confession asserts selfhood, while the substance of the confession diminishes the subject. Harrison's reflections on the necessity for land reform and justice are crossed by the paradoxes that (a) his confessions are accusations, (b) if his ideas are transparent then there is an instant abrogation of the need for Harrison to express them and (c) that in confessing he in fact abolishes the self the confession is intended to establish.

Paratextual evidence registers the philosophy of transparency in both the foreword and preface. In the foreword of Harrison's book, Saunders poses:

> Some think this book should not have been written, for it tells things as they really frighteningly have been. I disagree. I have always been a keen student of history and I believe that it should be recorded as it has happened, whatever the threat ... the stark facts will remain the same. (p. 3)

[65] This is with regards to the ambiguity, ambivalence and paradoxes inherent in the use of language as already investigated and proven by Derrida, Lacan and others.

The philosophy of transparency emanates from modernity's demand that phenomenon must become surveillable and epistemological projects be stable enough to account for truth. This demand descends, in most cases, to inflexible discourses that seek to assimilate the self and abolish the self's difference in the same instance. Hence Dotcherty's disdain for the demand for transparency and both Foucault and Derrida's exasperation at the demand for confessions by state authorities and the somewhat obsessional desire to confess by modern subjects. The paradox of the desire for transparency is evident in Saunders' demand for transparency. By simultaneously claiming that the book 'tells things as they frighteningly have been' and that 'the stark facts will remain the same' whether things are recorded or not, the demand for transparency is traversed by this paradox that also gestures at the erosion of the legitimacy of the confessional act. The paradox can be phrased as a question: why should one demand a book that merely reproduces the transparent? Harrison's desire for transparency is evident in his promise to tell the 'fullest' and 'fairest truth' (p. 8) and his acerbic conviction that '[t]his government has a case to answer' is a demand for both transparency and accountability: the staple marks of democracy. The claim on truth and narrative completeness is, of course, something that has already been dismissed in the foregoing section. Its significance here is that it leads to the next paradox.

By posing the question: 'Has this Government really done its indigenous people any favours implementing the Land Reform in the manner that it did?' (p. 198), Harry confirms two things, first that he endorses land reform but not the manner in which it have been done, second that he himself is not indigenous. This paradox is that the moment one confesses, in accordance with the transparency philosophy, one ostracizes oneself from the community one confesses. For example, Harrison confesses the factionalism that, like a riptide, has torn the white community into subgroups whose disparate allegiances subvert the theory of a solid homogenous white community that the autobiography endeavours to perform throughout the confession to the post-invasion period. The ostracism derives from the fact that '[o]ne cannot confess oneself and, at the same time, remain a member of the social community' (Dotcherty, 2012: xiii). In commenting on occasions on which the Commercial Farmers' Union (CFU) makes concessions with the government, for example, Harry accuses the CFU of connivance by saying they 'are in bed with the Government' since 'they are still on their farms' (p. 196). There is a slippage between this factionalism and suspicion and the claim that the white community has a single coherent story as seen when Harry poses that during the Jambanja/violence he had 'shared his experiences with friends' and that the support he had

received from them 'had been overwhelming' (p. 197). Harry's realization of the necessity for the land reform is crossed by his persistent belligerence and the impossibility of a common ground for negotiations. By confessing the alleged connivance between the CFU and the government and endorsing Geoff Chapman's claim that the CFU must not 'sup with the devil' (p. 196), Harry forecloses the possibility for dialogue. Paradoxically, by confessing this way, he dislocates himself from both the white and black communities. If by locating himself outside the indigenous group, Harry does not belong to Zimbabwe as indigenous, then he diminishes his identity and subjectivity as noted by Dotcherty, since he paradoxically also confirms the claim by the government and paramilitaries that whites do not belong to Zimbabwe. Of course, one can be entitled to property ownership but entitlement, as discussed in Chapter Four, does not necessarily guarantee belonging.

Harrison's confessions are simultaneously accusations/indictments. By confessing, the modern or postmodern self, 'unsettles the readers' sense of self possession' (Foster, 2012: 4). Harrison invests more time in accusing the government and the CFU instead of proposing solutions as to how the land reform can or could have been undertaken. The accusatory stance in confessional autobiography stems from the confessor's desire that the interlocutor or reader is also a human being who is as fallible as the confessor (Foucault, 1993) and that by confessing the subject's fallibility will evoke the reader's fallibility: hence confession becomes an accusation. This is a different outcome from the aims promised by Harrison: he sets out to tell the whole truth 'fairest' and 'fullest', but he descends into accusations of the government. It must be admitted that his claim that the government is incompetent is true, if for example, they destroyed Kondozi as the protagonist points out. Nevertheless, the accusations restrict other versions of truth since through the confession, like any other confessor, the writer attempts to mount an 'imperialism of the self' (Foster, 2012: 6), over the reader. In the prototype of confession, as assumed, the confessor avows certain truths or values or disowns certain economies of norms and values. The aim, as proposed by Berggren (1975), is that, the confessor exposes some guilt, renounces a past life or self and is absolved or exonerated. But this is opposed by what happens in *Jambanja*. Instead of realizing the complexity of the need for restitution and reconciliation for both whites and blacks, Harry reduces the entire confrontation between white farmers and the government to the greed and political expedience from which black leaders allegedly act. As already noted, the black government is marked by incompetence and corrupt acts but that does not detract one from making the claim that the confrontations on the land reform were and still are attended by complex issues that refuse the simple and

deluding mode of acrimonious binaries.

The argument that Harrison's confessions are accusations take a more riveting turn when one comes across the evidence that in his attempts to accuse the government, he simultaneously accuses himself. In quoting the Biblical James Chapter 5: 1-6 (p. 201), the narrator raises another issue of the undecidable since the judgement in the text applies more to the white community than the rabbles of black invaders across the country. For example the 'rich people' who 'weep and wail' because of 'miseries', whose 'wealth has rotted' and who 'have hoarded wealth in [their] last days' refers more to whites than the invading blacks. If his judgement is targeted at rich government ministers, he ironically includes and implicates the white community in the harsh judgement. This is premised on Hughes' (2013) postulations that whites, until the Jambanja, lived in privilege and disdained or simply ignored, in the main, black people's presence. Confession, then, takes a startlingly different course from that proposed by a teleology of confession within which truth telling about the self, moves from revelation to exoneration or as in modernist expectation: change. This prompts Foster (2012) to say '[a] confession is both a challenge and a temptation to a rational reader ... The confessor is a species of madman, someone whose deviance into [irrationality] suggests the fragility, possibly the illusion, of reason's grasp on knowledge' (p. 5).

5.4. Conclusion

This chapter, subtended by deconstruction, narratology and Foucault's genealogy theories investigated three issues. The first section, concerned with nostalgia and humour in autobiography, analysed these matters' implications for ontology, belonging and identity and concluded that nostalgia functions as both a therapy and delusion. It was argued that while nostalgia is a therapeutic or psychological resource, it permits both discontinuities and continuities between temporal modes in *Jambanja*. Its (re)collection acts, usually toned with positive affect (Davis, 1979) can easily morph into a utopia and that though it acts as an anesthesia that numbs the dehiscent event of trauma, may also occlude possible ways of circumventing the trigger of that nostalgia. Humour was examined and analysed as a resource of versatile, protean and fluid character. It was concluded that humour defuses tension, creates empathy that draws the reader to the protagonist. However, the investigations on humour also led to the view that through its irony, it can be a double-edged sword that criticizes by diminishing the subjectivity of others as shown by superiority theories of humour. Relief

theories of humour, it was examined and concluded, show that humour as in *Jambanja* defuses tension, deflects embarrassment and secures the imagined borders of the self's ontology. The investigation of humour and nostalgia was also a prefiguration of the character and reaction played out during the invasions by Harry. This prefiguration, as it was found out was in the location of the origins of the versatile, prosocial and redemptive Harry.

The second section was concerned with the third-person's modes of reporting on Harry's character, speech and psycho-narration. Having investigated these modes, it was concluded that the third person in *Jambanja* is both consonant (empathetic) and dissonant (critical) (Cohn, 1987), of the character and orientations of Harry. This demonstrated that narratives, when analysed as a deconstructive mode, can yield internal contradictions whose gaps evince the artifice of narrative and the irony that marks human beings' lived condition. In this section, the impossible possibility of confession was discussed and the investigation arrived at the conclusion that the primordial or inherent schizophrenia that troubles the self disallows the possibility of a coherent and stable narrative simultaneously as it allows writing or narration. The third section was concerned with the lacunae in Harry's post-invasion reflections on the necessity of the land reform. In this section, confession, it was found out, can be irrational since the writing self can contradict itself by damning itself on occasions it intends to exonerate itself by damning others. Confession, it was concluded, refuses the teleology proposed by Berggren and others that confession follows a logical trajectory whose culmination is forgiveness, reconciliation or self-coherence. Instead, Derrida's argument that a teleology of confession or forgiveness is meaningless and must remain meaningless, holds the day.

Chapter 6

Biographical productions: problematizing Lamb's epistemes, methods of lives and historical representations in *House of Stone: The True Story of a Family Divided in War Torn Zimbabwe*

6.1. Introduction and theoretical framing

In the investigations and conclusions of the preceding chapter whose sites of study were humour and nostalgia, autobiographical discussions were caught within paradoxes of the third person narrator's construction of a redemptive and generative self in the service of coloniality. An outcome, connected to the present study, of these investigations was that, in the schizoid self that deploys the third person, there is seen both a writing of the self and simultaneously the unstitching of the seams of narrative coherence. This chapter confronts biographical productions as inaugurated and presided over by an external or third person consciousness that compiles data and examines archives in the production of biographies or lives. This brief juxtaposition between the foregoing chapter and this one compels an enumeration of the differences between them. While discussions on *Jambanja* and, specifically, on the third person, examined the striking of the third person poise in autobiography, a site that allows occasions for autobiographical truth, the present concern, since Strachey, [66] at least to mark the beginning of non-commemorative and noneulogistic criticism on biography, is the representation of the lives of observable protagonists whom the author has to approach through the caveats of objectivity, neutrality and inclusivity. Different from *Jambanja's* third person pretence to a third person, Lamb's book presents the author as an individual rived from her subjects of study by an external subjectivity - both in embodiment and consciousness and different and separate ontologies - of presence and epistemes. Another point of departure is Lamb's concern or endeavor to produce a biography of the country concomitantly with the production of lives.

Lamb's biographical project, provokes what Denzin (1997) has called the crisis of representation. This crisis 'involves the assumption that much, if not all, qualitative and

[66] Strachey's biographies are an impertinent homage, an oxymoronic and paradoxical enterprise which bears direct consequences on the characterisation of his eminent Victorians for example. Strachey's biographies reveal his ambivalent attitude to his biographees. He considers them as 'characteristic specimen[s]' but on the other hand they should be 'examined with careful curiosity' and he reminds us that 'human beings are too important to be treated as mere symptoms from the past' (Strachey, 1918: 9–10). In the end, he constantly hovers between portrait and caricature.

biographic writing is a narrative production, structured by a logic that separates writer, text, and subject matter' (Denzin, 1992, 1993, 1997: 4; Richardson 1994). Such a 'text' can be analyzed in terms of its treatment of four paired terms:(a) the real and its representation in the text, (b) the text and the author, (c) lived experience and its textual representations and (d) the subject and his/her intentional meanings. This chapter will pose biography as construction and will examine and criticize the methods deployed by Lamb in her construction of Aquinata or Aqui, Hough and Zimbabwe or, before that Rhodesia. Such examination, as drawn from Denzin, will confront questions of biographee representativity and authenticity and biographer objectivity and neutrality, and veracity. It is an examination that places modernity and its epistemes in the foreground not for promotion but demotion, since effusive advancements of modernity's epistemological foundations have already been shaken under the onslaught of biographical inquiry methods, postmodernism, postcolonial and feminist criticism. The author, as one who possesses an external memory, in fact as one whose subjectivity is an altogether different performance, such a subjectivity and consciousness cannot be privy to the interiority of the Other whose separate embodiment, consciousness and dynamics of culture and epistemes are different.

In this chapter:

> [B]iography will consistently designate the study of the life of an individual, based on the methods of historical scholarship, with the goal of illuminating what is public, explained and interpreted in part from the perspective of the personal. The personal in this respect an important source, but not a determining one. (Renders and de Haan, 2014: 1)

A summary of the dilemmas that trouble biographic production is available in Edel's (1981) disquisitions. The first dilemma concerns the imposition of a logic and order to a fluid and fragmented subjectivity whose mode of existence, as noted in its attributes, defy such logic and order. Put in Edel's phrasing of the problem: it calls attention to bringing logic and shape to the 'record of something that is mercurial and ever flowing, as compact of temperament and emotion as the human spirit' (p. 15). The second revolves on the biographer's attempt, despite this biographer's subjective and singularity distance, to enter into the biographical subject's consciousness. The third dilemma, according to Edel, Walter (2014) notes, is, 'how to encompass all available data, and yet reduce them to manageable, to dimensions that can be

comprehended by a biographer and audience' (Walter, 2014: 47). The fourth, which shares certain aspects with the first, is how the biographer can maintain his/her objectivity and neutrality in face of the demand that the biographer, to be true to the subject's experiences, must be immersed in the subject's life simultaneously as an objective stance is stricken. While this chapter adopts Edel's enumeration of biographical dilemmas, it spurns his psychoanalytic method as solution to them by adopting a poststructurist mode of analysis. By formulating a program that imposes restrictions on how biography must be done, Edel's method is reductive in a field of inquiry and practice whose nature refuses a program.

This chapter questions modernity and whiteness' epistemological foundations and itineraries in relation to biographic compositions. The programmatic, reductive and hegemonic modes of both epistemes are examined in conjunction with coloniality and postcolonialism: applied this way, this chapter interrogates the intersectionality of gender, race, epistemological poises and biography (Radcliffe, 2015). The dilemmas of neutrality, authenticity and objectivity, already noted, are examined in the context of the subterfuge of whiteness' invisibility or neutrality in the shelter of being the norm that remains unmarked while other identities are discussed with reference to such a self-reproducing and reflexive validating norm (Dyer, 2004). Modernity's methods of craft and inquiry are evident in Lamb's chronological structuring of experience and history and the proclivity to fixed classificatory acts in her anthropological delving into Aqui's culture. Whiteness is examined in the context of its interpellation (Althusser, 2002) and discursive formation of Lamb as one whose subjectivity is produced (Foucault, 2003) in the discursive sites of meaning and identity construction. Such interpellation operates within the ruse to reproduce its subjects at the same time its reflexive occlusion of this reproduction remains hidden from the subject.

The reflexive reproductions, occlusions and hegemonic ruses of whiteness are interrogated in conjunction with the ambivalences and re-inscriptions of coloniality that Lamb's book evinces, especially in her feminist project of biographical representation. I will determine whether it 'is desirable or even possible to speak of women as a category of representation without reinforcing the false universal of global sisterhood' (Jones, 2011: 13), in a project in which one of such women postures as one whose representation of a native and marginal woman is endorsed by her self validating ethnographic and historical research. To obviate the simple binaries of male and female categories in the examination of Lamb's feminist project, the author's position in relation to Occidental heteronormativity, will be included to demonstrate

how she is, at the same time, both included and excluded by the hegemony of this heteronormativity (Dyer, 2002). This will be discussed through the Lacanian account of how females are in the orbit of the phallus in which their subversion of that phallus paradoxically serves to corroborate the law of that phallus instead of dismantling it. This idea of the law of the father's reflexive reordering and regeneration is transposed to the occasions when whiteness reflexively reorganises itself by masking its resurgence of monopoly behind projects intimating to recognize the Other: the way Foucault, as Spivak's astute observation has pointed out, engages in a rigorous overhaul of the Western epistemes with the intention to align it with contemporary global issues by recalibrating it. It will examine how even the males in Occidental cultures, despite being poised as paragons of the human norm, are not necessarily (just as in the phallus) in control of whiteness. The position of the author, in which she is both inside and outside Occidental heteronormativity demands an investigation of her project and identity as emanating from the discursive field generated by whiteness and heteronormativity: a discursive space that troubles her as both subaltern (within whiteness) and notched higher than the native men and woman within whiteness' global grading and positioning of humanity. This means her biographical productions extend beyond her external subjects by reflexively inaugurating these productions in the sites of her own epistemes and self-invention: hence the autobiographical enters at this point and extends to that of her subjects.

Lamb's professionalism - objectivity and neutralism and neutralizing acts, as a journalist are interrogated in the context of her disposition to align herself with the Western media. What is questioned is her agenda setting - with regards to the setting up of issues that one suffuse with relevance, and gate keeping - the acts of including and alternatively excluding some issues in the process of determining what issues ascribe to the normativity index set by publishers and editors, especially of media organizations. This will test Zelizer's (1992) rejection of the 'paradigm of professionalization' a move in which he 'identifies journalists as an interpretive community whose authority stems from discursive sources operating both inside and outside the professional sphere' (Shudson and Anderson, 2009: 98). Lamb is located within the journalism profession, operates within the jurisdiction of her profession. This jurisdiction, [67] establishes its own authority and legitimacy (Abbot, 1988) on the occasions it vies for an ascendancy in the face of epistemic contestations. Abbot's observation that professions differ

[67] Here I refer to a jurisdiction that Abbot (1988) suggests that, it establishes its own kind of power, legitimacy, validity and authority. This kind of jurisdiction is examined in the context of Lamb's appropriation of Aqui and Nigel's speech space and archives.

from occupations since they are marked by 'a knowledge system governed by abstractions, a knowledge system that can redefine its problems and tasks, defend them from interlopers, and seize new problems' (Abbot, 1988: 93), is deployed in the investigation of Lamb's threefold positions of whiteness, gender (feminism) and profession.

Drawing on the paragraphs above, the argument of this chapter is that: (i) since Lamb operates within the circuits of and is discursively defined by whiteness, her neutrality or neutralizing acts and objectivity and objectifying acts are compromised by her epistemic, professional and ideological belonging. (ii) despite biographic projects that seek to impose a teleology on biography, the biographee's subjectivity eludes such reductive contrivings. Argument (i) is predicated on, first; Lamb's juxtaposing of global whiteness or coloniality and local patriarchy as both political orders that erect hierarchies which in turn produce inequalities in the distribution of resources, particularly land. This has the effect of minimizing the injustice and inequalities generated by whiteness. Such a minimization rests on a fallacy, or fallacies: the *ad hominem* and the *tu quoque* fallacies. The two are closely connected by the fact that in both cases, the one arguing attacks his interlocutor's person, for instance by pointing out a physical or moral deformity instead of attending to the demands of the interlocutor's argument. The *tu quoque* fallacy, (the you-too fallacy) strongly comes through Lamb's narrative textual suggestion that the natives' demand for an equitable distribution of land is insubstantial since land distribution inequalities existed among and between the natives themselves before the coming of the whites. Second; Lamb's feminist project neutralizes Aqui's agency [68] by appropriating her voice in scenes investigated by Spivak (2004), Talpande (2007) and Mohanty (2008). Third; Lamb can be accused of making hasty generalizations in her biographical productions by assuming that her anthropological gleanings, the result of forays into anthropological archives, [69] can be transposed on Aqui's culture and lived experiences without complications. Before colonialism, indigenous women had allotted to them certain rights and resources (Bourdillion, 1987) and that it could have been colonialism that imposed some of the inequalities that still beseige the post-colony in its post-independence time (Jones, 2011). Such hasty generalizations' effects are exacerbated by Lamb's representation of Aqui's childhood in the absence of a sufficient archive: a feat which both Aquinata and Lamb cannot accomplish since for Aqui (re)constructing her childhood in a complete coherent sense is forbidden by

[68] I refer to Spivak's (2004) investigation on the effect of Western feminism on indigenous women.
[69] Here reference is being made to Lamb's anthropological excavations on Aqui through interviews and written records.

either gaps in memory or the task of reconstruction as an impossibility since re-membering one's childhood is invariably vexed by the reminder that one should confront memories of events, customs and other encounters which one could not have comprehended in that childhood due to immaturity and which, therefore, one cannot recount in the event of the biographical production.

In the shadow of the project of the interpretation and construction of lives in historical biographies a question always lurks: In crafting biographical narratives, does the biographer succeed in constructing a representative or unique subject? A more vexing question calls for attention: Beyond the ruins of metanarratives and into the strobing light of Barthes, Foucault and Bourdieu, is it possible to address a coherent and unified subject before addressing the questions of unicity and representativity? It is impossible to construct a representative subject though its uniqueness is invented by the archival inventorization and interpretation of the subject by the biographer. This is predicated on the narrative discrepancies, gaps, omissions and contradictions inherent in Lamb's construction and interpretation of lives in *House of Stone: The True Story of a Family Divided in War Torn Zimbabwe*. [70]

In Lamb's project is the desire to construct representative subjects in the subjectivities of Aquinata and Hough: Aqui, in this scheme, representing the doubly exploited and oppressed woman on one hand and Hough representing the unjustly dislocated and dispossessed model farmer on the other hand. By undertaking such a project, Lamb gestures to '[a]utobiographical approach in history, as in the social sciences, [that] offers an important addition to the understanding of general developments by providing a way of accessing subjective understanding of experience' (Caine, 2010: 1). This comes in the wake of the disbanding of metanarratives whose habit was or is to silence marginal voices. 'At a time when historians want to stress the need to encompass the many and different historical narratives which could be produced at any one time', allowing marginal voices authorises the contigency and particularity of situations and locations and 'individual lives have' thus 'come to appear' increasingly and significantly to bear on the multiple 'ways in which they can illustrate how differences of wealthy and power, of class and gender and of ethnicity ... have affected

[70] To be referred to as *House of Stone*. There exist similar titles of House of Stone: A Novel by Novuyo Rosa Tshuma and a poem in And Now the Poets Speak an anthology of poems by Mudereri Kadhani and Musaemura Bonus Zirnunya. This existance of similar titles from authors across different geographic spaces tells us much about issues of home, house, nation, (un)belonging, (dis)placement, identity and (dis)location. These are issues that cut across religion, race, gender, sexuality and ethnicity amongst others.

historical experiences and understanding' (Caine, 2010: 2). In addition, the biography's purpose for embedding these subjectivities in the narrative is to cathect with humanity and empathy the itinerary of the said narrative. This embedding demands attention for it provokes an examination of the problems of representativity in *House of Stone* where:

> This is a story then about two people who have lived through all this from a brutal civil war to the elation of becoming the last British colony in Africa to win Independence; the early optimism and international acclaim, with Mugabe even receiving an honorary knighthood; and then the descent into madness. It is a story of two people, from completely different backgrounds, one rich, one poor, one white, one black, it is not about race. Rather it is about power and one violent man trying to save his skin even if he destroys the whole country in the process. (p. xxvii)

This quotation highlights the dilemmatic encounters biography writing and reading has to face: here Bamberg's (2010) problematization of the construction of identity in biography becomes timely. He poses: 'Any claim of identity faces three dilemmas: (i) sameness of sense of self across time in the face of constant change'; (ii) 'uniqueness of the person vis-a-vis others in the face of being the same as everyone else' and (iii) 'the construction of agency as constituted by self (with a self-to-world direction of fit) and world (with a world-to-self direction of fit)' (p. 6). Lamb's production of 'a story ... about two people who have lived through all this' is an invocation of temporal and locational experiences and marks her project with a teleological program. By imposing a limit to two lives and claiming that it is their story (iii), her project is reductive. 'Reducing narratives to what they are about irrevocably reduces identity to be depicted at the representational or referential level of speech activities … disregarding the everyday life activities' which mark 'identities as constructed', 'formed and performed' (Bamberg, 2010: 6). Lamb's reduction of vast swathes of time and differently positioned experiences to two lives generates tension between particularity and homogeneity. [71] Lamb's juxtapositions of Aqui and Nigel's experiences in which she avowedly subtracts the issue of race and her fierce focus on Mugabe's 'madness' - which occludes the injustices emanating from white privilege, exposes her white fragility and betrayal of objectivity and neutrality. 'White fragility' in this context, 'is a generative idea; it is a crucial concept that inspires us to

[71] Lamb articulates in the optimism that such lives will represent their peers and general experience thus juxtaposing particularity and homogeneity or to use another term: infinitude.

think more deeply about how white folk understand their whiteness and react defensively to being called to account for how that whiteness has gone under the radar of race for far too long' (Di Angelo and Dyson, 2018: 14).

The 'sameness of sense of self across time in the face of constant change' once again brings an invocation of Heraclitus' paradox to the fore. While all entities undergo constant change, it is change itself that remains constant and thus rendering identity over time and within geographical locations as flux. The emphasizing of identity as fluid or liquid (Bauman, 2004) accrues significance in the face of the persistence of biographers to write biographies, as in Lamb's case, in which chronology and narrative linearity are deployed to service the demands of a teleology of writing selves whose culmination is to proclaim some purported truth out of reductive acts. Thus, Law and Hughes assert:

> The unified self not only thrives in contemporary biography, along with confidence in the ability of that self to act and to achieve. Postmodern doubts about agency and autonomy have had little impact on the practice of biography. (2000: 3)

This stubborn thriving of a unified self in contemporary biography stems from the illusion that is constructed through embodiment and embodied experience, that the body is a permanent physical location or address on which or to which certain attributes, experiences and stories are postable and attributable. By dissecting personhood into self 1 (uniquity); self 2 (singularity) and self 3 (multiplicity), Harre (2010) dismantles this illusion by dispersing selfhood into locational, nomological and transitory acts: thus, dispensing with the notion of selves as entities or fixed ontological locations. The dismantling of the ontologies of selves in their embodied mode means that Aqui's body undergoes constant change and reconfigurations that prohibit the formation of a permanent and portable entity. For example, the body as contemporary location of selves at the moment of the interviews or conversations between Lamb and Aqui, is not the same configuration as the body of baby Aquinata who at baptism and naming was dropped by accident by the senile Irish clergyman. That body is irretrievably lost and there is a blockade in Aqui's memory that disables any attempt at retrieval since Aqui the adult cannot know that which baby Aqui could not know, and worse still to narrate it. An inventory of the metamorphosis of Aqui's body becomes necessary: Aquinata, (1) the baby open to naming becomes (2) the seven year old who experiences Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence; (3) the pubertescent body that on 'turning into a woman' (p. 44) would foreclose

her dream to become a nurse since it would be shunted into marriage; (4) the body 'sprouting in all directions' (p. 46) that becomes a rapeable body (p. 63); (5) the marriage and adult years when her body is marked by 'a pinched and drawn face' (p. 132) and becomes 'thin and pale' (p. 150). This constant metamorphosis registers that lability is not confined to psychological motilities and refuses the biographer's project of pretending to retrieve a unified and permanent body as a location that confirms the said biographer's crafting of a textual body through language. The project of dismantling the ontology of presence (an ontology perceived as a stumbling block to infinitude) have been done on a rigorous scale by Derrida whose disputations of Western metaphysics (as inaugurated by Socrates) privileges the presence of the speaking subject over the written text. In the present case, Aqui as a speaking subject, embodied in interviews and conversations with the biographer, eludes the containment of structures of identity that Lamb's crafting attempts to accomplish. Harre (2010) postulates:

> Neither Self 1 nor Self 3 are entities. They are attributes of the flow of the person's interaction with the material environment in perception, including that person's own body as part of the umwelt, and with the social environment in social interactions. Perceiving is a common thread in both, since one's social interactors must see and hear how one looks and what one has to say, even, sometimes, showing how one feels. (p. 65)

Dismantling the ontology of fixed embodiment troubles any biographical project that calls forth the presence of the biographee's body as a validating corpus of the truth of a subject's experience and perception of events. As attributes, embodied selves refuse a single address or location and thus the biographer's validation of truth and experience through the infinitude attributable to selves seems to stymie the possibility of the biographical project. This is predicated on the fact that the perceiving and speaking subject embodied as presence constantly morphs into multiple shapes and appearances that forbid an archaivable codification. The perceiving subject, for example, feels through the body and is sometimes betrayed by the body. Feelings are subjective experiences that elude even the subject of the feelings' attempt to reduce them to vocalizations or textual inscriptions and therefore the biographer's project to reconstruct or retrieve such feelings is futile from the beginning. Lamb, for instance, claims that Aqui reports, on an incident when she was three, when the latter's father 'picked her up and threw [her] out of the hut like a ball, so hard that [she] still has the scar' (p. 40). The scar, it can be argued, is both an absence and presence of the pain Aqui imagines at the time of narration but can never be a site of the archeology of the pain since it is impossible even for

the subject who claims to have experienced pain to experience that pain exactly the same way twice. The pain, in its unequivocal refusal not to equivocate is absent because it is irretrievable and present only as imagination and as such the body cannot be a reliable site for an archeology of memories and experiences.

Here archeology [72] is deployed as locating supposed originary sites of meaning and extracting and inscribing meanings on physical bodies or transcribing physical bodies into textual bodies. Even the imagining of the ideal body by the biographee unravels such acts of transcriptions. Aqui, to exemplify, bemoans how her body shape crosses the beauty norm in her culture. By '[longing] to have plump breasts and a pumpkin bottom like Joy's at the Red Cross, something for a man to grab hold of' and 'wishing' her body 'was not so thin, not so straight up and down like a ruler' (p. 21), Aqui evinces the tensions between the body as site of archeology and the infinitude of bodily possibilities that selves can never exhaust in their lifetimes. Aqui's body as a rapeable body transgresses the norm of the sanctity of the body and betrays the biographee by being the object in and on which lust and violence can be written. In recounting or rewriting Aqui's reconstruction of the rape episode, the biographer cannot reproduce the shame that the biographee felt, neither can she retrieve the betrayal Aqui felt as her body, despite being strong at her age, could not prevent the brutal violation. All that the reader has to contend with are signs in the biography's textual body and acts of signification that refer not to any verifiable body outside the text: this returns the reader to the recognition of the Derridean aphorism that no meaning speaks outside the text. The supposed uniquity of the body as an entity dissolves in the body's mutability and pliability. For example, Aqui's mother applies technologies of bodily reconfigurations in the enterprise to construct a ripe and appealing body for Aqui, in preparation for the latter's marriage. By applying makeup and other dermal cosmetics, Aqui confirms the malleability of the body to fit the demands of situations: in this context, her desire to be loved by Lovemore. Constant metamorphosis of the body ensures that selves cannot be reduced to corporeality.

The self is embodied but the embodiment disallows a fixed location of inscriptural address since the body is both portable and mutable. This portability and mutability renders impossible the biographer's project in which there cannot be a biography without the evidence of a body

[72] I use archeology after tracing it to its Greek etymology: *arche* as the originary site and *logy* as the study of this site.

that houses the name of the biographee. The examination of a 'sense of sameness of self across time in the face of constant change' dilemma done here through Bamberg's theorizations emphasizes the discontinuities across time that occur on, in and through the body. Continuities, it can be concluded, are the illusion of sameness that can only be generated through a teleology whose language conflates biographical transcription with complete retrieval of bodies available as sites of metaphysical archeology that is assumed to confirm identity and agency.

6.2. Biographical illusion: Problematising representation of biographee subjectivity through textual crafting in Lamb's book

Lamb's book, because it appropriates autobiographical narrations by Aqui and Nigel (as evident in the italicized embeddiments) in the biographical project, can be read as a rewriting of these framed autobiographical narratives which involves revaluations and translations of biographee subjectivity, archives, events and episodes (Renders and De Haan, 2014). This summons one to confront the following questions (1); how can the biographer, in the wake of the decentered and performed subject (Foucault, Derrida and Butler) and the aphanasis of the author (Barthes after Lacan) be able to reproduce any representativity believed to be an attribute of the biographee?; (2) How can the biographer render in linearity and chronology events, episodes and memories of the biographee after the advent of formidable evidence from postmodern studies (Hutcheon, 2002; Marcus, 2015; Denzin, 1997) and psychology studies which have dispensed with linearity, chronology, coherence and stability or fixities meanings and categories (Bhabha, 2004)? In Lamb's book's contradictions, which the author apparently fails to hide in her bid to invent narrative coherence, disclose aporia between biographee autobiographical narrations and biographical appropriation of these. These aporia, which paralyze the biographer's project of subjectivity (biographee) construction, is evident in collusive acts (between biographee and biographer), collaborative memory acts between the biographee and his/her significant others and ambiguous and ambivalent handling and deployment of facts or event narration between biographee and biographer.

The biographical enterprise in its traditional mode up to the 1970s and 1980s (Rassool, 2010) emphasised the stability of individuality, self-determination, rational choice and the 'autonomous, acting individual' (Rhiel and Suchoff, 1996: 2-4). Underpinning this enterprise was an under theorization of subjectivity which neglected (or which was unaware of) reflexive, 'theoretical and analytical explanations and analytical investigations of subjectivity and the

production of lives' (Rassool, 2010).

Collaborative memory acts in the context of this section are memory acts which involve the biographee's confirmation of certain events or episodes through reference to the memory of significant others, for example parents, friends, former teachers and others. These collaborative memory acts are not confined to events, facts and episodes: they extend to feelings or emotions about such (re)constructed events or episodes. This makes one confront the biographer-subjectivity versus the biographee - subjectivity dilemma or paradox: If subjectivity can only be apprehended by the thinking subject reflexively reordering, interpreting its memories and reorganizing itself according to demands of different and multiply positioned situations, how can one subjectivity apprehend the reflexive project of another? And in the present confrontation of this dilemma, trouble becomes treble: the significant other's reflexive acts are supposedly appropriated by the biographee whose reflexive acts are in turn purportedly appropriated by the biographer whose elusive reflexive acts are supposedly to be put under scrutiny! This, one can say, is the predication of Bourdieu's argument that biographies construct illusions. In *House of Stone* Lamb writes:

> It was only later that Aqui would ponder the circumstances that on the night of her birth in August 1962 had led her parents choosing such a name rather than Precious, Blessing or Joy like her friends, or Chipo, which means Gift, like her mother ... Aquinata was the name she was Christianed by the Irish missionary with the shaky hands who downed her in the bowl of water and let slip ... Father Walter said she was named after a saint who was a man of peace and renounced all things. (p. 7)

By assigning the task of the naming of the subject (biographee) to significant others, the biographer inscribes the biographee with an incomplete reflexive narrative since the subject (not the subject who names) of the naming is always already eluded by events and feelings surrounding their birth which they could not have comprehended at birth, infancy and years leading to puberty. If subjectivity is not innate but built in the ambit of the Law of the father (cultural and psychological symbolization) and the phallus (imbrications of politics and the libidinal) in the biographee's infancy (Freud and Lacan), the biographer's (Lamb) biographical project is marked by incompleteness from the beginning. And the project of writing the biographees (Aqui and Hough) as representative(s) of their respective communities is inscribed with ambiguity, ambivalence and aporia. The naming of Aquinata immerses and removes her

from the collective and its double ruse marks typology and homology (Williams, 2000) as problematic in the project of constructing representativity out of selected subjects from the community. Thus, in 'The uses of biography', Levi postulates:

> At the present time we are in an intermediate phase: more than ever the biography finds itself to be at the centre of historians' attention, but they also clearly stress its ambiguities. In some cases an appeal is made to the irreducibility of individuals and their behaviour to generalized normative systems, in the name of a life as it is experienced; in other cases, by contrast, they are seen as the ideal locus for testing the legitimacy of theoretical hypotheses as against reality and the operation of laws and social rules. (2014: 60)

Aqui's pondering the circumstances of her birth, done via a detour through the mother as collaborator, points to the appropriation of the biographee's retrospective interpretation by the biographer Lamb. If circumstances are to be re-membered then they become subjective in the act of re-membering. In being named Aquinata, after a geographically and temporally distant man unknown in her community, the biographee is removed from the typology of the community in two ways. The first is that Aquinata is either incongruous or a misnomer in a community and country saturated by violence: incongruous because Aquinata means 'peacemaker' in a world that can never make peace. Here references can be made to both racial and gender violence: Lovemore being roasted to death in the kiln by his boss and brutalizing violence on Aqui's mother (p. 39) and Aqui herself (p. 119) by their respective husbands. At both the metaphoric and factual level, the event in which Aqui 'slips' through the shaky hands of the Irish missionary registers the impossibility of securing and containing the named subject as biographee. The biographee as Aqui 'slips' through the biographer's textual containment because she has already slipped through her community's 'general normative systems' as noted in Levi above. The biographee refuses the biographer's bid to turn her into 'an ideal locus for testing the legitimacy of theoretical hypotheses as against reality and the operation of laws and social rules'. Lamb's project to create Aqui as some verifiable and stable location from which the meaning of the nomos of society radiate reinscribes Edel's fixed categories of principles of biography which, in contrast, I depart from. In this departure and the untraceable itineraries of the biographical self is performed the dispersion of subjectivity. This performativity of subjectivity is discussed and elaborated in the context of biography as craft in the next section. Here I proffer subjectivity in its definition as unlocatable, unstable and as one that refuses moorings in theories, like Edel's. This proclivity for theorizations that seek to establish identity

and belonging as stable and unified is opposed by Monk (2007) whose disquisitions on philosophy and biography culminate in the assertion that 'biography is essentially and fundamentally, to its very fingertips, as it were, a nontheoretical exercise' (Monk, 2007: 528). Monk's assertion finds corroboration in the multivocality in the biographee and the biographer's translation of the retrospective (re)construction of the former's past: an exercise performed in the present, that is, the present of narration while supposedly gazing into the past. Multivocality (Barthes, 2006) in this case, emanates from both Aqui and Nigel's (re)collections that lean on the re-membered sayings and feelings of others on historical topics. Multivocality, in this context, is the dispersing vehicle in the decentering of subjectivity. To exemplify, on the biographer's transcription of Aqui's (re)construction of the announcement of the Land Tenure Act by Ian Smith, the biographer poses:

> It was from [the] magic box [the radio] that in 1969, when she was seven, *they* heard the nasal voice of the Prime Minister Ian Douglas Smith announce the land Tenure Act so that the division of land … good to the whites and bad to the blacks … would be fixed for all time. God bless you all, he ended and the elders snorted. Aqui knew from listening to the Seven day drinkers that Ian Smith was a Bad Man and what he said meant there would never be land for her and her children, not in a thousand years, but there were some people fighting this. (p. 15)

This quotation can be read to expose the 'retrospective teleology' deployed by Lamb and to link multivocality to subjectivity as dispersion. Retrospective teleology is 'an order of lived time and narrated time in which the present' in a paradoxical sense 'emerges from the past like the famous flux of time. In the process of being narrated the flux of life seems to be transformed into a flux of necessity' (Brockmeier and Carbaugh, 2001: 253). On this occasion, the necessity being alluded to is the demand of narrative to be endowed with a chronology and temporal linearity in the service of narrative veridicality and verisimilitude. The present, as in the paradox, becomes the past and vice versa because the biographee's autobiographical snippets allotted to the biography by Lamb are generated in the present moment of narration and transcription and therefore the present biographic moment constructs the past it purports to remember or reconstruct. The word 'they' marks the acts of multivocality and therefore the dispersion of biographee subjectivity, thus interdicting a reading of subjectivity registered as locatable and stable, as in Edel's dictums on biography. In appropriating a multivocal commentary on the announcement of the Land Tenure Act and pretending to be doing two

biographical acts by way of reproducing this multivocality and presenting Aqui's voice as a representative of this multivocality, the biographer can be accused of Edel's *reductio absurdum*. Such an accusation in addition to its predication on the absurdity in speaking infinitude through a singularity, also aims at the disparity between the complicated subject of the Land Tenure Act, for a seven year old Aqui and the biographer's supposed comprehension of such issues by such a child. The accusation finds additional augmentation in the compromisation of the source of this multivocality in the possible inebriation within which the beer drinkers are supposed to have made the commentary.

Similarly, the accusation points at another issue that complicates the work of retrospection, translation and transcription in projects of biography: how to verify [73] the beer drinkers' snorts of derision in cognizance of the immaturity of the biographee? Such immaturity and its concomitant inability to decipher certain topics is attested to, a few lines later in the book, when the biographer quotes from Aqui's autobiographical narration: 'Mostly though we were all too busy with the small things of life to think about these matters ... We village children would all gather after supper ... and we would play games like hide and seek' (p. 15). These problems of retrospection, translation and transcription are also confronted in the biographer's assignation of a retrospective teleology to her biographic enterprise in the context of the trenchant announcement of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) by Ian Smith. Lamb's transcription of Aqui reads: 'I didn't know what UDI was but from the way grown ups talked about it I knew it was something bad' and that 'it meant that our people would never have their own country like our brothers had got in Zambia next door' (p. 40). And the biographer's transcribing of Nigel's (re)construction of his mother's opinion on blacks' squandering of their wages reads: 'Mother said they would just fritter it on beer and that he (Nigel's father) should pay the wages to the women to make sure the children got fed, but the munts would not accept that' (p. 32). Once again here are disparities between events claimed to be known or re-membered and the biographical project of recording the biographee's narrative as something subjective. Aqui, it is evident, would have been too young to be able to project any negative consequences of UDI and since this narrative claim attributed to Aqui is prefaced by her ignorance about UDI, it becomes absurd for such a biographee to proceed from this point of ignorance to the point of making truth claims about UDI. The subordination of Nigel's voice to that of his mother disencumbers an understanding of biography of the pretence that Lamb's

[73] A reading of biography after Strachey and Johnson is concerned about the veridicality of facts.

annexation of the biographee's voice observes fidelity to a locatable and verifiable voice. This unlocatability has led Derrida (2008) to conclude that it is preposterous to use biography as reference and Foucault to proclaim that it is spurious and, according to both Barthes and Derrida, that it is a thanatography and hence bears no reference to the living or the ever lived. Bourdieu (1986) deployed the phrase 'the biographical illusion' by which 'he meant that a life story had no direction and thus could not be construed in a chronological order' and '[a]gainst such criticism social constructivists and historians stressed that a human individual had to be conceived as part of the surrounding society' and 'that biography did not represent a life as a continuum, but as a construction of many identities' (Possing, 2016: 7). Instead of construing the human individual by the construction of a retrospective teleology and its attendant inventions of chronology and linearity (a dissemblance of stability and uniquity), biography should be deployed to deconstruct and reconstruct a life (Macey, 2003). This suggests a rupture between traditional biography in which '[t]he relationship of the individual with the social was read either through notions of uniqueness and natural greatness or ... typicality and representativeness' (Rasool, 2015: 27) as espoused by Edel, Freud and Satre. This is contraposed to contemporary biography that stress the unrepresentativity of subjectivity.

Ambiguous intersections between the biographer and biographee in the moment of the narrative present by the biographee creates an intersection of ambiguous interpretations. Intersecting here is both willful and inadvertent. It is both a misreading and reading of the other by reference to a shared implicit text: a reading that privileges coincidence between biographee and biographer over divergence. That the text is implicit makes this intersecting different from the collusion between interlocutor and interviewee discussed in investigations on Roger's autobiography in Chapter Three, in which an explicit text of convergence was found to be exorbitant. This ambiguous intersecting is evident in what this section suggests as the biographer's anthropological and ethnographic forays in her attempt to interpret Shona culture and cosmology. After sketching her (re)construction of her version of a Shona village complete with lurking mambas in the foliage, the biographee's siblings buried in the river bank, the thatched rondevals and the nganga's place, the biographer says Aqui was 'proud that her parents were very clever and, unlike most of the villagers, did not believe in ghosts or tokoloshies that could possess you, poison your food or bewitch your enemies, but that did not stop her quickening her step as she passed by' [the nganga or witchdoctor's place] (p. 4). Here the biographer poses Aqui's attitude towards her parents' cosmological stance on tokoloshies, but her subjective position with reference to these tokoloshies is left in abeyance. This

ambiguity can be explained as emanating from the performativity and situatedness of every conversation or dialogue in which biographee and biographer iterate the expected norms and roles in every dialogical context. Every dialogue context is new and its difference demands the refashioning of these norms and roles and:

> Consequently, narrating in interaction is not necessarily bound by previously held positions, or beliefs, (though it may), but is open to negotiation. As such the actual theme or content of what is being told is dependent on the interactive situation in which narrating takes place. (Bamberg, 2014: 15)

Aqui's performativity of the subject of study by the biographer and as the Subject of her autobiographical narrations invents spaces in which on one hand, she submits to the expectation by the biographer that as a native, she must be superstitious and fearful of malevolent spirits (tokoloshies) while on the other hand, she is made to seem to scathingly disparage such fear since she is in the presence of a white woman: a supposed embodiment of enlightenment thinking [74] that is expected to transcend such superstition. These interactions, as noted in Bamberg, Kratz proffers, reflect 'shifts of form and tone' the reflexivity of participants which enables interruptions (self and other) and revisions and the negotiations over 'topic, form and turn taking'. In these processes of negotiations, the life history is 'contextualized' in diverse ways, thus interdicting 'later extraction, rearrangement, and re-presentation' (Kratz, 2015: 136-138) of the biographee. By not bridging this equivocation by the biographee between pride in her parents' dismissal of tokoloshies and the fear of these tokoloshies, the biographer establishes Aqui's family deviance or rebellion from the norm and leaves the question of the biographer's fear unaccounted for. The implication of this rebellion is that, Aqui and her parents' belonging, is suspect since, against immersion in local cosmology and some components of culture, they exile themselves through this rebellion. In a corroborative stance, Loriga (2015) in turning Wilhelm Dilthey's beam of philosophical reflection on biography and history asserts that 'the historic world cannot be understood in terms of belonging, and even less in terms of ownership or assimilation'. This deviance means '[an] individual cannot explain a group, a community or an institution, and vice versa ... There is always a disparity, and this is inexhaustible' (Loriga, 2015: 91). Thus, ambiguous intersections between biographer and biographee register not the successful capture of the subjectivity of the later but

[74] To be noted here is the Christianizing Catholicism to which Aqui subscribes.

the unsuccessful attempt to construct narrative coherence by the biographer.

Different from (but related in reductive attitudes) behaviourist epistemes is the cognitive episteme whose application to biography recognizes a bulwark of the subscription to an individual's inner core as essential a matrix of the supposed stable and continuous personhood or subjectivity of the biographee. Germane to this is Edel's argument that the continuity-discontinuity dilemma or paradox in biography can be bridged by the 'judicious use of psychoanalytic theory, and the acknowledgement that the successful biographer must be an artist' (Walter, 2014: 67). Such theory would achieve an archeology of biographee life mythologies: he postulates: 'A writer of lives must extract individuals from their chaos yet create the illusion that they are in the midst of life' (Edel, 1981: 15). Since Edel argues for the possibility of an archeology or extraction of selves (for individuals are a multiplicity and multivocality) he is convinced - against the theory of lives as performativity, that, biographee selves are locatable and can be read as transparent texts. His advocation for 'learn[ing] to understand mans' ways of dreaming, thinking and using his fancy' (Edel, 1980) draws one into nebulous terrain: the view of this section is that the human unconscious as charted by both Freud and Lacan, despite Freud's attempt to formulate a standardized and standardizing theory on reading the unconscious, is fraught with phenomena that disallow fixities of taxonomies whose aim is a narrative teleology. In this context, can be discussed Lamb's inclusion of Aqui's dreams, the ambiguity of guilt in her oscillation between her fidelity to and betrayal of her master and imaginations.

Adopting Tredgell, one would be guided by knowing that it is not the 'verifiable facts which are of interest and value in a biography: what is of interest are the ways in which biographers interpret the facts, the significance which they attribute to them' (Tredgell, 2004: 26). In her appropriation of narratives on and by Aqui, Lamb is unsuccessful in her biographic project to construct a continuous Aqui. Illustrating this assertion is the Lion-leopard dream (p. 172-173) whose opacity prohibits a transparent and meaningful reading of the biographee's psyche since it proffers no decipherable signposts to a locatable and essential subconscious substratum that constitutes subjectivity as proclaimed by Freud, Satre and Edel. On the significance of situating biography in psychoanalysis, Freud, in his psychoanalytic delineations of Leonardo da Vinci (through da Vinci's cradle dream), poses with confidence: 'The domain of biography, too, must be ours. The riddle of Leonardo da Vinci's character has suddenly become transparent to me. That, then, would be the first step in biography' (Freud, 1988: 268). Affirmed in Freud's choice

of vocabulary is the conviction that the subconscious substratum (if at all it is a substratum) can be read as a transparent text that elucidates the biographee's identity and belonging by providing the requisite codable and decodable signs. Applying such psychoanalytic readings to Aqui's dream becomes an exercise in the invention of the supposed codable and decodable signs, thus a venture into fiction (Monk, 2015), an exercise that flies in the face of poststructurist language and meaning theories whose conclusions have dissolved sites of the *arche:* originary locations of belonging and identity.

In oscillating between fidelity to her master and betraying him, Aqui evinces the impossibility of a trackable subjectivity. In its bearing on the inscrutable ruses of subjectivity, the passage wherein this vacillation occurs is irrecusable to the aim of this section. Here one has to turn to the text to illustrate the antinomies written in subjectivity: there is an unbridgeable gap between Aqui's avowal to keep her fidelity intact on one hand and a transgression of that avowal. The biographer transcribes her vacillation when she poses the biographee as saying:

> Then I thought if I joined them, perhaps I could protect the Houghs so the war vets didn't kill them and also save some of their things. I felt bad for boss Nigel because I could see what he thought of me when I was shouting Death to whites and all those things. But I had to be more enthusiastic than the other war vets so they wouldn't suspect me. (p. 255-256)

And:

> Why shouldn't I have it [Kendor Farm] rather than Netsai? I had worked for the party all those years whereas these people had come nowhere. I had signed the list requesting a farm ... It was nobody's fault; that was just how things were. Whites might lose their farms but they got on a plane to start a new life some other place ... My dreams hadn't come true. Maybe this was a way my children's could come true. (p. 261)

In the reading of these two contrasting quotations whose issuing from one individual fissures the coming and thus obliterates singularity and uniquity, one can draw on Erving Goffman's dramaturgical theory in which individuals are perceived as performers, audience members and outsiders that operate within particular stages and social spaces. Goffman (1982) poses that how one presents one's selves is aimed towards impression management and this is done

through the ruse of disclosing and concealing selected facts or aspects of an individual's motives for example as in Aqui's case. The biographer, by enveloping Aqui in ambiguity as vacillator, inadvertently exposes her textual desire to simultaneously construct an Aqui whose agency has not been annihilated by the double oppression/repression at both gender and race levels and an Aqui who still sublates her subjectivity to the moralizing universal nomos. If, as the biographer's investing of agency in Aqui is to be effectuated, then she has to come through as a sovereign individual who can devise means of escape from the restrictions of the moralizing universal nomos, since agency, in the end, drives one towards insurrection against the community or civilizations' nomos which subscribes to hierarchies and binaries: sites of violence (Derrida, 2012). The devices the biographer equips her with are dissemblance and lying and according to Goffman, these are 'contrivances' by which one confronts a situation and is motivated to construct 'a definition of the situation' (Goffman, 1982: 2), that is projected before the other war vets. Thus, by shouting more enthusiastically than the other war vets, Aqui performs herself as a 'responsible representative of [her] colleague grouping' (Goffman, 1982: 3), the war veterans. [75] The biographer, it must be noted, by contriving to represent a representative Aqui who is goaded into a ploy to seize her master's farm, suggests an accentuation of moral depravity as emanating from the Mugabe government. And by devising to represent an Aqui who rebels against both the war vets and her masters, the biographer suggests the possibility of Aqui's agency overthrowing all conflicting communities' nomos and thus the biographee is exiled from belonging: both as identity and ontology.

To improve on Goffman's theorization: what remains is the biographee's belonging by performativity: the construction by the subject of authority by that subject's anticipating that authority. Drawn from Kafka's parable 'Before the Law' and read through Derrida and Butler, this means one constitutes meaning in situations by anticipating such meanings. This is significant here because it shows that there exists no hidden Aqui, as in Freud, Satre and Edel's postulates, nor a pre-situation or rehearsed Aqui as in Goffman's case. The Aqui that is performed is a constant becoming by its fleeting between anticipating the Law - meanings of multipositionalities: the community of war vets, whites and her singular experience of encounters and the arrival at or of that meaning by attributing authority to these meanings. In this context of the rewriting of identity and belonging as performativity, one has to abandon

[75] This is so, since in the situation of the invasion of Kendor farm Aqui is staged as reinventing herself as a war veteran.

Rassool's postulation that biography 'obscures' or erases 'subjectivities' (Rassool, 2010: 40), since no subjectivity is available for such a palimpsest: one cannot represent flux and in turn, the flux cannot represent a community or civilization (Dilthey, 1990).

Whereas through Aqui the biographer proposes, or argues if one is persuaded to take biography as 'argument' as Tredgell (2003: 26) does, against Monk's admonition to take biography as argument, that Aqui be constructed through the appropriation of stories, events and episodes revolving on her, as a female figure that circumvents social and political hurdles by contrivance and guile. An examination of the biographer's representation of Nigel offers no continuity of subjectivity and hence no basis for supposing that Nigel could be a representative of his time and community. This in no way registers the absence of the biographer's attempt to use stories by Nigel, about Nigel and Nigel's private archive to construct a tellable privileged white male. To exemplify, there is a contrived biographical continuity between Nigel's acceptance of stereotypical representations of blacks in 1976, when he was fourteen and in 2002 when he was 42 years old. With reference to 1976, the biographer transcribes Nigel as retrospectively saying: 'I thought in wars against blacks the white man always won and definitely thought the black man was a coward and whites better at planning and strategizing' (p. 83) and then in 2003, according to the chronology imposed by the biographer and framed within the biographer's emphasis on Nigel's negative attitude on black MDC party members:

> I thought they were vision-less and lazy. If we white guys didn't do things for them it didn't get done. All the money was raised by us and we organized all the logistics. They said they were afraid of provoking a bloodbath ... I had never seen Morgan as the answer to Zimbabwe; the problem was there just wasn't anyone else. (p. 246)

Shared and thus repeated in the two quotations is the lack of an enterprising and pioneering drive that supposedly marks the blacks. In allotting these narrative snippets by Nigel to different temporal modes in the narrative chronology, Lamb constructs narrative continuity and thus identity continuity. By deploying Nigel's stories in this way, the biographer constructs the biographee as a representative of the privileged white males who should stand accused of a lack of versatility that should have enabled an anticipation of such land appropriation as faced by whites. Such versatility, Lamb suggests, ought to have alerted the privileged whites to the necessary reforms or adjustments that the white community should have taken to prevent seizures of property owned by whites: retributive seizures that had happened in Mozambique

and other African countries. In avoiding accusing Nigel and his kind for such past injustices, the biographer's handling of the biographee's archive and transcribed narratives proposes that Nigel's generation can only be held accountable for failure to secure their properties but not to atone for inherited guilt. Even if atonement was to be broached, Nigel and his kind ought to have planned of possible land arrogation through gestures of concessions and collaboration with black communities. Nigel's image as model farmer, it must be noted, instead of retrenching economic inequalities between blacks and whites, entrenched white privilege through the patronage order established by most white farmers on their farms: an order that resourced the white farmer to provide a clinic, school and other amenities ostensibly for the benefit of blacks (Hughes, 2012).

In contrast to the chronology and stable identity advocated by Lamb's (re)arrangements of biography stories, it can be posed that even through this crafting of Nigel's character as representative or typical of his supposed kind, no stable and unified biographee is successfully constructed. Here one can turn to how Lamb treats Nigel's stories on the secret he kept on Moonie's gang's senseless or psychopathic bombing of vulnerable and innocent blacks. By re-presenting one version of Nigel who condemns such wanton violence, including the way 'one of the guys' in his father's stick 'tore off [an] old man's moustache, ripping away the skin' (p. 88) and another that is marked by an exorbitant gravitation to the glory of war and the readiness to 'shoot' a 'black guy' and thereby 'become' instantly 'a hero' (p. 85), the biographer installs ambivalence in the reading of such a schizoid character. In reckoning with Lamb's feminist biographic project, one is not surprised to note such ambivalence, since the biographer in connection to masculinities, especially the violent ones, evinces some sort of a harassing of such masculinities through a disruption of their narratives. For example, her subversive rewriting of Allan Wilson's campaign and last stand, invariably touted as the height of Rhodesian heroism, reduces it to some quixotic but malevolent blundering: 'The deaths of the 34 men were probably caused by a reckless blunder during Jameson's barbaric war on the Ndebele in 1893' (p. 68). The biographer reflexively rewrites Allan Wilson's history by rereading the rewriting of the history of the natives by the White Pioneers. Nevertheless, her manipulation of biographee material often let's slip certain issues that guarantee the impossibility of a foreclosure of errant subjectivities that interdict total evaluations of character, events and experience. This biographical project is one which is primed to appease the summons of a teleology, in fact, all biography is vexed by ambiguity, unpredictability and aporia. On this point Levi posits:

> Biography has continued to develop, but in an evermore controversial and problematic way, while in the background unresolved and ambiguous aspects continue to exist which seem to me to constitute, today, one of the privileged loci of confrontation in the landscape of historiography. (2015: 66)

And Loriga asserts:

> The first utopia is that of biographical representativeness: it promises to discover a point that encapsulates all the qualities of the whole. The historian should work in two times: first to find the representative individual (normal peasant, normal woman, etc.), then to extend the qualities of the representative individual to a whole category (the class of peasants, the female gender and so on) through an inductive process. The second [is to assume that the collective can represent the singular]. (2015: 90)

Quoting such postulates first; reregisters in the reader, biography as 'messy texts' (Marcus, 1994: 547) and a call by Denzin (1994) to approach biography as a reflexive project that outlaws pretence of chronology, linearity and the supposed uniquity of the biographee and biographer. Second; it imprints a Janus facedness of summary of the foregoing sections and promises of problems in biography to be investigated in the next section. Biography has been examined and found to introduce or inaugurate problems in that the project to represent civilizations, communities and groups is reductive: it becomes total and on reading and writing the elusiveness of subjectivity, pretends to mummify the biographee within temporal and geographic sites of identity and belonging. In the next section, the resources (incompleteness, irreducibility, of experience and reflexivity) of biography shall be used to question Lamb's approach to whiteness, colonial and postcolonial historiographies and feminism. I problematize issues of the biographer's handling of neutrality and objectivity.

6.3.0. Biography and the archive: Questions about voice in biography

If the foregoing section has exhausted (within the parameters of the present chapter) the questions on the fraught relationship between biographee subjectivity and representativity, concluding that representativity is an illusion (Bourdieu, 2000) or a utopia (Loriga, 2014), the present section puts into question the biographer's objectivity. Objectivity is the ethos, in

Occidental knowledge systems that, authorizes the construction of validity, truth, legitimation of text and the archive and researcher/biographer neutrality. Following on this, therefore, this section investigates how Lamb, within the Occidental archive handles this archive and how inversely, the archive handles her in her biographical project on Aqui, Nigel and Zimbabwe. Occidental deployments of objectivity make invisible the political and epistemic enterprise behind this objectivity and thus pretends to invest value in neutrality, authenticity and acts of textual and archival legitimation. This is premised on; (i) Lamb's juxtaposition between reductive acts of global whiteness or coloniality (Quijano and Mignolo, 2011) and local patriarchy, with the result that both are inscribed as equally reductive and thus this inscription subtracting from native claims the juridical and moral authority that justifies the repudiation of colonial and postcolonial inequalities in resource (re)distribution, especially land; (ii) under the guise of objectivity, Lamb pretends to reproduce Aqui's voice and Nigel's voice: this pretence, however, becomes a palimpsest on these biographee voices, thus centering the biographer's voice instead of the biographees' voices; (iii) Lamb's is guilty of a third fallacy: the fallacy of *hasty generalizations*. [76] It shall be argued that she erroneously assumes that all subaltern female subjects are equally oppressed and that this female subject, like the western female subject, can be approached and classified by and through the Western episteme(s). [77]

6.3.1. Biography and the problem of biographer (in)authenticity

In paraphrasing Backscheider, Caine (2010) stresses the point 'that the attitudes of biographers towards the evidence they have to work with is as psychologically revealing about *them* as it is about their subjects' (Caine, 2010: 90). Noting the complicity of the biographer or researcher in ethnographic research in the epistemes and methodology that constrain the biographer, Davies has called for 'reflexivity in the sense that studies of others must also be studies of ourselves in our relationship with those others' (Davies, 2002: 12). These quotations authorise an investigation of the epistemes and methods that shape a biographer's project. In Lamb's case, whiteness and enlightenment methods inform her project simultaneously as they obscure the subject of research. While the foregoing subsection focused on Lamb's abandonment of objectivity, the present section argues that since the indeterminate position of Lamb as a subject

[76] This follows the discussion of the *fallacy of representativity* discussed in the preceding section and the ad hominem or in its alternative form, the *tu quoque* fallacy.
[77] This is despite the subaltern black female subject's different positionalities in geographical epistemic and cultural locations.

who supposedly belongs to white privilege or enjoys the dividends of white privilege simultaneously as she is routinely reminded that she is excluded from whiteness' heteronomativity's complete height by gender or sex (Dyer, 2014), her speaking position as author is compromised by inauthenticity, with the result that her neutrality becomes questionable.

Lamb, in the summons of reflexivity, is expected to turn the process of research into her biographees upon herself and be critical of 'the research process as one in which the researcher and reciprocators are engaged in co-constructing a world' (Steier, 1991). For example, the biographer could reflexively examine Aqui and Nigel's respective views on whiteness, race, white privilege and black disprivilege and how she is implicated in the construction of these views. On commenting on the relationship between whites and blacks in the colonial period Aqui says:

> Whites didn't often venture into Native Reserves. The only white people I had ever seen were Father Walter, the Irish Missionary at church, and the white policeman. It was very important in those days for a white person to talk to you, you would be so happy. But most of them didn't ... All I knew was that our skins were different and that being white somehow gave you a special power. (p. 17)

Nigel, as if to complement Aqui's view, is quoted as saying: 'I knew nothing about how Black's lives' and that Blacks were a mere 'supporting cast' (p. 57). Of significance here is a quotation that shows the biographer and biographee co-construction of a world. Nigel is quoted:

> Growing up in Rhodesia it was so easy to be drawn into generalizations. When you have all these incidents at the farm, endless theft and betrayal by servants, you have one or two ways of going. You can either, rationalize and say, "Well, that would happen with any race", or say "No, they are just an inferior breed and what do you expect". (p. 51)

In assigning being white to a position of superiority and authority, Aqui's reading of race relations, white privilege and Black disprivilege ultimately indicates that to survive, one had either to overtly stage a rebellion like Mugabe and his compatriots did or covertly align one's priorities by paying close attention to the master's script. Bhabha's (2004) theorizations on hybridity in the labour to dislodge theories like Spivak's, that cast suspicion on the audibility

of the doubly muted female subject, become significant. If by the time that Lamb has interviews or conversations with Aqui, the biographee already refused an essentialized and essentializing reading, then Lamb would not have attempted to fixate her in traceable and locatable anthropological niches as she does by attaching ancestor worship and gender role assignations to a self that has already eluded these. To paraphrase Bhabha, Aqui can be best approached through her mimicry of the white world, a mimicry whose betrayal of the master's script invents a third space of being: always liminal and interstitial. However, Lamb, as one who paradoxically belongs and does not belong to whiteness, fails to engage with this hybridity by not reading closely into the hybrid reading of history and events by Aqui. The implication is that her neutrality as researcher is compromised since she misses the way Aqui comes close to comply with her reading of the biographer's view while simultaneously refusing to be reduced to cultural or anthropological fixities. In Nigel's case, Lamb ought to have observed that Nigel, in the presence of an international journalist from the West, would modify his views on race with the intention to stage a rational white, one who is aware of multiculturalism and the democratic ethos. In this context, Davies' intervention becomes relevant:

> If we argue that the activities and texts of our informants are really not expressing their obvious surface message but an underlying one about the nature of their society, then in a reflexive displacement of this analysis, we may question the researcher's activities in producing a text about these others. (Davies, 2002: 8)

In re-presenting Nigel as one aware of multiculturalism as Lamb does is a way of avoiding the disparity between white privilege and black disprivilege. According to Mahoney, 'white use of the term "race" is based on definitions of the other which imply a normal, neutral, objective, culture-less stance towards whiteness' (Mahoney, 1997: 305). This implies that Nigel's stance on race cannot be deployed in the construction of a narrative like a biography whose expected accomplishments include some weight of veracity if the boundary between the novelistic and biographic genres is to be maintained. The trouble with the whiteness within which both Nigel and Lamb operate is that it is an episteme that erases the moral and ideological consequences of those who are subjected to it in a discursive mode, as Foucault postulates about formations of enunciatory positions in discourses. Its sleight of hand disposition means it becomes invisible to those inscribed by it (Dyer, 2012; Mahoney 1997; Mills 1997; Wise 2014). McIntosh poses:

> I have come to view white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets, which I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was 'meant' to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless backpack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools and blank checks. (2011: 96)

This habitual inability or difficulty in tracing the evasive motions of whiteness by most whites puts into question the authenticity of the biographer in question by exposing Lamb's inability to complete an adequate questioning of her own motives as author since a substantial component of herself is unreadable after the effacement by whiteness. McIntosh's view on white privilege can be deployed to explain how Nigel is privileged and how Lamb who vows that the land repossessions are not interlocked with the question of race, is blind to the effacing activities of her whiteness. Thus, she fails to offer the reader a critical reading of the land appropriations in Zimbabwe. McIntosh's point can also be used to explain how Aqui who is outside whiteness can have a pellucid view on how whites like Mr Loos a white commercial farmer (p. 147) and the Houghs can find it easy to begin life afresh elsewhere in the event of being dispossessed and dislocated, while the whites like Nigel fail to see that their inherited white privilege excludes the Other by refusing the other access to that privilege.

Linked to this self-effacing and self-regenerating whiteness is the question of the archive to which Lamb refers to in her (re)constructions of her biographees. Derrida delineates an archive as the site (physical, historical, ontological) where 'authority, commands and social order are exercised, [it] is this place from which order is given … the nomological principle' (Derrida, 1996: 2), and at 'the intersection of the topological and nomological, of the place and the law, of the substrate and the authority, a scene of domiciliation becomes at once visible and invisible' (Derrida 1996: 3). Derrida's postulations confirm the formation of the invisibility of whiteness as norm, universal norm. The domiciliation here refers to discursive events similar to those theorized by Foucault in which the subject of discursive formations is so defined by the moves of such discursive activities without the promise of a unified and locatable self being available for easy inspection. This means Lamb cannot, as a whiteness subject, interpret in a coherent and complete sense her own location in this episteme. The next subsection investigates the problem of biographer objectivity on the background of these foregoing discussions on whiteness and the archive.

6.3.2. Biography as palimpsest

'The new approach to biography' which had been synonymous with the rise of new interpretations of history since the 1970s, has accepted as its vocation the inclusion into the archives of the experiences of marginal women, muted ethnic groups and all positions of gender, (dis)ablism, ageism, and race excluded by Western heteronomativity. All these interpretations of experiences

> share a concern to explore the activities, the experiences and historical agency of groups with relatively little political and economic power or social status and to locate and listen to the voices of those who had been silenced in earlier historical writing. (Caine, 2010: 90)

Lamb's biographical project is to give voice to Aqui and Nigel by exploring their experiences of the colonial and post-independence periods. This places biography as writing that can protest against the exclusions (de Haan and Renders, 2014) of both coloniality and patriotic historiography: the latter which was constructed after Zimbabwe's independence by ZANU PF to consolidate and legitimate its authority (Ranger, 2014). In admitting that Aqui needs space in which to speak, one is confronted with the questions of how and where she has to speak? These questions in turn question Lamb's biographical project's claim to give room for the occasion to speak and the concomitant methods that enable or allow that speaking. In her acknowledgement section of the biography, Lamb poses: 'There are two people without whom this book really would not have been possible and they are of course Nigel and Aqui, for this is their story' (p. xi). In writing thus, Lamb leaves this quotation contained in ambiguity: one can read it as alluding to the book as something authorized by Aqui and Nigel or, alternatively, as a book that has become a gift to the two, since the biographer invested some labour in producing it. It is prudent at this point to rise above the convolutions generated by the paradox of the concept of the book as gift by pointing out that Lamb is offering a poisoned gift to the two since the book is monopolized by her voice instead of the assumed voices of Aqui and Nigel.

By appropriating Aqui's voice in her long running protestations of masculine hegemony, Lamb silences her since the latter resides in and questions this masculine hegemony from within this hegemony. Lamb's muting of Aqui appears in three modes: the first is the uncritical

reproductions of the received archive on Zimbabwean history to which the biographer, in a bid to provide padding for narrative gaps in the absence of a substantial private archive on Aqui, resorts; the second revolves on Lamb's glib assumption that Aqui as a doubly silenced subaltern female black subject requires a feminist awakening in the call of emancipation; the third concerns Lamb's (re)writing of Aqui's voice on cultural or anthropological topics. In investigating the ruses by which Lamb silences her biographic subjects, attention must be paid to the fact that she configures both the black and white colonialist masculinities as malign and thus through the recalibrated archive or episteme of whiteness, she is capable of scorning white Rhodesian masculinist violence on blacks. At this point, it is necessary to first illustrate this palimpsest as shown in the book. In giving an account of Aqui's uncle's breaching of the curfew and his subsequent murder by white Rhodesian soldiers, Lamb poses what Aqui purportedly said (p. 75), but contrary to the biography's generic demand for possible verification of the account, Lamb offers the reader an account in which the heinous murder is narratable despite the absence of a witness or witnesses. Lamb's padding of the lacuna in this murder story exemplifies a verging of the biography genre on the novelistic genre, an attestation to the abandonment of biographic or journalistic objectivity. In the same context, that Aqui said: 'I was very angry' (about the callous murder) (p. 75), is problematic since what Aqui is assumed to be angry at is an unverified and unlocatable source: adequate psychological scholarship has concluded that anger requires an object.

In the quest to expose Lamb's abandonment of objectivity, a contrast can be made between her handling of the murder account noted here and the death of Allan Wilson's patrol. While, with scathing sarcasm, she dismisses the heroism bequeathed to Allan Wilson's last stand by Rhodesian history because '[i]n fact what Nigel had learnt about as a glorious sacrifice in the name of the founding of the country had no factual basis as no survivor lived to tell the tale' (p. 68), she fabricates or reproduces a fabricated story without any qualms. This irony is unraveled when Lamb's biographical project is delineated: first to expose masculinist hegemony and violence as injurious to civilization; second, to enthrone Lamb as the torch bearer to such a civilization that rejects exclusions and violence against the marginal. In the context of biographical objectivity, Renders (2014) postulates: 'A biography with too many literary pretensions betrays the expectation that everything in the biography is actually true' and that the biographer has to 'emphatically consider autobiographical documents as research material' in the service of 'good biography' and that 'among other things, to reconstruct how the biographee viewed the self. Biography should be regarded as a non-fiction genre, respecting

the codes of reliability and transparency' (Renders, 2014: 176). Renders speaks of 'too many literary pretensions' in biography as sufficient evidence of the biographer's deviation from objectivity but despite the fact that Lamb, on numerous occasions uses fabrication as padding for narrative lacuna, here it suffices that one or two exemplification, like in the white swan and black swan syllogism, to cite this example as troubling to Lamb's project.

By attributing to Aqui either received stories or her own (re)constructions of Zimbabwean history, after some forays into the archives, Lamb veers off the objectivity course. In the accounts of the relationship between the Ndebele and the Shona, for instance, Lamb writes that they shared a common objective: liberation and the reclamation of land from the whites and then she poses:

> But their tribal rivalry went too long back before the white man, and when they came into contact they often fought each other. While the Mashona tended to be of docile nature, the Ndebele were once respected according to the number of Mashonas they had killed. (p. 76)

And then Lamb inserts the italicized autobiographical snippets attributed to Aqui: 'We never trusted the Ndebele' (p. 76), and Aqui is postured as regurgitating the joke on Lobengula's obsession with sugar, all with the intention to reproduce the rewriting of the subaltern's history by the colonialists. At this juncture, her incorporation of the colonialist archive is in the service of confirming her condemnation of the Gukurahundi massacres in Matabeleland after 1980. This condemnation encompasses the outlawing of violent black masculinities and gestures to the compulsion, under a Western norm, that such violence as repeated in the land repossessions, was to be prohibited from a civilised country. It must be noted that historical accounts by both Ranger and Beach, seasoned white historians on Zimbabwean history, provides sufficient evidence that the Mashona were not as docile as naively supposed by the white colonialists. The fact that they also raided on the Ndebele for cattle and that they incited the first Chimurenga is enough evidence. The point of focus here, however, is not to get entangled in factual contests but as recommended by Backscheider (2014: 112), to be 'rather more preoccupied with the choices that a biographer makes about voice and interpretation' than in enumerating sites where the text misses, erases or omits the facts. In Backscheider's postulate, discussions on biography must 'be engaged in a tour of the decisions biographers make, showing some of the implications of those decisions' (Caine, 2015: 89).

In the context of Lamb's juxtaposition between native and colonialist masculinities in their capacity for violence and its attendant culpability, the implications of pointing to native on native violence predating the advent of colonialism is that (i) colonialism minus the Allan Wilson masculine violence is permissible in the summons of human progress and (ii) that the justification for retribution or the redistribution of land is morally and logically bankrupt. By implicating the natives in similar acts of violence done by whites in the ostensible mission of civilizing the backward races, Lamb's biographical project neutralizes and minimizes the call for justice through a redistribution of land. This biographical ruse rests on the ad hominem and the tu quoque fallacies. Another case that illustrates this, drawing on Backscheider's recommendation on focusing on biographer choices, is Lamb's exposing of jealousy and other forms of evil among those who she purportedly would like to give a voice. Lamb quotes Aqui saying: 'In the villages people already have grudges. They hate each other or are jealous because you have many cattle because you are working hard at your place', and: 'There is a lot of jealousy in our *race*' (p. 77). Such juxtapositions of native jealous and white people's jealous, minimizes the atrocities done by whites in the name of progress. [78] If in reading Lamb's book one endorses the condemnation of Ian Smith's racist, segregatory and discriminatory policies, one is equally called on to accuse blacks for their own intra-racial evil and thus the claimant for justice is conflated (in the circle of injustice) with the perpetrator of injustice.

By writing Aqui as doubly silenced by native patriarchy and colonialist patriarchy or masculine hegemony, Lamb reproduces this muting through a Western feminist discourse palimpsest. Renders (2014) postulates:

> There is, of course no clear-cut definition of what constitutes a good biography. Naturally, the ideal biography is well written, with a form that owes to journalism ... The research methodology must include use of all available sources, with oral sources approached in an even-handed way, and every assertion substantiated by a source, which is a norm in both journalism and history. (2014: 41)

In her biographical project to provide her Western readers with the evidence that the native

[78] This is with reference to jealous which was behind the dispossession of and dislocation from the fertile land of Aqui's people.

female subject and her counterpart, the recently marginalized white subject, are endangered, Lamb falters in terms of her use of sources. This is because her use of these sources reflects not the conditions of the biographees but her own objectives. Both native and colonialist masculine hegemonies are re-presented as violent and as disposed to injustice and evil. For example, both Aqui's husband and her mother's violence is or can be juxtaposed with Lovemore's white boss' violence. In showing and juxtaposing the events of colonial land dispossession and native female repression and dispossession, Lamb proposes, by implication, that land or resource (re)distribution in the post-independence period has no such urgency as attached to it by war veterans and Mugabe since such injustices or inequalities are endemic to the blacks themselves. But the common and erroneous view that the native woman is invariably oppressed, repressed and dispossessed by native patriarchy is a view that proves more the inadequacies of Western feminism and the orientation to biographer objectives than the ills of native patriarchy. For example, contrary to the image of the patriarchal figure as unredeemably monopolizing, Aqui's father does not appear as one who would thwart his wife and daughters' enjoyment of the profits of their labour. In Chapter Three, Aqui is 'eager to get to the store because for the first time she and her sisters were going to be given a share of the money from the groundnuts and allowed to buy something for themselves' and their 'mother had divided some of the land into strips for her and her sisters each to tend to their own crop' (p. 37). To the argument that these sisters did not own the land can be raised the point that in egalitarian communities, as opposed to Western societies that privilege private ownership of property over egalitarianism, sharing the profits of labour is valourized above ownership. In this context, Jones (2011: 13) has argued that Western feminism has the habit of obscuring native voices and culture by placing a palimpsest premised and that Western feminism usually mistakes native arrangements of resource (re)distribution for inequalities and injustices.

6.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, the topic of biography and biographee representativity was investigated with the conclusion that it is impossible to deploy a singular self to represent the infinitude or heterogeneity that inscribe the lived experience of multiple and differently positioned individuals. In addition to the forbiddance by the infinitude and heterogeneity of human experience, the self itself was discussed not as a unified and locatable entity as Freud, Satre and Edel, would have us believe. The reading of the self in this chapter was drawn from poststructurist theorizations which posit the self as a discursive formation which refuses

grounding in any ontology since discursive formations as Foucault argues, do not offer stable sites on which to arrest selves in the activities of these formations. This put paid the illusion (Bourdieu, 2001) that biography can provide an individual, who after inspection, can be found to exhibit unique and stable characteristics that can provide an index to a study of communities. The impossibility of deploying such an individual as index was done through examinations of both embodiment and psyche ontologies. The conclusion on this point was that subjectivity, since it cannot be obedient to textual apprehension, cannot be representative.

The second section of the chapter interrogated biographer objectivity, authenticity and neutrality. It was discovered that the biographer, Lamb, lacked such qualities since the ideologies that shape her relations with her social environments and the epistemes that not only inflect her orientations with meaning, but also (re)produce her while remaining invisible through self-effacement obscure access to the biographee. The biographer's lack of objectivity, neutrality and authenticity was discussed in the context of whiteness and the biographer's project to present to her Western audience the grounds on which violent masculinities such as those staged by white colonialists, war veterans and individual men in private spaces should be outlawed. The absence of objectivity, neutrality and authenticity, it was found, ironically permitted the silencing of the biographee through minimizations of injustices and inequalities: something that opposed a project whose promise was to create speaking space for the marginal.

Chapter 7

Conclusion: The problematics of constructing lives: dilemmas of (un)belonging

This study explored the themes of (dis)placement, (dis)location and (un)belonging in *Mukiwa* and *Crocodile* by Godwin, *The Last Resort* by Rogers, *African Tears*, by Buckle, Harrison's *Jambanja* and Lamb's *House of Stone* by confronting and interrogating questions, aporia and paradoxes that mark autobiography and biography. Questions on both biography and autobiography opened a space for the investigations of truth, memory, subjectivity and history (Bruner, 2001; Gusdorf, 2001; Weintraub, 1978; Olney, 1972). It was concluded that autobiography and biography, as modes of writing lives, place a premium on narrative invention, retrospection and projection in constructing such lives in the acts of such retrospection and projection. Further, the weighing in of retrospection and projection in autobiography and biography, constitutes a paradox, in that, the present moment of narrative construction becomes present in the past that is purported to be recollected, with the result that, the past and present constitute a hybrid temporality that erases the boundary between past and present.

Complicating this further, is that, the present narrative moment, is predisposed to priorities of the self as projection and, thus the future of the self is included and involved in the melding space of narrative temporal hybridity. It was established that, this possible impossibility in claims of selves' experience in narrative temporalities, always introduces the impossibility of belonging or stable location. Following this, the enterprise of this study was not to map sites of belonging and location, but to prove through autobiography and biography that since selves are schizophrenic (Lacan) and experience and interpretations rhyzomatic and epistemes are bodies without limbs (Deleuze and Gautarri, 1987), identity and belonging are better put under erasure (Heidegger, 1961; Derrida, 2003) as they are rendered obsolescent by the fluidity and excesses of the self. Investigations on biography encompassed the dilemmas on selves' continuity versus discontinuity, subjectivity versus objectivity and the problem of constructing supposedly coherent and unified selves from unstable speaking positions through and within epistemological standpoints, archives and biographical methods. The investigation of these questions, paradoxes and dilemmas was done by allotting these problems to the chapters below.

Chapter One investigated the paradoxes, dilemmas and questions in the methods of autobiography and biography by examining the theoretical and methodological premises of these forms of life writing. By examining and applying methods of modernism, postmodernism, critical white feminist studies (Dyer, 1997; Amico, 2016; Sullivan, 2014; DiAngelo, 2016; Wise, 2017) poststructuralism, performativity theories and postcolonialism to the investigations of autobiography and biography, the study concluded that traditional methods of life writing have become forbidden, despite residual reversions to such methods. Both autobiography and biography were traced to their origins in methods and life writings that centered the privileged masculine figure whose authority, legitimation and normativity was nourished, advanced, and protected by the hegemony of Occidental heteronomativity (Anderson 2000; de Haan and Renders, 2014; Hamilton, 2014, Levi, 2014; Loriga, 2014; Caine 2010). It was established that counterposing these traditional methods of writing biography and autobiography to postmodern, postcolonial, poststructural and critical studies - race and gender studies, could disband metanarratives that constrain multiple possibilities of writing and thinking about life writing. Theorizations by Olney (1980), Derrida (2003), Eakin (1988), Anderson (2000), Huddart (2006) and de Man (2002) were deployed to mobilize a confrontation and prohibition of these traditional methods and their attendant reductive metanarratives.

The reductive acts of Western heteronomativity were tracked to Descartes' proclamation of an insular and self-sufficient individual in the now numerously cited *cogito ergo sum* theorem. Its obsession with self-reference, opened space for the egology espoused by Heidegger, Hurssel and Hegel who constrain identity and belonging to the fixities of ontologies. Such ontologies, when examined in the context of biography and autobiography lead to the assumption that the self or selves are easily available to the surveillance, monitoring and naming ruses of modernism. Contrary to such theorizations, Western heteronomativity is to be dislodged from its pedestal to pave way for epistemes and methods that afford selves emancipated zones in which to stage identity as unstable, fluid and unlocatable (Bhabha, 2004; Butler 1998) and belonging as unhinged from geographic, cultural and temporal fixities (Appadurai, 2006; Giddens, 1991; Gilroy, 2001). While theorizations by Gursdof and Weintraub enthroned the androcentric self as one who could be locatable in culture and history, de Man and Derrida advanced a self that could breach all containments of the Cartesian self by positing autobiography as a thanatography and defacement.

Whereas Edel (1981), Satre and Freud (1988) provided postulations on biography that supposed the existence of identities and entities that could be extracted from the archives through the corroboration of private narratives, pictures and other biographical evidence, Walter (2015), de Haan and Renders (2015), Levi (2014) Loriga (2014) and Lepore (2001), posed the impossibility of biographee representativity and thus endorsed Dilthey's (1990) assertion that an individual cannot represent a civilization. The predication of this impossibility was the heterogeneity or infinitude that marks culture, civilizations, communities and nations: something that could not be reduced to singular experience. Inversely, nations, cultures and communities, could not represent or reproduce the irreducible experience of singularities. In annulling the representativity of the biographee, one simultaneously places an interdict on belonging. On the authorization of such theorizations, this study advanced belonging and identity as relentless becomings (Hall, 2004) shaped by epistemes and methods of interpretation. As such, belonging and identity could be a result of the discursive formations created by epistemes and the power differentials in each context (Foucault, 2002). Selves in both biography and autobiography, belong by their performativity (Butler, 1992) in these epistemes and methods.

Through investigations on the instabilities of speaking positions of the self, Chapter Two argued that Godwin's *Mukiwa* and *Crocodile*, demonstrate the difficulty and or even the impossibility of writing an autobiography as a displaced and dispossessed white in the context of colonialism and farm reclamations in Zimbabwe. It is impossible to establish a coherent speaking position since the enlightenment episteme that informs Godwin's narratives simultaneously promotes and dismantles his entrenchments on the Zimbabwean landscape through monuments, museums and statues. Since the modernist moves of colonialism harboured notions of the repression of the Other through a reductive naming episteme (Said, 1980) and ironically at the same time proclaimed human progress through a civilizing mission, the selves in Godwin's books have their narrations intercepted and disrupted by this antinomy. Autobiography opposes the traditional method of life writing that sought to reproduce masculine models of success and virtue. In its analysis of autobiographical problems in Godwin's books, through postcolonial and postmodern poises, this study advanced the position that the displaced and dispossessed selves, as constructed by the author, are denied stable citizenship and locatable centers of reference since the episteme and historiography that used to prop them up have been torn asunder.

In analyzing (un)belonging and (dis)location in Rogers' memoire, Chapter Three concluded that autobiography can be discussed as auto/biography. This view of biography and autobiography became a new venture that extended investigations of identity and (un)belonging in conjunction with the fusion of biography and autobiography (Lejeune, 2004). This fusion troubles strict impositions of boundaries between biography and autobiography in the sense that writing about one's experiences become entangled with writing about Others, especially significant others. The porousness of the boundary between autobiography and biography was allowed in the presence of the guiding caveat by Smith and Watson (2009), that for purposes of the feasibility of theorizations of the two, some distinctions between them ought to be left intact. Analysis of Rogers' book culminated in the conviction that both the whites and blacks became dispossessed, (dis)placed and (dis)located, with whites and in particular white commercial farmers, suddenly finding themselves denuded of their privilege and having to reinvent themselves. This reinvention, since it revolved mainly on improvisations, illustrates the ephemeral nature of selves and subject positions in given contexts. The memoire as auto/biography is hybrid or amphibian through Rogers' acts of self-exteriorization and exteriorization as evidenced by the interviews the protagonist undertakes. These interviews become sites where the self sublates the other into its projects by appropriating the participants' voices in the corroboration of the protagonist's objectives. This sublation is ambivalent in that while it is postured in the guise or conviction of giving voice to the recently marginalized whites, it inadvertently or by guile permits the Cartesian self whose egological self comports with a Western heteronomativity that habitually disremembers to attend to the Other of race and gender. Such totalizing habits were discussed and proscribed in relation to views on belonging and identity, by analyzing such views in conjunction with the production of space, eco-imperialism, ecological discourse, global capital and colonialism. Opposing totalizing discourses, auto/biography was discussed and offered as a project which implodes such discourses since the impossibility of reducing polyvocality into a monologue is refused.

By analysing Buckle's online activism against farm invasions and lawlessness in Zimbabwe in context with the self in autobiography as one that becomes political by mutation (contrary to Aristotle's postulation that the self is inherently political) the fourth chapter opened a space for a new venue for the discussion of (dis)placement and (un)belonging not offered in the previous chapters: the construction of online identities. The quest of the political self is to effect change and in Buckle's case, a change from lawlessness to the rule of law and the recognition of human rights. By examining agency and exemplarity, the chapter reached the conclusion that Buckle

does not rise above the antinomy of how to elevate singularities or particularities to the status of the universal without muting other singularities. In seeking to impose her singular reading of the law and human rights as applicable in a universal sense, Buckle reinscribes the universalizing acts of modernism.

In the investigation of Buckle's environmental activism, it was found that her activism is a counterdiscourse that allows a counterpublic discourse whose aim is to create spaces of emancipation for the human subject and the other as flora and fauna. Buckle's internet activism, especially through electronic mail was analyzed and it was concluded that the internet, through its affordances, permits the reinvention of the self through the fluidity of virtual space. The internet offers a platform on which virtual selves can effect change similar to their offline counterparts. Despite its affordances allowing spaces for speaking out the same affordances can be manipulated and monopolized by totalizing regimes and epistemes. Belonging in Buckle's book was seen as problematic in that in protesting the lawlessness in Zimbabwe and in being ashamed of being Zimbabwean, the author evinces her desire to belong simultaneously as she deprecates that belonging.

Chapter Five, by analyzing how Harrison's posing as a third person narrator in his autobiography, argued that such posturings as Harrison's, register the disconcerting problems of how to absolve the self when the self itself is both arbiter and imbricated in the matter to be arbitrated. It was established, through discussions and investigations, that Harrison puts himself on the plinth of heroism by telling his life and experiences through the third person. This self-glorification does not heed Levinas' approval of the capability of the third person to create room for infinitude in the context of identity and to transcend the dialectical relations between the self and its interlocutor. Spurning dialectical conversations disallows the re-inscription of egological approaches of the self to the Other and thus the approval of the always incomprehensibility of the Other. This incomprehensibility, it was asserted, refuses these egological approaches since nothing is offered for easy manipulation or assimilation.

This chapter also investigated humour and nostalgia and concluded that, both can simultaneously be, sources of therapy and delusion. While nostalgia is a therapeutic or psychological resource, it inscribed temporal nodes with both continuities and discontinuities. Nostalgia's (re)collection acts, usually inflected with positive affect (Davis, 1979) can morph into a utopia that, through its anesthetic effects, may also occlude possible ways of

circumventing the trigger of such nostalgia. It was discussed and concluded that humour is a resource of the protean, resilient, versatile and fluid character. Additionally, humour creates empathy and thus seduces the reader to endorse the objectives of the protagonist. Nonetheless, investigations of humour and superiority theories of humour in tandem with the analysis of *Jambanja* brought to the fore the fact that humour can be double-edged: it criticises by privileging the protagonist on one hand while diminishing the subjectivity of the Other, on the other hand. Relief theories of humour were discussed and in *Jambanja*, humour deflects embarrassment and the denting of self-esteem by defusing toxic atmospheres and thus securing the self's concept of itself in the promotion of that self's priorities.

In this same chapter, confession was discussed as impossible (Derrida, 1987; Foucault, 1999) and this impossibility was tracked to the fissuredness of language (Derrida, 2003; Lacan, 2002; Foucault, 2001) that disallows a stable and coherent confession at the same time providing resources to facilitate confession. In addition, investigations on confession arrived at the conviction and verdict that confession is irrational in its methods since the self that seeks to exonerate itself first must perform the dehiscence of sites of trauma by the iterative acts of memory: acts that always must preserve the crimes or offences done if ever forgiveness or reconciliation is to be possible. Since a teleology to confession was refused play, it was concluded that there exists no abiding site on which the self can redeem itself without provoking paradoxes. Following this, belonging was postulated as problematic and as always open to revisions and relocations.

The sixth chapter was concerned about the dilemmas confronted by the biographer in the latter's attempt to draw representativity from the former. In the investigations on the dilemmas of continuities versus discontinuities in the self across time, objectivity versus subjectivity (of both biographer and biographee) and the problem of how to know other selves (Ayer, 1980; Walter, 2014; de Haan and Renders 2014). While Edel, Freud and Satre's endorsement of extracting selves from biographical evidence (letters, photographies and recorded audios and videos) suggests a unified and stable self, Backscheider (2014), Heilbrun (2013) and Loriga (2014) oppose this impossible self with one that can only be arrived at through interpretive acts, demonstrating that they subscribe to biography as construction instead of extraction.

The investigations on biography in this chapter were done within poststructuralism, critical white feminist studies and postcolonialism. This approach afforded the discussion and analysis

of biographical selves as discursive formations (Foucault, 2002) and commanded that the reader pay attention to issues of race, gender, white privilege (Amico, 2016; Sullivan, 2015) and fragility (DiAngelo, 2016). The questioning of the epistemes and methods that were deployed by Lamb led to the conclusion that the biographer's immersion in whiteness and journalistic or professional methods obscures the voice of the biographee that the biographer ostensibly wanted to emancipate. This muting of the biographee, emanated from the biographer's gate-keeping and whiteness's acts of self-effacement (Dyer, 1997; Wise, 2016) that ensure the success of epistemic and methodological imperatives above and beyond the call of truth and objectivity. Lamb minimizes the negative ruses of colonialism and whiteness by juxtaposing the injustices within native or local patriarchy and national historiography with the injustices of whiteness and colonialism by invoking the ad hominem and tu quoque fallacious arguments.

My thesis demonstrated that in society at large, auto/biographies contribute to the construction of a critical and historically informed constellation of public opinion. Similar to investigative journalism, auto/biographies are a vital tool in the construction of a transparent and democratic civilization. Investigating both the dominant/powerful and the marginal/subalternised voices of the past, in tandem with building on solid academic research auto/biographical research could perform a vibrant and significant role in understanding society's past and influencing both current public and historical debates. The examination of Zimbabwean white farmers' auto/biographies shed light on the subtle and not readily visible participation of cultural identity nuances that are often missed in history and fiction. The Zimbabwean white farmers' political auto/biographies therefore have a capacity to articulate and grapple with the complex issues of self and national identities. The study shows that the meaning(s) and construction(s) generated by the white commercial farmers' narratives reveal that the appreciation of cultural identities in Zimbabwe is incomplete if these white narratives are excluded.

The thesis also proved that the impact of the land invasion crisis was far reaching than just its influence on party and bigoted politics. This study speaks to McAdams' (2008: 247) view that 'within any society, different stories compete for dominance and acceptance … and reflect, in one way or another, prevailing patterns of hegemony in the economic, political, and cultural contexts wherein human lives are situated'. In as much as ZANU PF's land redistribution narrative was propagated as intended for correcting colonial land imbalances, the white farmers' narratives are different stories inherently competing for acceptance. While ZANU PF power elites privileged the land redistribution narrative, white commercial farmers resisted this

dominant narrative and gave voice to their 'suppressed discourses, and struggle to bring marginalized ways of imagining and telling lives to the cultural fore' (McAdams, 2008: 247). The auto/biography thus explores the hiatus that established disciplines such as fiction and history have failed to explain.It is therefore this aptitude to harness both fiction and fact that in my view qualifies auto/biography as a critical tool to examine, analyse and explore the subtle nuances of cultural identities even across races. Based on this finding of my study, I would recommend; (i) the inclusion for study of the auto/biographical in secondary and university curricula as auto/biography is the genesis of appreciating any group culture. (ii) I would recommend for further thought and engagements, the rights-reading approach (with its own paradoxes) which would identify my selected texts as human rights texts. This manner of reading, would open up conceptions that, over and above the realisation that, the nation is imagined, race is a construct and belonging is slippery and have real life consequences that require ideas that focalize humanness and workable interhuman interventions. Rights-reading, demands an ethical and committed reading, because any human-rights based inquiry or undertaking 'that considers it irrelevant or does not entail the importance of how to right wrongs is a hollow rhetoric that deserves our hermeneutical suspicion' (Ilesanmi 2011: 455).

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