PUBLIC EVENTS, PRIVATE INSPIRATIONS: HOW ZIMBABWEAN HISTORY HAS CONSTRUCTED LIFE NARRATIVES

by

HAZEL TAFADZWA NGOSHI

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF LITERATURE

in the Department of English at the

University of Pretoria

Faculty of Humanities

Supervisor: Professor Anthony John Chennells

March 2014

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my original work and that all the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the support of my daughter Takudzwanashe. Her quiet demeanor and resilience when I could not give her my time have been exemplary and will always be cherished. I dedicate this work to her and anticipate the day when her own academic endeavours will come to fruition and surpass mine.

It would not have been possible to write this thesis without the support of Professor Anthony Chennells, members of the Department of English at the University of Pretoria and the Department of English and Communication, at the Midlands State University. I appreciate Professor Chennells's profound and unparalleled multi-disciplinary knowledge and skills that helped shape this thesis: I could not have had a better director of studies. I wish to thank Professors Andries Wessels and David Medalie, and Dr Molly Brown for their kind support in many respects. My colleagues in the English and Communication department at the Midlands State University: Dr Tasiyana Javangwe, Dr Ernest Jakaza, Dr Collen Sabao, Dr Terrence Musanga, Ms Elda Hungwe, Ms Itai Mariko, Mr. Aneas Mutekwa, Mr. Hugh Mangeya and Mr. Francis Mungana provided inspirational support, stimulated academic debate and I wish to thank them for the spirit of collegiality. I express my gratitude to Dr Terrence Mashingaidze for his patience when I constantly bothered him for historical facts on Zimbabwe and for being a sounding board for my ideas. I would also like to thank the University of Pretoria for the financial support for my studies and the Midlands State University Research and Post-graduate Studies office for funding my travel and subsistence expenses.

The friendship and academic support of the Midlands State University Librarian, Ms Nyarai Chibanda has been invaluable and I am grateful to her for keeping a superb library. I also thank her library staff and particularly Mr Makandwa for his patience and diligence. I wish to thank my cousin Wendy Musunda and her husband for being my hosts in South Africa; my expressions of gratitude do not suffice. Last, but not least, I am forever grateful to my friends and sisters Mrs Rhoda Makamure and Winmore Kusena for being mothers to my daughter in my absence and when I became engrossed in my studies. I have only given mention to few of those who have been kind and supported me, but I still thank many others for their kindness and support.

Abstract

This study identifies and critiques the historical, political and discursive moments and contexts that have shaped autobiographical writing in Zimbabwe. It does this by locating the autobiographies of Frank Johnson, Hans Sauer, Hylda Richards, Lawrence Vambe, Abel Muzorewa, Maurice Nyagumbo, Peter Godwin, Ian Smith, Joshua Nkomo, Fay Chung, Judith Todd and Edgar Tekere in their historical, political and discursive contexts, while also demarcating the narrating subjects in these contexts. The study seeks to examine the kind of autobiographical subjectivities that emerge in these contexts and its point of departure is that autobiographical remembering and story-telling are historically situated. It further problematises these subjectivities by showing how they are constituted by memory, experience, identity, agency and embodiment as they are inflected by history and power relationships. Literary criticism of Zimbabwean writing has not accounted for how self narration and conceptions of the self emerge out of historical, political, cultural and national processes at any given time. It has also not shown how these processes have occasioned the production of autobiographical narratives and the nature of subjectivities that these processes construct. Through the endeavours of this study autobiographical subjects are demarcated and understood in diverse contexts.

The study approached the analyses of the selected life narratives from postcolonial, dialogic and intertextual perspectives. Postcolonial theory as a critical method problematises human experiences and cultural and class identities as they relate to the power dynamics of colonialism and its aftermaths. In deploying postcolonial theory the analyses in Chapters Two, Three, Four and Five establish that subjects of postcolonial autobiography in Zimbabwe develop complex subjectivities that emerge from the contradictions of history and postcolony. While some autobiographers belong to a similar historical epoch, their subjectivities are not necessarily the same but diverse and complex. The study reveals that these contradictions are constitutive of the hybrid autobiographical subjectivities of the narrators, which range from pioneer, domestic settler, nationalist, radical nationalist to nation-builder, freedom-fighter, rights activist and dissenting subjectivities. Bakhtin's notion of dialogism provides insight into the nature of autobiographical discourse in these narratives from a stylistic perspective and reveals the dialogic practices that narrating subjects engage in to mediate their subjectivities. The application of dialogism shows that the narrating I's subjectivity is formed

and manifests at the point where the "I" is in dialogue with another's word. Self conception is thus located where the public and private selves converge in narrative. The analyses of these narratives also make use of intertextuality, which establishes the relationality between studied texts and other narratives. The study reaches the conclusion that the historicity of autobiographical story telling should be a guiding framework for understanding autobiographical subjectivities and for a theory of autobiography in Zimbabwe. The study also facilitates a reconsideration of Zimbabwe's violent past since it positions autobiographical narratives as sites for rethinking the politics and practices of life writing.

Key terms: autobiography, life narrative, Zimbabwean history, Rhodesia, subjectivity, nationalism, postcolonial theory, dialogism, intertextuality, pioneers, settlers, colonialism.

List of Acronyms

AIDS - Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome

ANC - African National Congress (South Africa)

ANC - African National Council

ANC - African National Congress (Rhodesia)

BSAC - British South Africa Company

HIV - Human Immuno Virus

ICU - Industrial and Commercial Workers Union

LAA - Land Tenure Act

LOMA - Law and Order Maintenance Act

LTA - Land Tenure Act

MDC - Movement for Democratic Change

NDP - National Democratic Party

NLHA - Native Land Husbandry Act

OAU - Organisation of African Unity

RRAF - Royal Rhodesian Air Force

RAF - Royal Air Force

RF - Rhodesia Front

RLI - Rhodesian Light Infantry

SAPES - Southern African Political Economy Series

TTL - Tribal Trust Lands

UANC - United African National Council

UDI - Unilateral Declaration of Independence

ZANLA - Zimbabwe National Liberation Army

ZANU - Zimbabwe African National Union

ZANU-PF - Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front

ZAPU - Zimbabwe African People's Union

ZIPA - Zimbabwe People's Army

ZIPRA - Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction
Autobiography: Theory and practice

The intention of this study is to identify and critique the historical, cultural and political contexts from which Zimbabwean autobiography has emerged; to demonstrate how discursive practices developed in the course of Zimbabwean history-constructed autobiographical subjectivities; to problematise how the denial of or access to cultural and political agency manifested in the selected autobiographies as motives for narrating the self; to interrogate the cultural models of identity available to these autobiographers to show how they shaped the process of constructing the self; to explain the ways in which autobiographical remembering is a politicized process and, finally, to critique the idea of how life-narratives in Zimbabwe can be positioned as productive sites for rethinking the politics and practices of life-writing in order to allow us to reconsider the dynamics of Zimbabwe's violent political past.

African poetry, drama and the novel have focused on the cultural, social and political processes that have constructed and mediated identities of both the self and nation before and in the aftermaths of the colonial encounter. Yet Zimbabwe's endeavours in literary criticism have largely not accounted for the self-narration, analysis and interpretation of the colonial experience and the postcolonial condition in Zimbabwean writing. Through an exploration of the medium of autobiography which offers a subjective rendition of experiences, this study seeks to explore the relationship between the individual's conception of the self and the social, political, cultural and national processes, which are all implicated in the autobiographical act. Given the centrality of history, culture, politics and discourse in identity formation, there is a need to delineate comprehensively how these have over the years shaped autobiographical subjectivities. It is imperative that life-narratives in Zimbabwe be identified, arranged and critically analysed on the basis of historical, socio-cultural and political circumstances that have occasioned their production. This will inevitably allow for the demarcation of autobiographical subjects and their subjectivities in diverse contexts.

Aims and justification of study

Conceptions of the self in autobiography have always been complicated by the convergence of the public and private experiences and motivations of narrating subjects. It is the aim of

this study to demonstrate how conceptions of the self which are at the centre of life-narratives, are constructed by the historical and political processes obtaining in the narrating selves' lived environment. The criticism of life-narratives that this study undertakes is located in the history of Zimbabwe from the time of the initial colonial settlement, during the consolidation of colonial power and the rise of African mass nationalism and attendant struggles, to the post-independence dispensation. This demarcation may be simplistic and appear to be a linear version of the postcolonial, but it can allow one to understand the autobiographical subjects within their historical, discursive and political contexts. The study also seeks to interrogate how the autobiographical subjects sometimes confirm, contest and subvert dominant discourses on nation-building and state power.

While this study focuses on life-narratives in Zimbabwe, the name Zimbabwe will be used to refer to the present day nation and retrospectively to refer to Southern Rhodesia or Rhodesia which were official names for the country before 1980.

Questions guiding this study

The following key questions will inform the thrust of investigation in this research:

How have discursive practices developed in the course of Zimbabwean history shaped autobiographical subjectivities?

What are the specific historical, cultural and political contexts that have informed life-narratives in Zimbabwe?

How has the denial of or access to cultural and political agency manifested in autobiographical narratives as motives for narrating the self?

In what ways is autobiographical remembering a politicised process?

What cultural models of identity were and are available to these selected autobiographers and how did they shape the process of constructing the self?

How can life-narratives in Zimbabwe be positioned as productive sites for rethinking the practices and politics of life-writing in Zimbabwe in order to reconsider or re-interpret the dynamics of the country's violent political past?

To contextualize these questions, the following sections define autobiography, review literature on the development of autobiography in the West, in Africa and Zimbabwe and provide the theoretical and conceptual framework within which selected narratives are analysed.

Defining autobiography: its theory and practice

Smith and Watson (2001: 1) acknowledge the Greek origins of the term "autobiography": "In Greek *autos* signifies 'self,' *bios* 'life,' and *graphe* 'writing'. Taken together in this order, the words denote 'self life writing'". An expansive definition of the term was offered by Lejeune cited in Smith and Watson (2001: 1) who posits that "We call autobiography the retrospective narrative in prose that someone makes of his own existence when he puts the principal accent upon his life, especially upon the story of his own personality." Since autobiography is a retrospective narrative, it makes reference to the past, to a history and it is this historical aspect that is the provenance of this study. Western scholars of autobiography have acknowledged the theoretical problems of defining the genre and since early critics of autobiography focused on this, Olney's (1980:4) observation is instructive:

> [while] autobiography is both the simplest of literary enterprises and the commonest, in talking about autobiography, one feels that there is a great and present danger that the subject will slip away altogether, that it will vanish into thinnest air, leaving behind the perception that there is no such creature as autobiography and that there has never been – that there is no way to bring autobiography to heel as a literary genre with its own proper form, terminology and observations.

Olney's (1980) observations point to the complexity of the genre of autobiography and how it refuses neat definition and theorization because of the multiple perspectives associated with the reconstruction of a lived life.

Efforts to define the genre and give it a theoretical framework have, from the late 19th century, elicited contesting views regarding the origins of the term "autobiography". The word "autobiography", Berryman (1999:72) argues, "was invented in 1797 by a linguist who perceived the need for a common term in English to cover the many different accounts that authors make of their own experience." Yet on one hand Folkenflik (1993:3) in introducing *The Culture of Autobiography: Constructions of Self-representation* had earlier argued that the term's first usage appeared in German scholar Schlegel's 1798 commentary in which he argued thus:

> Pure autobiographies [*Autobiographien*] are written either by neurotics who are fascinated by their own ego [I], as in Rousseau's case; or by authors of a robust artistic or adventuresome self-love, such as Benvenuto Cellini; or by born historians who regard themselves only as material for historic art; or by women who also coquette with posterity; or by pedantic minds who want to bring even the most minute things in order before they die and cannot let themselves leave the world without commentaries. [They] can also be regarded as mere *plaidoyers* [legal pleadings] before the public. Another great group among the autobiographers [*Autobiographen*] is formed by the autopseusts [self-deceivers].

Smith and Watson (2001: 2) on the other hand attribute the origins of the term autobiography to its coinage "in the preface to a collection of poems by the eighteenth-century English working class writer Anne Yearsley." In spite of the differences in dates, these critics seem to concur that the term has its origins in its usage in the eighteenth century. What is also clear from these arguments is that the genre preceded its naming and as Smith and Watson (2001: 2) further argue "until the twentieth century the word memoirs (the French *les memoirs*) was commonly used to designate 'self-life-writing'." These arguments suggest that there has been a sustained pre-occupation with seeking to establish the origins of the term and the exact moment when autobiography begins. In other words, critics have at one time been seized with issues of the genesis of the genre.

In this study the terms "life-narrative" and "autobiography" are preferred to "life-writing", which according to Smith and Watson (2001: 3) "is a general term for writing of diverse kinds that takes a life as its subject. Such writing can be biographical, novelistic, historical, or an explicit self-reference to the writer", while "life narrative [is] a somewhat narrower term that includes many kinds of self-referential writing, including autobiography". Autobiographical writing, which is the major pre-occupation of this study, is therefore a particular practice of life-narrative. Smith and Watson (2001:3) also propose that "autobiography is the most widely used and most generally understood term for life narrative" and in the light of this, life-narrative and autobiography will be used interchangeably in this study.

Western scholars generally concur that autobiography, properly so called, begins with St. Augustine's *Confessions* and Olney (1980: 5) proposes in retrospective style that perhaps:

> the first autobiography was written by a gentleman named W. P. Scargill and was published in 1834 and was called The Autobiography of a Dissenting Minister…or was written by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in the 1760s (but called it his Confessions) or

> by Michel de Montaigne in the latter half of the sixteenth century (but called it Essays) or by St. Augustine at the turn of the 4th-5th century AD (but he called it his Confessions) or by Plato in the 4th century BC (but he wrote it as a letter, which we know as the Seventh Epistle).

Augustine's *Confessions* are seminal to the study of the entire discourse of autobiography in that they are taken as the starting point of modern autobiographical subjectivities. Yet Gunzenhauser (2001: 75) problematises Augustine's subjectivity noting that he presents himself "less as an irreproducible individual than as a model servant of God" and "it is [only] with the emergence of more secular rationalism, a classic early example of which is Michel de Montaigne's *Essais* (1595) that autobiographers begin to focus on themselves as individuals." Weintraub (1978) calls this change the defining moment in the history of autobiography. The identification of secular rationalism as inspiring individualistic subjectivities in autobiography is of great consequence to this study as, in line with that model, this study identifies the cultural, social, historical and political moments and ideas that inspired autobiographical narratives and shaped the subjectivities of narrating subjects in Zimbabwean autobiographies.

Augustine's work is the prototype of all conversion narratives. The *Confessions* occupy a special place in both the history of the genre and in autobiographical theory. Weintraub (1978:1) argues that:

> The justification for assigning a special position to Augustine lies also in a simple experience. In a systematic search in time through our Western heritage for the accounts in which men self-consciously sought to express the meaning of their personal experience, his book confronts us with striking prominence. All autobiographic writing prior to the *Confessions* retains a much lower profile. None has the scope, the fullness, the inner richness, and the intense personal focus of the *Confessions*.

Weintraub's argument is an acknowledgement that autobiographic writing stretches back in history beyond Augustine, but it is the intensity of self-consciousness that elevates the *Confessions* above all other forms that approximate autobiography. From establishing the beginnings of autobiography properly so- called, autobiographical theory took a paradigmatic shift towards a historical analysis of its generic development. Spengemann (1980) in *The Forms of Autobiography: Episodes in the History of a Genre* discusses the recalibration of the autobiographical form from the Renaissance to modern times. He identified three phases in its evolution. In the first phase he places the chronologically structured narratives of the

Medieval times and the early modern autobiographies such as Dante's *La Vita Nouva* (1292-94), Theresa of Avila's *Libro de la Vida* (1588) and John Bunyan's *Grace Abounding* (1666). Bunyan's story of his conversion is one of a whole genre of Protestant narratives that emphasise the individual's personal relationship with God that can be accounted for only as a life narrative. Spengemann places autobiographical forms that emerge with the advent of Romanticism in the second phase. This he calls "philosophical autobiography", represented by Rousseau's *Confessions* (1782-89) and Wordsworth's *The Prelude* (1850) among others. Gunzenhauser (2001: 75) notes that Spengemann identifies the third phase as "poetic autobiography", in which writers subordinate issues of truth to matters of "poetic self expression" and "self invention". Early novels like Gulliver's Travels (1768), *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), (which is the first novel that uses the Protestant conversion narratives to structure a fiction), and *Jane Eyre* (1864) fall into this category. Consequently, by the 20th century the line between autobiographer and novelist became increasingly blurred. These studies, show endeavours to understand the genre within its diverse contexts at specific junctures in the historical, social, political and cultural development of the West.

The history of literary criticism in the West shows how autobiography, despite an acknowledged long history of existence, suffered neglect as a field of literary inquiry until the beginning of the 20th century. However, because autobiography has a much longer and sustained literary heritage in the West, western critics often claimed, with some justification, that autobiography was a phenomenon unique to the Western world. In discussing the "conditions and limits of autobiography", Gusdorf (1980:29) suggests that autobiography is not to be found outside the Western cultural area "and that one could conclude that it expresses a concern peculiar to Western man, a concern that has been of good use in his systematic conquest of the universe and that he has communicated to men of other cultures...". While Gusdorf (1980) limits autobiography to "our [western] cultural area"; slavery and colonialism, and accompanying struggles have since shifted the boundaries of this cultural area to include Africa and other non-Western frontiers. The systematic conquest of the universe that he attributes to the Western man has resulted in other cultures affected by this conquest sharing the Western habit of self-consciousness (this is not to suggest that such societies lacked self-consciousness prior to these experiences). By so doing notions of self-consciousness have emerged, which create appropriate metaphysical conditions which make autobiography possible. In the same discussion Gusdorf (1980: 30) contends that "it is

obvious that autobiography is not possible in a cultural landscape where consciousness of self does not, properly speaking, exist". In view of slavery and colonialism, processes which engaged in and thrived on what Said (1978, 1998) calls "othering" the conquered, no culture, so assaulted, would fail to develop the kind of self consciousness that is necessary for the creation of autobiography. The violent nature of both slavery and colonialism and the discourses that supported them prompted individuals to question their personal and national identities in fundamental ways. The cultural, political and historical condition that colonialism engendered is a postcolonial one. Postcolonialism as discussed in this chapter is the conditioning background for autobiographies analysed in this study. Another problem with Gusdorf's argument is the phallocentric approach to autobiography and Villanueva (2013: 303) argues that "Autobiography has traditionally been an androcentric form of narration presenting the public story of a public male life." The narratives of women are left out in using this approach.

In terms of critical approaches to autobiography, Smith and Watson (2001) identify two generations of critics. Beginning with German scholars Wilhelm Dilthey and George Misch, Smith and Watson (2001) argue that they are the first generation critics of autobiography. According to Smith and Watson (2001: 114) Misch's criticism focused on the subjects of autobiography arguing that "people who have lived their lives in the public sphere, people who have been actors in important historical events or moments, people who have achieved fame or notoriety in public, are the 'representative' and appropriate subjects of what he designates as autobiography." Smith and Watson (2001: 114) however charge that he is "restrictive and prescriptive in arguing for what is 'great' " at the expense of other more private forms of life narrative like diaries and journals created by those who are not "great". Women's and other marginalized people's potentials for autobiographical acts are also left out of Misch's theorization. As such, Smith and Watson who take exception to the use of the word "representative", argue that these marginal life narratives would not have been representative but exceptional in their time. And as I shall show in the course of this work, the most marginalized person is as "representative" of a form of public being as are Misch's "actors in important historical events." Concurrent with the German scholars' criticism, in the British and American literary spheres scholars traced a tradition of literary criticism in which autobiography was always left out. Smith and Watson (2001: 118) propose that "For the dominant Anglo-American critical tradition, then, autobiographical writing was a suspect

mode of 'trivia' or 'personal' writing, the site of writers' flawed notions about their artistic works, and therefore was to be bracketed out of the canon of poetic and narrative texts." This attitude by critics explains why it took long for a robust theory of autobiography to emerge. However, the influence of Misch's criticism, in which he considers the subject of autobiography to be a great man, is acknowledged as pervasive in autobiographical criticism over the years. Smith and Watson (2001) credit both Dilthey and Misch with inaugurating the criticism of autobiography in the twentieth century and "[offering] a working definition of the genre and its controlling trope – the life of the 'great man'." They also situated the subject and his deed as representative of particular historical and cultural contexts. While this study situates autobiographers in specific historical and cultural contexts, the subjectivities of these autobiographical subjects are not necessarily "representative" of their times, but as the study shows, varied and complex subjectivities emerge in autobiographies that are set in the same historical, political and cultural contexts.

First generation critics did not problematise the self in autobiography, but as Smith and Watson (2001: 123) argue, "radical challenges to the notion of a unified selfhood in the early decades of the twentieth century eroded certainty in both a coherent 'self' and the 'truth' of self-narrating." For the first wave critics, truth was verifiable through biographical facts about the subject and yet later critics proved this to be questionable. We learn from Smith and Watson (2001: 124) that "What had been assumed by earlier generations of critics to be a universal 'self' – achieving self-discovery, self-creation, and self-knowledge – became, in the wake of multiple theoretical challenges of the first half of the century, a 'subject' riven by self-estrangement and self-fragmentation."

The second generation or second wave of criticism is associated with Gusdorf and Spengemann. In this instance, Smith and Watson (2001: 125) argue, "critics began to attend to what Olney labeled the 'agonizing questions' of self-representation. For these critics, truthfulness becomes a more complex and problematic phenomenon." They consider autobiography to be an artistic genre and therefore as unreliable because the relationship between the "I" narrating the life story and the historical person being narrated shows the constructedness of autobiography if only because it depends on selection and omissions on the part of the narrator. This explains the earlier reference to Spengemann's conception of

third-wave autobiography as poetic and as subordinating truth-telling to creative self-expression.

Scholars in the West have documented the development of the genre and have through that documentation demonstrated how the conception of the self is influenced by the historical, political and social circumstances among other factors. They have in a way, according to Gusdorf (1980), located autobiography in its cultural moment through recourse to history and even anthropology. Again they have been able to interrogate the constructedness of the self and truth in autobiography, which can be problematic because narrative constructs both self and the memories it chooses to register.

According to Smith and Watson (2001) the third wave critics opened up new and more nuanced critical interventions and experimental forms of life narrative. The new critical interventions have come in the form of postmodern and postcolonial approaches. Postmodernists on one hand "decentre a stable self" as Smith and Watson (2001: 130) argue and citing the example of deconstructionist Roland Barthes note that "[he] explores the conundrum of being both the subject and the object of an always impossible autobiographical discourse." Postmodernists show the instability of autobiographical selves and acts. Postcolonial interventions on the other hand, as Smith and Watson (2001) suggest, have come from formerly colonised and multicultural writers who propose other identities and alternative ways of imagining the self in autobiography. These writers recall and simultaneously call into question the justice of their historical conditions of oppression and marginalization. Their narratives also reveal the complexity of postcolonial subjectivities.

The vigorous and sustained efforts, starting in the twentieth century, by Western scholars to trace the development of the autobiographical genre are not paralleled elsewhere in the world. Perhaps this is because non-Western societies largely do not have long traditions of literacy and therefore the existence of self-referential writings is a recent phenomenon. Smith and Watson (2001: 84) however argue that while the coinage of the term is fairly recent in the West, autobiographical practices have a history extending back to and maybe before the Greeks, Romans and even extending beyond Western culture. They (2001: 84) point to the existence of oral performance of self-narrative in pre-literate societies and other "modes of written self-inscription in China as early as a thousand years ago, in Islamic-Arabic literature as early as the twelfth century, in India during the Medieval period..., and in North Africa in

the fourteenth century....” On the basis of evidence of oral performance of self-narrative in pre-literate societies and of written forms of life-narratives in other non-Western societies, Smith and Watson (2001: 84) declare:

> This widespread use of self-representation in both pre-literate and literate non-Western cultures contradicts the allegation of an earlier generation of literary critics that “autobiography” is a uniquely Western form and a specific achievement of Western culture at a moment of individuation in the wake of Enlightenment.

The delineation of historical episodes in the development of the genre in the West and evidence of autobiographical forms in the non-Western world are critical and a matter of significant academic interest for this study. One possible outcome of the oral context of autobiography is that it modifies the genre (undermining claims of the autobiographical subject being autonomous) by also ascribing to it a communal identity. Another significance of the oral aspect is the resultant clashes of genre in autobiography and the realisms that also become multiple. This study also adopts the historical turn and applies it to the analysis of Zimbabwean autobiography. By interrogating the inspirational occasions for the writing of autobiography and how history has constructed life-narrative, the subsequent chapters explore the complex processes of historical (re)creation. If Zimbabwean autobiographical works are subjected to this same analytical paradigm of historicizing texts and subjectivities, the outcome will shed light on the complex processes of historical (re)creation. Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular have no comprehensive theoretical history of experimentation with the genre, a gap which this research hopes to fill by engaging in criticism of Zimbabwean autobiography using approaches that rest on a larger cultural-historical and discursive matrix.

In the following section the discussion turns to a review of autobiography criticism in Africa.

Literature review: autobiography in Africa

In Africa the development of life writing in general and autobiography in particular coincided with the colonial encounter, although as noted earlier in Smith and Watson (2001), written autobiographical forms existed in North Africa around the fourteenth century. Javangwe (2013: 20) argues that “[t]here is little research on the existence of auto/biography in Africa. African scholars depend on European definitions of auto/biography and locate its origins as traceable to a modernizing Europe. The consequence of such a scholarly gap is that no

possibility is allowed that African auto/biography could have been oral", an echo of earlier arguments by Smith and Watson (2001). Admittedly, this is a relatively new genre (in its written form) and in addition more critical attention has been paid to other literary forms like the novel, poetry and drama than to autobiography. Countless volumes on literary criticism of this literature have been developed and notable among these are Gikandi's (1987, 2003) *Reading the African novel* and *Encyclopedia of African Literature* respectively, and Irele's (2001, 2011) *The African Imagination: Literature in Africa and Black Diaspora*, and *The Negritude Moment: Explorations in Francophone African and Caribbean Literature and Thought* respectively. Gikandi looks in general at Africa's literary culture and in *Reading the African Novel* he gives space to biographical narratives. This is an attempt to theorise life-writing in Africa. While these are just a few of the substantive studies on African literature, there is dearth of extended studies solely dedicated to life-writing and autobiography and where these have been dealt with they appear as sections or chapters in works that deal with other literary genres that have dominated literary criticism in Africa. Yet autobiography, just like the novel, poetry and drama is a distinct genre with its own theory that deserves comprehensive study.

Olney's (1973) *Tell Me Africa: An Approach to African Literature* is acknowledged as the first ever attempt to study African autobiography. Olney approaches African literature through the lens of autobiography. However, he has been accused of simplifying African subjects of autobiography by suggesting that the life-narratives articulate communal as opposed to individual stories. Olney's simplification is not entirely without merit considering how for instance many of the life-stories of luminaries of Africa's struggles for independence are constructed as typical of the African collective of oppressed people. Nevertheless, Larson (1974: 289) in his review of Olney's work charged that Olney should have devoted his study to African fiction, the novel in particular, since "[a]bout half of *Tell Me Africa* is, in fact, devoted to interpreting African fiction." Olney's argument about subjects in autobiography in Africa also suggests the impossibility of autobiography (in the Western sense) in African life-narratives.

What Olney fails to interrogate in his study (and what should have redeemed his thesis) are the mutations of autobiography once appropriated in an African context. The questions that need answering are whether autobiography in Africa is mainly derivative discourse, to what

ends it has been put and what kinds of stylizations have been included. While the origins of African autobiography have been located in African-American slave narratives which articulated the experiences and legacies of slavery, African autobiography also has its origins in anti-colonial struggles and these engender specific forms of autobiography. Kenneth Kaunda's (1963) *Zambia Shall be Free* and Jomo Kenyatta's (1965) *Facing Mount Kenya* are some among the many autobiographies that take on the form of stories of decolonization. These narratives also speak of the political imperatives of the African intellectual elites in anti-colonial struggles. In these narratives the subjects conflate individual and national histories. They also provide counter discourses to narratives of colonization by forging myths of national belonging for African people.

The post-independence period in Africa has also spawned self- narratives by statesmen who provide insight into their lives as national leaders. Those who write about repression and misgovernance in post-independence Africa have created yet another form of autobiography. This form is defined by prison narratives of those incarcerated for opposing dictators, detention notes, diaries and narratives like Ngugi waThiongo's (1982) *Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary* and Wole Soyinka's (1972) prison notes: *The Man Died: Prison Notes of Wole Soyinka*.

In addition, African women's struggles have also been another occasion for autobiography. These struggles have spawned a whole feminist discourse of female emancipation and empowerment. For many women autobiographers in Africa this has been a search for voice and liberated space. The search for space is both political and discursive. In the age of HIV and AIDS African autobiography has again taken on new forms and on this Javangwe (2013: 174), while interrogating the political identities of narrating subjects in Tendai Westerhof's (2005) *Unlucky in Love* and Lutanga Shaba's (2005) *Secrets of a Woman's Soul*, argues that:

> The problem of HIV/AIDS is not just a biological (health) and moral issue, but assumes political connotations that warrant subjective narrative representations and/or interventions from across the gender divide. Westerhof and Shaba sidestep and revise the narrow definition of the political. Their concerns are the modes of survival for the self and nation in the context of HIV/AIDS and oppression by the patriarchal order. The texts invite a re-reading of how identities are constructed and assigned to individuals from both sides of the gender divide, race and nations in an environment where the scourge of HIV/AIDS redefines male/female representations. In this case, the autobiographical form has been stylized to capture the trauma of HIV/AIDS and the attendant stigmatization.

In South Africa Coullie (2004) and Coullie et al (2006) have written on South African and non-South African autobiography. She has edited a book that brings together extracts from women's life-writings and another one edited by her and others. Coullie's efforts show how women's studies can be focalized around autobiography and how the genre also gives voice to apartheid experiences by women. Autobiographical criticism in southern Africa also focuses on the role of autobiography as personal history in relation to political struggles.

A number of *Research in African Literatures* dedicated to African autobiography also appeared in 1997. Several themes are dealt with in the articles and some of them relate to those already discussed above. The articles speak of hybrid identities, challenges of gender and life-writing, female bodies in autobiography and marginal forms of autobiography. Buuck (1997) writes on Marechera's writings which he considers to be autobiographical and his analysis is informed by postcolonial theory. He (1997: 118) argues that "the work of Dambudzo Marechera stands out as a unique expression of self and post-colonial identity in contemporary African literature. His fiction, though mostly autobiographical, consistently undermines any fixed notions of a unified and stable 'self' or 'history'." Buuck's deployment of the postcolonial theory allows one to problematise history and reject the essentialist categories that define identity in binary terms. Buuck (1997: 118) concludes that "the scripting of the self in Marechera's work reveals the hybridity of postcolonial subjectivity, as experienced within the colonial setting as well as in exile." This article represents one of the early attempts to endow African autobiography criticism with a theoretical framework.

In the same edition of *Research in African Literatures* d'Almeida discusses the challenges of gender and life-writing within the context of using orature as textual strategy in Kesso Barry's *Kesso*. She (1997: 67) informs us that "[African] women writers have used orature in an intertextual manner for different purposes. Recast into textual strategies, it is used as a means of compromise, mediation, protest, or indeed subversion." In this discussion, d'Almeida (1997) shows how women negotiate both space and voice through autobiography. This theme of negotiating space and voice is echoed in an article, in the same volume, by Julia Watson in which she discusses the negotiation of space by female bodies through a hybrid genre of autoethnography. The narrative of growing up that she analyses is complicated by the revelation of the narrating subject's body and the bodies of others. Watson (1997: 37) informs us that "Diallo's covert revelation of both her own (sic) and

others' bodies as culturally inscribed in multiple ways exposes the complex tensions underlying her seemingly innocent and 'natural' narrative of growing up in Dakar." These bodies work to reveal the challenges of Senegalese women.

These analyses point to the varied contexts and circumstances that must inform any analysis of African autobiography. The trajectories that autobiography criticism in Africa is taking also seem to be multiplying.

Critical approaches and views on Zimbabwean autobiography

A review of general autobiographical theory and how autobiography has developed in the West and in Africa helps shed light on how Zimbabwean scholarship on autobiography has engaged general theory to date. This has also created the appropriate context in which to locate this study on how Zimbabwean history has constructed life narratives and how autobiographical subjectivities have in the process been created. Early Western criticism of autobiography rested on its history and form. While this was characteristic of early Western scholarship on autobiography, critics of Zimbabwean autobiography have not been concerned with the origins or genesis of the body that constitutes what we term Zimbabwean autobiography as subsequent discussion shows.

When Veit-Wild (1992) attempted a social history of Zimbabwean literature, autobiography did not feature in her analyses an indication that the genre has eluded sustained critical attention in this country. It is also a limitation on the part of Veit-Wild. This study augments current efforts to theorise life writing in Zimbabwe by further locating autobiography in the realm of literary studies.

Current theories on Zimbabwean autobiography are yet to grapple with the question of its context and, to some extent, structure and stylistics. In terms of offering a synchronised analysis of context and structure, it is Chennells (2005:131-132) who offers an analysis of early accounts of Zimbabwe in white writing, concluding that the accounts are plotted as imperial romances, which, as shown in my study, largely befit the imperial moment in the history of Southern Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular. Chennells (2005: 131-132) calls them "...narratives of control...[that] anticipate the more pervasive control which colonialism will one day assume over Africa's random existence". This is what creates the condition of possibility for autobiography by Africans. Chennells's analysis shows the

relationship between historical moment, creation and structure of autobiographical narrative, but this approach has not been used in analysing other autobiographies that come after these early accounts of Zimbabwe. His approach approximates the model used in this study.

Another approach that can be identified in the body of literature dealing with autobiography in Zimbabwe is the concern with generic convergences and distinctions within the autobiographical form. In Veit-Wild's and Chennells's (1999) *Emerging Perspectives on Dambudzo Marechera*, Melissa Levin and Laurice Taitz (1999:163) theorise Marechera's fiction using the framework of autobiography as a genre. They (1999: 163) point out that "the works of Dambudzo Marechera serve to question received notions concerning the generic distinctions between autobiography, fiction, history, and narrative…." Their chapter is pre-occupied with the thin line that divides fact and fiction in Marechera's works in particular and autobiography in general insisting that "the autobiographical act necessarily entails a combination of two narrative genres, fiction and history". Apart from grappling with the question of generic distinctions, Levin and Taitz (1999:164) also argue that identity in Marechera's writing is constructed in the writing process and that it is "momentarily defined by discursive, ideological, and institutional structures and positions". This current study goes beyond the analysis of generic structure and identity formation to theorise the experiential histories of narrating subjects, and the occasions for textual production, as well as interrogate subjectivities that emerge given the context of the historical moments of autobiographical production.

The general theory of autobiography embraces an exploration of how autobiography functions as material evidence in the study of social and cultural history. As texts, autobiographical narratives cannot be separated from ideas of intention and empowerment especially when those narratives go against the norm in their handling of cultural and political matters. By interrogating the private inspirations for narrating the self, this study not only explores the complex process of historical, social and cultural creation, but individual intentions as well. This concern with the intentions of the narrating subject pre-occupies Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2007: 79) when he explores the metamorphosis of Joshua Nkomo's identity from "father of dissidents" into the "founding father" of Zimbabwe. In a section of his chapter Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2007:79) uses Nkomo's autobiography *The Story of My Life* to show how "Nkomo represented himself as a cultural nationalist and a man of the people who

symbolised and cherished African traditional norms and religious beliefs". What Ndlovu-Gatsheni misses is that this 'man of the people' image is also critiqued in the autobiographies of other nationalists. However, the central argument in his chapter is the question of self representation, another significant concept in general autobiographical theory, and most importantly in postcolonial theory which informs this study. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2007:78) argues that Nkomo's story "forms a part of political self-construction in the midst of hostile deconstruction. In the book, Nkomo re-claims the Father Zimbabwe figure through some historical justifications, and careful and selective mapping out of personal contributions to the liberation of Zimbabwe." He also theorises the intentions of Nkomo in writing his story and how he empowers himself through careful arguments and justifications. It is important that Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2007) points out that Nkomo's self-construction takes place in the "midst of hostile deconstruction" by his political opponents. This observation is useful to endeavours in this study as it foregrounds the inter-relatedness of historical background and textual creation and practices, and shows that autobiography cannot command subjectivities outside the policing or criticisms from other narratives. Therefore in this instance there is no one memory of Nkomo by Nkomo or as constructed in other autobiographies.

Memory as a concept occupies a central place in the theory of autobiography and has been a subject of rigorous discussion. Berryman (1999: 80-81) problematises the place of memory in autobiographical acts. He argues that "...arguments from cognitive psychology, linguistics, and other concerned fields all lead to the conclusion that memory is less a record of the past than a new fusion of image and language, determined by present motives and circumstances." It is not something that is inviolate. While he relates memory to the creative dimension that is always embedded in autobiographical narratives, it is when Berryman (1999: 80-81) argues that "if memory is understood to be a creative act, then the record of experience in a memoir or autobiography is a mixture of design and truth that cannot be unravelled because the past is available only in new forms of present imagination," that his analysis becomes pertinent to this study. Zimbabwean scholarship on autobiography has largely consigned memory to the margins, focusing more on issues of identity and belonging. In addition, the few studies that have explored issues of memory, have not adequately shown that memory is historically inflected and situated. The studies have also not delineated the interface between memory and autobiographical subjectivity, a gap that this study addresses as the subsequent chapters show.

Olney (1980:19) also theorises the centrality of memory to autobiographical acts and argues that "it is memory that reaches tentacles out into each of these three different 'times' - the time now, the time then and the time of an individual's historical context." Both Berryman and Olney stress the significance of placing memory in its historical and discursive moments, a milestone that current theory on Zimbabwean autobiography has not reached. Brockmeier and Carbaugh (2001:3) posit that "psychological issues of memory and identity may be enriched when they are integrated with matters of language, discourse and narration," aspects which this study will show to be at the core of cultural and historical discourses. Smith and Watson (2001:6) postulate that "in autobiographical narratives, imaginative acts of remembering always intersect with such rhetorical acts as assertion, justification, judgement, conviction and interrogation." This is echoed by Javangwe (2013) in his study of Zimbabwean autobiography when he problematises the national memories of subjects in political autobiography.

Javangwe (2013) offers the first ever extended and comprehensive study of Zimbabwean autobiography. His central thesis in the seminal text *The Politics and Poetics of Writing the Self and the Nation in Zimbabwean Autobiography* (2013: 4) is that both white Rhodesian and Zimbabwean nationalist "auto/biographies interpret their experiences in relation to the Zimbabwean nation [and they] authorize different versions of the self and nation, often seeking to exclude competing narratives." Central to his (2013: 5) approach is the question of self and national identities showing how autobiographical narratives "capture the contradictory senses of longing for durable form for both self and nation." Javangwe (2013: 3) too grapples with the question of memory in autobiography arguing that "Despite the claim to authorize and represent authentic accounts of self and nation, the form of autobiography is partial. It too, must be interrogated since as a form it is riven with its own contradictions that derive from mediations of memory and ideological and cultural biases that tend to promote the agenda of the individual subject." Javangwe here points to the politics of memory in autobiography. His study problematises the memory, identity and agency (constitutive elements of autobiographical subjectivity) of the political subject, but falls short of discussing subjectivity in autobiography, and its historicity and stylistic qualities.

Questions of identity have always been fundamental to theories of autobiography. In fact, issues of identity formation cannot be separated from any comprehensive theorisation of the

genre. It is my hypothesis in this study that identity formation in autobiography cannot be discussed outside the very forces that inspire self-narration, such as the experiential histories of narrating subjects for the reason that these same forces inform the nature of identity that is carved by the autobiographical subjects. Geesey (1997:1) notes that "the study of African autobiography intersects with the critical and theoretical 'isms' of our day, namely post-colonialism, post-modernism, and feminism. At the core of each of these critical movements is the question of the subject and the 'first person' speaking position." She singles out post-modern theory as allowing us to view autobiographical texts as "sites of identity production." Vambe and Chennells (2009:1) concur that "the recent surge of interest in biography and autobiography grows out of the pre-occupations of post-modernism which theorise the experiences of a world whose material realities as much as its ideologies call into question the teleologies of class and nation in the Southern African experience of race." This recent surge as noted has given birth to two numbers of the *Journal of Literary Studies* (2009) dedicated to southern African auto/biography.

Various approaches are discernible in the articles that deal with Zimbabwean autobiography in these numbers. The pre-occupations with post-modernity are evident in Vambe (2009:82) when he discusses the interfacing of fact and fiction and the politics and polemics of Nkomo's autobiography concluding that it is the literariness of the text which, "exposes [it] to infinite revisions of its meanings...." His observations are evidently inspired by post-modern thought which questions logocentric truths and undermines any attempt to create stable meanings. Vambe (2009:87) sees the narrative as fractured memories of the self and accuses Nkomo of appearing to have no other life outside the context of the political life of ZANU and the political life of Robert Mugabe. Vambe (2009) dwells on whether Nkomo is or is not the subject of his narrative without giving much thought to the exploration of the historicity of the Nkomo subject and stylistic factors such as intertexts embedded in the story and contributing to the construction of Nkomo's subjectivity in that narrative. Vambe (2009) also pursues the identity formation paradigm, so fundamental to general autobiographical theory, but without showing how identity, memory, experience and agency coalesce with history to create Nkomo's autobiographical subjectivity - a process this study seeks to examine. My study was not necessarily inspired by post-modernism, but by the urge to locate autobiographical production contextually along a historical, cultural, literary and political

continuum guided by postcolonial theory and Bakhtinian Dialogism with its associated concepts.

Other approaches and views on Zimbabwean autobiography have emerged in Muponde's and Primorac's (2005) *Versions of Zimbabwe: New Approaches to Literature and Culture*, which is perhaps seminal in that it devotes a section to life narratives. In this text Ashleigh Harris (2005: 103) in "Writing Home: inscriptions of whiteness/descriptions of belonging in white Zimbabwean memoir-autobiography" shows how "white Zimbabwean identity is constructed, and at times totally de-historicised for an international audience...," which again is a pre-occupation with identity formation without examining the context in which the texts that she analyses were produced and how the historical consciousness of the narrating subjects construct their subjectivities. Memory, another significant aspect of autobiography theory also pre-occupies Ashleigh Harris. She works with Nuttall's and Coetzee's (1998: 75) definition of autobiography as "a public rehearsal of memory." Harris (2005: 103) argues that the definition implies that "the narration of one's personal memory, simply as an act of remembering, or as an index to broader political history, is only ever a rehearsal, and thus can never be fixed in any one point in space and time."

Contrary to the assertion above, this study demonstrates that autobiographical remembering can be located in historical, cultural, ideological and political space and time, and these form the grounds for the construction of autobiographical subjectivities. The study benefits from Brockmeier's and Carbaugh's (2001:13) assertion that "narrative is a prominent and potent form of symbolic action, shaped by historically grounded human communities, socially occasioned in particular cultural and political texts and contexts: a situated performance to be read close- to- that- ground." As the following chapters show, Zimbabwean autobiographies have to be read close to the socio-historical, cultural and political moments that have shaped and occasioned them in order to understand the subjectivity of the narrating subjects.

What Harris (2005) explores is an identity matrix made up of land, race and nation. Her analysis does not interrogate the subjectivity that is constituted through that identity and nostalgic memories of the land by white autobiographers. Subsequent discussion in this study transcends such analytical frameworks and approaches in order to locate the selected autobiographies in their cultural, historical and political moments of creation and explore how memory, identity, experience and agency come together with private inspirations to

constitute autobiographical subjectivities. We learn from Brockmeier and Carbaugh (2001:15) that "the question of what type of construction is at stake here, can neither be separated from the question of what type of identity is being created in this construction, nor isolated from the question of the cultural and historical context of this creation."

Chennells's (2005) chapter in Muponde and Primorac (2005), "Self-representation and national memory: white autobiography in Zimbabwe" discusses white identities and generic structures of selected white Zimbabwean autobiographies. For instance, Chennells (2005: 141) shows how Peter Godwin's story in *Mukiwa* "...is shaped as carefully as a novel" and how "the closure of Mukiwa recalls us to earlier imperial romances", which is an analysis of the generic structure of the text. Chennells (2005) critiques national identity as configured by Ian Smith, Doris Lessing and Peter Godwin. His analysis reveals how "the question of who is in and who is out of the nation" (p. 141) is pertinent in these narratives. Chennells (2005) raises fundamental issues of personal and national identities as well as the generic structures of autobiographical narratives, issues that are at the centre of the theory of autobiography. However, the analysis does not locate these narratives in the discursive, historical and cultural instances of their creation in relation to autobiographical subjectivities, a gap which this study fills. The following chapters show the interrelatedness of memory, identity, private inspiration and the textual creation of autobiographical subjectivity.

Because "subjectivity" is central to this study, I make use of Smith's and Watson's (2001) conclusions on how autobiographical subjectivity is constituted through the five processes of memory, experience, identity, embodiment and agency. While the major thrust of this study is to establish how Zimbabwean history has shaped autobiography, these five processes form the basis on which subjectivity is rendered in autobiographical narratives. My study is and is not necessarily a "social history" of autobiography. It could be described as such in the sense that subjectivities are related to history in an almost linear manner, but it is not "social history" because beyond historical context, autobiographers are able to create new contexts that transcend the merely social. They are not merely mimics: they interrogate history through images and metaphors which are unstable. These five processes will illuminate the historical and cultural moments that inspire and shape life narratives in Zimbabwe. As the subsequent chapters demonstrate the subject of an autobiography constructs memory and is in

turn constructed by that memory, the time and the context of narrating. The memory invoked by a narrating subject is therefore specific to the time of narrating.

In reviewing Zimbabwean autobiographical theory, the observations are that critics have not engaged with the origins and subsequent generic development of the body that constitutes what is called Zimbabwean autobiography, a shortcoming that this study addresses by showing how Zimbabwean history has shaped life narratives through reading the texts against the historical and discursive moments of the narrators' lived times and time of textual creation. Since my study recognises political nuances in the period covered by the narratives and that history is not singular, it avoids Veit-Wild's sociological approach which is deterministic. To some extent, critics of Zimbabwean autobiography have engaged the identity formation paradigm in autobiographical theory, but they fail comprehensively to theorise the historical and discursive occasions for textual production of those identities, aspects that this study dealt with by showing how history, institutions and individuals coax stories out of subjects. While general theory stresses that autobiographical memory should be placed in its historical and discursive moments, Zimbabwean autobiography criticism has not shown how memory is historically and discursively situated and inflected. Levin and Taitz (1999) who theorise the fact and fiction interface in autobiography using Marechera's works fail to establish a causal relationship between historical realities of the time of narrating and the intentions and inspirations of the autobiographer. This study however shows how history and the occasion for narrating the self can account for the autobiographical fictions or fictional autobiographies that Levin and Taitz refer to. The merits of this study lie in endowing the analyses so far made by critics of Zimbabwean autobiography with a historical and discursive context.

At the level of theory the few studies done on Zimbabwean autobiography largely lack theoretical grounding even though, as Geesey (1997) argued earlier, the theoretical –isms of our time inform the study of autobiography in Africa. In Zimbabwean criticism, apart from Vambe's (2009) postmodern approach and Javangwe's (2013) postcolonial and psychoanalytic perspectives, there is dearth of theoretically grounded analyses of Zimbabwean autobiography. Javangwe's (2013) eclectic approach of combining postcolonial criticism with theories of narrativity and Jungian and Foucauldian psychoanalysis is remarkable in many ways. Using Jungian approaches, he shows how dreaming is a

manifestation of the wishes of the political subjects he analysed, wishes which come out from the subconscious. Javangwe (2013) demonstrates how dreams are recounted in autobiographical narrative to authenticate the political ambitions of subject narrators. In deploying White's (1987) theory of narrativity Javangwe (2013: 7) shows that "it is the narrator who renders fact into voice, into narrative, and thereby enabling certain preferred meanings of the event or experience." Autobiography is constructed in this way and narrativity actually speaks to the constructedness of autobiography. As Javangwe (2013: 7) further argues "[t]he narrator exercises authority over the subject matter, scaffolding his own image, authorizing excisions, omissions, interpretations and preferred views through the process of narration."

While the study of autobiography in Africa is said to be inspired by the theoretical -isms such as postmodernity and postcolonial theory among others, none of the studies have combined an ideological and stylistic approach to the analysis of the narratives. This study therefore deploys Bakhtinian dialogism, which enables the discussion to take a stylistic turn.

This study thus offers a postcolonial intervention to the criticism of autobiography, which will also be mediated by a stylistic approach in the form of dialogism and related concepts. While postcolonial theory takes care of the historical approach, dialogism and intertextuality provide nuanced analyses that go beyond history to deal with issues of literary production.

Towards a historical, discursive and stylistic turn: postcoloniality and Bakhtinian dialogism

This study makes use of selected key concepts in postcolonial theory and Bakhtin's theory of dialogism to inform the reading and interpretation of the narratives. On the one hand, postcolonial theory problematises various indices of identity such as race, nation, gender, class and ethnicity. It also attempts to arrive at an understanding of colonialism and its legacies, an important feature of all the narratives selected for this study. According to Ashcroft et al (1995) postcolonial theory also discusses various kinds of human experience such as migration, resistance, representation, place and responses to popular European discourses of imperialism, history and philosophy. The theory also tackles the experiences of speaking and writing about all these.

Dialogism on the other hand is relevant to the endeavours of this study in as much as it recognises the relationship between text and discourse. The theory rests on the premise that no text or discourse exists independently of some other discourse. Discourses and texts always reference some other discourse and sometimes even anticipate other discourses or some other texts. Both theories will create the point of departure in discussing how discourses of the self are imagined and created.

Among the outstanding figures of postcolonial discourses are Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, Frantz Fanon, Gayatri Spivak, Stuart and Catherine Hall, Chinua Achebe, and Chandra Mohanty. As a critical approach, postcolonial studies is a loose conglomerate of critical and theoretical methods used to interrogate principally the politics, history, and literature of former colonies of European powers. Race, gender, ethnicity, nation and class are related to the power dynamics of colonialism and its aftermaths in postcolonial theory. Postcolonial studies provide a critique of all of these and how they are represented. Postcolonialism is therefore also concerned with the politics of representation.

While the broader legacies of colonialism are at the centre of postcolonial studies, the discipline also stresses the importance of local histories. This is the reason why it resonates with this study which deploys Zimbabwe's local histories to understand autobiographical subjectivities. The subsequent chapters problematise these local histories to establish how they are instrumental in shaping a poetics of Zimbabwean autobiography. Local histories are critical in this study since critics of postcolonial studies like Seshadri-Crooks (2000) have emphasised that postcolonial criticism should be re-directed towards the inside and interrogating how the politics of repression was experienced in a local context. This proposal comes in the wake of concern that postcolonial criticism may ignore local particularities in its pre-occupation with the legacies of colonialism.

Some of the key postcolonial concepts I find useful for this study are "alterity", "Eurocentricism", "imperialism", "hybridity", "representation" and "resistance". Alterity is an important concept in postcolonial theory and refers to the absence or lack of identification with either oneself or one's community; it is the condition of otherness and marginality. Ashcroft et al (2011) note that from its Latin ancestry, "alterity" means being different or otherness. "In post-colonial theory, the term", according to Ashcroft et al (2011: 12) "has often been used interchangeably with otherness and difference" since, they further argue,

"[t]he self identity of the colonizing subject, indeed the identity of imperial culture, is inextricable from the alterity of colonized others, an alterity determined, according to Spivak, by a process of othering". It is also a term implicated in the construction of subjectivity because the subject is constructed in relation to its others. An understanding of this condition will be useful to the interpretation of narratives by colonizing pioneers (colonizing others) and African nationalists who were "othered" or marginalized by the colonial system in Rhodesia as well as in post-independence Zimbabwe by the dominant discourse of the ruling elite, from which they have been deliberately excluded. Colonial hegemony sought to define the African in ways that undermined his or her being. Alterity is also important in understanding the subjectivity of narrators in pioneer and other white autobiographies because in Bakhtinian thinking it is the pre-requisite for dialogue, "where dialogue", as Ashcroft et al (2011: 12) argue, "implies a transference across and between differences of culture, gender, class and other social categories". Alterity as a concept will help to shed light on the subjectivities that emerge in autobiographies that narrate the condition of the colonised and the process of resistance.

Because the starting point of this study is the interrogation of autobiographies by the pioneers of the Rhodesian nation, the concept of Eurocentrism will be of significance. Ashcroft et al (2011: 90-91) define the term as "[t]he conscious or unconscious process by which Europe and European cultural assumptions are constructed as, or assumed to be, the normal, the natural or the universal." Europe is here defined as the centre and as Ashcroft et al (2011: 91) further argue, "'[t]he world' only acquired spatial meaning after different regions had been inscribed by Europeans, and this inscription, apart from locating Europe at the top of the globe or map, established an ideological figuration, through the accompanying text and illustrations, which firmly centralized Europe as the source and arbiter of spatial and cultural meaning." Ashcroft et al were referring to the creation of the global map and how the map as a text positions the West as the global top but ideologically and simultaneously it was also offered as the centre. The colonial venture was in itself rooted in Eurocentrism and particularly European nationalisms that began to define themselves in imperial terms in the course of the nineteenth century although, of course, Spain and Portugal had already shaped huge areas of the world to their imperial designs three centuries before. The whole American continent and most of the Asian continent are creations of European empires, while at the same time in the Far East Japan and China were both expansionist imperial powers in their

own ways. The colonial enterprise was also considered a God-sanctioned mission to civilise and enlighten the non-European world. It is in this imperial context that white Rhodesia was equally driven by the discrete claims of British colonialism. This view will illuminate the subjectivities and sense of being of the narrators in the autobiographies of Rhodesian pioneers and Ian Smith who saw their endeavours as nation-builders from a Eurocentric perspective.

The imperial spirit that inspired colonialism leads us to the concept of imperialism, which is considered key in postcolonial theory. Ashcroft et al (2002, 1989) argue that imperialism is viewed as the policy of exercising political and economic control over other foreign territories. It is expansionist and controlled by the notion of superiority of the imperialist. As the subsequent chapters demonstrate, imperial ideology constructed the kind of masculinities deemed suitable for colonial frontiers and was the force that inspired imperial and colonialist subjectivities.

Another fundamental concept in postcolonial theory that is applicable to this study is "hybridity". Hybridity is most useful in interpreting almost all the selected autobiographies, but more so the pioneering ones and those of nationalists. Hybridity, according to Ashcroft et al (2011), refers to the integration or mingling of cultural signs and practices from the colonising and the colonised cultures; the variety of stratagems, desperate or cunning or benevolent by which people adapt themselves to the necessities and the opportunities of more or less oppressive or invasive cultural impositions. Something familiar but new is produced out of this. This assimilation and adaptation of cultural practices can be seen as positive, enriching, dynamic, but also oppressive. Hylda Richards's *Next Year Will Be Better* (1975) and Vambe's *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* (1976) best typify this hybridity as this study will reveal. Richards for instance, appropriates the honorific Ndebele title "Nkosi" for her husband and all that goes with it in an environment that subjugates the African. She is also *Janus*- faced in her construction of identity. Hylda Richards looks back with nostalgia to Home (in England) while at the same time looking forward to making a home in Rhodesia for her descendants and in the end actually sees Rhodesia as being valuably different from England. Yet her aspirations for a home in Rhodesia are modeled on the English middle-class family. Vambe also emerges as a hybrid subject through appropriating the colonizer's intellectual tools and interrogating the colonial condition.

Resistance, conceptualised as subversion, opposition or mimicry is a significant concept in postcolonial theory. Postcolonial theory deals with how resistance to the colonizer can be a creative act and in the context of this study writing the self as a form of writing back to the colonizer and oppressor is an aspect of that creativity. Resistance is also creative in the sense that new subject identities are created in the process of resistance. This resistance can come out clearly as subversion and opposition or mimicry, which actually is not a matter of simple mime, but in effect undermines the authority of the oppressor. In later chapters when I discuss Vambe's narration of how one of his uncles mimicked European habits and how Vambe also appropriates the intellectual tools of the colonialists to interrogate the colonial condition, the idea of undermining the authority of the oppressor comes out poignantly if not paradoxically.

According to Ashcroft et al (2002: 8) "[t]he major feature of post-colonial literatures is the concern with place and displacement. It is here that the special post-colonial crisis of identity comes into being; the concern with the development or recovery of an effective identifying relationship between self and place." The narratives analysed in the coming chapters also grapple with displacement in the physical and spiritual sense with the result that the subjectivities that emerge in such contexts are complex. Migrant subjectivities as articulated in one of the chapters are a direct consequent of this displacement.

Postcolonial theory, however, has its limitations. Seshadri-Crooks (2000: 4) has argued that "the field itself remains undefinable and amorphous in its outlines." This has been caused by its appropriation of various theoretical positions. We further learn from Seshadri-Crooks (2000: 19) that:

> It does not have a theory to speak of, concerned as it is with local cultural practices and political issues in the context of transnationalism. Unlike other area studies, postcolonial studies has no identifiable object; it would be impossible to suggest that it pertains to one or the other area of the world or that it is confined to a period, genre, or theme; nor can it name a stable First or Third world subject as its legitimate speaker (as can e.g. women's studies).

This lack of form causes postcolonial studies to be a dual exercise of self-criticism and opposition. In addition, critics of all hues and shades make it their target. However, in spite of all this its redeeming feature is that it is the ground upon which the contradictions of history and colony are articulated, which is useful for this study as these contradictions are

recognised as constitutive of autobiographical subjectivities. As Seshadri-Crooks (2000: 19) puts it, "perhaps it is this shapelessness; this refusal to stay still, to define itself, that makes postcolonial studies a particularly hospitable interstice from which to work out the paradoxes of history (the temporality of modernity) and colony (imperialism and nationalism)." Given that this study seeks to locate autobiographical subjectivities in their historical contexts, postcolonial criticism from this perspective is suited to inform the interconnectedness of these paradoxes of history and colony to the construction of autobiographical subjects, and disjunctions of individual narratives with conventional history.

Another consequence of the amorphousness of postcolonial studies is that critics of postcolonial discourse also argue that it is afflicted by the very practices it purports to oppose. Among the critics of postcolonial theory Arif Dirlik and Aijaz Ahmad stand out. While postcolonial theory seeks to provide materialist criticism of power and ideology (also a concern of Marxist theory), Ahmad (cited in Seshadri-Crooks, 2000) calls the theory anti-Marxist. This is in light of his opposition to what he deems Homi Bhabha's celebratory approach to the concept of hybridity. Seshadri-Crooks (2000: 14) argues that "Ahmad's real quarrel with Bhabha's notion of hybridity is that it dispenses with 'a sense of place, of belonging, of some stable commitment to one's class or gender or nation'". Class, gender and nation are important categories in Marxist thought and because postcolonial theory claims and is encouraged to radically revise history, for Ahmad, hybridity (at least as he believes Bhabha conceived of it) undermines commitment to these categories and threatens their very existence by transcending them. In this study however, analysis shows how hybridity is actually more complexly conceived in the narratives than Ahmad conceives it. Hybrid subjects paradoxically commit themselves to the struggles and aspirations of their communities yet also appropriate colonizer's tools to critique their own people.

Anne McClintock (1992) also highlights the limitations of postcolonial discourse. Her argument is that in postcolonial discourse, colonialism remains the point of focus and the marker of world time and yet postcoloniality purports to dismantle this. According to McClintock (1992: 85-86):

> If "post-colonial" *theory* has sought to challenge the grand march of western historicism with its entourage of binaries (self-other, metropolis-colony, center-periphery, etc.), the *term* "post-colonialism" nonetheless re-orients the globe once more around a single, binary opposition: colonial/post-colonial. Moreover, theory is

> thereby shifted from the binary axis of power (colonizer/colonized – itself inadequately nuanced, as in the case of women) to the binary axis of *time*, an axis even less productive of political nuance since it does not distinguish between the beneficiaries of colonialism (the ex-colonizers) and the casualties of colonialism (the ex-colonized).

For McClintock, postcolonial theory privileges European linear time as the organizing centre. While I am aware of these pitfalls, my own use of the theory takes into account the political nuances of the local and personal histories of the narrating subjects in the autobiographies analysed in this study.

Again notwithstanding these weaknesses, postcolonial theory offers a literary-historical approach to narratives by engaging in historical discourse as it constructs texts and as it is in turn shaped by those texts, and, therein lies its value to this study. This historical approach is however largely ideological and as such does not provide insights into the nature of literary discourse from a stylistic perspective. Bakhtin's notion of dialogism and related concepts of intertextuality provide entry points to the analysis of texts from a linguistic and metalinguistic approach. While postcolonial criticism clarifies the debates about identity and their myths, dialogism and intertextuality as theoretical constructs unravel the dialogic practices that narrating subjects discussed in subsequent chapters engage in to mediate their subjectivities.

Bakhtin (1981) sees all discourse as having a dialogic orientation. He argues that a work of art does not come fully formed from the brain of its author, speaking a monologic language: it is a response, a rejoinder to other works, to certain traditions, and it situates itself within a current of intersecting dialogues. Its relation to other works of art and to other languages (literary or non-literary) is dialogic. Alfaro (1996: 272) quoting Holquist (1990: 29) posits that:

> for Bakhtin, the "self" is dialogic, it lives in a relation of simultaneity with the "other": consciousness is otherness or, more accurately, it is the differential relation between a centre and all that is not a centre. The self then, may be conceived as a multiple phenomenon of essentially three elements: a centre (I-for-itself), a not-centre (the-not-I-in-me), and the relation between them.

This idea of a dialogic self is critical for an understanding of autobiographical subjects as they relate to their other selves as shall emerge in this study. Martin and White (2005: 92) argue that Bakhtin's concepts of dialogism and heteroglossia are constituted by the view that "all verbal communication, whether written or spoken, is 'dialogic' in that to speak or write is

always to reveal the influence of, refer to, or to take up in some way, what has been said/written before, and simultaneously to anticipate the responses of actual, potential or imagined readers/listeners." In view of this, the autobiographical act that this study analyses is an act of entering into dialogue with other words, ideologies, discourses and histories. Above all it is also the narrating subject's entry into dialogue with another self that is a product of the process of narration. In applying dialogism, this study will reveal how the narratives under analysis not only enter into dialogue with Zimbabwean history, but with other political, religious and cultural discourses and texts generated in the process of creating Zimbabwe as well as concepts of self.

Bakhtin (1981: 281) also argues that utterances are made "against a backdrop of other concrete utterances on the same theme, a background made up of contradictory opinions, points of view and value judgements…pregnant with responses and objections." The discussion that follows highlights how the polemic quality of Ian Smith's *The Great Betrayal* (1997) or Bitter Harvest (2008) and Joshua Nkomo's *The Story of My Life* (1984) demonstrates the kind of relationship between them and other writers or speakers who have engaged similar political subject matter. This dialogic perspective shapes the speaking positions of autobiographical subjects and in the case of these two for instance, the subsequent chapters show that they are contending against certain prior speaking and writing positions adopted by others. Implied here is that their texts are also anticipatory of how their imagined readers are likely to respond. Again because of these positions the narrating subjects are positioned intersubjectively.

Intersubjectivity is the relationship between one's subjectivity and another's and since the act of autobiographical narration is both a public and private one, we learn from Du Bois (2011: 54) that "Pursuing public projects of social action, the self plays the card of its own subjectivity. But this is a subjectivity already calibrated in public space, framed to engage with the displayed subjectivities of co-present Others." The analyses of autobiographical narratives in the following chapters demonstrate the dialogical practices that narrating subjects engage in to mediate their subjectivities. Muzorewa's autobiography, Rise up and Walk (1978) shows how he adopts the discourse of Jesus Christ's messianic attributes in order to construct a messianic nationalist subjectivity. His consciousness of his colonized condition and the discourse of Christian liberation dialogize each other to construct his

subjectivity, which is realised intersubjectively with other characters in and outside the text. Du Bois (2011: 53) adds that "intersubjectivity must be problematized from the beginning as a contingent achievement of social actors engaged in interaction and potentially, contestation." Narrating subjects in the autobiographies discussed in this study interact with history and its discourses and at some level contest historical categories such that the subject positions they take destabilize the self and other categories previously thought to be rigid. The value of dialogism to the analysis of autobiography emanates from its conception of the social and historical as supreme. In line with this, this study also considers the historical and social to be critical to the construction of autobiography. Most importantly, dialogism demonstrates how the self is unstable as it is always being constructed by multiple words, discourses and texts of others. The subject therefore refuses any closure.

Autobiography as a practice is a rhetorical act of the self in which individuals connect with and draw from prior discourses and texts to construct themselves as subjects. The chapters that follow critique how narrating subjects craft rhetoric of the self variously as pioneers, nation-builders, freedom fighters and innocent victims of state repression. There is a binary here and this may be the poverty of Zimbabwean autobiography in that it sees nation-builders versus imperialists, freedom-fighters versus sellouts, innocent victims versus state repression and not other forms of power contestation as capital, patriarchy, and individual choices as subjects of autobiography. The autobiographical text is an example of the material manifestation of a culture of rhetoric. Du Bois (2011: 55) argues that "In the unavoidable human condition of rhetoric culture, the production of discourse is always framed within rhetorical practice, and always realized dialogically. This conjunction suggests the utility of examining the issues raised by rhetoric culture from a dialogic perspective." Subsequent chapters in this study interrogate the rhetorical means deployed by autobiographical narrators to construct subject positions. Since most of the autobiographers studied are tied to the formation of the Zimbabwean nation and far fewer to the creation of the Rhodesian, theirs to a great extent is rhetoric of nation-building.

While the subject narrators are constructed by discourse, they also construct discourse through rhetoric and as Du Bois (2011: 60) argues "[d]iscourse comes in voices, and those voices are able to say different things, and say them from different positionings." In the chapters that follow I argue that subjects speak from multiple positions and with many

layered voices. Because of this, the subject is multiply constructed and the self can never be stable and unified. This as shall be highlighted is an instance of dialogicality. In addition, the dialogicality of the construction of autobiographical subjectivity is realised in intertextuality.

Intertextuality is a theoretical construct developed by Kristeva in 1966 as a development from Bakhtin's concept of dialogism. In interpreting Bakhtin's work, Kristeva (1980: 65) argues that "Bakhtin situates the text within history and society, which are seen as texts read by the writer, and into which he inserts himself by rewriting them" and she defines intertextuality in "Word, Dialogue and Novel" as "a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another." Martin (2011: 148) suggests that "Julia Kristeva … combined ideas from Bakhtin on the social context of language with Saussure's positing of the systematic features of language". This in itself is an intertextual exercise. From Kristeva's thinking it is argued in this study that intertextual references are a stylistic exercise of recreation because when words and texts are referenced and embedded in autobiographical narratives, they are being recreated, which is the essence of language. Various other perspectives on intertextuality have emerged since Kristeva to a point where there are many strands applied in various disciplines and one can effectively talk of intertextual theories. Allen (2000) argues for the usefulness of intertextuality noting that it foregrounds interconnectedness and relationality, which in this study explains how autobiographical texts and subjects are constructed through that relationality to both history and discursive practices.

Other variants of the concept of intertextuality are associated with Roland Barthes, Michel Riffaterre, Jonathan Culler and Gerard Genette. According to Barthes cited in Alfaro (1996: 278) "the citations which go to make up a text are anonymous, untraceable, and yet *already read*" (emphasis in the original) and, Alfaro adds "The 'already read' in Barthes encompasses more than the idea that we all possess conventional knowledge whose sources we cannot recall. It extends towards a notion of the subject as constituted by the texts of his/her culture, the subject as already read." Barthes (1974: 10) in Alfaro (1996: 278) argues: "This 'I' which approaches the text is already itself a plurality of other texts, of codes which are infinite or, more precisely, lost." This argument invokes the agency of a reader who comes already multiply constructed by other texts and in later chapters this study discusses the agency of the reader in establishing intertextual connections in the narratives. Establishing these connections is an interpretative exercise that attempts to also establish the coherence of the

text. Both Kristeva's and Barthes's concepts of intertextuality, Alfaro (1996) argues, have been found to be difficult to apply to literary criticism. However, Barthes's notion of the "already read" and Kristeva's concept of intertextuality as rewriting remain useful to this study as the former explains the constructedness of the subject and the agency of the reader and the latter accounts for the impossibility of having a subject constructed outside social and historical discourses. These facts resonate with the aims of this study.

In order to solidify this argument I will make recourse to the manifestations of intertextuality as articulated by the linguist Norman Fairclough (1992). Fairclough applied an intertextual theory to analyse media discourse. His ideas will be useful to this study since autobiography is a specific instance of language use. Fairclough (1995: 61) argues that:

> Intertextual analysis is looking at text from the perspective of discourse practice, looking at the traces of the discourse practice in the text. Intertextual analysis aims to unravel the various genres and discourses – often, in creative discourse practice, a highly complex mixture – which are articulated together in the text. The question one is asking is what genres and discourses were drawn upon in producing the text, and what traces of them are there in the text?

The value of Fairclough's observations regarding intertextuality lies in its interpretative approach to the analysis of texts. Fairclough (1995: 61) considers intertextuality to be "cultural interpretation in that it locates the particular text within that facet of the culture that is constituted by…orders of discourse". The analysis of autobiographical narratives in subsequent chapters is also an instance of cultural interpretation in that I locate the narratives in their cultural moment. My analysis is also dependent on my social and cultural appreciation.

Another valuable insight from Fairclough (1992) is his discussion of manifest and constitutive intertextuality. Fairclough (1992: 104) argues that "In manifest intertextuality, other texts are explicitly present in the text under analysis; they are 'manifestly' marked or cued by features on the surface of the text, such as quotation marks" and cautions us to "note, that another text may 'incorporate' another text without the latter being explicitly cued." As later discussion shows, there is manifest intertextuality in some of the narratives and these explicit references to other texts are part of the rhetoric construction of autobiographical subjects. Since autobiography is a discourse type, Fairclough's (1992: 104) category of constitutive intertextuality is also useful: "The constitutive intertextuality of a text, however,

is the configuration of discourse conventions that go into its production." A combination of other discourse types is in this case structured to constitute autobiographical discourse. This is also evident in narratives that are analysed in this study.

Most important however, are Fairclough's (1992: 133) observations that:

> Intertextuality has important implications for…the construction of subjects through texts, and the contribution of changing discursive practices to changes in social identity [and that] intertextuality, and constantly changing intertextual relations in discourse, are central to an understanding of processes of subject constitution. This is so on a biographical time-scale, during the life of an individual, and for the constitution and reconstitution of social groups and communities.

These observations resonate with the intentions of this study, which are to critique the construction of autobiographical narratives and their subjects in historical and cultural contexts.

This discussion of intertextuality has shown the multiple strands that have developed ever since Kristeva first coined the term. Intertextuality has also been appropriated in many other disciplines outside literary studies including applied linguistics as evidenced by Fairclough's usage of the theory.

This discussion will benefit from Kristeva's application of the term since according to her as cited in Fairclough (1992: 102) intertextuality is "the insertion of history (society), into a text and of this text into history." Such are the aims of this study.

Outline of Chapters

Chapter One critiques autobiographical subjectivity and what goes into its making. This chapter theorises identity formation, historical experience, social and historical discourses and how they network to create particular autobiographical subjectivities. Ideological discourses are analysed in this chapter to establish how they motivate individual autobiographers within a culture to change and act toward certain ends. In addition the chapter demonstrates how regimes of power work to construct autobiographical subjects.

The pioneering autobiographers embrace between them over half a century of crucial early settler experiences. Chapter Two critiques autobiographies of Rhodesian pioneers, demonstrating how they were compelled to interpret their experiences as empire and nation

builders. The analysis in this chapter is based on Frank Johnson's *Great Days* (1940), Hans Sauer's *Ex-Africa* (1937) and Hylda Richards's *Next Year Will be Better* (1975). These autobiographies can be called historical memoirs; the retrospective gaze of the autobiographer more exclusively on the self as adventurer and pioneer. The Rhodesian nation that these autobiographers celebrate is ironically the same nation that engenders the oppressive conditions that occasion the autobiographical acts of the narrating subjects studied in Chapter Three.

Chapter Three examines Lawrence Vambe's (1976), Abel Muzorewa's (1978) and Maurice Nyagumbo's (1980) autobiographies. In these narratives emerge a recurring and characteristically colonised black Rhodesian self; Rhodesia has made possible the occasions for narrating the self. The discussion of these narratives will dwell on the authors' ideological themes and psychological motives. I shall argue in this chapter that the public and private violation of black people's rights occasioned these autobiographies. The autobiographies can therefore be considered literature for liberation

No single occasion or strategy of self-representation can possibly embrace the autobiographies that come after Zimbabwe's independence. Much of the writing is political autobiography where the authors see themselves as historical figures recreating themselves in memoir. I have split post-independence-published autobiographies into two groups. Therefore Chapter Four will discuss, Joshua Nkomo's, Peter Godwin's and Ian Smith's narratives and their place in the nation-building process. In this chapter I argue that the tumultuous road to Zimbabwe's independence and post-independence political contestations in Zimbabwe create the contingencies that give to the autobiographical acts of Godwin, Nkomo and Smith the form that these assume. The state of Zimbabwean national politics immediately before and in the aftermaths of independence compels their memories and also invigorates their imaginations.

Chapter Five further discusses the politics of post-liberation as autobiographical occasions. In this chapter I have placed Fay Chung, Judith Todd and Edgar Tekere. The discussion in this chapter acknowledges that the narrators have varied encounters with the Zimbabwean postcolony depending on ideological orientation, political location, race and gender. Their different experiences of the postcolony result in diverse ways of validating Zimbabwe as a

nation.

The Conclusion to this research provides an assessment and evaluation framework of how Zimbabwean autobiographies and the autobiographical acts can be located in cultural, political and ideological space and time. This chapter makes conclusions on how historical consciousness and subjectivity of the autobiographer have shaped or are in turn shaped by autobiographical narrative. The Conclusion also brings to light the theoretical results of combining postcolonial criticism with dialogism and intertextuality. In addition, the Conclusion highlights the contribution of the research to scholarship on Zimbabwean life-narratives and its limitations as well as suggests possible avenues for future research. Recommendations on how to theorise Zimbabwean autobiographies are made based on research findings.

Chapter One
Autobiographical subjectivity, discourse and history

Introduction

This chapter explores the construction of subjectivity in autobiography. It seeks to demonstrate how historical forms of consciousness and the discourses these produce both inside and outside autobiographical narratives are constitutive of autobiographical subjectivities. I will use Smith's and Watson's (2001) thesis as the basis for defining the elements that shape autobiographical subjectivity, and adopt their classification, modified by other scholarly references, as an operational model. The chapter will explore the cultural or political discursive economy in which autobiographical subjects narrate their stories. Because history underpins this study and historicising texts is the core business of postcolonial criticism, the theory which informs this study, this chapter will also discuss the construction of autobiographical subjectivity through the dialectic between historical truth-telling and fiction in the reconstruction of the autobiographical subject's historical past. The idea that history tells the truth in a way that fiction is unable to do is quite problematic and Green (1997) has critiqued this notion. In *Novel Histories* Green (1997: 15) argues that "the general neglect or dismissal of historical fiction by historians, no less than the often cavalier deployment of historical material in fiction, suggests a clear demarcation between these two forms of discourse. The line between them has, however, not only been challenged from a variety of perspectives by both literary theorists and historiographers, but perhaps more fundamentally, is demonstrably a shifting one". The chapter thus problematises what White (1987) conceptualises as tropics of history since all historical narratives are constructed to satisfy people's expectations for genre types and not because the facts at the historian's disposal force a particular form on the narrative. White (1987) explores this relationship between fact and fiction in historical narratives. The discussion in this chapter will underwrite the ways in which the study will examine selected narratives to place them at the intersection of historical, discursive and cultural mechanisms that are involved in acts of historically situated autobiographical remembering and establish their particular strategies of constructing autobiographical subjectivity.

Autobiographical subjectivity and its constitutive elements

The point of departure for this chapter should be an understanding of what is meant by subjectivity and the theoretical implications of this for autobiographical subjectivity. Discussing subjectivity and temporality in narrative Pena-Marin (1993: 2) proposes that:

> Subjective identity may be understood as the construction of the meaning of one's life which unifies its different "I"s and its different self-representations into one coherent image. Autobiographical narration, through which subjects select certain events from their biography and organize them as a unified succession of events, plays a fundamental role in this construction of identity carried out by the subjects themselves.

Subjectivity in this sense is the identity of the narrating subject; the self who creates the text and who is also in turn created by the text. Apart from being the author of the text the subject is also involved in the narrative in which selfhood or subjectivity emerges with the unfolding of narrative, underscoring Hall's (2003) assertion that the subject is the centre and author of representation and that subjects are specific to specific discursive regimes and historical periods. The constructedness of both the autobiographical subject and the text within the framework of discourses and history is at the centre of the theory of autobiography. This symbiotic interaction between text and discursive practices, anchored in historical experiences and their representations, shapes autobiographical subjectivities.

While it is the case that subjects are produced and controlled by social institutions and discourses, Woodward (2002: 3) observes that "subject and subjectivity also carry contradictory meanings and include a sense of agency and the notion that the subject can also be an agent. The subject encompasses both subjection to outside forces, even to the extent of being determined by such structures in some accounts, and the possibility of agency." The subject is therefore characterised by a certain degree of ambivalence by virtue of its failure to be fixed in some category of dominance and subordination. In fact the subject is never complete because its subjectivity keeps unfolding defying any kind of closure. Kristeva (1982: 1) points to the incomplete and unresolved nature that permanently accompanies the subject arguing that "subjectivity never quite forms [but] is experienced as an intense ambivalence…" What this foregrounds is the elusive and ruptured nature of identity as a category and how this inflects the making of autobiographical subjectivity.

I shall now turn to the five point classification of the elements that shape autobiographical subjectivity as articulated by Smith and Watson (2001). They identify memory, experience, identity, embodiment and agency as constitutive of the process of creating autobiographical subjectivity.

Memory and autobiographical remembering

Gumbar (2009: 20), borrowing from Smith's and Watson's (2001) thesis considers memory to be the source and authenticator of narrative details and simultaneously recognises the problematic of remembering, arguing that "remembering is performed according to certain collective forms of cultural meaning-making, which defines memory as contextual and dependent on discursive patterns that guide the way personal stories are told." Far from being just a question of recollecting past events that are supposedly inviolate, memory is a process of meaning-making. Smith and Watson (2001:18) point to the political nature of remembering, insisting that memory is embedded in context, and that "we inevitably organise or form fragments of memory into complex constructions that become the stories of our lives. And we learn cultural uses of remembering, how certain ways of remembering are expected, acknowledged, valued." Gumbar (2009:20) also complicates her thesis by arguing that, "autobiographical subjectivity is contingent upon what is remembered and what facts are silenced or voiced due to ideological constraints or certain political overtones that the narrating self is restrained by." Memory thus inflects autobiographical accounts, a notion corroborated by Vambe (2009:82) who observes that "as we remember details of our stories, we suppress other details, disremember or dismember consciously or unconsciously only certain facts and deploy the words in certain calculated ways to elicit certain responses." The act of remembering is thus a much debated aspect of the autobiographical genre. Ezekiel Mphahlele interviewed by Chabani Manganyi in Coullie et al (2006: 244) concedes that telling one's story entails remembering many events and "there is no way that you are going to capture everything that happened in your life. There is no way that you can even approximate the sequence of those events in your autobiography." Because of this the autobiographical text must always be read as a creation, the subject is a recreation and therefore both text and autobiographical self operate at the levels of symbol and metaphor and not absolute facts.

Smith's and Watson's (2001: 19) contention that "the autobiographical subject's engagement in the politics of remembering is symptomatic of the cultural production of knowledge about the past" invites an examination of the significant role played by cultural context in guiding processes of remembering. In the words of Klein (2000: 130) " memory is not a property of individual minds, but a diverse and shifting collection of material artefacts and social practices", adding that "few terms are more tightly bound up with subjectivity; few are better positioned to take the place of the 'soul' shoring up humanist tradition." Certain cultural norms and practices of remembering therefore govern the rearrangement of the past in narrative. Memory is thus the gateway to personal and at some level collective identity; the key to the psychological self that underpins autobiographical subjectivity. As a gateway, and in the historical and political context of the marginalisation of the colonial subject and later the post-independent dissenting subject, memory capacitates the marginalised subject to transgress the boundaries of what is acceptable in terms of political discourse. This view is corroborated by Palumbo-Liu (1996) cited in Vambe (2004:102) who, writing on the ethnic subject, observes that "through memory alone, as the repository of things left out of history, the ethnic subject can challenge history." To remember, therefore, is to commit an act of transgression by recovering that which has hitherto been suppressed. Palumbo-Liu was discussing the repression of an ethnic memory in the US by the dominant white memory. In Zimbabwe when a subject from an ethnic minority tells his or her story he or she is challenging history in the sense of a dominant discourse that is a white discourse and also a hegemonic black majority ethnic group about the past. White memories in Zimbabwe will have the capacity to challenge official, that is, ZANU (PF) histories of the same period. This notion is significant for this study especially as it readily relates to the narratives that delineate dissent and offer alternatives to the dominant discourses on Zimbabwe and its coming into being as a post-independence nation-state.

Vambe (2004:7) points to the problematic nature of memory, highlighting how the "slippages within the interstices of memory are more manifest at the point when authors transpose, massage or interface the 'here and now' quality characteristic of orality into the writing of narrative to create a text or novel." While Vambe was discussing orality in the Zimbabwean novel in English, especially its relationship to cultural memory and the politics of remembering, his observation on the slippages within memory resonates with the notion that remembering is political in nature and it is embedded in context, and that accounts for why

remembering or disremembering is context-bound. In this discussion Vambe is also aware of a double act of translation: translating into static prose the constantly re-enacted performance of orality and the more obvious Shona/English translation.

Smith and Watson (2001: 19) relate memory to experience, indicating that experience is "mediated through memory and language" and that experience itself is "already an interpretation of the past and of our place in a culturally and historically specific present." Language, by mediating experience can abate, challenge or subvert discourses that shape the subject, for in the words of Worthington (1996: 114), "creative language is a condition of our partial self–determination as subjects of/in discourse." Memories are thus inherently fractured and the vocabulary of remembering is not only fractured but inadequate.

The experiential dimension in autobiographical subjectivity

Commenting on experience, the other constitutive element of subjectivity, Scott (in Smith and Watson 2001: 25) posits that "it is not individuals who have experience, but subjects who are constituted through experience." Smith and Watson (2001: 25) contend that experience predates subjects and autobiographical subjects can only know themselves "as subjects of particular kinds of experience attached to their statuses and identities." By establishing the primacy of experience in constituting the autobiographical subject, they show that autobiographical narrators only assume certain identities through the authority of experience and the process of interpreting that experience. Discussing the authoritative nature of experience Smith and Watson (2001: 27) note that:

> A narrator's investment in the 'authority' of experience serves a variety of rhetorical purposes. This observation invites or compels the reader's belief in the story and the veracity of the narrator; it persuades the reader of the narrative's authenticity; it validates certain claims as truthful; and it justifies writing and publicising the life story.

Authority can also be drawn from presence as alluded to in Chennells (2009); from being in the midst of things as they happen. Chennells (2009) discusses Judith Todd's memoirs and delineates the ways in which they read like a diary in some places. He further argues that the diary-like entries are a rhetorical strategy that serves to consolidate what he calls 'the authority of presence'. In other words the diary-like form that the narrative assumes serves to

validate the authority to speak. However, this authority is not asserted and at times it is explicit, but at others it is implicit. The authority of experience according to Smith and Watson (2001) is explicit when the narrating subject is outside the dominant culture lacking public status and implicit when the narrators are celebrities or public figures who can have their names on the title pages of their narratives. Their names actually announce credibility. Because those lacking public status are unknown, their narratives have to be explicit, while public figures rely on the prominence of their names and their experiences are thus implied.

Because of the implicit-explicit dichotomy authority is therefore unstable and according to Smith and Watson (2001: 28) "the instability of something called the authority of experience suggests how it is that the category of experience itself is socially, culturally, historically, and politically negotiated." These inflections point to the discursive nature of experience more in its interpretation. Narrators according to Smith and Watson (2001:27) are said to bring in "discursive schema that are culturally available to them to bear on what has happened" and this is so because experience is "embedded in the languages of everyday life and in the knowledges produced at everyday sites."

Identity and the construction of subjectivity

This discursive schema also permeates the realm of identity; another element constitutive of the process of constructing subjectivity and because of this, it is valuable to explore the identity debates about the autobiographical subject and the key informants of past and contemporary thinking regarding identity. Discussing the identities of selves at key historical moments in the West, Hall (1992:275) outlines discourses that have been critical in shaping individual subjectivities. He says that at the beginning was the "Enlightenment subject", followed by the "Sociological subject" and then the "postmodern subject". The Enlightenment subject which was responsible for constructing the rational and autonomous self, who deserved and could attain political freedom, had reason as the overriding principle for its thought. This point calls to mind Call's (1995: 5) observation in his critique of Nietzsche's criticism of Enlightenment where he argues that Enlightenment thought "asserted that humans could and should seek knowledge of the natural world and that they must use that knowledge along with their own rationality to perfect their societies". This study will

demonstrate how values of Enlightenment were embraced by early colonial settlers and how their embodiment of these values impacted on their worldview and consequently inspired certain subjectivities when they narrated their selves in autobiography. It is also possible that given their daring situations, early colonial settlers could also be Hall's sociological subjects since they were aware at one level of their narratives that they were intruders into someone else's country and were at risk of being driven away sooner or later. They possessed a double discourse: one of fear of being driven away and the discourse that said they were rational subjects in an irrational world which could only benefit from adopting their rationality.

The Enlightenment subject was according to Hall (1992) followed by this sociological subject which in Woodward's (2002: 7) words "grounds identity in the here and now and challenges the transcendental basis of the self." According to Woodward (2002) sociologists and more specifically American pragmatists such as Cooley and Mead consider social interaction to be at the core of formations of selves; selves that must be apprehended in their social contexts. Callero (2003: 121) in discussing the sociology of the self insists that "whether phenomenal or discursive, fragmentary or unitary, stable or transitory, emotional or rational, linguistic or embodied, the self is assumed to be a product of social interaction." Through social interaction, particular practices intersect to influence the creation of selves. This recalls Taylor's (1989: 206) view in Callero (2003: 122) that "the modern approach to identity arose because a wide range of practices – religious, political, economic, familial, intellectual, artistic – converged and reinforced each other to produce it." This range of practices comprises forces of a social nature that control, inhibit and also give definition to the social construction of the self. Callero (2003) proposes that features of self-construction are fluid; changing over the course of life and across social categories like race, ethnicity, gender and class. Given the social nature of self-construction, especially the fluid nature of features of self-construction, Callero (2003: 122) concludes that "for this reason, the most enduring and informative analyses [of self-construction] are often those that link together historical shifts in the political economy, changes in particular social settings, and critical alterations in self-experience." Reflexivity is also a core organising concept for understanding the sociological construction and understanding of the self. This concept entails the self's capacity to reflect on one's situation, actions, thoughts and feelings. The appropriateness of this concept in this study is premised on the fact that the autobiographical act is a reflective act; in

autobiographical narratives subjects reflect on their actions, thoughts and feelings in relation to their historical and social experiences.

The sociological subject assumes a different epistemology to that of the postmodern subject. There is an agreed horizon of situation and approved responses to that situation for the sociological subject. This contrasts with the postmodern subject, which theorises the self as fragmented and characterised by disunity. Woodward (2002: 21) argues that "postmodernism challenged the encompassing nature of the grand theories of modernity and suggested that the notion of a unified self, at the heart of social relations could not be sustained." This view is corroborated by Callero (2003: 117) in his observation that "for theorists such as Derrida, Laclau, and Baudrillard, the idea that individuals are in possession of a core, rational, unitary self, endowed with an essential nature and an independent consciousness, is simply a political artefact of the European Enlightenment." The postmodern self cannot be apprehended, and postmodern conceptions of identity reject the very idea that the self exists.

Given these knowledge systems about the construction of selves at various historical moments, we can see it as evident that systems of discourse are at the core of self-formations. Gumbar (2009:23) suggests that finding him/herself "amidst discourses, the autobiographical self selects identification and differences assigned to identities that exist within those discourses" For Gumbar (2009:23) identity is immediately connected to the historical context, which is recognition that autobiographical selves understand and articulate who they are within specific historical circumstances. To theorise identity is therefore to render ways of thinking about the relationship between the personal and the historical, a concept validated by Woodward's (2002: 21) submission that "identity is historically specific; it can be seen as fluid, contingent and changing over time" in addition to "some historical moments hav[ing] greater resonance than others and provid[ing] a particular focus on the meaning of identity." Since identity matters, it will be worthwhile to interrogate the identity positions that autobiographical subjects take by way of analysing the historical, material, social and symbolic processes involved in the construction of identities.

Selves are located in history and identification is a product of the self's historical circumstances. Coullie et al (2006: 1) propose that "the identity we create through autobiographical accounts is connected to issues of time, meaning, and action. Pursuing the question "How did I become who I am? we (sic) plot our stories along a timeline, tying

together our past and present, our earlier and later selves". Tying together the past and the present entails an engagement with history, its discourses and representations. The historical circumstances are also cultural constructs in much the same way that the selves are. As autobiographical subjects identify themselves they locate themselves in relation to history and narratives of history. The autobiographical act is thus a performance of historical identities.

Identities are also located in language, a fluid entity, which inevitably creates instability in identity. The language terrain is particularly slippery and on the slippery nature of language, Bates (1937: 7) has this to say of problems with language; "we are dealing with words and these form a medium both elusive and inadequate in all cases and one of which few are masters." In signifying and stating, language can overstate, oversignify, understate and undersignify. If then identities are located in language, with its elusiveness and inadequacy, its capacity to embellish and overembellish, they are unstable, fractured, elusive. Bates (1937:7) further contends that "all our means of expression are so abundant and so defective that everybody is forever expressing him/herself and simultaneously giving different impressions from those they think they are giving. When words define; they tend to over define; when they state, they overstate." According to Smith and Watson (2001: 32) "By choosing a particular linguistic repertoire to describe autobiographical acts, the subject creates an identity or a 'subject-positioning' that is not stable." According to Spivak (1995), Butler (1995) and Gilroy (2000 & 2004) identities are by nature fragile, recalcitrant and ruptured. Smith and Watson (2001:32-33) argue that identities can derive from difference or commonality and "identities or subject positionings, materialize within collectivities and out of the culturally marked differences that permeate symbolic interactions within and between collectivities." Smith and Watson (2001: 34) show the shifting nature of identity as a category depending on context which determines meaning or lack of it, "thus autobiographical narrators come to consciousness of which (sic) they are, of what identifications and differences they are assigned or what identities they might adopt, through the discourses that surround them." Woodward (2002: 167) also theorises this shifting nature of identity and argues that "difference and sameness involve the marking of boundaries and the identity story is characterised by the moments at which boundaries are drawn, redrawn and transgressed." Because identification is couched in the language and images of difference, it is appropriate to discuss how this difference is framed. Difference and similarity

are framed by stereotyping; by representational practices. Hall (2003: 258) says that "stereotyping deploys a strategy of 'splitting'. It divides the normal and the acceptable from the abnormal and the unacceptable. It then excludes or expels everything which does not fit." Stereotyping therefore thrives on circumscribing and setting boundaries of what is and what is not. According to Hall (2003: 258) "another feature of stereotyping is its practice of 'closure' and exclusion. It symbolically fixes boundaries, and excludes everything which does not belong", and again:

> It sets up a symbolic frontier between the 'normal' and the 'deviant', the 'normal' and the 'pathological', the 'acceptable' and the 'unacceptable', what 'belongs' and what does not or is 'Other', between 'insiders' and 'outsiders', Us and Them. It facilitates the 'binding' or bonding together of all of Us who are 'normal' into one 'imagined community'; and it sends into symbolic exile all of Them – 'the Others' – who are in some way different – 'beyond the pale".

The phenomenon of stereotyping explains the discursive imaging of Africa through the lens of the colonial metropolis. Hall (2003: 239) demonstrates the mutation of images of Africa from the Middle Ages onwards arguing that "in the Middle Ages, the European image of Africa was ambiguous – a mysterious place, but often viewed positively: after all, the Coptic Church was one of the oldest 'overseas' Christian communities…" Hall shows how this perception changed over time and Africans were then linked to the myth of Ham where they were considered eternally damned to be servants of servants to their brothers. McClintock (1995) in Hall (2003: 239) notes that "by the nineteenth century, when the European exploration and colonization of the African interior began in earnest, Africa was regarded as "marooned and historically abandoned… a fetish land, inhabited by cannibals, dervishes and witch doctors." This reduction of Africa and the African by extension, to essentials was already in place when the imperial venture started and it was certainly employed to justify imperialism. Given this stereotyped identification, relations with Africans were framed in accordance with that identification and this is what underwrote the colonial enterprise. Discourse, argues Hall (2003: 44), "governs the way that a topic can be meaningfully talked about and reasoned about. It also influences how ideas are put into practice and used to regulate the conduct of others." Stereotyping as a discourse of representation is deployed to exercise power over the colonised. Depending on their location on the historical and discursive continuum, autobiographers conform to, personify or resist the discourses giving

rise to autobiographical subjectivities that are specific to prevailing discourses or epistemes to employ Foucault's (1972) use of the term.

This construction of boundaries is useful in interrogating the subjectivities of autobiographical subjects in the narratives under study. The rationale behind this usefulness is the inescapability of a political reading of the autobiographies under study by virtue of their emergence against the backdrop of Zimbabwe's political history. The process of appropriating or resisting a particular national identity may, according to Spencer and Wollman (2002) "involve the deployment of powerful agencies, messages and symbols for particular purposes and may involve conflict and contestation between existing and potential nations, between competing nationalists and others." These observations are relevant and will illuminate the strategies employed by nationalist and non-nationalist autobiographers alike in mapping their selfhoods.

What is clear from this discussion is that autobiographical subjects operate within framed models of identities. Therefore the autobiographer is not creating a unique individual but may well be insisting on his or her typicality.

Bodies, textual surfaces and embodied subjects

While subjectivity is predicated on memory, experience and identity, the autobiographical subject's body is a trope embodying various kinds of experiences. It is according to Smith and Watson (2001: 37) "a site of autobiographical knowledge, as well as a textual surface upon which a person's life is inscribed. The body is a site of autobiographical knowledge because memory itself is embodied. And life narrative is a site of embodied knowledge because autobiographical narrators are embodied subjects." Woodward (2002:2) corroborates this view when she argues that "notions of who we are and the relationship between the individual and the personal, and the societies we live in are always located within the parameters of embodiment", adding "the bodies we inhabit also offer boundaries and structural constraints as well as being sites for the presentation of identities." Gumbar (2009:18) also notes that "apart from inscribing the past in autobiographical narrative, the body serves as a site of identity formation." The narrating subjects who are located in and through their bodies in ways that are culturally specific are therefore, as Smith and Watson

(2001: 38) would argue, "situated at a nexus of language, gender, class, sexuality, ethnicity, and other specificities, and autobiographical narratives mine this embodied locatedness." The autobiographical subject's body is therefore a crucial site for representation of identity. It is according to Woodward (2002: 118), "the medium through which messages about identity are conveyed" and "a site of inscription and symbolic representation, produced through discursive regimes within some accounts." At the same time Woodward (2002:163) problematises both the historicity and materiality of this body by suggesting that "the body is socially and culturally made meaningful in space and time, but it also carries a material dimension that cannot be subject to discursive, social construction only." It is therefore valuable to note that there is a correlation between the body as a site of inscription of autobiographical subjectivity and symbolic representation of identity, in relation to historical contexts and discursive regimes, which account for autobiographical subjectivities.

Agency, the transformative dimension in autobiographical subjectivity

In articulating the significance of memory, experience, identity and embodiment as constitutive of autobiographical subjectivity, there is a risk of over-emphasising their relationship to the narrating subject. The narrating subject can easily be seen, quite erroneously, as a passive subject being acted upon by the constitutive elements of subjectivity. McNee (1997: 84) argues that "the premise that the individual cannot be separated from the wider social framework does not foreclose the possibility of individual agency, for the individual constructs an identity through negotiation or resistance to that framework." Smith and Watson (2001: 42) emphasise the importance of seeing "human beings as agents of or actors in their own lives, rather than passive pawns in social games or unconscious transmitters of cultural scripts and models of identity." Agency is therefore, another significant element in the constitutive process of autobiographical subjectivity as rendered in Smith's and Watson's classification. Thus, in the words of Smith and Watson (2002: 10), "agency is understood as control over the self-representation that the subject produces about [herself or himself]." According to Smith and Watson (2001: 42) "we tend to read autobiographical narratives as proofs of human agency, relating actions in which people exercise free choice over the interpretation of their lives and express their true selves." However, in spite of the fact that autobiographical subjects are deemed to exercise free

choice of agency, this free choice is always a product of mediation, a fact Gumbar (2009: 25) notes when she says "although agency presumes the autobiographical self's freedom to create a textual self, this choice is nevertheless conditioned by social structures, cultural scripts, and discursive systems in which the subject operates." Smith and Watson (2001: 45) "conclude that postcolonial writing exemplifies the politics of agency because it serves as a tactic of intervention in colonial repression." In the Zimbabwean context of the history of colonialism, anti-colonialism and pro-democracy struggles, the black autobiographers' urge to produce or initiate alternative discourses of self as well as dissenting autobiographical subjects in the Zimbabwean post-colony point to this agency, which is the transformative dimension in autobiographical subjectivity. In fact, with the exception of Dambudzo Marechera it is difficult to think of any black autobiographer who did not construct a self that he or she knew that a large number of other black Zimbabweans would identify with. The subject who writes in complete isolation and in total opposition to his or her social context is very rare. Similarly, while white pioneering autobiographers also assume agency when they textualise the imperial and colonial enterprise, they were also inserting their subjectivity within the large volume of texts that were creating imperial discourses.

In theorising agency as a constitutive element of autobiographical subjectivity, Smith and Watson (2001: 43) refer to Althusser's conceptualisation of agency. They (2001: 43) highlight Althusser's submission that the "subject is a subject of ideology- not in the narrow sense of propaganda, but in the broad sense of the pervasive cultural formations of the dominant class." Althusser thus talks about the subjection of subjects, but most importantly the ironies of the perceived agency of subjects. Smith and Watson (2001) point out these ironies in their argumentation that "individuals understand themselves to be 'naturally' self-produced because the power of ideology to hail the subject is hidden, obscured by the very practices of the institution." The result, as Smith and Watson (2001: 43) contend, is that "people are invested in and mystified by their own 'subjection'. That is, they have 'false consciousness': they collude in their own lack of agency by believing that they have it." It is important therefore to be cognisant of this ironic or perhaps paradoxical nature of agency when examining the agency of autobiographical subjects as it is possible that what they deem to be their agency may actually be framed in the terms of reference defined by others and by institutions they believe to be subverting.

The exercise of agency is fraught with many possibilities and impossibilities. Revisionists of Althusser's formulation of the concept of agency are useful in problematising agency. Smith and Watson (2001) identify revisionist theorists in the manner in which they reinterpret Althusser. Wingrove (in Smith and Watson 2001: 43) says the multiple ideologies that hail subjects actually "expose both the subject and the system to perpetual reconfiguration" and that de Certeau, Lyotard and Appadurai locate agency, respectively, in "transverse tactics", "the flexible and uncontrollable networks of language" and in "imagination mobilised as 'an organized field of social practices'." Smith and Watson (2001: 43-44) argue that through transverse tactics subjects manipulate constraining spaces. They may do this through strategically re-using constraining orders to establish plurality and creativity. Smith and Watson (2001: 44) further argue that language is uncontrollable and fluid, it "holds strategic potential for the formation of new socio-political subjects", while "individuals as sites of agency deploy their imaginations as a social fact and a kind of work to navigate the disjunctures of global flows that create radically different self-understandings." For feminist philosophers Butler and de Lauretis, Smith and Watson (2001: 44) further argue, subjects have agency through their daily performance of identities while the subject's unconscious "is also a potential site of agency; its excess is a source of resistance to socially enforced calls to fixed identities", respectively. According to Smith and Watson (2001: 44) "these concepts offer critical frameworks for considering how people, in the act of narrating their lives, might change the stories they tell, might gain access to other cultural scripts, might come to understand themselves differently, might, that is, exercise agency."

Smith and Watson (2001: 45) argue that autobiography is a "metanarrative of Western hegemony that celebrates the autonomous individual and when adopted by postcolonial subjects it becomes a means of asserting cultural agency; of even asserting a critical awareness of the self that has often been denied them by colonisers." In such cases Smith and Watson (2001: 46) posit "writing becomes a means of reforming (or deforming) the former 'empire' and its enforced symbolic interactions." These arguments all point to the agency of subjects and to its politics, which Smith and Watson (2001) claim are best understood in the field of postcolonial writing, the same field to which the narratives under study belong.

In view of this argument, it is axiomatic to recognise agency as a constitutive process of subjectivity and the social, historical and cultural locations from whence the autobiographical subject narrates his or her story and which inflect his or her subjectivity.

Story- telling, poetic truth and the construction of subjectivity

The autobiographical act of narrating a story implies an act of creation which raises questions on the fictional dimensions in autobiographical texts. It is therefore necessary to examine, as Gumbar (2009: 2) puts it, "autobiographical subjectivity as conditioned not only by the lived reality but also by the author's creative representation of that reality." Gumbar (2009:15) argues that "The nexus between experience and autobiographical storytelling is situated in language. Experience and storytelling emerge in a linguistic event; therefore, both of them are discursive."

This brings in the concepts of representation; a critical term in autobiographical studies and in postcolonial theory, and imagination, which is intrinsically connected to the act of creativity. These concepts actually point to a paradox inherent in the interpretation of autobiographical texts; on one level they are imaginative and on another they purport to repeat experiences as they were lived through the act of story-telling. This paradox is succinctly captured in the questions asked by Coullie et al (2006: 55): "to what extent do auto/biographical accounts lay bare the existing truths about a life? In other words, to what extent is auto/biography primarily a mimetic activity? And to what extent do such accounts create the truth about a life? In other words, to what extent is auto/biography primarily a poetic activity?"

Apart from Smith's and Watson's five point classification this research identifies two culturally specific strategies of constructing subjectivity; first, the tradition of European success narratives to which the conversion narrative, which I have already discussed, also belongs. It is as important as the success narrative. The success narratives also come as adventure stories. The second is the African oral story telling tradition. From this epistemological position, there is a way in which story-telling conventions, inherent in early settler, colonial and post-independence white autobiographies, and black African autobiographies, shape autobiographical subjectivity.

Story-telling shapes subjectivity in a number of ways and in the context of Zimbabwean autobiographies it shapes subjectivity as a discursive pattern that forms the subject, as a discursive pattern that constructs both colonialist and African autobiographical subjectivity on the basis of imperial and postcolonial experiences, embodiment, and identity and also underwriting race, gender and other discourses. At another level, story-telling shapes subjectivity as a tradition that often conflates the collective and personal memories of an autobiographical subject.

Autobiographical narratives raise questions regarding truth-telling and textual representation with Levin and Taitz (1999: 168-9) noting that event and textual representation have no equivalence since "autobiography as an act of narration can [never] offer a faithful and unmediated reconstruction of a historically verifiable past." What is called truth in autobiography should therefore be interrogated and since autobiography can be located in the narrative realm, it is prudent to take cognisance of the fact that a thin line divides fact and fiction in autobiography. Because of the problems associated with verification Bruner (2004: 630) further observes that autobiographical accounts are unstable and "this very instability makes life stories highly susceptible to cultural, interpersonal and linguistic influences" that ultimately inflect the truth and this truth is not singular, but has multiple dimensions. On the constructed nature of autobiographical narratives, Bruner (2004: 630) argues that because of their "dependence upon the cultural conventions and language usage, life narratives obviously reflect the prevailing theories about 'possible lives' that are part of one's culture." As there are many possible lives that a subject can recall so the truth of the subject has many layers. The truth in autobiography is what Gumbar (2009:1) calls poetic truth, "a combination of imagination, creativity, and emotions [, and which claims] the primacy of emotional and subjectively interpreted experiences in the construction of subjectivity." The point at which the autobiographical narrator strives to get 'her/his story' into 'her/his history' is the space where the whole essence of autobiography rests and the space which should constitute the site of interrogation." This is again where the imaginary, the fabulous and the fantastic contest the real; the same space where it is crucial to determine how the autobiographical subject engages in the precarious pursuit of balancing narrativity and historicity.

The story of the autobiographical narrative has to be related to historical consciousness. White (1987: 1) considers this to be "a problem of general human concern, namely,

translating knowing into telling, the problem of fashioning human experience into a form assimilable to structures of meaning that are generally human rather than culture specific." Thus according to White (1987) events that were supposed to be rendered in the code of historical facts/chronicles are rendered in the literary code. The literary-historical dichotomy also informs much of the theorisation of autobiography. Inherent in autobiography is a process of self-invention, what Coetzee (2006) interviewing David Attwell in Coullie et al (2006: 217) calls "the inescapable fictionalizing of the self, [at the risk of] undermining the historical sensitivities that insist on using the genre as a form of historical self-reclamation." Self-invention is what brings about the fictions of autobiography.

Imagination is the key driver of the creative acts of story-telling and narrating the self. Thus, some narrators, according to Gumbar (2009: 2), "incorporate imagination as a valid component to represent reality, and as an empowering strategy in autobiographical texts" adding that "these experiences are conflated with the autobiographical subject's perception of her/ [him] self and her/ [his] social reality through her/ [his] imagination." What emerges in this imaginative narrative is another self, a substitute of the self leading to classification of all autobiography as being "autre-biography" as De Man cited by Attwell in Coullie et al (2006:216) would say.

In discussing narrative discourse in historical representation, White (1987: 48) argues that "a narrative account is always a figurative account, an allegory. To leave this figurative element out of consideration in the analysis of a narrative is to miss not only its aspect as allegory, but also the performance in language by which a chronicle is transformed into a narrative." White's argument is that a narrative account of events must never be mistaken for a literal rendition of those events. In view of this postulation, autobiographical truth can only be conveyed via figurative or allegorical means, which are key components of literariness. The self that is constructed in this literary rendition of historical experience is a figurative or allegorical one; one that does not represent itself, but one that Olney (1972) precisely calls metaphors of the self. Olney's (1972: 31-32) concepts of metaphors of self derive from a need "to connect the known of ourselves to the unknown of the world." Metaphor enables such connections to be made. Olney (1972: 30) defines metaphor as "something we know and of our own making, or at least of our choosing, that we put to stand for, and so to help us understand, something unknown and not of our making" and "as that by which the lonely

subjective consciousness gives order not only to itself but to as much of objective reality as it is capable of formalizing and of controlling". Implied in Olney's discourse about metaphors of self is that the autobiographical self has many versions, and these are revealed through metaphor, hence the biblical allusion "by their metaphors you shall know them" (Olney, 1972: 35). Olney (1972: 32) further argues that metaphors are mean with what the world is but generous with "what I am, or am like, and about what I am becoming; and in the end it connects me more nearly with the deep reaches of myself, than with the objective universe". Thus, the subject whom Kristeva (1982: 1) says "never feels itself to be ordered and knowable" becomes knowable through metaphors. Without the metaphors of the self that self does not exist; it has no existence prior to its metaphors and only comes to exist after creating its metaphors.

The autobiographical text as the discursive space in the construction of autobiographical subjectivity

As one of the aims of this study is to scrutinise the discursive construction of subjectivity in selected Zimbabwean autobiographical works, it is worth pursuing autobiographical textuality especially since subjectivity is conceived and mediated through the written autobiographical text. Gumbar (2009: 11) argues that "the autobiographical subject is equally shaped by the narrative itself, which is interpreted as the discursive space where the formation of the subject takes place" and further notes that "the speaking subject is constructed discursively [with] the discursive plane of the narrative [being] used to inscribe the author's selfhood."

Postcolonial studies have shown how the text in its various forms was used to validate empire. Today the empires which controlled early twentieth-century Africa are experienced and understood through texts and in Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular, exercises in texts have opened up a myriad of avenues of understanding the colonial, postcolonial and post-independence experiences and the resistance tradition. Boehmer (2005: 14) observes that "the empire in its heyday was conceived and maintained in an array of writings- political treatises, diaries, acts and edicts, administrative records, notebooks, memoirs, popular verse, government briefs, letters 'home' and letters back to settlers." The text in the nineteenth and

twentieth centuries therefore birthed empire sustained it and mediated imperial authority. In this context the Zimbabwean autobiographical texts under study were and are symbolic performances or re-enactments of experiences, colonial and postcolonial.

The world of the narrative text interacts with a historically and culturally framed outside world in constituting autobiographical subjectivity. Chennells (1999: 169) referring to the works of Zimbabwean novelist, Dambudzo Marechera, considered to have autobiographical qualities, equates the writing act to the concretisation of a writer's sense of his own identity arguing that "the literary process actually reveals the writer's multiple selves and offers the autobiographer options for recovering a sense of his own identity." The text thus plays a performative role and this invites a discussion of the performativity of the autobiographical text and the autobiographical speaker who, as Smith (1998: 108) observes, "becomes a performative subject."

Text, the subject and performativity in autobiographical practices

Smith (1998: 108) notes that "everyday, in disparate venues, in response to sundry occasions, in front of precise audiences (even if an audience of one), people assemble, if only temporarily, a 'life' to which they assign narrative coherence and meaning and through which they position themselves in historically specific identities. Whatever that occasion or audience, the autobiographical speaker becomes a performative subject." Implied in this view of the performativity of the subject is that "autobiographical telling is not a 'self-expressive' act." This notion disputes the autonomy of the autobiographical subject as was often posited by early critics of autobiography; a notion inspired by Enlightenment thought. Olney (1980: 20) complains that:

> Prior to the refocusing from *bios* to *autos* there had been a rather naïve threefold assumption about the writing of an autobiography: first, that the *bios* of autobiography could only signify "the course of a lifetime" or at least a significant portion of a lifetime; second, that the autobiographer could narrate his life in a manner at least approaching an objective historical account and make of that internal subject a text existing in the external world; and third, that there was nothing problematical about the *autos*, no agonizing questions of identity, self-definition, self-existence, or self-deception – at least none the reader need attend to – and therefore the fact that the individual was himself narrating the story of himself had no troubling philosophical, psychological, literary or historical implications.

The problematic nature of autobiographical writing suggested by Olney in this critique points to the fact that autobiographical narration is a performance of identities that are marked by philosophical, literary and historical discourses. Smith (1998: 110) further observes that "the cultural injunction to be a deep, unified, coherent, autonomous 'self' produces necessary failure, for the autobiographical subject is amnesiac, incoherent, heterogeneous, and interactive. In that failure lies the fascination of autobiographical storytelling as performativity." There is also a way in which this performativity functions dialogically as proposed by Smith and Watson (2001: 109) who say "discourses intersect, contradict, and displace one another, where narrators are pulled and tugged into complex and contradictory self-positioning through a performative dialogism." Autobiographers actually stage their self-identities through performing identities in relation to this complex inter-play of discourses.

Butler (1993) also offers another interpretation of performativity in her discussion of gender performativity, which she says is underwritten by the assumption that all human actions, practices and whatever action at any given moment or location is perceived as a public presentation of the self. This resonates very well with the character of autobiographical narratives. Smith (1998: 110) argues that "autobiographical storytelling becomes one means through which people in the West believe themselves to be 'selves'." Self-construction makes use of story-telling as a resource. In this way, autobiographical storytelling is always a performative occasion, an occasion through which, as Butler (1993: 20) argues in theorizing performativity, the "power of discourse…produce[s] effects through reiteration." The concept of performativity therefore problematises representation. All culture is considered as performance and since autobiographical narratives are symbols of cultural pageantry, they are also performative.

Performativity also denotes the idea that the acts of social agents reinforce the rules of a certain discourse, which points to and relates well with the discursive nature of autobiographical acts and the contention underpinning this research that history and discourses underwrite autobiographical practices. Therefore ideas about performance can prove useful methodologically in the interpretation of texts with historical content such as autobiography.

Discourses, power and subject positions

Memory, experience, identity, embodiment and agency are all embedded in social and historical realities and discourses. Hall (2003: 44) credits Foucault with moving us from language to discourse, which he claimed to be "a group of statements which provide a language for talking about – a way of representing the knowledge about – a particular topic at a particular historical moment…. Discourse is about the production of knowledge through language." Speaking of Foucault, Hall (2003) says his project paid attention to historicity, historical circumstances and specificities. One can similarly think of autobiographical subjects as personifying the historical, cultural and social discourses of their times. Referring to the African subject, Mbembe (2001: 6) argues that "the African subject does not exist apart from the acts that produce social reality, or apart from the process by which those practices are, so to speak imbued with meaning." Mbembe's argument supposes that the African subject is different from other subjects, which is contestable. Gumbar (2009: 16) says "the construction of experience occurs within the confinement of an established discourse that defines what experiences are meaningful and worth narrating about." Contrary to Mbembe's assertion it is discourse or discourses that give meaning to subject positions and not necessarily their geographical location as implied by his reference to Africa. Hall (2000: 18) says "discourses construct subject positions through their rules of formulation and 'modalities of enunciation'." Knowledge about the subject is produced through discourse and subjects also know themselves through discourse, to reference Smith's and Watson's (2001) assertion. Thus, in the context of this study, knowledge about the autobiographical subject's experience of conquering and being conquered and the colonial experience unfold, in self narratives, precisely through interactive engagement in discourses, social and institutional systems. Extensive research is obviously required to relate historical texts such as autobiographical narratives to their contemporary discourses.

Discourses also provide symbolic resources by which certain autobiographical subjectivities are either sustained or abandoned. Identities, which are constitutive of autobiographical subjectivities, according to Hall (2000: 17) need to be understood "as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies." For Hall (2000) to enunciate is to articulate a position and subject positions are articulated through language, ideology and other cultural codes.

Althusser (1970) argues that "ideology interpellates [hails or recruits] individuals as subjects." In introducing *Identity: A reader* du Gay, Evans and Redman (2000: 11) point out that "Althusser advances the classic structuralist argument that 'all ideology has the function (which defines it) of constituting' concrete individuals as subjects."

Since ideology as articulated in discursive practices is responsible for constituting the subjectivity of autobiographical subjects, the writing and reading of autobiographical narratives are acts of interpretation of subjectivities. Boehmer (2005: 19) elucidates the interpretative ventures of imperialism at the level of discourse arguing that "nineteenth-century writers of empire…were heirs to long-established traditions of symbolic interpretation." These writers wrote within the scope of a dominant European subjectivity; the conqueror, civiliser and natural ruler of the uncivilised. Boehmer (2005: 24) further argues that "a world-vision of this nature clearly required substantial cultural and discursive reinforcement" and autobiographical narratives of conquest penned by agents of imperialism form part of this discursive reinforcement. Imperialist discourses therefore actively fed the imaginations of imperialist writers and in turn shaped their very beings in fundamental ways, bringing about imperial subjectivities. Imperialist discourses of the "other" were invariably stereotyped and the very existence of the imperialist subject was contingent upon this stereotyped other. The imperial identity was always based on what the "other" was not and was therefore similarly stereotyped.

Discussing the alleged inaccessibility of the African experience where "reason is supposedly permanently at bay, and the unknown has supposedly attained its highest point" Achille Mbembe (2001: 3) argues that "more precisely, Africa is the mediation that enables the West to accede to its own subjectivity." Therefore, what the West is, Africa is not. In the context of this study, the varied autobiographical subjectivities are also founded on the basis of identity differences. Du Gay et al (2000: 2) posit that "identities are constituted in and through 'difference' and (that), as a result, they are inherently 'dislocated' (that is dependent upon an 'outside' that both denies them and provides the conditions of their possibility); and that 'subjects' are 'interpellated' by or 'sutured' to the subject positions made available in discourse through the operation of the unconscious." According to Hall (2000: 17) these identities are constructed by multiple forces "across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions. They are subject to a radical historicization,

and are constantly in the process of change and transformation." This brings in the notion of instability of subject positions and foregrounds the existence of split and multiple subjectivities or troubled selves in autobiographical narratives. Discussing troubled selves, Woodward (2002: 13) proposes that these are "well illustrated at particular historical moments when specific circumstances and social changes are seen to pose dilemmas for individuals. It may be periods of time which are characterised as alienating, or as overturning hitherto securely held values." The postcolony is characterised by ambivalences that may spawn split and unstable autobiographical subjects.

Discourses are also inter-textually transmitted; texts interact to convey and exchange discourses that then inform subject positioning. Boehmer (2005: 45) argues that "colonialist writers, therefore, intertextually inspired one another with images." These images were and are cultural models that are deployed in the construction of subjectivities.

Apart from the subject being determined by discourse, it is also a direct consequence of power. Foucault (1994: 214) says that although "the individual is not the vis-à-vis of power; it is, I believe, one of its prime effects." Power brings a subject into existence through coercive means. Callero (2003: 117) observes that "for Foucault, the self is the direct consequence of power and can only be apprehended in terms of historically specific systems of discourse", and he adds "so-called regimes of power do not simply control a bounded, rational subject, but rather they bring the self into existence by imposing disciplinary practices on the body." Callero further shows how, after the self is coerced into existence, a self-regulating subject is created through the workings of discourse from inside out. Given the coercive nature of power in creating subjects, this study connects the construction of subjectivity to what Callero (2003: 118) calls the "historical deployment of power." The study interrogates how power has been deployed at different historical moments in Zimbabwe and shows how this has inflected autobiographical subjectivities.

History, the autobiographical act and the autobiographical subject

When one reads autobiography, one expects to be undertaking a synchronic reading of personal and national or world history narratives. Again when autobiographers set out to narrate their life stories, it is evidence that they have acquired a historical appreciation of

their existence. Historicity and historical circumstances or specifications mediate our understanding of autobiographical subjectivities.

Commenting on the significant rise of the cultural function of autobiography at the beginning of the nineteenth century in the West, Weintraub (1975: 821) posits "the growing significance of autobiography is thus a part of that great intellectual revolution marked by the particular modern form of historical mindedness we call historism or historicism." Notwithstanding that the normal argument is that autobiographies are a peculiar Protestant form of conversion narrative and begin in the seventeenth century, Weintraub's observations foreground the relevance of relating both the production of autobiography and autobiographical subjectivities to the historical experiences of the autobiographer and the historical times that form the discursive background or horizon of the narrative though this discursive background also affects the autobiographer and his or her work. The autobiographer and his or her text are both social and historical constructs. In this way autobiography assumes its ideal form when it is viewed as a form with a discernible and powerful historical dimension. Weintraub (1975: 835) further argues that "autobiography can have a very special function in elucidating history – and in helping us understand life as a continuous process." The reason why history should be elucidated by an individual experience is that in autobiography the public and the private come together. Weintraub (1975) also emphasises the fact that the autobiographer cannot possibly give his story without also giving the story of his own world and that the autobiographer is enveloped in a cultural-historical skin. The narrating subject's personal life is best apprehended by perceiving it in its historical dimension. History therefore enables readers of autobiographical narratives to understand individual subjectivity on its own terms.

In order to appreciate the point of conjunction for history and narrative, it is appropriate to understand what is meant by history and what the brief of historians is. The historian according to Chennells (2009: 106) is defined by his or her "[accumulation of] a great deal of archival material and indicates its provenance with accurate footnotes and these together with similarly acknowledged, published sources provide the context of academic debates to which the new book or article contributes." This is, however only a claim by historians of what they purport to do in order to give the appearance of objectivity to their work. There are contradictions within the so called objectively written histories as pointed out by Olney (1972) and White (1987). Olney (1972: 38) describes history "as the exercise of an

imaginative cultural or racial memory that is quite analogous to, and has the same powers put to the same uses as, personal memory in the act of autobiography or poetry; the memory in either case is fused with the pattern-making creativity of the individual historian cum cultural autobiographer cum poet." The writing of history is thus framed within individual historians' points of view or historical narratives in which Olney (1972: 36) insists they impose "their own metaphors on the human past" and in which the historian is revealed. Olney's thesis blurs any distinctions that had formerly been made between history as an objective enterprise and autobiography as an imaginative venture. White (1987: ix) corroborates this in his argument that "history itself consists of a congeries of lived stories, individual and collective, and that the principal task of historians is to uncover these stories and to retell them in narrative." Storytelling is always inflected by the logic of tropes and tropes are the hallmarks of literary narratives. Therefore the literary is also to be found in the supposedly objective and factual historical narrative. Earlier White (1966: 112) had attributed the oppositional politics between historians and artists to "the nineteenth century belief in the radical dissimilarity of art to science [which] was a consequence of a misunderstanding fostered by the romantic artist's fear of science and the positivistic scientist's ignorance of art." Historians insisted on events that could be located in specific time and space as opposed to "imaginative writers - poets, novelists, playwrights - [who] are concerned with both these kinds of events and imagined, hypothetical, or invented ones." White's point which I found particularly valuable is his remark (1985:121) that what should be interesting is "the literature of fact or 'the fictions of representation' [and] the extent to which the discourse of the historian and that of imaginative writers overlap, resemble, or correspond with each other." His remarks point to the significance of the zone of convergence between history and life narrative, a zone that foregrounds the purely discursive nature of both historical and imaginative writing.

Sandberg (n.d:35) in discussing the telling of history/histories in autobiographical writing and testimonies of the Holocaust posits that "the relationship between history and literature, or historiography and works of fiction, has been at the centre of an on-going debate within literary and historical studies for some decades." Historians with their insistence on objectivity could not see the relevance of literary texts to their field of study. Thus Sandberg (n.d: 35) noted that "historians and literary critics occupied different territories with few points of contact." The development of a more mutually respectful relationship between

history and literature can be attributed to New Historicism. According to Montrose (1989: 20) cited in Sandberg (n.d: 36) "New Historicism insists on the 'historicity of texts' and the textuality of history." Sandberg adds that "seeing a culture as a text, [New Historicists] acknowledge the crucial role that the study of discourse plays in any historical period while also insisting on the historicity of the text itself, fictional or non-fictional." They therefore define their field by advocating the interpretation of texts by locating them more deeply in context. Gallagher and Greenblatt (2000: 12) argue that:

> The house of the imagination has many mansions, of which art […] is only one. But the new historicist project is not about 'demoting' art or discrediting aesthetic pleasure; rather it is concerned with finding the creative power that shapes literary work outside the narrow boundaries in which it had hitherto been located, as well as within these boundaries.

The interdisciplinary approach to literature and history has according to Sandberg (n.d: 37), "allowed this special kind of fictional works, i.e. those based on documentary experiences, to contribute to contemporary history, and especially [in her case] to the Holocaust, in a more specific way." Sandberg (n.d: 38) refines her analysis of New Historicism in relation to autobiographical and testimonial writing by concluding that "when many contemporary authors use autobiographical techniques to tell their stories, it is because they want to emphasise the authenticity of their experiences and to contextualise them historically in the political and socio-cultural forces of the time." Therefore New Historicism is interested in cultural constructs which are formations of any era. This notion is related to the concept of historically specific models being available to autobiographers and how they are reflected, in their multiple forms, in a given work.

Carr (1991: 3) in a contribution to the philosophy of history posits that "in a naïve and pre-scientific way the historical past is there for all of us, that it figures in our ordinary view of things, whether we are historians or not." This assertion highlights the ubiquity of history in our perceptions of the world around us. Carr (1991: 3) also suggests: that "we have what the phenomenologists call a non-thematic or pre-thematic awareness of the historical past which functions as background for our present experience, or our experience of the present" is evidence, if extended to the production and interpretation of autobiography, that historical consciousness is a critical ingredient in both cases. Dilthey (1968) (in Carr 1991: 4) had earlier argued that "we are historical beings first, before we are observers of history, and only

because we are the former do we become the latter. The historical world is always there, and the individual not only observes it from the outside but is intertwined with it."

These observations add support to the argument for the relevance of history in constructing life-narrative in Zimbabwe as proposed in this thesis. The history of Zimbabwe; the history that largely informs all of the autobiographical narratives under study, is the history of British imperialism, the Zimbabwean resistance to this and the aftermaths thereof. Therefore, this history and its relationship to the Zimbabwean autobiographical text cannot be ignored and finds resonance with the endeavours of this study.

How history and the memory of history are put to use by autobiographers has implications for ways in which subjectivities are constructed. Muchemwa (2005: 196) demonstrates how "Zimbabwean fiction consistently makes use of biographical and autobiographical modes" and how writers not only "use fiction to interrogate facts found in historical narrative; they also seek to collapse boundaries of discipline and genre that separate history and fiction". This argument highlights the inseparability of history and life-narrative, as well as establishes the connectedness of storytelling and its relation to historical time.

Identities, especially cultural identities are not only discursive as discussed earlier but also historical due to being situated in concrete temporal and spatial co-ordinates. Smith and Watson (2001:10) argue that "some people read autobiographical narratives as historical documents, a source of evidence for the analysis of historical movements or events or persons." This explains why autobiography has been and is being used to give focus to studies such as African and African American studies, whose foundational texts are more often than not historical renderings of the African and African American experiences and subjectivities in literary and more precisely autobiographical form. Chennells and Veit-Wild (1999) corroborate this view by noting that the autobiographical act has further implications for the understanding of the discipline of African literature since it is within this literature that the "African image" has been given definition by African writers. The same has been the case with the African American image; much of it has been configured through slave and post slavery narratives that are often cast as autobiographical narratives. The outstanding examples of these are Douglass's *Narrative of Frederick Douglass* (1845), Washington's *Up from Slavery* (1901) and Wright's *Black Boy* (1945) to name a few.

Commenting on Depelchin's decolonisation project in African literature and society, Senayon Olaoluwa (2010) says the former motions for the incorporation of art and literature in the reinvention of African history. Depelchin's project in a way is useful in underwriting the interpretation of Zimbabwean autobiography from the perspective of history. Depelchin (2005) in Olaoluwa (2010: 55) proposes that "African historical scholarship needs an overhaul, because of its colonial orientation through which it adheres to the sanctity of facts, thereby eliding crucial elements of African indigenous history which, among other things, includes a synthetic blend of history and other art forms for the articulation of human travails." His argument is that the dignity of the African was compromised by representations of the African personality in African history; a representation marred by reduction of African history to the written form. Olaoluwa (2010: 57) observes that "on account of the relations of power…, the reduction of African history to a written form, as sanctioned by the West, informs why so much is lost on the real condition of the continent." This observation again foregrounds the relevance of why the historical should be found in the literary and vice versa.

According to Smith and Watson (2001:10) "the complexity of autobiographical texts requires reading practices that reflect on the narrative tropes, sociocultural contexts, rhetorical aims, and narrative shifts within the historical or chronological trajectory of the text." Therefore, a historical appreciation of the times of the narrating subject (and the times of the audience's interpretation of the text) can methodologically be employed to apprehend the subjectivity of the autobiographical subject.

Smith and Watson (2001: 10) also observe that:

> When life narrators write to chronicle an event, to explore a certain time period, or to enshrine a community, they are making 'history' in a sense. But they are also performing several rhetorical acts: justifying their own perceptions, upholding their reputations, disputing the accounts of others, settling scores, conveying cultural information, and inventing desirable futures among others.

Autobiography can thus be the history of an autobiographer's individuality and the history of an individual age. It can also provide a textual record to interact with other textual records. The two histories are inextricably linked. In this way autobiographers will be responding to historical discourses, cultural scripts and sanctioned social discourses.

Smith and Watson (2001:11) argue that "…autobiographical narrators are at the centre of the historical pictures they assemble and are interested in the meaning of larger forces, or

conditions, or events for their stories" adding "in the details of the immediacy of the lived lives of…autobiographical narrators, the political and cultural contexts of the historical past become vivid and memorable." Postcolonial studies corroborate Smith's and Watson's submissions. Boehmer (2005) in writing on postcolonial literature traces its history and makes critical observations that are useful to review for their significance for this section and for how history and historical discourses are fundamental in understanding the interplay between history, autobiographical acts and subjectivity. Boehmer (2005: 14) notes that "in diary descriptions of new lands, or by carving their initials on trees and stone tablets, colonialists declared their intention to make a home, to begin a new history" with the intention of "[erasing], either wholly or in part, the signs of other lives which had unfolded in that particular space." The history of conquest forms the backdrop against which early settlers narrated their life stories and the same historical backdrop carried with it a dominant model of a specific culture configuration, which is among several factors that shaped early settler autobiographical subjectivity. A sense of pride in being subjects of a history of imperial conquest becomes a real foundation of autobiographical subjectivity. The history of imperialism inspires certain kinds of subjectivities for both the agents and subjects of imperialism and is deployed by narrators to project particular subjectivities.

The decades immediately following the Second World War were a period of marked resistance to imperialism in its varied forms and this is the historical context that inspires some of the early autobiographies by black Africans in Zimbabwe. New nationalist projects were coming into being. In Zimbabwe, then Rhodesia, early agitators for black people's freedoms began to mobilise against colonial occupation and oppression. The rallying point for early and latter nationalists was an appeal to the validity of a negated indigenous culture and also to the experience of colonial oppression. Early writings by the likes of Stanlake Samkange, Solomon Mutswairo and Lawrence Vambe bear testimony to this historical moment of resistance couched in cultural nationalist terms. Spencer and Wollman (2002: 99) summarise the tendencies of cultural nationalism by claiming that "cultural nationalism looked elsewhere for its justification, finding it not in reason but in emotion, not in the present but in the past, turning inwards, to the imagination, to tradition, to history and to nature."

In the same way that the imperial adventure was birthed and sustained by texts, and was experienced textually, the historical moment of indigenous resistance to colonial oppression found its own dramatisation in narrative. The historical moment of resistance therefore provided an impulse for narrating the self and consequently for the construction of subjectivities reflecting that historical and cultural moment. The narrative promoted the resistance cause and narrative was also turned into a textual artefact to symbolise that resistance. Boehmer (2005: 183) observes that "a host of biographies and autobiographies by or about national figures appeared at this time". Prominent examples of such texts across the African continent include Kwame Nkrumah's *Ghana: An Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (1957), Jomo Kenyatta's *Facing Mount Kenya* (1965), and Kenneth Kaunda's *Zambia Shall Be Free* (1963). In such works it was taken as self-evident that the experience of the writer or subject – usually the leader of a mass nationalist movement – was in some way typical. "His (almost invariably his)", Boehmer (2005: 183) argues, "development captured in cameo form the emergence of the self-conscious nation." The titles of the texts also captured the conflation of individual and collective national experiences. Implied by the title of both Nkrumah's and Kaunda's autobiographies is that their personal histories are intertwined with the histories of their respective nations. The historical moment of resistance can thus be considered the moment of individuation so critical to the formation of subjectivities for early African nationalists in Zimbabwe in particular and Africa in general. Boehmer (2005: 188) adds, "Historical atonement, the account of a community's coming-into-being, was fundamental, too, in the process of nationalist self-making or self-imagining." Boehmer's observations testify to the fundamental role of history in the construction of a subject position and subjectivity; history shapes the ways in which autobiographical subjects perceive themselves and their place in the scheme of things. Through examples drawn from history and lived experiences, one can grasp how this subjectivity is constituted. Thus, black narrating subjects implement a nationalist decolonising practice of interrogating the discourse of colonialism and articulating their own history. What is important then, is the historical location from which the autobiographical subject asserts his or her authorial voice.

Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, the foregoing discussion was designed to contextualise the following study by stating its basic foundation and locating it in relation to theoretical issues in autobiography in general and to subjective identities in autobiography. This chapter has sought to elucidate the dynamics of memory, experience, identity, agency and embodiment as constitutive elements of autobiographical subjectivity. It has demonstrated how identities are fragmentary, how memory is fractured and how autobiographies as personal histories always deploy the past. By fully recognising identities and autobiographical subjectivities as unstable, shifting and ever unfolding autobiographical acts in Zimbabwean life narratives will be better apprehended.

Through the analysis of the deployment of historical consciousness in the construction of subjectivities, we can better understand how history has constructed life narratives in Zimbabwe. It has also emerged that scholars continue to emphasise the inseparable unity of discourse, history and imagination in autobiographical thought. The chapter demonstrated how memory, storytelling, cultural discourses and history inflect constructions of subjectivity.

Apart from these aspects the chapter delineated how regimes of power coerce subjects into existence. At another level, the discussion in this chapter problematised the purported disjunctions between history and autobiographical storytelling, showing that ultimately both historian and autobiographer resort to using the same tropological mechanisms in their attempts to craft images of reality.

Chapter Two
The pioneering self: Autobiography and Rhodesian discourses of empire building

Introduction

This chapter theorises Rhodesian early settler identities and subjectivities through the examination of three autobiographical texts, namely: Frank Johnson's *Great Days* (1940), Hans Sauer's *Ex-Africa* (1937) and Hylda Richards's *Next Year Will Be Better* (1975). The analysis will be guided by the western discourses that underwrote imperialism. Autobiographical subjectivities that emerge out of this historical background are located in both the history and the time of narrative construction. Johnson's, Sauer's and Richards's narratives cover the crucial first half of Rhodesian history. Johnson's account is significant in that it renders an inside view of the pioneer column's trek to occupy Mashonaland, while Sauer's account is complementary in that it provides a historical link between the colonial enterprise in South Africa and colonialism in Rhodesia. Both male-authored texts expose daring adventure plots in narratives of pioneering and conquest. Richards's *Next Year Will Be Better* is all the more significant in its articulation of the "middle years" in Rhodesia between the two world wars. Its appeal also lies in its gendered presentation of early settler experiences, especially the experiences of pioneers of commercial agriculture in Rhodesia, Rhodesian femininity and the ideology of home-making which was implicit in Rhodes's ambitions for a settler colony. The pioneering autobiographers embrace between them over half a century of crucial early settler experiences. This chapter critiques these autobiographies demonstrating how the narrating subjects were compelled to interpret their experiences as pioneers of Rhodesian commerce and agriculture, in contributing to the spread of empire and finally and paradoxically in laying the foundation for a Rhodesian nation. The narratives can be classified as historical memoirs, in which the narrators are adventurers and pioneers in Africa.

The chapter begins by giving a brief historical account of the pioneer column and its occupation of Mashonaland and later, conquest of Matabeleland. This background is crucial in framing the cultural, historical and discursive backgrounds against which Rhodesian pioneer and subsequent identities were formulated. The cultural, historical and discursive backgrounds also help in theorising the narrative identity of the autobiographers, showing

how for instance the so-called uniqueness of the individual subject that theorists of autobiography often refer to is in fact constituted within what Regard (2003: 92) calls the "geography of social relationships." Discussing what he called topologies of the self and critiquing Lejeune's concept of the autobiographical pact, Regard (2003: 92) argues that

> Lejeune himself cannot avoid asserting that an author's story is conjugated within geography of social relationships. That which he calls the author's 'fragile reality' threatens the first certainty of a closure around the 'uniqueness' of an 'individual life', and hurls the self back into a world constituted by the discourse of others, in which the subject henceforth plays a role.

Thus autobiographical subjectivity is located in a matrix of historical discourses, time and space. Since these discourses and the spatio-temporal spaces occupied by the narrators inflect autobiographical subjectivity, they also point to the dialogic character of the autobiographies that are analysed in this chapter. Guided by Bakhtinian dialogism the analysis of the narratives shows how the autobiographical subjects are authored by their historical times and the prevailing discourses of those times in a dialogic relationship.

Since postcolonial criticism also forms the analytical framework for these texts, it will be prudent to interrogate and justify situating texts authored by pioneers and colonial settlers in postcolonial studies. The analysis of these texts is situated in the context of the Rhodesian colony and pioneer and settler writing. I will also engage with what other scholars have said about settler subjectivities in order to establish where they interface with postcolonial studies before analysing individual texts.

Pioneering Rhodesia

In 1889 on the 29th of October the British South Africa Company (BSAC), with Rhodes as its director, was granted a Royal Charter by Queen Victoria allowing it to acquire mining and other concessions, sign treaties, make laws and maintain peace by means of a police force. This Charter became the legitimating tool for Rhodes's imperial ambitions. The year 1890 saw the Chartered Company's pioneer column marching northwards eagerly anticipating that a second rand awaited them north of the Limpopo. The impressive mineral deposits found in South Africa had encouraged a conviction that the land beyond the Limpopo River held rich deposits and was the Biblical land of Ophir. The pioneer column had a paramilitary force of around 500 men and 200 civilians constituting the Pioneer Corps. The pioneer column recruitment process is ably recounted in Frank Johnson's *Great Days*. On its march to

Mashonaland, the column marked its journey by establishing forts which would provide security for future settlers at Tuli, Victoria, Charter and finally at Salisbury, where they arrived on September 12, 1890. In Johnson's account the British flag was raised the following day and the column took possession of Mashonaland. In accordance with their contracts with Rhodes, each member of the police force was rewarded with land and gold claims. Unfortunately the much anticipated "second rand" failed to materialise and Rhodes's company shifted its focus to agriculture.

As noted by Uusihakala (2008: 39) Rhodes's ideas of the imperial call were reflected in the composition of the Pioneer Corps; his aim being to "establish the nucleus of a self-contained civil community." Uusihakala (2008: 39) posits that, "[b]y and large the Corps men were young and single, motivated by the adventure and opportunity of a new frontier. The Corps included doctors, lawyers and stockbrokers as well as miners and farmers, butchers and builders, many of them were sons of noted Cape families."

Rhodesia remained under company rule until after the First World War when the BSAC mobilised for Rhodesia's incorporation into the Union of South Africa. The BSAC and the business community were clearly motivated by business considerations in their desire for amalgamation. In the referendum of 1922 the white electorate in Rhodesia voted against amalgamation and in 1923 the BSAC handed over responsibility of Southern Rhodesia to the imperial government. Rhodesia became self-governing.

In this historical and political context, Uusihakala (2008) contends that the aggressive defence of the interests of white people, segregation of races and land were the cornerstones of the Responsible Government's politics. The government went on to institutionalise the racial segregation of land through legislation such as the Land Apportionment Act (LAA) of 1930.

White Rhodesians thus constructed their identities against this background of the institutionalisation of white privilege. It is worthy to examine the formation of the political and cultural contexts that underwrote Rhodesian identities and the autobiographical subjectivities of which these identities are constituent elements.

The cultural politics of Rhodesia

The cultural politics of Rhodesia cannot be separated from the wider global context of imperial and colonial politics in general. Malik (1996: 129) cited in Alexander (2004: 196) observes that "colonialism pioneered the transposition of racial arguments into the sphere of culture." This notion is elaborated by Alexander (2004:195) who claims that:

> Initially, white identity construction took the form of a process of racialized 'othering' within the discourse of superiority that was the colonial encounter. It progressed to the status of ideology when it became necessary to explain why the African majority was not to be granted the same rights as the white minority and when the policy of segregation was born.

The result, as posited by Alexander (2004:195), is "the formation of a white community unified by race, over and above ethnicity or class" and "whose national identity was founded on racialism and an idea of the nation that excluded the majority of its inhabitants." Notwithstanding the point raised by Uusihakala (2008: 42) that "[by] the 1930s Southern Rhodesia had became (sic) dominated by lower middle class settlers, skilled artisans, small farmers and small miners [and] semi-skilled workers", these disparate classes ignored class to rally behind race. In this regard, Alexander (2004: 195) points to race as being at the centre of the "national biography that established Rhodesia." According to Alexander (2004: 196);

> Historically, whites allied themselves along racial lines and progressively, in both Southern Rhodesia and Rhodesia, settlers and citizens constructed the state to serve themselves as a race. This drive for the construction of a white identity was derivative of the need to establish 'hegemony' and the right to 'minority' rule.

Theories of colonisation often confer subjectivity on colonial settlers on the basis of the power they wield over their subjects, but it remains to be seen whether discussion of early settler autobiography, in this chapter, can sustain or dismantle this view that confers subjectivity to colonial settlers on the same basis of colonial power over the colonised.

Rhodesian white settlers deployed culture in order to consolidate the subjugation of Africans. This culture was underpinned by emphasis on racial differences. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009:59) argues that the BSAC rule created a caste system in which white Rhodesians were separate from the indigenous Ndebele and Shona, and adds that; "From the beginning, race and racial difference were articulated and institutionalised within the colonial state institutions. The net effect of this was that citizenship was racialised and the population of Rhodesia bifurcated

into ‘citizens and subjects’.” This may not be legally true as Rhodesian blacks could and did acquire Rhodesian passports and could vote if they possessed the economic qualifications, but it is true in black self perception and the perception of most whites about blacks.

Through segregation and its institutionalisation Rhodesians were able to fashion a narrative of identity and on this, Alexander (2004:197) contends, “identity then, as a function of culture, had to be consciously and fastidiously constructed through the creation and propagation of a series of myths, which ensured its insularity”. Anderson (1991: 205) cited in Alexander (2004: 199) adds weight to the above assertion when he posits that “a nation re-imagined daily by its inhabitants requires a ‘narrative of identity’, a story that locates it in time and provides a sense of continuity.” In this chapter I argue that Johnson’s, Sauer’s and Richards’s narratives form parts of that narrative of identity. They can be read as or contribute to formative chapters in the Rhodesian national biography.

Theorising settler subjectivities

One question that I should like to ask of these three texts is whether these are postcolonial texts. Postcolonial studies are concerned not only with the voice of the “colonised other” or the subaltern, but the impact of the colonial enterprise from the onset of colonialism and its aftermaths is at the core of postcolonial concerns. In fact Ashcroft et al (1989: 1) set the limits of postcolonial discourse by arguing that their seminal text *The Empire Writes Back* “is concerned with the world as it exists during and after the period of European imperial domination and the effects of this on contemporary literatures.” The term “post-colonial”, Ashcroft et al (1989: 1) argue, “[is used] to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day. This is because there is a continuity of preoccupations throughout the historical process initiated by European imperial aggression.” What this means in relation to pioneer and settler texts is that these are colonial texts that articulate the lived experiences of colonialism and thus postcolonialism as a critical method is here applied in analysing them. These autobiographies also betray the contradictions that characterise settler subjectivities within postcolonial criticism. For instance, there was no white colony in the British Empire that did not aspire to be independent of the British Parliament, but not outside the empire, which became a sort of

transcendental space whose content lay in subjective perceptions. Some colonies for instance defy simple description as colonising and colonised. In Rhodesia for instance, white settlers were deemed colonisers by the displaced and dispossessed natives, yet these colonisers had a complex relationship with Britain. They were largely unaccountable to Britain throughout most of their history. Although under the rule of the BSAC for over thirty years, settler representatives were a majority in the Legislative assembly and after Responsible Government in 1923 Rhodesians were economically independent of Britain and uniquely for a British colony had complete control of their own defence forces. This last signifier of autonomy was of particular importance when Ian Smith unilaterally declared independence from Britain in 1965 and Britain refused to commit troops in quelling what was a rebellion against the crown. The settlers were in a way colonised by Britain in the context of limited or regulated autonomy although the only regulation was that under the 1922 constitution the British parliament had the power to veto any legislation that addressed the rights of blacks. This right of veto was never exercised: the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 and the various maize acts which forced blacks to sell maize on the international market which was subject to market forces while whites could sell on the local market where prices were kept artificially high by the government; as well as acts which denied blacks the right to train as apprentices. These were unchallenged by Britain. However, Rhodesians were terrified of going too far and attracting British parliamentary attention and this meant that Rhodesia was always less extreme in its legislative racism than South Africa. All these point to the complexity of colonial relations between the metropole and the colony. Against this background, the analysis of the three texts theorises the pioneer and settler subject within the framework of the postcolonial and pays careful attention to the cultural and social practices of the historical times of the subjects.

In the following sections, I explore identity, memory, agency, experience and embodiment as constitutive elements of subjectivity against the historical background of imperialism and particularly pioneer settler politics and culture articulated above. The three texts, Johnson's *Great Days*, Sauer's *Ex-Africa* and Richards's *Next Year Will Be Better*, are autobiographical accounts of pioneer life at various stages and they articulate a variety of settler subjectivities.

Frank Johnson, the cultural rubric of the imperial project and muddled subjectivities

To apprehend Johnson's subjectivity in *Great Days* requires recourse to the discursive practices, socio-cultural models and the immediate and preceding political history of the period in which he lived so as to create a dialogic relationship between the subject, and the matrices of time and space.

Johnson's autobiography chronicles his childhood in England and subsequent emigration to South Africa from where he launched his military and business careers that resulted in his being contracted to Rhodes to help him annex the country later named Rhodesia. The account however ignores the fact that he was in his early twenties and his military and business careers were rudimentary. It is therefore an account of an extraordinary life given that he had the confidence to apply for and that Rhodes had the insight to give him the job. Johnson's self articulation is done within the context of empire building and also being mindful of English ideals of manhood and empire citizenship. His individual identity is thus tied to empire; he is a dialogic self.

The narrative begins by outlining the inspirational occasions for authoring the autobiography. He was "bullied and nagged into writing [the] book" by "Governors, Prime Ministers, Generals, old comrades – 'all sorts and conditions of men'" (p.xii). Johnson also concedes that "it has occurred to me that perhaps it may be a duty I shall owe to the unborn generations of Rhodesians to leave behind me some authentic account of the very genesis, the first hours and days of the life of their country – destined, as it surely is, to fulfil its founder's dream of 'Homes, more homes for Britons'" (p. xii-xiii). His inspiration again is so that he may be included in the class of "those born of women, who lived and died, leaving some *spoor* behind them", and not "those, also born of women, who lived and died but leaving no *spoor* behind to show their existence!" (p. xiii). Johnson's motivations point to a desire to leave a legacy and also that posterity may esteem his part in empire-building: a part that he constantly refers to in his narrative.

When Johnson talks about owing a duty to unborn generations of Rhodesians, to leave behind an authentic account of their genesis, he betrays the complexities and ambivalences of settler subjectivities. This comes out if one considers how 'home for Britons' sits oddly and paradoxically alongside the fact that unborn generations of Rhodesians will learn of their

genesis through his autobiography. The question I should like to ask is whether Rhodesians are really British or a new nation. If they are British then their genesis is in British history and not the history of pioneering Rhodesia. These paradoxes accentuate the ambivalences of settler subjectivities and one could speak of these as muddled subjectivities. When Johnson writes his autobiography, there are other settler colonies such as New Zealand, Australia and South Africa, and Rhodesia itself that perceive themselves as new nations. They would have been offended if they had been called British. These settlers were exemplifying a potential for Britons to go out and found new nations. The founding of new nations was one potential meaning of empire and although British in origin, their futures will be lived out in what they see as new countries. Empire also meant controlling, ordering and civilising people that Britons perceived as inferior, such as in Asia, Africa and the South Pacific. It is only after World War II when India and Pakistan became independent that the idea that "Brown" colonies could be as independent as "white" colonies became part of British thinking. That "Black" countries could become independent occurred simultaneously to British, French and Belgian politicians within a very short space of time -1957-1962- partly because the desire to be an imperial power had fallen away and more practically because the British and French lost control of the Suez canal in 1957 and both Britain and France realised that they could not contain the new militant nationalisms that manifested themselves in Kenya and Algeria.

Great Days belongs to the literature of empire and as Godfrey Martin Huggins argues in the foreword to the text, "[t]he foundation of this Colony fifty years ago has made a stirring chapter in the history of British colonisation in Africa" (p. xiii). The narrative articulates Johnson's political agency in pioneering Rhodesia and enlarging Britain's sphere of influence globally. Huggins further contends "Colonel Johnson is now the last of those who played a prominent part in assisting Cecil Rhodes in his great Imperial schemes. He belongs to that group of Britons who, from time to time, have foisted an Empire on an undesiring and almost unwilling, Mother Country" (p. xiii). Huggins's remarks are fascinating in that they bring closer home the ambivalences of settler subjectivities and how muddled they are. For many theorists empires were only for elites in the metropoles. Many people were indifferent to empires as they perceived them as a waste of money and some objected to them on moral grounds. Though this latter reason is often ignored, there was a considerable ethical objection to the claims made by imperialists. These objections of course were obviously not made by people who were to settle in the new colonies or new nations.

Johnson's narrative can also be located along the continuum of fictional adventure stories and travel narratives "produced by authors such as Rudyard Kipling and H. Rider Haggard in the 1880s," which were, Santaularia (2001; 83) argues, "part of the imperial informational and propagandist machinery of the day." Huggins's comments and Johnson's own submissions immediately locate him as an imperial and pioneering subject.

From the beginning it can be pointed out that Johnson's subjectivity is motivated by empire-mindedness, his identity as English, experiences in South Africa and later experiences in heading the Pioneer Column. Also constituting his subjectivity is his agency in refusing to pursue a medical career as desired by his mother and emigrating to South Africa as a penniless young man, his memory of childhood, contact with Lobengula, Rhodes, his compatriots, as well as embodiment in regard to embodied English colonising masculinity. Johnson internalises the dynamics of all these contexts so that they become the motivating force for the interpretation of who he is. Given these constituent elements of Johnson's subjectivity, it is crucial that this study unravels what underwrote imperial and pioneer subjectivities. The construction of imperial subjectivity has a history traceable to historical and political discourses inflected, in many ways, by the ideology of Enlightenment, among other factors. Smith and Watson (1998: 27) contend that this subject, hailed into subject position by Enlightenment thought has been variously called "the individual" or "the universal subject" or "man" and further argue that "cultural attachment to this sovereign 'I' signals an investment in the subject of 'history' and 'progress', for this 'man' is the subject who travelled across the globe, surveyed what he saw, claimed it, organized it, and thereby asserted his superiority over the less civilized 'other' whom he denigrated, exploited, and 'civilized' at once."

The moral idealism of Englishness also played a mediational role in constituting British imperial subjectivities. Gail Ching-Liang Low (1995: 18) contends that "[one of the distinct ideologies of late 19th century England was] 'imperial Darwinism' and the belief in the white man's right to colonise and rule over other races." Darwinism articulated a pseudo-scientific discourse of natural selection, and natural differences between races that manifested through evolutionary processes. At the level of Social Darwinism, these differences also manifested culturally, with the "lower races" deemed to have inferior cultures to those of the white races. These notions were also backed by anthropological and ethnographic studies. Low (1995: 21-

22) argues that "within the context of imperialism, nineteenth-century anthropology produced a taxonomy of different cultures placed on a temporal scale of development" and "nineteenth century anthropology became a form of comparison between past and present time; geography and culture were reconstructed within a gradation of time and development based on Western civilisation." Darwinism, a product of Enlightenment, coupled with anthropology of the 18th and 19th centuries therefore crafted a language that is then deployed by European subjects of this epoch to articulate notions of selfhood. There is thus a language that expresses notions of the self; and these notions are steeped in stereotypical discourses. Bhabha (1983: 18-19) theorises discourses of stereotyping in relation to the construction of colonial subjects. In this context Johnson is a colonial subject in the sense of being coloniser, but in Bhabha's theorisation a colonial subject connotes both the colonised and coloniser. Low (1995: 1) argues that reading colonial discourse should shift "to an understanding of the processes of subjectification made possible (and plausible) through stereotypical discourse" and that this is "only possible by engaging with its effectivity; with the repertoire of positions of power, resistance, domination and dependence that constructs the Colonial subject." These discourses, according to Low (1995) are invested with myth-making power. These myths thus enable and sustain imperial and colonial subjects in their projects.

In Johnson's narrative, the native people of Africa are savages; he is subscribing to a pre-existing discourse of native savagery that is articulated in European epistemology of the "other". For instance, the chef at Lobengula's court is "a greasy savage" (p.51), Lobengula is "the cunning old savage" (p.66), and when Johnson recounts the disappearance of all native Christian converts in Matabeleland during Lobengula's reign, "even the proverbially untutored mind of the savage was quick to note the association between 'conversion' and 'disappearance'," and this is "a bit of barbarian history" (p.77). This myth of native savagery and barbarism, which embodied more profound truths, is contained in the language of the epoch, which Johnson appropriates and through that appropriation the terms are allowed actively to participate in the discourse. The categories are necessary for the imperial project to justify itself. Johnson's subjectivity is, in Low's (1995: 3) words, "produced by the powerful divisions of self and other" and by choosing to abide by this kind of linguistic repertoire, Johnson creates a subject position that places him as the superior other. His identity is formed through the language of difference and thrives on the distinction between 'them' and 'us'. Calling the others "savages" also endows the imperial subject with power

and control over this savage "other". Imperial subjectivity is thus located at the cusp of power and desire to subdue the other using the rhetoric of the civilising mission.

When Johnson recalls what he called Lobengula's dictatorship, he does this in the context of dictatorships that were developing in Europe at the time of writing his autobiography. It was Mussolini, Franco and then Hitler who embody dictatorship in Europe. Johnson alludes to Germany's Hitler without mentioning him by name. He argues that what Lobengula did then was now being re-enacted in civilised Europe and thus he confirms what theorists of autobiography have claimed in saying that remembering is context bound. It is in the context of what is prevailing in Europe that he is able to identify the king's rule as totalitarian as noted when he spent time at his court.

Johnson invests great narrative energy in proving his service to empire and justifying his deeds as part of the grand scheme to enlarge the British Empire although empire was more complex than that. In several instances, the narrative shows that his motivation was to leave a '*spoor*' in British imperial history. At times he even shows his frustration at the Imperial Government's failure to support his endeavours; frustration that is also shared by Rhodes. From Johnson's frustrations the complexes of the meaning of empire come out. The ambiguity of the idea of empire is that the government in London does not want empire. It is British individuals who create the empire. These complexes foreground the attitudes of a later generation of Rhodesians. As shall be discussed in Chapter Four, these complexes become justification for the Rhodesian Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) as Ian Smith felt that the best qualities of the British had immigrated to Rhodesia and the British had betrayed Rhodesia. The many instances where imperial mindedness is a factor in Johnson's subjectivity are captured below:

> I had, indeed, visions of our own concern becoming a new 'John Bull Company' similar to the East India Company, but with interests covering Africa, from the northern boundary of the Transvaal in the south through the Matabele country, Nyasaland, with no northern limitation (p.69).
>
> I formed plans and vast schemes which would bring the whole of central Africa under our power. But, as usual, the Imperial Government were timid over giving us any active support. They were not keen to go forward in the north (p.69).
>
> [a] road 400 miles long had been cut through practically unknown country and often through dense bush; forts had been built at Tuli, Victoria, Charter and Salisbury; the territory of Mashonaland had been annexed and added to the British Empire; and the

> nucleus of a self-contained civil population had been brought into the country, so that the annexation was no empty formality (p. 161).

As evidenced in the above quotations Johnson is claiming that empty and incoherent space is being given shape and form by his endeavours. These claims emphasise an idea realised in action. Outside its own agency the subject has no meaning. That agency is equally meaningless without factual achievement. The phrase "no empty formality" for instance implies this factual achievement. For Johnson it is white presence that gives content to what otherwise would be an empty formality of annexation. It is also essential for him to define Africa as incoherent nothingness in order to allow him to write like this. Johnson realises his subjectivity because the success of the white Rhodesian nation has allowed him to be a subject.

Johnson concludes the sections on pioneering Rhodesia by declaring that "today most of the Pioneers have passed on, and I remain one of the few left of the small gallant band. Many have died in various battlefields for their King and country; others have died in all parts of the Empire…." (p. 161). Johnson declares all this triumphantly. This is triumphalistic writing showing how for him the justification for his effort is the creation of Rhodesia.

The ideology of an English sense of duty to the empire and a sense of moral superiority underwrote Johnson's subjectivity. This ideology implies putting ideal into practice and in fact the praxis of imperialism is in the expansion of empire. His choice of genre in articulating his sense of self and place in empire makes autobiography an appropriate genre in the poetics of empire. Empire builders are in this narrative and elsewhere figured as superior, morally and physically, to those whom they eventually colonise. This "inherent superiority", according to Taylor (2009: 52), was "the fundamental validating tenet of empire." Thus, Low (1995: 34) posits, "imperialism …turned moral idealism into the fraudulent conviction of inherent superiority." In understanding Johnson's imperial subjectivity one understands, in Low's (1995: 34) words, "the complex workings of ideology and interpellation…." The English masculine ideology hails Johnson into an imperial subject position and also as an imperial adventure hero.

Masculinity, embodiment and imperial subjectivity

A gendered frame of reference helps one to identify one strand in pioneer and imperial subjectivities. Late Victorian England had a culture of masculinity that gives the pioneer Johnson the language through which he can project his identity. Kaiksow (2008: 61) proposes that "masculinity has been shown to be contingent upon historical processes, both material and discursive." Historically, by the time that Johnson moved to Africa, English masculinity had mutated and Mosse (1996) in Kaiksow (2008: 61) delineates "the creation and evolution of a distinctly 'modern European masculinity' that formed in the second half of the eighteenth century, supplanting a previously dominant 'aristocratic' masculinity." Kutcha (2002: 157) defines aristocrats as "a 'leisureclass' of 'respectably dressed' conspicuous consumers who by living off rent produced no value of their own." This class was considered parasitic and during the industrial revolution in England lived off industrialists. A white colonising masculinity succeeds this aristocratic masculinity, which was highly unsuitable for imperial adventurism. This colonising masculinity was defined by a sense of being self-made, highly mobile and worked hard to accumulate capital. Johnson thus creates his identity in the image of this imperial and colonising masculinity.

This masculinity, heroic in nature, is performed through venturing into dangerous and unknown territory. Low (1995: 46) contends that "[t]he landscape of difficulty provides the opportunity for a narrative of the heroic performance of the male body under pressure." This is best captured in the description of the nearly insurmountable task of cutting a road to the north through wild country by the Pioneer Column. Johnson meticulously chronicles the difficulties that the Pioneer Column had to contend with on their journey to the north. The markers of masculinity in this autobiography are treading on ground that has not been trodden before, contending with wild and unfamiliar terrain and facing danger of attack from wild animals, all in the name of empire. Masculinity remains an idea unless it is embodied and autobiography allows that embodiment to be recalled by showing the physical achievements of the Pioneer Column. Ironically the black natives, Fingos, Basothos among others, who accompany the pioneers and actually do the menial work of cutting the road, do not figure as pioneers and this is because black bodies cannot embody imperial masculinity. In fact, before their departure and as Rhodes is being furnished with the plans for the northward trek, Johnson reports that "Rhodes studied my sheets, occasionally muttering figures aloud: "one

hundred and seventy-nine pioneers – a hundred and fifty natives - £30,000 advance." Despite the fact that the pioneers are going to work with these natives, the natives are excluded from the glorious definition of being pioneers. Pioneering masculinity can only be embodied in a white European body. But even in a white body, pioneer masculinity was contested. In describing Jameson, Johnson contrasts him to Rhodes; "not that he was much to look at, for he was small and thin and insignificant – a contrast to Rhodes, who was big, burly and outstanding in appearance" (p.115). Johnson adds, "[Jameson] seemed to delight in doing dangerous things simply for the joy and thrill derived from them, yet, physically, he was totally unlike the pioneer and adventurer of fiction" (p.116). This obviates the embodied nature of imperial and pioneer masculinities; imperialist pioneers had to have a strong physique. While Heather Streets cited in Taylor (2009: 56) argues that the "martial races of empire were constructed through a naturalized discourse that presented them as hardened by the environments in which they were raised, fiercely devoted to one another and to the crown, above all 'naturally' manly and warlike", masculinity in Johnson's narrative is more complexly imagined than suggested here. It is a complex denial by Johnson that imperial masculinity requires brute strength. Jameson's character shows that cunning or intellect and the thrill of danger are as or even more important. In fact, Jameson's utter fearlessness was often seen as more than compensating for his puny size.

In his autobiography, Johnson is also articulating what Wittenberg (2006) calls "the New Imperialism", which he says is best exemplified by John Buchan's *African Writing*. Wittenberg (2006: 5) points out that Buchan and his contemporaries were writing in response to "a general crisis in confidence that marked the late Victorian and Edwardian culture", also arguing that "there was general consensus that the richness and true potential of English civilisation could best be realised by an exposure to the vitality (and danger) of the frontier." Evidently, the key discursive point informing British imperialism is the idea of enhancing British masculinity and as inevitable consequence, being duty bound to civilise the natives. The civilising mission was thus to some extent fertile ground on which the declining value of English masculinity could be redeemed. Thus, Wittenberg (2006: 5) argues that "the wilderness and chaos of the colonial frontier could be the energising proving ground where a new, robust English masculinity could emerge that had, since the glorious days of Drake and Raleigh, been long in decline." The desire to salvage English pride also sustained this imperial masculinity, which in this context sustained Johnson's subjectivity.

Mapping the contours of the imperial adventure hero in *Great Days*

Kaiksow (2008: 62) proposes that "[t]he mental and emotional effort to experience and present oneself as a culturally recognizable 'man' by internalizing and enacting manly ideals and norms entails an active striving toward something." Johnson's agency is thus seen in his striving towards, in Kaiksow's (2008: 63) parlance, the "English-British masculine ideal of the 'imperial adventure hero'." His adventurism can be seen in his impetuous response to Rhodes's inquiries about the size of a military force required to annex Mashonaland. Without due consideration, Johnson tells Rhodes that he could take Mashonaland with a force of 200 men. This is compared to what Rhodes had earlier been told in his inquiries, that a force of 2000 men was required. Johnson's response points to the supreme sense of confidence in the imperial male which has adventurism as one of its features.

The adventure heroes in imperial travel narratives in general, which together with autobiographies of pioneers and settlers form a rhetoric of empire, are according to Santaularia (2001: 85) "virile, strong and valiant figures committed to action and the pursuit of a noble quest." Here nobility is located in bringing imperial schemes to fruition. Johnson's northward trek is life threatening as the possibility of facing a Matabele *impi* is very real. Together with the pioneer corps he surmounts apparently unfordable rivers and rough terrains, as well as wild animals. The trek is a test of their gallantry, military and survival skills. The space that marks the frontier is thus a place where the physically valorised English masculinity is enacted. Here adventure is a masculine affair. Johnson reminds us that the trek to Mashonaland was the "adventurous search for a new country, in which [the pioneer column] might create fresh homes" (p.152) and that "the end had come of the great adventure with, I think, the unique job completed of adding a large piece of Africa to the Empire by contract" (p.155-156).

By scripting his own imperial adventurism, Johnson constructs a self; his "I" emerges during this trek of imperial conquest. We are reminded by Charles Grivel cited in Ivison (2003: 207) that "writing about a journey means writing about the subject. Someone constructs himself, his I, during the journey. Unseen countries, unknown races, extinct species are good for this." Above all Johnson has narrative agency in that he participates in the colonising discourse of imperial authority. The following section analyses Sauer's autobiography in which imperial

masculinity that stresses sacrifice for empire, operates within discourses that, to borrow from Elaine Showalter (1992: 83), "propagandise the British imperial project."

Hans Sauer's Orientalist gaze and the semiotic of otherness

Sauer was of Boer parentage and was born in South Africa. His adventurous spirit however saw him becoming a significant factor in early Rhodesian affairs, especially after his meeting with Rhodes. His autobiography chronicles his South African childhood on a Boer farm and his later development as medical doctor before venturing into law and commerce. Sauer was at the thick of things in Rhodesia following the occupation of Mashonaland by the pioneer column on behalf of Rhodes's BSAC. His narrative is crucial in that it provides an insider's account of the early days of Rhodesia and sheds light on Rhodes's character and motivations.

The salient feature characterising Sauer's account of the pioneer days right from the onset of the narrative is the phenomenon of 'othering' manifesting itself through stereotyping. The discourse of 'othering' subsists in postcolonial theories as a category that explains the nature of relations between colonials and their subjects. It is as Mamdani (1996) rightly observes a consequence of the bifurcation of colonial populations into 'citizens and subjects'.

The identity of colonials thrived on stereotyping the colonised and in Sauer's narrative three outstanding instances of 'othering' through stereotyping indigenous South African populations are prominent. To understand Sauer's conception of the "other" it will help if we employ the epistemology of dialogism. Holquist (2002: 28) argues that "the Bakhtinian just-so-story of subjectivity is the tale of how I get myself from the other: it is only the other's categories that will let me be an object for my own perception." Sauer authors his subjectivity by first projecting the other as inferior. The first instance of this is his description of the Griquas; a description that is inspired by his encounter with Adam Kok, "chief of a curious race" (p.1). He goes on to render the following description of the Griquas:

> In appearance these Griquas were striking: the men were tall and well set up, with reddish brown complexions. They were fond of liquor and not very useful in ordinary life…
>
> The Griqua women were the most remarkable specimens of womankind that could be found anywhere on earth. As a rule they were fairly large and powerfully built, with the unusual peculiarity that their buttocks were enormously developed – to such an

> extent that a Griqua woman when erect presented an almost unbelievable caricature of the human form. This posterior development was probably a provision of nature for the storage of food, like the camel's hump. (p.1)

The second instance is his description of the Khoi Khoi whom he calls Hottentots. This is what he says:

> The Hottentots, small brown men with absolutely flat noses, but otherwise with not unpleasant features, were unique in their way. They were a smallish people, with the women showing a tendency for the buttock to be too largely developed, but this was not so marked as with the Griqua.
>
> They were a stock raising (sic), owning large herds of cattle, sheep and goats. The Hottentot was unwarlike, pleasant in his dealings, and easily took to domestic service with the white man.
>
> The language they spoke was unallied to any other known tongue. It was unprintable and impossible to acquire.
>
> According to the scientific world, they are quite extinct as a separate race, drink having proved their undoing. (p.3)

The third instance that demonstrates Sauer's race-science-inflected attitude towards the other is his description of the Bushman. Sauer says:

> He belongs to the great pygmy race, and in many respects is more allied to the gorilla than he is to man.
>
> The scientific explanation is that in the early stages of evolution of homo sapiens, man was a pygmy who overran practically the whole of the earth, traces of the pygmy being found in all the existing continents.
>
> He was an untamable savage. He had no tribal system, or form of government; he never built a house or hut; he slept in holes in the ground or in caves; he had no domestic animals of any sort, not even a dog; and he never cultivated the ground, even in the most primitive fashion. He was, however, a born hunter, and with his only weapon – the bow and poisoned arrows – he managed to exist until the advent of the white man
>
> The South African Boers, from their very first contact with these strange people, came to the conclusion that extermination was the only policy to pursue, all their efforts to tame them being useless. (p. 4)

These extensive quotations highlight the way in which difference is deployed as a basis for stereotyping the other, and constituting the self. The South African native tribes that Sauer describes are devoid of what he considers to be markers of civilisation. Through Sauer's language natives cannot be admitted to the community of the civilised; he engages in what I

may call strategic annihilation of native Africans in order to justify displacement, dispossession and subjugation, which are all hallmarks of colonisation. He is however generous in his assessment of the Zulus under "Tchaka, the most powerful and relentless conqueror and marauder that Africa has ever known" (p. 5) whom he considered martial.

Sauer's own identity is formed on the basis of the difference that he sees as inherent in the black and white races. Whitlock (2000: 43) posits that, "the settler self cannot be seen as an entity which floats free from…, racial and ethnic differences. Indeed it is constituted by and through difference, and in history." The language of difference and its accompanying imagery and metaphors of difference are also responsible for constituting that self. Through deploying the language of conquest, Sauer constructs his identity as conqueror. This is manifest in his articulation of the Boer resolution to exterminate the South African Bushmen, and regarding the Khoi Khoi and San languages as having no relation with the other categories of human speech. According to him the language spoken by the Hottentots "was unallied to any other known tongue. It was unprintable, and impossible to acquire" (p. 3). As for the Bushmen, Sauer concludes that "the language spoken by these little men consisted of a series of "clicks" in different intonations, quite impossible to imitate and still more impossible to reduce to writing. It is the language of the higher ape" (p. 4). Sauer's language locates natives of Africa on a low level of the evolutionary scale. He employs the discursive baggage of Darwinism, which theorises the evolution of species. But racial discourses are contingent on the purposes which the speaker chooses to make a human group serve. It was conventional to see the Matabele as admirably militarist, but when it suits him Sauer describes this reputation as over-rated. This is what he says:

> I cannot recall to mind a single instance in which a native tribe got the better of a laager. The dreaded Matabele power, put to the test of war, turned out to be very much over-rated, and quite incapable of standing up for ten minutes to the white man armed with modern weapons of precision. (p. 287)

In the narrative Sauer downplays the victory of the Matabele at the annihilation of the Victoria patrol in the advance on Bulawayo and the defeat of the Allan Wilson patrol: "The Allan Wilson tragedy was only an episode, where some forty white men were all killed by a horde of Matabele after they had fired away their last cartridge" (p. 287). In his selective remembering, Sauer conveniently forgets that the Matabele could not stand up to the white men with superior weaponry. Again at one time the Mashona are useless, but in different

circumstances they are peaceful, harmless and useful house servants. This refusal to acknowledge the humanity of black peoples and their contribution to human civilisation is demonstrated in his description of the Negroid races. When he gives an account of the "Zimbabwe Ruins" he says:

> In my opinion they are due, if not to actual construction by the Phoenicians, at least to purely Phoenician influence. The idea that they were built by the African negroid or Bantu races is preposterous, as these races never built anything but huts of straw and sticks. There is not an atom of evidence to show that they ever used either brick or stone. (p. 201)

This is then followed by a lengthy reference to scientific evidence of the time suggesting that the Negro race is inferior biologically. He says:

> Their incapacity to advance is undoubtedly due to the fact, established by De Quatrefages, the great French biologist, that the African negroid races have three and a half ounces of brain matter less than the European. De Quatrefages also proved that the skull of the negro and his allied races ossifies immediately after the age of puberty, that is, round about fourteen to fifteen years of age, whereas that of the European does not close up or ossify before he is thirty. (p. 202)

"After the age of puberty, therefore," Sauer adds, "the negroid brain is unable to grow or to expand and remains more or less the brain of a child" (p.202). Sauer readily uses the stock of scientific racist data and discourse currently in use in order to project himself. In the process his own superiority is accentuated and in a way the scientific discourse absolves him from any moral liability in his jaundiced view of black people. He is operating within the discursive practices of his time. Drichel (2008: 30) refers to Said's (1978) *Orientalism* to articulate the perceptual framework deployed by the west on the Orient and argues; "[Said] draws on metaphors of sight and vision when he refers to the stock of Western narratives about the Orient – 'the journey, the history, the fable, the stereotype, the polemical confrontation' – as the lenses through which the Orient is experienced" and "Said calls these lenses the 'textual attitude', which inserts itself between experiencing subject and experienced object as mediating representations." Sauer's appeal to scientific and anthropological texts in justifying his stereotyping of black people, according to Drichel (2008: 30) "translate[s] what is alien into familiar terms, thus buffering what might be an unsettling or threatening confrontation with the real cultural other."

At the discursive level therefore, Sauer's narrative conforms to the discourses of stereotyping available in his times. Discourses of stereotyping are useful as a mode of representation and

are deployed to legitimate colonisation and governing the colonised, and in other instances to indicate ethnic inferiority. Sauer's narrative thrust and identity conforms to the epistemic systems of his time. His experiences are therefore embedded in the prevailing everyday languages and knowledges, which equip him with a coherent worldview. While everyone is guilty of stereotyping the other it is not everyone who uses that stereotyping for a specific political end. Sauer's description of native tribes cited earlier is evidence of the perception that Africa is locked into a primordial irrationality that can be broken only by the colonist who will bring order and rationality. In this context, Sauer is an Enlightenment subject who is using his own rationality to denigrate the native societies that he encounters and to rationalise his encounter with Africa. Experience if it is to be conveyed to other people must be mediated by language and forms of discourse. Experience can be understood only if it is socially, culturally, historically and politically negotiated, which is why Sauer brings historical, linguistic and scientific evidence to bear on recounting his experiential history. The irony however is that the British used the same "scientific" evidence to show that the South African Dutch like Sauer had experienced an evolutionary regression in South Africa. In his study of the Southern Rhodesian novels Chennells (1982) argues that Stanley Portal Hyatt (1911) in his novel *The Land of Promises* shows how all whites in Africa implicitly undergo this regression. Here is what Chennells (1982: 285) says:

> Hyatt attributes a Native Commissioner's defects in character to his belonging to an old Natal family, 'which showed in a certain predilection for Boer words and customs, including inter-marriage and the procreation of congenital idiots…. In the same novel, a colonial asks what an Englishman means by the curse of Africa and he is told that he is '"one of the results of it"' (p. 147). Barry Ratcliffe, the hero, is only too well aware of the effects of Africa on Englishmen: it could reduce him to the level of a colonial. Nor is it surprising that whites should degenerate in an environment where 'the process of Evolution had produced nothing better than a black savage of a low type'…

Tappan (2005: 51) however contends that "cultural and historical resources (particularly ideologies) serve as both empowering and constraining tools for identity formation." Sauer seemingly becomes only what the mediational tools available to him allow him to be. In this way the dominant subjects miss opportunities to develop broad identities as they are limited by the ideologies that hail them as particular subjects.

Sauer and the iconography of the Conquistadores

It is also through the authority of historical experiences that Sauer assumes the identity of pioneer and *conquistador*, of astute businessman and military strategist. Sauer, the subject and author of representation is here constructed by the history of settler colonialism in South Africa and pioneering Rhodesia. Conversely the text itself is constructed by the discourse of imperialism. By writing, Sauer performs his historical identity as pioneer (and *conquistador*), military strategist and businessman. The narrative has been inserted along the continuum of similar imperial literature.

As the subject of his narrative, Sauer also experiences subjection from outside, which is the cultural context of both his times and the time of remembering. Since remembering is context-bound, his remembering is inflected by the context of early colonial days. Sauer reveals:

> In 1900 I may claim to have become "Ex-Africa". I was to have more experiences both in England and in Africa, but they belong, as it were, to another chapter, or rather, to another record. For this must be a book of early days… (p.324)

The urge to advance and chart new territories, coincides with or is birthed by the historical moment of imperialism and colonialism. This is the historical occasion that provides to Sauer, a focus on the meaning of his identity. The "ex-Africa" of the above quotation means that he was a product of Africa as Cape Dutch - what later would be called an Afrikaner.

The capacity to reflect on one's actions, thoughts and feelings is critical to the construction and understanding of the self. Sauer's narrative is at one level also a reflective act. He reflects on his actions and thoughts, and how these relate to his historical and social experiences. By authoring the text, he engages in identity construction at a symbolic level. Symbolically, he sees himself as a Spanish Conquistador. Here, there is an instance of intertextuality and intersubjectivity. There is collaborative subjectivity in the sense that it is dialogised with that of the Spanish Conquistadores. Erdinast-Vulcan (2008: 8) argues that "intersubjectivity precedes subjectivity". Thus, Sauer's subjectivity is a product of the mediation of the subjectivity of the Spanish Conquistadores. He refers to the Spanish Conquistadores in his account and this helps him realise his identity:

> One day while riding through the open bush, a Matabele lad aged about fifteen or sixteen, rose out of the long grass and ran for his life. I galloped after him and

> rounded him up. He was frightened to death and thought his last hour had come. He had never before seen a white man on a horse, and probably thought that I, and my horse were one animal, a mistake which was made by the Mexican warriors when they first beheld the mounted conquistadores under Cartes. (p.235)

Sauer performs the Conquistador identity by re-enacting the Mexican experience, albeit in Matabeleland. Here Said's notion of a "textual attitude" is inspired by the sight of a helpless lad. While the lad is not threatening to him, Sauer feels the urge to articulate his own threatening position in terms of what he had read or heard about the Mexicans and their encounter with the Spanish conquistadores. Thus, Smith and Watson (2001:34) view identities as "historically specific models" and note that "[a]utobiographers incorporate and reproduce models of identity in their narratives as ways to represent themselves to the reader." Sauer appeals to a written or oral text to project the identity of a conqueror. The autobiographical text is a particular sort of discursive space and in it Sauer negotiates his identity and at the same time textualises empire. Sauer's subjectivity is thus predicated on imperial and pioneering experiences and relationships; what has earlier been called the "geography of social relationships". He figures himself in distinction to native peoples, and sometimes ambiguously in opposition to and intimacy with the English-born. Whitlock (2000: 43) identifies this figuring when she says that "this process of scripting the self in relation to others, through oppositions, intimacies and distinctions with and through others, is germane (although not unique) to colonial encounters."

By textualising his role in constructing a part of the empire he proves his agency which is a constitutive element in the process of constructing his subjectivity. Agency is a product of mediation and the impetus to insert his own narrative within the continuum of similarly placed narratives and discourses is evidence of that agency.

However, since the power of discourse to hail the subject is hidden, the agency to define the self in imperial autobiography is ironised by the fact that, the very same self is framed in a pre-existing ideology of imperialism, masculinity and pioneering and therefore it cannot be autonomous. Sauer's privileging of a military and hegemonic male identity shows how his subjectivity has been created by nineteenth-century British or Cape valorising of military prowess as these were useful in establishing colonies and defending them. He writes with contempt of weaklings as evidenced by what he says about the young man whom he finds

installed in his carriage without permission, at the height of the Matabele rebellion. Sauer says:

> He was a curious case of inherent cowardice. Although a public school and Oxford man and a well-known cricketer, he refused to enrol himself for the defence of Bulawayo. Every night he was put into the inner laager with the women and children; he was too frightened to sleep in the men's laager in case the Matabele should attack.
>
> A week later he paid Mr Cecil Bisset a large sum of money to drive him to Tati. On the way Bisset pretended to see some Matabele, whereupon the young man collapsed in the bottom of the cart, overcome with terror. (p.298)

The masculine identity that Sauer privileges, is military and aggressive. This is further elaborated in his proud projection of the military exploits of his Boer race as compared to the English. In a long diatribe, Sauer proudly and eloquently argues the case for Boer military supremacy. In one long sentence he says:

> I laughed at him [Jameson], saying that he knew nothing of the fighting qualities of the Boers, that he knew nothing of the history of South Africa, and that he had never come into close personal contact with the Boer population; that he had forgotten that the Boers were the men who had conquered the whole country, that it was they who had broken the fighting spirit of the Red Kaffirs, the Pondos, Fingos, Gaikas and Galekas, the powerful Zulu tribes in the Eastern Cape Colony; that the Boers had expelled the Basutos from the Orange Free State and occupied it, that they had driven a powerful section of the Zulu nation under the leadership of the redoubtable Umzilikazi out of the Transvaal, and occupied it as far north as the Great Crocodile River, that they had taken the whole of Natal from the Zulus and settled it; that a few hundred mounted Boers under Pretorius had invaded Zululand and defeated the Zulus in many bloody fights; that this same commando under Pretorius and Uys had caught and killed Dingaan, the treacherous Zulu king---; that the most sanguinary battle, that of the Blood River, was fought by a handful of emigrant farmers assisted by their women and children, the result being the almost complete destruction of a powerful Zulu army; and that all this was done in the days of the old muzzle-loading rifle (p.250).

In this long sentence Sauer breathlessly recounts Boer military exploits. And then to put Jameson, the Englishman, in his place Sauer "ended by reminding him that a hundred and thirty Boer farmers had attacked and driven off the crest of Majuba a much larger force of trained British troops" (p. 250). Implied in his narrative is that he incorporates in his identity the military authority of the Boer. His narrative is authorised by his own militarist Boer ancestry and the financial authority of Rhodes. His closeness to Rhodes through business deals also gives him the authority to speak of Rhodes. Sauer made important deals for Rhodes on the Rand and later was charged with heading the Rhodesian Syndicate. He credits Rhodes

with "foresight, patience, and determination to advance the interests of the English peoples over the annexed native kingdoms of Africa. An all-British road from Cape to Cairo was his obsession, and he came near to realising it before death overtook him" (p.184).

Again he gives credit to Rhodes for having Umtali incorporated into the British Empire. He says:

> Umtali at the time of our visit was the latest jewel in the Imperial Crown. A little more than a year before it still shone in the Royal Crown of Portugal, but the foresight and daring of a private individual turned this beautiful territory of Manicaland into British territory. (p. 207)

Sauer positions himself as an authority on Rhodes's political and economic motivations. Above all, though Boer in origin, Sauer creates his subjectivity in the over-arching shadow of the call of empire, empire-awareness, colonialism and historical mindedness. This is a complex double identity that Sauer is expressing. There were in fact many Cape Dutch like Sauer who saw themselves as part of the British Empire but were not of British origin. Rhodes's own party was the Afrikaner Bond of which Sauer was an important member. At any given time identities are heterogeneous.

What is clear in Sauer's narrative is the consciousness that he was part and parcel of the making of Rhodesia and the narrative is a call to recognise him as such. Richards's autobiography, which I analyse in the following sections, presents one with another occasion to theorise pioneer autobiographies and settler subjectivities from a gendered perspective.

Mrs Hylda Richards: the poetics of women's autobiography and a feminist occasion in empire[1]

Hylda Richards's *Next Year Will Be Better* is set against the background of "the time between the two wars when most of the early optimism had evaporated and a different breed of Rhodesian – less impatient, more permanent – put down his roots" (np. publisher's introduction). It is an era that deserves knowing, and according to the publishers of

[1] A modified version of the subsequent discussion of Hylda Richards's narrative appeared in Imbizo, 3(1) 2012, pp. 34-46.

Rhodesian reprints, "it was, after all, one of consolidation, a time when Rhodesia stopped being an improbable amalgam of Imperial outpost and commercial venture and became a country in its own right, independent in all but name". The import of this statement is that it makes a distinction between the pioneer, the settler and the Rhodesian nationalist. It signifies that Richards's narrative recalls the era of Rhodesian nation building to which she belongs as a nation-builder in her own right as shall be discussed below. While the hardships associated with the 1930s seem to inspire her narrative, the Rhodesian home-making imperative also motivates her story-telling.

Richards dedicates her book to the country-women of Rhodesia, but of course her "country women" denote white country-women. Black country-women are not part of this dedication. Her narrative is also significant in that it offers another occasion to theorise settler subjectivities, but this time domestic and gendered settler subjectivities. This is against the background in which, according to Boydstan (2005: 1228) "…gender emerged as a critical idiom in the imagining of colonial power." Richards also writes as a settler subject who is located in a discursive formation which she embodies as an autobiographical subject and articulates in her narrative. Her autobiographical account is also a feminist (though she never used that term herself) intervention in the Rhodesian national biography that is largely authored from a male perspective. She says:

> Nkosi (as he was later to be called by the natives) and I suffered so many ordeals and excitements when we came to Rhodesia that I decided to write a book about it. Since neither of us was anything like a hero or heroine, I created Hugh and Frances and then the trouble started. (p.2)

Richards's initial fictionalisation of her and husband's lives creates the challenge of balancing and reconciling fact and fiction inherent in autobiography. The narrative is actually framed in the story-telling tradition. This story-telling is a discursive pattern that forms the subject – Hylda Richards. By initially attempting fiction, Richards engages in self-invention and this recalls us to the fictions of autobiography. Robert Elbaz (1987: 12) claims that:

> [t]he autobiographer always writes a novel, a fiction, about a third person. And the question is not whether that third person coincides with the writing 'I' of the autobiographer… but rather: What does this third person (or series of third persons) which defies the myth of continuity tell us about the world? What subjectivity, what role, does it incarnate in its relationship to the world?

Elbaz's statement however, appears to be too strong considering most autobiographers would claim to be remembering accurately and view their work as different from fiction, which Richards is in fact saying. She tried and failed at writing a fictional novel and instead writes a life-history. The theorist however can recognise that the continuity between autobiographical subjects is a myth, but of course the autobiographer would deny this.

The narrative begins at the point where Richards is discarding fiction for "reality"; it begins with a sense of split selfhood. She burns her manuscript and in this way also engages in partial self-emollition since the fictional character Frances is in the first instance created to explore Richards's inner self. The question however is if the fictional has been dispensed with, considering that the fictions of autobiography in effect permeate autobiographical narratives and whether multiple subjectivities continue to inform her autobiography and one of those subjectivities is that of her fictional character Frances. Richards says:

> I want to write about what happened to the four of us in Rhodesia, it seemed the only thing I could do was to write our story and then consign that of Frances and Hugh to the flames. This I have done.
>
> So this story is without a heroine, though Nkosi is certainly the hero, and Bryan and Peter are two ordinary little boys for whose sake we cut away from our Home ties and made a home in Rhodesia. (p.4)

While she has consigned the story of Frances and Hugh to the flames, in the narrative she continually relates her own story to that of Frances. Whenever she makes decisions she reminds herself of what Frances would have done in the fictional narrative. Richards's narrative is therefore dialogic or even polylogic in many ways. Her reference to the biblical plagues of Egypt as metaphors for her family's misfortunes in regard to inclement weather is another instance of intertextuality. It captures the spirit of endurance that characterised appropriating and taming lands in new territories. *Next Year Will Be Better*, in dialogic parlance, is an intertextual web. Excerpts from the burnt manuscript appear in the narrative and at the end of the narrative there is also verse written by Hylda Richards that captures memories of her experiences of home-making as a settler's wife. The poet's voice is not in essence different from that of the autobiographer. Therefore, the voices are complementary.

In denying herself heroine status Richards recalls the autobiographical practices of women in which they appear to project their self-identities through others; through husbands, family, mothers and daughters and even community. Mary G. Mason cited in Smith and Watson

(1998: 17) argues that "female identity is grounded in relationships and produces textual self-representations that contrast with masculine self-representations." Smith and Watson (1998: 17) further argue, "Mason's 'set of paradigms' for women's life-writing involved the postulation of an 'other' toward, through, and by whom women come to write themselves, whether that other is 'God', for instance, or a 'husband'." Richards writes herself through her husband and two sons. She thus modifies autobiography, traditionally figured as a masculine genre in which the so-called "autonomous subject" emerges. Her narrative brings out a relational autobiographical self.

Hylda Richards: the call of empire and the pioneer spirit

The narrator's journey to Rhodesia is emblematic and worth analysing. Richards chronicles her journey from England to Rhodesia together with her two sons. They follow her husband who had gone in advance to prepare for their immigration. The journey is a metaphor that frames a new consciousness of the self and this confirms Whitlock's (2000: 44) argument when she writes "[t]he crossing initiates a new consciousness of the self through emigration. The different configurations that emerge in the colony begin with these boundaries of departure and arrival, which initiate acute self-awareness and the beginnings of transformation." This process of emigration and settling frames the identity of settlers and "autobiography is produced in moments and spaces in which subjects", Whitlock (2000: 6) argues, "are driven to grasp their positioning and subjectivity." Richards's story is a narrative of emigration told from a perspective of gain and appropriation of land in Mashonaland. It is also a narrative of containment of open and hostile African land. Opening up of hitherto "historyless and open" country is a recurrent theme in the autobiographical accounts of Rhodesian pioneers. Cairnie (2007: 169) contends that "in *White Writing* J.M. Coetzee explains that white settlers produced 'the literature of the empty landscape'." Fox (1997: 8) recalls Jack Watson's (n.d) poem to accentuate this view:

> Once a column came a-marching
> In the long, long, long, long ago,
> And they came to found a country
> That the world could come to know;

It was built on toil and courage

Out of what was wilderness:

So they gave us this our country

To preserve and ever bless.

Watson's poem foregrounds the idea that white Rhodesians considered themselves as having obtained possession of an empty country and land through the pioneer column, a position further articulated by Fox (1997: 11) when he argues thus: "although the majority of whites, throughout Rhodesia's history, were born outside of its boundaries, the whites seemed to feel that they had gained a right to the country – and particularly to the land – through the pioneer column." Richards's account of how she fared on a Rhodesian farm can be read within this context of social, racial and economic capital drawn from the occupation of Mashonaland and conquest of Matabeleland, but above all it has to be read in the context of colonialism since there is an intimate connection between colonial encounters, settlement and postcolonial subjectivities. Fox's argument may be an oversimplification of this relationship because it is beyond the achievements of the pioneer column. In fact from Richards's narrative, the hardships of the 1930s gave her and husband the right to the land. It is through shaping the land that they get this right. The right to that land actually confers a Rhodesian identity on the two.

Her own place and husband's role in all this can be contextualised within the discursive plane constructed by the history of pioneering Rhodesia, the culture of the metropolis and the colonisation of Africa in general. The influence of the discursive baggage that many colonists carried with them is evident in Richards's narrative. When her family finally moves to their own farm, she feels threatened by the environment and the natives. She says, "It seemed to us as if we were right in the heart of darkest Africa just as the books say" (p.33). Richards could have been referring to Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* or any other texts that articulated Africa as a dark continent. This again is an instance of that "textual attitude" that Said discusses in *Orientalism*. Drichel (2008: 30) writes that:

> In fact, Said emphasizes that one of the situations that provokes a "textual attitude" is precisely such an experience of threat: "One [situation] is when a human being confronts at close quarters something relatively unknown and threatening and previously distant. In such a case one has recourse not only to what in one's previous experience the novelty resembles but also to what one has read about it."

Richards further elaborates the darkness of Africa and its perceived 'historylessness' in later remarks in the narrative. Thus, "as usual he (Nkosi) took charge of the emergency and, giving the [native] boys a short, pithy history of their immediate ancestry in which I believe baboons figured largely, he sorted out everything, freed the oxen and saved the tree" (p.36). Richards also refers to "…wonderful civilisation, typical of Africa who carries on her plans regardless of anything we humans can do" (p.36). Earlier, she had stated, "[n]atives are neither downtrodden slaves nor insolent upstarts, but just Africans…children of a continent that goes its own way watching with good humour Man's futile attempts to change her face. Africa knows that directly Man tires or she gets tired of him she can easily cover up his little efforts and carry on as she has always done" (p.22).

These remarks are certainly part of a discursive framework that originates from Darwinism and European metaphysics of the human race. When Richards refers to "Man" she is talking about a white builder who is engaged in a futile attempt to change Africa and Africa only has Africans who are children. In these remarks, native Africans have been expelled from the community of humans and their civilisation; they are not part of "we humans" and it is possible that baboons are part of their immediate ancestry. Richards talks of the "pioneer spirit" (p.62), "the Africa Conqueror [Nkosi]" (p.66) and how "[t]he success in defeating Africa, spurred me on to greater effort…" (p.75). Richards here assumes, or in Bakhtinian terms, appropriates the European superior moral identity over Africans and Tappan (2005: 49) argues, "Moral identity is, at its core, a function of the ongoing dialogical interchange between self and others." Her relationship with native Africans is mediated by pre-existing discourses about Africa and its natives, and whatever perceptions Richards has regarding them should be understood in that context. Natives are the irrational other, the antithesis of civilisation. When her sister-in-law visits from New Zealand, Richards recalls:

> Chris was very amused at the way Bryan and Peter escorted her everywhere. From the beginning the children knew that women must be protected from natives and Chris told me that whenever they went for a walk Bryan was in front to break the trail and fat Peter behind to protect the rear" (p.116).

Richards is operating within a pre-existing discourse that articulates the irrationality and savagery of native men. The perceived rampant sexuality of the native is a product of European discourses about the native. Therefore, the white woman, it is perceived, is in constant danger of being ravished by the native. "The perceived vulnerability of white

women on isolated farms", Cairnie (2007: 169) argues, "is a recurring motif throughout Rhodesia's (and, it seems, Zimbabwe's) history." This idea finds further expression when Richards and her sister-in-law are stuck when their car breaks down, "She said that what she was frightened of was that we might be raped, and she thought that if I carried the money openly, the villains might snatch it and run off" (p.132). Her statements are meant to confirm that the children had every right to protect the women. This notion is best illustrated by Levine (2001:6) who claims, "[i]n yet other imagery, the colonized man was imagined as a sexual predator unable to control his physical desires and dangerous to women." and this was in addition to the ironies of perceiving the colonised man as weak and lacking in masculinity. The perception of natives as barbaric is made possible through stereotyping them, but there is certain ambivalence when it comes to this notion. The native is both savage and child-like. When Richards narrates the politics behind World War II to James, her native servant, she says "[t]hen I continued with the sad tale and could see that James was enjoying repetition for, like children, the native appreciates most the stories told on these lines" (p. 196). Richards is clearly positioning herself in relation to the native and to available cultural tools that she then uses as an agent to act upon the native. Bakhtin cited in Tappan (2005: 54) calls that process of positioning and re-positioning the self with respect to others as "ideological becoming"; a process of identity development. Richards's statements regarding natives are authoritative. Thus, according to Tappan (2005: 55), "identity development as ideological becoming, for Bakhtin, entails gradually coming to authorize and claim authority for one's voice, while remaining in constant dialogue with other voices".

Richards's superior identity is underwritten by discursive practices that privileged white civilisation. When she recounts the arrival of ground staff at the beginning of World War Two, Richards further accentuates the politics of identity in Rhodesia. She observes that, "[t]he first contingent of ground staff [of the Royal Air Force] had been a mistake. The type sent, were unable to grasp the position and obligations of the white man in a black country. They cat-called after our Rhodesian girls, and when repulsed fraternised with the coloureds and natives" (p. 200). Richards here echoes Doris Lessing (1954) in *A Proper Marriage*, a text which raises similar issues. In contrast, Richards argues, "[we] old settlers had brought up our children to believe that England was a wonderful country and the English a wonderful race. So anxious had we been to instil in them the best of the English traditions, that we had led them to believe that the English type was the ideal and should be their example" (p. 200).

Here Richards highlights the perceived moral superiority of the English race and implies that Rhodesians are the embodiment of virtues of the English-born. What is even more important is Richards's recognition that Rhodesians are a new people who are not English. She thus talks about how:

> [w]hen our sons saw these underprivileged, undernourished, under-educated lads with their bad teeth and bad manners, they were aghast and when they saw them with the Coloureds and natives they were horrified. These English lads who, most of them, had never left their home city were prompt to notice the disapproval, and so, instead of settling down and gradually suiting themselves to their new surroundings, they were on the defence, and showed their shortcomings and none of the sterling virtues we English-born knew they possessed. (p.200)

From the above quotation Richards is almost certainly repeating Lessing. There is a prevailing discourse of race and sexuality that Richards's narrative is obviously in dialogue with, which is why Stoler (2002: 140-161) cited in Kaiksow (2008: 61) argues "for the empire-ization of Michel Foucault's history of sexuality, contending that only in the context of empire can we properly account for the racialization of European sexuality and its relationship to European state racism, both at home and in the colonies." Richards articulates her relief when she says, "later on, a different type was sent out, and these boys coped with conditions and learned from our boys the correct and fair treatment of natives" (p. 200) because "the ignorant newcomer so often begins by treating the native as an equal, which the latter does not expect or want, and then suddenly switches over and treats him like dirt. The Rhodesian-born boy accepts, with the servant's work, the responsibility of caring for him and protecting him" (p.200). Richards projects her identity as well as that of the Rhodesian born as superior to that of those coming from England. Her identity can be further complicated by thinking of it in class terms and her statement above is interestingly a class perception. The ground staffs are working class; the pilots are middle class and there is always a threat that a working class man will see the black as equal to himself. Only the middle class will recognise the distances between the two races are as different as that between the classes. Uusihakala (2008: 25) recalls Robin Cohen's remark that: "exaggerated mannerisms and demonstrations of patriotism often made the British abroad more British than the British at home." Richards's deploring of the lads from England points to a more heightened "empire awareness" and an appreciation of ideal English masculinity that is lacking in those from England. This idea of being more British than the British at home is repeated by Ian Douglas Smith in his autobiography, which is the subject of another chapter.

The Rhodesian home-making idiom and the dialogic subject

Richards's identity, which she establishes in contradistinction to both the native African and the less-British-British, shapes her subjectivity, yet typical of women's life narratives, she refuses a heroic identity. Instead, she casts her husband as "Africa Conqueror" and as "Nkosi" (Ndebele for Chief or Lord). This is despite the fact that she has her own agency which she grudgingly brings forth early in the narrative. Richards says "[n]o one knows what our mothers have been to us, the home-makers of the colonies" (p.31). In this statement she locates a collective female agency in the domestic space where women figure as home-makers. Cairnie (2007: 166) argues that "[e]ven though his original 'Pioneer Column', which set out from the Cape in 1890, was comprised of men, Cecil Rhodes envisioned white women on that landscape" and "in a footnote in his "Last Will and Testament", readers are told that Rhodes "circl[ed] his hands about the horizon [and] said, 'Homes, more homes; that is what I work for." Richards's home-maker subjectivity or domestic settler subjectivity should therefore be apprehended within this context. Cairnie (2007: 166) posits "from the beginning, the establishment of white homes was connected to the arrival of white women, and black women were taught by these same women to maintain their own homes to white European standards." Citing Margaret Strobel, Cairnie (2007: 166) further argues that "the arrival of white women in the colonies 'intensified the appropriation of indigenous land' in order to facilitate this desire for homes." Richards recounts to the pioneer Godfrey King how she is tired of subordinate agency:

> One gets so tired of always being somebody's mother, somebody's wife, somebody's mistress. I meant of course, a native's mistress but he took it the wrong way and made me laugh. I meant that there was always a position to keep up, always a part to play, one could never be a separate individual. (p.31)

In the colonial scheme of things, the farm and the domestic household, where Richards dominates, are enclaves of colonisation. These are some of the spaces where settler subjectivities can discover themselves. The domestic never remains a private space and instead the public practices of colonial power relations find expression. The farm is a political and cultural domain where power relations of rule and domination are enacted. In addition, the white woman in the colony is never quite what a white woman might be in England. She

is a public figure by being white and her private role is a political one because she is creating the children of a future nation.

In the narrative Richards speaks as mother and wife, thus parenthood and wifehood as axes of identity are constitutive of her subjectivity. That is why the narrative itself is dedicated to the women of Rhodesia, whom she figures as home-makers of Rhodesia. For Whitlock (2000: 42) "the domestic subject is articulated through the couple and the family, through an interdependent rather than an individualistic understanding of identity and subjectivity." Home-making in this sense is a gendered role, pointing to Richards as a gendered self. Whitlock (2000: 40) argues that "the [gendered self] is deeply implicated in the politics of race, class and ethnicity as they converged to formulate the domestic settler subject in the early nineteenth century." We have seen how Richards is implicated in the politics of race in her treatment of natives as the inferior other and in subscribing to the script of natives as having dangerous sexuality, thus posing danger to white women. To borrow from Smith (2002: 420) Richards has "traces of an imperial subjectivity in [the] way [she] positions" native Africans in her text. She engages with processes of colonisation and settlement, but hers is an example of the instability of the autobiographical subject. Richards's stability as a subject is derived from home, both the colonial home in Rhodesia and the Home in England, which she recalls nostalgically throughout the narrative. Yet nostalgia is selective and therefore can be false memory. In her nostalgic remembrance of Home in England, that Home is a coordinate of stability and tradition, a tradition that must be embraced by all true English-born people. However, that reference to Home as a coordinate of stability and tradition, is called into question and destabilised by ground staff at the beginning of World War Two as they are not shaped by a culture that she would like to believe England can command. Because of this instability, the autobiographical subject also becomes volatile since the uncouth manners of these young men call into question whether her memories of England are an accurate reflection of what England actually stands for. Richards realises that her commitment is to Rhodesia and not to England because Rhodesian culture and the nation that will encompass it is what she is committed to.

Because Richards is speaking from the position of a home-making ideology, she is speaking herself into being, dialogically. Holquist (2002: 21) argues that "conceiving being

dialogically means that reality is always experienced, not just perceived, and further that it is experienced from a particular position."

The double topography and dialogism in *Next Year Will be Better*

The narrating subject in *Next Year Will Be Better* is a double being. The subject has a double identity that is partly poetically constructed. In narrating her experience, Richards has one eye on her fictional story and one on the self who authors the autobiographical subject into being. The poetic/literary character in Richards's narrative has an identity that corresponds more to that of her fictional character in the manuscript she burns at the beginning of the narrative. Erdinast-Vulcan (2008: 5) argues that "the reflexive awareness that is integral to consciousness is that 'sense we have that we not only participate but witness our experience'…. We embody this doubleness of our first-person perspective in the I-narrators who tell the stories of our I-character selves." Erdinast-Vulcan (2008: 5) citing Bakhtin notes that "it is precisely the doubleness of the first person perspective which makes it impossible for the self to 'tell itself'." To return to the double-topography metaphor, in as much as Richards seems to be telling her story from outside we are able to see her text being a double topography. There are particular discursive frameworks determining her from outside. She also has to overcome a divided self; the self that makes a home in Rhodesia and yet longs to be "home" in England. This nostalgia feeds self-division or splitting of subjectivity.

In discussing Bakhtin's concept of dialogism in the novel, Shevtsova (1992:754) observes that "since heteroglossia is heterosocial, the dialogism it produces ipso facto historicizes the novel. The novel's own historical time saturates its discourses." While the novel and autobiography are distinct genres, they share particular features. They are both characterised by fiction even though autobiography purports to be recalling facts and they are both speech acts and genres. Speech genres are, according to Shevtsova (1992: 50) "determined by the time and place of utterance and, further, by the time in precise space – Bakhtin's 'chronotope' – in which they are uttered." The fictions of autobiography and its constructed nature can thus allow one to extrapolate from Bakhtin's dialogism in the novel and argue that the autobiography is also historicised by the dialogism produced by the heteroglossia in the

autobiography. Thus to refer to Shevtsova (1992), the autobiography's own historical time saturates its discourses.

Conclusion

This chapter set out to critique autobiographies of pioneers and settlers of Rhodesia, with the aim of delineating the subjectivities that emerged in the historical and cultural context of imperialism and settler colonisation.

While postcolonial critics are known to hesitate to include settler subjectivities in postcolonial studies, my analyses of *Great Days*, *Ex-Africa* and *Next Year Will be Better* have shown how these three autobiographies already invoke a postcolonial trajectory that marginalises black people or the colonised "other". They also fit into the postcolonial paradigm in accordance with Ashcroft et al's (1989) contention that the postcolonial begins at the very moment of colonisation. In all the three texts natives are objects in the narrating subjects' field of vision; objects that are accurately known only from the western epistemological perspective of the narrating subject. This habit of naming and describing the "other" through the workings of discursive practices is the domain of postcolonial studies. In fact revisionist scholars have already begun to locate settler subjectivities in the postcolonial imaginary. Frank Johnson's and Hans Sauer's autobiographies articulate white-colonising masculinity giving rise to pioneer and imperial subjectivities that are realised within the context of an ideological and historical space that these autobiographers draw from. The analysis has shown, according to Kaiksow (2008: 77), that "imperial masculinity was subjectively sustained by the assumptions of 'knowing more' and 'knowing better' than indigenous people."

The analysis of Hylda Richards's autobiography brought into focus a gendered narrative of land appropriation and settlement. Richards's narrative relies on a familial trope for its narrator's subjectivity and also mines imperial discourses. She operates within a narrative of maternity and domesticity, but in spite of that, she maintains a parallel plot of male heroism in the form of her husband Nkosi. From her narrative it is clear that the colonial domestic can never be simply private and even as she writes her life she is writing the life of a new nation. Smith (1992: 413) would say Richards "proceeds to maintain narrative allegiance to male

scripts" for the discourse of imperial conquest is a discourse of founding new nations. For all the three autobiographers, scripts about being white and western give rise to the characteristic of domination. It has emerged, to quote Tappan (2005: 51), that "ideologies that are available in a particular social-cultural-historical context… shape and mediate identity in critical ways." The agency of these narrators emerges from the act of authoring and authorising their experiences in this context. Bakhtin's observations cited in Tappan (2005: 56) are instructive; "'authorship' – in real life as in literature – is necessarily a function of both self and other. The utterances that self-as-author produces thus do not arise ex-nihilo from a single, solitary, Cartesian mind, spoken by a single, monotonic voice. Instead such utterances emerge from a dialogical relation – a form of mediated action – that must be the primary unit of analysis…." This chapter has interrogated the dialogical relationship between the three autobiographical subjects and the cultural and historical tools available to them. It has proved that there is a dialogic exchange between narrating subjects and the bigger discursive forces, which Bakhtin names heteroglossia. The three autobiographers are not interested in those whose land they have appropriated, but in themselves as founders of a new nation.

The unequal power relations that are played out in the colonial encounter incubate the emergence of subaltern identities and as pointed out earlier invoke a postcolonial trajectory. The next chapter will therefore explore the era of African mass nationalism in Zimbabwe as an autobiographical moment.

Chapter Three
The era of mass nationalism and the liberation struggle: an autobiographical moment

Introduction

The texts studied in this chapter are Vambe's *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* (1976), Muzorewa's *Rise Up and Walk* (1978) and Nyagumbo's *With the People: An Autobiography from the Zimbabwe Struggle* (1980).The main gesture of agency in these narratives is the narrators' acts of inscribing, remembering and re-constructing selves, at both literal and symbolic levels; selves that have been subjected to colonial power and were previously denied a voice by that power. As Rota (2009: 47) contends "the problem of re-construction is considered to be an exclusively postcolonial or feminist issue", which is why the analyses of these re-constructions are situated in postcolonial discourse. This chapter will critique autobiographical narratives by these three black Zimbabweans who grew up shadowed by Rhodesian settler colonialism as well as transnational consciousness movements and winds of change that blew across continents, regions and across nations in southern Africa; raising, in earlier stages, consciousness of labour rights and later, nationalist consciousness. Vambe's *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe*, Muzorewa's *Rise Up and Walk* and Nyagumbo's *With the People* are narratives that emerge against the background of the consolidation of settler colonialism, transnational consciousness awakening and the attendant struggles for workers' rights and political freedom. I shall argue that the narrators' engagements with the disabling public and private violation of black people's rights occasioned their autobiographies. These narratives will be analysed with an awareness that they need to be understood within the context of a larger perspective of already existing typologies provided by other scholars like Flora Veit-Wild (1992) and Terrence Ranger (1988) who have interrogated nationalist discourse.

These narratives articulate the condition of a colonized black Rhodesian self. Thus, the Rhodesian situation makes possible the occasions for narrating the self for these autobiographical subjects. The discussion of these narratives will dwell on the philosophy undergirding their dialogue with history, the authors' ideological themes and psychological motives. It will articulate how the autobiographers interpret the memories of their historical experiences; their subjectivities. The chapter shall also delineate how postcoloniality as an

idea is both foregrounded and implicated in these autobiographers' identities. In these texts, as suggested by Spivak in Rota (2009: 36), one will be engaging with "a human subjectivity attempting to understand the contingencies of identity in a colonial and postcolonial location". In Sow's (2010: 498) words, these narratives are "defined by a distinctive engagement with historical moments" and this engagement with history informs the configuration of the narratives and on another level, mediates the subjectivities of the narrators. The autobiographical subjects are thus subjects of history and the discursive experiences of their epoch.

Since the history of mass nationalism and the armed struggle is a historical moment that autobiographers engage with, Sow's suggestion above points to the immanence of nationalist ideology in colonially repressed environments and in narratives that emerge in that context. Raftopoulos (1999: 115) argues that "[n]ationalism, as a mobilizing ideology has had a powerful presence in Zimbabwean history, as it has on a global level." In providing a historiographical review of nationalism in Zimbabwe, Raftopoulos highlights how nationalist ideology spawned a considerable amount of general and autobiographical accounts of players in the nationalist movement. Raftopoulos (1999: 118) identified Ndabaningi Sithole's *African Nationalism* (1959), Eshmael Mlambo's *The Struggle for a Birthright* (1972), Vambe's *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* (1975) and *An Ill-fated People* (1972), Muzorewa's *Rise Up and Walk* (1978), Nyagumbo's *With the People* (1980) and Joshua Nkomo's *The Story of My Life* (1984) as "provid[ing] interesting and valuable insights into the lives of major nationalist leaders, within the broad narrative of nationalist politics." As the discussion below shall show the mass nationalist and armed struggle movements and their politics dialogise Vambe's, Muzorewa's and Nyagumbo's narratives.

Vambe, Muzorewa, Nyagumbo and the heteroglossia of their epoch

To begin to unravel the dialogising background of Vambe's, Muzorewa's and Nyagumbo's autobiographical narratives requires historical contextualization in order to apprehend their discourses and the subjectivities that emerge from the narratives. From the onset the three texts articulate the identity of those hailed into colonial subject positions. Colonialism itself is characterized by asymmetrical power relations between colonizers and the colonized, which

is one of the concerns of postcolonial theory. However, postcoloniality could also involve thinking about the superior numbers of the colonised which would speak to an asymmetrical power but one which would empower the colonised. These three autobiographers are thus working within and also against the historical, psychological and ideological context of colonialism. Since they also grapple with the processes of decolonization, the dialogising background for their texts is to a great extent, the moment of awakening of African nationalist consciousness and other colonised people elsewhere and in Rhodesia. The colonized African emerges in this epoch as a life writing subject. Smith and Watson cited in Berger (2010: 34) contend that "autobiographical writing has often served as a tactic of intervention in colonial repression" by enabling both cultural and political agency.

The three texts under consideration in this chapter articulate the narrators' individual memories of growing up in a repressive colonial environment in Rhodesia as well as the social memory of the destruction, transformation and/or reconstitution of traditional society; processes which othered them. Ponzio (n.d: 269) argues that "the self cannot exist without memory; and structural to both the individual memory and social memory is otherness." While Ponzio is implying that we all remember another self who is other to our present selves, for my purposes I wish to limit my concern to the colonised's memory of his other self. These memories in effect implicate the condition of otherness or alterity in this stifling colonial environment.

Central to my critical inquiry in this chapter is thus a coherent delineation of the socio-historical and discursive backgrounds that characterized the times lived by Vambe, Muzorewa and Nyagumbo and how these three interpret their experiences and memories. All the three narratives share almost similar textual structure in that they begin by chronicling the births, growing up and then political conscientisation of the subjects. Sow's (2010: 499) observations in his discussion of Camara Laye's *L'Enfant Noir* (2005) and Wole Soyinka's *Ake* (1982) are useful; "In African literatures, autobiographical childhood narratives are typically associated with emergencies – disenfranchisement, to echo Spivak – crisis, and trauma, and as with other life narratives, are constantly reshaped by the continent's 'social and political movements'." The early phases of these autobiographers' lives are defined by dispossession and alienation of their communities' economic resources, especially farming land. This historical fact is in turn implicated in the formation of their characters. Thus, Sow

(2010: 499) adds, "childhood autobiographical narratives are regularly seen as responsive to historical junctures, and as exploring repressive situations, or racial, gender, and/or class prejudice, recalling the drama of early life and character formation."

The dialogising background for these three narratives should thus be apprehended from at least four perspectives; the political, ideological, discursive and cultural. The cultural perspective in this case is dominated by the Christian religion, which for instance plays a significant role in Muzorewa's and Vambe's accounts. From these perspectives, one would appreciate, to borrow from Sow (2010: 503-504), "…the familiar tragic itinerary of the colonized" and that "the autobiographical is not primarily 'the locus of secrets'…, but becomes instead the main site of gradual familiarization with public affairs and politics." We thus see African subject formation in the political and discursive context of colonialism or what Punt (2004: 318) calls "discursive nationalism".

The period following the suppression of the Shona and Ndebele uprisings against colonial occupation was attended by profound political and cultural shifts in the lives of African people. The cultural undertaking by white settlers was premised on the ideology of the civilising mission, but more importantly the broader agenda was to build a robust settler society. The former may have sanitised European settlement in colonised lands although economic ambitions were largely at the centre of the colonial enterprise. Adas (2004: 31) comments:

> Formations of this ideology varies widely from those of thinkers or colonial administrators who stressed the internal pacification and political order that European colonization extended to "barbaric" and "savage" peoples suffering from incessant warfare and despotic rule, to those missionaries and reformers who saw religious conversion and education as the keys to European efforts to "uplift" ignorant and backward peoples.

While the above is largely true, one consequence in the context of Rhodesia was that settlers disliked missionaries. It is within this context that Vambe's early chapters in *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* report and comment on the disintegration of the VaShawasha traditional life and culture, and the life-changing infiltration by the Christian religion and urbanity from nearby Salisbury. The cultural re-organisation engendered by this political and religious control had far-reaching implications in the lives of black people and also spawned moments of individuation necessary to autobiographical self-construction.

The twin cultural on-slaught on Africans was thus achieved through Christian conversion which was almost always accompanied by missionary education. Adas (2004: 37) contends that "through state-supported and missionary education, Western colonizers sought to propagate epistemologies, values, and modes of behavior that had originally served to justify their dominance and continued to be valorized in their rhetoric of governance." However, Rhodesian whites mistrusted missionaries because they educated blacks; making possible a new class of people who would demand their rights as citizens. This was more acute in Rhodesia than in many colonies because the franchise was partly based on educational qualifications. Education and religion become sites of psychological violence and alienation, albeit in an ambiguous manner considering, as shall be argued, the complicated attempts at balancing a rejection of the disruptive elements of colonialism and the aspirations for middle-class status.

Historically, the years between the two World Wars marked the beginnings of labour politics in Zimbabwe. This age spawns working-class movements and it is from these labour movements that a nationalist consciousness also emerges, though of course the land issue, majority rule and 'one man one vote' became the rallying points for nationalist agitation. These workers' movements thus preceded mass nationalism.

In Zimbabwe, nationalist consciousness burst into flame with the Native Land Husbandry Act (NLHA) of 1951 although earlier movements like the trade unions and labour strikes had in a way inspired nationalist awakening. The impact of the Act on traditional land tenure systems was radical; it was a revolution attempted. It fractured the cultural dimension of land ownership which entailed land inheritance rights for one's offspring. With this Act the rights of inheritance ceased to be the case as the Act introduced individual land rights that were not transferable to an heir. This inspired African resistance and Benjamin Burombo's African Voice among other nationalist groups aggressively campaigned against this Act. Thus, by enacting this law, the Rhodesian government unwittingly galvanized Africans across the rural and urban divide. The national nature of the law's impact is, to a large extent, what raised a nationalist consciousness among Africans. However, one of the most enduring effects of the NLHA was to acknowledge that black people had a place in the cities as it envisaged a class of blacks with no rural homes. Admittedly, this was a radical rethinking of how the city accommodated the population, but that also meant that urban blacks – potentially the most

politicized in nationalist terms – were also denied their right to the safety net of a rural home and this added to urban black insecurity. They could be dismissed from work and end up with nowhere to go. While there was hopelessness among urban blacks, rural blacks resisted village lines and ridges. They also destroyed cattle dip tanks and Native Department officials were also defied.

However, working class movements in a way also provided organisational templates for nationalist organisation. The Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU) in particular provided a meeting point of ideas that fomented nationalist thinking. Van der Walt (2007: 243) posits that "in Southern Rhodesia…, ICU speakers spoke, by turns, as aspirant traders, as African nationalists, and as militant socialists. The ICU in Rhodesia sometimes saw whites in general as the enemy, but sometimes focused on the 'capitalist' class…the capitalist who kept power by means of the government and the missionaries." Van der Walt's analysis is significant in that it shows how the binaries of black versus white, authentic culture versus western corruption of authentic culture, capital versus labour all simply disintegrate and are constantly shifting their content. In the complexity that characterises Africa these categories, constructed in the West, are porous and refuse their difference. Alternatively, these are structuralist categories that fail to contain the lived realities of black experience in the 1950s and since then. From a dialogic perspective, the languages of protest associated with labour politics are implicated in the discourses of these nationalist autobiographers, especially Vambe who lived through the era of ICU activity and personally knew Charles Mzingeli, the persona synonymous with the movement (having founded the Reformed ICU in 1946) in Rhodesia.

The three narrators belong to political, social and religious groups, but most significantly political. Political groups use specific languages. As a result, these autobiographical subjects arrive at consciousnesses of who they are courtesy of these languages- that is discursively. Smith and Watson (2001: 33-34) refer to Bakhtin in this regard; "consciousness – which also implies identity as a category of consciousness – is dialogical. That is, it is always implicated in 'the process of social interaction'." Smith and Watson (2001: 34) further contend "[a]nd because of what Bakhtin calls 'heteroglossia' in the social realm, the multiplicity of languages, words, and meanings that 'mutually supplement one another, contradict one

another and [are] interrelated dialogically'…, the subject comes to consciousness through multiple identities and multiple voices."

Thus in this chapter, the many languages of multiracialism, national liberation, workers' rights, citizenship, class formation and above all national self-assertion are interrogated in order to establish ways in which they shape autobiographical subjectivity within the historical context of nationalist agitation. It is important to interrogate class formation as a way of understanding the subjectivity of these three autobiographical subjects because of the ways in which class complicates subjectivity. For instance black people who went into business (the bus owner or store-keeper for instance) were the new bourgeoisie who wanted full rights of citizenship first and only secondly were interested in multiracialism. In the 1950s it was not possible for a black person to access a bank loan, which would help grow business. This would easily apply to Lawrence Vambe who was a businessman. Muzorewa was a churchman and that complicates his identity as his growing position in the church enabled him to change class positions.

In this context that I have briefly outlined, the lived experiences of these autobiographers were linked to discourses of emancipation and nationalist politics. The analysis in this chapter will excavate the making of the subjectivities of the colonised through being subjects of colonial power and through their agency in subverting that power for nationalist ends.

Reading boyhood retrospectively

The early part of Vambe's narrative is a retrospective reading of his boyhood years. In it he chronicles his birth and the life-changing events for the VaShawasha people which profoundly affected his own life. He remembers the VaShawasha tribal life with fondness and a tinge of nostalgia as he recalls that "even I at the age of ten somehow sensed that the VaShawasha were now losing their tribal identity. The upheaval revealed that the tribe was now irrevocably divided" (p. 2). Vambe articulates intimate details of tribal life that include the justice system and other aspects, showing how all that came to an end with the death of Chief Mashonganyika. His personal experiences and observing adults in his boyhood in a way facilitate an understanding of many potential identities available to him and the fluid

nature of identities in general. Of those who leave Chishawasha following the death of Chief Mashonganyika, Vambe recalls:

> Those who chose to leave the area entirely were in effect trying to escape white civilisation and its double noose of religious and economic enslavement. But those who stayed were beginning to understand that now there was nowhere in the whole country where Africans could live without interference from the hydra of white political, economic and administrative control, and so decided to swim with rather than against the tide. (p.2)

Vambe mentions the newly-found open-mindedness of his people to tribal taboos which they had failed to question previously as "they seemed to seize the chance to escape from their old existence and were trying to make a giant leap into this new dynamic system brought by the Europeans" (p.6). However, in the context of the new mission environment Vambe acknowledges the stability that was inspired by the figure of Mashonganyika. As the tribal life of the VaShawasha was being reconstituted, he admits that "In this new environment, I saw more clearly what the late Chief had stood for in the life of the tribe" (p.5-6).

This retrospective reading of his boyhood years is inflected by a sociological paradigm. Vambe's analysis of the changes taking place among the VaShawasha is sociological more than anything else. There is also a new awareness of gender. He interprets the new position of the African woman in the colonial context by contrasting it to her former position in traditional society and acknowledges the emancipatory role of colonial modernity for the African woman, but recognizes the vulnerable position in which it also left her; "Outside domestic service, she had nothing to offer Europeans in Southern Rhodesia. But the white society and the majority of Africans saw the black woman, if she strayed outside the social structure of her tribe, as fit only for the role of a prostitute" (p. 8). Vambe's subjective interpretation of gender relations among African people in the context of colonial modernity is academic in scope and points to an academic or intellectual subjectivity that is a result of his education and exposure to a cosmopolitan world through his interactions with people during his career as a journalist.

Vambe is surrounded by multiple models of identity and discourses that have the potential to construct him multiply, which is why he is seeing the liberatory potential of colonial modernity when at the same time he is consistently interrogating white rule in Rhodesia. He has not just his grandmother Madzidza who steadfastly maintained that white rule had

brought only suffering to Africans and others like his uncle Jakobo and John Nyamayaro of whom he says, "at a time when discrimination on grounds of colour was being intensified, men like John Nyamayaro sustained my confidence and pride in being black" (p.12). Uncle Jakobo had the habit of "telling his people the bitter truth about themselves" (p.13). Jakobo had no kind words for Africans and Vambe comments, "but what made him unusual was his lack of spurious African nationalism" (p.13). He not only refused to attribute African people's problems entirely to Europeans, but also vowed never to get into the employment of a white person and "to give him his due he did prove his point by refusing to work for the Europeans for as long as I knew him" (p.13). In addition, Vambe chronicles Uncle Jakobo's dress sense; he wears anything European including a combination of men's and women's clothing. Vambe admires how Uncle Jakobo carnivalises the confluence of European and African culture; "For Jakobo, for instance, one article of clothing, except perhaps a skirt, was as good as another. He saw no inconsistency in wearing women's blouses, men's tailcoats without matching pairs of trousers, or riding breeches without boots or leggings. Hats had a special fascination for Jakobo and he had a whole selection of them, men's as well as women's, cast-offs from the settlers in Salisbury" (p.13). Jakobo would revel in a world of pomp and good fortune and tell anyone who cared to listen that he felt like the Governor or a military general and "would dream of marching on Europe to give the white race a taste of their own medicine by turning their part of the world into an African colonial Empire" (p.13), but would switch to instant sobriety if a problem called for his wisdom. Vambe analyses characters and what motivates them. He thus subjects each of his notable relatives to what is in effect sociological analysis. Vambe articulates the dissidence of his people demonstrated through a delicate balance between outright resistance and mimicry. Ashcroft et al (2011: 139) argue that "mimicry is never very far from mockery, since it can appear to parody whatever it mimics. Mimicry therefore locates a crack in the certainty of colonial dominance, an uncertainty in its control of the behaviour of the colonized." Thus Jakobo's mimicry of colonial governors and white generals undercuts imperial discourse; it is subversive imitation meant to be dissent and in a way Vambe's admiration of this character shapes his subjectivity in that it allows him to see the ambivalence of the condition of the colonised.

Vambe appeals to these many voices of his boyhood years to craft a memory of his own. These memories discipline the construction of his subjectivities. His intellectualism is projected in his ability to synthesise these many voices ranging from Madzidza's and

Jakobo's radicalism to Nyamayaro's accommodationist tendencies, which emerge in the many discussions he witnessed as a child. His first encounter with Rhodesian racism is at the age of ten when he accompanies his grandmother on a visit to Chinyika Native Reserve where he briefly works on a farm where his labour is exploited for a pittance. Recalling the farmer and this incident Vambe argues, "Little did he realize that one of the piccaninnies who worked for him and to whom he gave only sixpence-worth of maize-meal for more than eight hours' drudgery was fuming internally with rage for a long time after and saw him as a heartless tyrant" (p. 23). From this experience he vows never to reside in a native reserve close to a white farmer. He is rescued from this life when he is called back to Chishawasha to attend school. At the Sacred Heart School Vambe encounters the irony of Rhodesian race relations through the many coloured children that he sees there. What he calls the "colossal amount of miscegenation" (p. 24) does not escape his young mind. It is in his appreciation of the value of education that Vambe develops an intellectual subjectivity. His educational experiences make him conclude that education was the most rewarding benefit of European civilisation.

In Vambe's later years Communism gained relevance especially in countries under repressive regimes that used it as an ideology to mobilize resistance. He refers to memories of his early years to critique Rhodesian political rhetoric, then and during his time of writing, of blaming African nationalist consciousness on the influences of Communism. Using retrospective logic in relation to discussions that took place among the VaShawasha he argues:

> I found these discussions stimulating and enlightening, because they gave me a chance to see both sides of the question. The notion that the tribal African, if not misled by people with Communist leanings, is apolitical, is one of the most dangerous delusions nursed by white Rhodesia.
>
> The people of Chishawasha, whatever their education, were continually involved in discussions of this kind, and that at a time when Communism was as far removed from Africans of Southern Rhodesia as Shintoism is from the English today. (p.13)

Vambe rejects the attribution of his people's political consciousness and agency to Communism. Evidently his Shawasha background avails multiple identity models that are rooted in the mores of his people. In a way Vambe is apprenticed to various identity models which in turn shape him, even if the models are in conflict with each other. The conflict leads to fissured subjectivity.

Lawrence Vambe and the split personality of the African subject

The control exerted by the colonialists against Africans is both intellectual and cultural. Thus the school and the church both become sites where the old order disintegrates or at best is reconstituted. Vambe's Catholic education exposes him to the complexities of the Christian religion, which in his youth he finds difficult to fathom. He contends:

> I did not have trouble in learning this little bit of Catholic doctrine from cover to cover parrot-fashion. But, occasionally, I felt depressed and overwhelmed by the implications of parts of its teaching. For example, we were taught that God had no beginning and no end. My young mind could not grasp this lofty theological point. I found myself turning over and over in my brain how it was possible that God was timeless. Because I could not comprehend this fact of eternity, I sometimes felt physically sick with worry. (p. 27)

The failure to comprehend this religious fact makes him unstable as it does not cohere with how God is conceptualized in his people's worldview. He also grapples with the absence of ancestors in this religious teaching and this in turn splits his subjectivity.

Vambe's constant interrogation of the Catholic teachings points to a fractured identity, which is a product of an unstable mind. He recalls:

> I accepted entirely that God was all goodness, as the nuns kept emphasizing. But sooner or later my brain wanted to understand why God, having created human beings out of the profound goodness of his heart, at the same time inflicted us all with evil, pain, sorrow and death, including Limbo and that awful place, Hell, which, in the language of the nuns, was one huge flaming furnace, where sinners were kept burning for eternity. Trying to fathom such mysteries *threw me into utter despair and a temporary state of schizophrenia* (my emphasis). (p. 27)

Vambe's conceptual problems as far as apprehending the nature of the Christian God are what concretise his feelings of despondency and creates a problematic and split identity. This has its roots in the reconstitution of the old world and the cultural trauma that this engenders. The disintegration and reconstitution of the old world ushers in problematic self identities trying to reconcile themselves with the present. Berger (2010: 47) opines:

> if an autobiography is indeed, as James Olney's romanticist-inflected analysis suggests, 'a metaphor of the self at the summary moment of composition', then African autobiographies – part of an on-going historical process – are Africanized metaphors, both human narratives attempting to construct an order from life and African texts crucially impacted by a global imperial system that sought (seeks) both land and identities.

Thus the relationship existing between self formation or coming into being and the tragic and transformative powers of colonial control cannot be over-emphasised.

The dialogising forces in the Rhodesian educational and religious context inspire the formation of what Berger (2010: 36) calls "the tragic or colonized schizophrenia of the African subject that has replaced an imagined older unity". For Vambe, the advent of colonialism with its money economy, Christian religion and education, is responsible for the disintegration of the VaShawasha hegemony characterized by stability. This disintegration is metaphorically marked by the death of Mashonganyika and the dispersal of the VaShawasha in the aftermaths of his death. It is also marked by the rearrangement or resettling of the people in "Christian villages" headed by church-appointed chiefs. The demise of Chief Mashonganyika and grandfather Mizha heralds the end of an era that stood as a signifier of the collective identity of the VaShawasha people and that of Vambe himself. The breakdown of this cultural signifier and exposure to the mysteries of Catholic doctrine thus engender the divided personality that characterizes Vambe's subjectivity.

Vambe's articulation of the breakdown of VaShawasha culture and its reconstitution recalls Smith's and Watson's (2001) theorization of the politics of agency especially in postcolonial writing. "[T]raditional autobiography", argue Smith and Watson (2001: 42) "has been read as a narrative of agency, evidence that subjects can live freely. But we must recognize that the issue of how subjects claim, exercise, and narrate agency is far more complicated." For instance Smith and Watson (2001: 45) pose this question:

> What about formerly colonised peoples who have been educated as subject populations in the colonizer's language, beliefs and values (interpellated as "colonized"), while their indigenous culture has been repressed, often brutally? Such subjects are inheritors of the legacies of a colonial history that made them less than fully human beings. For them, autobiographical writing has often served as a tactic of intervention in colonial repression.

In the colonial context where Vambe has been hailed as the colonised black subject, autobiographical writing is his way of showing his agency. Given this background Smith's and Watson's (2001: 45) question is instructive:

> When people have encountered representations of themselves as the objects of the surveyor's gaze – the "exotic" native Other of anthropology and racialized laborer or slave of imperialism – how do they begin to assert cultural agency, especially while using the terms and the medium of the colonizer?

In asserting his cultural agency Vambe deploys the strategy of knowing himself within the context of a Zimbabwe in the making, which is why his narrative is titled *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe*. His autobiographical identity is thus tied to that of a nation in the making. There is mobility, also fluidity implied in the title; mobile identity that is constantly in the making. His education and subsequent middle-class jobs are opportunities for agency. Education equips him with the necessary tools to write but at the same time allowing him to write undermining, the myth or stereotype of Africans as barbaric. Secondly Vambe grounds his aesthetic in the mores of his people as opposed to those of the West. Yet again his grounding in the histories and memories of the VaShawasha enables him to be conscious of his being hailed as a subject of colonialism, especially when he encounters the inhumanity of the Salisbury environment when he runs away from school to seek employment in 1930. The Salisbury environment is a colonial space, in which the African is an unwelcome sojourner and Vambe encounters the inhumanity of the black man's existence in that space. His initial view is that Salisbury is a place of freedom, but that freedom is ironically undermined by the squalid conditions under which black people in the service of white people live. When he gets work at the Salisbury Golf Club Vambe has this to say about the sleeping quarters:

> I did not sleep well and only waited for dawn to break so that I could escape from this animal existence. I found it difficult to believe that grown-up human beings could live like the oxen and the mules which they were looking after and be proud of working under such conditions. I had never felt so superior before, and the way to show it was not to stay there a minute longer than was absolutely necessary. (p.31)

While conceding the fortuitous nature of the "freedom" he had tried to embrace, Vambe's interpretation of the Salisbury experience is not at all entirely negative. He sees it as a learning experience as it exposes the squalor beneath the glamour in Salisbury and the dynamics of racial interdependence of the white and black races. Therefore entry into the urban space enables Vambe to appreciate the dynamics of race relations in Rhodesia and his interpretations of what he sees as the interdependence between the races explains his persistent reformist stand which set him in opposition to radical nationalism. The Salisbury sojourn is a journey of consciousness. In Chishawasha Vambe is not fully apprised of the workings of Rhodesian colonialism. When he opts to go back to Chishawasha and to school, he has turned full circle; it has been a journey of his social education and discovery. His movement into the urban space, from house to house nearly cast him as an itinerant *flâneur*;

the gentleman traveller, and only his lack of means prevented this side of himself from being developed.

In addition, the journey to Salisbury leads to a re-evaluation of his relationship with his grandmother who so far has been a coordinate of stability. Madzidza's outlook is Manichean; for her there is nothing good in the whiteman's world and there is everything to celebrate in the VaShawasha traditions. Prior to this journey she has been a signifier of his identity, but for the first time, he sees the limitations of his grandmother's vision: "She was too prejudiced and puritanical to be relied upon for guidance" (p. 34). The dismissal of the moral authority of his grandmother marks another turning point in his own interpretation of events in Rhodesia; he rejects a simple binarism of bad white and good black in his responses to the Rhodesian problem. His individuality to a certain extent also emerges from this partial rejection of Madzidza's moral authority. Yet Madzidza remains a point of light; she continues to illuminate certain issues for him. When Hitler's influence rises in Nazi Germany and the missionaries ask school children to pray for a British victory over Hitler and also when they are asked to pray fervently for the conversion of Russia, it is Madzidza who opens Vambe's eyes to the other side of the story. Vambe recalls that when Madzidza heard about this "she was not shocked. If these Russians were white people, she observed, then all these things could be true as were the stealing of our country and the killing of our mediums, chiefs and countless Shona people by the white race in Rhodesia during the Rebellion" (p. 48). He confesses that they had not been informed of the conditions which had bred communism in Russia and it is through Madzidza that he realizes if another side of any story is told, a different conclusion may be arrived at and he begins "to doubt the efficacy of our daily prayers for the conversion of Russia" (p. 48).

When Vambe begins to see the limitations of his grandmother's vision his individual identity also begins to emerge. Individualism is a by-product of Enlightenment logic and modernity. The modernity of Vambe's project, however, is that he uses tradition to question colonial modernity and also deploys the tools of modernity to question the efficacy of the enlightenment project, especially when he brings out the hypocrisy of Christianity in failing to speak out against racial injustice and what was happening in the Harare African Township.

Vambe: the intellectual subject of life narrative

The overall effect of Vambe's early chapters in which he talks about his childhood is that they position him as a subject of colonialism. Yet in writing his autobiography he is asserting cultural and political agency in spite of being subjected to colonial oppression and having limited access to power. This paradoxical agency is achieved through what Ashcroft et al (2011: 19) call "appropriation". Ashcroft et al (2011: 19) describe appropriation as "ways in which the dominated or colonized culture can use the tools of the dominant discourse to resist its political or cultural control." The appropriation in Vambe's case is both linguistic and textual, that is using the English language and the autobiographical genre – perceived to be largely a western mode of representation - although it has since been proved that the genre is and was also pervasive in non-western cultures mostly in oral forms. Autobiography privileges the autonomous subject, but Vambe's narrative shows how his subjectivities are formulated within the context of his people's value systems and power matrices in Rhodesia. In attempting to construct the authentic self Vambe is also authorising versions of the self. These versions speak to multiple identities that answer to how history and discursive formations shape identities.

Vambe is exposed to cultural formations that enable the enunciation of his "I" identity. Smith and Watson (2001: 83) also highlight how "the personal story of a remembered past is always in dialogue with emergent cultural formations". Veit-Wild (1992) categorises Vambe as belonging to Generation 1 of Zimbabwean black writers who received basic education before and during World War II at a time when it was difficult for black people to access education in Southern Rhodesia. To Veit-Wild (1992: 7) "when they started their writing careers in the 1950s, they were pioneers in this field. For many, their writing was closely linked to an emerging African nationalism which they actively supported." If their writing was largely connected to the emergence of mass nationalism, then professional and intellectual resources were also to a great extent influential in shaping the writing careers. Vambe's career as a journalist coheres with his keen observation and reportage of urban society in the Harare township of Salisbury. Veit-Wild (1992: 32) suggests that in *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* Vambe "combines his autobiography with vivid observations of the social and political history of his country, which again lead into support for the nationalist cause and the hope that things will change soon, that Rhodesia will eventually become Zimbabwe – as the title

suggests." Veit-Wild (1992: 32) also calls the text "a brilliant example of Vambe's journalistic craft."

To begin to understand the relationship between intellectualism and Vambe the life-writing subject, there is a need to apprehend what happens with subjectivities when the colonised deploys the intellectual resources of the coloniser to critique colonial injustice, protest and map out an existence in the colonial world. This understanding has to be located in the postcolonial context of how the colonised Other appropriates the intellectualism of the coloniser to achieve this. Such intellectualism in turn also has to be understood as it relates to structures of power in the Rhodesian polity because as Ally (2005: 72) argues, "intellectualism that defines itself in opposition to the state can therefore still be implicated in power, if it is involved in processes of political claims-making by other actors in the society at large."

To extend their earlier definition of appropriation Ashcroft et al (2011: 19) also define appropriation as:

> A term used to describe the ways in which post-colonial societies take over those aspects of the imperial culture – language, forms of writing, film, theatre, even modes of thought and argument such as rationalism, logic and analysis – that may be of use to them in articulating their own social and cultural identities.

An analysis of the discourse in *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe* will reveal ways in which Vambe has appropriated the modes of the coloniser's culture to oppose colonial power and at the same time critique the African urban society. Thus, through this appropriation Vambe's narrative links the autobiographical to social and political critique.

Vambe's intellectualism is manifest in his retrospective handling of his boyhood years. His memories of growing up in the context of the disintegration of VaShawasha culture is in effect shaped by oral traditions to which he was exposed in his childhood, but these are balanced by measured analyses, which is evidence that the speaking subject is the older and intellectually mature Vambe. The impact of these oral traditions and their resonance in his autobiography and other works (*An Ill-Fated People* 1972) is acknowledged in an interview with Flora Veit-Wild. His analysis and reportage of VaShawasha disintegration and the people's ambivalent responses to the impact of Christian and urban cultures, recall some kind of ethnography. Ethnography itself is a mode of social science research common among

anthropologists who studied minority societies in parts of the world under European imperial influence. It is thus implicated in the mapping and objectifying of the colonised by the coloniser. In explaining the behavior of some of his relatives in relation to the cultural and economic impact of colonial rule, Vambe employs logical reasoning which is venerated in European metaphysics.

A combination of this intellectualism and his journalistic skills spawns an intellectual subjectivity that finds expression in his commentary of social, cultural and political matters in Rhodesia. In chapter seven of his narrative Vambe discusses life at Kutama Mission and its cosmopolitanism: "it was here that I had a graphic glimpse into the daunting diversity of black Africa" (p. 81). His description of cultural and customary differences between black people from parts of southern Africa recalls anthropology and journalism. Journalism as a practice entails subjecting the object of reportage to some kind of surveillance. In postcolonial parlance, Ashcroft et al (2011: 226) posit that:

> One of the most powerful strategies of imperial dominance is that of surveillance, or observation, because it implies a viewer with an elevated vantage point, it suggests the power to process and understand that which is seen, and it objectifies and interpellates the colonised subject in a way that fixes its identity in relation to the surveyor.

The irony of a postcolonial context is that the educated political elite can appropriate surveillance by displacing imperial surveillance of the colonised Other and in the process becoming surveyors in their own right. Their power within state structures enables this endeavour. The irony again is that the gaze of the colonised Other not only turns on the coloniser, but also on fellow Others. Vambe turns his gaze on fellow Others and by so doing he is betraying a hybridized identity in which he is opposing colonial dominance while at the same time appropriating its tools of domination. Thus, while "the imperial gaze defines the identity of the subject, objectifies it within the identifying system of power relations and confirms its subalterneity (sic) and powerlessness", Ashcroft et al (2011: 226) contend that, "[t]his concept of the gaze becomes important for post-colonial discourse because such surveillance, which corresponds to and confirms the gaze of colonial authority, may be reversed." In surveying African life in the black township of Harare, and commenting on poor provision of housing by the colonial establishment and moral degeneration among Africans, Vambe has reversed the imperial gaze. This reversal is further manifest in his

critique of colonial power and domination of Africans in Rhodesia. In this respect, Ashcroft et al's (2011: 229) comments are instructive:

> The metaphoric displacing and returning of the imperial gaze is a fundamental operation of the appropriation of imperial technologies, discourses and cultural forms. The colonized subject not only alters these to local rules but uses them to direct the gaze up the colonizer and thus reverse the orientation of power in the relationship.

Commenting on oppositional intellectualism in South Africa as reflecting and not rejecting power, Ally (2005: 71) bemoans the fact that:

> First, for the existing literature, power is exclusively imbued in the state and in its repressive capacities. The state is seen as the producer of knowledge in the first instance, either by directly sponsoring it as in the 'ideological subservience strand', or inspiring a direct critique as in the 'moralistic strand'. Any intellectualism opposed to the state is therefore, by necessity (in both instances), intellectualism disconnected from power and from repression.

In offering an alternative understanding of the relationship between intellectuals and power, Ally (2005:71) suggests that power has to be "liberated from an exclusive association with the state and recognized as operative throughout the social space, amongst all actors who seek to make political claims, and redefine political practice."

Vambe's narrative exposes a colonised subject in an ambivalent relationship to the structures of power in Rhodesia. In retrospectively reading his boyhood, Vambe points out the benefits that he could see potentially accruing from exposure to Western education. He later engages in reformist politics, believing in multi-racial co-existence before turning to radical politics in the face of frustration with Rhodesian right-wing politics. It is axiomatic that the intellectualism of the elite class of Africans in Rhodesia was embedded in the politics of segregation and nationhood at that time. From this perspective, as Ally (2005: 72) argues, "[p]ower is therefore understood as providing a conditioning for ideas that, while not instrumentally connected to specific political interests, implicates the development of those ideas in a context shaped by a more broadly circulating politics of the time." Rhodesian political practices shape Vambe's ideas of black people's relationship to state power. In the context of self-narration, such texts as Vambe's autobiography are fundamental sites for analysis in order to apprehend the nature of the critique of Rhodesian state power by black nationalists.

Above, I located Vambe's subjectivity in relation to the segregatory politics of Rhodesia and the broad power dynamics, but that relationship is couched in ambivalence. Describing ambivalence, Ashcroft et al (2011: 12) argue the "term was first developed in psychoanalysis to describe a continual fluctuation between wanting one thing and wanting its opposite." They further point out that the concept was "adapted into colonial discourse theory by Homi Bhabha, [and] describes the complex mix of attraction and repulsion that characterizes the relationship between colonizer and colonized." Ashcroft et al (2011: 12) further postulate that "the relationship is ambivalent because the colonized subject is never simply and completely opposed to the colonizer. Rather than assuming that some colonized subjects are 'complicit' and some 'resistant', ambivalence suggests that complicity and resistance exist in a fluctuating relation within the colonial subject." This explains why Vambe's narrative betrays his and other middle class Africans' desire to fit into the system as well as his hope that Rhodesian politics will voluntarily reform its own racist preconceptions.

At Kutama, Vambe demonstrates his ambivalent relationship with colonialism more than anywhere else in the narrative. He contends:

> the deeper I went into the analysis of the ugly facts of our past and present, the more I tended to rationalize and to accept the view that colonial rule and its misfortunes were the prerequisites of an eventually united, free and industrious people, with the necessary wisdom and experience to endure hardships and so make Africa as great a continent as Europe. I told myself that, if the Europeans were at that point to fade from the African scene, the black people would be the losers. There would either be inter-tribal strife and bloodshed or once again time could stand still in Africa. (p.82)

Vambe then argues for the use of the English language claiming that it expresses all thoughts whether abstract or concrete, a view that is contrary to linguistic theory; all languages have the same capacity for creativity. He also argues that the European ways should be the guidelines for progress. Perhaps this fear of freedom is what Freire (1972) discusses in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. The ambivalence lies in the recognition of the need to unchain oneself from colonial oppression yet at the same time fearing this freedom in the absence of the white man. Vambe also knows that education empowers individuals, which is a process of individuation. He however concedes that taking education as the panacea of all problems is too simplistic.

Veit-Wild (1992) explains the genesis of this ambivalence when she describes the first generation of black writers' educational experiences in mission schools and abroad. Their

exposure to the ideas and literary works of other black people in the diaspora molded their identities and aspirations. These ideas ranged from the accommodationist tendencies of Booker T. Washington as epitomized by his autobiography *Up From Slavery* and the Ghanaian Dr J. E. K. Aggrey to the radicalism of W. E. B. Dubois. Veit-Wild (1992: 59) contends:

> As mentioned in Lawrence Vambe's biography, an important example had been established by the career of Dr J.E.K. Aggrey of Ghana, proving that an African could excel academically and be recognized internationally. Booker T. Washington's *Up From Slavery* and Richard Wright's *Native Son* became important early ideological sources for many Zimbabwean writers who were thus influenced by black American writers and by leaders of the pan-African movement of early this [twentieth] century as were South African writers such as Peter Abrahams.

The subject in Vambe's narrative is a product of exposure and engagement with intellectual resources gained from colonial education and wider reading as evident above. Above all the preceding discussion has also shown how Vambe realises his subjectivity within the context of nostalgic remembrance of the Shawasha culture and also the historical context of mass nationalism in Rhodesia and the rise of a black middle-class to which he also belongs. The nationalist subject emerges in the wake of mass nationalism and the desire to fight for national liberation.

The following section begins the discussion of how Muzorewa's narrative has been shaped by his experiences of the politics of national liberation from within the church movement. The analysis of his narrative shall show how liberation theology dialogises the construction of his subjective identity.

Propping up an Augustan turning point

Muzorewa was born on the 14th of April in 1925 at Old Umtali at a time when historically black people in Rhodesia were still making that transition from the old world into the new, ushered in by colonialism. This transition is manifest in the life of his parents. He observes that, "living between two worlds, they tried to hold on to what was worthwhile in both cultures" (p. 2). Muzorewa is thus conditioned by an environment, where already his parents are situated in the in-between - Homi Bhabha's (1994) third space in which culture is negotiated. This is an era in which Africans are grappling with a dying world and an

emerging one, which is a re-constitution of the old. The beginning of the narrative sets the identity trajectory that is characteristic of Muzorewa's life, an identity trajectory inflected by ancestral history and interaction with modern forces in Rhodesia, and the national politics of his time. He appropriates a historical identity derived from the achievements and misfortunes of his progenitors:

> It was my ancestors of the Makombe tribe who fought courageously against Portuguese rule in the early years of this century until beaten into submission or forced into exile. They were the earliest 'freedom fighters'.
>
> My father's mother was of the Chipunza family, one of the royal houses of the Makoni tribe, with the same totem, Shonga, as those named Makoni. They were among the first to be evicted by the Europeans from their rich farmlands of Headlands area, halfway between the present cities of Salisbury and Mutare. (p.2)

In fact, from these statements, Muzorewa simultaneously locates his narrative identity within the context of the gallantry and historical dispossession of his people. Interestingly however, Muzorewa also appears already to be deconstructing the image of freedom fighters in his contemporary context. This is implied in his emphatic statement that his maternal ancestors were the earliest "freedom fighters". While in the discourse of Chimurenga (war of liberation), the Ndebele and Shona uprisings of 1894-6 are identified as the origins of freedom fighting, Muzorewa takes us centuries back. He stretches this legacy in order to situate himself in the continuum of freedom fighters over centuries, being himself a descendant of the Makombe people from his mother's side. Having done so, he immediately proceeds to catapult his familial experience and locates it in the national political realm. Muzorewa comments that "in fact, the history of my father's family mirrors the saga of so many thousands of Zimbabweans under white rule in Southern Rhodesia who became displaced persons in the land of their birth" (p. 3). His family's experiences are metonymic of the larger Rhodesian issue, and because of this he is claiming the authority to speak on behalf of the majority. The contexts of the forces that shape his subjectivity are then neatly summarized in the following statement: "Discipline, sharp temper, humour – those words summarize my upbringing. Add regular Bible lessons plus church-going, and you have the ingredients which have moulded my character and that of my five brothers and sisters" (p. 4). To this he adds his first encounter with Rhodesian racism especially on commercial farms and the context of the formation of his early identity is complete. He is thus identifying himself with his people's experiential history of colonialism.

However, it is during his school days, which also meant attending religious services as required by missionary educationists, that one sees a philosophical identity tied to the spiritual emerging in Muzorewa. While some of his school mates loathed the religious services, Muzorewa belonged to another group that saw the services as a time of spiritual revival. It is during one of these services that he gives his life to Christ after an introspective search for his religious ontology, "Do I believe in Christ just because my parents and teachers want me to do so? What do I believe?" (p. 21). He finds his answer and feels compelled to respond to an altar call. This becomes what I would call his Augustan moment, in which his action and experience recall Augustine's turning point as the Saint described it in his *Confessions*. Muzorewa says:

> Although I had been brought up in a devout Christian home, I made that morning my own commitment to follow Christ as my Saviour. On that day of days Christ gave me a spiritual microscope, spectacles and earphones to see and hear for myself what Christ offers. I realized that I was a sinner, but God loves me and forgives me. (p.21)

This is for him a turning point which subsequently shapes his whole view of religion, life and politics. Prior to his realization of his sinful nature, Muzorewa is an incoherent being who only finds coherence in this newly found relationship with God. He is a spiritual scientist as suggested by a combination of "microscope, spectacles and earphones" and is also setting himself apart as highly qualified for his future religious and political vocation. Muzorewa continues to use the Augustan tropology as evidenced by a moment which parallels Augustine's experience where he also comes to a realization of his sinful nature when he steals a pear. He says:

> at such moments it is often the little misdeeds that at first bring remorse. I remembered how a group of us had stripped a mango tree when asked to cut grass at the home of Sister Hansen, our missionary nurse. On leaving the small group I went immediately to her and said, 'Sister, I am sorry that I took your mangoes without permission. Today I have accepted Christ and have felt His acceptance of me. I now seek your forgiveness also, Sister Ruth'. (p. 21-22)

In appropriating the Augustan trope, Muzorewa is authorizing the spiritual foundation of his priestly identity which he will assume in the Methodist Church later in life. Dominic (2001: 228) commenting on Augustine's *Confessions* suggests that:

> his "confessio peccati et laudis" (confession of sin and praise [of God]) follows the biblical pattern of two selves in conflict, the old and the new, the one imprisoned in sin, the other released by grace. The split subjectivity between "what I once was" and

> "what I am now" produces a discontinuous account…. To resolve the problem of personal identity Augustine turns towards the immutable God … who continually gathers the fragmented self into one. A coherent story becomes possible for Augustine because the human narrator enters into an I/Thou relationship with the divine Author.

This is also similar to how Muzorewa crafts an allegory of the self by finding coherence in the grace of God; "I realized that I was a sinner, but God loves me and forgives me" (p. 21) . By extension his incoherent self, betrayed in his questions of his faith in God, finds coherence when he also becomes a High Priest of Zimbabwean nationalist politics. In that vocation he marries the gospel of Christian salvation to nationalist liberation politics. Muzorewa is able to maintain this spiritual identity throughout his narrative especially by consistently touting the philosophical relationship between Shona traditions, Christian beliefs and political liberation.

Apart from the Christian influence, his parents also provided a model of identity especially by instilling a desire for education; "They have taught by example a vital Christian faith and we have caught it. Their integrity and courage in standing for the truth have been my model not only when a student, but also later when chosen to lead in both church and politics" (p.25). His career as a minister of the church is cast as God-ordained. This is brought out in the recollection of the dreams he began to have as he grappled with the question of whether God wanted him to be a minister or a farmer. According to Okazaki (2002: 63) dreams are a "strategy for subjectivity" and "intersubjective dreaming [contributes] to the consciousness of subjects [and] to their subjectivity as moral beings who perceive the moral ambiguities of their social lives". The moral dilemmas he grapples with in his daily existence play themselves out in dreams and this magnifies the sense of complexity in the choices he has to make.

In late 1947 Muzorewa was in Salisbury after abandoning teaching at Chitimbe School where he had taught in 1944 and 1945. In Salisbury he comes face to face with racism; he had not experienced its kind with missionary whites. It is here that he experiences the beckoning call of the priesthood:

> On the first night in Salisbury, I had a dream. It was a vision of a hut full of ministers of religion, all clothed in clerical garb. They surrounded my shabbily dressed figure. I was the only dirty fellow in that room. Was God saying to me that I should join the company of the ministers of the church? I doubted in (sic) the next morning as I set for the city centre to look for a job. (p. 29)

A complete stranger then tells Muzorewa to go back and work for the church; astounded, he takes this to be a message from God. After three months of joblessness in Salisbury he comes across Darius Jijita who had been sent by Reverend O'Farrell to look for him. Thus strictly speaking his movement to Salisbury in search of employment in 1947 constitutes a Jonah moment, a futile exercise since his destiny to become a man of the cloth had been divinely ordained, just as Jonah was destined for Nineveh. He is appointed lay preacher and sees this as confirmation of his prayer just after quitting teaching in which he had asked God to find means of sending him back if Salisbury was not meant for him. This is why he titles a segment of his first chapter "When He Calls I Will Follow" (p. 31). In it he carefully positions himself as a servant of God and like Augustine, he is a subject of God's grace. This is the image that he also so consistently props up throughout the narrative that even his entry into nationalist politics is conceived of as God's call to which he has no choice but to obey. This way Muzorewa absolves himself from any blame for any of his subsequent actions in the political arena since God himself had tasked him with that work.

As a lay preacher, he "soon became a familiar figure in the district – the small preacher trudging along the dusty road" (p. 30). Here Muzorewa points to the embodied nature of autobiographical subjectivity. Indeed he was physically small, but by calling himself "the small preacher", he is suggesting how despite his small frame he trudges along dusty roads enduring difficulty while doing God's work. This obsession with trying to relate work and physical stature is also seen later in the narrative when he refers to Robert Mugabe's stature when they meet in Lusaka for the first time. He describes how he had expected to see a physically imposing Robert Mugabe, only to see a man of small physical stature. Muzorewa appears to be haunted by the belief that nationalists had to have imposing statures to match their equally imposing roles in nationalist politics. He also calls himself the "itinerant bachelor" (p. 31) after the manner of his travels across the district in his ministry duties as an unmarried preacher. These are the many identities that are constitutive of Muzorewa's subjectivity. The small preacher and itinerant bachelor identities are evidence of the possibility of multiple identities and how they are always in a state of flux. His own identity is always changing in relation to his changed circumstances.

Muzorewa's 'total gospel' and immersion in liberation theology

After flirting for eight years with the idea of total commitment to the church ministry Muzorewa finally responds to the call of God by enrolling at the theological school. He makes this decision while working as a minister at Nyadiri. The experiences at the theological school also underwrite another turning point in his life. Here he sees the shortcomings of a gospel that extols material poverty on earth in anticipation of heavenly bliss in the afterlife. While studying at the theological college Muzorewa and his colleagues begin to articulate a different gospel and at the same time begin to question the efficacy of the gospel as preached by missionaries:

> The new content of our preaching did little to alleviate their fears. Previously, the evangelistic message of our Church in both hymns and sermons stressed heavenly rewards to be given to the faithful who must endure suffering here on earth…. The early missionaries had given a literal interpretation to those Bible verses that implied that the poor and not the rich would inherit the kingdom of heaven. African evangelists and pastors went out of training to preach the same message. It was found in the words of another hymn which sang, 'I don't want much money'. (p.33)

Here Muzorewa exhibits a sense of growing consciousness, which manifests through a critique of religious doctrine, previously accepted wholesale as interpreted by mission theologians. That growth in consciousness is also nurtured by the intellectual environment subsisting in the school. He goes on to say "My classmates and I disliked that emphasis. We labeled it the 'pie in the sky by and by' gospel. We found more appealing another side of the church mission – that of giving to those who follow Christ not only faith but also the skills of agriculture, carpentry, teaching, etc., so that they might live a fuller life here and now" (p.33).

The realization of the limits of the gospel as expounded by missionaries in a way fractures the earlier coherence of the self acquired from reconciliation with God's grace. The religious zone as represented by the theological school is thus potentially a liminal space where Muzorewa is in-between the suffering of the working black people (found in Salisbury and the white farms) and the space occupied by the suffering peasant majority in rural areas. He is at the interstices of colonial discourse and emerging resistance to colonialism. Because of the in-between space offered by religion Muzorewa cannot easily be situated in the category of radical nationalist resistance to colonial rule with its implications of ideological homogeneity. The value of the theological school is that it is a place that nurtures hybridity as this is where Muzorewa develops his ideology of the total gospel, which is a marriage of the spiritual and

physical needs of humanity. It is the total gospel that discursively underwrites his subjectivity.

Muzorewa's analytical mind spurs him to some form of agency: that of proclaiming a holistic gospel. In his mind therefore, he is playing God's advocate: "Did God want some to seize the good land of our country leaving the masses to scratch the dry and sandy soil and starve? We wanted to proclaim a whole gospel for the whole man, (sic) that would speak to what was going on in the day-to-day life of our people" (p.33). Colonial ideology, at psychological and economic levels, creates a sense of insecurity among the colonised. In Muzorewa's case religion and an emergent form of nationalism are useful in securing a stable identity and in signifying that identity. His personal identity is thus shaped by an amalgam of re-interpreted scriptures and nationalist concerns such as access to land resources by Africans in Rhodesia. These address the existential crisis engendered by colonialism.

Interaction with his educators also shaped Muzorewa's identity, as testified to by his statement that "Today it is the living example of my teachers more than their formal teaching that remains impressed on my memory. Dr. Arthur Mansure brought from Boston not only new insights in New Testament interpretation but also an example of humility that remained with us all" (p. 33). Obviously the new insights in biblical hermeneutics propel Muzorewa's agency in re-articulating the gospel to fellow Africans. He chronicles how he wins new souls to Christ by avoiding a confrontational approach previously employed by missionaries. He argues "Too often the missionary witnessed to Africans as if they had no religion, speaking only of Christ without reference to our rich religious heritage. Such an approach, I found to be both ineffective and disrespectful to our Shona culture" (p. 38). Muzorewa is developing an ontological balance between Christian and traditional Shona culture; a philosophy he upholds throughout the narrative as he recollects his engagement in both religious and political leadership. His turning points in life remain interesting as he metamorphoses from "village pastor", "a new crusader" to a "fledgling nationalist" (p. 44). Muzorewa's identity is constantly in the making as he makes many life-changing encounters.

Muzorewa the fledgling nationalist and freedom fighter

Muzorewa's being a fledgling nationalist coincides in his narrative with the deployment of Dr. Ralph E. Dodge in 1956 as the new Bishop for Angola, Mozambique, South Africa and Rhodesia. Bishop Dodge's radicalism in many ways influences Muzorewa. For instance the Bishop would not carry provisions when he toured church circuits, but depended on African hospitality, which many white missionaries before him would have been reluctant to do. Muzorewa also recounts how the Bishop's radicalism was manifest in his sermons. In the absence of Bishop Dodge, however, Muzorewa had already begun to question a religious doctrine that did not address the liberation of black people or the segregationist race relations in Rhodesia. However, the coming of the bishop adds impetus to his agency and this he achieves through a dialogic interaction with his ideas, especially his radical sermons. Therefore, the bishop's ideas and his modus operandi instantiate a radical political subjectivity in Muzorewa: a radicalism always tampered by Christian values**.** Muzorewa himself assumed leadership of the United Methodist Church succeeding Bishop Ralph Edward Dodge after his deportation by the Rhodesian government for his sharp criticism of its racist policies. From the perspective that autobiographers benefit from readily available cultural models, Bishop Dodge stands as a role-model in constructing the identity of Abel Muzorewa both in the political and religious sense.

Muzorewa's identity is in a significant way tied to the Christian church, not solely because he became a man of the cloth, but because ideologically, his articulation of the self ties the religious to the political. His theology is thus politically situated and when he ventures into nationalist politics, the church doctrine and scriptures become the ideological basis for his articulation of nationalist philosophy. Christianity thus functions as a cultural resource that Muzorewa draws from in articulating his memories of colonial experience, agency in articulating a liberation agenda, and identity, all constitutive of his autobiographical subjectivity. Huddart (2008: 78) cites Harbard as suggesting that:

> Autobiography is never simply about the constitution of a stable, knowable self, even if that is the desire in the writing. The writing of the self involves an engagement with the various cultural resources available, forms which are recognizable to institutions, publishers and audiences…. To dismiss it as an intrinsically private activity, signaling a retreat from either public communication or narratives of broader social application, is to miss the point, and to reinstate the tired polarities of public and private, abstract

> versus embodied knowledge, the political subject versus the narcissist: the ineluctability of othering each other.

Suggested above is that autobiographical narration is located in a matrix of pre-existing and even emerging cultural resources. It is in this context that Muzorewa's autobiography Rise Up and Walk and his subjectivity in the narrative can be understood as mediated by his Christian disposition and nationalist liberation ideology inflected by Christian ideals. Understanding Muzorewa's subjectivity is thus a situated undertaking.

Muzorewa's fledgling nationalism, which blossoms in later years, is a result of political encounters: "during my years as a village pastor our country was experiencing an awakening of African nationalism. The honeymoon of racial partnership was over" (p. 44). In this statement Muzorewa is in effect in dialogue with the racial ideology of the Rhodesian government under Garfield Todd, which the Federal Prime Minister, Godfrey Huggins (Lord Malvern) had undermined by claiming that the racial partnership was "to be likened to the partnership between a horse and its rider" (p.45). His first encounter with this awakening spirit of nationalism took place in 1957 when he attended an African National Congress (Rhodesian ANC) gathering at St. Faith's Mission. Mr Winston Field, later leader of the Rhodesian Front Party, spoke at this meeting and Muzorewa recounts, "I do not remember all that Mr. Field said that night. Burned indelibly in my memory, however, was his statement, 'I do not believe that an African will go to heaven'" (p. 45). For one whose re-reading of the scriptures has in a way created the illusion of a stable identity, Field's statement destabilizes that identity, which momentarily finds stability when a white Anglican Bishop counters the statement: "I breathed a deep sigh of relief. Here was another white Christian leader like my own bishop who was fearless in opposing the white racists who ruled our land. But I wondered how soon we as African Christians would rise up to join them in that struggle for justice" (p. 45). While it seems highly unlikely that the ANC should have invited Winston Field to speak at their meeting and that Field would have agreed and said something as stupid as he did, as a story it justifies Muzorewa's later political attitudes although these became less radical in time. That fractured identity caused by Field's remarks inspires his quest for freedom.

In 1958 Muzorewa leaves to pursue further studies in the United States. In America he also encounters racial bigotry. Here again exposure to American racial bigotry and the discourses of the Civil Rights Movement strengthen his resolve to be a freedom fighter. He admires

Martin Luther King's inspired leadership of the Civil Rights Movement and the way he always spoke without hate. Again in relation to his education, Muzorewa says "[c]ourses in psychology and sociology proved to be helpful as well, giving insights which in later years would enable me to be a better judge of human behavior" (p. 50). Noticeable in this confession is the role of intellectualism in postcolonial subjects. Muzorewa appropriates the western modes of analysis and these as with Vambe's enable him to cast a surveying gaze on fellow man. At the same time academic work on apartheid in South Africa enables him to relate this racism to the Rhodesian experience. After receiving education in the United States, Muzorewa returns in 1963.The Rhodesian Federation was on the verge of collapse and this coincided with the time when the Rhodesia Front came under the leadership of Ian Douglas Smith. Politically, this period was volatile as violence had erupted among supporters of nationalists in the wake of the split within ZAPU giving rise to ZANU under the leadership of Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole. He also returns home to witness the visible implications of the land tenure systems in the country.

Muzorewa's odyssey in America sharpened his analysis and as he was driven to his village, he became critical of how African opposition was being silenced, of the implications of the Law and Order Maintenance Act (LOMA) on the rights and freedoms of black people and also questioned the sexual abuses of black women by whites. He shares a sense of living at the margins of Rhodesian society. This feeling of despondency is aptly captured through Old Testament tropology. He appeals to the Ezekiel metaphor:

> It seemed at the time as if we had returned to 'a valley of dry bones'. That expression comes from the prophecy of Ezekiel in the Old Testament. His people were scattered in exile, crushed politically, and spiritually despondent…. Like Ezekiel I felt that my people were like dry bones – oppressed and depressed under the rule of a small white minority…. Like Ezekiel, I felt I had been called to preach the word of the Lord to such a people. (p. 55)

The Ezekiel metaphor enables Muzorewa to assume a prophetic subjectivity, which also assumes a prophetic-nationalist dimension. The prophetic language of the Old Testament dialogises Muzorewa's political language in the narrative.

The biblical tropology is carried further when Muzorewa in his inaugural sermon at Old Umtali also uses the text used by Christ in his first sermon. This choice is not innocent; it is also not devoid of symbolic import. Muzorewa is appropriating the Messianic role of Jesus

Christ by re-deploying Luke 4: 18-19 for political ends couched as religious; "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (p. 55). Metaphorically speaking, Muzorewa is the Messiah come to deliver the Israelites (read Zimbabweans) from bondage. He is thus deploying a series of metaphors of the self to articulate his identity; he is "itinerant bachelor", "village pastor", "fledgling nationalist" and now political Messiah, an Ezekiel prophesying to dry bones in Rhodesia, the valley of dry bones – to extend the metaphor.

Muzorewa notes in his narrative, "our people needed to hear a total gospel – that God created a man, or a woman, as a total person, having a body, a mind and a spirit; and that our Heavenly father would save that total person" (p. 56). This is the crux of his doctrine of salvation throughout his narrative. Maenzanise (2008: 81) observes that "one thing was clear in Bishop Muzorewa's mind as he assumed his position of church leadership: people needed 'a total gospel'. As far as Bishop Muzorewa was concerned, participation in politics was not a secular activity only, but also part of the Christian duty." In this regard, Muzorewa partnered Catholic and Protestant church leaders in attacking new constitutional proposals by the Smith regime. Punt's (2004) discussion of the contested ownership of the bible and its translation especially in southern Africa is instructive in apprehending Muzorewa's "total gospel". His stance can thus be explained by recourse to biblical hermeneutics. Punt (2004: 308) argues "all texts, and especially those disseminated and used widely such as the Bible in Southern Africa, encounter two powerful forces which have been described by Bakhtin and others as centripetal and centrifugal, or monologising and dialogising." Since Bakhtinian dialogism informs this study it is useful to explain it as it contrasts with monologism. Punt (2004: 308) contends that:

> Centripetal or monologising forces are powerful efforts to centralize hermeneutic authority, suppress ambiguity and ambivalence, and curtail the practice of reading differently. In contrast, centrifugal or dialogising forces entail practices which allow and stimulate ambivalence and diverging interpretations. Both centripetal and centrifugal forces are important elements to account for in the proper use of the biblical texts.

The Christian doctrine in its liberatory sense is the dialogising force that stimulates Muzorewa's identity in the autobiographical account. His self-identity is thus refracted

through religious lenses. Punt (2004) points to the problematic of biblical hermeneutics in Africa highlighting the fact that formations, maintenance and transformation of identity relate to the Bible in fundamental ways. While the Bible was viewed ambivalently, as the coloniser's cultural tool of oppression and as having potential to liberate and empower, Punt (2004: 312) concludes:

> In Christian, and Protestant communities in particular the bible often becomes a mode of identity, as these documents contribute in different ways to open up other worldviews, to create different realities. Enscripturalised identity entails not only self-definition in communal and individual sense, but also the identification of difference, of the Other, through the interpretation and appropriation of the biblical texts.

Muzorewa's inclinations emerge notwithstanding the fact that in postcolonial terms the other is often inscribed using scriptures and other European generated texts about the other. Scriptures were appropriated in the service of buttressing stereotypes of the other. Again from a hermeneutic perspective, Muzorewa's reading of the bible is subversive and in that regard, as Punt (2004: 318) citing Schaaf (1994: 166) would argue, "the bible was indeed the 'time-bomb' which would eventually help to blow colonialism apart."

With the formation of the Christian Council of Rhodesia in 1964, the same year that Ian Smith became Prime Minister, Muzorewa and others found new hope. The Council was instrumental in articulating the concerns of black people at a time when political parties had been banned and black nationalists imprisoned. This is the year Bishop Dodge is also deported for being vocal against the detention of people without trial and his denunciation of the proposed unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) (p. 59). Muzorewa joined other church leaders to protest the orders to deport the bishop. Muzorewa's subjectivity was partially formed by the prophetic role that the church plays in taking part in actively resisting the oppressive Smith government.

Nevertheless, the church's stand was not without its critics. Muzorewa chronicles how some sections of the church "enjoined Christians to obey the existing authorities under every circumstance" (p. 60) and how students wanted to "throw out the white man's religion [asking] 'why not stick to our own traditional ancestral worship?'... 'why worship Jesus, a European God? Wasn't he a white man and not an African?'" (p. 62). In response Muzorewa says he decided to preach a sermon he titled "Why worship Jesus, a European God?", but adds that "Today my reply would be 'Liberation Theology'. I explained that Jesus was not

from Europe, but the Middle East. His people were themselves in bondage, and Jesus announced that his vision was 'to proclaim release to the captives (and) set at liberty those who are oppressed'" (p. 62). This point raises an interesting question about experience, memory and time of narration. In retrospect Muzorewa says that his response to the students' question would today be "Liberation Theology". Muzorewa is constructing this narrative at a time when Liberation Theology had gained currency in Latin America. He thus retrospectively locates his own theology of the total gospel in Liberation Theology. In claiming that he is using the gospel to push a liberation agenda, Muzorewa's subjectivity becomes that of a political liberation theologian. He constructs a self identity of one engaged in a moral combat with a political system whose architects profess to be Christians, which is why he comments "the fact that so many whites in Rhodesia claimed to be Christians (although few attended churches) and that the vast majority, including some missionaries, supported white minority rule, made my witness to African students extremely difficult" (p. 62). Muzorewa's narrative is in effect problematising Christian practice in Rhodesia and because his own identity is premised on Christian values, that identity is also problematic.

Muzorewa also situates his identity in the discourse of pioneering. In his case, he is pioneering a version of Liberation Theology in Rhodesia. By highlighting that some churches preferred to abstain from political involvement, for instance, "the Dutch Reformed [in Rhodesia at least], Salvation Army and Free Methodists" (p. 63), Muzorewa is identifying himself as one doing what others have failed to do. He is in a way carving a heroic pioneering identity. Muzorewa also elevates his political influence by mentioning that it became increasingly difficult for him to work with students in government schools since the authorities suspected that his influence would result in restlessness among students. Thus, his narrative is propping up his claims to legitimacy as a fighter for freedom with entitlement to the governance of this country. This can also be inferred from the timing of the publication of his autobiography, which is meant to coincide with independence or majority rule. The preface to the book describes the autobiography as one written by a man who is on the verge of becoming Rhodesian Prime Minister.

Muzorewa the strategic visionary

With an identity modeled along that of Bishop Dodge, Muzorewa positions himself as a naturally electable candidate whether for religious or political office. He titles the section that deals with his elevation to the office of Bishop of the United Methodist church "In the footsteps of Bishop Dodge". He emphasises that he did not campaign for the post of bishop, but wins ahead of Reverend Kawadza himself interested in becoming Bishop. Muzorewa's pride in receiving the principles of leadership from Dodge, his "predecessor and mentor" (p. 64), is all too obvious in the narrative: "I felt at ease in following in the footsteps of Bishop Dodge. He, too, had stressed that the Christian faith must be proclaimed as a total gospel for the total person" (p. 68). By implication Muzorewa is seeing himself as the new High Priest with a vocation to exorcise the demon of colonialism and the sense of inferiority among black people: "I wanted our people to be liberated from over eighty years of colonialism and the implication that Africans are by nature inferior" (p. 68).

The many rhetorical questions that punctuate his narrative point to a philosopher or thinker. Muzorewa asks questions concerning the role of the church in the future society of his country: "Is it possible for the Church to become a model of the kind of community we desire the nation to become? I believe so." (p. 70). This constant engagement with political and religious ontology spawns in him the subjectivity of a strategic visionary. In the context of his question, Muzorewa is envisioning a new nation characterized by inclusiveness; where there is even gender equality. At a psychological level, he sees himself as one possessing a strategic vision for a new nation. He positions the Church as the springboard upon which a new nation will be launched and on this he says "The church conducts elections by secret ballot as fairly and smoothly as any independent state. It provides a practical training ground for self-government" (p. 90). He conflates Church and nation. Once imbued with this national vision Muzorewa takes to the habit of addressing the nation, which he does on many occasions and of which he says "for the first time I addressed concerns which were political rather than religious in nature. In doing so I joined in a new wave of Church opposition to racism in Rhodesia, and was to face the consequences in the months ahead" (p. 71). He joins in opposing the proposed 1969 Republic Constitution, the December 1969 Land Tenure Act (LTA) and on June 4 1970 he is in confrontation with Smith over the LTA. The result was that in September 1970, he was banned from entering the Tribal Trust Lands (TTLs).

Of this ban he says "the whole country was surprised and angered by it. 'Congratulations!' many said. At first that response puzzled me. Later I understood its meaning. If I was considered a threat by the regime, then I must be honoured as a leading Zimbabwean nationalist" (p. 85). While the founding nationalists are in prison, Muzorewa is systematically building the image of a nationalist for himself. He finds legitimacy as a nationalist from the bannings, and the demonstrations by church men and women in Salisbury and Umtali become for him the basis upon which to carve a larger-than-life portrait of a liberation struggle hero. When he then describes the numbers and nature of the demonstration, all other demonstrations that had taken place in Rhodesia pale into insignificance. He then attacks other church leaders for being conspicuously silent on matters of violence. It can be noted that Muzorewa is constantly thrusting himself into the fore and sees himself as filling the gap; another metaphoric reference to the book of the Old Testament prophet Ezekiel. He keeps on offering his own intervention as the only viable voice of opposition.

Muzorewa and the radical elements in the struggle: his political nemesis

In concluding his chapter "The Church in the Liberation Struggle", Muzorewa is emphatic in articulating his strong critique of violence in the struggle. He argues "I do not subscribe to the romantic and unhistoric view that the liberation struggle is won by armed clashes between forces of liberation. Neither do I call for whole congregations to march enmasse, guns in hand, against the Smith regime in order to be considered part of the liberation effort" (p. 91). Considering the time of narration of his experiences in the Zimbabwean struggle, this view is interesting in that Muzorewa is already beginning to deconstruct the totalising discourse of the armed liberation war before the conclusion of the war itself. There is sustained effort by Muzorewa to legitimize the Church's intervention in political affairs, hence the strongly worded conclusion that:

> Liberation embraces the whole process of opposition to all forms of colonial repression. This opposition is at various times moral, spiritual, mental, economic, political and physical, as appropriate. The Church's contributions are manifold, including its attack on the very rationale and philosophy of racism. In the future it must continue in the struggle for liberation even after the overthrow of the Smith regime. At that moment the struggle for liberation will not end but will enter a new and perhaps more difficult phase. (p. 91)

What Muzorewa manages to achieve is to conflate his identity with that of the Church; he sees himself and the Church as one. In the process he refuses to be identified with the violence that has come to characterize inter and intra party politics of ZAPU and ZANU.

Muzorewa's entry into nationalist politics-proper is when he is invited to lead the newly formed African National Council whose immediate objective was to oppose the Smith-Home proposals. Four members from the banned ZAPU and ZANU, among them Josiah Chinamano, had earlier presented a joint statement to Sir Alec Douglas-Home and "their problem was to find a 'neutral' leader of national stature who was neither former ZANU nor ZAPU" (p.94). Muzorewa's choice of words is implicated in the language of struggle violence by responding dialogically to the culture of violence. He is suggesting that he is clean and possesses a national appeal as suggested by "national stature". There is a subtle suggestion in his statements that ZANU/ZAPU politics are contaminating. Fearing the contagion effect, he requests time to seriously consider the offer and, like a man of God, to pray about it; "I wanted to be absolutely convinced that the old rivalry between ZAPU and ZANU would not be resuscitated. I did not want to be associated with a new outbreak of inter-factional fighting and thuggery between rival nationalists such as that which had given the Smith regime an excuse to ban both ZAPU and ZANU" (p. 95). Like the strategist that his narrative positions him as, Muzorewa springs into action and we are told ANC branches sprang like mushrooms all around the country. The ANC successfully defeats the Smith-Home proposals. He views the successful "no" campaign as a vindication of his leadership. By carefully outlining the difficulties in carrying out political activity during the Pearce Commission's visits, he gives the impression of struggle, making his achievements heroic and as he is writing in 1978 Muzorewa gives the impression that he acted independently of Lusaka yet he was only supposed to be the face for the outside forces.

His visit to England and addressing a rally at Trafalgar Square presents another moment for Muzorewa to distinguish himself from older nationalist politicians. A fellow Zimbabwean accuses him of globe-trotting and wasting people's moneys and in response he deconstructs what he calls the stereotype of the Zimbabwean politician, but not before a philosophical reflection on the nature of these exiles. He says, "Later I reflected on this incident and realized that my accusers were afflicted with the 'exiles' disease of disorientation, division and general confusion which results when politically-minded persons are separated for too

long from their people" (p. 109). His reflections point to an intellectual and philosophical subjectivity. This is enabled by his academic work in sociology and psychology as highlighted earlier. Notable, in deconstructing the stereotype, he disidentifies himself with the crop of earlier nationalists:

> Blinded by the exiles' London fog, they were not aware of the new Zimbabwean political unity achieved by the ANC. They still thought of ZAPU, ZANU, and FROLIZI. As for their stereotype of politicians, it had been built up, alas, on the demerits of our Zimbabwean leaders in the 1960s, many of whom had been globe-trotters and pleasure-seekers who squandered the people's money recklessly. Seeing me they had assumed that I came out of the same mould as my older brothers in the Zimbabwean nationalist movements (p.109).

Muzorewa is systematically building a personal profile in which he takes credit for internationalizing the Rhodesian issue. He returns home to a jubilant crowd and this props up his heroic image.

Muzorewa is conscious that with the expiry of the ANC's mandate, he risks sinking into political oblivion. He moots a new United African National Council (UANC) and his statements regarding the continued existence of the ANC are carefully crafted to pre-empt any opposition to it. He argues:

> During my absence the ANC Executive received delegations from various districts petitioning for the continuance of the ANC. My overseas experience convinced me, also, how imperative it was that people remain united and determined to continue to work through the ANC, inasmuch as our political parties were still banned and their leaders held in political detention. A permanent political organization, the ANC Executive agreed, was essential. (p.114)

While these appeals cannot be verified, his own appeals to petitions and overseas experience are a way of seeking and establishing legitimacy for his continued participation in liberation politics. In the process he then also locates his activism within the larger context of resistance to colonial rule dating back to the 1890s.

However, the ambivalence of his position regarding revolutionary violence is also not lost to the reader. When he addresses the Council of Bishops and the General Conference of the church in Atlanta, he manages to also talk about the determination of Zimbabweans to get freedom. Later a film about his speech is made; "A Child of God in Search of Freedom" (p.114). Muzorewa is apparently frustrated that his warnings of bloodshed in Rhodesia are ignored and his pacifism given prominence; "My pacifism amid persecution was extolled in

that film, but my warning that bloodshed was the only alternative to a strict enforcement of economic sanctions against Rhodesia was largely forgotten" (p. 115). While he has all along been deriving his sense of identity from rejecting association with violent forms of nationalism, he is now offended that the film extols his pacifism. This may not be coincidence; he is constructing this text at a time when the armed struggle had intensified and was proving largely successful and would thus not want to be left out of that particular narrative. His own armed faction Pfumo reVanhu which was notorious for its brutality was founded at about this time but Muzorewa leaves this out in the narrative. That he leaves it out is an important omission especially for one who has also been opposing violence. Perhaps the omission is even more important for one who makes claims that he was the Commander-in-Chief of the liberation forces. He would not want to be identified with a small faction of fighters as this would undermine that identity. However, what Muzorewa misses are the political paradigms that shape the film. He could not have expected a film talking about a child of God seeking freedom to extol a streak of violence in that child. The theme of the film simply had to cohere with the Christian doctrine. This ambiguous desire for non-violence and at other times violence, demonstrates an ambivalent subjectivity.

Muzorewa continues his strategic undermining of other political groups by emphasizing that his own party promoted unity. In the aftermath of the victory over the Smith-Home proposals he says "This was a victory which outshone the achievements of all the other previous black organizations. Our slogan 'Unity is Power', had been proved right" (p.118). This emphasis on unity is meant to accentuate a different identity from the divisive politics of ZAPU and ZANU. The metaphor of outshining is also meant to elevate the ANC over the banned parties. He is emboldened by this victory to assume greater authority in nationalist politics as seen by his convening of an all stake-holders National Convention. His narrative strives to obliterate the preceding political parties and other groups from the centre of the discursive space of Rhodesian politics by also claiming that "for the first time the people of Zimbabwe had an organization capable of total national unity, able to produce results, and to overcome the minority regime" (p.119).

Muzorewa keeps emphasizing his anti-violence stance even in the midst of persecution by the Rhodesians and reiterates that violence can only result from lack of engagement. He also keeps offering himself as a moderate African as opposed to militant nationalists. Ironically

however, towards the end of his narrative Muzorewa redefines violence when he deems it necessary to adopt it. He launches what could be called a treatise in defence of violence, which he terms "Righteous violence" (p. 172). The moment he begins to support righteous violence he betrays an unstable and split identity. The identity occupies the liminal zone; the threshold between the peaceful man that Christian practice requires and the violent military campaign for Zimbabwe's independence. Much of his narrative from this point becomes apologia for his "deep involvement in the violent liberation struggle" (p. 175). His response to critics of this involvement betrays a dialogic interaction with the languages of Mahatma Gandhi, with his passive resistance doctrine, and Martin Luther King Jr.'s civil rights discourse. In answer to those who question his involvement he says:

> My answer may surprise you. I begin by asserting my basic personal advocacy of non-violence. By nature I am a non-violent person. Since childhood I have recoiled at the sight of blood, and the presence of violent death. I have never been reconciled to the necessity of slaughtering animals for food. Physical suffering and pain always arouse strong emotions in me. I hold that all forms of life, even the lowliest, are sacred. Life, I believe, is God's greatest gift to the world, and should be valued as such.... given a clear choice, all things being equal, I would settle any dispute. A settlement arrived at through peaceful negotiations, through give and take to achieve a mutual understanding, is far more stable than a settlement arising out of a test of force. (p. 175)

Having said this he then offers the reason why he now supports the violence of the liberation struggle. He uses a simple analogy in which he describes two neighbouring Christian families who in the middle of enjoying a peaceful evening are attacked by a madman who dashes a baby to the floor and when the neighbours come to help, the madman brings in equally mad new accomplices. Muzorewa's question is "How should these Christian families react to these acts of unprovoked savagery? Should they continue to strive peacefully against brute force? And what do they do if this madman summons equally evil accomplices and begins wantonly to torture and kill?" (p. 176). His answer is obvious: righteous violence in their self defence. Muzorewa is covertly and overtly engaging polemically with the ideas of both Gandhi and King Jr. He argues:

> Here is the point where my convictions differ from those of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi. They advocated non-violence and passive resistance without defining the intensity of the provocation. If I were in the position of the two families involved in my analogy, I would pick up the nearest weapon and strike the madman… I question whether God himself would wish me to hide behind principles of non-

> violence while innocent persons were being slaughtered. To act in self-defence at such times is, I believe, to use 'righteous violence'. (p. 176)

While he claims to stand for ideals that are different from those of ZAPU and ZANU, he appeals to the principles of a just war as well as religious authorities to justify the armed struggle and his support of it. This way he constructs his identity as a freedom fighter. Furthermore he appeals to the Exodus theme to support the legitimacy of the Church's involvement in this apparently violent process.

Muzorewa's intersubjectivity with Jesus Christ

One interesting result of Muzorewa's deployment of Old and New Testament tropology is the intersubjectivity with biblical characters that arises. Earlier the Ezekiel trope revealed how Muzorewa empathises with the prophet; suggesting that he felt like Ezekiel felt when the Spirit of the Lord took him to the valley of dry bones. Metaphorically he also sees Africans as living in the valley of dry bones, in which he, like Ezekiel was called to bring life.

This biblical trope is sustained throughout the narrative as Muzorewa consistently projects a Messianic identity. When he relates a threat to silence him, Jesus Christ figures as his alter ego, his *doppelganger*. He says:

> What would 'silencing' mean? I wondered. I recalled how Jesus had told his disciples when on the road to Jerusalem: 'the Son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged and crucified'. (Mathew 20:18-19). I began to understand how Jesus must have felt about the impending crucifixion. It was painful to think of being silenced before I had accomplished what I felt I had been called to do. (p. 127)

Muzorewa raises the intensity of his feelings to Messianic proportions. The metaphor of the Messiah and his political activities as a calling and not something he is doing out of his own volition props up this intersubjectivity with Jesus Christ. The irony of this however is that Christ accepted his impending death to facilitate the redemption of mankind; that way his mission was accomplished. Yet Muzorewa is not willing to be martyred for the redemption of Zimbabweans. Therefore, since Muzorewa thinks he is more effective alive that dead, his use of the Messianic trope is characterized by ambivalence and is thus problematic.

However, amidst these intense feelings he gets assurance from God when he says he hears God telling him "Abel do not quit" (p. 128). The threats to his life that Muzorewa chronicles point to the fractures in this nationalist liberation movement. In the aftermaths of the bombing of his Highfield home by suspected rival nationalist groups, a concerned young Christian lady from his church comes to beg him to quit politics. Again in a show of that intersubjectivity with Christ he remembers the scriptures:

> But as she spoke I remembered the words of Jesus, 'Get thee behind me, Satan', - words the Master addressed to Peter when he wanted Jesus to avoid a confrontation with his enemies.
>
> Then I recalled another scripture passage and asked her to go home and read it each day for a week and then return to tell me what she thought. It is Mathew 16: 24-25:
>
> 'If man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it'. (p. 155-156)

These biblical references are serving the rhetorical purposes of claiming a Messianic subjectivity. Implied in Muzorewa's appeal to the scriptures is that he is Zimbabwe's Messiah and the young lady is like Peter, at that moment a satanic agent who attempted to discourage Christ from fulfilling his Messianic mission. For Muzorewa, his political activities in Rhodesia are for God's sake.

Muzorewa, the polemics and aesthetics of nation-building

Having established the necessity of righteous violence and his messianic mission, Muzorewa positions himself polemically as the statesman that others are not. When he chronicles the fiasco that was the Geneva Conference, he is writing out his political nemeses especially Joshua Nkomo of ZAPU, whom he has always considered a threat to his hold on power within the UANC. His nation-building philosophy is premised on several factors; a disciplined army, and ability to negotiate among others. Once he is President of the United ANC he is "Comrade Commander-in-Chief" of the liberation forces and is bitter about the formation of ZIPA, because this denies him his new found identity. However, the Commander-in-Chief identity is fragile anyway. Ironically when the Commander leaves the country he has to discover the whereabouts of his army's military bases: "On arrival in Maputo I sought to establish the whereabouts of the Zimbabwean camps and of our advance

mission" (p.189). This incident portrays Muzorewa as a naïve character; he fails to see through the fact that whatever the nationalist leaders were doing in terms of forming a united nationalist movement was meant to please the leaders of the Front-line States. Muzorewa's identity is constantly shifting as he wrestles with fears at the machinations of outsiders and colleagues trying to isolate him from the struggle. At the Geneva Conference, the narrative positions him as the only one displaying the qualities of a statesman; everyone else is driven by naked ambition but the statesman is clearly someone who is not in control of the conference or indeed any other strategy of the nationalist organisations.

When the Geneva Conference turns out to be a monumental failure and the Anglo-American proposals are rejected, the moment inspires another kind of agency in Muzorewa. He begins talks with Ian Smith and while conceding that this could be seen as a form of political suicide, he defends it as pragmatism. Muzorewa has a way of anticipating what his critics would say and is always pre-empting their arguments. When Smith bombs Chimoio and Tembwe in the midst of these negotiations, Muzorewa tactfully explains resumption of talks with Smith as pragmatism on his part. In promoting himself as a practical man, he is emphasizing his nation-building role. He is displaying a Man-of-the-people personal identity and this is evident in explaining his negotiations with Smith:

> What frightened me most and worried me sick was that the whole black population looked to me to do something about the situation. The faith of the people in me was one of the heaviest crosses I have ever carried. I had to keep on trying and striving and my worries were torture. (p. 227)

The last chapter of the narrative is an emphatic celebration of the self as nation-builder as well as showing him to possess the political dexterity or resourcefulness that underwrites this nation-builder subjectivity. Muzorewa positions himself as thinker and philosopher of the Zimbabwe struggle. In this last part of the narrative he ponders on what his legacy will be. He asks:

> Will future generations accuse us of delivering to them a country whose independence is a fraud, a sham, a hollow shell? Will ours be called a 'free state', but in fact be mortgaged heavily to external international interests? Will we of Zimbabwe stand in danger of being satisfied with the mere trappings of independence…while those in power are not accountable to the governed for their actions? (p. 241)

Muzorewa is quite conscious of the postcolonial situation in Africa and his sentiments recall Fanon's (1963) "Pitfalls of National Consciousness". Fanon theorises the betrayal of national

aspirations by the ruling elite in post-independence states, especially those who achieve independence through revolutionary violence. Muzorewa conceptualizes this betrayal by using the imagery of cancer eating the inside of the body politic of an independent state. In this last chapter he proposes a new national ideology "which arises out of a people's material conditions of life, their heritage, their culture, and their attainments" (p. 244). He sees the future of Zimbabwe recovering the noble heritage bequeathed by the forefathers.

In an emphatic tone, Muzorewa concludes the autobiography by comparing his life journey to the greatest journey of classical mythology by insisting that "throughout this book the odyssey of my own struggle for personal freedom and dignity has been intertwined with that of our nation – Zimbabwe" (p. 252). In other words, Muzorewa's subjectivity has been constructed by the discourse of the narrative, which in turn has been shaped by the discourse of liberation and nation-building. His self-imagining is a conflation of individual and collective national experiences, which is why history plays a critical part in Muzorewa's subject-formation and subjectivity.

The following sections discuss Maurice Nyagumbo's *With the People* and show how through retrospective wisdom he narrates his naivety as a foolish young man who took too long to develop political consciousness and commitment to political struggle.

Maurice Nyagumbo: self construction within multiple idioms and invented identities

The discussion has so far shown selves that are largely constituted by the realities of colonialism and anti-colonialism. The political and cultural spirit of the times can easily be discerned in the sense of urgency that characterizes the narratives so far discussed. I want to posit in this section that in Nyagumbo's narrative, background experiences and memories are credentials to colonised, liminal and migrant subjectivities that are articulated with mature hindsight.

Like Vambe and Muzorewa, Nyagumbo is born and brought up in a Rhodesia that is repressive for blacks. He was born on December 12 1924 and while his original manuscript began by giving the history of his ancestry, John Conradie who edited the original manuscript compresses this information into the preface that he authors. Nyagumbo's history is a history of dispossession, typical of most Rhodesian blacks. Land dispossession and economic

marginalization, thus become typical of the early childhood histories of all the three autobiographers.

Nyagumbo's narrative identifies the major highlights of growing up in Rhodesia and his subsequent emigration to South Africa. When he finally begins his formal education, Nyagumbo encounters many incidents that confirm his marginality in Rhodesian society. The post office where he and some other boys are routinely sent for mail by their school authorities serves as a painful example of the poisonous race relations in the country. His colleague Stephen is assaulted for entering the post office and is further assaulted for seeking refuge at the Native Commissioner's offices. The intervention of Sister Esther does not help as he is assaulted again. Father Knight, their school principal, takes sides with the whites and all this leaves the young Nyagumbo and his colleagues "shocked by his reaction" (p. 27). Another incident follows; again at the post office when Weston, Nyagumbo's school mate assists a young white boy who had fallen from his bicycle after bumping into him. Instead, Weston is accused of having assaulted the boy and despite protestations of his innocence, he is assaulted. Nyagumbo and the rest of the boys are also beaten up by several Europeans who gang up against the boys before the police take the boys into custody. In interpreting these experiences Nyagumbo shows a deep sense of bitterness towards white people; "I felt bitter against white people after this incident. We had not done anything to that white boy. There was absolutely nothing wrong with us and we did not deserve that punishment" (p. 27). And because previous experience had shown that they could not get assistance from their principal Father Knight, they decide to remain silent. The young Nyagumbo concludes:

> These two incidents at the post office really changed my attitude towards education and also towards the white man. I actually thought that the white men had actually bullied us at the post office only because we were young boys, and decided that when I grew up I was going to retaliate if any white man bullied me. Of course, at the time I had no knowledge of the facts of the situation in the country. (p. 28)

This incident was soon followed by another racist encounter. A farmer van der Merwe chases Nyagumbo and his companions on their way from school. When he catches up with the bigger boys, the boys decide to give the farmer a thrashing. They are later arrested, the road through van der Merwe's farm is closed to the public, and in the end Nyagumbo transfers to St. Augustine's mission as St. Faith's was too far to walk to following the closure of the road. These incidents serve to enlarge Nyagumbo's consciousness about the violence of race

relations though of course at this moment he has no appreciation of the larger political picture.

Debate sessions at school help to raise his understanding of the state of affairs in Rhodesia. When he is told that a war had broken out between Britain and Germany and that they should all pray for Britain because if "Germany won the whole world would suffer under Nazi domination" (p. 30), Nyagumbo makes a balanced assessment of the efficacy of praying for Britain. He says "I had seen cruelty among some English people at Rusape post office, I had also seen that among the missionaries were some very good English people who treated Africans as human beings" (30). It is however the debate sessions that psychologically conditioned his understanding of Zimbabwean history. The subject of one of these debate sessions was whether or not Africans in the country had any obligation to support the British in their war against Germany. Nyagumbo tells us:

> Among the speakers was Samuel Madekurozwa who spoke last and was one of the two who were against assisting Britain. Although his partner, Joshua Nyamunda, had also spoken very strongly against assisting Britain, Madekurozwa went further to explain "notorious British colonial history", especially in this country. He told the audience that the Africans of the country had no obligation to help Britain, whose nationals had butchered and tortured the inhabitants of the country during 1896-7. Madekurozwa pointed out that Africans of the country had become parasites because they had been declared homeless by the British colonists here…. Immediately after the debate that evening, Samuel Madekurozwa was expelled from school. His expulsion served as an eye-opener to me as I still had some illusions about missionaries. I now realized that they were birds of the same feather as other settlers. Since my arrival at St. Augustine's Mission, we had been made to understand that all debaters on any topic were to discuss the subject independently without fear of antagonizing the school authorities. But this expulsion was to disprove the theory of "independence" (p. 30-31).

The mission school becomes in this case an ambivalent space where Nyagumbo initially thought free minds could develop, yet it turns out to be a constrained space. Here Nyagumbo comes face to face with the segregation and marginalization of Africans by white Rhodesians. Javangwe (2011: 116) argues that, "through a series of encounters with the settler world, a precocious sense of existing at the fringes of mainstream society develops." These encounters mediate Nyagumbo's sense of identity and from these experiences he interprets his identity as the colonised and marginalized other. He also finds himself reacting to these encounters and Javangwe (2011: 117) contends that; "[t]he construction of the young subject's self identity is achieved through discovery and reactions, both conscious and unconscious and emotional, to

the frictional encounters in contested spaces where settler domination is imposed." Michel de Certeau (1984) proposes the idea of the colonial environment as a constraining order and Nyagumbo's identity is shaped by such a constraining order. In analyzing similarly placed African autobiographies that capture childhood experiences in this constraining order in the African context, Sow (2010: 511) suggests:

> These texts chronicle an experience of childhood set in a period of profound changes in both French and British colonies, a period Frederick Cooper describes as the "crisis of colonialism", which witnesses the emergence from the late 1930s into the 1950s of a culture of militancy, open resistance, and finally the decline of empires.

The "crisis of colonialism" to which Sow refers to is precisely the character of the environment that begins to prevail in Rhodesia after Nyagumbo immigrates to South Africa at the end of 1940. Of course the crisis that Cooper describes is the beginning of organized black anti-colonialist agitation, but it was a crisis in West and East Africa – not in Southern Africa. Despite this, resistance in Rhodesia begins to foment from the 1940s onwards and although the 1940s and 1950s were the years when Rhodesians were at their most confident, the seeds of resistance were sown in this period through the trade union movement, which proliferated in the years after World War II.

At a tender age, Nyagumbo runs away from home and migrates to South Africa. In South Africa he has varied encounters with the country. The period he lives in South Africa is also a period of notable political activity and yet he initially opts to remain untouched and does not commit himself to any kind of political activism, preferring to devote his energies to dancing. The initial stages of his stay in South Africa thus point to a case of highly radicalized individualism; radicalized in the sense of being self-centred and refusing to be involved. In South Africa Nyagumbo is a migrant subject and all his experiences in South Africa crystalise into migrant subjectivity. Nyagumbo's story at this stage is defined by his zeal for dancing. The early part of the narrative also reads more like an adventure narrative with a hero who survives difficult encounters with trouble.

Later, Nyagumbo begins to interact with the political movements in South Africa, deciding to become more involved. His experiences in South Africa enable him to draw parallels between oppressive environments in the Orange Free State and Rhodesia. Experiencing the variegated nature of settler colonialism in South Africa compels him to be critical in his interpretation of the relationship between colonialism in Rhodesia and the Afrikaner and English controlled

parts of South Africa. Javangwe (2011: 119) notes that "[t]he migration to South Africa provides critical consciousness to the subject narrator as to how different settler groups seek warranting voices that would accord them control of given spaces."

In his early days in Kimberly he has an opportunity to compare Rhodesian and South African whites: "everywhere I had gone that day to enquire for work, there was a politeness in all the Europeans I encountered. This was a marked difference from in Rhodesia and in particular those Europeans I had seen at Rusape Post Office" (p. 35). The post office remains for Nyagumbo the metonymy of Rhodesian oppression. He holds various jobs in the hotel industry. His time in South Africa is a period of apprenticeship to the nuances of colonial society and the white world in general. Nyagumbo is able to distinguish between white attitudes in Boer and English controlled territories in South Africa. In Edenburg in the Orange Free State he is brutalized by an Afrikaner and saved by an English speaking policeman, and this opens his eyes to Boer cruelty. He comments:

> During this time, I observed one important thing about the white man in general. From the time I had arrived in Kimberly and wherever I had worked in the Cape Province, the white man had always treated me like a human being. But the white man I had seen in the Orange Free State was identical to the white man in Rhodesia. This was at a time when I had no political understanding of our situation. I actually accepted the superiority of the white man in both Rhodesia and South Africa. But I did not understand why the white man in Rhodesia and the Orange Free State hated the African. I vowed not to return to Rhodesia or to the Orange Free State but to remain in the Cape Province for the rest of my life. (p. 65)

By being in South Africa Nyagumbo is deterritorialised and has no loyalty to Rhodesia, which explains his vow never to return home or to the Orange Free State. Nyagumbo displays a kind of sincerity in his analysis that is informed by his characteristic naivety, which he sets out to narrate. However, as Prasad Giri (2005) suggests, that refusal to go back to Rhodesia is at an unconscious level a form of undeveloped political radicalism. It is undeveloped because he lacks the epistemic appreciation of the real issues. He tells of how he is unable to discern the intricacies of the colonial situation in South Africa relating to Anglo-Boer political relations and he also seems to make no reference to the fact that one of the largest Afrikaner settlements in Rhodesia was around Rusape (for example van der Merwe) where he experienced race oppression as a schoolboy.

It is in Cape Town that Nyagumbo makes friends with Willie Mashaba, a member of the Communist Party. Willie takes him to the Party's dances where he is impressed by the camaraderie of the European and coloured girls. One of the girls Jean explains to him the aims of the Party. Nyagumbo agrees to join the Party, but not because he understands their political ideology. He then asks Willie on their way back to further explain the Party's aims.

> He told me that its most important aim was to organise the Africans throughout South Africa. He said that Africans working in South Africa were suffering from many oppressive laws, and he cited forced labour in mines and exploitation in many industries. Willie said that if the Africans were organised, they could revolt against the white minority government of South Africa. At this stage I argued that, rather than in the Cape Province, it was Rhodesia and in the Orange Free State that Africans were really suffering under repressive laws. I said that the Communist Party organisation should be extended to those areas where Africans were suffering. Willie was full of laughter at this and accused me of being ignorant of "the reality of the situation." (p. 73)

These visits to Party functions and discussions with Willie Mashaba mark the genesis of his initiation into politics. However, his is a false start since he is still naïve about where political power is located in South Africa. For instance he has to lie his way through to employment and getting a pass because he fails to appreciate the implications of the newly passed Pass Laws in the Cape which controlled the movement of labour in order to privilege South African capitalism.

> I just did not understand the circumstances in which I was. It's no wonder that up to that time I did not know whether we had a Prime Minister in Rhodesia. In fact, I used to think that the country was ruled by the governor Sir Hebert Stanley who I had seen when I was at school. (p. 73)

Nyagumbo's statement above is one of the many examples in the narrative where he traces his own naivety. On several occasions, he also assumes many disguises in order to survive. Nyagumbo gets employment by assuming fraudulent names. His disguises in South Africa therefore speak of invented identities although he does not seem to be consciously aware of the symbolism of what he is doing. With the benefit of hindsight he narrates his foolishness and general lack of political consciousness.

His first political meeting in the proper sense is a party rally held at the Grand Parade whose theme was "The white minority government of South Africa" (p. 73-74). At this rally the government is denounced and for the naïve Nyagumbo this is thoroughly shocking; "I had not read a book or heard anybody denouncing the government in the way these speakers did that

day. Every time a speaker made a vicious speech against the government, my heart started beating with fear" (p. 73-74). He then attends another rally addressed by ANC people, but in spite of hearing this analysis his commitment is still in doubt. Nyagumbo is sincere in confessing that both Willie Mashaba and he lacked political understanding and he was only attracted to the social opportunities that the Communist Party provided. Because of his attitude of non-commitment, Nyagumbo also misses a golden opportunity to further his education and avoids meeting members of the party who had facilitated the scholarship. In determining not to commit himself to anything besides ballroom dancing, Nyagumbo further demonstrates his superficial understanding of Africa's problems. He argues "I just wanted to live an easy life and enjoy myself. I believed that if I took up further studies, I would deprive myself of all that was pleasant in this world. And at that time, Cape Town was the only city where life was full" (p. 77).

In 1947 he and his friend Willie Mashaba rejoined the Communist Party at the urging of their new acquaintances Peter Mashingaidze, Robert Chikerema and Peter Musarurwa. Again their rejoining the Party had nothing to do with new found commitment, but a desire for the company of these men; "We both now found ourselves in a terrible fix, for we felt we really wanted the company of Lancelot Chikukwa, Peter Musarurwa, Peter Mashingaidze and Robert Chikerema. It was a group of semi-intellectuals which elevated our status in the social structure of our time" (79). Here Nyagumbo is again tracing his own naivety. He is aware that he was a foolish young man and tells his story so that the reader can recognise him as such, which is of course the point of his whole narrative. Nyagumbo regrets his failure then to appreciate the value of education and the status that comes with it. Yet at the same time he reveals, throughout the narrative, a troubled relationship with the class of the educated elite.

However, when the Communist Party is banned following the coming to power of the Nationalist Party in the elections of May 1948, Nyagumbo is actually pleased because this frees him from commitment to the Party: "The party had been banned just at the right time. We were preparing for a very big ballroom competition which was to be held in August the same year…" (p. 80). In his recounting of these events, his memory fails him as editorial intervention shows that the party was actually banned two years after the Nationalist Party victory. Whether this is a failure of memory or deliberate amnesia, Nyagumbo seeks here to justify his continued non-commitment. When his colleagues then join the ANC, he is

reluctant to join the party and his excuse as usual is that conditions in South Africa and Rhodesia were different. He joins the ANC only after disappointment with his dancing partner and vows never to dance again. Nyagumbo is then involved in the formation of a social club meant to mobilise Rhodesian blacks in South Africa to join politics.

Nyagumbo's sojourn in South Africa is a journey of growing consciousness. He realises his naivety which is evident in the narrative through his reflexivity:

> Despite my shortcomings, I was beginning to appreciate the need for political education…. After this meeting, I realised how naïve I was to have refused further education. It had become quite clear to me that I could not play an important part in politics because of my inability to express myself. The speeches made at that meeting had inspired me. (p. 83)

This new found commitment coincides with the beginnings of deportations of foreign blacks involved in politics. In this way Nyagumbo assumes the office of secretary of the club following the deportation of Robert Chikerema. This is when a political subjectivity really begins to take shape in Nyagumbo. The club's efforts to mobilise resistance against the proposed Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland situate Nyagumbo at the centre of political activity. The club flourishes and is supported by many Cape Town University students. Nyagumbo confesses that he "personally benefitted from these students. As I had now taken over the Secretariat of the club, Kamba offered to show me how to keep records and write down minutes" (p. 85).

In 1955 he received deportation orders and was deported from South Africa to go back to a country to which he had vowed never to return. Nyagumbo's arrival in his Makoni home area coincided with the completion of the implementation of the Land Husbandry Act of 1951. He clashes with Europeans in Salisbury where he had gone to purchase clothes for his impending wedding to Victoria. Nyagumbo marries Victoria in April 1955, cannot get land and lives off a small shop they had established soon after their wedding. This allows him to articulate his colonially induced predicament of being landless; Nyagumbo is positioning himself as a subject of colonial repression.

The discussion in this section has shown that Nyagumbo was perfectly happy never to come home and the speaking subject in his narrative is the old more aware Nyagumbo who is recalling his own political innocence and how he had to learn patriotism.

Nyagumbo the patriot: a re-invented self

The second part of Nyagumbo's narrative is titled "Beginning to be patriotic" (p. 101). He begins by chronicling his meeting with Robert Chikerema and learning of plans to form the City Youth League in 1955. He is opposed to this preferring instead the formation of a proper national party and does not attend the inaugural meeting. After later meeting Robert Chikerema and being taken to the Youth League offices, Nyagumbo again regrets his foolishness in not attending the inaugural meeting of the City Youth League. He is impressed by the caliber of people he meets at the offices; "It then dawned on me that I was a fool for not attending the inauguration of the organisation. I realised that I was not equal either politically or socially to those I had met in that office" (p. 102). His political consciousness expands as he begins to question the relevance of the educated elite to the country's politics. His feelings towards the educated are especially acute in the aftermaths of the shooting of strikers at Wankie colliery in 1954 when police confronted striking workers and fired on the crowd killing several strikers. This incident was of national importance as it was the first public shooting of blacks directly challenging white authority since 1897. Militant nationalists used this as reason not to trust white liberals since it was Garfield Todd (then Rhodesian Prime Minister), a white liberal who had ordered the shooting. Here is how Nyagumbo reacted:

> What worried me was the lack of organized protest by Africans against the shooting. The educated Africans were most disappointing to me. The few I had spoken to on the matter, at Rusape and Umtali, were completely unconcerned. Most of them would comment: "There is absolutely nothing we can do about it. The power of the white man cannot be challenged by anyone in this country"…. But I thought it was high time an African national political party was formed, and I blamed the educated Africans who, I believed, feared the white man and did not want to lead their own suffering people. (p. 102-103).

Nyagumbo perceived the educated elite to be betraying Africans in this country. His dialogue with the social and political movements in the wake of his conversion to patriotism spawns class consciousness and a critical appreciation of class dynamics. It also shows that he had in fact learnt something from his encounter with the SA Communist Party. Nyagumbo is conscious of the contradictions that lie at the centre of relations between the class of intellectuals and the less educated or uneducated working class. He is critical of how these classes relate to the Rhodesian state and to the nationalist liberatory agenda. Nyagumbo's experience reveals that the intellectuals were less keen to take decisive action as compared to

the uneducated or the working class. This is shown for instance by Lawrence Vambe, a member of the educated elite, who initially supported the idea of one man one vote within the framework of Federation and only grew disenchanted with these ideas when he realised that white Rhodesians had become increasingly rightist in their politics. Nyagumbo points out how the educated elite condemned the political actions of the working class people and contends that "these so-called intellectuals feared to lose their privileged positions and their employment, and were only concerned to criticize and condemn what was being done by those they looked down upon" (p. 106). As a result, Nyagumbo's political agency is inspired by the urge to do something that he feels the elite is failing to do. Working class ideas thus mediate his identity and in fact explain the title of his book – *With the People*. It is an identity that emerges against the backdrop of acting politically in a manner that his educated colleagues in politics failed to do. From the moment he decides to be committed to the nationalist agenda, he asserts his cultural and political agency that seeks to promote national liberation. This perception of black intellectuals is again buttressed in the narrative by Chitepo's failure to agree to chair the meeting for the formation of a national political party and Dumbutshena's outright refusal saying he was afraid of jeopardizing his job as a journalist.

When Nyagumbo relates the events of the bus boycott of 1956 he strategically deploys arguments to justify the actions of workers. He does this by showing how the efforts of the leaders of the City Youth League to engage the Superintendent of Harare Township, the Provincial Native Commissioner and the councilors had failed. Nyagumbo says "such was the state of affairs. In fact, this is what is meant by civilised rule, democratic rule, Christian rule and all that goes with it" (p. 104). His sarcasm shows his bitterness with the system of governance in Rhodesia which was incapable of negotiating with blacks and which he was beginning to understand would respond only to violence.

The year 1957 saw the formation of the Southern Rhodesia African National Congress with Joshua Nkomo as president, Chikerema as Vice-President, Nyandoro as Secretary General, Paul Mushonga as Treasurer-General and Joseph Msika as Finance Secretary. Nyagumbo downplays his own agency in all this and it is only through editorial interventions that the reader gets to know Nyagumbo's own role. His agency is seen when he seizes the opportunity presented by disgruntled peasants to promote the relevance and significance of the ANC. The

peasants are disgruntled with the overzealous implementation of the LHA by some Native Commissioners. Nyagumbo chronicles the achievements of the ANC especially in regard to denouncing the LHA and also undermining the powers of Native Commissioners. The exploits of nationalist Peter Mtandwa are chronicled with gusto.

In all this Nyagumbo withholds his own political agency, which is only mediated by editorial interventions. Nyagumbo is therefore a modest patriot. If it were not for the editor's notes, his could be characterized as a withheld autobiography. In February 1959 the ANC is banned and Nyagumbo gets his first experiences as a detainee.

Nyagumbo's prisoner identity

The chronicling of prison and detention experiences is an instance of agency on the part of Nyagumbo. He narrates several incidents in prison where he beats up a native Commissioner and counters the activities of colleagues in restriction who were now organizing against the National Democratic Party which had been formed on the 1st of January 1960. We get a view of the external world or his interpretation of the country's political events from his perspective. When Nkomo accepts fifteen parliamentary seats for Africans and hails that as an achievement for Africans Nyagumbo is disgusted and says "the next morning I felt thoroughly depressed and decided to remain in bed" (p. 148). Nyagumbo is also presenting a very subtle and calculated indictment of Nkomo's leadership and showing how inadequate it was as a strategy to liberate the country. He includes in the narrative the dialogue between Nkomo and those who questioned when majority rule was coming. These details in his narrative serve to prove Nkomo's indecision.

While in Gwelo at Desai's (an Asian businessman and supporter of the nationalist cause) house where the nationalists are hosted Nyagumbo recalls:

> As the two men continued their dialogue, the whole house was quiet; it seemed that all were anxious to hear Mr Nkomo's replies. Looking at the faces of these Asians at the reception that afternoon, it was possible to see that the majority of them did not believe what Nkomo was saying. Some of them were gazing at each other and others could be seen mocking Nkomo's replies. (p. 164)

Nyagumbo has been strategically building a case against Nkomo so as to justify the formation of ZANU. He carries out a strategic narration of people's grievances against Nkomo. The

persistence of his violent reaction to Rhodesian police, a symbol of white oppression which he also chronicles is meant to buttress a heroic and militant identity. Nyagumbo maintains his violent reactions in contrast to fellow political prisoners. He says:

> The truth of the matter was that I had actually punched the police superintendent and also fought the other four but that my colleagues had ran (sic) out of the house during the fight. It was also true that Chikerema was calling to me through the window from outside to stop fighting. At no time did Nkomo wield a stick or poke any policeman as he stood against the wall outside the building. (p. 167)

Nyagumbo is reacting to the trumped up charges against his fellow inmates, Nkomo, Madzimbamuto and Chikerema. His interpretation of these charges is that the concocting of such charges steals the limelight of being a radical from him and unnecessarily elevates these three to unmerited radicalism.

When the detainees become disenchanted with Nkomo's leadership, Nyagumbo confesses in the narrative that he was opposed to deposing Nkomo especially since he believed it was the mandate of the National Executive of ZAPU to handle matters of leadership. His argument is that he "feared that if such meetings were encouraged there was likely to be a split in the nationalist organisation, a thing I completely opposed" (p. 177). From his interpretation of this matter, Nyagumbo is building an image of non-violence and constitutionalism. He is also constructing a sense of victimhood which contrasts with that of Nkomo whom he paints as a despicable leader. This he exemplifies through narrating the Umtali incident in which Nkomo and his supporters walk out of the meeting organised by a trade unionist, Mr Ngoma, when Nyagumbo and Enos Nkala walk in. Nkomo calls them "rats" (p. 182). To testify to Nkomo's violence Nyagumbo writes, "Now that the Zimbabwe National Union had been formed we were finding difficulties in holding meetings. Each time we called one, Nkomo and his men fielded hundreds of thugs who would go about intimidating people and preventing them from attending" (p. 183). Nyagumbo's narrative continues to chronicle intra-party violence in the nationalist movement.

He successfully deconstructs Nkomo's image as the godfather of nationalism by re-interpreting the latter's arrest while carrying out political activities in Enkeldoorn: "By dawn, the police felt that they had had enough of it; Nkomo and some of his followers were arrested and he was restricted at Gonakudzingwa. No one can persuade me that Nkomo was arrested and restricted for the national cause. But it is true that he was arrested because he wanted to

save his leadership" (p. 185). Nyagumbo suggests here that Nkomo deliberately caused his own arrest in order to avoid losing leadership.

Conradie counters Nyagumbo's "poetics of insignificance"

As suggested before, the earlier parts of Nyagumbo's narrative that capture his stay in South Africa focus on trivial matters such as his adventure-like survival, but most significantly his passion for dancing. The narrative devotes much space to his focus on delightful experiences and the effect of this is to create the impression that a personal story is not developing and yet that is the essence of autobiography. However, while this part of the narrative appears to dwell on the trivial, in actual fact there are deeper layers of meaning in that we get to understand the postcolonial condition of migrancy. Nyagumbo has to constantly re-invent himself in order to survive in South Africa. A personal story is actually unfolding even when he appears to be pre-occupying his life with trivialities. In fact, his disguises and obsession with delightful things, while appearing trivial, actually point to the impossibility of not engaging with the history and politics of his time. It is an unconscious reaction to the constraining order both in apartheid South Africa and Rhodesia.

The pre-occupation with the trivial so characterises his narrative style that throughout much of the narrative. He also trivializes his contribution to the nationalist struggle or at best he is very modest about it. He gives the impression that his role in the struggle was insignificant and in Scott's (2013: 86) description, Nyagumbo's narrative constitutes a "poetics of insignificance". This presumed insignificance is only countered by John Conradie's editorial interventions and it is as if he remembers on behalf of Nyagumbo.

The intersubjectivity of memory in Nyagumbo's narrative is brought out in the way in which John Conradie constantly interrupts the narrative with his own memories derived from Nyagumbo's correspondence with the Rangers (Terrence and Shelagh). It is from one of these letters to Shelagh Ranger that Nyagumbo derives the title to his narrative:

> There is of course a lot of discontent among our people at home with the present move which was taken by the National Executive. But it has been our effort all along to stop them denouncing the leaders as it will spoil our case and will mean arming the settlers with the method of dividing us which they have been looking for. So, to stop

> such a thing from happening some of us must remain to be with the people, even it if (sic) means to be in jail with them. (p. 171)

The editorial inclusion of Nyagumbo's letters to the Rangers is thus an editorial intervention meant to provide readers with intimate insight into the workings of his mind while in incarceration and also his significant contribution to the nationalist struggle for independence. The editorial intervention is also offering an alternative narrative to the one that Nyagumbo has chosen to provide. Conradie's interventions provide the narrative of a totally selfless and dedicated leader which the modesty of the principal narrative does not reveal.

The cultural assumption that readers have when reading an autobiographical narrative is that the autobiographical subject is knowable. This is disrupted by Nyagumbo's withholding or trivializing of his intimate involvement at certain stages of the struggle. However, the editorial information violates Nyagumbo's withholding of certain aspects of his identity by offering an alternative context in which his more powerful agency is able to reveal itself.

From the discussion so far, it has been argued that Nyagumbo's subjectivity is forged in the context of dialogue with political and cultural formations in both Rhodesia and South Africa. His interaction with various classes of people and institutions in both countries define his identity in significant ways. Smith's and Watson's (2001: 83) assertion rings true: "[u]nderstanding how individual representations of subjectivity are 'disciplined' or formed enables readers to explore how the personal story of a remembered past is always in dialogue with emergent cultural formations." Like Vambe's and Muzorewa's narratives, Nyagumbo's narrative is a story of both spiritual and literal mobility and migration. The three narrating subjects locate themselves as subjects of African nationalism in Rhodesia. They situate themselves as part of the history of a nation in the making. This situatedness of the narratives points to what Smith and Watson (2001: 109) refer to as "performative dialogism", which in this case I want to posit, is located in the myths that characterized the Rhodesia lived by these three autobiographers.

Rhodesian myths, nationalist autobiography and performative dialogism

Smith and Watson (2001: 109) contend that "autobiographical acts have always taken place at conflicted cultural sites where discourses intersect, contradict, and displace one another,

where narrators are pulled and tugged into complex and contradictory self-positionings through a performative dialogism". In Chapter One the performative nature of self identities was articulated using Judith Butler's and Smith's and Watson's theorization of performativity. They provide a framework of looking at how identities are always enacted or performed. The discussion in this section will show how political myths that subsisted in Rhodesia also provided the impetus to narrate the self and the nation in the making; in many ways shaping both the narratives and autobiographical subjectivity. Day's (1975) definition of political myths in his discussion of African nationalism in Rhodesia is useful. According to Day (1975: 52), "political myths are narrative visions of the past or of the future that have practical value to the groups of men who believe in them. A political myth makes sense of a group's present experience, often creating a world in which merit receives its just reward, identifying the enemy and promising eventual victory." Day (1975) traces the generation of political myths in Rhodesian politics to the strain and excitement engendered in Africans and white people because of the advent of radical politics in a society that was generally dominated by Europeans. As mentioned above, African nationalism burgeoned in the late 1950s. Since both the Africans and Europeans struggled to come to grips with the intense political atmosphere, Day (1975) contends that two opposing myths emerged. He (1975: 52) argues "political myths are not mere intellectual inventions, but are produced in particular historical circumstances to satisfy social needs." The sense of impotence that both sides felt in the face of radical politics thus resulted in the invention of myths.

While on one hand, argues Day (1975: 53), "the African nationalist myth that the Africans were about to take over Southern Rhodesia established itself only in the early 1960s when the African nationalist leaders unambiguously decided that majority rule was their primary objective", on the other hand, "the European myth that African nationalism was not popular among Africans, however developed from the Europeans' long held conviction that the Africans were content with the segregation and discrimination which the Europeans imposed upon them". Day's argument is that Europeans were encouraged to think that Africans were content with the status quo because their protest against European rule had generally been weak and unsustained from the time of the 1896-7 rebellions.

Overall, European myths included denying that nationalists had a considerable following and that the 'contented Africans' were being misled by reckless demagogues with Communist

leanings; a myth criticized and rejected by Vambe in *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe*. At the same time, in line with Day's argument, these myths achieved the social purpose of preserving – on the part of whites – the belief that Africans on their own could not be a militant lot and – on the part of nationalists in the face of frustrated hope for betterment of African lives – the illusion that majority rule was nigh.

In the context of these opposing myths, I wish to posit that the autobiographical subjects under analysis perform their narrative identities in line with the nationalist myths. Vambe, Muzorewa and Nyagumbo embody the nationalist myths in their articulations of self identities. The three narrators position themselves as agents of national liberation in the sense that their narratives engage in a dialogic relationship with the narrative vision of a new Zimbabwe about to emerge. Vambe's From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe, is in fact animated by this myth, while Muzorewa's *Rise Up and Walk*'s publication is meant to coincide with his taking up the premiership of the Zimbabwe-Rhodesia government. Maurice Nyagumbo's *With the People* also suggests his rootedness in a people's struggle to enable the emergence of a new nation.

By crafting these narratives, the subjects are performing their identities, which materialize from the myth of impending black rule in Rhodesia. The texts themselves are also performative as they confer the myth with solidity by textualising it. The European myth is epitomized by Ian Smith in his autobiography *The Great Betrayal/Bitter Harvest*, but the text is the subject of another chapter in this thesis.

Myth-making by African nationalists and the performance of these myths by nationalist autobiographers point to the agency of the narrating subjects. Day (1975) adds another dimension to the nationalist myth by suggesting that another myth was that of European evil. Although it is problematic that given the glaring injustices of white rule in Rhodesia, Day (1975: 64) should characterize nationalist articulation of genuine grievances as "the myth of European evil", the language of protest by its exaggerated nature should certainly catapult European evil to mythical realms. Day (1975: 65) contends that "[t]he inflammatory and hyperbolic political style, of which the myth of European evil was an extreme example, was adopted by the African nationalists partly as self-conscious defiance of the Europeans". This resonates well with Smith's and Watson's (2001: 45) earlier assertion that autobiographical writing is a strategy of intervention in colonial repression. Thus, articulating European evils

in the narratives is a form of political and cultural agency on the part of these autobiographical subjects. Evident from this discussion is the fact that autobiographical subjectivity is "disciplined" or shaped when the subjects' remembered pasts are seen to engage with discourses of their times.

Conclusion

From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe, *Rise Up and Walk* and *With the People* articulate personal and national struggles. The narratives are in character, a delicate balance between individual and national experiences. Therefore, nationalism instantiates individual narratives of anti-colonial struggles. Smith and Watson (2001: 109) argue that "[t]his contemporary fascination with life narratives derives in part from the power of an ideology of individualism and its hold on us." Thus the life-writing subject, represented by these nationalist autobiographers is a product of the ideology of individualism or to reference Olney (1980), is the sovereign self who is at the centre of autobiographical writing. In their compelling engagement with settler colonialism in Rhodesia, and its ramifications, and in terms of literary practice, the autobiographies can also be positioned as literature for national liberation. Without doubt, the nationalist idiom becomes the basis upon which the autobiographies studied in this chapter articulate a colonised subjectivity. It is also the basis upon which agency to liberate the nation and to articulate that agency is also narrated.

The discussion in this chapter has shown how in as much as Vambe historicises his identity within VaShawasha traditions, Muzorewa's identity is historicized within the events that characterized nationalist agitation and events that define the prophetic calling of the Methodist church and the church in general for total liberation of humanity. Nyagumbo's narrative is the story of his naivety in political matters told from the perspective of a now enlightened but modest nationalist. As the analysis has shown his dialogue with political forces in South Africa begins ambivalently, initially he remains unfazed, but later awakens to the implications of South African Black Nationalist politics on African nationalism in Rhodesia. By engaging with the ideological forces in this political movement, Nyagumbo begins to realize the potential for an alternative political order in Rhodesia. Vambe makes use of his vast intellectual resources to craft a self while Muzorewa makes use of theological

resources to construct his autobiographical subjectivity. These resources are deployed to jettison colonial oppression.

Self representation is always undergirded by discourses within which the self operates. *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe*, *Rise Up and Walk* and *With the People* are all autobiographical narratives of growing up in a repressive colonial environment in which dispossessed Africans grapple with the alienation wrought by the colonial experience. The chronicling of the experiences by these autobiographers becomes an attempt to reclaim their communities' cultural and historical past. Vambe, Muzorewa and Nyagumbo are historical agents who focus on their people's as well as their own experiences in order to assert their own identities.

The common theme that unites these autobiographies is personal struggle for self-improvement through education and employment. Later, these subjects develop consciousness of the unjust nature of the political status quo in Rhodesia. Combined, these three autobiographers craft a narrative of African political and cultural agency and resistance. They interpret their experiences as builders of a new Zimbabwe.

Chapter Four
Nation building: its rhetoric and autobiographical practices

Introduction

This chapter discusses Peter Godwin's, Ian Smith's and Joshua Nkomo's narratives and how they craft a discourse of the nation-building process. In this chapter I argue that the turbulent road to Zimbabwean independence and ensuing post-independence political contestations create the contingencies that give to Godwin's, Nkomo's and Smith's autobiographical acts the forms that these assume. The state of Zimbabwean national politics before and in the aftermaths of independence compels their memories and also invigorates their imaginations, which in turn define their subjectivities.

This chapter begins by discussing Peter Godwin's experiential history; his boyhood years in Chimanimani in eastern Zimbabwe, his memory, identity and agency in the political and cultural space of colonial Rhodesia as articulated in his autobiography, *Mukiwa: A White Boy in Africa* (1996). The name *Mukiwa* is the word used by the Ndebele for white people – it is the Shona and Ndebele word for a fig - and Peter Godwin's use of this name loads it with meaning. The name allows him to navigate the intersections of whiteness and Africanness. The discussion thus examines how his identity is located at the intersection of white boyhood and being in Africa. It then examines ways in which Godwin's consciousness of his relations with black domestic and plantation workers during his childhood years shapes his subjectivity. His subjectivity is also historically determined by his negotiation of competing political interests in Rhodesia and post-independence Zimbabwe. My examination will unravel the kinds of subjective identities borne by Godwin in his narrative.

Ian Smith's obsession with a singular version of Rhodesian-ness forms the basis of the analysis of his narrative, *Bitter Harvest: the Great Betrayal and the Dreadful Aftermath* (1997) or, as the second edition of 2008 is titled, *Bitter Harvest: Zimbabwe and the Aftermath of its Independence*. The chapter debates Smith's construction of his subjectivities within the framework of the memory of the founding principles of the British Empire, his sporty boyhood, experiences in the Royal Rhodesian Airforce (RRAF), his rise to political power and his political engagements with African nationalists, South Africa and the British. Smith's political agency in the making of an intransigent Rhodesian state is examined within the

context of Rhodesian cultural and political discourses as well as his masculinist and aggressive repertoire that reinforced a particular Rhodesian identity: an identity "more British than the British" as he would argue. As shall be discussed in this chapter, Smith's subjectivities are also constituted by his promotion of a racial and political discourse that sought to reinforce the legitimacy of the Rhodesian Front's national project.

The chapter will then examine Joshua Nkomo's *The Story of My Life* (1984) by considering the extent to which his subjectivities are shaped by Rhodesian politics, relations to colonial and post independence power structures and his own disposition. I will consider how Nkomo's experiences of repression in colonial Rhodesia, politicization in South Africa and becoming a social worker for Rhodesia Railways, and subsequently fighting for national liberation, and then suffering further marginalization in the post colony, constitute the bases upon which his subjectivities are formed. The chapter grapples with his, as well as Godwin's and Smith's agency in their narratives; agency as an informed response and actions arising after considering specific historical situations. As Werbner (2002:5) suggests, "people are agents insofar as they choose to subject themselves, to perform and conform accordingly, to accept responsibility, and to acknowledge their commitments." This chapter will also complicate agency by exploring the tripartite agency of the autobiographical subject, the narrative and the reader and show how these are further complicated when placed in a postcolonial context.

Intimate relations: Peter Godwin and the moral ambiguity of his African childhood

Peter Godwin opens his narrative with the Oberholzer murder carried out by the Crocodile Gang led by Willie Ndangana. This was another of the earliest acts marking the guerilla war for Zimbabwe's liberation. The narrative also begins from the perspective of a collective identity in which the narrator simultaneously identifies with his fellow Rhodesian whites while also seeing himself as an individual:

> 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 at all. The constables called them *tsotsis*, which in English means "thugs", I suppose. I had no idea what they were really. I thought they were robbers, African highwaymen perhaps. (p. 11) (emphasis added)

The note left by the Crocodile Gang immediately locates Godwin's narrative in the context of the struggle for Zimbabwe. It thus invokes a historical context of liberation politics for this narrative: "*This is the work of the Clocadile* (sic) *Gang*, it said. *We will keep on fighting until all white setlars (sic) are going and our land is returned*. *VIVA CHIMURENGA*"! (p.12). The response of the African sergeant to the inquiries of the white member-in-charge accentuates the liberation discourse that frames Godwin's narrative and in which his subjectivities are entangled:

> 'What's all this Chimurenga business, sergeant?'
>
> 'Well, sah, it is the word for the old Shona rebellion in 1896. But I think it can mean any rebellion'. He paused and handed the note back. 'Maybe this is a new rebellion?' (p.12)

From here the narrative chronicles the search for Ndangana, leader of the Crocodile Gang. This is punctuated by Godwin's retrospective description of his relationship to his family's black workers who are invariably infantilized by being called 'boys' or 'girls' regardless of age. His narrative thrives on understatement as he merely states rather than elaborates on this. It is this intimacy with black servants and the land of Chimanimani that I wish to examine as I consider this to be the ground of his political and moral subjectivity.

Early on Godwin reveals a religious identity derived from his membership of an African apostolic sect. His embracing of an apostolic identity is borne out of an intimate relationship with his family's African servants especially his nanny Violet who takes him to the Apostolic church meetings. Godwin writes:

> This became *our* regular Sunday outing. Over the next few years, *we* Apostolics became more established and more numerous. *We* built a huge hut the traditional way. Working only on Sundays – *we* could break the Sabbath because this was Jehovah's business – *we* nevertheless managed to complete the project in less than two months. (p. 25) (emphasis added)

The narrative establishes an apostolic identity for Godwin as he merges his own identity with that of the African apostles. When Violet gets him a '*gammont*' (the church uniform), this identity finds embodiment in an appropriately dressed body. In the narrative he also claims agency in the establishment of this brand of religion. He goes into elaborate detail describing the apostolic religion:

> the religious cocktail we had concocted was almost irresistible. It was a combination of traditional African animism and selected morsels of Christianity, mostly from the Old Testament. (p. 29)

Godwin intimately describes spirit possession, either by prophets of the Old Testament or by long departed ancestors. This religious space is a hybrid space where Africans appropriate elements of the Judaeo-Christian religion, blending them with African animism. He too assumes a hybrid identity – getting possessed just like his fellow African apostles. In narrating one of the church meetings, Godwin remembers:

> The tempo had become frenetic, and despite the chill we were all lathered in sweat. The last thing I remembered was staring into the fire and feeling myself slowly being drawn into them. When I came to, I was lying down by the wall, my head in Violet's lap. She was wiping my forehead with her handkerchief. I felt exhausted, drugged with sleep. My *gammont* was completely sodden, as though I had fallen into the river…
>
> No one would tell me what had happened. I thought I'd just fainted, but Violet eventually told me I'd been possessed, that I'd talked – in Shona – for about ten minutes. But she wouldn't say who I had become or what I had said. No matter how I pleaded and threatened and cajoled, she absolutely refused to elaborate. I had never seen her so stubborn. (p. 31)

Hybridity manifests itself in various forms and the formation of African independent churches is one such domain where this phenomenon is manifest. Daneel (1987, 2000, & 2011) discusses African independent churches showing how they appropriated and synthesized Christian discourses with African traditions in order to create a new liturgy consonant with their worldview. According to Daneel (2011: 143) '[t]heir enacted theology, moreover, represents a sensitive and innovative response to Africa's existential needs and must be seen as a central – if not the most important and authentic part – of African theology'. This hybridization of religion disrupts a monolithic narrative of the Christian religion as espoused by missionaries and colonizers. In Bakhtinian terms Africans carnivalise Christianity by concocting this new hybrid form and Godwin exercises his agency by being part of this carnival that is opposing the religious interpellation of Africans by their colonizers and that is in the process refashioning religion to suit the local. The carnival is rooted in the popular and has the capacity to subvert the authoritarian. This suggests not only cultural but political agency in which the Africans (and Godwin by extension) are contesting the authority and authenticity of colonial discourse the church is seen to be part of. Godwin's

subjectivity is thus mutually constructed by his belonging to the white world and experiencing African culture.

In the wake of this incident, however, Godwin ceases to be a member of the apostolic sect and the symbol of his belonging with them – his *gammont* – is confined to his wardrobe, later to be thrown away by his mother. The incident of his possession points to his ambiguous relationship with his fellow apostolics and even the hybrid religious space which is also threatening in its complex mysticism. Godwin is with them without fully being of them; this is Bhabha's (1994) "third space", which is an ambivalent space. This is why when he becomes possessed no one is willing to divulge the content of his utterances. The narrator does not suggest anywhere in the narrative that black people who would have been possessed are not informed of what they would have said under the spell of their possession, yet Godwin is denied knowledge of what he had said except that he had said it in the local African language. Godwin is thus an outsider in a space to which he thought he belonged and in whose agency he has partaken; an indication of the indeterminacy of identity and belonging. Yet his fellow apostolics have a new found reverence for him in the aftermath of this spiritual incident. The ambiguity of his situation also arises from the fact that he is subjected to a spiritual power over which he has no control and this is worsened by the fact that he has no memory of what transpires when he is under the spell of this power. In effect some spiritual power exercises its own agency through his body, which points to the problematic of theorizing identities as based exclusively on individual agency. Such theorization is fractured in this case by spirit possession and its implications. That spiritual force finds embodiment in Godwin; he only embodies spiritual agency. Yet again his identity has been reconstituted after this incident as he finds new respect from his former colleagues in the sect. His experience is scientifically inexplicable or paranormal or even a-logical, yet his narrative asserts it as real.

Following the Oberholzer incident, Godwin goes to boarding school and this is a life-changing development. He does not like it and blames this on Willie Ndangana and the Crocodile Gang. In the chapters that follow Godwin describes his intense feelings of sorrow at being away from his home and then tells us of how Ian Smith declared UDI on the 11th of November 1965. Godwin highlights the difficulties of living in Rhodesia after UDI and his longing for a safer place to live in:

> A place where there were no scorpions or lethal snakes, or rabid jackals to bite me, or mosquitoes to infect me with cerebral malaria, or tsetse flies to give me sleeping sickness. A place free of the *tokalosh*, and the *muroyi* – the evil African witch; a place where there were no *tsotsis* setting fire to the forests or killing Europeans for the *Chimurenga*. (p.138)

From his invocation of deadly animals, evil human beings and fatal diseases, it is evident that the colonial space that Godwin inhabits is far from being hospitable. The sense of permanence of the settlers in this place is therefore false. Godwin longs for a safe place and imagines that safe haven to be England 'a gentle deciduous place where man had tamed nature and moulded it to do his bidding' (p. 139). He considers England to be the utopian space. His parents, who had come from England, however remind him 'You're a *pukka* African. The first Godwin to be born out here' (p. 139). This revelation by his parents dis-identifies him with any other earlier Godwin and locates his identity as African. However, he is worried that unlike the Afrikaners and Africans they have no relatives. For Afrikaners a claim to the African identity and long-established family traditions in Africa are coordinates for this solid identity. This realization destabilizes him further as he feels insecure and believes the Afrikaners and Africans have more stable identities. This is also further complicated by Godwin's vow later in the narrative never to set foot again in Rhodesia and his failure to reconnect with the land of his birth when he returns from England. In some way therefore, it appears throughout his narrative that Godwin inhabits some liminal space and yearns for an idyllic moment of harmonious colonial relations. Ironically, Godwin does not seem to appreciate the fact that there cannot be harmonious relations when the settler is the perpetual outsider, the habitual alien. He neither belongs in Africa nor in England. Unfortunately, real life encounters and experiences always recall him to his half-given loyalties.

The rest of the narrative up to chapter eleven, which concludes the first book, is a chronicle of his studies at St. Georges which he describes as "a bizarre cocktail of moralities: racial enlightenment within a system of extreme conservatism…. The arcane tradition that was probably most central to the fabric of the college life was fagging, the system inherited from English public schools where senior boys are allocated junior boys as servants." (p. 132). Godwin himself is allocated to Peter Chingoka, a black Upper Sixth prefect and later a pre-eminent member of cricket administrators in independent Zimbabwe. Ironically this is the same time that the *Rhodesia Herald* is awash with news that Ian Smith was not going to

allow black rule and that whites were going to put up a fight to maintain white rule in the country. Godwin says:

> I thought about it all while I polished Peter Chingoka's shoes, and knotted his tie, and smoothed out his bed sheets. Here I was, a white boy, skivving for a black in a country that was embarking on a civil war to prevent black rule. I must be the only white servant of a black man in the whole damn country, I thought. And I felt oddly special. (p. 133)

What is prevailing in Rhodesia as opposed to a somewhat non-racial environment at St. Georges ironises Godwin's position and this manifests in his interrogation of his position as probably the only white servant of a black man in Rhodesia. In a way this awkward position enables him to question Ian Smith's intransigence. His experience is ambiguous and by extension, he finds that his own identity is being ambiguously constructed.

It is during this time, when the war of liberation is also intensifying in the north east of the country that he is told that the family is moving to Mangula. This impending move destabilizes Godwin, for he has developed an intimate relationship with the landscape of Chimanimani and the Africans around him notwithstanding the dangers and evil surrounding him. The land offers him stability even if that stability is threatened by the guerilla incursions. The news therefore upsets him and when the family goes mountain climbing as a farewell to Chimanimani, Godwin sees his move to Mangula as an intersubjective experience. This intersubjectivity is inspired by his sighting of a slave trail in the mountains:

> This pass was part of the ancient slave trail from the interior out to the Mozambique coast. I thought of all the thousands of slaves that must have trudged over these mountains, shackled together by logs attached to collars around their necks; wrenched from their homes and destined for a miserable life of captive toil. And now I was being wrenched from my home too. (p.166)

Since autobiographical subjectivity is an amalgam of experience, memory, identity, agency and embodiment, Godwin's subjectivity emerges here only after intersubjectively sharing in the slaves' experience, the imagination of their ordeal triggered in him by seeing the slave trail, and identifying with their pain at being uprooted from their homes 'destined for a miserable life of captive toil'. From his choice of diction, 'wrenched', Godwin perceives himself suffering the same violence as was suffered by slaves of old. To equate his suffering to that of the slaves is a pointer to the intensity of his feelings. Werbner (2002: 1) reminds us that "the intersubjective is ever and always the ground of the subjective; that there is no

subjectivity prior to intersubjectivity". Therefore subjectivity cannot be neatly defined outside and in opposition to intersubjectivity. To keep his spirits up in this state, Godwin finds himself singing an old Shangaan hunting song, "one of the borrowed hunting songs that the Silverstream beaters sang to keep their spirits up, on their way to tackle a forest fire" (p. 168). In a moment when he suffers individual fragmentation, Godwin has no other language to use to assert wholeness except through recourse to Shangaan culture with which he is familiar through interaction with black plantation workers. His subjectivity is entwined with the cultures and experiences of the indigenous people in a delicate and precarious balance, which leaves him largely unsettled because one part of him knows that he is always the outsider to the multiple black experiences that he has observed or even taken part in.

Unsettled and in search of the elusive middle ground in Africa

When the Godwins move to Mangula, Godwin's experiences there provide another opportunity to rethink his identity. The move to Mangula also coincides with his adolescence and sexual maturation. He recalls dating an Afrikaner girl, Ilse. Because of this relationship Godwin has the opportunity to relate to Afrikaners at close quarters and his admiration for their race is apparent:

> Under the influence of Ilse I became a fervent admirer of the Afrikaners. After all, they were *real* white Africans. That's what Afrikaner meant; it was simply the Afrikaans word for African. They seemed more secure than us, more settled. I began to wish that I was an Afrikaner with a solid identity and I even started spelling my name the Afrikaans way – Pieter. (p. 187)

Godwin's consciousness of the precarious nature of his identity as English Rhodesian is a mirror reflecting how he interprets the complex nature of Rhodesian identities and his own identity. He is consciously aware that, notwithstanding the assurance by his mother that he is "a *pukka* African", an authentic African, that identity has no solid grounding, contrary to how Smith asserts the solidity of the Rhodesian identity. The deduction here is that whiteness as a racial category is not physically and culturally homogeneous. The Afrikaners arrived on the African continent in 1652 and their famous Great Trek is a source of nationalistic pride for them. Their history as a people requires an ideological and discursive mapping onto Africa and allows them to appropriate the word Africa in naming themselves. Their settlement in South Africa was characterized by rivalries with the British culminating in the Anglo-Boer

War. Manifestations of Afrikaner nationalism are seen, among other things, in the birth of the apartheid state which even while it was asserting its Africanness affirmed its refusal to be involved with Africans with a different experience of the continent. For Godwin it is by first establishing the subjectivity of the Afrikaner people that he also establishes his own subjectivity - that is intersubjectively.

In Mangula Godwin gets a holiday job arranged for him by his father and it is in the workshop environment that he is further awakened to the nature of race relations in Rhodesia. He sees how Radetski - the manager - treats black workers and when he cracks a joke that is meant to be his way of sticking up for an abused black worker – Elijah – Godwin's joke is resented by Elijah. This leaves him devastated, but serves to enlighten him regarding the complex nature of race relations, especially in the workshop. Godwin narrates:

> I felt hard done by and resentful. I'd been trying to stick up for Elijah and now he'd gone off in a huff. You just couldn't win, really. I felt resigned to the fact that there really wasn't much room in the middle in Africa – all sides ended up despising you.
>
> As I was leaving the workshop that evening, Clever fell in step with me. 'Don't worry about Radetski', he said. 'Well, I don't know how you stand for it,' I sympathized, trying to re-establish my credentials as a friend of the black man. (p. 195)

Through this incident, Godwin realizes that beneath Radetski's abusive nature towards black workers lay an ambivalent camaraderie with blacks in which each one appears to know his place. He learns that it is only Radetski who loans money to stranded black workers at no interest. This ambiguous relationship forces him to register that race relations are complicated and this complexity equally complicates the formation of his own identity. Godwin becomes conscious of the problematic nature of perceiving race relations as a black and white binarism. He thought sticking up for Elijah would endear him with blacks, and was not to know that, Radetski is not strictly considered an enemy by the very same people he abuses. By problematising and questioning this, Godwin is searching for a liminal space - and perhaps a middle ground as well - that constantly eludes him. The middle ground implies compromise between opposing concepts. The liminal zone seems ideal for Godwin because as Ashcroft et al (2011 : 131) contend, "the liminal, prevents identities from polarizing between such arbitrary designations as 'upper' and 'lower', 'black' and 'white'."

A letter from Honor (a relative in England) announcing Godwin's cousin, Oliver's impending visit to Rhodesia and bringing along a black girlfriend creates for Godwin another

opportunity to problematise Rhodesian thinking on race relations and accentuates the elusiveness of the middle ground. For Godwin:

> This was pretty exciting news, and just what Mangula needed, I thought, to really shake it up. My father got into quite a flap. According to the law, under the Land Apportionment Act, Lydia Lively wasn't even supposed to stay with us in a white residential area. My mother became convinced that Honor, who made no secret of voting for Labour, was sending out Lydia Lively to test us. So father had a word with the police member-in-charge, a friend of his, and explained the ticklish situation. The member-in-charge was happy to turn a blind eye, Lydia Lively was only staying a few weeks after all, but he warned us not to parade her about too blatantly, or the miners might complain. (p. 196)

This is the middle ground that Godwin is constantly seeking in his narrative; a middle ground that he finds elusive all the same. In as much as the colonial system oppressed Africans it was equally oppressive and stifling to whites. They had to conform and subject themselves to invented values and perceptions. In other words, whiteness in the colonies was not a condition of being; it was a contrived and imposed identity. He is disappointed when Oliver arrives without Lydia, but his parents are relieved. Godwin however enjoys Oliver's eccentricity in both dress and manners. When they take him to Salisbury they are refused entry into parliament because of the manner in which Oliver is dressed. Oliver's visit also illuminates for Godwin how Rhodesia is perceived by the outside world. Godwin argues:

> At the time I thought Oliver was pretty strange, really eccentric, with his loincloth and Afro and everything. But in his eyes I saw that he thought we were the odd ones. And for the first time I got a glimpse of how we appeared to the outside, of just how far we had strayed from our mother culture and mutated into this quite separate people. And I realized that was why my parents would never really consider going home to England because England wasn't home any more, even to them. (p.197)

The idea of home is an ambivalent, contingent and constructed notion and Godwin comes to the consciousness of this. Psychologically, Godwin is conscious of the excesses of Rhodesian racial bigotry and his moral subjectivity arises out of questioning this and the idea of home. His subjectivity, Werbner (2002) would argue, is also realized existentially through his consciousness of these ambiguities of both home and racial relations.

Towards the end of Book 1, Godwin relates the escalation of the war and how conscription was introduced. He questions the whole logic of this war in the wake of the youthful dying in numbers. The effects of these deaths are more pronounced to him as more and more memorial services are conducted at his school St. George's for former boys who would have

fallen in battle. Godwin's interpretation of the singing that takes place at these church services resonates with his sense of disgust towards the cause of that war. In order to register his disdain and disgust, Godwin identifies the metaphorical import of the lyrics as pregnant with death:

> The more we sang these songs, *Ex Fide Fiducia* and *St George*, the more I became aware that they were dripping with the metaphors of war, all of which now assumed a worryingly real aspect….
>
> Conflict, battle, live or die.
>
> For the first time, really, I began to think about death. Not the death of others, not the death of oom Piet, or Great-Aunt Diana, or Mr Arrow Head, or the corpses my mother used to cut up, or old Mr Boshof, or even Father Brennan. But my own death. (p. 206-207)

The war and consciousness of the fact that conscription would surely catch up with him further awaken him to the amoral nature of the war. He compares his own parents' participation in World War II to his imminent participation in the Rhodesian war and concludes:

> …they were lucky, theirs had been a simple war to fight. *A moral war*. *A just war*. *The right war*. This war seemed messier and more complicated. I thought about it that night as I lay on the bed in the cottage, with my revolver under my pillow, listening to nightjars. (p.208) (emphasis added)

As he agonises over this he considers skipping the country but his parents discourage him as they consider it to be dishonourable. He consoles himself by insisting that he would not be fighting for Smith's Rhodesia Front since he had already conceded the imminence of black rule and also that he would not do anything that he disagreed with or that would shame him. Godwin's agony accentuates his moral subjectivity, but what is perhaps striking in his agonizing are the possibilities it offers for problematising received notions of Rhodesian hegemonic identities; which valorize war and the protection of white interests as well as supposedly protecting civilization against barbarism represented by guerillas. In popular post-independence Zimbabwean political discourse that has become intensely anti-Rhodesia and anyone seeming to champion ideas considered close to those of Rhodesia, Rhodesian identities have been homogenized. Godwin's narrative however, provides a contrarian voice that is destabilising this homogenization as shown by his own agony at being part of this war. Yet it is also problematic whether the term amoral can be strictly applied in a struggle context

where political ideologies and philosophies contained both moral and spiritual justifications. Book 1 ends on this note of agony and moral engagement with the Rhodesian question, which opens us to his fragile and split consciousness at this point.

Youthful masculinity ebbing away: Godwin's moral dilemma

Book Two begins with Godwin undergoing medical tests for his conscription and being photographed for his identity card. To aid his memory at the time of constructing this narrative, Godwin says he still has the photograph and,

> in it I'm holding a small blackboard with my regimental number chalked on it, like a convict. My hair is so short my ears seem pale and enormous, sticking nakedly out of my head…. The shaven-headed conscript that stares out of the photograph looks all of fifteen. In fact I had just celebrated my eighteenth birthday. (p. 215)

Godwin's deployment of the simile 'like a convict', coupled with the description of his appearance invokes a sense of being caged or imprisoned in the Rhodesia Front's futile war and at the same time a sense of culpability for taking part in that war. This feeling is sustained throughout this second book as Godwin chronicles his involvement in the war; involvement reluctantly undertaken.

At another level, composing his narrative while looking at his photograph invites a discussion of the relationship between memory, photography and embodied identities. Photography is a representational mode which in this case is representing Godwin's embodied autobiographical identity. Barthes (1981), Shilling (1993) and Smith and Watson (2001) show how identities are predicated on embodiment. Photographs, according to Barthes (1981), act to inform desired memory or desired remembrance. They also embody the subject by presenting the literal reality that the subject exists. Thus the convict-like and conscript identities find embodiment in the photograph that Godwin is referring to. His photographic image is thus speaking with the same voice of his narrative.

In the chapters that follow, Godwin describes the grueling military training that he undergoes at Morris Depot. The incident in which he has to attend to a riot scene in the black township of Mbare opens us to the deep sense of moral dilemma that he experiences. During his days at St Georges, Godwin had, as part of service to the community, tutored black students at St Peter's school in the same township and among the said rioters is Bornwell whom he had taught at the school. Bornwell and his classmates had written letters to Godwin; letters he had

not responded to because of his busy training schedule. As he leaves the riot scene and after having warned Bornwell against wearing a red shirt and joining such crowds lest he be a shooting target, Godwin moralises on his involvement. He relates:

> I stared through the grille at the township passing by and realized just how much the training was getting to us. How it did that to you. Turned you into a fighting machine and set you loose on people who were writing letters to you. My shoulders slumped and I sighed a ragged sigh and with it I felt the fight drain out of me. (p. 227)

Godwin's experience here points to a psychological and moral crisis in which he is struggling to make sense of the logic of the Rhodesian situation. His use of the metaphor of a fighting machine resonates with his feeling that the war is dehumanising him; turning him into a conscience-less individual and yet the creation of the Rhodesian state is premised on the moral of bringing civilized and humanizing standards in every regard. The metaphor of the machine reminds one of Olney's (1980) 'metaphors of the self'. It is through the manner in which autobiographical narrators deploy language that readers get to know them; through the metaphors they use to craft identities. Thus Godwin's use of "like a convict" and "fighting machine", for instance, creates a siege identity. He is under siege and trapped in a war that is fraught with contradictions. The contradictions of this war permeate the whole of Book Two.

His sense of isolation is accentuated by his observation that even international celebrities shunned Rhodesia and only those whose careers had lost their luster, or had none, became significant in Rhodesia. When Jimmy Edwards comes to visit them at Morris Depot, Godwin observes, "having to treat the likes of Jimmy Edwards as an honored VIP only made me feel our isolation more keenly" (p. 229). That Jimmy Edwards, with his lack-luster career becomes in Rhodesia an international star, is symbolic of the decline of Rhodesia's moral standing in the international community. His sense of dejection derives from the pariah status of Rhodesia and for him this is an unsettling feeling.

The rest of the narrative in Book Two delineates Godwin's experiences when he is deployed in Matabeleland. Godwin is at pains in the narrative to prove his respect for local people. This is manifest in his claims that:

> I learnt as much as I could about local politesse, and did my best to observe it. I tried not to rush people to whom time was unimportant, even though I fairly danced with impatience. I tried to remember to show respect to age, even when the old one was dressed in rags and appeared to have no status. I never walked on to the area of beaten earth around a cluster of huts, for this was as bad as barging into someone's house

> unannounced…. I was, to use PO Moffat's phrase, 'a regular fucking *kaffir*-lover'. (p. 254-256)

Godwin is this "*kaffir*-lover"' because he has been so constructed by his childhood intimacy with black people and attending a somewhat racially tolerant school. Involved in a war he considers amoral and against his conscience, Godwin is eager to establish his solidarity with Africans and this catalogue of his cultural achievements points to that. This is why theorists of autobiography contend that autobiographical remembering is a political process in which subjects learn what to remember and how to remember. In this case Godwin understands the political use of remembering how he was at pains to get to know and understand African culture in his area of deployment. His rhetoric is thus a strategy of carving a political identity that is in opposition to the hegemonic Rhodesian political identity. However, the extent to which Godwin is seeking acceptance and accommodation into the new dispensation is complicated by the fact that the new order itself is not of a higher moral standing considering the history of post independence Zimbabwe. Godwin publishes this book in 1996 after witnessing not only the *Gukurahundi* massacres in Matabeleland, but the decline of the Zimbabwean state itself and the dehumanization of its citizens.

As a rhetorical strategy, Godwin incorporates in his narrative diary entries he made when he met Chief Maduna. This is meant to authorize his favourable perception of Africans – his '*kaffir*-lover identity' – and their cause in the war. He writes:

> That night, on my verandah at Avoca Base, I wrote up my account of meeting Chief Maduna. *The Maduna chieftainship has been fighting white rule for four generations*, I observed. *The present chief sees this war as simply round two of the 1896 rebellion*. I rated the chances of his co-operating with the authorities at nil. I rather admired him.
>
> I concluded: *I do not think that this is a man who will be in any way intimidated by the prospect of prison, but, on the whole, his continued presence among his people is probably a stabilizing influence. If he is detained, it could well radicalize what has been, up until now, a fairly quiet area*. (p. 257)

Godwin's assessment of Chief Maduna is positive and again this buttresses his disdain for the war. He registers his opposition to the war; a war in which his youth is going to waste. When there are guerilla incursions in Filabusi he investigates them, but is wearied by the hopelessness of the situation. He is even unwilling to remember some of the horrific incidents; "incidents that I try not to remember. Women impaled on stakes. Whole families

burned to death inside their own huts, their hands tied behind their backs with wire. People accused of being 'sell-outs', killed 'to make an example'" (p. 259).

These experiences make him react with fury at the news that Smith had increased the duration of national service and was considering making it indefinite until the improvement of the security situation. He is exasperated; "Well, there went Cambridge…. Christ, I might never get out. I felt a surge of fury at it all" (p. 262). Godwin feels trapped by Ian Smith and it is at this point that the thought of killing Smith crosses his mind. He then contemplates how the whole history of Rhodesia would change after that; may be peace would come sooner. Again both his moral and political subjectivities are realized in this moment; political in the sense that he is subject to the political power wielded by Ian Smith and moral in the sense that he has a conscience that is inclining him to exercise agency by assassinating Smith. Godwin recalls:

> So this was the man – good ol' Smithy – followed blindly by white Rhodesians even though he had no bloody idea where to lead us. This was our icon. Then, completely unbidden, the thought popped into my mind that I could easily shoot him. My pistol was in my holster, its bullets snuggly spring-loaded into their magazine. He was about twenty-five feet away from me; it would be perfectly easy. (p. 263)

The hint of bitter sarcasm cannot be missed in this extract. Godwin is bitter and his thoughts of killing Smith incline him to imagine a heroic identity. Interesting to note is that he reckons this act will locate him as liberation hero on the side of those who oppose Ian Smith. He imagines the consequences of his actions:

> I'd be arrested, tried for murder and hanged, like members of the Crocodile Gang, going to the gallows as some sort of liberation hero. Or I'd be declared criminally insane, like the parliamentary messenger 'Blackie' Tsafenadas who had assassinated the South African prime minister (sic) Hendrik Verwoerd ten years before. (p.263)

Godwin's contemplation points to the complex entanglement of the political, the moral and the personal in the making of autobiographical subjectivity. Entanglement, Nuttall (2009: 1) suggests:

> …is a condition of being twisted together or entwined, involved with; it speaks of an intimacy gained, even if it was resisted, or ignored or uninvited. It is a term which may gesture towards a relationship or set of social relationships that is complicated, ensnaring, in a tangle, but which also implies a human foldedness. It works with difference and sameness but also with their limits, their predicaments, their moment of complication.

His imagined heroic identity is entangled in other histories of resistance and here emerges in the context of thinking about it intersubjectively with that of the Crocodile Gang members who murdered Oberholzer and Tsafenadas whose assassination of Verwoerd was inspired by his disgust with South Africa's racial policy. It is after considering the Crocodile Gang members' and Tsafenadas's identities that he thinks of his own potential heroic identity. This desired heroic identity premised on being opposed to Smith is seen in his protection of Chief Maduna when his home is searched. Godwin finds incriminating evidence and hides it from the eyes of other white officers. He goes on to attack the racial priorities of the security forces as we see in the diary entry he made then, which he incorporates in the narrative:

> I was getting quite steamed up, and went on. *If we have a racial attitude to the war, only bothering to protect white farms and mines, then we must not be surprised that black areas slip out of our control so quickly and easily. Blacks there, even those who do not voluntarily support terrorists, believe that we have no commitment to protecting them. They see little option but to co-operate with terrorists and in this assessment, it seems to me, they are absolutely right*. (p. 273)

Since autobiography is a retrospective interpretation of the narrator's experiences and autobiographical remembering is politicized, Godwin has to prove that he had always been against participation in a war which was being fought for a cause of which he did not approve; a position which is politically correct, notwithstanding the fact that he is at the risk of being attacked by the post independence rulers for also exposing their evils in the post colony. This is why he continuously includes extracts from his diary entries and reports to his superiors to justify his position that the war was amoral and that he had always been against it.

Book Two is thus qualified by an overwhelming sense of despondency. Godwin has resigned to his fate; the Department of Manpower keeps refusing to consider his release and all hope of going to Cambridge is lost: "slowly all other life faded. The potent images of war crowded out memories of my life before this, of my very identity. I had become a soldier, a technician of war" (p.295). The Book ends as it begins; with the metaphor of a war machine. The metaphor points to the dehumanizing impact of this war and the wasted youth. Godwin is trapped in an identity positioning with which he feels no empathy. He is subject to the power of the Rhodesian state and his agency in this state of subjection is located in his dissident or contrarian thoughts and acts of undermining Rhodesian power. News of his release suddenly arrives and in less than three days he is out of Rhodesia; about to begin studying at

Cambridge: "I felt a wave of relief that I was still alive, that I hadn't been killed in this stupid little war, that I was going to be allowed to live to be an adult after all" (p. 310). But the ghosts of this war haunt him anyway. He is haunted by the motto he had seen in the reconstructed hut of a woman whose village had been razed in an inferno; "*Hate us and see if we care*" (p.311) and dreams of the many horrific encounters. Werbner (2002: 8) argues that "dreaming is a profoundly intersubjective activity." The horrors of his wartime experiences keep competing for remembrance and Godwin thus carries the memories of the resilience of African people until his sister Jain's death provides a new incident to provide other memories and which also makes him return unexpectedly. The situation in the country had worsened. He vows never to return to Rhodesia.

Making sense of the incoherent postcolonial state: Peter Godwin's eye-witness account

Book Three opens with Godwin back in independent Zimbabwe while carrying out PhD research. The language of the opening betrays his scepticism about the new national project and the tone of mockery is thinly veiled. He is also relieved that the white people are no longer in charge. As a stop gap measure Godwin gets to practise law when his research grant runs out. The legal practice involves him in the treason trial of Ex-ZIPRA war leaders and the awkward nature of all this troubles him. Using theatre topology, Godwin brings out the bizarre nature of power and political intrigue in the new nation state;

> Later, as the warder let me out with a jangle of keys and banging of bolts, I wondered what had happened to us all. Five years ago we had been shooting at each other. Now Zimbabwe was liberated, he was in prison for high treason, wearing bandit khaki, and I was defending him. I felt like I'd returned to an old play but none of us were playing the same parts any more, we'd all been confusingly recast. (p. 333)

Godwin had realized that one of the imprisoned was the commander of a detachment he had exchanged fire with in the war years and now war-time adversaries were united in different circumstances. The metaphor of a play is effective in creating the image of Zimbabwe as a stage where political drama is taking place, but because the performers have been "confusingly recast" the drama is theatre of the absurd. At another level the play metaphor foregrounds the performative nature of identities. During the war both Godwin and the commander performed military identities as opponents for their respective sides and in post independence Zimbabwe they are awkwardly recast, Godwin performing legal counsel for the

commander now performing bandit accused of high treason. The roles are cut out for them by both history and political power structures and struggles in the new nation state.

When the state case against the Ex-ZIPRA commanders collapses, so does the façade of legality. The state resorts to its might and Godwin is frustrated:

> As for me, I'd had enough of the law, African style, after that. It was little better that (sic) window-dressing. The trial had gone ahead with all the legal trappings, but once the state had lost, they simply resorted to their all-powerful armoury of emergency regulations to rule by decree. All we were doing was helping to camouflage the reality of it. I felt it was pointless to go on, and I resigned from Scanlen and Holderness. (p. 338)

Joshua Nkomo also bears witness to this abuse of state power in his own narrative. Godwin takes up freelance journalism as the national drama continues to unfold. Six Airforce officers are arrested on suspicions of blowing up aircraft at Thornhill Air Base. Godwin remains optimistic, but not until an elderly woman alerts him to the army's activities in Matabeleland South province.

He flies to Bulawayo where he interviews young Matabele refugees and is left in no doubt of the atrocities taking place there. Godwin is horrified as he had hoped that "the whole thing was a fantastic construct of the politically dispossessed, the ethnically antagonistic" (p. 344). He is disguised as a monk in order to penetrate the prohibited areas where the massacres were taking place. It is not clear if Godwin is conscious of the irony, but he again works within the metaphor of performance. He performs the identity of a priest as he travels to Minda Mission in the company of Catholic nuns and encounters a road block: "'God bless you, my son', I found myself saying, absurdly, and I made a little sign of the cross at him" (p. 348). The journey to Minda Mission is an eye-opener and enables him to render an eye-witness account of the Gukurahundi atrocities. Chapter nineteen is populated with direct quotations of his conversations with Catholic priests, nuns and ordinary people who are victims of the Fifth Brigade. Father Gabriel's closing statement is a solid indictment of the Fifth Brigade; "'I am not a young man, you know'", he said. "I have lived through the Second World War in Austria and I have seen terrible things the Gestapo could do. But let me tell you something, the Gestapo couldn't teach these Fifth Brigade fellows a damn thing'" (p. 356). The many direct quotations are Godwin's rhetorical strategy of presenting evidence of the massacres and authenticating it to readers.

Godwin deploys journalistic skills to gather evidence and alludes to a courtroom scene and his legal experience when he refers to his interviewees giving evidence in language that recalls a trial; "That night was a procession of witnesses. I didn't sleep at all. As fatigue overwhelmed my sense of perspective, the individual cases crowded in on me in such profusion that they began to merge" (p. 361). By assuming the journalistic responsibility of documenting the atrocities, Godwin is rendering himself subject to a specific media discourse. He has agency in that he is performing the role of producing documentary evidence of Gukurahundi. Godwin's is not a lone agency, but his agency is implicated in the collective desires of victims of Gukurahundi to have their story told to the world. His subjectivity is thus implicated intersubjectively with victims of the atrocities. He is claiming moral high ground in this political dispensation which necessitates the fact that Godwin's moral judgements need to be conceptualized in spatial terms. In the colonial period his claims to moral authority are based on his perception that the Rhodesian war had no justification and was dehumanizing, but in the post independence state, his moral authority is based on the evidence he gathers showing how the state has reneged on its obligation to protect its citizens.

Godwin's agency is also realized in his investigations: he goes to Antelope mine where dead bodies were being dumped. On his return to Harare he writes his report. It invites international outrage and he is informed of his impending arrest. Godwin flees to Botswana and once again he is conscious of the re-enactment of his flight from Rhodesia, away from Ian Smith's war:

> As we gained height and the city's lights fell below us, I had the strongest surge of *déjà vu*. Once again I was leaving a war behind in a rush. Once again, as we left the earthly bonds far below, the conflicts and passions down there seemed so pointless, more so with every foot we climbed into the cold thin air. (p. 383)

He now has assumed the identity of a fugitive. When parliament is told that Godwin had been working as a South African agent, he is declared an enemy of the state. Godwin is here not only subjected to state power which criminalizes him as sellout, but also to its tyranny and because of this his ties with home are severed. The sellout image is consolidated in a *Herald* editorial which insinuates that Godwin is not in jail only because of the national policy of reconciliation. Godwin's already fragile identity is further fractured as he relates how he tries to dismiss Africa as a violent continent. In a deeply emotional state after visiting his aunt's grave in South Africa, Godwin indulges in self pity and sheds tears "[a]t the impermanence of

my family in Africa. At our silly misguided attempts to fashion the continent to our alien ways" (p. 399). This argument contrasts with Ian Smith's interpretation of his own citizenship in this country; a country he claims to belong to and where he considers white people to be another of the country's tribes. Where Godwin sees impermanence, Smith sees lasting citizenship, as will be discussed later. He comes back to visit Zimbabwe and reclaim his past but he feels like a stranger in Harare and feels an urge to visit the Chimanimani (Melsetter) of his past. Here there seems to be confusion in Godwin's account. He has to flee the country and yet seems to come back without any interference. Godwin may be turning himself into a heroic victim or alternatively an African returning to his roots.

By retracing his steps to the Chimanimani of his childhood, Godwin is hoping to re-establish the co-ordinates of his identity, but the place has also changed. He then retraces his steps to all the places of his childhood except Mangula. Godwin visits Chief Maduna's kraal and finally the Filabusi memorial for white heroes of the 1896 rebellion. He positions himself as a witness and ends his narrative on that note. Thus, he notes:

> As I turned to leave, a tremendous shaft of lightning forked violently down into the pyramid hill above me. The air crackled with static and a great wall of thunder shook the bush. I gasped with the surprise of it, and wondered briefly whether Chief Maduna's ancestral spirits were going to strike down another white man before he could bear witness. (p. 418)

Godwin has attempted a homecoming, but he is not very successful. If anything his identity is even more fragile. All his attempts at reconnection point to what Whitlock (2000: 180) calls "the ambivalence of postcolonial subjectivity." His narrative telos foregrounds an identity characterized by uncertainty and estrangement. This uncertainty is felt intersubjectively with the state witness of old who was supposed to testify against Chief Maduna's ancestor who had participated in the 1896 rebellion, but was struck by lightning before he could testify. The case could not proceed in the absence of a witness and this is what Godwin is alluding to. Godwin fails comfortably to act out his Zimbabwean citizenship; reconnection with the country and the land of his childhood has not been successful. It is instructive to note that postcolonial subjectivity in this case is unstable and highly uncertain. This sense of uncertainty and estrangement is deeply characteristic of Ian Smith's experiential history and autobiographical subjectivity in the post independence era as articulated in his autobiography, *Bitter Harvest*. History broadly frames the subjective identities of autobiographical subjects dealing with nation-building.

Military combat, British civilisation and the making of Ian Smith

Considered by many to be the rogue Rhodesian Prime Minister, Ian Smith's autobiographical subjectivity is constituted by the subjection of his body to strict sporting discipline and military action in the Second World War, and the desire to preserve the principles of British civilisation. To begin to understand the making of Ian Smith's autobiographical act calls for a rigorous analysis of the connections between his memory, representation of Rhodesian historical experiences, interpretation of the meaning of his life, which is unified around Rhodesian nation-building, the complex interplay between his and the readers' agency, and the postcolonial condition.

In thinking about this identity three aspects immediately come to mind: family identity, national identity and the ideals that are the founding principles of the British Empire. For Smith the family is the basis of the Rhodesian national identity, a national identity he qualifies as more British than the British themselves. He describes his parents and their achievements in Rhodesia and suggests that his own successes are built on the foundations of this solid family background. As revealed in his narrative, which is plotted along the continuum of key political and historical events in Rhodesia, he strongly believes that the ideals of the British had migrated to Rhodesia, leaving the British character hollow; a situation that justifies his unrelenting contention that he was betrayed by the British. This theme of betrayal is what also underwrites his contention that the Rhodesian identity is more British than the British. Said's (1994) observation that whites who took part in the colonial enterprise were considered morally superior to those who had stayed at home, is useful in understanding Smith's identity claims. Rhodesian identity as espoused by Smith is thus inflected by this colonial discourse and characterized by a Rhodesian masculinity that finds embodiment in the prime minister who is a rogue only from the perspective of a newly decadent Britain but who ironically stands at the centre of British public moral traditions.

Smith begins his narrative by locating himself in the history of the birth of Rhodesia and the Britishness of the Rhodesian identity in a chapter titled "Growth of a Nation". He recalls,

> 'You Rhodesians are more British than the British'. So often I heard that during the war years 1939-45. It was a comment which pleased Rhodesians. To think that we were not British would be ridiculous. After all, what is our history? Rhodes's dream of a British route from Cape to Cairo. (p.2)

The British-ness of the Rhodesian identity is a claim that becomes ubiquitous in Smith's narrative and when this claim is deployed right at the beginning of the narrative, it is his way of pointing to the degree of betrayal of the Rhodesians by their kith and kin: the British. Smith then appeals to the all-too-familiar claim of empty spaces used in colonial discourse to justify the colonial enterprise. Referring to the land that was to become Rhodesia, he argues, "[c]learly it was no-man's land, as Cecil Rhodes and the politicians back in London had confirmed, so no one could accuse them of trespassing or taking part in an invasion" (p.2). Whitlock (2000: 199) explains this kind of reasoning when she argues that "[t]raditionally, Rhodesian settler writing is organized around a series of myths and iconic figures, with a strong Arcadian element of moving into land that is empty and full of promise." Whitlock's argument is useful in making postcolonial connections between Smith's narrative discourse and that of settler autobiographies discussed in Chapter Two. He is thus operating within the same colonial discourse as that of the pioneers of settler colonialism. Said (1994) argues that all struggles in this world are over territory and geography and the representation of that territory and geography. Thus Smith is constructing his narrative argument from a perspective where colonialists did not to see these other civilisations in the spaces they occupied because to do so would undermine the logic of colonialism, which was also premised on claims of bringing civilisation to the uncivilized. Smith quickly disposes of this theme by triumphantly concluding that with the suppression of the Shona-Ndebele uprising of 1894-96, peace reigned only to be disturbed by the rise of African nationalism in the 1960s. The political imperative that coerces him to narrate his story is the desire to demonstrate his perception of African nationalism as disruptive.

His narrative rhetoric throughout the text becomes a response against those he considered the radical elements in the African nationalist movement. The contradictions in Smith's argument are glaring; the uprisings he refers to testify to the fact that pioneers did not occupy empty spaces. Elsewhere in the analysis of fiction, Whitlock (2000) highlights how Lessing's story "The Old Chief Mshlanga" in her *This Was the Old Chief's Country: Collected African Stories, Volume One* resonates with an earlier presence of African people prior to colonial occupation. This also reminds one of the tensions that exist between the historically factual and the myths generated in colonial discourse; such as the myth of empty spaces.

Smith then proceeds to construct an ultra British identity for Rhodesians by systematically arguing that the British are outsiders to the experience of empire building. In this regard Smith valorizes character traits such as bravery, commitment, being dutiful to a cause, fearlessness and related traits. He highlights this when he claims:

> Wherever the new settlers went, the first thing they did was to raise the Union Jack. This was part of pioneering a new country – something in which the people back in Britain had never participated. Nor did they know anything about the spirit of nationalism associated with the opening up of new lands in the name of monarch and country. These were the things that motivated pride and a belief in nationalism. There was feeling of duty to believe in a cause, to make a stand to support and defend it. Again, for the people back in Britain this was a stimulation which they had never experienced. (p.2)

Smith accuses the British who were not part of empire pioneering of living a sheltered life unlike the empire's pioneers who sought challenges. He constructs his own identity by first writing out Africans from the colonised spaces and writing off the British in order to foreground a discrete Rhodesian identity. He projects the British as less empire-minded and thus vicariously claims:

> So our foundations were built by people with strong, individual character, with that important quality of having the courage of their convictions – British people who were playing their part in building the British Empire, the greatest force for good the world had ever known. Britain, a small island off the coast of Europe, this mighty atom which had spread its Western Christian civilisation over half the globe, introducing proper standards of freedom, of justice, and the basics of education, health and hygiene. And right now, here in the centre of southern Africa, the dark continent, men of British stock were once more carrying the torch on one of the few frontiers yet to be civilized. (p. 2-3)
>
> Clearly, this was no place for the faint-hearted men, those who were not dedicated, or were not inspired by the cause they were serving. They had to be convinced that if they were not God-sent, then at least it was the next best thing, sent by their queen and country to spread British civilisation. (p.3)

Ian Smith considers it a privilege to be part of this Empire building process as he also valorizes being disciplined at one's school, not letting down one's team and even dying for one's cause. This is the kind of everyday national performances that define Smith's identity and Rhodesian-ness in general. Indeed his narrative catalogues many examples of Rhodesian actions that proved their ultra British identity. At the outbreak of the Second World War when young people ended up being literally conscripted into civilian jobs to keep them from

joining the army and air force, Smith says "[s]uch was the character of these people who were more British than the British" (p.9).

The Rhodesian masculinity touted in Smith's narrative manifests in the subjection of the body to a strict disciplinary regime. This is initially captured in his school and university years when he took part in cricket, rugby and rowing. Later this is seen in his military exploits on the battlefield in North Africa and elsewhere. To this end, Smith bears visible marks of war on his body, specifically his face, which is thus a site of autobiographical identity as the memory of and his sacrifice to the ideals of British civilization in World War II are inscribed on his very self. He embodies in a peculiarly literal way his own ideals. Shilling (1993) theorises the body as social text and as having both physical and symbolic capital. Shilling (1993: 4) argues that "there is a tendency for the body to be seen as an entity which is in the process of becoming; a *project* which should be worked at and accomplished as part of an *individual's* self-identity." Playing cricket and rugby, swimming and rowing should be seen as Smith's engagement in what Shilling calls bodily projects to conform bodies to certain valorized traits of masculinity and femininity. Shilling (1993: 63) further argues that "[h]istorically, the practice of equating an individual's worth with their body has favoured dominant groups" and adds that the body is the primary site of identity construction or deconstruction, a notion also deployed by Butler (1993) in her theory of performativity and 'bodies that matter'. Historically rugby and cricket partly define Rhodesian masculinity and have symbolic value as identity markers. As Hall (1996a) suggests, this shows how subjects are linked to discursive practices. Again to reference Hall (1996b) these sports are symbolic resources that sustain a Rhodesian identity.

However, Smith's projection of a British-Rhodesian identity is problematic. His parents are of Scottish extraction and in ignoring his Scottish roots and emphasizing the British routes; Smith demonstrates the contradictions in his identity. Stuart Hall (1999: np, online interview) ably articulates the roots/routes problematic when he argues that:

> Instead of asking what are people's roots, we ought to think about what are their routes, the different points by which they have come to be now; they are, in a sense, the sum of those differences. That, I think, is a different way of speaking than talking about multiple personalities or multiple identities as if they don't have any relation to one another or that they are purely intentional. These routes hold us in places, but what they don't do is hold us in the same place. We need to try to make sense of the connections with where we think we were then as compared to where we are now.

> That is what biography or the unfolding sense of the self or the stories we tell ourselves or the autobiographies we write are meant to do, to convince ourselves that these are not a series of leaps in the dark that we took, but they did have some logic, though it's not the logic of time or cause or sequence. But there is a logic of connected meaning.

What Hall is arguing is that cultural identity is not about originary or essential identities, but life trajectories that subjects have followed in history and the many connections made that ultimately shape identities. Hall's statement shows how we give purpose to our lives by writing of the unfolding sense of self as having a purpose. Smith has Scottish roots, but has been constructed by the British route and subsequently a Rhodesian route that is in opposition to British politics. Smith appreciates the cultural and political import of claiming Britishness. "We all write", Hall (1990: 222) contends, "and speak from a particular place and time, from a history and a culture which is specific. What we say is always 'in context', positioned." Although not unusual, Smith is concocting a unitary identity which suppresses the historical Scottish-English rivalries. He is speaking from a position of sameness and difference seen in constructing himself as British, but different from the British in that he considers himself more British than them. This is evidence of the political construction of identities, which is why Smith knows that it is politically imprudent to emphasise one because it is they who control world affairs and he has his own investment in the empire project of the British. He however acknowledges his Scottish roots when he asks after Kissinger's wife, who is of Scottish descent like him. At this moment he feels it is convenient to lay claim to the admirable characteristics of the Scottish since he is strained by British duplicity.

Another problematic aspect of the way he constructs his identity emanates from his dual identity as 'Britisher' and 'African'. At the end of his stint in the World War, Smith recounts some of his experiences with fellow fighters:

> And there were several occasions which remain very vivid in my memory. We would inevitably end up with the rendering of many stimulating songs, and a few of the favourites had an African background. One was about the 'Zulu Warriors' and another concerned a 'Matabele from Bulawayo'. As I was the *only African* on the squadron, obviously no one else could be expected to play the lead when these came up. (p.23) (emphasis added)

Here Smith emphasises his Africanness, which points to an attempt to create a unitary identity consisting of British-ness, Rhodesia-ness and African-ness, and yet all these constituents are pushing him in different directions. The British will in a short fifteen years be

in the process of divesting themselves of their colonial past and yet Rhodesian thinking, at least as symbolized by Smith, is still holding on to a dying ideology. These identities are shifting and Smith's Rhodesia is being constructed on this shifting ground. This confidence in this unified identity is best demonstrated in his confession when he returns to Rhodesia after the war rather than going to America when there were prospects that he could join his uncle in the United States:

> But there had never been any doubt in my mind: *this was my country, my home, and I had never had any problem living with and getting along with our black people*. There was a cultural gap associated with our respective history, tradition and ways of life, but provided things could be done in our own time, maintaining standards of Western civilisation, there was no reason why we could not all live together to our mutual benefit, gradually bringing our black people in, as and when they were prepared to accept change. (p.24) (emphasis added)

Smith is claiming this colonised space as his and association with it is a marker of identity. In a paternalistic tone he says the black people can fully be part of this nation in the time determined by their colonizers and on condition that they embrace white standards. However, that claim to a unitary identity is difficult to sustain; holding on to British standards and at the same time claiming Rhodesian sovereignty proves problematic as seen in his arguments with British Prime Minister Harold Wilson regarding the formation in October 1964 of a Royal Commission to investigate terms for Rhodesian independence. Smith is not agreeable to the terms set by the British and following his telephone conversation with Harold Wilson he recalls:

> I slumped back in my chair. I was overwhelmed by a feeling of absolute frustration. There was within my whole system a very strong desire to preserve my links with the history and tradition and culture that I had been brought up to respect and believe in. but over the last half decade this had taken a tremendous battering. When one looked at the composition of the current Commonwealth, the whole character of it had changed. Within Britain itself, we were landed with a socialist government, hell-bent on appeasing the cult of Marxism-Leninism, at the expense of old traditional values of the British Empire. This was never part of my tradition and culture. (p. 101)

This is evidence of a split consciousness desiring old British standards and at the same time desiring Rhodesian sovereignty. It is notable that this split consciousness had been successfully contained in Anglophone Canada as by 1869 the territory was more or less sovereign, in Australia by 1900, New Zealand by 1906. A Republican Australia has been rejected again and again by their electorate. In South Africa (1910) this was not successful.

Significantly it was Asian and African states that opted for Republicanism and although Jamaica remains a monarchy several other independent Caribbean former colonies are Republics.

In addition, Smith's purported unitary identity is altogether fractured later in the narrative in the wake of the alarming rate of emigration of whites. The Rhodesian nation is cracking and so is his identity which is premised on the supposed solidity of that nation. Soon after this, Smith goes back to his cabinet and then asks each member for a yes or no answer to the declaration of independence. He gets affirmation from the cabinet, but while the above quotation displays Smith's disgust with socialism and Marxism-Leninism in particular, he renders his own and cabinet's resolve intertextually with a socialist text and his subjectivity in this context is also realized intersubjectively with the protagonist of this socialist text. Smith argues:

> I suppose it should have been a very dramatic occasion. In fact it was not. We had been on the edge of the precipice for so long, had resolved ourselves to making the decision so many times, *that our steel had been tempered*; we were ready for it…, and so how could any reasonable, honest man fault us? (p. 102) (emphasis added)

While the tempering of steel is a very common English idiom and cannot be attributed exclusively to Ostrovsky, it is possible for readers to make intertextual connections with Nikolai Ostrovsky's *How the Steel was Tempered* (1932-1934), a socialist text (ideologically far removed from Smith's reverence of free enterprise), which delineates a socialist realist vision of the central character Pavel who fights on the side of the Bolsheviks in the Russian revolution. Like Pavel who is unshakable and perseveres in his socialist convictions, Smith is equally unmovable and cannot be deterred from his path towards the Unilateral Declaration of Independence. Most importantly however, it is part of Smith's self imaginary that he is inflexible and the steel simile is an appropriate way of showing his own sense of Rhodesian masculinity: a force that acts on things around it rather than showing how things around it have altered it.

In terms of image, Smith's narrative largely projects a loner up until such a time his Information, then Defence and Foreign affairs Minister P.K van der Byl features in the narrative. With the emergence of van der Byl in the narrative, Smith has an alter ego and thus experiences his own identity intersubjectively with that of van der Byl. His personality is always drawn to strong willed people like van der Byl and John Cronje (President of the

South African Chamber of Industry) of whom Smith says "I always find it re-assuring to be associated with people who have the *courage of their convictions*. He was hitting at the foundations of the National Party's principles and beliefs…" (p. 268) (emphasis added). Perhaps Smith admires the Afrikaners' historical courage and at the same time conflates this quality of courage with British-Rhodesianess. For Smith, his identity, both political and social, is realized in relation to what Derrida (1988) refers to as its constitutive outside. In this instance, those who do not have "the courage of their convictions", who engage in the politics of appeasement and who compromise on standards, are the constitutive outsiders and it is through establishing difference between himself and these others that Smith comes to know who he is. Throughout the narrative, his relationship to these others is antagonistic. He antagonises the "perfidious" British, African nationalists whom he labels 'communist gangsters' and leaders of the free world who appease the OAU. Smith's heroic identity is also borne out of this antagonism and endurance of duplicitous diplomacy. The following section centres on how his encounter with the duplicity of the British and others impels his consciousness of who he is - his subjectivity.

"Blame me on history": Smith's endurance of the experience of South African and British duplicity

The enduring experience in Smith's narrative is the combined betrayal by the South Africans, the British and 'the free world' led by America. It is this experience that endures in the narrative and is passionately articulated. I argue that this sense of victimhood at the hands of the free world provides the psychological motivation for Smith's general intransigence and the route through which he leads Rhodesia.

Smith constantly refers to the duplicity of successive British governments especially those of Labour. He attributes Rhodesian political problems to the deviousness of British and South African diplomacy. The betrayal is multi-dimensional: the British did not give support to Smith to execute and maintain the civilising mission which purportedly underwrote colonialism and throughout the narrative Smith argues that countries in sub-Saharan Africa and the Zimbabwean postcolony are testimony to this betrayal as they are all failed states. This betrayal may actually have a colonial history in the context of colonial historical and

literary discourses which suggest that the Africans can only be saved by the intervention of the whites; otherwise left to their own means they will revert to the primordial chaos from which Europeans had rescued them. Haggard's *Alan Quatermain* is testimony to this.

The betrayal of Rhodesia by the South Africans, Smith argues, is nothing new and actually begins with their rejection of their wartime Prime Minister Smuts and the subsequent rise of the Afrikaner National Party. He calls this "the fatal turning point" (p.4). Similarly, the British had also rejected wartime prime minister Churchill. Smith's sense of his identity is thus largely shaped by this context of the historical betrayal by perceived allies. It is when he articulates various incidents of betrayal that his political thoughts are given full expression. Part of Smith's constructed persona is to remain the unemotional man who is driven by the affront to his reasoned judgment by the passage of events. When the South Africans begin to question his cross-border raids in Mozambique during the war of independence, Smith argues "[t]his was another example of how the South African politicians were resorting to devious methods of pressurizing us in order to assist them in their plan of appeasing the terrorists – I was despondent" (p. 185). This despondency makes him nostalgic about his wartime years, which he would have preferred to the political troubles at hand. Another dimension of this betrayal springs from the pandering of the British and the Americans to the whims of the OAU and the Front Line presidents, Kenneth Kaunda, Julius Nyerere and later Samora Machel.

His experience of betrayal is accentuated by his narrative which is a hybrid autobiographical text that combines historical reportage and personal experiences within the historical context of the times of the author and context or site of articulation. As pointed out earlier, the site of articulation of his story is the political and discursive imperative in post-independence Zimbabwe, where things have gone wrong. When he fights in the war and is afterward persuaded to take up politics, he agrees and considers this to be a transition from innocence to experience. While experience brings a necessary wisdom which innocence never can acquire, for Smith it does not. Smith's narrative is consciously or unconsciously referring to an entire discourse of heroic imperialism. The oft-touted autonomous self and its singularity in autobiography are undermined by this reference. The language through which the subject of Smith's autobiography comes to know himself is populated with utterances from other texts.

When he enters politics he is elected into parliament and assumes the chairmanship of the public accounts committee. His entry into politics coincides with plans to form the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Therefore part of his historical reportage is the politics of the rise and fall of Federation. His reportage of and attitude towards the events leading to the collapse of the Federation invite a discussion of Smith's choice of language, which has a bearing on how his autobiographical subjectivity forms itself.

For Ian Smith the setting up of the royal Commission to proffer advice on the future of the Federation is a "devious manoeuvre" (p.39) by the British and the collapse of the Federation is attributed to the "outrageous thing" (p.39) done by the Conservatives who were architects of the Monckton Commission. Throughout the narrative words recur such as "devious", "outrageous", "dreadful", pointing to how intensely Smith feels about what he considers to be the duplicity of the British. Furthermore, what happens in Congo he refers to as "the Congo debacle" (p.44) and there was "local barbarism" (p.44) as well. This kind of language resonates with the strong stance that he adopts in dealing with the Rhodesian question. Against this background Smith says, "I felt strongly that the time had come to have the courage of our convictions and make a stand of principle" (p.42). This remark is typical of Smith's claim always to have acted on principles that have been arrived at rationally and heralds the formation of the Rhodesia Front (hereafter RF) which in consequence is a party driven by reason and principle. Smith's interpretations of events point to a suggestion that he is more decisive - because his own principles are clear to him - than anyone else in Rhodesian politics at the time. When others dissuade him from returning to Southern Rhodesian politics following the collapse of the Federation Smith remarks, "our political world was riddled with compromise, appeasement, indecision, all part and parcel of the deviousness which permeated our society – I felt strongly about this permissiveness, but at the same time tried to avoid over-reaction" (p.45). Smith has argued throughout that only he has a claim to be acting from righteous reason and therefore his morality is demonstrably objective and it creates who he is as a subject of his narrative. Feeling strongly about "this permissiveness" is his psychological motivation for the stand he takes and the party is formed. The RF wins the December 1962 elections. Ian Smith is obsessed with action and with an electoral victory he sets about "ensur[ing] that we could save Southern Rhodesia from the shambles" (p. 49).

Bitter Harvest is a highly polemical narrative in its solid argumentation for Rhodesian independence and many of the decisions Ian Smith made in politics. He argues for Rhodesian independence and when the British show their "deceit and treachery" (p. 49) by going back on their promise of independence, the Rhodesians take matters into their own hands. Smith gets the premiership in 1964 and immediately sets about doing ground work for Rhodesian independence. In terms of argumentation, Smith marshals historical facts and records for rhetorical purposes. Again the polemical quality of this narrative shows how Smith constructs this text in relation to prior texts and discourses. His claim of Rhodesian independence is based on the 1961 constitution. The rhetorical questions that populate his narrative point to the absoluteness of his thinking, emphasising his claim to principled rationality, as well as active engagement with his audience; he is the all-knowing subject and these rhetorical strategies strengthen his argument against 'British duplicity', which he then uses to justify the subsequent route to the Unilateral Declaration of Independence by his RF government. His political experiences enable him constantly to make claims to authority on matters to do with sub-Saharan Africa. His arguments have two sources of authority and the above is just one of them. The other source is the claim that because he is on the spot he has the authority of presence. The old fallacy especially in colonial matters is that the local man knows his Africa (and his Africans) better than anyone in London can. Using African failed states as examples, Smith argues for a gradual incorporation of black people in government. The memories of betrayal and failed states are deployed to craft a counter discourse against those who perceive him to be responsible for the Rhodesian crisis.

Memory and autobiography as counter narrative in Smith

The memory of Rhodesia which comes out in this narrative is meant to re-vision the colonial past and project another version of that past into the present. This re-visioning and re-versioning becomes a form of counter narrative to other narratives of the colonial past. Representations of memory are thus central in a postcolonial autobiography such as Smith's. Remembering is problematic because of its political and cultural nature; it has multiple representations. To understand the kind of memory in Smith's text is also to understand that it is shaped through historical reportage and contemporary polemic. In remembering the pioneering of Rhodesia at the beginning of the narrative, Smith emphasised the British

quality of Rhodesian identity. However, as already highlighted, Smith begins to also claim an African identity. When he takes over from Winston Field as Rhodesian premier, he says "for the first time in its history the country now had a Rhodesian born PM, someone whose roots were not in Britain, but in southern Africa, in other words, a white African." Unlike his predecessors who, when they talked about "going back home", were thinking about Britain, "his home was Rhodesia" (p.67). Smith conveniently forgets the very British-British identity that he claims earlier in the narrative for the simple reason that he desires to position himself as a more appropriate leader than earlier leaders and therefore most suited to the task of wrestling independence from the British.

Smith's memories of military action in World War II, defending the ideals of (British) civilisation against fascism and the incursion of communism inspire a build up to a heroic subjectivity. The dialectic between memory and forgetting is significant in analyzing how memory is constitutive of Ian Smith's autobiographical subjectivity. The immediate historical context of Smith's autobiographical remembering is a failed Zimbabwean state. His remembering is thus inflected by the politics of Zimbabwe, which actually embolden his "I-told-you-so" stance. McAdams (2008: 244) contends that "[a]utobiographical memories, furthermore, are encoded and later retrieved in ways that serve the person's goals." Smith selectively remembers events that, in the context of the failed postcolony, seek to project the idea that history has proved him right. Thus memories of historical events are rendered differently by autobiographers who experienced the same events simply because their deployment is context bound.

When Smith continuously argues that the Rhodesians had always written constitutions with a non-racial franchise, he also chooses to dis-remember that legislation in Rhodesia created separate spaces for whites, coloureds and blacks and thus to forget that these constitutions did not make it unconstitutional to create separate spaces for whites, coloured and blacks. Smith's selective colonial memory is deployed to constitute a self-definition that runs contrary to the prevailing memory, in post-independent Zimbabwe, of Ian Smith as the racist Rhodesian Prime Minister. The tensions of the postcolonial state inflect how Smith remembers the meaning of his life in Rhodesia. Whitlock (2000: 189) rightly suggests that "autobiographic writing is in a state of tension, for…autobiographic subjects are both agents

and victims within colonialism, and postcolonial autobiography always bears traces of its origins in specific historical relations of power, rule and domination."

Smith's memories of the old world ideals also prop up and heighten his sense of heroic leadership of the Rhodesian nation through an unfolding tragedy from which he desires to rescue Rhodesia. In the aftermaths of the Pretoria meeting with Kissinger, then US Secretary of State, Smith says:

> While these were traumatic, indeed desperate, days we had the reward of being part of a small nation which not only believed in but put into practice these old fashioned ideals and principles which throughout history had created great nations. They were built on the indestructible foundations of courage, integrity, loyalty and a determination to put into practice the philosophy of: "Do unto others as you would have them unto you." (p. 209)

His memories are thus framed in the discourse of preserving so-called Empire standards at a time when the Rhodesian era was coming to an end. He thus has nostalgic memories that find outlet when he describes Government House in Bulawayo: "Government House in Bulawayo is indeed a special place, full of history, tradition and atmosphere. It was built by Rhodes, and everything about it depicts the British Empire: its greatness, its glory, the beauty of old England, Rhodes's furniture, pictures, treasures" (p. 302).

McAdams's (2008: 244) contention that "[r]ather than representing a veridical recording of life as lived, autobiographical memories are highly selective and strategic" demonstrates the political capital that accrues from a strategic deployment of memory. Smith's identity is sustained by remembrance of past British glory, in which the Rhodesian colony is a centre piece. His strategy lies in juxtaposing the memory of a functional Rhodesia and a dysfunctional Zimbabwe to exonerate his own historical blameworthiness. Smith is thus recreating himself in this new historical context, where, juxtaposed against Robert Mugabe, he appears more rational and principled. It is therefore imperative to discuss Smith's agency in committing his memory to the autobiographical act that constructs his subjectivity.

Autobiographical agency as Smith's and his readers' prerogative

The excavation of Smith's autobiographical agency has to be understood in the context of postcolonial discussions of the agency of the author and that of his audience. Agency in this

context is bidirectional as opposed to it being a preserve of the author or the narrating subject. Since autobiographical writing is historically and politically situated, the reader is duty bound to establish historical and political connections between the text and other accounts of the same events. As Whitlock (2000: 203) also argues:

> Agency is too often seen as the prerogative of the writer, and yet one of the legacies of recent postcolonial criticism is the renewed sense of the agency of the reader, and the urgency of reading. The reader no less than the writer, has the power and authority to pursue the other stories, histories, knowledge and experience that remain suppressed, unwitnessed and unauthorized between the lines.

Because the construction of colonial memory in Zimbabwe is complicated by disparate voices and competing strategic political interests, it is incumbent upon the critic of autobiography, as a genre that stages memory, to establish these other connections in order to construct or reconstruct autobiographical truth.

Smith's agency lies in using the autobiographical narrative in resisting and contesting how he has been categorized as a rogue by the dominant nationalist memory. His agency is also expressed when he joins the military to fight German fascism and when he enters politics, but his political agency crystallizes when he takes over the premiership. He then strives to prove the British and left-wing press wrong. The pre-eminence of Empire discourse in Smith's autobiography highlights how this underwrites his agency in building the Rhodesian nation on the foundations of Empire. His confessed desire to preserve civilized standards inspires his agency in resisting a revolution in Rhodesia on the grounds that he is curbing communist incursions into southern Africa and that a revolution is convulsive and will result in a failed state. This is not just agency through curbing the encroachment of communism but also agency inspired by the "whiteman's burden" which is carried to ensure that blacks do not regress to their chaotic and uncivilized past.

His agency is thus shown in the creation of the Rhodesian state following the demise of the Federation. Smith's statecraft is then seen in his creation of a well-organized military with its RLI, the SAS and the Air Force. Smith himself is the benefactor of the creation of this military state; a state which according to Godwin and Hancock (1993) was sustained by calculated propaganda and misinformation.

By carefully articulating his attempts to help build a post independence Zimbabwean nation that promotes racial harmony and free enterprise, in spite of consistent acts of racial

provocation by ministers in Mugabe's government, Smith displays his agency as a nation-builder. Ironically however, these attempts are always being undercut by communists in the new administration. For Smith the new nation has suffered contamination by communism. Smith sees this contamination as symbolically located in the new national flag which has the Zimbabwe bird "superimposed on the communist star" rather than a Rhodesian flag with the Union Jack prominently placed in some corner. He blames British diplomacy for all this. Painfully, he watches as the values of Rhodesia, which he thought could sustain the new nation, are in the process of disintegrating. And, as this process is going on, Smith is getting more and more estranged from this new nation. This culminates in him appearing to be a victim of the power, rule and ideological structures of this new nation in spite of his agency.

The continued rhetorical argumentation in his narrative implies Smith's awareness of the historical context of his narrative and its relationship to its audience. It further points to his awareness of his agency and victimhood in both Rhodesia and Zimbabwe. As the historical reportage in the autobiography has shown, Smith's agency comes out in his dexterous maneuverings within the political power structures of Rhodesia, Britain and America, the Frontline States, South Africa and the OAU. Smith proves his mettle by demonstrating an awareness of the international political power play of which Rhodesia seemingly becomes a victim.

There are other histories, power structures and other sites and discourses that begin to emerge in Smith's narrative and these have to be understood from the perspective of how the intertextual connects the reader to other texts and how the subjectivity of the autobiographer can be apprehended through these connections.

Intertextual connections in *Bitter Harvest* and the construction of Smith's subjectivity

Smith's narrative allusions, references to and anticipation of other texts and discourses recall Said's (1994: 67) contention that "each cultural work is a vision of a moment, and we must juxtapose that vision with various revisions it later provoked." Smith's autobiography is clearly engaged in dialogue with literary, political and other cultural texts by the British, the South Africans, African nationalists and even Rhodesians. It has to be understood from the

perspective of all the discourses that went into its making and the strategic silences maintained by the narrator. The narrative is also in dialogue with an anticipated audience.

To extend my earlier argument concerning the prevalence of rhetorical questions in the narrative and how they are deployed to marshal evidence that British diplomacy is "perfidious" and that the actions of the RF government are legal, allusions and intertextual references also serve the same purpose. The second chapter of the autobiography entitled "From Innocence to Experience" is an intertextual allusion to William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* (1794). Smith now knows that however glorious UDI was it was bound to be destroyed by British sell outs and international and local communists. The allusion to the romantic poet facilitates, through the tropes of innocence and experience, explicit rendering of Smith's transition from childhood/boyhood to the adult world with its political intrigues. The reference to literary texts is also captured in another intertextual allusion to Brutus's words in William Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* (1861) where Brutus is urging his compatriots to be brave enough to make best of the opportunity they get in the battlefield. Brutus's words, "There is a tide in the affairs of men/Which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune. Omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows and in miseries" (Act 4, Scene III), are referred to in Smith's decision to join politics. Smith says, "If politics was going to be part of my life, there were many arguments to persuade me that sooner was better than later – there is after all, a tide in the affairs of men…" (p. 30). This intertextuality inspires intersubjectivity with the character of Brutus, but again the problematic of this intersubjectivity is that Brutus loses just as Smith loses. When Shakespeare wrote this he was of course aware of the ambiguity of the tide which floods but then ebbs. It seems highly likely that Smith is thinking only of the flood tide and not the ebb. Further reference to *Julius Caesar* is found when he voices his intolerance for failure and poor standards; qualities he uses to describe African independent states to the north. He writes, "those who have not made the grade must stop looking for a scapegoat, and look to themselves: their corruption, incompetence, nepotism, external bank accounts and high leisure preference. '*The fault, dear Brutus, lies not in our stars, but in ourselves*'" (p. 106) (emphasis added). This is Cassius speaking to Brutus to convince him that Julius Caesar had to be eliminated for the good of the Roman republic. Smith uses this Shakespearean reference to argue that African failed states have their leaders to blame and not the international community, especially former colonisers as is often the mantra.

Among Smith's most disliked politicians is British Prime Minister Harold Wilson. The animosity arises from what Smith considers to be the duplicitous quality of Wilson's Labour government's diplomacy. It is no wonder why Smith's narrative is in dialogue with the historical narrative of Britain's duplicity, which allows him frequently to use and translate the French term "Perfidious Albion", and another text authored by former British Prime Minister Harold Wilson. The usage of the term arose out of Britain's history of infidelity in foreign relations and Smith's usage of it is meant to include Rhodesia on the list of those betrayed by Britain. Furthermore, in reference to a meeting he attended in London Smith says;

> The major objective was our independence issue, and Wilson's pettiness and destructive behavior should be ignored. His secretary had suggested that in order to avoid publicity we should use the side entrance. My reply was that whatever entrance we used would not affect the tone or result of the meeting. Wilson, again, would twist this in his memoirs to put me in bad light by claiming that I had suggested a clandestine entrance through the back door because it was difficult for me to come through the front door. Why was it difficult for me? Why should I be so melodramatic? After all, I was keen to publicise my course, not hide it from the press. (p.86)

Smith's text has to some extent been provoked by one authored by Wilson. Smith is clearly at pains to correct the bad impressions created about him by Wilson in his memoirs; autobiography is here used to settle scores. He suggests that he was above the pettiness of Wilson. After meeting Wilson and then Menzies and Holyoake, Australian and New Zealand Prime Ministers respectively, Smith writes, "Wilson was to accuse me, in his memoirs, of failing to mention to Menzies my meeting with him, Wilson at Downing Street. Well, there is no surprise in that. As I have said, we did not discuss politics" (p.87). Smith is settling scores with Wilson and thus confirms Barthes's (1981: 39) remark that every text is "a new tissue of past citations."

When the UDI text is read, one realizes how it is modelled on the American declaration of independence. The intertextual connection with the American document is not lost and, for Smith, the inevitable intersubjectivity with the founding Fathers of America is established. Performed identities are also visible here: for in that moment Smith re-enacts the part of Thomas Jefferson. Again Smith's address to the nation on this occasion is laced with biblical allusions: "To us has been given the privilege of being the first Western nation in the last two decades to have determination and fortitude to say: '*So far and no further*'" (emphasis added) (p. 106). This last part is an allusion to Job Chapter 38 verse 11. The context is God telling

Job about how He created the universe and specifically commanding the sea waters to keep their boundary with the dry land. The metaphorical import of this intertextuality is that while God was creating the universe Smith and colleagues were creating Rhodesia. By making this intertextual reference Smith is re-writing creation to claim his own historical agency in the creation of the Rhodesian state.

As evidenced by this analysis, unraveling the intertextualities in this narrative calls for agency on the part of the reader, agency which complements that of the autobiographical narrator in constructing the meaning of the life of the subject. The reader constructs autobiographical meaning by pursuing other implied texts in the narrative. What has to be established are the implications of Smith's performance of military identity, making a principled stand for Empire ideals, his experience of diplomatic duplicity, the nostalgic memory of a dying Rhodesia, his and his readers' agency and intertextualities to the constitution of his subjectivities.

By contextualizing this interpretation of his personal experiences in an intertextual matrix of imperial, colonial, historical, cultural, literary and discursive texts and their others, Smith realizes a heroic subjectivity. All these texts, together with his biography comprise his subjectivity, which is also historically realized.

The next section begins the analysis of Nkomo's life story. My interrogation of the text places emphasis on the construction of his subjectivity through his relation to colonial and nationalist history.

Joshua Nkomo and the political and historical conjunctions of the publication of *The Story of My Life*

Nkomo's *The Story of My Life* was first published by Menthuen Press in 1984 and later appropriated by the SAPES Trust for its Pan African series. The political institution invested in this kind of life-narrative is thus significant. In order to historicise Nkomo's narrative, we should understand the political force of SAPES Trust in determining what gets into its Pan-African series. There is a clear political agenda on the part of SAPES to ensure the circulation of political ideas generated in autobiographies of political players and makers of modern

Africa as stated by its founder Ibbo Mandaza. "Through this series", Mandaza writes, "the SAPES Trust hopes to contribute to the history of African nationalism in particular and to that of the liberation struggle in general" (p. xiv). The SAPES edition which is the second edition of the autobiography has a new foreword by Ibbo Mandaza, which locates the narrative in nationalist and Pan Africanist discourse. The historical moment of the publication of this edition is thus a political agenda by SAPES to circulate nationalist political discourse. The reader should also recall that in a new political atmosphere of 2001 the grand nationalist narrative is being deconstructed. This text is thus implicated in the politics of knowledge, production and circulation, which is one of the concerns of postcolonial studies. One can thus discern the political use of autobiographical narrative not only by its narrator, but even by other individuals and cultural institutions. When the SAPES edition appeared Nkomo was dead and there was a resurgence of writing or speaking him back into history and a re-evaluation of his part in Zimbabwean history.

Right from the onset Nkomo identifies the moment and place of writing as 1983 and Britain respectively; "'The greatest irony of my life is that I have written this record of it in Britain, the country that for so many decades refused our people the freedom they fought for. But the right to publish my memoirs is one that I gratefully claim even from my former oppressors" (p. xvi). The time of writing is also identified in the statement, "As I write, in the great drought of 1983, I have news that the cattle of the district are dying of hunger and disease, and the people are on the point of starvation" (p. 22). But what is the significance of time of writing and historical conjunctions to the making of autobiographical subjectivity?

The moment of telling of Nkomo's story is identifiable in the narrative as outlined at the start and even in the text. Nkomo's story-telling is situated in time, when he is in exile in London. The condition of exile as the historical moment of storytelling for Nkomo is strategic in its projection of an exilic identity that emerges out of political betrayal and persecution; a thread that runs through the narrative. His narrative identity is thus created out of the narrative of persecution. There is obviously no shift in the narrative tone and objective of the narrative as there are equally no shifts in the historical occasion of the telling of the story. While the historical context of nationalism and post-independence betrayal forms the basis of Nkomo's narrative identity, the narrative is also forward looking in that he is constantly referring to his

dreams for the new nation. As McAdams (2008: 244) suggests "life stories, therefore, are always about both the reconstructed past and the imagined future."

The audiences for this narrative are multiple. It is dedicated to MaFuyana (his wife) who stood by him through his many difficulties. Since the text was also appropriated by the SAPES Trust, the narrative's audiences are also those interested "in the history of modern Zimbabwe" (p. xiv), "the history of African nationalism" and "the liberation struggle" (p. xiv). The narrative rhetoric in the text demands a sympathetic reader who will sympathise with an embittered nationalist betrayed by colleagues and prevented by former colleagues in the nationalist movement from making meaningful contributions to nation-building. This kind of reader is implied in the careful arguments Nkomo advances in showing the sacrifices he made and how this was met with betrayal.

The Saint or the Cobra? Transgressing the post-independence political script

Nkomo's narrative begins in the middle of things; the period soon after independence when there are political disturbances in Matabeleland. It also begins by stating that he was driven into exile by Robert Mugabe's actions and chronicles his and Zapu supporters' persecution by Zanu PF leaders. Thus the intentions of his narrative are clearly set out; "This book will, I trust, make clear what had gone wrong and why. But first I must explain how I got away and lived to tell the tale" (p. 1). Nkomo provides a political context where things have gone wrong and his interpretation and understanding of his own existence in this political context is what constructs his subjectivity. He engages in what Said (1993: 96) calls "the rhetoric of blame, so often now employed by subaltern, minority, or disadvantaged voices." At the time of writing Nkomo is politically disadvantaged; belonging to a minority in terms of the political stakes in the post colony. His is the voice of the subaltern. Nkomo thus uses this rhetoric of blame to attack both Robert Mugabe and Zanu PF who have persecuted him. Even his articulation of the colonial experience is launched from this position of blame; in fact his colonial experiences are harnessed to project a freedom fighter turned by opponents into sell-out.

The kind of story that Nkomo seeks to tell in this narrative is thus the story of a heroic liberator who has devoted his life to the liberation of Zimbabwe; an individual who has made

sacrifices, and who has remained steadfast in the face of persecution; first by colonial authorities and later by colleagues in the liberation movement in post-independent Zimbabwe. This is in contrast to the persona constructed in Zanu PF propaganda and in order to prove this point Nkomo quotes Mugabe's call for violence against him by labeling him a cobra in the house. What follows is thus a counter narrative to the political script of Nkomo the cobra whose head must be destroyed. In fact, Nkomo corroborates this labeling by claiming that "for a year I had lived the life of a hunted animal. I could hide no longer" (p. 4). His narrative agency and ultimately subjectivity is thus realized in speaking back to Zanu PF propaganda by carefully scripting a redeeming portrait of himself as a liberator and nation-builder. Nkomo's subjectivity is therefore largely located in the political ecology of independent Zimbabwe.

The liberator in him is recognizable in his narrative in several instances: he undermines the white system of the Rhodesian Railways; spearheads the employment of black people; gets elected as RANC president; and resigns from Rhodesia Railways in order to devote more time to ANC business among other things. It is also a story of betrayal and hope that the new nation will be functional one day. Nkomo's contestation of the sellout image is best captured in his memories and the technologies that capture that memory.

Remembering and sources of memory in *The Story of My Life*[2]

Memory and remembering have a political force in postcolonial texts. Very often in postcolonial conditions what is remembered and how it is remembered is harnessed for political ends. Nkomo's life story-telling and memory are made possible by the deployment of photography and extracts from radio broadcasts, newspapers and other reports such as that by the Catholic Bishops on the activities of the Fifth Brigade in Matabeleland. These artifacts of memory are implicated in the politics of the production of texts and interpretation of experience. The visual images tell the story of an illustrious nationalist politician, negotiator

[2] Part of this discussion of the sources of memory and the role of photography as a technology of memory that speaks with and alongside the written text also appeared in my article: Ngoshi, H.T. 2012. When the written and visual texts collide: photographic images and acts of memory in Zimbabwean autobiography, Scrutiny2: Issues in English Studies in Southern Africa, 17(2), pp. 55-66.

and family man about whom there is nothing of the cobra. The photographs substantiate the subject of the autobiography and the claims of heroic nationalism.

The traumatic memories of his colonial and post-independence experiences are captured in the opening chapter when he sneaks out of the country into exile, briefly in Botswana and then Britain. These traumatic memories are both personal and political. The trauma is personal when he recounts the loss of his child and the separation from wife and family; it is political in the sense of his humiliation by the colonial rulers when he is detained. It is also political in that he is belittled by his political rivals on the night of 17 April 1980 – the eve of independence - at Rufaro Stadium – when he is made to occupy an obscure seat away from the view of those with whom he had worked for the liberation of the country. He is also politically traumatised at the indignity of being sacked from government and being accused of planning to overthrow the government.

The narrator thus deploys objective evidence in the form of photographs, media broadcasts, reports and references to actual historical events in order to validate his story. Nkomo makes use of personal memory, and the testimonies of other political players, historical record of his participation in the national struggle and politics to authorise his voice. At the beginning of the text he says the narrative is:

> …not a history…but…the personal record of a life that has played a part in history, and it is the work of an active politician who wishes to see things change for the better in the lives of the ordinary people of his country…. But by a dozen years in prison and half as many in exile I believe I have earned the right to speak up for freedom while it is still endangered – this time not by far-off colonial rulers, nor by a settler population who will, I hope, now play their full part as citizens of a new nation, but by my former colleagues in the liberation struggle. (p. xv)

The authorising factors are identified in this statement as playing a part in history, "a dozen years in prison and half as many in exile." These experiences validate narrating his story to the public.

Speaking severally: heteroglossia in *The Story of My Life*

The layers of selves in this narrative need to be understood in order to grasp the nature of Nkomo's subjectivity. There are multiple 'I's in the text; the fighter or liberator; victim of

political machinations in the liberation movement and of Frontline States presidents (e.g. Nyerere) who can be both domineering and untrustworthy; the 'I' of Father Zimbabwe, the purported Father of Dissidents and the ever hopeful nation-builder. Nkomo voices the memories of his life from two positions. There is the voice of Nkomo the narrator and the implied voice of ZAPU, his political party. The narrative thus tends to be polyvocal or polyphonic; there are undercurrents of other voices even as this narrating 'I' is speaking. The authoritative voice of an experienced subject makes its point right at the beginning of the narrative and later when he is at the independence celebrations at Rufaro Stadium. This is where Nkomo suggests his heroic title of Father Zimbabwe. These are the many 'I's' that Nkomo's narrative seeks to reconcile.

Further, the narrating subject, the historical subject and the narrated subject, who is constructed by the text, need to be disentangled from each other in order to establish the heteroglossia in the narrative. There is the historical Nkomo narrating a betrayed, but resolute 'I' using retrospective wisdom and another Nkomo; a younger subject narrating the raw experiences of his childhood and growing up. The naivety of his childhood is reflected upon by the older subject who makes comments with the benefit of hindsight. There is another Nkomo whose subjectivity is the sum total of all the textual strategies he uses to tell his story. This is the subject whose self is realized in the process of constructing the narrative. The result of this is that various narrative tones are discernible in this text; the defensive tone; self critical or self reflexive - when he admits his errors - and the tone of self importance when he lauds his status as Father Zimbabwe and seems to suggest that he had earned the title through his personal sacrifices.

Both the public and private selves are privileged in this narrative. At the same time Nkomo the political figure in the public space is highly privileged in the narrative. His social and political roles as social worker, pioneer nationalist, political prisoner, liberation fighter, negotiator, peace builder and nation builder are emphasised throughout the narrative. It is the totality of the features and characteristics of these models of identity that construct his subjectivity. The figures of the political prisoner or detainee are defined by unrelentingly demanding freedom, while the pioneer nationalist is qualified by agitating for political and economic freedoms and development for the oppressed and the liberation fighter is a

principled organizer and later strategist of the armed struggle. These are the qualities that define Nkomo.

However, these identity models are not without their contradictions. The conflicting models of identity are evident in the dichotomy between Nkomo the man of peace and Nkomo the Commander-in-Chief of ZIPRA who mobilizes military hardware for the execution of the liberation war. Many conflicting voices speak in this narrative. In relation to the armed struggle he argues, "Of course I would have preferred the peaceful road to freedom that was open to practically all the other former British colonies in Africa… But it was not to be. We were forced to fight" (p. 101).These conflicting voices are also evident in the resolute character that in the end is cornered by Robert Mugabe and ends up escaping into exile. These multiple selves point to the complex nature of identities in the manner in which they are multiply constructed and the multiple subject positions assumed by the narrator. McAdams (2008: 243) citing Hermans (1996) sums up this multiplicity of positioning by referring to the dialogic self:

> Personal narratives reveal multiple and conflicting self-expressions, a point emphasised, as well, in Hermans's (1996) influential theory of the *dialogic self*. In Herman's view, narrative identity is akin to a polyphonic novel that is authored by many different voices within the person, all of whom engage in dialogue with each other and with flesh-and-blood characters in the external world.

This dialogical self is recognizable in the structure of the narrative which is plotted initially as his political situation in being persecuted out of the country by those with whom he had fought the war of liberation. Soon after this chapter, the plotting of the narrative takes us back to his birth and growing up. The pattern is that of young Nkomo's development socially and politically. The narrative plots his coming into social and political being. But the plotting that dominates the narrative is that of political consciousness and understanding the world's political stage and the place of oppressed people in all this. Nkomo comes to the consciousness that the condition of black Rhodesians in embedded within a larger African collectivity. The last part of the narrative is structured as a treatise on the economics and politics of nation-building. The narrative begins in *medias res* and then describes the historical and political events leading to the moment that begins the narrative. It ends with a philosophy or carefully thought out piece on what Fanon (1963) calls the 'Pitfalls of National Consciousness' as well as how to build an all-inclusive nation. The narrative pattern at the end of the text, which resembles a philosophical treatise on nation-building, relates very well

with the statesman model of identity that Nkomo constructs. The statesman only becomes dominant in the last part where he vows to keep working for a unified and better Zimbabwe.

The location of Nkomo's political identity

Nkomo's political identity can be located in the broader context of the cultural, historical and political environment that obtained in both Rhodesia and Zimbabwe. The early cultural and religious space in which he is born and brought up is characterized by exposure to the Christian and African traditional religions. The older Nkomo who is narrating the life story interrogates Christianity and what he considers to be its monologist outlook by questioning the narrative of Israel's occupation of Palestine as sanctioned by God. Nkomo thus develops a religious philosophy in which he finds the African traditional religion more wholesome than Christianity. The development of this religious philosophy, coupled with early educational experiences open him to consciousness of the political conditions in his country; the dispossession of Africans by their colonizers. Nkomo testifies in the chapter titled "A Little Learning" that "I understood almost without being told that they had taken something from us. Later I discovered that what they had taken was our country" (p. 17). Nkomo locates his political identity in desiring to correct this.

The educational experience in South Africa opens him to new forms of political consciousness. Here he sees how the Rhodesian experience is no different from the apartheid state in South Africa. It is here also that his first little act of resistance is registered when he and colleagues stage a small demonstration by insisting on entering the dining car reserved for whites on the train. It is also in South Africa that he has his first exposure to African nationalist politics by attending ANC rallies in the black townships. His gradual understanding of race politics is demonstrated in his analysis of the "locations in the sky debate" (p. 36). Field work for his social work diploma also enables him to conceptualise the South African race problems and the crises of black urban dwellers which he finds are equally present in his own country when he returns to Rhodesia. From that time he is seized with the potential of the nation and out of nationalist thinking, the narrating nationalist subject emerges. It privileges a desire to fight for national liberation and the rights of the

oppressed majority. The narrative is below an overarching nationalism and as a result the narrative is performing nationalist identities.

The unstable nation: Nkomo and the rhetoric of nation building

One way of looking at Nkomo's autobiographical subjectivity is by understanding his ideas about national liberation and the nation. By staging acts of resistance and leading the decolonization process in Zimbabwe, Nkomo works within the liberation and nationalist discourse. His hopes for the new nation are clearly delineated in the narrative: a nation built on the foundations of unity and racial inclusivity. Nkomo is clear about the divisive nature of the liberation struggle, but insists "the end of the fighting, and the start of the task of building a nation, was the time to draw the divided people back together again, to emphasise the work that can only be done in unity" (p. xvi). As highlighted in Anderson (1991) and Ashcroft et al (2011) nations are unnatural creations that are likely to fragment in the face of tensions. Ashcroft et al (2011: 149-50) further suggest, "that nations were and are profoundly unstable formations, always likely to collapse back into sub-divisions of clan, 'tribe', language or religious group, is nothing new, and the false tendency to assign this unstable condition to specific regions or conditions ("balkanization", "the Third World", "underdeveloped countries") is reflected in contemporary discussion of national questions." While Nkomo's desire for an inclusive nation is not in doubt, what is doubtful is the nature of identity located in the unstable nation where the interests of the dominant Zanu PF are at the centre.

In this new nation Nkomo is dominated by the power of the ruling party working in the place of the state; Nkomo accuses ZANU PF of conflating the party and the state, thus validating Ashcroft et al's (2011: 151) contention that the confusion arising from the conflation of the nation and the practices of the nation-state makes "[nationalism] an extremely contentious site, on which ideas of self-determination and freedom, of identity and unity collide with ideas of suppression and force, of domination and exclusion." Nkomo thus declares; "[b]ut still the ruling party could not provoke me to disloyalty towards the nation I had struggled to liberate" (p. 1-2). His sense of identity is derived from his thesis about the Zimbabwean nation, in which, in the aftermaths of colonization, he expected the diverse groups of people to have "an unquestioned sense of national identity" (p.7).This is a naïve understanding of the nation and national identities which have their own contradictions in that there can be exclusion in the supposed inclusivity of the nation as evidenced by his own experiences. In

his childhood the sense of national identity is already being undermined by the constant movement of his family whenever white people decide to claim any part of the land as theirs.

While for Ian Smith ideas about race and an extended version of British nationhood in Rhodesia construct his individual subjectivity, for Nkomo both nation and religion are discursive sites where his subjectivity is realized. In relation to religion he says "as the spirit of Zimbabwean nationalism came to the fore again in the early 50s, I examined for myself the power of the traditional faith of my people, and visited the shrines where Mwali resides in the Matopos hills" (p.13). This understanding of the value of traditional African religion as a basis for claiming or grounding one's identity is strengthened by earlier accounts of his encounter with the Christian religion at school and through his parents who were also practicing Christians. Nkomo, the mature and self reflexive narrator is able to revisit these early encounters with Christianity and question the efficacy of the religion given the treacherous nature of early missionaries in facilitating the cheating of King Lobengula. Nkomo finds traditional religion more attractive and fulfilling. It is when he is in England that he is awakened to the value of continuity of the nation through one's ancestors; "But here in England the ancestral tombs in the churches signified the continuity of the nation, and I could not see what was so different about that" (p. 52). Nkomo had seen the graves of English monarchs in Westminster Abbey on his visit to England and wondered why the church in Rhodesia was critical of the African veneration of ancestors.

When he talks of liberal whites; "Mr Cordell and Mr Longhurst, his deputies, certainly wished Africans well on the personal level. But I do not think that any of them at any time even dreamed that better relations had to mean, in the long run, creating a single community in a nation of which they and I would be equal members, no more and no less" (p. 43). Nkomo is not blind to the boundaries beyond which white liberalism was unwilling to move and recognizes its challenges in relation to nation-building.

Nkomo is also conscious of how nation-building is threatened by African organisations and societies that developed along tribal lines. His nation building project has no intention of excluding whites. When he talks about the new ANC constitution; "But there was – I must emphasise this – absolutely no intention to exclude white people as such from a full share in the national life" (p. 72), Nkomo is articulating his vision of the new nation.

Although it is difficult to suggest that ideology and nation can be separated Nkomo says "John Kale argued and I came to agree, that the conflict between the British and the supporters of freedom for Africa was not about ideology, but about nationhood" (p. 81). Concerning nationhood Ashcroft et al (2011: 151-152) citing Hobson (1902: 6) suggest "Colonialism, where it consists in the migration of part of a nation to vacant or sparsely peopled foreign lands, emigrants carrying with them full rights of citizenship in the mother country . . . may be considered a genuine expansion of nationality." Nkomo appreciates the link between colonialism and the emigration of nationalistic ideals; a relationship ably delineated by Ian Smith when he insists that the genuine and admirable British character had immigrated to Rhodesia. Ideology underwrites nationhood.

It is again through Nkomo's understanding of race relations in Rhodesia and nationhood that his individual subjectivity realizes an identity. Nkomo deconstructs the Rhodesian nation as a nation of whites. His vision of the new nation is inclusive: "We did what we could to show that our fight was not a racial one, against the whites, but for all the people of the country" (p. 137). For Nkomo nationhood in Zimbabwe had to be premised on reconciliation and justice for all: "In the new country we were about to create, I believed that the rights of all would be respected equally and that our suffering would at last be rewarded by justice" (p. 205). His narrative keeps exalting his calls for reconciliation. He has a vision of an all inclusive nation: "We owe special care too, to the coloured Zimbabweans, cousins to the white people as well as to the black people, and to the Zimbabweans of Indian origin, who are in our country not because their ancestors were oppressors but because they were themselves oppressed" (p. 257).

Through his delineation of national liberation, nationalistic ideas, race and religion Nkomo forges the many identities that manifest as freedom fighter, nation and peace builder; crystallizing into 'Father Zimbabwe'.

Political and moral agency in Nkomo and the reader

Nkomo's agency can be understood in the context of how nationalist identities are articulated through autobiography. That of the reader is apprehended in the reader's interpretation of what counts as experience in the life of the narrating subject. The historical situation as a reader and critique is that I was born in the dying moments of the Rhodesian state and live in times when nationalist and liberation discourse has intensified amidst political problems in the country. Given this historical embeddedness, I also appreciate how the historical situatedness of the narrator inflects his agency. Nkomo's moral agency resides in his refusal to allow a disunited Zimbabwe and in his promotion of an all inclusive postcolonial state while his political agency lies in resisting all forms of colonial and post independence oppression. Freeing Zimbabwe from colonialism and rescuing it from the divisive politics in the post independence era is for Nkomo both a moral and political project. The narrative itself has its own political agency in the way in which it articulates the politics of nationalist memory and its representation.

The political script in post-independence Zimbabwe has hailed Nkomo as an undesirable element, undeserving of state power and a threat to national security. The persecution that attends this scripting drives him to exile. But when he writes the narrative and claims to have played a part in the history of modern Zimbabwe, Nkomo is revising the terms of his representation. He has gained agency by this revision and throughout the narrative Nkomo interrupts and transgresses this post-independence political script about him.

Through his rhetorical style, Nkomo shows that he is deliberately interrupting the identity models scripted by his political nemeses. The narrative is a kind of dual writing back. Nkomo is not only writing back to the empire as a postcolonial subject, but is also writing back to the leaders of a new political dispensation in independent Zimbabwe. Nkomo's memories are interwoven with his relationships with the significant others in his family and political life. MaFuyana is his social significant other and he can draw solace and comfort from her presence. Robert Mugabe is the political significant other who Nkomo blames for the strife that takes place in the country and his own persecution and national disunity. The significant others are critical in shaping the subjectivity of autobiographical subjects. The previous chapter indicated that for Muzorewa, a divine force is the significant other, which is why his subjectivity is realized in his intersubjective relation to Jesus Christ the Messiah.

The reading of this narrative generates alternative political knowledge about the civil strife that dogged Zimbabwe as a new nation-state and therein lies the agency of the text itself. The narrative therefore has an agency of its own. To some extent, even though this is a later edition, this narrative's agency is recognizable through other narratives such as other nationalist autobiographies; texts that have begun to deconstruct the image of a Zimbabwe reconciled to itself as enunciated in the Prime Minister's speech at independence.

Conclusion

This chapter analysed Godwin's, Smith's and Nkomo's autobiographies in relation to how their subjectivities are implicated in the broader politics and history of the Rhodesian colony and the Zimbabwean post independence state. The analysis has established how for Godwin the Rhodesian identity so highly embellished by Ian Smith as anything but fragile is in fact fragile indeed. The fragility and instability are the grounds for his schizophrenic self. This subjectivity is not helped by his experiences of repression in post independence Zimbabwe. Therefore, both the Rhodesian and Zimbabwean states pose for him moral and political dilemmas that tear at the core of his identity. Smith's subjectivity is intertextually and intersubjectively realized through his allusions and references to other narratives. The American national narrative, manifest in its founding document, becomes Smith's intertextual reference point for the founding of an independent Rhodesia while the glorious history of British imperialism shapes his whole outlook of what Rhodesia should be and who he is politically and morally. The failed Zimbabwean state, according to his narrative, appears to be the inspiration for his autobiographical act and an occasion for justifying his political intransigence of the 1970s. Nkomo's nationalist subjectivity is achieved through narrative tropes that network to resist and contest the cobra metaphor deployed by his adversary to deny him the status of Father Zimbabwe. His narrative systematically responds to Robert Mugabe and his government's actions. Nkomo also speaks with many voices, which point to the heteroglot nature of his narrative. He speaks 'severally' and is multiply positioned. Both Smith and Nkomo engage in the rhetoric of blame as they negotiate the meanings of their lives vis-â-vis the construction of the Rhodesian and Zimbabwean nations respectively.

The following chapter analyses Judith Todd's, Fay Chung's and Edgar Tekere's divergent encounters with the Zimbabwean postcolony and how their subjectivities are located at the confluence or cusp of Rhodesia's colonial history and the aftermaths of independence.

Chapter Five
Divergent encounters with the Zimbabwean post-colony: views from the centre and the margin in Zimbabwean post-liberation autobiographies.

Introduction

Chapter Five further discusses the politics of colonial rule and post-liberation as autobiographical occasions. In this chapter I have placed Fay Chung, Edgar Tekere and Judith Todd. The discussion here acknowledges that the narrators have varied encounters with the Zimbabwean postcolony depending on ideological orientation, political location, race and gender. Their different experiences of the postcolony result in diverse ways of validating or invalidating Zimbabwe as a nation. While the narrating subjects' encounters with post independence Zimbabwe are varied, the political experiences of these narrators are the common thread that unites their political subjectivities.

I have discussed these texts in order of publication although they appeared almost at the same time. The analysis begins with Fay Chung's *Re-Living the Second Chimurenga* (2006) arguing that her identities are formed in the context of refusing domesticity that would have come with an arranged marriage, which she rejects, and being ideologically involved in student politics and the intellectual life at the University of Rhodesia. Intellectualism is also another ground upon which her subjectivities form. Her narrative discourse in which she demonstrates her relation to history, family and fellow freedom fighters in Zanu (PF) also shapes her subjectivities. I analyse her narrative from a gender perspective, showing her articulation of the connection between women or what she herself is as a woman and the national liberation cause. Chung's narrative problematises the position of women in the struggle through her analysis of what she calls a feudal system that oppressed women in the Mozambican camps and the attendant sexual abuses. This gender perspective will also inform my analysis of how heroic femininities and masculinities are historically figured and contested both in her narrative and to some extent in Tekere's.

The analysis then turns to Edgar Tekere's *A Lifetime of Struggle* (2007) where the emphasis on being a relentless freedom fighter underwrites Tekere's subjectivities. He meticulously articulates his involvement in the struggle for liberation and it is within this context that his subjectivities form. His identities are also located in his deconstruction of Robert Mugabe's

liberation-fighter credentials. Through this he positions himself as someone whose identity cannot be separated from himself as freedom fighter in contrast to Mugabe. An analysis of Judith Todd's *Through the Darkness* (2007) concludes this chapter. The embeddedness of her narrative identity in history demonstrates how autobiographical subjectivities are constructed by contingencies of history. As shall be shown in the discussion of her narrative Judith Todd takes her discourse in *Through the Darkness* as representative of the political history of post independence Zimbabwe, although at the beginning of the narrative she out-rightly rejects any historical status for the work. I argue in this chapter that it is out of shared trauma with the victims of the Zimbabwean post-independence state and by providing a voice of conscience that speaks for their suffering that her subjective identity emerges. The time of writing for these subjects is also critical in apprehending their subjectivities because as Smith and Watson (2001: 62) argue, "every autobiographical narrator is historically and culturally situated, each is a product of his or her particular time. We need, then, to situate the narrator in the historical notion of personhood and the meaning of lives at the time of writing". All the three narratives are written at the height of the political and economic crisis in Zimbabwe and the three narrators are historical personages of this time. This crisis time thus becomes the site and occasion for narrating the self.

Women and the autobiographical act: Fay Chung and the relationality of her narrative[3]

Chung's autobiography, which I discuss in this section, is seminal in a number of ways. At one level it is inspired by a desire to narrate the quest for an alternative political and cultural order in Rhodesia. At another level it is a political narrative of femininity, which has historical embeddedness and is foundational in canonising women's personal experiences of Zimbabwe's war of liberation. Chung's autobiography, just like Todd's, however, presents the reader with difficulties in reading. The narrative is fragmentary in structure. Far from focusing exclusively on her own role in the struggle, Chung's narrative captures more of the role of many other luminaries of the struggle than of her own. This focus on others, argue

[3] The subsequent discussion on Fay Chung's autobiography formed part of an article published in Journal of Literary Studies: Ngoshi, H.T. 2013. Masculinities and Femininities in Zimbabwean autobiographies of Political Struggle: The case of Edgar Tekere and Fay Chung, Journal of Literary Studies, 29(3), pp. 119-139.

Smith and Watson (2001), is characteristic of female life-writing in general. Her rhetoric does not exhibit the characteristics often associated with the masculine subject of autobiography; characteristics such as being success oriented, aggressive, egotistical, and boastful of the role played, recalling competitiveness, decisiveness and justified ambition, even though she participated in the struggle for liberation with distinction.

Mason (1980) in "The Other Voice: Autobiographies of Women Writers" argues that women's establishment of identity is a relational rather than an individuating process. Her thesis is that the disclosure of the female self is linked to the identification of some other. To use Mason's words I would want to call subjectivity in male narratives that have been analysed so far, "a flamboyant self-staging of the drama of the self", a situation which is far removed from Chung's and, to some extent, Todd's narratives. Women are seen to identify themselves with others and it is this relationality that lies at the centre of both narratives. The embeddedness of Chung's narrative in the history of Zimbabwe equally demonstrates this relationality. Commenting on relationality Smith and Watson (2001: 64-65) argue that "Relationality invites us to think about the different kinds of textual others through which an "I" narrates the formation or modification of self-consciousness. These include historical others, the identifiable figures of a collective past such as political leaders".

Re-Living the Second Chimurenga is Chung's narrative of growing up in Rhodesia and becoming a player in the liberation struggle for Zimbabwe. Her rhetoric on liberation is informed by the repressive political atmosphere in Rhodesia and her family's Chinese background as well as her intellectual outlook. The centre-piece of her narrative discourse is the land issue in Rhodesia and therein lies the relationality of her self-consciousness with history. She thus begins the narrative by highlighting the Rhodesian land question and by recalling her family history of migration from China and settling in Rhodesia. Chung recalls:

> It was impossible to grow up in colonial Rhodesia without becoming aware from one's earliest age of the deep hostility between the races. The land issue was the main bone of contention. At the age of four, I would listen to my grandfather talking about the land problem with his old friend, a Somali who owned a butchery near my grandparents' café. My grandfather, Yee Wo Lee, had come to Rhodesia in 1904 as a youth of 17, the fifth son in a large Chinese peasant family. As the fifth son, he did not inherit any land in China. He had gained his initiation into politics as a school-boy follower of Sun Yat Sen, and as a result was very sensitive to the colonial situation. He was one of the first people to provide financial support to black nationalists, and his bakery, Five Roses Bakery, situated very centrally in the middle of Charter Road

> and near the railway station, soon became the meeting place for many nationalist leaders. He was later to pay the rent for ZANU.
>
> With a peasant's attachment to the land, he came to Africa in search of land, but his ambition was thwarted by the racial laws instituted by the colonialists…. Those who were neither black nor white were not catered for by the land laws. Grandfather was never able to buy the farm he yearned for. From a very early age we learnt that the whites were greedy and would not allow other races to own land. (p. 27)

The recalling of family traditions and traditional history is crucial to the formations of both heroic masculine and feminine identities. This opening of the narrative provides the basis upon which her political identity is constructed; she is claiming a political identity that has its roots in her grandfather's political consciousness. Chung is apprenticed to her grandfather's political ideas at a tender age and thus her consciousness emerges in relation to this.

At the beginning of her story Chung's grandmother also takes centre stage as she goes against Chinese tradition to follow her husband to Africa:

> My grandmother had refused to be constrained by tradition and had displayed great courage and determination in embarking into the unknown. Unlike the grass widows who had remained in China faithfully waiting for their husbands to return, my grandmother took her fate into her own hands and left for Africa, a continent of which she had no knowledge. (p. 28-29)

Chung goes further to highlight her grandmother's successes, especially her business acumen in spite of her illiteracy. She says her grandmother "laid the foundations of the family wealth, on which her children could later build" (p. 29). Her grandmother's literal movement from China to Africa and her metaphorical movement from passive femininity epitomised by the "grass widows" to becoming an active agent of social change and responsibility becomes symbolic of feminine heroism and radicalism, and Chung locates her heroic acts within the family tradition pioneered by both grandparents. In coming to Africa, Chung's grandmother was adopting a role conventionally played by men. She ventures into unknown territory and by so doing fractures the boundaries imposed by cultural traditions and gender. It is worth noting that Chung repeats this pattern in her radical politics and thus performs her grandmother's radicalism and in this regard her grandmother stands as a model of both political and cultural identity. Smith's and Watson's (2001) view that autobiographical subjects have cultural models of identity at their disposal when they write is therefore instructive. At another level Chung embodies her grandmother's radicalism in that her self-consciousness is equally formed through the grandmother who is a significant model of

identity. Here cultural marginalisation, resisting gender oppression and on the part of Chung being subjected to the racial and power hierarchies of Rhodesia network to inspire in her a radical political identity. And while her individuality relates to this significant other in her family, at a political level it relates to the cultural and national politics of her times.

As the narrative progresses Chung's radical politics is played out at the level of nationalist politics. Notwithstanding her racial identity as Chinese and being in a minority group, Chung joins Zimbabwe's nationalist politics while teaching at the University of Zambia. Minority racial groups did not find it easy to fit into the national political system in Rhodesia although evidence abounds that minority groups such as the Indians rendered assistance to the nationalists. These groups occupied the in-between space and were equally segregated by law. Chung is acutely aware of this when she highlights the dilemma of her mother's youngest sister who could not proceed with her education as there were no schools which accepted their race. Chung recalls that her mother's sister "was forced to repeat the last grade of primary school for five years until she left school at the age of sixteen" (p. 33). By articulating her aunt's dilemma Chung finds a launch pad for her narrative of conquering this racial segregation through her participation in the education sector. Her educational experiences are narrated from this perspective of state sanctioned marginalisation. Chung's agency is established through her experiences in seeking to transcend this marginalisation.

The academic environment at the then University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland also awakens Chung to the possibilities of tackling the political problem in Rhodesia from an intellectual perspective. She recalls, "This was the first opportunity for us to meet with students of all races on an equal footing. Our lecturers were mainly from Britain and had little knowledge or experience of the racist Rhodesian ethics and ethos. For the first time, we were able to confront the nature of our society intellectually", (p. 39). The activities at the university where some committed intellectuals worked towards scoring victories against race prejudices, enabled Chung to gain political consciousness. Led by historian Terence Ranger, she is involved in visits that targeted all-white restaurants as a means of challenging racial segregation. Chung recalls that:

> The predominant ideology at the university was that of liberalism, which favoured the development of individual values and individual ideologies. The existentialist philosophy of Jean Paul Sartre, which rejected materialist capitalism while accepting individual responsibility to improve what was wrong around us, was very powerful,

> particularly among the Catholic thinkers of the day, and influenced our development. (p. 41)

Her identity is thus ideologically constructed by this intellectual environment and politically by opposing institutionalised racism; in a relational sense. She is a subject of the dominant intellectual ideology at the institution as well as Catholic thinking and the philosophy of existentialism. Chung has the authority and resources of education that constitute her identity as a political subject. For her high school education Chung had been at the Convent, which was de-racialising and thus enabled her not to repeat her mother's sister's fate.

Chung pays attention to gender and emphasises the role women play in political, cultural and social development. She foregrounds and re-inscribes the contributions of women to the liberation war effort and to nation-building. Her narrative thus documents the achievements of other women in the struggle and her articulation of Sally Mugabe's role during the war and in post-independent Zimbabwe is one other instance of how the narrative relates to significant others. About Sally Mugabe she says:

> [Sally] made an indelible mark on the revolution in support of her husband's claim to leadership. Sally Mugabe was a single-minded woman.... She had a simple ambition: she wanted every woman in Zimbabwe to be educated and to have a job. She realised that economic independence was of critical importance to women. Without it, women could not be free. She spent a lot of time strengthening the women's movement. (p. 183)

To a considerable extent therefore, Chung's subjectivities are constructed by this relationality to Rhodesia's political and cultural institutions, to significant others whether within the family or the political circles she moved in, as well as resistance to cultural and political forms of segregation. Subjectivities which emerge out of this context of opposition and resistance are worth exploring.

Subjectivities established in opposition to cultural and political norms

Opposition to normative cultural and political systems defines Chung's consciousness of who she is. Her career as an educationist and her political activisms are manifestations of her refusal to conform to how Rhodesia orders its society into hierarchies based on race. This resistance creates a revolutionary identity that is also constitutive of a radical political subjectivity. Throughout the narrative Chung articulates her role as an educationist in

Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia, in the war bases in Mozambique and finally in independent Zimbabwe. She achieves this by first rejecting the institutionalising of racial prejudices in Ian Smith's Rhodesia by going into African education and by demonstrating early in life a distinct sense of self that is also tempered by acknowledgement of others. This sense of self is seen in the way she opts to go into African education rather than enter into matrimony. She says: "My family was astonished that I had decided to teach in an African school. My grandmother in particular was anxious to organize my marriage …. My father too felt that it was time for marriage" (p. 46). Chung rejects the culturally constructed presumptions of a feminine identity. For Chung, her grandmother's story and the quest to work against the segregated education in Rhodesia are the conditions that shape her particular kind of feminine and political self identity. It is a femininity that is premised on political responsibility and also guided by belief in non-racial principles.

When Chung leaves for Leeds after a stint in African education she reflects on collective political responsibilities if the Rhodesian problem was to be resolved. Of political responsibility she writes:

> One of the most important changes in my outlook while at Leeds was that I began to personally accept responsibility for what was happening in Rhodesia. Before I went to Leeds, I saw political responsibility as resting squarely on the shoulders of black nationalist leaders …. My three years at Leeds changed this. I realised that if skin colour was not to be used as a criterion, then all of us born in the country had an equal responsibility for the liberation of the country. (p. 68)

This statement by Chung is highly self-reflexive; she considers it the collective responsibility of everyone to liberate Zimbabwe and also implied in that statement is her vision for a new post-independence nation. The Leeds experience thus provides the site for one of her turning points which modifies her self-consciousness. In this confession, Chung is advancing her own intellectually inspired explanatory narrative on her reasons for joining the struggle. Her education contributes to the formation of a political identity that is linked to the anti-colonial struggle in Zimbabwe and also defined by her sense of duty.

On her own sense of duty regarding the struggle and fellow women, Preben Kaarsholm (in Chung 2006: 9) has this to say in the introduction to the text: "Fay Chung was also active as a feminist, and worked to improve the situation of women guerrillas and refugees, who were at times exposed to considerable harassment by male commanders, and expected to provide

services as 'warm blankets'." Chung gives intellectual focus to issues of sexual abuse of women during the guerrilla war. Her narrative thus effectively questions violent and dominant masculinities that Morrell (1998, 2000) calls hegemonic masculinities. These according to Unterhalter (2000: 188) entail "participating in violence against women and other men [and] exhibiting or enduring violence [which is seen] to be a feature of being a 'real man'." This questioning comes out in what I wish to call the Tongogara subtext where the ZANLA Chief of Defence is indicted by Chung for his rampant sexuality and violent exercise of his authority. Chung shows these sides of ZANLA's chief of defence when she narrates Tongogara's summary execution of the Nhari rebels, a group of radical, but not ideologically coherent young fighters contesting political power. Notwithstanding this, she also portrays him as loving and caring to both guerrillas and the many feeding mothers in the camps whom he ensured were well taken care of. Chung's portrayal of Tongogara confers on him a dual masculine identity. In him are embodied both violent and heroic masculinities. These two are different in that violent masculinities are about proving manhood by inflicting violence against others and enduring violence, while heroic masculinities are constituted through relationships and loyalties. Unterhalter (2000: 173) posits that "the social construction of heroic masculinity entails that manhood is proved by locating oneself in history, identifying the significance of history and working towards a vision of a better future. Heroic men do not mark bodies, but instead make their mark on historical time". The violent masculinity in Tongogara is, however, also tempered by the heroic. Chung has this to say about him:

> Josiah Tongogara led ZANLA to success. A military specialist, he was over six feet tall, with the upright and muscular figure of a soldier accustomed to the rigours of war and the stresses of prolonged periods of living in the bush. Josiah Tongogara commanded both fear and love. Feared on the one hand by his enemies as an ambitious, ruthless, and implacable fighter, he was loved and respected by his supporters and followers as a faithful and caring leader, ever solicitous of his soldiers' welfare; as a leader who deserved to be followed; as a leader to whom people entrusted their children and their lives. Tongogara was able to command respect from both his enemies and his friends. No one could be indifferent to him. (p. 124)

It is this heroic image that has been more dominant and enduring in Zimbabwe's memorial discourse than the violent image. His ambiguous relationship with people defines his heroic identity. For this reason, the narrative agency of Chung's story is located in its disruption of the dominant liberation narratives in Zimbabwe. It provides contradictory sub-narratives that

are alternatives to the grand narrative of the struggle for liberation. This in itself is a postcolonial endeavour. Sala Moukhlis (2003: 67) observes that "The social dynamics of the postcolonial society are problematized further by women writers who have been the subject not only of the violence of an orientalising colonial discourse, but also of a rigid patriarchal order".

In the narrative, Chung attacks violent masculinities and especially sexual aggression, which in the text she suggests is epitomised by ZANLA Chief of Defence Josiah Tongogara. Her chronicling of Tongogara's excesses is systematic and detailed, courtesy of her intellectualism. She recalls an incident at Pungwe III camp:

> I was awakened in the middle of the night by the sound of commotion–many angry voices could be heard shouting from the women's barracks situated a hundred metres from my posto (little grass huts occupied by individuals). The next morning I was told …. Tongogara and his retinue had arrived in the middle of the night and had demanded women to entertain them. Such women were euphemistically called "warm blankets". (p. 126)

As already highlighted, the narrative projects Tongogara as both bloody and sexually aggressive, charges that are viciously contested by Tekere in *A Lifetime of Struggle*. That his excesses were accepted with silence by his admirers is an indication not only that women were treated as trophies to reward successful militarists within this struggle but also an unwillingness to subvert the official narrative of liberation struggle which showed men and women liberation fighters as equals. It is women themselves who had to rise to the occasion by challenging the exploitation of female sexuality. Chung constantly attacks the feudal nature of traditional culture, especially its treatment of women and construction of femininities. She says, "This feudal attitude towards women was one of the reasons the two rebellions in ZANLA, namely the Nhari rebellion and the Vashandi rebellion, both attracted very large numbers of women guerrillas" (p. 127). The fact that the women guerrillas reviled Tongogara and his top commanders is indicative of another kind of femininity whereby women are not passive victims of sexual violence. Chung's narrative reveals certain fissures in the experiences of freedom fighters showing that these were not unified or homogeneous. Moukhlis (2003: 67) further notes that "postcolonial women writers make it clear that the postcolonial subject is not a fixed and unified entity."

Chung's attack of what she calls the feudal attitude has its roots in her promotion of modernity. For her the whole liberation agenda is a modernising one and she has no patience with any form of liberation that remains rooted in feudal practices. This is evident in the early parts of her narrative when she highlights her perception of Joshua Nkomo during her university days. In relation to the early nationalist days she argues:

> Both Joshua Nkomo and the new leader of ZANU, Ndabaningi Sithole, came to address us at the university. Perhaps not surprisingly, we were more impressed by Ndabaningi Sithole, whose book, African Nationalism, had become one of the most popular books on campus. Sithole's argument was that African nationalism had been born in the Second World War when African soldiers fought in the British army against Nazism. This had brought forth the ideas of freedom from colonialism, which was so closely akin to Nazism, with its foundation of racial superiority and racial domination by the so-called superior race. Joshua Nkomo struck us as a great feudal chief rather than as a modern political leader. (p. 42-43)

Chung's narrative is pushing a modernisation agenda and she is highly critical of anything suggesting feudalism. At the same time however, her political inclinations predispose her to write-off Joshua Nkomo from the nationalist platform since he is a political opponent of the party she eventually belongs to.

Still on matters of sexuality, Chung exposes the often ignored sexual aggression of females during the war. Women have often been depicted as victims of sexual violence, but Chung shows how senior ZANLA women also took their pick from newly arrived young male recruits in the camps. This is an expression of gendered power that is often ignored in women's studies and merits research. What emerges from this is another dimension to femininity. Men are generally regarded as the initiators of sexual action and women as the passive victims of sexual aggression. It is therefore far from being feminine, in the conventional sense, if women initiate and take a leading role in matters pertaining to sex. Chung's narrative is also revealing in terms of the dynamic character of gender and sexuality. Here is a novel depiction of female sexuality juxtaposed with balanced femininity in the person of Sheba Tavarwisa. Sheba was one of the highest-ranking officers in the ZANLA hierarchy. Chung describes her as deeply religious and courageous. This is what she says about Sheba:

> The only camp commander who to my knowledge refused to comply with this systematic abuse of some of the young women who had joined the struggle, many of them for the most idealistic of reasons, was Sheba Tavarwisa, a top woman

> commander and one of the first and most respected of women guerrillas. She was a skilled and wise leader, who managed to maintain her integrity while enjoying the absolute trust of Tongogara, despite the fact that she always refused to comply with his demands for women. Tongogara respected her combination of independence and loyalty. (p. 127)

Chung's narrative hails the contributions of women to the struggle and in the process links femininity to struggling against the colonial state. In this case Sheba's heroic femininity is premised on both independence and loyalty combined with her high ranking and strategic position in the struggle.

One can also discern how Chung positions feminism as a significant force, socio-politically speaking, within the context of postcoloniality. In the autobiography Chung articulates her efforts in striving throughout to improve the welfare of fellow women. She also attributes heroism to fellow women, but typical of female life-writing, there is a way in which the narrative progressively obscures her own feminine identity. Because of the relational nature of female life-writing, Chung's own autobiographical persona is not fully developed. Her personal life does not find full expression in the narrative, rendering highly relevant Smith's and Watson's (2001: 64) contention that "[a]lways there are moments in the text when that impression of narrative coherence breaks down, in digressions, gaps, and silences about certain things, in contradiction". The narrative becomes more and more concerned with issues of social justice and political responsibility.

Chung's subversive poetics and the making of an ideological subject

As at the beginning of the narrative, near its end the text returns to the theme of the land and citizenship in Zimbabwe. Chung argues that the land reform programme that the Zanu (PF) government embarked on from the year 2000 is a return to a central issue of the national liberation agenda.

The last two chapters of Chung's narrative titled "The Fruits of Independence" and "A Vision of Zimbabwe Tomorrow" are ideologically grounded in many respects. In these chapters she articulates post-independence developments that range from political changes in Zanu (PF), the growing power of the black middle-class, the education legacy from Zanla schools in Mozambique, the position of women, land resettlement, the changing role of war veterans to

the labour movement, formation of opposition parties, lack of economic growth, loss of national unity, the survival of feudal and settler institutions and building on the heritage of Zimbabwe among many other issues. In these chapters she condemns the neo-colonial practices of the well-connected and expresses her disappointment with the outcome of the 1970s revolution.

Chung attributes the collapse of nationalist liberation ideology to the adoption of neo-liberal economic models that she claims weakened the state. Her argument is that the values of the liberation war must inform the re-generation of the nation. For her the values of the liberation war thus constitute the background ideology for her vision of a working post-independence nation. She is thus making an ideological stand in her narrative, which in turn defines her as an ideological subject. Chung's intellectualism gives her a privileged outlook and she is able to critique both the struggle and post-independence society.

However, her allegiance lies with Zanu (PF)'s liberation ideology, which was Marxist-Socialist and she uses this as a mechanism for identity formation. Chung demonstrates how the party has shifted from the ideals of the liberation struggle to the compromises of corruption and neo-colonialism.This explains why her narrative also demonstrates her sympathetic attitude towards the Vashandi or Workers' movement. Chung describes this as a group of "young men and women who had recently left the classrooms of high schools and universities" (p. 169) and filled the leadership vacuum created by President Kaunda's imprisonment of the old leadership and veteran fighters following the murder of Herbert Chitepo. She adds:

> Most of the Vashandi were in their twenties. Some of them were teenagers who had just left school. Their education and their youth gave them a certain elitist arrogance that set them apart from the peasant majority. They were in strong contrast to the veterans, the freedom fighters who were mainly of peasant origin and who had formed the backbone of the liberation struggle in the 1960s and early 1970s. While the Vashandi assiduously studied the works of Marx, Lenin, and Mao Tse Tung, they had little time for the ideology of the peasants, which was dominated by ancestor worship and the power of the ancestral spirits, the midzimu, who controlled the day-to- day decision-making of the majority of the peasants and their veteran leaders. The Vashandi dismissed traditional religion as superstition, which had to be destroyed. (p. 169)

While showing the defeat of this left-wing group, she is clearly sympathetic to their cause. As a result of this she shows a certain level of nostalgia for the Marxist-Leninist values of the

revolution some of which were represented by this group. She thus identifies herself as socialist.

From her intellectual analysis of the struggle and its aftermaths, Chung displays split subjectivity. While she resists colonialism, she is reluctant to apportion blame for Zimbabwe's problems entirely on colonialism and the ruling elite, but also blames the opposition, especially the Movement for Democratic Change, civil society and the NGOs for Zimbabwe's woes. When Moukhlis (2003) discusses the subversive poetics of postcolonial writers, she shows how these writings combine a criticism of both colonialism and aspects of nativist or indigenous practices. To use Moukhlis's (2003: 67) words, Chung's narrative "[does] not only stage the colonial discursive apparatus as an epistemic violence but also highlight[s] and expose[s] the asymmetrical social and economic relations within the postcolonial society". Her articulation of post-independence developments, in this context, point to a partly disillusioned postcolonial subjectivity.

The analysis of Chung's narrative shows an individual identity that is constituted by gender and political relations, and a national liberation ideology rooted in socialism. Her subjectivity also lies embedded in the story of the nation. The agency of her text emerges in its articulation of a counter discourse to the nationalist narrative that is silent on the subordination of women based on gender and sex. Her intellectual energy, which she invests in critiquing both the colonial and post-independence states and permeates the narrative, constructs her intellectual subjectivity. My discussion now turns to Tekere's narrative, which also shows how postcolonial subjectivities are located in the episteme of colonialism as well as the uneven power relations in postcolonial societies.

Coaxers and coercers: history and the publisher as elicitors of Tekere's story[4]

The story of Tekere is a narrative of the coming into being of Zimbabwe, of "a relentless freedom fighter" and of that same fighter's political marginalisation in post-independence

[4] Part of this analysis of Tekere's autobiography is contained in my publication in JLS: Ngoshi, H.T. 2013. Masculinities and Femininities in Zimbabwean Autobiographies of Political Struggle: The Case of Edgar Tekere and Fay Chung, Journal of Literary Studies, 29(3), pp. 119-139.

Zimbabwe. Since the narrative was written at a time of political crisis in Zimbabwe from the beginning Tekere situates his story within the discourse of what went wrong after independence. As I shall demonstrate later, this is the same context in which one can also read Todd's narrative. It is therefore axiomatic that the time of narration for Tekere is a way of accessing his autobiographical act.

The opening of his narrative is an occasion to thank those who have stood by him in his most difficult times, especially following his fallout with Zanu (PF). After thanking many individuals who include politicians and business people, he then turns to thanking Ibbo Mandaza and it is what he says that is instructive in understanding who and what prompts his story. Tekere says "But most of all I thank Ibbo Mandaza for encouraging me to write my story. I hope it will help contribute towards an understanding of the dynamics of the liberation struggle, and what went wrong thereafter" (p. xxi). Tekere's statement makes claims to understanding the dynamics of the war of liberation because he was a central figure of that war and to understanding what went wrong with the post-independence nation, which recalls the authority of presence as with Judith Todd.

By acknowledging that it is Ibbo Mandaza who encouraged him to tell his story, Tekere gives credence to Smith's and Watson's (2001: 53) assertion that "Coaxing is an integral part of the life-writing process when more than one person is directly involved in producing the story". Mandaza's hand is evident in Tekere's story, a fact that Mandaza also acknowledges in the introduction in which Mandaza refers to the "endless and numerous sessions during which I had to interrogate the man, clarify facts and processes, and edit out the angry and unnecessarily provocative" (p. 25). In this case Mandaza stands as a coaxer who apart from this editing actually is involved in a project to document, through autobiography, exemplary experiences in national liberation struggles in southern Africa. His desire to have autobiographies of liberation icons in his Pan African Series is documented elsewhere.

While at an individual level, Mandaza coaxes the story from Tekere, at a broader level the post-independence history of the Zimbabwean nation also coaxes this story from him. In another sense we see the re-writing of history as a coaxer and as a result we can think of the historical moment of the telling of this story as the site of Tekere's narration. Smith and Watson (2001: 56) propose that we can "Think of sites as both occasional, that is, specific to an occasion, and locational, that is, emergent in a specific 'mise en scene' or context of

narration… But the site of narration is also a moment in history, a socio-political space in culture." The historical moment in Zimbabwe, where a monolithic narrative of liberation and of nation has partly cracked creates the impetus for Tekere's narrative and indeed that of Chung and Todd. I say partly cracked because the narrative became even more monolithic than it had been as former freedom fighters increasingly repeated the line that "we and we alone gave you freedom" and brooked no criticism since they argued that the "liberated" cannot criticise because "only through us are you empowered to criticise". This kind of language became the controlling and hegemonic discourse as the economy collapsed. In addition, the state of being excluded and alienated from the practices of state power and political governance is a historical site that invokes autobiographical acts, and in this case that of Tekere. This site enables these autobiographical subjects to reconstruct national narratives, in the process re-imagining themselves and resisting a singular version of the Zimbabwean nation.

Since this site is also the historical moment of political turbulence in the post-independence nation, the audience also expects particular narratives that are consonant with that turbulence and that can be read into that temporal site. As Smith and Watson (2001: 56) argue "The appropriateness of personal narratives for particular sites is a crucial consideration. Sites establish expectations about the kinds of stories that will be told and will be intelligible to others". Tekere thus articulates the problematic of national politics from his current location of post-independence politics, but from a perspective that is informed by his experiential history of Zimbabwe's struggle for liberation as a member of the inner circle. Tekere's "I" is therefore located in multiple historical, social, political and cultural experiences as shall be articulated in the following sections.

Disempowered masculinities and the search for alternatives

Tekere's *A Lifetime of Struggle* (2007) narrates his birth, formative years in educational institutions, the milestone decision to join the struggle for independence, the political intrigues that characterised this struggle and its aftermaths. The struggle for liberation and the aftermaths of independence thus form the political background that defines Tekere, as he is constructed by the narrative. The Rhodesian state was oppressive and exclusionary in

identifying who was part of the nation and who was not. Its colonial policies demeaned the black people and relegated them to the margins of the nation. It is within this nexus that Tekere experienced and projected his political and gendered self.

From the very beginning of his narrative, Tekere shows how his ancestral background was instrumental in shaping his ideas about the self and what he stood for. He reveals the significance of his mother's ancestry, a descendent of the Makoni people. The Makoni are an old family with a very prominent chieftaincy in the eastern part of Zimbabwe. In the first uprising against colonial occupation, Chief Chingaira Makoni fought bravely and eventually was decapitated and his head was taken to England as a trophy. As great-great-grandson to this heroic Chief, Tekere says, he was often reminded that it was his traditional and customary duty to see to it that the head was returned to Zimbabwe for decent burial. From his childhood Tekere is initiated into the masculine and militant role of avenging the dishonourable treatment of his maternal great-ancestor and acknowledges in the narrative that he owes the spirit of fighting, so deeply ingrained in his personality, to his maternal ancestry. He writes in his dedication: "I often good-humouredly, and with pride, taunted my mother for passing onto me the Chingaira strain of blood, causing me to relentlessly engage in the struggle for liberation" (p. v). It is worth noting that the Shona people are patriarchal and that they very rarely emphasise the matriarchal side when identifying themselves. Discussing the conditions and limits of autobiography, Gusdorf (1980: 28) concludes, "[E]ach man thus appears as the possessor of a role, already performed by the ancestors and to be performed again by descendants". Gusdorf was discussing Western autobiography and yet I find this applicable to Tekere's narrative. Tekere stresses his mother's ancestry in order to lay claim to its heroic legacy and to appropriate his maternal grandfather's legendary fighting spirit. Later on he adds, "And, of course I longed to emulate the proud fighter of the First Chimurenga in my role during the Second Chimurenga; and I believe that, in time, this is what I came to do" (p. 29). This also demonstrates performativity in the shaping of identities.

But, what is it that shaped the self according to his narrative? After briefly describing his birth, family and the Makoni roots, Tekere winds up that part of the narrative by declaring, "Underlying all this, the village life, reverence for the ancestors, the generosity and warmth of the people in those rural areas, was the continuing occupation of Zimbabwe by the whites" (p. 29) and adds, "My family living in Nyan'ombe grew in the shadow of British rule. My

mother, in particular was very bitter against the British settlers for what they had done to her grandfather, Chingaira" (p. 29). Clearly underlining these statements is his anger towards colonial rule and the brooding shadow it cast over apparently peaceful people living harmoniously with each other. It is this shadow that haunts him and subsequently helps to determine his identity. In this regard, one can argue that this colonial shadow constantly challenged the manhood, the very being of black men in general and Tekere in particular. This state of affairs resonates very well with Suttner's (2004) argument that masculinities in colonial societies need to be analysed within the context of colonial reservations about the humanity of the colonised.

In discussing his years at St. Augustine's mission, Tekere recalls:

> Rebelliousness was beginning to emerge among young people at the time I was at St. Augustine, as we listened to the older people express disgust at the way we were treated. No-one [sic] was immune from the treatment of blacks by whites, the inequality, segregation and exploitation we suffered. Many of us had witnessed the white government dispossess black people of their land and livestock. Our parents were forced to pay many taxes, and the movement of people from rural to urban centres was restricted. (p. 32)

In this, Tekere sums up what background created his identity and the masculine choices that he adopted. While he acknowledges that at this point many young people were not yet prepared to fight, they were however, keen to listen to the elders as they articulated their suffering. The school environment had its own contradictions. While on the one hand the education was meant to create a subservient class of colonial functionaries, the environment on the other hand actively abated the awakening of political consciousness and a spirit of rebellion in the young people. At St. Augustine's, Father Baynham "encouraged free debate" (p. 33), and it is through this that Tekere came to understand that "colonialism and racism were much wider issues" (p. 33). Again at this mission school he is involved in activities that shape his identity and in turn awaken him to political consciousness. Apart from being a member of the debating society, he says he was also an actor, his most successful role being that of Absalom Kumalo in a stage production of Paton's (1948) *Cry the Beloved Country*.

From a psychoanalytic point of view one may argue that given the similarities between apartheid South Africa and colonial Rhodesia, Tekere easily identifies with this Absalom Kumalo who in the play goes to Johannesburg and kills a white man, and is hanged. In the novel *Cry the Beloved Country*, Absalom Kumalo goes to Johannesburg to help find his

father's sister, but gets caught up in what is regarded as urban decadence unchecked by rural culture. When Absalom is about to turn his life around he murders the benevolent Arthur Jarvis in a robbery. Tekere may have simplified Paton's plot or the adaptation of the novel was deliberately altered by those who directed the school production to certain ends. In the original version Absalom hangs, but not before his admirable attributes are brought out and even the white man who is killed supports black political aspirations and cannot be seen as a justifiable object of racial killing. It will not be far-fetched to postulate that by extension Tekere longed to kill a white man in oppressive Rhodesia. It is also not surprising that later on Tekere was put on trial for his alleged murder of a white farmer shortly after Zimbabwean independence.

Although he was acquitted, it is as if by "killing" Adams he was fulfilling a long-deferred dream. To Tekere therefore, the character of Kumalo is a symbol of heroic masculinity to be emulated given the odds staked against black people in both apartheid-era South Africa and Rhodesia (notwithstanding the fact that Jarvis in Paton's novel simply does not fit into the model of an oppressor). Tekere appropriates the violent masculinity that Paton strongly criticises in *Cry the Beloved Country* although Paton also recognizes that South African racism legitimates the expression of such masculinity. His subjectivity is intersubjectively realised with that of Kumalo. Tekere refuses to conform to the colonially constructed masculine identity for black people, that is subservience to white people epitomised by swearing allegiance to "God and the King and obey[ing] the Scout law" (p.35). He defiantly argues that since they were in Makoni country then they should be swearing allegiance to "God and Mambo Makoni" (p. 35). An equally defiant mother, a Makoni princess, constantly nurtures this attitude of defiance. For Tekere the legend of Chingaira Makoni is a signifier of heroic masculinity and throughout the narrative acts as a significant other who helps shape his political consciousness. The Chingaira myth also acts as a symbolic resource for the re-discovery of an identity by Tekere. It also facilitates a certain degree of coherence to his identity as a freedom fighter. Tekere locates his identity in this narrative of the past and as Stuart Hall (1990: 225) suggests "identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past". Suttner (2004: 2) proposes that the oral and at times written tradition, "amongst members of a liberation movement tend to create a model of what is revolutionary conduct and which people are exemplars of such conduct". For Tekere, the revolutionary conduct of Chief Chingaira

Makoni, the legends of Nehanda, Kaguvi and Chaminuka provide such models as seen by traditional prayers to the latter three in the camp of the elders in Mozambique. Tekere appropriates the heritage of the first Chimurenga and by so doing appropriates a new kind of manhood and masculinity, which stands in opposition to that assigned black men by the Rhodesians. His consciousness is thus shaped by an awareness of the political and cultural capital that can be drawn from relating the present to the past.

The instances of resistance epitomised by debating, performing the role of Absalom Kumalo and refusing to swear allegiance to God, the British king and the Scout law exemplify Tekere's propensity for insubordination. That capacity on his part for resistance and systematic insubordination is a quality of postcolonialism. The resistance by postcolonial subjects to forms of oppression is in fact a cardinal issue in postcolonial theory.

Tekere and the rhetoric of political and liberation masculinity

Tekere's political activities develop from rebellion at school and joining the youth league, which merged with the African National Congress in 1957, to many other political undertakings and commitments. With the banning of the ANC the National Democratic Party was formed and with its outlawing the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) came into existence. Tekere narrates his roles in all these formations. He becomes a political player amidst complex political processes during those times. The narrative becomes a celebration of his heroic achievements throughout his political career in the struggle for liberation. Smith and Watson (2001: 10) argue:

> When life narrators write to chronicle an event, to explore a certain time period, or to enshrine a community, they are making "history" in a sense. But they are also performing several rhetorical acts: justifying their own perceptions, upholding their reputations, disputing the accounts of others, settling scores, conveying cultural information and inventing desirable futures among others.

It is as if Tekere is responding to a post-independence discourse (following his fallout with ZANU-PF) that has been negating and undermining his perceived heroic identity and contributions to the struggle. If he is not responding to such a discourse Tekere is anticipating that he will not be properly esteemed for his role in the struggle. This recalls Bakhtin's (1981) assertion that texts are always a response to or an anticipation of some other texts;

there is a dialogic relationship between the text and other texts and between the text and its audiences. Referring to his work with ZANU, which was formed after leadership fallout with ZAPU, Tekere says, "I am very proud of the work I did in Gweru, for were it not for I and my team in the Midlands, ZANU would have died then" (p. 54).

After the decision to embark on a military struggle against the Rhodesians, Tekere's narrative again highlights his heroic contributions to the whole effort. He writes:

> "I had always been committed to the armed struggle, and moreover, as the leader of the Youth, I was the obvious choice" (p. 71).
>
> "As we proceeded [into the camps], I made all the arrangements and took the lead, ensuring that Mugabe complied with the ZANU line" (p. 74).
>
> "I would get up at 3.00 in the morning, and run for 20 kilometres in laps.
>
> As leader, I had to be the fittest. Mugabe participated a little". (p. 75)

These statements among many others of a similar nature are Tekere's attempt to authorise his role in the war effort and to show how his identity is inextricably entwined with that of the Zimbabwean nation. Hroch (1996: 90-91) says men have "a personalised image of the nation", while Mayer (2000: 6) adds that men "often tend to assume the role of defending the ego of the nation because their identity is so often intertwined with that of the nation". In many respects Tekere's identity that he produces in this book is entwined with that of Zimbabwe.

This narrative is also Tekere's way of highlighting his heroic achievements, which in ZANU (PF)'s politics of inclusion and exclusion, are in danger of obliteration. But to project his own image, Tekere must of necessity eclipse the image of a rival other.

Othering Robert Mugabe: subjectivity established in the feminisation of Mugabe

A critical mind will not fail to discern the hidden text in Tekere's autobiography: the feminisation of Robert Mugabe and the masculinisation of Joice Mujuru (vice-president of Zimbabwe). Nationalist liberation movements are, more often than not, considered masculine and by feminising Mugabe Tekere attempts to undermine the former's centrality to the national liberation effort. Postcolonial scholars contend that identities emerge out of

difference and by showing how different he is from Robert Mugabe Tekere constructs his identity.

It is important to note that Tekere always juxtaposes his own achievements, especially in military accomplishments, against those of Robert Mugabe. He chronicles his own training, initially at the hands of Joice Mujuru, later Mark Dube, and adds, "Besides the individual coaching, I joined the recruits in the various training camps, such as Nachingwea. I went to Yugoslavia to learn the techniques of surface-to-air warfare. In Romania, I learned infantry manoeuvres" (p. 78). Tekere is critical of Mugabe's aloofness and failure to conform to the military demands of the situation. Later on after the Chimoio massacres Tekere says Mugabe was incongruous in his formal attire at a time when they had come to visit the camp in the aftermath of the Rhodesian raids when everyone else was wearing military uniform which befitted the occasion. About Mugabe, he says:

> I then taught him how to handle weapons, and to keep them always within reach. Yes, up to that time, he had not learnt how to use a weapon. There were other examples of his lack of appetite for war. Mugabe was by now Commander-in-Chief of the ZANLA forces, yet he had no uniform …. He was really a civilian bureaucrat. He would sit in his office, waiting for military briefings from me, and never took the initiative himself unless pushed. He did not know how to salute. (p. 92-93)

In Tekere's world-view, lack of military skill and appreciation of the workings of war weapons is evidence of unmanliness. It is evident from this narrative that for Tekere, the masculine identity to be projected in a war situation like the one he is narrating is that of a military man. His narrative has no kind words for those he deemed to be cowards, the likes of Josiah Tungamirai (later Commander of the Zimbabwe Air Force) and Ernest Kadungure who he says were abducted into the war; they did not join voluntarily. He does not hide his admiration for Tongogara, Joice Mujuru, Mark Dube, Serbia, Rex Nhongo (Solomon Mujuru) and Justin Chauke.

Throughout the narrative Tekere projects himself as a solid individual who takes control of situations. One cannot help but see an overemphasis on his military accomplishments. It is not surprising that he does this since as Gusdorf (1980: 28) argues:

> as soon as they have the leisure of retirement or exile, the minister of state, the politician, the military leader write in order to celebrate their deeds (always more or less misunderstood), providing a sort of posthumous propaganda for posterity that otherwise is in danger of forgetting them or of failing to esteem them properly.

In Tekere's hidden text, Mugabe is the antithesis of revolutionary conduct and desired military masculinity. His consciousness and interpretation of his individual identity thus emerges out of this knowledge of Mugabe's un-war-like conduct. Tekere's narrative increasingly becomes a deconstruction of Mugabe's heroic image, an image that haunts him as he feels his own heroism is dissipating in the context of post-independence politics. Mugabe is his other and by establishing difference with him, his own identity emerges. It is an identity that refracts from the image of Mugabe.

Joining the youth league, all the subsequent political formations and the war of liberation was a rite of passage for Tekere and all the others who joined. Tekere's version of favourable masculinity prioritises political and military exploits. Even his preferred femininities constitute resistance to political domination and military accomplishments as epitomised by his mother and the likes of Joice Mujuru and Serbia. Of the former he says, "Teurai (Joice Mujuru) was the first woman fighter I had encountered, and I was very impressed, as she was extremely accomplished. I submitted, with pleasure to her orders to crawl and roll on the ground" (p. 78). He has this to say about Serbia:

> Among those who died in the attack were Serbia, who had been my instructor, and my major source of inspiration. She had been a commander in Tete, where she headed a commando unit of some 99 men. She was the only woman there.… She was a priceless soldier. She had come to Chimoio to get supplies for her unit, and was killed in the maize field. It was sad that such a great fighter had not gone down in battle …. (p. 86)

Tekere's avid admiration for such women is undoubted. Also notable in his narrative is the contradictory relationships with women at a personal level. Tekere has a series of failed marriages and I wish to suggest that these are manifestations of his deeply entrenched respect for political and military femininities and alienation from domestic femininities. His admiration for military femininity alienates him from domestic femininities that are appropriate to a rather conventional marriage.

The analysis of Tekere's narrative has demonstrated that his subjectivities are constituted by a discursive framework of decolonisation and nation-building. By speaking in terms of this discourse he has accepted a discourse of decolonisation. Exclusion from post-independence political power also acts as a catalyst for this narrative, which shows the relationship between autobiographical acts and history. In the next section I critique Todd's narrative, showing

how her subjective identity is shared with the others of both colonial and post-independence Zimbabwe.

Through the Darkness: an autobiography of the "other"

In this section I want to argue that Todd's narrative can be read as the autobiography of the 'other' because at one level it is an exercise of representing others. This is done through clearing autobiographical space for the marginalized others. At another level, her self-disclosure in this narrative is tied to the subjectivities of these others; her subjectivities are thus intersubjectively realised. She is also the subaltern in terms of her being a female postcolonial subject.

While Chung's and Tekere's narratives trace the political trajectories of their lives from the colonial period to the post-independence era, Todd's narrative begins by briefly charting the history of her birth at Dadaya in March 1943, her father's rise to become Rhodesian Prime Minister, his ouster and Smith's declaration of independence. Right from the onset of the narrative she foregrounds the problems of truth-telling and fiction in autobiography by claiming: "Over the years I kept notes and copies of letters that have now turned into this book. It is neither a history nor an analysis of events, but simply charts, one person's impressions along Zimbabwe's roller-coaster ride from its birth on 18 April 1980" (p. 2.). She then goes on to narrate her return from exile and only makes reference to her colonial experiences to illuminate Zimbabwe's and her present circumstances. The first chapter thus chronicles the early days of independence, days full of promise and yet at the same time for her, showing the early signs of despotism. In the same breath she highlights the ill-preparedness of relevant organisations to re-integrate returning refugees into society. She uses this as the reason why the Zimbabwe Project, which she worked for in London, remained relevant. Todd therefore positions the Zimbabwe Project prominently and it becomes a metaphor for her being a witness of, and her deep involvement with, Zimbabwe's national affairs.

In view of the above, one way of looking at Todd's subjectivity is by locating her narrative discourse as the discourse of the other. This other is formed discursively, echoing Hall's (2000) assertion that the subject is the subject of discourse and that discursive practices

constitute subjectivities. *Through the Darkness* is a narrative that encapsulates the stories of other players in Zimbabwean state politics. Her narrative is also a process of becoming the other because as Hawes (1995: 2) argues "writing an autobiography is essentially a process of writing the self as other, and to do this, one must other the self". She opts for a group identity of the marginalized as opposed to an individualistic identity. Todd does this by identifying with victims of political persecution who are mostly Zimbabwe Project clients:

> So I felt safe. But to have the privilege of feeling safe also, of course, increased the responsibility of trying to assist where possible the anonymous, the unsafe, the hurt, the incarcerated. I could do very little, but at least I was in a position to try. (p.184)

By doing this Todd is, in Blackman et al's (2008: 14) words, "fabricating and regulating otherness and subalternity through the multiplication and assimilation of subjectivities that are created by one's own reflexivity of one's own positionality". She is positioned as a critic of ZANU (PF)'s governance system and her subjectivity materializes when she assembles her memories and experiences of post-independence Zimbabwe. Since her subjectivity is an assemblage it can, according to Deleuze and Guattari cited in Blackman et al (2008: 15), be read as "decentred…, an emergent conjunction and an evolving intertwining of self-ordering forces and diverse materialities". Todd's subjectivities thus materialize in the context of the new political dispensation in the post-independence nation that she deems intolerant of diverse voices and also in the context of her oppositional stand. They also emerge within the material realities of deprivation of political space for those considered to be dissident voices and with whom she easily identifies.

Descent into the space of the other is also highlighted when Todd loses the election to parliament and she reflects that former Rhodesian functionaries are preferred ahead of her simply because she stood on a PF-ZAPU ticket. This is ironic since in colonial days Todd had been on the side of nationalists, yet in post-independence Zimbabwe the nationalists' erstwhile enemies are preferable to her. This political environment is not inclusive and it is this historical contingency that is constructing her, yet at the same time Todd is opposing and resisting the terms of reference of this political environment. Following Green's (1997: 6) argument that "Resistant form refers to the search for a critical model as much as an aesthetic mode that can at one and the same time, recognize the inevitable constructedness of its subject within its own productive processes, yet create that subject in such a way that that subject challenges the terms within which it is constructed – thus resisting the very forms

within which it is produced", her narrative can also be read as a "resistant form". Todd is resisting the historical moment and its political power structures that are constructing her as a postcolonial subject. Through writing her resistance and opposition, Todd is constructing an oppositional subjectivity.

Todd's oppositional subjectivity and palimpsestic writing

The formation of the oppositional subjectivity is linked to her relation to political power structures and state power. Todd establishes a causal relationship between Zimbabwe's post-independence history of repression and the stance she takes in opposing that repression through the power of the pen. The awareness that her self-knowledge is linked to how she relates to state power is what constitutes her subjectivity. In Chapter Eleven titled "Hiding Prisoners" Todd narrates the story in the context of more arrests and disappearances of Zapu-linked people. She sees no difference between Smith's and Mugabe's reigns and argues "it was just like old times under Ian Smith's Rhodesian Front, except now the abusers were black, although maybe there were still some whites helping to arrange the scenery" (p. 106). Given these circumstances Todd finds an outlet for her emotions and activism through the pen. She confesses "I started sending messages to a handful of friends, such as the writer David Caute in London. Writing helps me to get some of the burning out of my blood" (p. 104). Denied agency, Todd develops a language of writing in order to represent her subjectivity.

The power exercised by the state, while seeking to subject her, produces resistance in Todd and in the process constructs her as an opposing subject, refusing to be subject to that power. Her experiences instigate her oppositional stand to the Zanu (PF) party and government. The experiences of her activities with the political underdogs, in the form of the war-wounded and Zapu supporters, also register this opposition. These experiences are not only material, but are located in the discursive since the site of narration of her story in spatio-temporal terms is the context of robust debate about the state of the Zimbabwean nation in both political and civil society circles that gained momentum with the birth of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 1999.

Implied in *Through the Darkness* is the implied argument "blame me on Zanu (PF)'s post-independence political practices." Rhodesia under the Rhodesia Front was defined by a certain dualism and the new Zimbabwe according to Todd is characterised by its own dualism which she seeks to transcend by refusing to fit into its categories. She fights on the side of the oppressed during colonial days and forfeits the privileges of being white and then fights on the side of the oppressed and dispossessed in independent Zimbabwe and refuses a narrow definition of patriotism which she knows is read as uncritical support to the governing party, both the Rhodesia Front in Rhodesia and ZANU (PF) in Zimbabwe. Todd's autobiographical act is located in negotiating the self within this dualism, where her narrative identity is that of an othered self. *Through the Darkness* is thus the narrative of the other self, who, were it not for an aggressive disposition, has been denied the space to exercise political agency, ironically in both Rhodesia and Zimbabwe. But the outsider position is in a way empowering as it enables her to critique and deconstruct Mugabe's nation-builder image as she characterises Mugabe's reign as a period of 'darkness'.

By using the metaphor of darkness, Todd is contesting the idea of a unified and thriving postcolonial state. When she chronicles her personal experiences and experiences of torture and marginalisation of the opponents (perceived or real) of the ruling elite, Todd is exploring the internal dynamics of post-independence history. What emerge are micro-histories that prove the layered nature of post-independence historical narratives. Todd therefore exfoliates the nationalist narrative of a coherent and unified postcolony revealing layer after layer. The vestiges of the authoritarian state remain very much alive contrary to the appearance of a new political dispensation that is supposed to have eradicated oppression in the act of displacing colonialism.

Sites of narration and occasions for writing the self in *Through the Darkness*

Todd narrates her story from the discursive position of an opponent of the ruling elite who ironically has easy access to its members. She invests in that location by establishing solidarity with those on the margins of state politics. The denial of political agency in both the historical and political contexts of Rhodesia and Zimbabwe acts as sites of narration and provide Todd with the occasion to write. Two ways in which Todd is denied political agency

are through her arrest and detention for demonstrating against Ian Smith's government and being subjected to the gaze through state surveillance in Zimbabwe as well as being denied political participation when she loses at the parliamentary elections.

Todd's political agency is being curtailed when she is placed under surveillance and her mail is opened (which only stops when she complains directly to the Central Intelligence Organisation) and when she is censured for standing for parliament under ZAPU. This denial of political agency is also manifest when she is raped for daring to want to report the atrocities in Matabeleland. All these instances of the curtailing of her political agency are what partly constitute the site of narration for her autobiography. Sites of narration are spatio-temporal and the historical and political situation in post-independence Zimbabwe provides the space and occasion for narrating the autobiographical subject. Since the Zimbabwe experienced by Todd is characterised by internal fissures and exclusionary practices in terms of the nation-building project, the kind of story she tells has to be consonant with her marginalization, her rape and her surveillance. Todd's narrative refuses the narrative produced by the prevailing ideology that marginalizes ZAPU's contribution to the struggle and instead restores something of ZAPU's significance. It also refuses a narrative formed out of the myth of reconciliation and a unified state as throughout the narrative Todd articulates the fissures in the nation.

One other way of thinking about site of narration in Todd's narrative is to look at it from the perspective of a desire to write the nation through the metaphor of going through the darkness. Writing the postcolonial nation can be considered an autobiographical occasion for Todd. Postcoloniality can therefore be positioned as a discursive site for Todd's autobiographical act. Discussing women's identity and the postcolonial state, Moukhlis (2003: 67) suggests that:

> [f]oregrounding colonialism as the only source of all evils and eventually bracketing it out is simply creating a smoke screen to cover some oppressive indigenous traditions and neo-colonial practices. This context led to the rise of a myriad of protesting voices that have emerged to negotiate new identities and map new pathways into a constantly changing postcolonial topography.

Todd and the others of the Zimbabwean nation constitute a minority and when Todd articulates their experiences of suffering and fear, she is speaking from the position of a subaltern minority. Independence has not changed the material realities of these formerly

colonised black people; they constitute a subaltern group where their circumstances should have changed. However, not all black people experience postcolonialism in the same way and therefore black postcolonial subjectivities are not homogeneous but diverse: where some enjoy the fruits of independence others become marginalized victims of the same state and the reasons for their marginalization can be many and different: historical, ethnic, regional or class.

Family and race as cultural and political models of identity

Smith and Watson (2001: 62) argue that: "At any historical moment, there are heterogeneous identities culturally available to the narrator", through gender, race, ethnicity, generation and family among other identity indices. In Todd's case it will be interesting to explore, first her family as a cultural and political model of identity, second her race, which of course to her means nothing, and thirdly ethnicity. No one would want to think of ethnicity in relation to whiteness in Zimbabwe, but sentiments expressed in the narrative by one of her Ndebele acquaintances invites a discussion of black ethnicity as an identity available to Todd.

The Todds have a political and cultural legacy in both Rhodesia and Zimbabwe, Garfield Todd having been Rhodesian Prime Minister and Grace Todd's name being synonymous with the development of educational practices in Rhodesia. Both parents are a model of commitment to the nation and Judith Todd has this model of identity to emulate.

In Chapter 17 titled "Standing for Parliament" Todd relates how her father's birthday triggers memories of enduring suffering. She thus sees her own suffering in Zimbabwe through the enduring suffering of her parents in both Rhodesia and Zimbabwe. When she articulates her persecution in Zimbabwe, it is collectively that of herself and her parents especially her father. Using Freudian logic she argues "Freud in The Future of an Illusion mentions countless people 'who do not hesitate to injure other people by lies, fraud and calumny so long as they remain unpunished for it', and we experienced that in both Rhodesia and, more recently for me, in Zimbabwe" (p. 209).

To demonstrate how her father had suffered she uses Chapter 19 of her narrative to relate his experiences of near-death at the hands of the guerillas during the war. Furthermore, she

emotionally recalls the arrest of her father and the emotional strain it causes her mother. Todd thus identifies her own suffering with the historical suffering of her father.

Speaking in tongues: heteroglossia in *Through the Darkness*

A defining feature of her autobiography is a constant reminder to her audience of the similarity between Ian Smith's Rhodesia and Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe. This is underwritten by what Chennells (2009) calls "the authority of presence", manifest in the many diary excerpts and notes that constitute much of her narrative. Her memories of Rhodesia in effect help her to structure her interpretation of what transpires in Zimbabwe. Chennells implies that Todd's use of the diary form is a stylistic device. She keeps on implying that she is an innocent girl caught up in a scheme (the Zimbabwe Project) that she thinks the newly independent nation needs and registering in her simple way the impressions that each day brings and plays down the fact that she is an experienced political commentator who has been analysing the country's politics for years. This side of herself comes out most clearly in the last two chapters of her narrative.

As suggested by Chennells (2009), the use of her diary notes in the narrative confers authority based on her presence when events transpired. This authority of presence does not necessarily suggest or confer truthfulness on her narrative. The authoritative "I" that is underwritten by the diary notes, news reports and letters is a way of publicly declaring authority to speak about the Zimbabwean nation and to foreclose any doubt about the value of her narrative. The historical events in Zimbabwe invite Todd to tell her story and thus history is intervening and coaxing her to construct her subjective identity. Todd's "narrated 'I' is" therefore, as Francoise Lionnet cited in Smith and Watson (2001: 60) posits "a subject of history whereas the narrating "I" is the agent of discourse". However, it is also a fictional trick. She pretends it is a subject of history whereas of course it is an invented identity: that of the naïve little girl.

The ZANU (PF) ideology and discourse of the nation motivate Todd's autobiographical act as she is inspired to work towards fighting for the underdogs and in the process writing an alternative interpretive version of events in Zimbabwe and her relation to them. This is only possible because she is writing from the underdogs' point of view, but she is not an underdog

because she is Judith Todd and not an underdog/subaltern. She is only playing at being this to provide an alternative narrative. But it is convincing because it does not read like bombastic propaganda from the ruling party. As a subject Todd has internalized the ideological identities of freedom fighter and critic of nationalist liberation discourse, often used to explain and prop up the governance system. The consequences of these many ideological identities are that Todd speaks in many tongues and I wish to discuss the voices of suffering and victimhood, of cynicism and sarcasm and that of conscience.

The dominant perspective in *Through the Darkness* is that of the subject who suffers politically and considers herself as the victim of the state and its functionaries. After her rape by brigadier Mutambara Todd seeks consolation from Eddison Zvobgo's poem:

> Before long the subjugation was over, he dropped me back at our offices and, in the words of Eddison Zvobgo, I tried to continue on my road precisely as if nothing had ever happened.
>
> *Should you fall, rise with grace, and without*
>
> *Turning to see who sees, continue on your road*
>
> *Precisely as if nothing had ever happened;*
>
> *For those who did not, the ditches became graves. (p. 51)*

This is the voice of suffering and victimhood, experiences which are endured with a certain kind of stoicism and for which she lacks adequate words save to appeal to Zvobgo's poem. Later in the narrative she uses this same technique of appealing to the words of others to capture her emotions of suffering victimhood. In Chapter 14 where she chronicles the death of Lookout Masuku, Todd again makes recourse to another's definition of fascism in order to articulate suffering and victimhood. The setting is the house of Nazi victim Anne Frank in Holland and she is reminded of what is obtaining in Zimbabwe. She takes the opportunity to copy down the definition of fascism as displayed in the house and claims "It helped me to understand what was happening in Zimbabwe" (p. 169). The definition thus works in place of what are supposed to be her own comments regarding the situation in Zimbabwe. By invoking the Nazi Todd is summarizing the nature of victimhood suffered by some people in Zimbabwe.

Again earlier in Chapter 14 titled "Survivors of Sekou Toure", Todd has also invoked the image of political brutality in the form of former leader of Guinea-Conakry; Sekou Toure.

The presence of a delegation from Guinea-Conakry, which she entertains, triggers this imagery through which she articulates victimhood. Todd relates:

> They told me that under Sekou Toure about 25 per cent of their population became exiles. They were not so keen anymore on 'socialism'. I think that is the word, like many others, that can be used to cloak many evils.
>
> By 2006, President Robert Mugabe would equal the then President Sekou Toure in that more than 25 per cent of Zimbabwe's population was also in exile. (p. 143).

These images of totalitarianism are carefully chosen to constitute the voice of victimhood and solidify the image of a brutal political leadership.

The voices of cynicism and sarcasm are also pervasive throughout the narrative and emerge most strongly when the narrating subject reflects on her experiences and those of Zimbabwe in general. Following the accusation by Minister of Home Affairs, Enos Nkala, that she was behind Kembo Mohadi's successful suing of Home Affairs and being awarded damages, Todd comments:

> So I thought it prudent to inform Nkala that at the time I was in Holland, and wrote to him that July, thinking how extraordinary it was that the Rhodesian Front mentality about how there had to be a white behind any objectionable process had lingered in the minds of our new rulers. Ian Smith's Rhodesian Front and Robert Mugabe's Zanu (PF) were similar in so very many ways. (p. 170)

Todd's thoughts as articulated in the above extract point to the cynicism of her voice. She sees no change in terms of political praxis from Rhodesia to Zimbabwe. The cynical voice can further be discerned from her thoughts and comments when she gets information about the bombing of Jeremy Brickhill from Stannard, a white former officer in the Rhodesian intelligence who remains in the intelligence in post-independence Zimbabwe. Looking at Stannard she remarks:

> My problem was how someone could be an assiduous and loyal servant of one state that had been replaced by such a totally different state. The answer to this, of course, was that it wasn't replaced by a totally different state at all. (p. 245)

Her cynicism arises out of the fact that she sees no change in terms of how the state is governed both in Rhodesia and Zimbabwe. Todd's narrative tone is laced with sarcasm when she highlights the absurdity of the post-unity accord period with its amnesty for dissidents. Here is how the sarcastic voice comes out, "Things seemed good but quite strange with 'dissidents' giving themselves up and shaking hands with villagers in some sort of

reconciliation. Very weird" (p. 247). Todd's voice here suggests that things are stage-managed and her thinking even doubts the authenticity of these dissidents and she even puts the word "dissident" in quotation marks. In short, Todd suggests that dissidence was manufactured by the ruling party to find an excuse for the military operation in Matabeleland. In one instance she even asks how Tambolinyoka, a well known dissident, could even send a message to the police ahead of the gazetted deadline for surrender to inform them that he was on his way. Todd is nevertheless honest enough to cite good things accruing from the unity accord. One of these was the new found respect for Joshua Nkomo. Todd attends a meeting addressed by Nkomo where he showers her with praises in the presence of civil servants who once loathed both of them. Joshua Nkomo has been reinstated to his position as a leading politician and Todd is evidently happy.

Todd's narrative contains the voice of conscience as she constantly brings to light the excesses of the ruling elite. A poignant moment of this voice of conscience is when in Chapter 29 she writes about what she calls "Mugabe's war on Zimbabwe". Todd projects Mugabe as the incarnation of evil and using the Lord's Prayer as an inter-text says:

> Observing the transformation of people once they were absorbed into Zanu (PF), I often thought of President Mugabe as embodying the antithesis of that plea from the Lord's Prayer: 'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil'. Over the years he has perfected the art of leading people into temptation and then, when they fall, delivering them into evil. A dramatic example of this was the offer of irresistibly beautiful stolen farms to judges. (p. 422)

Her voice of conscience here speaks to the question of the independence of the judiciary, which she sees as being compromised by these lucrative offers. Earlier in the narrative Todd has evoked the voice of conscience following the death of Edward Ndlovu:

> I was usually quite good at suppressing anger, but now I found myself at its mercy. How dare 'they' have inflicted all that misery and suffering on Edward and his family? And I bet 'they' would be at the funeral, lamenting. (p. 314)

Implied in this statement is that the powers that be have no conscience as Todd reckons they are partly responsible for Edward's eventual death as they had hounded him in life and now the irony was that they would appear at the funeral and lament his death. There is even a hint of sarcasm given that the pronoun "they" is enclosed in quotes and Todd is working on the assumption that the reader knows who these are.

Postcolonial anxieties: racial entanglement and complicity in *Through the Darkness*[5]

A postcolonial reading of Todd's political activism on behalf of black people against the Ian Smith government, leading to her arrest in 1972 and that of her father, former Rhodesian Prime Minister Garfield Todd, occasions a consideration of the anxieties that come with this involvement. The anxieties arise out of being entangled in the political and cultural milieu of a postcolonial society. This focuses this analysis on issues to do with political and cultural identity and belonging. Todd's story is therefore at one level a narrative of entanglement, in which the idea of a singular and normative white Zimbabwean identity is debunked. I will briefly expand my discussion of entanglement as highlighted earlier in Chapter Four before showing its instances in Todd's narrative.

Nuttall (2009) uses the South African historical context of apartheid and post-apartheid to demonstrate how apartheid institutions were not purely a creation of whites, but that they were, in the words of Carolyn Hamilton (1998: 3-4 cited in Nuttall 2009: 2), products of "the complex historical entanglement of indigenous and colonial concepts". By engaging with the ideas of various scholars who have overtly or by implication written about entanglement, Nuttal proposes rubrics under which the concept can be best understood. These are: "historical entanglement"; "the time of entanglement"; "ideas of the seam and of complicity", "an entanglement of people and things", "DNA signature" and finally "racial entanglement".

Historical entanglement takes into account the mutual dependence (although 'mutual' is contestable given the unequal power relations in a colonial set-up) for instance that developed between blacks and whites in colonial processes resulting in colonial institutions not being purely a construction of whites. According to Nuttall (2009: 4) "the time of entanglement" was originally discussed by Achille Mbembe (2001) who argued that "as an age, the postcolony encloses multiple durees made up of discontinuities, reversals, inertias, and swings that overlay one another, interpenetrate one another: an entanglement." Here the multiple time periods referred to speak of the various times in the postcolony that are at times disjointed and at other times interconnected in a complex web of relations. Nuttall then

[5] This discussion of Todd's autobiography was presented at the UNISA School of Arts conference, 10-11 October 2013 as part of a paper titled "Complex Entanglements: The Intersubjective as Grounds for Moral and Political Subjectivities in *Through the Darkness* and *Mukiwa-A White Boy in Africa*".

speaks of a third rubric coming from literary scholars; doubly formulated as "ideas of the seam and of complicity." Citing Leon de Kock who says the seam is "a place of simultaneous convergence and divergence, the seam is the paradox qualifying any attempt to imagine organicism or unity", she argues that what is different and what is similar come together, and is denied or displaced. According to Sanders (2002) in Nuttall (2009: 6) "Complicity can be seen as collaboration or accommodation." When people are entangled in things then we are talking about consumption and commodity culture and people are said to invest in commodity culture. The DNA signature rubric describes a situation whereby scientists have generated "ancestral maps" "charting the geographical location of ancestors closer to us in time" (Nuttall 2009: 8). These scientists have discovered in some people categorised as white, "a maternal line African gene" (Nuttall 2009: 8). This has undermined rigid mappings of race identities and Nuttall (2009) considers it one way of thinking about a non-racial South African identity. Racial entanglement as a rubric speaks to the problem of race as articulated in "critical race studies" which see racism as institutionalised and persistent, but not immutable. To resolve the problems that have been created by race thinking, Nuttall (2009: 9) cites Paul Gilroy's proposed humanism deriving from "a principled, cross-cultural approach to the history and literature of extreme situations in which the boundaries of what it means to be human were being negotiated and tested minute by minute, day by day." According to Nuttall, Gilroy further suggests an alternative way of seeing race: multiculturalism.

These rubrics as suggested by Nuttall (2009), point to the rejection of an over emphasis of difference and sameness. This is useful for my analysis since my concern is to locate the realisation of Todd's autobiographical subjectivities in such kinds of entanglements, but I will restrict myself to a few of these rubrics.

Because of her involvement on the side of black people and other forces struggling against colonial rule, Todd is considered politically black and she receives the same treatment given Black Nationalist activists. Her political activism in Rhodesia threatens the white Rhodesian state and whites like her were more often than not declared *persona non grata*. They could not fit into the white Rhodesian nation as their activisms were a rejection and interrogation of white privilege. In view of this, racial categories are not fixed, neither are they entirely based on skin colour. Therefore, by using the rubric of racial entanglement as articulated by Nuttall (2009) it is possible to illuminate the mutability of whiteness as a racial category. There are

contradictions of race in Todd's narrative as the white and black races become something different from how they were mapped in both Rhodesia and Zimbabwe.

Todd's political activism has already alienated her from the expectations of the white Rhodesian state since she has failed to conform to whiteness through supporting the values of white Rhodesia under Ian Smith. Fighting on the side of black people is a transgression of racial boundaries. Here her identity has been constructed by the public political, but her reflections in the narrative make her identity a private construction because the public and the private converge in autobiography. As Nuttall (2009: 64) suggests in relation to South Africa: "Entanglement here, the invocation of blackness for a white person – implies a political praxis of complete commitment to struggle; a willingness to fight and, if necessary, to die." Todd's transgression of racial boundaries indicates her commitment to the values of an inclusive nation.

Another instance of this invocation of blackness for Todd is in the post-independence era. Given the work she is doing with the Zimbabwe Project, her white identity does not mean much. From evidence in the narrative her associates are cosmopolitan and her movement in political and diplomatic circles gives her a multicultural perspective. Todd's political cause in standing up to the new post-independence government and significantly her moral imperative to help former fighters confers upon her a black racial and particularly Ndebele ethnicity. Although she does not invoke blackness and Ndebeleness for herself, this is done on her behalf by Davityne – a colleague – who introduces her as MaKhumalo:

> Davityne accompanied me to the home of Enos Ncube about 100 kilometres from Bulawayo. When he introduced me to the ancient-looking mother of Enos, he paid the most perplexing compliment of introducing me as a Khumalo. Later I asked why he had called me MaKhumalo.
>
> 'Because', he explained, 'you are not a Kalanga and you are not a Shona. You are an Ndebele'. (p. 364)

The choice of MaKhumalo is not accidental; it is the name for female members of Ndebele royalty – the Khumalo clan. The significance is that she is not a low caste Ndebele, but belongs to the highest caste of Ndebele ethnicity. Todd is however conscious of the contradictions of Ndebele ethnicity when she quietly reflects, immediately after Davityne's response, that the Ndebele were also known by their neighbours as Boers, which is a category of whiteness, but in the Zimbabwean context, with connotations of domination and

oppression. Race identities are thus not immutable because here, Todd is repeating the invocation of whiteness for a black ethnic group by their neighbours. Afrikaner domination in South Africa is embedded in the consciousness of these people which is why they equate Ndebeles and their history of conquest, with the Boers.

Although Todd has relegated her racial identity to the margins in all her dealings in post-independence Zimbabwe, it is the reason why she has problems with the young receptionist at a hotel she was supposed to meet with friends. The receptionist has challenges digesting the fact that a white person can have black friends. This incident of the receptionist awakens Todd to the problem of race in the new nation prompting her to question what was wrong in a nation where ten years after independence, there were still race prejudices.

Throughout the narrative Todd is also discursively disentangling herself from the perceptions of whiteness that associate her race with non-commitment to the new Zimbabwe. Nuttall (2009:59) reminds us that "the work of entanglement is also, in part, the work of disentanglement – from whiteness in its official fictions and material trajectories, its privileges and access to power, now in an emerging context of black political power… in order to become something, someone different". This disentanglement comes out sharply when Todd is disturbed by a statement that had initially escaped her attention in a book authored by Mutasa who had written: "It is surprising that Judith Todd and Peter Niesewand those young whites who opposed the regime, were born, and brought up in Rhodesia. Maybe they are opposed to Afrikaner domination (sic)" (p. 119). Judith Todd is thinking about this in the context of a chapter in which she narrates the arrests and disappearances of Zapu linked people. In reflecting on the import of Mutasa's remarks she comments:

> I was shocked and irritated by this, as well as half-heartedly amused, but maybe this weird rationale deserved some thought. Maybe Mutasa was genuinely puzzled about how we could break away from a sort of group loyalty. Maybe detention was wrong in those days simply because it was visited by whites, or by a colonial regime, on the representatives of the nationalist movement. Maybe today what is worse than that is disloyalty to one's peers in power. Maybe criticism of the way in which power is being exercised, once one has a popularly elected black government, is at least rude and wounding, and at worst, treasonable. I'm not being in the least ironic. I'm just trying to puzzle out how and why people adapt to the repression of their fellows. (p. 119)

Todd's reflections speak to the afterlife of her anti-colonial activism, in which she is now expected to maintain support for those on whose side she fought, notwithstanding the

similarity of their regime to the one she opposed in colonial days. Disentanglement can also be read when Todd is asked by Canaan Banana to contribute a chapter on white politics in a book he was writing. The book was on the history of liberation and Todd is devastated because her argument is that she was never close to white politics. She argues "'But I was so alien to them', I said, 'I couldn't write on their behalf. Why don't you get Chris Andersen?'" (p. 312). She adds "Banana had thought *whites=Judy*. Simple as that" (emphasis in the original) (p. 312). Todd contrasts this affront to an incident that took place when she had visited detained friends at Chikurubi maximum security prison. As required by the rules, she had to taste the food she had brought, but,

> The warders weren't sure that I had sampled the third of the four chickens; I assured them I had, and added, 'It tastes very nice, at which the blacks around me laughed and laughed. Others behind them asked what was so funny, and someone said loudly, 'She says her chickens taste very nice!' And so others started laughing too. *That made me feel warm and included by them, not sad and excluded as Banana had unwittingly made me feel*. (emphasis added) (p. 313)

This is evidence that Todd is engaging in a process of disentangling herself from normative whiteness as generally perceived and concretised by Banana's earlier remarks. In the process she is claiming a higher humanism that rejects racial essentialism.

From the perspective of "time of entanglement", the Zimbabwean postcolony consists of multiple periods of time in which, as Mbembe (2002) in Nuttall (2009: 4) argues, there are "discontinuities, reversals, inertias, and swings that overlay one another, interpenetrate one another: an entanglement". The multiple periods speak of the instability of the postcolonial condition of which Todd says "Zimbabwe is like an enormous kaleidoscope. People keep being shaken up and each year, as if they were tiny pieces of coloured glass, they fall into different patterns" (p 269). By referring to Zimbabwe as a kaleidoscope, she is invoking the multiple experiences characterising postcoloniality and refusing a singularity of experience that comes with essentialism. From these examples Todd is registering her refusal to be bunched into a category of whiteness that she does not subscribe to, rejecting the idea that there is a monolithic white experience and also justifying her refusal to render uncritical support to a regime which she says is no different from that of Ian Smith.

Her reflections can also be approached from the perspective of complicity in terms of what Nuttall (2009: 6) calls "glaring instances of collaboration or accommodation" and "resistance

and collaboration" that are found in postcolonial situations. These are evident in Todd's analysis of the ruling elite and her relationships with some of them. The occasion when she entertains a delegation from Guinea–Conakry, some of whom were survivors of imprisonment by Sekou Toure, awakens her to the contradictions of complicity in Zimbabwe and within herself. She remarks: "I found it so hard to understand how people who had suffered at the hands of oppressors could so readily become oppressors themselves" (p. 136). This demonstrates how people in a postcolonial context are entangled in a political praxis of oppression originating from colonial rule. While this relates to the politically powerful, her own complicity is highlighted when she thinks of the contradictions of her life after the elections of 1985. Todd confesses: "I was leading a very odd life after the elections. On the one hand, friends were disappearing into the maw of the state. On the other, I was still associating with functionaries as if life in Zimbabwe were normal" (p. 97). Considering her opposition to all forms of state terror, Todd sees her own complicity in terms of "resistance" against the state and "collaboration" with functionaries of the same state. She sees this state metaphorically as the insatiable and terrifying stomach that is always swallowing dissenters real or perceived *ad infinitum*, yet she continues to work with this state. Evidently there are opposing forces co-habiting in one individual and this is a form of entanglement. Here resistance and collaboration are interrelated in a way that does not allow placing blame on any one. Lisa Blackman et al's (2008: 6) comment on subjectivity is thus instructive: "[subjectivity is] to understand the complexities of the experience of being a subject." Todd's subjectivity materialises out of her agency in shaping Zimbabwe's political space through the discourse she generates in her narrative and being simultaneously shaped by that narrative discourse, which constructs her as the other.

Conclusion

The discussion in this chapter has shown how the experiential histories that these narrating subjects are calling into being are political and related to Zimbabwe's coming into national being. This is not necessarily all there is about these narrators' histories, but other experiences on which the narratives remain silent do not belong to these stories about the Zimbabwean nation. Given these perceived silences the narrating subject is not completely knowable. The silences in Chung regarding her personal relationship to Rugare Gumbo, for

instance, points to some unspeakables in autobiography. Todd's marriage breaks up during the period about which she is writing and she mentions this only in passing when she says that Mugabe always calls her Lady Acton which she would only become when her father- in-law dies and her husband becomes Lord Acton. Todd's use of the diary form might be a pointer to the sense of inadequacy of her narrative to bring out the whole truth and yet the inclusion of the diary is an appeal to authority and authenticity.

In Tekere we have seen the tensions of having once belonged, being expelled and not belonging and then trying to re-occupy that space of belonging. He is critical of Zanu (PF)'s ideology of totalitarianism that has led to his expulsion from the inner circle of political power and does this by re-inscribing his personal history of struggle into the national narrative. Chung ushers in contradictory narratives by contesting the gender and sex-based subordination of women. Todd's narrative is a counter to the prevailing ideology that marginalizes ZAPU's contribution to the struggle. It is also a critique of the myth of reconciliation and a unified state. On the whole, the narratives of the three subjects are contestatory in style, which is a personification of the historical and political discourses of the time in which these stories are narrated.

Conclusion
Towards Historic and Dialogic Autobiographical Selves

The study set out to show how Zimbabwean history has constructed life narratives through demarcating autobiographical subjects in selected Zimbabwean autobiographies in their historical contexts. The starting point in the Introduction was a contextualisation of the study within the general theory of autobiography that has been developing in the West since the beginning of the twentieth century. The chapter problematised the definition of autobiography, reviewed literature on developments of literary criticism of the genre in the West, in Africa and in Zimbabwe. The Introduction established that a theory of autobiography in Africa has been lagging behind with Olney's (1973) *Tell Me Africa* being the first major attempt at an extended analysis of African autobiography. Thereafter several other articles in journals, books, book chapters and theses have appeared. Notable among these are a volume of the journal *Research in African Literatures* (1997) solely dedicated to African autobiography and more recently two numbers of the *Journal of Literary Studies* (2009) dedicated to biography and autobiography in southern Africa. The introductory chapter concluded that apart from articles and sections of books, the study of autobiography in Africa has not been sustained and its historicity discussed and this absence has justified this study.

The study proposed to locate the analysis of the selected narratives in postcolonial studies mainly because the historical condition in Zimbabwe is postcolonial. Concepts in postcolonial theory best explain the subjectivities of both the coloniser and the colonised. Postcolonial theory also explains migrant and diasporic experiences and identities. These were useful in discussing Nyagumbo's experiences in South Africa as discussed in Chapter Three. Using a postcolonial approach to the reading of these autobiographies also clarified the ideological representation of the postcolonial condition itself. An eclectic approach using Bakhtinian dialogism and Kristeva's notions of intertextuality was adopted. Dialogism complemented the postcolonial approach in that it unravelled the stylistic dimension of the discourses found in the texts. This created a balance between the ideological and the stylistic. In the analyses of the selected narratives the diverse voices and discourses contained in the texts were analysed from the perspective of seeing them as being shaped by the historical contexts of narrating subjects and as shaping their interpretation of these contexts and

experiences. The analyses established the heteroglot nature of these autobiographical narratives. My discussion in Chapter Three showed that Muzorewa's narrative for instance, is a story of both spiritual and political conversion in which the latter is illuminated by the former. The language of spiritual conversion is thus a type of discourse that could be better understood by applying Bakhtinian dialogism. In this narrative the political realities in Rhodesia are apprehended through Christian spirituality since discourses of Christian liberation sit together, notwithstanding the ironies, with nationalist liberation ideology. There is thus a genre within a genre in Muzorewa's narrative and these dialogise each other to create a narrative that attempts to present a coherent nationalist political subject, although the subject is being pulled in different directions. Muzorewa is not certain whether to embrace violence as part of the liberation process or not. Du Bois's (2011: 62) observations regarding dialogism are instructive:

> Dialogic engagement is a two-way street, in which the author of any utterance endeavors to articulate relevant connections between their words and the words of other speakers. But this dialogic engagement can be seen as a practice that points in two directions at once – extending out from the present moment of discourse towards the past, to the horizons of prior discourse, but extending also into the projected future, in anticipation of how one's current utterance will fare when it has left one's lips and is subject to the unpredictable contingencies of its dialogic reframing by the next speaker.

The process creates layers of meaning and the subject that is constructed is equally complex. My theoretical approach also embraced intertextuality and conclusions drawn from the discussion in the Introduction are that intertextuality brings history and society into the written texts. This explains how the deployment and reference to intertexts historicises the narratives studied for this thesis.

Chapter One was an extension of the literature review. The chapter explored the key concepts underwriting this study namely: autobiographical subjectivity, discourse and history. The study adopted Smith's and Watson's (2001) thesis on autobiographical subjectivity in which they argue that memory, experience; identity, agency and embodiment are the constitutive elements of autobiographical subjectivity. I modified their model by adding story-telling and performativity as other constituents of autobiographical subjectivity. This is because subjectivities are also constructed in the process of narrative construction and individuals perform identities in accordance with identity models available to them at particular historical junctures. Chapter One thus also explored how identities are created through performance. I

referred to the ideas of Butler (1993, 1995 & 1997) where she argues that performativity is underwritten by the assumption that human actions and practices at any moment are a public presentation of the self and through story-telling the power of discourse produces effects on self-construction through reiteration. To sum up succinctly the intentions of this chapter: it seeks to show that the act of telling one's story in autobiography is a performance of historical identities.

Since the purpose of this study is how Zimbabwean history has constructed life-narratives, it was imperative to demonstrate the interface between historical consciousness of autobiographical subjects and the acts of narrating their life stories. In Chapter One I therefore also applied White's (1987) and Green's (1997) ideas on how the demarcation of history and fiction by traditional scholars has to be revised in the wake of the realisation that the historian also makes use of metaphor and point of view in writing what is supposedly an objective ordering of historical facts. This was useful in demonstrating the fact and fiction interface in autobiography. It is through historical consciousness that the public experiences are brought into the private act of narrating the self in autobiography. I also examined the power of discourse in constructing the subject. While the subject may have its agency, discourse has an insidious way of constructing the subject. Discourses that pre-exist in any historical and cultural epoch hail individuals into particular subject positions and these are also mobilised by subjects as they construct their identities in narratives. Therefore, agency is also realised when subjects mobilise linguistic, political and other cultural resources (including intertexts) to come up with speaking positions. The chapter concluded that the nexus of autobiography, history, discourse and subjectivity is critical for any theory of autobiography.

Several questions were posed in the Introduction as questions guiding the study. The first question was: "How have discursive practices, developed in the course of Zimbabwean history, shaped autobiographical subjectivities?" The analysis of narratives chosen for this study has shown how these are located in the epistemes of the rise and fall of Rhodesia and the birth and decline of Zimbabwe and yet also constitute that episteme. Some of them carry the discursive agency of both Rhodesian and African nationalism and national liberation struggles. By locating the analysis of autobiographical narratives selected for this study in the discourses generated in the course of creating Rhodesia, deconstructing it and constructing

Zimbabwe, the study has shown that narrators are hailed into subject position as nation-builders, freedom fighters and even dissenting subjects by particular discursive practices in their lived times. In answering this question in Chapter Two I analysed Rhodesian pioneer and settler autobiographies. The chapter established that Johnson's *Great Days*, Sauer's *Ex-Africa* and Richards's *Next Year Will Be Better* are defined by the logic of imperialism although Richards's book extends the limits of imperial discourse by dealing with the gendered dimensions of settlement and most importantly, the transition of Rhodesia from being an imperial outpost to nationhood. The hardships of the 1930s in Rhodesia actually inspire Richards's narrative and her subjectivity is constructed on the grounds of home-making (an ideology championed by Cecil John Rhodes) in a hostile environment. Her subjectivity is also tied to that of her family and in this regard she maintains a familial trope in articulating her identity. Richards's family is symbolic of the ideology of the unified family that forms the basis of the Rhodesian nation as later articulated in Ian Smith's autobiography. In terms of emplotment Richards's narrative coheres with the masculine plot of the heroic conqueror of the wild on the colonial frontier and in her case the hero is her husband Nkosi. Richards's home-making is thus a materialisation of discursive nation-building. She thus conceives herself as a nation-building subject. The discursive mapping of the colonial frontier as the site where new nations are constructed shapes the narratives analysed in this chapter.

There is a way in which all the three autobiographers essentialise white identities of their time and yet in spite of these narrators belonging to roughly the same epoch, my analysis established that their subjectivities are different and complex. *Great Days* celebrates the achievements of the British race in spreading empire and argues for the moral superiority of the English. Richards's narrative argues that the fine English character has degenerated and is to be found in its uncontaminated form in Rhodesia, a view which is similar to that of Ian Smith when he defends the purity of the Rhodesian nation as discussed later in Chapter Four. However, Sauer shows in *Ex-Africa* that the white identity is not homogeneous. He complicates the white racial category by bringing in the perceptions of the Afrikaner which are significantly directed by the Anglo-Boer rivalries in South Africa.

Chapter Three also answered this question of how discursive practices, developed in the course of Zimbabwean history, have shaped autobiographical subjectivities. In this chapter I

examined Vambe's *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe*, Muzorewa's *Rise Up and Walk* and Nyagumbo's *With the People*. I located the analysis of these narratives in the history and discourses of mass nationalism and national liberation struggles. The question that needed to be addressed is how African nationalists constructed themselves in narrative given the complexities of nationalist struggles. All three autobiographers constructed themselves as nationalist subjects on the grounds of narrating and initiating a discourse of the historical dispossession of their people, the disintegration of traditional life and being antagonists of the Rhodesian regime. Their political agency in crafting a discourse working towards righting this colonial wrong constructs them as nationalist subjects. However, the study established that their individual experiences within this broader history of struggle spawned varied and complicated subjectivities. Each of the autobiographers deployed various resources in constructing their identities and coming to an understanding of who they are. While it is evident that all begin their narratives by drawing on the cultural resources of their people to establish coherent identities, for Vambe intellectualism shapes his political outlook and ultimately his subjectivity. His approach to the impact of colonialism on his people is measured. He weighs the benefits of the colonial encounter, adopts a moderate stance and proposes reformation of race relations in Rhodesia. However, he is disillusioned in the end when he realises that white Rhodesians were becoming increasingly intransigent in their determination to retain their political authority. Creating a discourse of liberation through writing is thus a way of exercising agency that is denied him by colonial repression. Vambe's cultural and political agency was asserted when he chose to know himself through the mores of his people and through a Zimbabwean nation in the making. This is in spite of being subject to Rhodesian state power and having limited access to power. However, access to intellectual resources and appropriation of Western tools of analysis confers on him a hybridized identity.

Muzorewa's subjectivity is constructed on the grounds of the Christian gospel of total liberation. He too placed value on the spiritual and cultural mores of his people, but it is the Christian Church that mediates his political identity and African nationalist subjectivity. There is even a subtle suggestion in the narrative that his conversion to Christianity takes the same form as that of St. Augustine and in repenting of his theft of mangoes, Muzorewa emulates Augustine's repentance for stealing a pear in the garden and the moment of repentance becomes his turning point. This dialogue with another's word, in Bakhtinian

terms, is according to Ponzio (n.d: 267) "the very place of the I's formation and manifestation". Muzorewa's narrative suggests that the church can be the organisational template for the new nation-state and that as a priest he has the messianic role of delivering the nation from colonial bondage. He conceptualises colonial bondage using biblical tropology derived from Ezekiel's prophecy of the valley of dry bones and Christ's first sermon in which He proclaims His messianic role. The biblical text is another kind of spiritual and religious discourse that is brought to bear on Muzorewa's self-construction as the messiah who will usher in the new nation. Since ideology hails individuals into subject positions as proposed by Hall (2000) the Christian ideology of the total gospel discursively underwrites Muzorewa's subjectivity. It is impossible for Muzorewa to be indifferent to the discourse of liberation and this form of liberation theology that he subscribes to employs a gospel that addresses the existential crisis of the postcolonial subject engendered by colonialism.

For Nyagumbo, being rooted in the struggles of the people disciplines his autobiographical subjectivity. His recollection of his naivety is mediated by exposure to liberation ideology in South Africa. Recalling his naivety in political matters, Nyagumbo constructs a modest nationalist subjectivity, which is only revealed as robust by the editorial intervention of John Conradie. There are two sides to Nyagumbo's narrative: his own principal narrative and the narrative provided by John Conradie through editorial intervention. However, his subjectivity is not as simple as demonstrated in the articulation of his naivety. It is a complex subjectivity given his migrant experiences in South Africa. Nyagumbo's sense of self is undermined by his experience of being a migrant and thus his sense of patriotism is developed when he is already in his thirties. But his interaction with liberation ideas during his time in South Africa perpetually constructs and remakes his identity. His narrative gives an insight into diasporic and migrant subjectivities in a postcolonial situation and how these are discursively constructed.

The second question posed was: "What are the specific historical, cultural and political contexts that have informed life narratives in Zimbabwe?" The postcolonial context provides the historical, political and cultural framework for the construction of these narratives. The political contexts in this postcolonial space are multiple: the occasion of the rise of Rhodesian nationalism and African nationalism and its armed and ideological struggles; the postcolonial

condition of being denied political and cultural space especially the disintegration of the old cultural order for Africans and the denial of political agency in both the colonial and post-independence periods. The cultural contexts also include the culture and politics of knowledge production which have invited certain responses from the narrating subjects. It emerged in this study that, individuals, institutions and history coaxed and at times coerced subjects to tell their stories in particular ways. Thus most of these texts speak to the politics of these sites partly outside the narrating subject. The discursive paradigms occasioned by the postcolony also elicit narrative responses such as those provided by these autobiographies. Since the postcolonial condition is complex the subjectivities it generates range from the all-knowing imperial and colonial settler subjectivities, migrant subjectivities, moderate and radical nationalist subjectivities to ambivalent, dissenting and disillusioned political subjectivities as evidenced in the preceding chapters.

To respond to the question of specific historical, cultural and political moments inspiring and shaping both narratives and subjectivities, in Chapter Four I explored the rhetoric of nation-building (in Rhodesia and in independent Zimbabwe) and related autobiographical practices in Joshua Nkomo's *The Story of My Life*, Peter Godwin's *Mukiwa* and Ian Smith's *Bitter Harvest* and the nature of their subjectivities. Nkomo constructs his nationalist and national-builder subjectivities on the grounds of his sense of victimhood at the hands first of white Rhodesia and more substantially of ZANU (PF). The context that occasions his narrative is political instability and what he says is his persecution in the new Zimbabwe. His narrative identity is constructed by his deconstruction of those marginalising him from state power in the new post-independence nation. The narrative is also a strategic annihilation of any contestations concerning his immense contribution to the country's liberation and to the claims of being Father Zimbabwe. His story is a repudiation of accusations of destabilising the new nation and proves instead that his victimisation was calculated to create a one party state. Evidently, there are many forms of nationalist identities.

Ian Smith appeals to the historic gallantry of the British for his rhetoric on nation-building. Again the historical and political context of the production of his autobiography is what he considers the failed post-independence state. The narrative is highly polemical as he justifies UDI and chronicles the culpability of the free world and South Africa in the betrayal of Rhodesia. The narrative also captures the complexity of Smith's and by extension Rhodesian

identity. He insists at the beginning of the narrative that Rhodesians are more British than the British, that they embody the gallantry of the British race, which unfortunately the British back home no longer possess. The paradox in the narrative is that he also claims an African identity, which in the last parts of the narrative culminates in an emphatic claim that white Rhodesians constitute another tribe in Zimbabwe. Smith constructs his narrative in the historical context of what he considers to be a failed post-independence state, which he thinks is typical of almost all independent African states to the north and his claims to an African identity are occasioned by white people no longer possessing political hegemony in Zimbabwe and therefore becoming irrelevant as a group. *Bitter Harvest* thus vindicates Smith's earlier political actions because they were designed to avert the onset of incompetent black rule and that incompetence is now manifest in the way in which the political class exercises its power in the independent state. Chapter Four established that Smith's Rhodesian nationalist subjectivity is radicalised by his obsession with a singular version of Rhodesianess and what he considered to be the politics of appeasement on the part of South Africa and the free world. Again his highly polemical narrative lends itself to Bakhtinian approaches. In spite of himself, Smith is committed to dialogue with the words of others in history and as Ponzio (nd: 267) argues, "Dialogue is not the result of the I's decision to respect the other or listen to the other. On the contrary, dialogue is the impossibility of closure, of indifference, the impossibility of not becoming involved and is particularly evident in attempts at closure, at indifference that simply proves to be tragico-comical." Smith's narrative becomes a rejoinder to the words and discourses of others and is anticipatory of how others may interpret his own words.

Peter Godwin's *Mukiwa* provides a counter-narrative to Smith's narrative of a stable, unified and coherent Rhodesian identity. Godwin's subjectivity is constructed by his consciousness that the so-called Rhodesian identity is a façade. He rejects the singularity of that identity and his narrative demonstrates how the Rhodesian identity is fractured and is actually cracking in the face of white immigration at the height of the war of independence contrary to Smith's assertions. Godwin's identity as an authentic African (*pukka* African as is intimated by his parents) is problematic since he realises the impermanence of his family in Africa. Where Richards and Smith see belonging on the basis of taming the land and civilising the Africans, Godwin sees the futility of white attempts to subdue Africa. The historical and political moment inspiring that kind of interpretation is again the uncertainty that is engendered by the

black government rule especially the civil disturbances in the Matabeleland region. According to his narrative, white people can never belong. By also comparing his own identity with that of Afrikaners, Godwin realises that he cannot relate meaningfully to Africa and the Rhodesian cause of fighting against Africans in their quest for liberation. He thus fails to identify with the postcolony after witnessing the killing of civilians in Matabeleland by government soldiers and his subjectivity is split both in the context of Rhodesia and the new Zimbabwe.

With the advent of independence new political struggles in Zimbabwe emerge and these together with the discursive context of democracy and multiparty politics also invited autobiographical narratives (especially in Todd's, Tekere's and Chung's cases), in which political subjectivities of freedom fighters and rights activists, such as Todd's, and disillusioned subjects such as Tekere and Chung also emerge. The Zimbabwean postcolony is complex and as a result no single autobiographical subject position can be considered as absolute in the post-independence era. In Chapter Five my analysis focused on autobiographical narratives that emerge in post-independence Zimbabwe. The narrating subjects in Chung's *Reliving the Second Chimurenga*, Tekere's *A Lifetime of Struggle* and Todd's *Through the Darkness* have divergent encounters with the postcolony since their speaking positions are located either at the centre or the margins of state power depending on their political orientation or ideological positions. In this chapter the study concluded that gender and race complicate the narrators' subjectivities in as much as Chung's and Todd's experiential histories are in many ways shaped by these two indices of identity. Their marginalisation, in Rhodesia for Chung and in both Rhodesia and Zimbabwe for Todd, was also explored from the perspective of how this constructed them as freedom fighters.

Tekere's narrative contests his marginalisation in the post-independence nation by deconstructing the discourse of Robert Mugabe's heroic leadership of the armed struggle. Chapter Five argued that Tekere constructs his militant nationalist subjectivity by subscribing to militant and violent masculinities and showing that Mugabe was less militant than he has subsequently claimed to be or he has subsequently been represented. This claim to militancy actually coheres with the dominant political culture and rhetoric of the time of writing his autobiography. It is a time when former fighters in Zimbabwe's armed struggle reinforce their role as liberators and how the nation is indebted to them for its freedom. By locating his

narrative in both the historical times it refers to and the time of its production, the discussion established that nationalist discourse and ideology construct the nexus of Tekere's nationalist subjectivity.

The time of writing and political economy of the production of the text are also relevant in that Tekere is coaxed for a nationalist autobiography by academic and publisher Ibo Mandaza who is keen to produce a Pan-African series of similar autobiographies by leading figures in southern African liberation movements. The dominant discursive practice by opponents of the ruling party at the time of writing is a deconstruction of Robert Mugabe's invincibility and the grand nationalist narrative, but while Tekere deconstructs Mugabe's heroic image his narrative does not transcend the grand narrative. Instead it actually feeds into it by adding his voice to the mantra often coming from the country's liberators who have a sense of entitlement because they liberated the country.

The third research question was stated as "How has the denial of or access to cultural and political agency manifested in autobiographical narratives as motives for narrating the self?" The discussion of autobiographies in Chapters Three, Four and Five has shown that African autobiographers construct their narratives from the position of resisting political and economic marginalisation, contesting the denigration of their cultures and also insisting on the typicality of their experiences. This is the case with African nationalist autobiographies. However, the same can be said of Smith's and Godwin's narratives. Godwin is denied political choices in Smith's Rhodesia where he is forced to serve in the Rhodesian army. Smith himself narrates his version of Rhodesia because he had access to power in Rhodesia, but ironically also narrates his story in post-independence Zimbabwe because his political space and access to political power have been shrinking and he has to contest this loss of actual power through his self-justifying reminiscences. Nevertheless, nationalist autobiographers and white autobiographers alike, narrate their stories because they have the cultural tools with which to articulate their experiences. Having been part of the struggle for independence is political and cultural capital enabling subjects to articulate their experiences.

The analysis carried out in the preceding chapters also addressed the fourth question relating to memory: "In what ways is autobiographical remembering a politicised process?" Memory and remembering are at the core of the autobiographical act since in Smith's and Watson's (2001) model memory is one of the constituent elements of autobiographical subjectivity. For

nationalist subjects, what have to be remembered are their contributions to the struggle since the nationalist struggle defines who they are. The power wielded by narrating subjects to tell their stories and at times not to narrate certain aspects of their stories, and the contexts of remembering indicate the political nature of remembering and narrating the self. Because of the political nature of remembering, the subjective identities that emerge in these autobiographical narratives are always products of the negotiation that goes into this political process. Power by nature can either be positive or negative, which is why in this process of negotiating the self, the individual's relation to power is constitutive of how subjectivity is realised. In the negative sense this relation to power can be controlling and in the process forecloses the realisation of certain identities. The very essence of why these autobiographical narratives have been produced, consumed and understood as legitimate stories constitutes this political process of remembering and telling, and consumption.

My analysis of Johnson's *Great Days* in Chapter Two showed that his remembrance of his Rhodesian days was inflected by the desires of great politicians to have the story of British imperial expansion told. His own motivation for remembering Rhodesia came from political claims of wanting to inform future generations of Rhodesians about the genesis of their country. These memories are therefore meant for a captive audience of statesmen, army generals and future generations of Rhodesians as intimated by Johnson.

To further highlight that autobiographical remembering is a political process my analysis of Muzorewa's narrative in Chapter Three showed how the production of his text was meant to coincide with his taking up of the Zimbabwe-Rhodesia premiership. It was therefore meant to symbolise the triumph of his messianic nationalist role.

The fifth question posed in the Introduction was: "What cultural models of identity were and are available to these selected autobiographers and how did they shape the process of constructing the self?" From Chapter Two it emerged that the pioneer and settler autobiographers had imperial adventure heroes and what Smith and Watson (2001) call the European global planetary subject as role models to emulate in conquering new lands, expanding the reaches of (in the case of Rhodesia or various European empires) the British Empire and creating new countries. The domestic settler subject exemplified by Hylda Richards had aspirations of the English middle-class family and her efforts to make a home in a new and hostile land are modelled on this middle-class identity. However, this relationship

with these models of identity is not simple mime, but is being perpetually reconfigured, which is why while Richards's family model is the English middle-class, she has problems with how the young men who are members of the ground staff of the Royal Air Force behave. To her, they have lost the fine values of English culture.

African nationalist autobiographers had their tribal and family heroes to emulate as discussed in Chapter Three. Vambe for instance had the cultural model of the vaShawasha people, among them Chief Mashonganyika, grandfather Mhizha and to some extent grandmother Madzidza to shape his early identity, which however is unstable as it mutates with unfolding experiences of education and national politics. This identity therefore metamorphoses with exposure to education and the wider world leading him to re-evaluate the significance of these models of identity in the face of the perceived benefits to be derived from colonial modernity. My analysis of Tekere's narrative locates his freedom-fighter identity and nationalist subjectivity in the continuum of his family's legendary fighting spirit. His maternal great-grandfather, a hero of the first Shona uprisings against occupation, acts as a signifier of his own heroic identity. The same can be said of Muzorewa who appeals to a long history of freedom fighting in his family, stretching for centuries since the Makombe people in eastern Zimbabwe on his mother's side successfully resisted Portuguese occupation of their land in the sixteenth century. The Christian priesthood later in his life was instrumental in constructing the subjectivity of a messianic nationalist. He models his identity on that of the radical Bishop Dodge who opposed Rhodesian treatment of black people.

Fay Chung's grandmother who defied tradition by coming to Africa provides Chung with a cultural and political model of identity for her radicalism. Ideologically Marxism and Leninism provide Chung with a model of identity. She models her nationalist identity and her vision for the new nation on these ideas. Chung's identity is modelled on her grandmother's radicalism and also early exposure to political ideology by a highly political grandfather. She chooses to know herself through constructing her subjectivity intersubjectively with fellow women fighters. Her narrative thus chronicles the achievements of other women and does not fully develop her persona making the autobiography relational in the historical sense and in regard to other players in the struggle for liberation. *Reliving the Second Chimurenga* has an intellectual quality which bears the stamp of the intellectual narrator and subject. Chung gives an intellectual analysis of the execution of the war and the ideological battles leading to

fractures and fissures in the struggle movement. Her articulation of the defeat of the ZANU left-wing is an intellectual endeavour and this underwrites her subjectivity. It is a radical-intellectual-nationalist subjectivity. The radicalism and intellectualism are maintained throughout the narrative and manifest in her criticism of the post-independence ruling elite for their betrayal of national aspirations through adoption of neo-liberal economic policies. This she argues is done at the expense of the liberation struggle agenda of creating a socialist post-independence state. Chung proposes to re-invent the national subject by going back to the values of the struggle.

Todd's subjectivity is complicated not only by gender and race but by entanglement in history, in race and complicity in continuing to relate with functionaries of the same state that she accuses of violating the rights of citizens. Entanglement is a specific instance of the postcolonial condition. The subjectivity that emerges out of this context is therefore ambivalent. Her narrative proves more than any other the instability of racial categories as indices of identity. The analysis demonstrated how Todd is conferred with a black identity on the basis of fighting on the side of Africans and accorded Ndebele ethnicity because of fighting for the cause of persecuted former ZIPRA members. Todd's subjectivity is also formed on the grounds of her relationship to state power in both Rhodesia and Zimbabwe. Her subjective identity is that of victim of the totalitarian regimes of both Ian Smith and Robert Mugabe. It is a victimhood cleverly constructed by a subject who purports to be ignorant of the workings of political power and history, but who all the same emerges as a shrewd political commentator. The long tradition of the Todds' involvement in politics shapes Judith Todd's subjectivity. Her Father Sir Garfield Todd provides her with a political model of identity. When she feels a sense of victimhood in post-independence Zimbabwe she relates this to the persecution of her parents both in Rhodesia and Zimbabwe.

My examination of nationalist narratives in Chapters Three, Four and Five proved that when nationalist autobiographers construct their subjectivities they are also working with available models of heroic nationalism in discourses of nationalism in Zimbabwe and elsewhere. They are also being constructed by the nationalist myths generated during the nationalist struggles. Therefore their subjectivities are a performance and embodiment of these myths and discourses.

The last question that this study sought to answer was: "How can life narratives in Zimbabwe be positioned as productive sites for rethinking the practices and politics of life writing in Zimbabwe in order to allow us to reconsider the dynamics of Zimbabwe's violent political past?" This required a consideration of the utilitarian and theoretical value of autobiographical narratives. The study established that self reflection by narrating subjects was deployed to proffer political, ideological and cultural critique of the Zimbabwean nation from its genesis in the modern form to the present. The narratives are also largely relational in that they are implicated in and implicate the stories of others. The bigger sense of relationality is of course that provided by Zimbabwe's history, which the narrators interweave with their own histories. Thinking about life-writing and life-narratives in Zimbabwe should therefore be guided by this relationality, which should inform our understanding of the politics of life-writing. Understanding Zimbabwean autobiography is therefore a relational and situated undertaking.

The personal stories told by these subject narrators perform the role of resisting and sometimes abating the dominant discursive trajectories of Zimbabwe's political and national history. Once these stories have been told and interpreted they function to transform political culture in Zimbabwe and to invent new sites for discussing and validating Zimbabwe. The autobiographies contribute to the construction of Zimbabwe's autobiographical histories and to a specific pattern of autobiographical and literary history of Zimbabwe in general. Studies in the struggle for Zimbabwe can also be focalised around autobiography. The selves projected in these narratives also fracture the understanding of autobiographical subjects as unique and autonomous individuals within the contingencies of history.

The study has shown that the historicity of autobiographical story-telling should be a guiding framework for apprehending the autobiographical subjects of Zimbabwean life-narratives. The location of the autobiographical subject in the historical and political spectrum of Zimbabwean national experiences is critical to our understanding of the relationship between narrative and the context of its production. Thus autobiographical subjectivities, at least based on this study, congeal around history and the political narratives of both Rhodesia and Zimbabwe.

This study used history and discourse to demarcate autobiographical subjects in selected Zimbabwean autobiographies. It showed how the historical experiences of subjects and the

historical context of narration network with memory, identity, and agency and to some extent embodiment to construct subjects. This study used narratives representative of historical epochs in Zimbabwe and obviously failed to theorise other subjectivities by leaving out certain narratives. It is still possible for future research to focus on Zimbabwean autobiographical narratives of spiritual conversion, of those not considered important agents of the political classes at different periods and those of former Rhodesian fighters that have recently proliferated. By deploying postcolonial theory and Bakhtin's concepts of dialogism and heteroglossia, as well as intertextuality, which is an extended development of Bakhtin's dialogism, the study has looked at life-narratives in Zimbabwe from an ideological and stylistic perspective. It will however be interesting to use theories derived from other disciplines such as applied linguistics or psychoanalysis to understand the construction of life- narratives. As highlighted in one chapter, autobiography, just like the novel is a speech genre and as such it would be interesting to use a theory of pragmatics like Austin's Speech Act Theory to analyse Zimbabwean autobiography. Since autobiography is an act of constructing identity through the mediation of memory, psychoanalysis will shed light on how memory is handled by the subject narrator. The autobiographical act is a linguistic act which performs an act because it has a performative force. The Speech Act Theory will illuminate our understanding of autobiography because the subjects do not just tell stories: their narratives actually perform certain acts.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Chung, F. 2006. *Reliving the Second Chimurenga-Memories from Zimbabwe's Liberation Struggle*. Uppsala/Harare: Nordic Africa Institute in Cooperation with Weaver.

Godwin, P. 1996. *Mukiwa: White Boy in Africa*. New York: Grove.

Johnson, F. 1940. *Great Days-The Autobiography of an Empire Pioneer*. London: G. Bell and Sons.

Muzorewa, A.T. 1978. *Rise Up and Walk*. London: Sphere Books.

Nkomo, J. 1984. *The Story of my Life*. London: Methuen.

Nkomo, J. 2001. *The Story of my Life*. Harare: SAPES Books.

Nyagumbo, M. 1980. *With the People: An Autobiography from the Zimbabwean Struggle*. Harare: Graham.

Richards, H. 1975. *Next Year Will be Better and the Verse of 'T'*. Bulawayo: Books of Rhodesia.

Tekere, E. 2007. *A Lifetime of Struggle*. Harare: Sapes.

Todd, J. G. 2007. *Through the Darkness: A Life in Zimbabwe*. Cape Town: Zebra.

Sauer, H. 1937. *Ex-Africa*. Bulawayo: Books of Rhodesia.

Smith, I. D. 1997. *The Great Betrayal: The Memoirs of Ian Douglas Smith*. London: Blake.

Smith, I. D. 2008. *Bitter Harvest: Zimbabwe and the Aftermath of its Independence*. London: John Blake Publishing.

Vambe, L. 1976. *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe*. London: Heinemann.

Secondary Sources

Adas, M. 2004. Contested Hegemony: The Great War and the Afro-Asian Assault on the Civilizing Mission Ideology. *Journal of World History*, 15(1), pp. 31-63.

Ahmad, A. 1996. The Politics of Literary Postcoloniality. In Mongia, P. (ed.), *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory*. London and New York: Arnold. pp. 276-293.

Alexander, K. 2004. Orphans of the Empire, an Analysis of Elements of White Identity and Ideology Construction in Zimbabwe. In Raftopoulos, B. & Savage, T. (eds.), *Zimbabwe: Injustice and Political Reconciliation*. Cape Town: Institute for Justice and Reconciliation. pp. 193-212.

Alfaro, M.J.M. 1996. Intertextuality: Origins and Development of the Concept. Atlantis, 18 (1/2), pp. 268-285.

Allen, G. 2000. *Intertextuality*. London: Routledge.

Ally, S. 2005. Oppositional Intellectualism as Reflection, not Rejection, of Power: Wits Sociology, 1975-1989. *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa*, 59, pp. 66-97.

Althusser, L.1970. <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/althusser/1970/ideology.htm> Accessed 20 November 2012

Anderson, B. 1991. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.

Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G. &Tiffin, H. 1989. *The Empire Writes Back*. London: Routledge.

_____(eds.). 1995. *The Postcolonial Studies Reader*. London: Routledge.

_____1998. *Post-colonial Studies: Key Concepts*. London: Routledge.

_____2002. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures*. London: Routledge.

_____ 2011. *Key Concepts in Post-colonial Studies*. London: Routledge.

Attwel, D. 2006. All Autobiography is Autre-biography. In Coullie, J. L., Meyer, S., Ngwenya, T. & Olver, T. (eds.), *Selves in Question-Interviews on Southern African Autobiography*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. pp. 213-218.

Bakhtin, M. M. 1981. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Ed. Holquist, M. Translated by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin and London: University of Texas.

Barthes, R. 1981. *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, trans: Richard Howard. New York: Hill and Wang.

Bates, E.S. 1937. *Inside Out: An Introduction to Autobiography*. New York: Sheridan House.

Berger, R.A. 2010. *Decolonizing African Autobiography*. Research in African Literatures, 41(2), pp. 32-54.

Berryman, C. 1999. *Critical Mirrors: Theories of Autobiography*. Mosaic, 32 (1), pp. 71-84.

Bhabha, H. 1994. *The Location of Culture*. New York and London: Routledge.

Bhabha, H.1983. The Other Question, Stereotype, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism. *Screen*, 24 (6). pp. 18-36.

Blackman, L., Cromby, J., Hook, D., Papadopoulos, D. & Walkerdine, V. 2008. Editorial: Creating Subjectivities. *Subjectivity*, 22, pp.1-27.

Blake, W. 1794. *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*. London: Tate Publishing.

Boehmer, E. 2005. *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature*. London: Oxford University.

Boydston, J. 2005. *Locating Settler Colonies in the Postcolonial Imaginary*. *American Quarterly*, 57 (4), pp. 1223-1229.

Brockmeier, J and Carbaugh, D. 2001. *Narrative and Identity: Studies in Autobiography, Self and Culture*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Bronte, C. 1864. *Jane Eyre*. Oxford: Oxford University.

Bruner, J. 2004. Life as Narrative. *Social Research*, 71(3). pp. 691-710.

Butler, J. 1993. *Bodies that Matter*. London: Routledge.

_____ 1995. Collected and Fractured: Response to Identities. In Apiah, K.A. and Gates, H.L. Jnr. *Identities*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press. pp. 439-447.

_____ 1997. *Excitable Speech: A politics of the Performative*. New York and London: Routledge.

Buuck, D.A. 1997. African Doppelganger: Hybridity and Identity in the Work of Dambudzo Marechera. *Research in African Literatures*, 28(2), pp. 118-131.

Cairnie, J. 2007. Women and the Literature of Settlement and Plunder: Toward an Understanding of the Zimbabwean Land Crisis. *English Studies in Canada*, 33 (1-2), pp. 165-188.

Call, L. 1995. Nietzsche as Critic and Captive of Enlightenment. Unpublished PhD Thesis. Irvine: University of California.

Callero, P. L. 2003. The Sociology of Self. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 29(2). pp. 115-133.

Carr, D. 1991. *Time, Narrative, and History*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Chennells, A. J. 1982. Settler Myths and the Southern Rhodesian Novel. Unpublished D Phil Thesis. University of Zimbabwe.

_____2005. Self-representation and National Memory: White Autobiographies in Zimbabwe. In Muponde, R. & Primorac, R, (eds.), *Versions of Zimbabwe: New Approaches to Literature and Culture*. pp. 131-144, Harare: Weaver.

_____2009. The Authority of Presence: Reading Judith Todd's Through the Darkness as Diary. *Journal of Literary Studies*, 25(1), pp. 98-114.

Chennells, A. J and Veit-Wild, F. 1999. *Emerging Perspectives on Dambudzo Marechera*. Asmara: Africa World Press.

Coullie, J. L. 2004. *The Closest of Strangers: South African Women's Life Writing*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

Coullie, J.L., Meyer, S., Ngwenya, T. and Olver, T. 2006. Introducing Selves in Question. In J. L. Coullie, Meyer, S. & Olver, T. (eds.), *Selves in Question: Interviews on Southern African Auto/biography*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. pp. 1-62.

Coullie, J.L., Meyer, S., Ngwenya, T. and Olver, T., (eds.). 2006. *Selves in Question: Interviews on Southern African Auto/biography*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

D'Almeida, I. A. 1997. Kesso Barry's *Kesso*, or Autobiography as a Subverted Tale. *Research in African Literatures*, 28(2), pp. 66-82.

Daneel, M. L. 1987. *Quest for Belonging-Introduction to a Study of African Independent Churches*. Gweru: Mambo Press.

Daneel, M. L. 2000. African Initiated Churches in Southern Africa: Protest Movements or Mission Churches? In *Africa Humanities Programme*, AH33. Boston: African Studies Center.

Daneel, M. L. 2011. African Independent Church Pneumatology and Salvation of All Creation. *International Review of Mission*, 82(326), pp.143-166.

Day, J. 1975. The Creation of Political Myths: African Nationalism in Southern Rhodesia. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 2, pp. 52-65.

De Certeau, M. 1984. *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans: Steven Rendall. Berkerley: University of California Press.

Defoe, D. 1719. *Robinson Crusoe*. London: William Taylor.

Derrida, J. 1988. *Limited, Inc*. Translated by S Weber. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

Derrida, J.1996. *Remarks on Deconstruction and Pragmatism*. In Mouffe, C. (ed.), Deconstruction and Pragmatism. London: Routledge, pp. 77-88.

Dominic, M. 2001. "Confessions". In Jolly, M. (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Life Writing*. London: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers. pp. 228-229.

Douglass, F. 1845. *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass-An American Slave*. USA: The Antislavery Office.

Drichel, S. 2008. Regarding the Other: Postcolonial Violations and Ethical Resistance in Margaret Atwood's Bodily Harm. *Modern Fiction Studies*, 54 (1), pp. 20-49.

Du Bois, J. W. 2011. Co-opting Intersubjectivity, Dialogic Rhetoric of the Self. In Meyer, C. and Girke, F. (eds.), *The Rhetorical Emergence of Culture*. Oxford: Berghahn. pp. 52-83.

Du Gay, P., Evans, J. & Redman, P. 2000. Introducing Identity: A Reader. In P. Du Gay, J. Evans, & P. Redman (eds.), *Identity: A Reader*. London: Sage. pp. 1-14.

Elbaz, R. 1987. *The Changing Nature of the Self: A Critical study of the Autobiographic Discourse*. Indiana: University of Iowa Press.

Erdinast-Vulcan, D. 2008. The I that Tells Itself: A Bakhtinian Perspective on Narrative Identity. *Narrative*, 6(1), pp. 1-15.

Fairclough, N. 1992. *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

_____ 1995. *Media Discourse*. London: Edward Arnold.

Fanon, F. 1963. *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans: Richard Philcox. New York: Grove.

Folkenflik, R., (ed.). 1993. *The Culture of Autobiography: Constructions of Self-Representation*. California: Stanford University.

Foucault, M. 1972. *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans: Sheridan-Smith, A.M. London: Tavistock Publications.

Foucault, M. 1994. Two lectures. In N. B. Dirks, G. Eley and S. B. Ortner (eds.), *Culture, Power, History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University. pp. 200-221.

Fox, J. 1997. Place and Landscape in Comparative Austronesian Perspective. In J. Fox (ed.), *The Poetic Power of Place. Comparative Perspectives on Austronesian Ideas of Locality*. Canberra: Department of Anthropology in Association with The Comparative Austronesian Project, Research School of Pacific & Asian Studies, The Australian National University. pp. 1-17.

Freire, P. 1972. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Gallagher, C. and Greenblatt, S. 2000. *Practicing New Historicism*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Geesey, P. 1997. Why African Autobiography? *Research in African Literatures*, 28 (2): pp. 1-4.

Gikandi, S. 1987. *Reading the African Novel*. London: James Currey.

_____2003. *Encyclopedia of African Literature*. London: Routledge.

Gilroy, P. 1997. Diaspora and the Detours of identity. In K. Woodward (ed.), *Identity and Difference*. London: Sage, pp. 299-346.

_____2000. *Between Camps*. London: Allen Lane.

Giri, B. P. 2005. Diasporic Postcolonialism and its Antimonies. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 14(2/3), pp. 215-235.

Godwin, P. and Hancock, I. 1993. *Rhodesians Never Die: the Impact of War and Political Change on White Rhodesia C. 1970-1980*. London: Pan Macmillan.

Green, M. C. 1997. *Novel Histories-Past, Present and Future in South African Fiction*. Witwatersrand: Witwatersrand University Press.

Gumbar, D. P. 2009. Autobiographical Subjectivity in Judith Ortiz Cofer's Silent Dancing and Marjorie Agosin's The Alphabet in My Hands. Unpublished MA Thesis, George Mason University.

Gunzenhausser, B. 2001. Autobiography: General Survey. In M. Jolly (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Life Writing: Autobiography and Biographical Forms*. London: Fitzroy Dearborn. pp. 75-77.

Gusdorf, G. 1980. Conditions and Limits of Autobiography. In J. Olney (ed.) *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*. New Jersey: Princeton University. pp. 28-48.

Haggard, R.H. 2009. *Allan Quatermain*. Auckland: The Floating Press.

Hall, S. 1990. Cultural Identity and Diaspora. In J. Rutherford (ed.), *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. London: Lawrence & Wishart. pp. 222-237.

_____ 1992. The West and the Rest of Us. In S. Hall and B. Gieben (eds.) *Formation of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press; Milton Keynes: Open University.

_____ 1996. Introduction: Who Needs Identity? In S. Hall and P. Du Gay (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: Sage, pp. 1-17.

_____ 1996. When was 'the post-colonial'? Thinking at the Limit. In I. Chambers and L. Curti (eds.) *The Post-Colonial Question: Common Skies, Divided Horizons*. London: Routledge, pp. 70-97.

_____ 1999. A Conversation with Stuart Hall. *Journal of the International Institute*, 7(1), pp. (n.p).

_____ 2000. Who Needs "Identity"? P. Du Gay, J. Evans and P. Redman (eds.), *Identity: A Reader*. London: Sage, pp. 15-30.

_____ 2003. The Spectacle of the Other. In S. Hall (ed.), *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. The Open University-London: Sage, pp. 223-279.

_____ 2003. The Work of Representation. In S. Hall (ed.), *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. The Open University- London: Sage, pp. 13-71.

Harris, A. 2005. Writing Home: Inscriptions of Whiteness/Descriptions of Belonging in White Zimbabwean Memoir-Autobiography. In R. Muponde and R. Primorac (eds.), *Versions of Zimbabwe: New Approaches to Literature and Culture*. Harare: Weaver. pp. 103-117.

Harte, L. 2006. Migrancy, Performativity and Autobiographical Identity. *Irish Studies Review*, 14(2), pp. 225-238.

Hawes, T. 1995. Janet Frame: The Self as Other/Othering the Self. Deep South, 1(1): Online <www.otago.ac.nz/deepsouth/vol1no1/hawes> Accessed 14 October 2013

Holquist, M. 2002. *Dialogism-Bakhtin and his World*. London: Routledge.

Hroch, M.1996. From National Movement to the Fully-formed Nation: The Nation Building Process in Europe. In G. Balakrishnan (ed.), *Mapping the Nation*. London: Verso. pp. 78-97.

Huddart, D. 2008. *Postcolonial Theory and Autobiography*. London: Routledge.

Irele, A. 2001. *The African Imagination: Literature in Africa and Black Diaspora*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Irele, A. 2011. *The Negritude Movement: Explorations in Francophone African and Caribbean Literature and Thought*. Asmara: Africa World Press.

Ivison, D. 2003. Travel Writing at the End of Empire: A Pam Named Bruce and the Mad White Giant. *ESC*, 29 (3-4), pp. 200-219.

Javangwe, T.D. 2011. Contesting Narratives: Constructions of Self and the Nation in Zimbabwean Auto/biography. Unpublished D Phil Thesis. University of South Africa.

_____ 2013. *The Politics and Poetics of Writing Self and Nation in Zimbabwean Autobiography*. Harare: Africa Institute for Culture, Peace, Dialogue and Tolerance Studies.

Kaarsholm, P. 2006. Memoirs of a Dutiful Revolutionary, Fay Chung and the Legacies of the Zimbabwean Liberation War. In F. Chung *Re-Living the Second Chimurenga - Memories from Zimbabwe's Liberation Struggle*. Uppsala/Harare: Nordic Africa Institute in Cooperation with Weaver. pp. 7-25.

Kaiksow S.A. 2008. Subjectivity and Imperial Masculinity: a British Soldier in Dhofa 1968-1970. *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, 4 (2), pp. 60-80.

Kaunda, K.D. 1963. *Zambia Shall Be Free: An Autobiography*. London: Heinemann.

Kenyatta, J. 1965. *Facing Mount Kenya: the Tribal Life of the Gikuyu*. New York: Random House.

Klein, K. L. 2000. On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse. *Representations*, 69. pp. 127-150.

Kristeva, J. 1980. Word, Dialogue, and Novel. In L. S. Roudiez, L.S. (ed.), *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, trans. Thomas Gora et al. New York: Columbia University. pp. 64-91.

_____ 1982. Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection, trans: Leon S. Roudiez, New York: Columbia University Press.

Kutcha, D. 2002. *The Three-Piece Suit and Modern Masculinity*: England, 1550-1850. Berkeley: University of California.

Larson, C. 1974. Review: Tell me Africa: An Approach to African Literature. *Research in African Literatures*, 5(2), pp. 289-291.

Laye, C. 2005. *L'enfant Noir*. Peterborough: Focus Publishing

Lessing, D. 1954. *A Proper Marriage*. London: Michael Joseph.

Levin, M. and Taitz, L. 1999. Fictional Autobiographies or Autobiographical Fictions. In Chennells, A. & Veit-Wild, F. (eds.), Emerging Perspectives on Dambudzo Marechera. Asmara: Africa World. pp. 163-175.

Levine, P. 2001. *Gender and Empire, Oxford History of the British Empire Companion Series*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Low G.C. 1995. *White Skins/Black Masks: Representation and Colonialism*. London & New York: Routledge.

Maenzanise, B. 2008. The Church and Zimbabwe's Liberation Struggle. *Methodist History*, 46(2), pp. 68-86.

Mamdani, M. 1996. *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Martin, E. 2011. Intertextuality: An Introduction. *The Comparatist*, 35, pp. 148-151.

Martin, J. R. and White, P. R. R. 2005. *The Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English*. London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mason, M. G. 1980. The Other Voice: Autobiographies of Women Writers. In J. Olney (ed.), *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press. pp. 207-235.

Mayer, T. 2000. *Gender Ironies of Nationalism, Sexing the Nation*. London: Routledge.

Mbembe, A. 2001. *On the Postcolony*. Berkeley: University of California.

_____ 2002. African Modes of Self-writing, trans: Steven Rendall, *Public Culture*, 14(1). pp. 239-273.

McAdams, D.P. 2008. Personal Narrative and the Life Story. In O. P. John, R. W. Robins and L. A. Pervin (eds.), *Handbook of Personality: Theory and Research* (3rd Ed.). New York: Guilford Press. pp. 242-264

McClintock, A. 1992. The Angel of Progress: Pitfalls of the Term "Post-colonialism". *Social Text* 31/32, pp. 84-98.

McNee, L. 1997. Autobiographical Subjects. *Research in African Literatures*, 28: (2), pp. 83-101.

Morrel, R. 1998. Of Boys and Men: Masculinities and Gender in Southern African Studies. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 24(4), pp. 605-630.

Morrel, R. 2000. *Changing Masculinities in a Changing Society: Men and Gender in Southern Africa*. Durban: University of Natal.

Moukhlis, S. 2003. "A History of Hopes Postponed": Women's Identity and the Postcolonial State in Year of the Elephant: A Moroccan Woman's Journey Toward Independence. *Research in African Literatures*, 34(3), pp. 66-83.

Muchemwa, K. 2005. Some Thoughts on History, Memory and Writing in Zimbabwe. In R. Muponde and R. Primorac (eds.), *Versions of Zimbabwe-New Approaches to Literature and Culture*. Harare: Weaver. p. 195-215.

Muponde, R. and Primorac, R., (eds.). 2005. Versions of Zimbabwe: New Approaches to Literature and Culture. Harare: Weaver.

Mutswairo, S. 1974. *Feso*. Washington: Three Continents.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J. 2009. Mapping Cultural and Colonial Encounters, 1880s-1930s. In B. Raftopoulos and A. S. Mlambo (eds.), *Becoming Zimbabwe, A History From the Pre-Colonial Period to 2008*. Harare: Weaver Press. pp. 39-74.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J. 2007. Africa for Africans or Africa for "Natives" only? "New Nationalisms" and "Nativism" in Zimbabwe and South Africa. *Africa Spectrum*, 1, pp.61-78.

Ngugi, WaThion'go. 1982. *Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary*. London: Heinemann.

Nkrumah, K. 1957. *Ghana: The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah*. Michigan: University of Michigan.

Nuttall, S. 2009. *Entanglement, Literary and Cultural Reflections on Post-Apartheid*. Johannesburg: Wits University.

Nuttall, S. and Coetzee, J.M. 1998. *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa*. London: Oxford University.

Okazaki, A. 2002. The Making and Unmaking of Consciousness: Two Strategies for Survival in a Sudanese Borderland. In R.Werber (ed.), *Postcolonial Subjectivities in Africa*. New York: Zed Books. pp. 63-83.

Olaoluwa, S. 2010. The Literary in the Historical? Jacques Depelchin and the Reassessment of the African Decolonisation Project in Literature and Society. *Imbizo: International Journal of African Literary and Comparative Studies*, 1 (1) pp.55-64

Olney, J. (ed.). 1980. *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*. New Jersey: Princeton University.

_____ 1972. *Metaphors of self*. Princeton New Jersey: Princeton University.

_____ 1973. *Tell Me Africa: An Approach to African Literature*, New Jersey: Princeton University.

_____ 1980. Autobiography and the Cultural Moment: A Thematic, Historical and Bibliographical Introduction. In J. Olney (ed.), *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*. New Jersey: Princeton University. pp. 3-28.

Ostrovsky, N. 1932-1934. *How the Steel Was Tempered*. Moscow: Progress.

Paton, A. 1948. *Cry the Beloved Country*. London: Jonathan Cape.

Pena-Marin, C. 1993. Subjectivity and Temporality in Narrative. In S. Lopez, J. Talens and Villanueva (eds.), *Critical Practices in Post-Franco Spain*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. pp. 1-6.

Ponzio, A. nd. Otherness, Intercorporeity and Dialogism in Bakhtin's View of the Text. Trans. Susan Petrilli. pp. 267-278. < http://nevmenandr. Net/scientia/festschrift/ponzio.pdf.> Accessed 17 August 2012

Punt, J. 2004. Whose Bible, Mine or Yours? Contested Ownership and Bible Translation in Southern Africa. *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies*, 60(1/2), pp. 307-328.

Raftopoulos, B. 1999. Problematising Nationalism in Zimbabwe: A Historiographical Review. *Zambezia*, 26(2), pp. 115-134.

Ranger, T.O. 1988. *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe*. Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing House.

Regard, F. 2003. Topologies of the Self: Space and Life-Writing. *Partial Answers: Journal of Literature and the History of Ideas*, 1(1), pp. 89-102.

Rota, S. L. M. 2009. The Limits of Postcolonial Autobiography and the Empowering Capacity of Life-Writing. *Linguae &-*, 1, pp. 47-63.

Rousseau, J. 2012 (1782). *The Confessions*. New Mexico: CSF Publishing.

Said, E, 1978. *Orientalism*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

_____ 1998. *Beginnings: Intention and Method*. London: Granta.

_____ 1994. *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Alfred Knopf.

Samkange, S. 1966. *On Trial for My Country*. London: Heinemann.

Sandberg, B. Telling History/Histories: Autobiographical Writing and Testimonies of the Holocaust. <www.cas.uio.no/Publications/Seminar/Consilence.> pp.35-38. Accessed 19 August 2011.

Santaularia, I. 2001. He Comes Back Badder and Bigger Than Ever! : Adapting the Masculine and Negotiating the Feminine in Treasure-Hunting Adventure Narratives. *Links & Letters*, 8, pp. 83-93.

Scott, B. 2013. "Every Trivial Little Thing": Sei Shonagan and the Poetics of Insignificance. *Auto/biography Studies*, 28(1), pp. 86-111.

Seshadri-Crooks, K. 2000. At the Margins of Postcolonial Studies: Part I. In Afzal-Khan, F. and Seshadri-Crooks (eds.), *The Pre-occupation of Postcolonial Studies*. Durham & London: Duke University Press. pp. 3-23.

Shaba, L. 2005. *Secrets of a Woman's Soul.* Harare: Sable Press.

Shakespeare, William. *Julius Caesar.* New York: Knickerbocker Leather and Novelty Company. 1861.

Shevtsova, M. 1992. Dialogism in the Novel and Bakhtin's theory of Culture. *New Literary History,* 23 (3), pp. 747-763.

Shilling, C. 1993. *The Body and Social Theory*. London: Sage Publications.

Showalter, E. 1992. *Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siècle.* London: Virago.

Smith S. 1992. The Other Woman and the Racial Politics of Gender: Isak Dinesen and Beryl Markham in Kenya. In S. Smith and J. Watson (eds.), *De-Colonizing the Subject: The Politics of Gender in Women's Autobiography.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. pp. 410-433

Smith, S. & Watson, J. 1998. Introduction: Situating Subjectivity in Women's Autobiographical Practices. In S. Smith and J. Watson (eds.), *Women, Autobiography, Theory: A Reader.* Madison Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press. pp. 3-52.

_____2001. *Reading Autobiography - A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.

_____2002. Introduction: Mapping Women's Self-Representation at Visual/Textual Interfaces. In S. Smith and J. Watson (eds.), *Interfaces: Women, Autobiography, Image, Performance.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan. pp. 1-48.

Smith, S. 1993. *Subjectivity, Identity, and the Body.* Bloomington: Indiana University.

_____1998. Performativity, Autobiographical Practice, Resistance. In J. Watson and S. Smith (eds.), *Women, Autobiography, Theory: A Reader*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 108-115.

Sow, A. 2010. Political Intuition and African Autobiographies of Childhood. *Biography*, 33(3), pp. 498-517.

Soyinka, W. 1972. *The Man Died: Prison Notes of Wole Soyinka.* London: Vintage Books.

Soyinka, W. 1982. *Ake: The Years of Childhood.* New York: Random House.

Spencer, P. and Wollman, H. 2002. *Nationalism: A Critical Introduction.* London: Sage Publications.

Spengemann, W. 1980. *The Forms of Autobiography: Episodes in the History of a Genre.* New Haven: Yale University.

Spivak, G. 1995. Can the Subaltern Speak? In B. Ashcroft, G. Griffiths and H. Tiffin (eds.), *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader.* London: Routledge. pp. 24-28.

St. Augustine. 1960. *The Confessions of St. Augustine*, trans: John K. Ryan. New York: Image Books.

Suttner, R. 2004. Masculinities and Femininities Within the ANC-Led Liberation Movement. Online: <http//:www.afsaap.org.au/Conferences/2004/suttner.PDF> Accessed 20 May 2009

Swift, J. 1768). *Gulliver's Travels*. London: Bathurst.

Tappan, M. B. 2005. Domination, Subordination and the Dialogical self: Identity Development and the Politics of 'Ideological Becoming'. *Culture & Psychology*, 11 (1), pp. 47-75.

Taylor J. O. 2009. Kipling's Imperial Aestheticism: Epistemologies of Art and Empire in Kim. *English Literature in Transition*, 52 (1), pp. 49-66.

Unterhalter, E. 2000. The Work of the Nation: Heroic Masculinity in South African Autobiographical Writing of the Anti-apartheid Struggle. *European Journal of Development Research*, 12(2), pp. 157-178.

Uusihakala, K. 2008. *Memory Meanders: Place, Home and Commemoration in an Ex-Rhodesian Diaspora Community*. Finland: Helsinki University Printing House.

Vambe, L. 1972. *An Ill-Fated People: Zimbabwe Before and After Rhodes*. London: Heinemann.

Vambe, M.T. 2004. *African Oral Story-telling Tradition and the Zimbabwean Novel in English*. Pretoria: UNISA.

Vambe, M.T. 2009. Fictions of Autobiographical Representations: Joshua Nkomo's The Story of my Life. *Journal of Literary Studies*, 25(1). pp. 80-97.

Vambe, M.T. and Chennells, A.J. 2009. Introduction. *Journal of Literary Studies*, 25(I), pp. 1-7.

Van der Walt, L. 2007. The First Globalisation and Transnational Labour Activism in Southern Africa: White Labourism, the IWW, and the ICU, 1904-1934. *African Studies*, 66(2/3), pp. 223-251.

Veit-Wild, F. 1992. *Teachers Preachers Non-Believers: A Social History of Zimbabwean Literature*. London: Hans Zell.

Veit-Wild, F. and Chennells, A. J. (eds.).1999. *Emerging Perspectives on Dambudzo Marechera*. Asmara: Africa World Press.

Villanueva, S.P. 2013. Crossing Boundaries: Authority, Knowledge, and Experience in the Autobiography Vida y Sucesos de la Monja Alfarez. Auto/Biography Studies, 28 (2), pp. 272-295.

Washington, B.T. 1901. *Up From Slavery*. New York: Doubleday, Page.

Watson, J. 1997. Unruly Bodies: Autoethnography and Authorization in Nafissatou Diallo's De Tilene au Plateau (A Dakar Childhood). *Research in African Literatures*, 28(2), pp. 34-56.

Weintraub, K. J. 1978. *The Value of the Individual – Self and Circumstance in Autobiography*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Werbner, R. 2002. Introduction-Postcolonial Subjectivities, The Personal, the Political and the Moral. In R. Werbner (ed.), *Postcolonial Subjectivities in Africa*. London & New York: Zed Books. pp. 1-22.

Westerhof, T. 2005. *Unlucky in Love*. Harare: Public Personalities Against AIDS Trust.

White, H.V. 1966. The Burden of History. *History and Theory*, 5(2). pp. 111-134.

_____1975. *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe.* Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

_____1985. Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

_____1987. *The Content of the Form: Discourses and Historical Representation*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Whitlock, G. 2000. *Intimate Empire: Reading Women's Autobiography*. London: Continuum International Publishing.

Windholz A.M. 1999. An Emigrant and a Gentleman: Imperial Masculinity, British Magazines, and the Colony that Got Away. *Victorian Studies*, 42 (4), pp. 631-658.

Wittenberg H. 2006. Occult, Empire, Landscape: The Colonial Uncanny in John Buchan's African Writing. *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, 7 (2), pp. 5-23.

Woodward, K. 2002. *Understanding Identity*. London: Arnold.

Wordsworth, W. 1850. *The Prelude*. London: Penguin Classics.

Worthington, K.L. 1996. *Self as Narrative: Subjectivity and Community in Contemporary Fiction.* London: Oxford University Press.

Wright, R. 1945. *Black Boy*. New York: Harper & Bothers.