# A COMPARATIVE STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF SELECTED ZIMBABWEAN AND SOUTH AFRICAN FICTION (2000-2015)

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**Declaration**

I hereby declare that this thesis is my original work and is a product of my research efforts under the guidance and supervision of my two promoters, Prof L. M Hove and Dr. A. Hlatshwayo. The study has not been presented elsewhere for the award of a degree. In addition, all sources used have been appropriately acknowledged and they appear on the list of references.

Esther Mavengano

**Abstract**

This study seeks to develop a new comprehensive, dynamic and ever-evolving stylistic analytical model that integrates linguistics and poetics. The Multi-perspectival Stylistic Model (MSM), is proposed in this study with the intention to demonstrate that human reality as depicted in poetic discourse and presented through languaging is nuanced, heterogenous and multifaceted therefore cannot be fully explored and understood from a single theoretical perspective but rather requires a transdisciplinary approach. One of the fundamental qualities of the Multi-perspectival Stylistics Model is that textual features are read as both contextual and linguistic clues that work for semantic effect. Thus, deliberate attention is paid to textual details to check on intuitively formulated semantic arguments. The study argues that it is necessary for both linguists and literary scholars to become rhizomatic researchers and rethink linguistics and poetics beyond disciplinary confinement. This means moving away from "striated "disciplinary spaces in search of "smooth" spaces that embrace flexibility, expansion and diversity. In other words, there is need to forfeit the "tree structures" of epistemological approaches and take new research trajectories in both linguistics and poetics. The Multi-perspectival stylistic model proposed in this study presents a shift from linear thinking. It cannot be over-emphasized that contemporary stylistic models should take diverse pathways contrary to arboreal conceptions of knowledge construction. The analyses and discussions in this study show that interpretation needs to integrate both objective and subjective approaches to avoid "false analytical ruptures" that ignore the relevant attributes of the previous epistemic models in both linguistics and poetics. Linguistics makes significant contributions to the reading and interpretation of literary discourse. Researchers should live outside the current state of affairs and occupy a position in a plane of immanence in order to problematise the status quo or working with prescriptions imposed by disciplinary traditions or "ways of doing things" usually stated by the watchful eyes of 'fathers and mothers' in the academia. The engagement with the various conceptual frameworks in this study has indicated the need for rhizomatic conversations across diverse disciplines, thereby breaking with traditions and exploring new avenues. The study recommends that contemporary stylistic models should accommodate conceptual and cross-disciplinary conversations essential for multiple entryways and exits in both linguistics and poetics. Furthermore, an on-going philosophical inquiry that continues to interrogate existing epistemologies and practices in order to find new areas of

engagement is most needful at this juncture and the Multi-perspectival Stylistic Model is hoped to be one such trans-disciplinary approach.

**Dedication**

With the deepest love I dedicate this thesis to my children and to all those who have shed tears as the only language of expressing agony. To all those whose life trajectories were thorny and scary but endured and survived, I respect and honor you.

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I am greatly indebted to my two promoters, Prof. Liberty Muchativugwa Hove and Dr. Abigail Hlatshwayo whose intellectual mentorship, inspirations, patience, encouragement and overwhelming support have sustained me during the period of my doctoral study at Mafikeng campus, North West University. I also appreciate their constructive and critical reading of the thesis and their timely feedback which pushed me to spend many sleepless nights working. My two promoters were highly supportive and understanding. What an amazing pair of great minds and I would like to be under their guidance and supervision for life. *Ndotenda zvikuru.* I am deeply thankful to Prof. Garside for his insightful comments after my presentation at Higher Degree Committee level, which contributed immensely towards the improvement of my Chapter One and shaped my thinking. I also owe a debt of gratitude to the following colleagues at Great Zimbabwe University, Mr Webster Kadodo for getting me a wonderful Ph. D main supervisor, Prof L. M Hove. My conversations with Prof Jairos Gonye and Prof Kizito Z. Muchemwa always brought new ideas which I incorporated into my writing. Prof Muchemwa has been immensely helpful in providing research materials. Likewise, I was fortunate to have Ms. Elizabeth Hove and Dr. Tobias Marevesa who spent some nights working with me at Great Zimbabwe University's Herbert Chitepo Law School. I was offered a great deal of support by these colleagues. Their scholarly advice and suggestions contributed to the task of writing this thesis. I had a wonderful support system of colleagues and friends that formed an academic assemblage with numerous connections. I wish to maintain these connections for further lines of flight in the academic rhizome. I benefitted from North West University Postgraduate Bursary Fund and I would like to express my sincere appreciation. Thank you NWU for making my dreams achievable. Many thanks are due to my children, thank you for all the love, endurance and support, I am blessed to have you. Your excitement pushed me to work hard even during trying times when I had no strength to continue.

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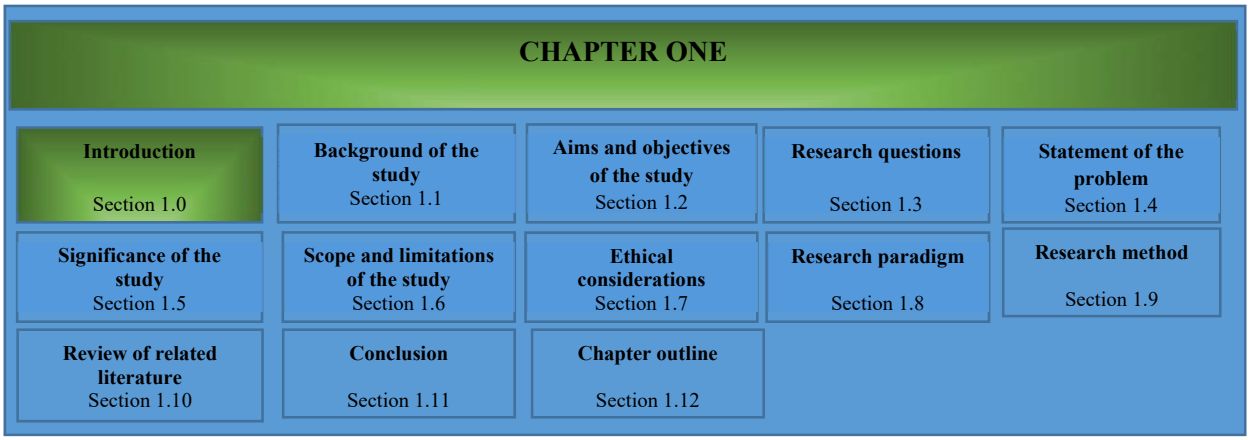
# CHAPTER ONE




## 1.0. Introduction

Recent discussions on literary discourse have brought to the fore insights which urge us to re-examine and re-consider some of the most central assumptions in our conceptualization of literary discourse. Mario (2012) observes that some widely held traditional practices of reading poetics are challenged in contemporary debates. For instance, Bakhtin (1981/84) a Russian critic claims that meaning in a text is not construed by the author alone but that the reader is an active co-constructor of meanings and the narrative text is dialogical. This has profound implications on traditional instrumentalist and monological accounts of literary discourses. Similarly the idea that texts are dynamic sites of meanings also presents another problematic angle of reading and interpreting literary narratives. This advances and reinforces the concept of the fluidity, instability and unfinalisability of meanings and interpretations which are ever open to further (re)readings. Tagwirei (2014) explains that in a Bakhtinian sense no interpretation is ever final since the words constantly enter into a dialogue with the past, present and future. These observations have stirred a shift or disjuncture in the ways we read literary texts. We are prompted to rethink about our reading and conceptualizing of the novelistic interactions. The usefulness of literary art derives from its transformative capacity, meaning that it is used as a veritable medium for portraying realities which are sometimes unspeakable (in other discursive platforms) and ultimately shape our perceptions and worldviews through critical and engaging discussions that arise in literary discourse(s). Contemporary debates in literature largely inform this investigation and reading of Zimbabwean and South African novelistic discourse in the current study.

Kehinde (2004), talking about African literature, points out that African artists have an enduring propensity for social and political commitment; their texts mostly reflect and refract the socio-political events in their societies, an observation which is also supported by Gonye, Moyo and Wasosa (2012) who submit that literature is a product of its time as it captures the pressures, controversies, failures and successes of an era. They further claim that literature captures the "pulse" and "beat" of the society, thus emphasizing the connectedness between literature and its context. Hove (2016) endorses such an observation when he asserts that literature is always *entangled* with the social reality that it figuratively represents. The afore-mentioned views imply that analysis of literary texts is an endeavor in knowledge construction since researchers engage themselves in the process of "(re)discovering" and "(re)constructing" meanings embedded or suggested in literary works as "expressive texts," according to Reiss (1977/1989). A further implication of the above views on literature is that there is a dynamic relationship between literature and society since the former is informed by the latter and vice versa which is the essence of "entanglement" as Hove (2016) rightly observes. This study concurs with the claim that insights from literary narratives are fundamental in shaping the discursive matrices of contemporary issues, and such discussions and debates generate essential knowledge(s) and at the same time shape the readers' consciousness(es) about the socio-political, cultural and economic environs of the artistic work.

This explains the proliferation of scholarly studies in the field of literature and other related disciplines as academics continue to explore and interpret literary texts. It is exciting to notice that Zimbabwean and South African literary narratives which are part of African literature have received their fair share of scholarly attention as evident in the extent of research on this canon. Although progress has been made in this area of research, most of the critical studies, especially from Zimbabwean scholars, have looked at gender and race relations, an observation which is also made by Rubaya and Gonye (2011) who note that there has been a plethora of research that privileges and interrogates gender relations. Recent studies in Zimbabwe, particularly by Magosvongwe (2013), Nyambi (2013) Tagwirei (2014) and Mangena (2015) focus on the thematic concerns of land, identities and race. These preoccupations are articulated within the context of a daunting reflection of a state on the verge of collapse, a haunting and alarming image of a country weighed down by an avalanche of failures. These unprecedented socio-political and economic challenges have been cumulatively categorized as the "Zimbabwean crises." Most importantly,

these discourses and the underpinning theoretical frameworks which inform most of the cited studies come from literary criticism. It is also quite telling to note that the same period when the Zimbabwean fiction writers are debating contentious socio-political and economic issues, South Africa also has produced significant literary narratives which reflect the artists' engagement with the social reality of their times. According to van Heerden (2015), although much has changed in post-apartheid South African society in the way of civil rights, the nation faces a myriad of problems such as widespread poverty, inequalities, criminality, discrimination, despair and disillusionment. As a result, South African fictional writers grapple with the realities of discontent and marginality in their society. In other words, South African narratives mirror vexatious issues in post-apartheid society perhaps not as polemically as the ones produced from the Zimbabwean milieu.

The visible points of similarities and differences between the selected texts are significant in this study since they pave way for a comparative analysis of Zimbabwean and South African fiction in the context of post 2000 socio-economic and political environs of the two states which would offer insights into the oeuvre of such texts; the fabric of "languaging" the texts, "metaphoricity", contextual "idiosyncrasies" and prosody. The underlying connection is that the two nations are bound together along socio-economic and political lines as rightly observed by Gretchen and Taylor (2005) who explain the interconnectedness of the Southern African region by mentioning a common colonial history as well as armed struggles which ushered independence to the indigenous African people(s). Therefore, a comparative analysis of the fictional works coming from these two states is a consciously purposive and deliberate attempt to investigate the stylistic modalities and assess the extent to which literary works function as forms of socio-political resistance which open up alternative communicative and discursive spaces. The engagement with fictional works from the two nations also aims to outline connections and disconnections in relation to "how far" the selected narratives debate contentious and contemporary political and economic thematic concerns. The study takes heed of numerous new reflections and some of the main arguments on language, literature and linguistics. This eclecticism indicates the complexity of the subject under study and the quest to gain complementary insights into the analysis of the selected narratives.

It is from this background that this thesis attempts to carve its own niche within an increasing body of literary research studies. This research adds a critical voice to the analyses of Zimbabwean and South African fiction from a stylistics perspective, departing from the dominant and contested critical literary perspectives which have made inroads into the field. The adoption of central insights from diverse but related disciplines should also be read as an attempt to depart from the current models of stylistics and offer a new eclectic model of stylistic analysis. In other words, this thesis goes beyond traditional literary criticism approaches as it is located in the interstitial spaces between linguistics and literary criticism.

## 1.1 Background to the study

This comparative study examines "styles" of narratives from Zimbabwe and South Africa published from 2000 to 2015 in order to highlight thematic overlaps and dissimilarities in the selected novels. It has been observed that most of the available scholarship on Zimbabwean fiction written and published from the year 2000 suggests that there is a marked revulsion, protest and anger directed at the political leadership in this era. Literary narratives that capture this historical phase in Zimbabwe demonstrate a preoccupation with demonstrable dejection, (citizenry anguish), greed and egocentric attitudes by those wielding power (Hove, 2013; Raftopoulos and Mlambo, 2009; and Jenjekwa, 2013).

According to Selby (2000), this period in Zimbabwe has been characterized by violence, chaos, political intolerance and intimidation, economic implosion and general uncertainty. Masunungure (2010) adds that since 2000 Zimbabwe has had a tumultuous history and, like a small burning fire, the country has smoldered under a corrupt and authoritarian ZANU PF regime. The country has been in a state of crisis as its economy has progressively collapsed, leaving a significant portion of the population languishing in poverty and desperate. Political oppression, restrictions on individual freedoms, the expulsion of the foreign press and acts of arson and violence and intimidation all have been characteristic of ZANU PF rule (with Robert Mugabe at the helm) (Masunungure, 2010). This is further supported by Bratton and Masunungure (2011) who also claim that the period from 2000 to 2008 has been marked by the onset of Zimbabwe's descent into political terror, increased unemployment and economic collapse.

Musiyiwa (2013) further asserts that the year 2000 was a turbulent point in Zimbabwe's historical and political trajectory, considering the innumerable catastrophic events of national significance such as hyper-inflation, the economic downturn and the rise of a more progressive opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), which posed a "real threat" to the ruling party, ZANU PF. Masunungure (2010:17) also observes that "the one party system in Zimbabwe has, among other things, cultivated intolerance of the opposition and of dissent." This vile socio-political environment leaves little room for dissent or unflinching opposing voices within the country. Nyambi (2013) makes a similar observation, when he says that the post -2000 period in Zimbabwe was (is) characterized by an unprecedented economic and political crises and, as the crises threatened to destabilize the political status quo, it prompted in governmental circles the perceived "need" for political containment. Zimbabwean society in post 2000 became a politically polarized state due to the government's attempt to "censor artistic expressive freedom and autonomy" which is shown through the dominant patriotic discourse in state run media outlets as well as an emergence of "patriotic artists"( Nyambi, 2013).

The control of "public discourse(s)" was one of the state's strategic responses to the opposition's drive for power as observed by Raftopolous (2010). Although it is uncontested that Zimbabwe suffered a more pronounced economic decline from the year 2000, a history that finds expression in literary discourse, I problematize the conceptualization of fictional texts and literary stylization as "means" to a pre-determined project because it has some serious implications on ways of reading.

Derrida (1981) is one of the critics who contest the idea of style as writer's choice, arguing that writers do not have complete control over the language and style (as well as meanings) in their texts. This view problematizes the idea of the writer as a source or origin of the work and messages embedded in the texts. I therefore propose that analyses and discussions on the fiction should be based on sincere efforts to present fairly balanced viewpoints to avoid the danger of subjectivity and projection of biased, sentimental and self-serving interpretations. As already highlighted above, Zimbabwe and South Africa share commonalities in terms of colonial history, liberation struggles that brought freedom to the indigenous black people, citizens had high expectations after the demise of colonialism. In post- 2000 era the two nations share a deep disillusionment under the leadership of ZANU PF and ANC respectively. Dreams are shattered, in the memorable lines

of the African- American poet Langston Hughes. Post -2000 is a period when Zimbabwe reels under hostile socio-economic and political challenges and these events influence social life in South Africa. Comparison is thus made in this thesis in order to illuminate the extent to which Zimbabwean and South African literary narratives register indictment of political leadership. It is from this background that the present study finds relevance since its focus is on "how far" and "to what degree" the selected fictional narratives from Zimbabwean and South African explore thematic concerns which are regarded by those in political power as "offensive" and "taboo." Wild (2005) calls this "writing against blindness" and Muchemwa, in *Versions of Zimbabwe: New approaches to literature and culture,* concurs with Wild that "writing is a process of de-silencing; it has become a mnemonic device of preserving lives that are vulnerable, exposed and hopeless." There is also ample evidence that the post-2000 era in Zimbabwe has received much scholarly and artistic attention which is a clear indication that despite the state's attempt to "silence and muffle" this discursive platform, both writers and critics in this field have been, resistive and persistent, implying the futility of such an attempt (Nyambi 2013, Eppel, 2012 and Mangena, 2015).

The study avoids rigid standpoints, definitive readings and instrumentality views of style in order to open conversations about the dynamic discursive practices which are open-ended, suggesting a conceptualization of literary discourse that incorporates a variety of possible (re)readings. Furthermore, an attempt is made to provide linguistic descriptions of the selected texts as foundations for evaluations of the selected texts but the discussions are not confined to linguistic forms only. In fact, the borders of linguistics and poetics are intentionally blurred in this thesis.

Bakhtin's theoretical concept of "polyphony" which points out that fictional works are multi-voiced is very useful in debating and positioning the author in a maze of reader-writer and text interactions that are going on in the selected texts. Polyphony suggests that texts present many "incommensurable" voices, meaning that many (unmerged) "consciousnesses" and plural standpoints can be discerned from a text (Bakhtin, 1981/1984). In other words, following Bakhtin's argument, the author cannot monopolize the "power to mean." Rather, the author participates a dialogue with multiple independent voices and this, significantly informs our reading and interpretation processes of literary texts. Although the critique of selected texts is guided by stylistics, the study takes seriously Magosvongwe (2014)'s observation that in reading literature, it is critical to debate rather than consent in order to avert distortions of meanings.

Despite the Southern Theory interest in Zimbabwean and South African fiction, no critic has yet seriously examined the remarkable discursive styles that emerged in post-2000 from a stylistic perspective. In addition, analysis of Zimbabwean and South African fiction has been largely approached from the instrumentality perspective which is captured in the following statements by one of Zimbabwe' s prolific writers, Hove (1980). Hove says that writers constantly turn around and become publicists for the sake of the survival of their people. Chiwome (1996) is also of the view that the novelist's goal should be to give vision, voice and direction to people facing socio-political and economic challenges. This takes us to Mazuruse (2010)'s observation that artists are practitioners directly involved in the remolding of their societies through their works. Muchemwa (2015) adds that literary writers fight for justice - all forms of fighting and contestation are a part of the artist's responsibility and commitment. Ngugi (1986:69) also brought to the fore the functional role of literary works in fighting against any form of suppression from the powerful when he says, "The pen may not always be mightier than the sword, but used in the service of truth it can be a mighty force."

In this regard, exposing the "undesirable truths" by writers is viewed as a process of empowering the oppressed people. Some of the Zimbabwean artistic voices have been regarded as "dissident" as they are associated with a "rebellious" western world which is deemed to counter an essentialist anti-Zimbabwean sensibility (Mangena, 2015). Although I agree that the sordid details about the conditions of the commoner in the selected texts could suggest the narratives' preoccupations with the experiences of the underprivileged, I still maintain some reservations as this is only one of the many (unmerged) perspectives articulated in the novels and this voice is independent from the author. I argue against assuming that Zimbabwean and South African artists use their pens only to privilege the voiceless and at the same time fight against silence. I think this is a premature conclusion. I therefore problematise Muchemwa (2005)'s observation that writers in the literary field resist "slipping into oblivion," and defy politically enforced silence thus suggesting that writing is a "de-silencing" strategy. Wild (2005) describes the term "de-silencing strategy" as styles adopted by fiction writers to destabilise canons and open up democratic and discursive spaces. Although I acknowledge and respect Muchemwa and Wild's immense contributions to literary studies, particularly in the reading of Zimbabwean literature, I intend to problematize their approaches to the reading and interpreting of literary narratives because they offer writers ultimate control over their literary output. They view style as a device aimed at interrogating pre-conceived

ideas and creating of specific reactions in the readers. Such a position is contested by Bakhtin and other scholars in contemporary discussions on reading of literary discourse. In other words, a stylistics approach adopted in this study is in constant engagement with ideas from numerous disciplines which guide and shape contemporary debates on the performative agency of the subject. In this way my study departs from most available stylistic scholarship, firstly because I am attentive to the interaction of objectivity (from linguistics) and subjectivity that comes from (literary criticism). I consider this intersection as a positive shift towards a better understanding of complex human communication in Zimbabwean and South African novels. Secondly, I move away from one-dimensional description and interpretation of selected literary narratives since I treat literature discourse as an" open event" with no fixed positions or "finalised meanings" as suggested by Bakhtin (1981/84). Thus, the readings and interpretations of the selected novels remain open to further re-reading and re-interpreting. Thus, this study interrogates such narratives in an attempt to position literature in the realm of multi-perspectival discourses.

In other words, this study re-examines these scholarly perceptions of literature in view of insightful theoretical notions such as Bakhtin's "intertextuality," polyphony and dialogism. For instance, from a "multivocality" perspective, literature does not only address those in power; rather it also points out their powerlessness and docility in the face of a system they perceive as immutable (Willeims, 2011). The text, therefore, appears as an interaction of distinct perspectives and ideologies borne by different characters and subsequently contesting meanings exist in the same text, rejecting the idea of homophonic writing. This study intends to offer a wide spectrum of insights into our readings of the selected texts and the motivation for a conceptually fused model is to proffer alternative ways of reading styles. Such an endeavor is also informed by the fact that there is a mutual link and interaction between the theoretical strands adopted in this thesis which has been overlooked for a long time therefore marrying these theories is meant to provide a wider interpretive framework of literary discourse. The present study thus aims to revise the constituents of current models of stylistics by bringing in some eclecticism into stylistics in an attempt to offer complementary insights into the field and new conceptual analytical tools for literary texts.

### 1.2. Aims and objectives of the study

The broad aim of this thesis is to develop a multi-conceptual and multi-dimensional stylistics analytical model that draws from Bakhtin, Kristeva, Deleuze and Guattarri, kristeva, canajaragah and contributions from Lakoff and Reddy theorists who privilege discursive and stylistic constructs in order to grapple with textual semantics. This study therefore connects to a number of related interpretive and academic disciplines. The proposed model draws insights from linguistics and literary criticism. This proposed eclectic stylistic model is then applied to the analyses and interpretation of selected Zimbabwean and South African fictional works written between 2000 and 2015. The logic of developing an eclectic stylistics model is motivated by my examination and analysis of the selected fictional narratives as complex sites of human discourses. The thesis has the following objectives:

- To examine the existing stylistics frameworks.
- To demonstrate the interaction of linguistic and stylistic aspects in the meaning making processes.
- To advance dialogic discursive practices which acknowledge multi-perspectives in narration and poly-semantic characteristics of the selected novels.
- To interrogate some long held views about style whereby a writer's deliberate choice of wording and languaging is contested rather than taken for granted in emerging insights about space and belonging, settlement and diaspora.

### 1.3. Research questions.

At a methodological level, the study develops a stylistics analytical model that should be used to develop and evaluate how language is used in the six selected texts. The research question that covers the theoretical-methodological aspect is;

1. How can one develop a robust stylistics analytical model that synergizes the salient linguistic and stylistic aspects in the selected fictional narratives? A sub question that follows is; how can one effectively bring in the insights from the fields which emanate from different traditions and ensure the model is successfully applicable to the selected texts?

2. On the level of application, the study investigates the view that there is a deep sense of sadness and despair in the selected narratives. The questions formulated in line with this view are: How do the selected writers develop nuanced styles and stylizations as new strategies of dealing with artistic muteness and providing voice(s) to the characters so that they "speak truth and no longer whisper to power" (Madonsela, 2017). In short to what extent do the selected writers generate expressive voices through different stylizations?

### 1.4. Statement of the problem

Linguistics and literary criticism have been at odds for a long time despite the fact that these two disciplines naturally overlap because language is the medium of literary discourse and therefore beginning with the analysis of literary language of a text is a secure foundation for its interpretation (Widdowson, (1975/1992). In other words, Widdowson places emphasis on the critical role of language in the conceptualization and communication of meanings in literary works. This foregrounds the long-standing debate on the place of stylistics which has been a subject of analytic enterprise in these two academic fields. Khader (2013) states that stylistics takes language as its object of study and it aims at particular cases of language use together with the special effect(s) realized thereby. This implies that stylistic analysis helps us to comprehend and appreciate literary texts in the more (un)systematic ways through which narratives are constructed. From this perspective of stylistics, style and stylization are integral parts of meaning-making; therefore without a sense of style, it is difficult to arrive at an understanding of an utterance or text (Khader, 2000). Carter (1996:5), a stylistics proponent, observes that stylistics "is a method of scrutinizing texts which is detailed and explicit, showing how one begins to reach an interpretation."

Linguistic approaches to the study of literary texts, stylistics included, are criticized and sometimes rejected by some literary critics and scholars who regard them as "cold" scientific methods used by language and stylistics scholars in their analyses of literary texts, whilst linguists accuse their literary colleagues of being too vague and subjective in the analyses they produce (McIntyre, 2012). Such incorrigible tension is a setback that hinders meaningful and diverse interpretations of the literary texts and the dismissal of possible contributions of both disciplines to the analysis of the literary which is the central problem in this study. Such a rejection of the significance of linguistic descriptions to the examination and evaluation of artistic works could not be taken

seriously and it prompted Jakobson (1960:377) to utter his famous argument that "a linguist deaf to the poetic function of language and a literary scholar is indifferent to linguistic problems and not conversant with linguistic methods that are equally flagrant anachronisms." Arguably, a marriage of related disciplines could bring a more comprehensive approach to the reading of selected literary texts and facilitate understanding of fictional works.

There are critical insights from Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) which treat language as a sophisticated multi-level system of communication (Halliday, 1985). Similarly, Short and Archer (1997) posit that language is an intricate web of levels, layers and links. They go on to say interaction between levels is important, implying the need to consider as well as study each level in relation to other levels, thus meaning-making processes are presented as problematic. It should also be added that such intricacy and interaction go beyond linguistic levels and extend to the world "outside" the text as expressed in Kristeva (1980)'s theory of intertextuality which says texts are not self-contained systems. Bakhtin's heteroglossic propositions and Deleuze and Guattarri (1980)'s rhizomatic theories also project the need for increased sensibility to both the internal and external worlds of literary narratives as essential for the interpretive purposes in this study. Tagwirei (2014) also acknowledges that discourse in fiction (language included) is too complex to be understood from monolithic thematic and sociological perspectives thereby supporting a multi-faceted approach which appreciates the breadth of diversity of perceptions, multi-connectedness and multi-layeredness in literary texts.

The thesis therefore presents a new model of stylistics which is open to new trajectories of style and meanings in Zimbabwean and South African fictional works. It adds discursive strategies to the stylistics school as well as engages critics in debates that potentially trigger revision of the existing knowledge through new insights which challenge and disapprove certain attitudes and practices. The current research also views stylistics as an interdisciplinary field that draws from philosophy, linguistics and literary theories; hence, there is need for scholars in the disciplines to embrace this approach as highlighted by Gray (1939: 143). Gray's argument is "that between true literature and linguistics there is no conflict; the real linguist is at least half a *litterateur* and the real *litterateur* at least half a linguist."

Thus, the core problems of this study are attended through the exploration of these questions which form the second paradigm of this thesis. An examination of epistemic studies of Zimbabwean and

South African fiction shows that there is little evidence of research that combines insights from linguistics and literary criticism. It is important therefore for this study to explore such a crucial literary analysis terrain. In other words, there are lots of works on Zimbabwean and South African literature yet no study has exclusively analyzed post-2000 narratives from an eclectic stylistics perspective which is multi-conceptual in combining linguistics and literature. This study is therefore interested in both linguistic forms and the contextual meanings of the texts analyzed, which is novel approach.

### 1.5. Siginificance of the study

From the critical mass of literature on Zimbabwean and South African fiction in English which is available, it is clear that this canon has been under scholarly scrutiny for a long time, and this can be traced back to Zimbabwean literary critics such as Muchemwa (1974), Kahari (1980), Zimunya (1982), Wild (1992), Zhuwarara (2001) and recently new scholarly voices such as Vambe (2001/2008), Primorac (2006), Muzondidya (2009), Mazuruse (2010), Magosvongwe (2013), Gonye (2012), Nyambi (2013), Manase (2014), Mangena (2015), Hove (2016), Muponde (2016), Moyana (2015), Masemola (2014). South African literature has been also widely studied, for instance, Fletcher (2013), Masemola (2011), Miloslawa (2012), Hove and Masemola (2017), Russell (2014) and Minesh (2014). Consequently, this is not a pioneer study *stricto sensu*. Despite the Southern Theory interest in Zimbabwean and South African fiction, no critic has yet seriously examined the remarkable discursive styles that emerged in post -2000 from a stylistic anchor. Thus the novelty of this study also stems from the observation that there is a huge gap that requires to be filled since there is a tendency of using approaches from literary criticism such as Feminism, Pan Africanism, postcolonial theory, and cultural hybridity studies which have perforce relegated relevant linguistic theories that could yield more insights and compelling results. Such theoretical cross-currents have their own weaknesses as shown by the lack of diversity. Such an observation is not meant to downplay the significant contributions that have come from various scholars mentioned, but it is a noted gap that needs more scholarly attention from critics. Furthermore there is proliferation of monolithic perspectives which have been used to critique Zimbabwean and South African fiction. A huge amount of scholarship views literature monolithically as "dissident art" aimed to evoke pre-determined reactions in its audience (Nyambi, 2013). The study problematizes such limits about fiction attempts to avoid one- dimensional readings of fictional

texts. The study also makes conscious attempt to bring together Zimbabwean and South African literature in order to locate the parallels in stylizations and discursive practices in the context of migration, dispersal, multiculturalism as experiential features fast transforming post- colonial and post- apartheid society. In other words, the study aims to broaden conceptualization of socio-economic and political discourses characterizing post 2000 fictional writing from the two states.

It is also apparent that most of the studies have looked at the effects of colonialism and apartheid on black people's sense of being, liberation struggles as well as gender disparities. The researcher's interest in stylistic approaches to literary analysis emanates from her previous studies which have been in both literature and linguistics. From these engagements, the researcher realized the perceptive contributions of linguistic approaches to the study of literary texts and argues therefore that the interface between the two disciplines is fecund ground for literary engagements. The selected primary texts in this thesis are considered representative in relation to stylistic innovations which demonstrate heteroglossic discursive practices, intertextual tendencies, multi-dimensionality in narration and poly-semantic nature of the contemporary Zimbabwean and South African novels. Thus, the study promotes open-endedness of critical engagement with the selected narratives which are read as complex sites of material, human and verbal interactions. Therefore the selection of contemporary debut novels is based on their attention to the problematic in postcolonial societies.

The selected texts are strikingly similar stylistically and thematically. It should be noted that the study avoids the rigidity of critical positions from either linguistics or literary criticism. As such, I welcome literary sensibilities to contextual and other non-linguistic factors essential to the reading and understanding of the selected fictional texts. I also embrace linguistics' preoccupation with the language of the text, since I argue for the exploitation of this interface in order to provide significant avenues for exploring complex multiple realities of the human world embedded in fictional works. Furthermore, there has been no conscious attempt to bring together Zimbabwean and South African fictional narratives in order to examine stylistic discursive peculiarities in the context of influx of immigrants and a fast transforming socio-political post-apartheid South African society.

The other intersection is evident in multiculturalism and multilingualism phenomena which are salient features in the selected fictional narratives. Thus, significant (dis)connections can be drawn between selected Zimbabwean and South African fictional texts, for there is a clear thematic, multicultural and multilingual overlap in terms of topical issues such as increased poverty, political betrayal, HIV and AIDS and liminal space of the migrant (mukwerekwere). The study is attentive to polyphonic sounding that projects multiplicity in the emerging realities of the changing social spaces in both nations, for instance "multilingualism" is captured through heteroglossic discourse in the contemporary novel as rightly observed by Rafapa and Masemola (2008). The new literary codes which are mainly hybrid forms show the narratives' sensibility to the emerging multicultural and multilingual societies (Rafapa and Masemola, 2008). Therefore, these innovative and creative ways of languaging and writing in the post 2000 era are explored in the context of cultural and political transitions, especially with reference to post-apartheid South African society. Diversity of linguistic codes is more pronounced in the chosen narratives which are: Phaswane Mpe's (2001) *Welcome to our Hillbrow,* Kgebeti Moele's (2006*) Room 207, Niq* Mhlongo's (2006) *After Tears,* Non-Violet Bulawayo's (2013) *We need new names* and in Tavuya Jinga's (2012) *One foreigner's ordeal and* Brain Chikwava's (2009) *Harare North.* Quite a number of South African indigenous languages dominate the discourse alongside English and Shona which is a Zimbabwean language in the novel *One foreigner's ordeal.* Although the writer is a Zimbabwean, the novel is set in both Zimbabwe and South Africa which makes positioning of this novel under Zimbabwean fiction label problematic since it could stir intense debates because South African life is largely depicted. However, the selection of this novel in this study is meant to examine the discourses about immigration in South Africa which also features in other chosen texts, including Bulawayo's (2013) debut novel, *We need new names* which is set in both Zimbabwe and America where the female narrator moves from her native land, Zimbabwe, to America at the peak of Zimbabwean economic crisis.

In addition to the thematic and stylistic parallels between the selected texts, there is also the urban life trope in the chosen texts as they are set in the major cities of their respective societies and the city space seems to be a special embodiment of challenges faced by the citizens in post 2000 era as rightly mentioned by Mhlongo (2008). Most importantly, the selected literary narratives can be classified under social realist narratives convention as they give prominence to social, economic and political problems, revealing a concentration on real life experiences of their people (Kehinde,

2004). In other words, these narratives chronicle the existential and social realities in post 2000 era, such as the economic ordeals, social turmoil and the persistent grim life in Zimbabwe and South Africa.

The conceptual and philosophical diversification in this study is necessary in order to present multiple accounts of style which is a problematic term. In addition, Simpson (2004) explains that doing stylistics is exploring language and creativity in language use and this similar observation is also made by Panda (2013) who views literature as language in use, thereby advancing the idea that there is a dialogue and an interface between linguistics, literature and other related disciplines which share a common interest in language functions. My interest in an interdisciplinary stylistic approach is further enhanced by an acknowledgement of the shortcomings associated with literary analyses done from lens of "pure" linguistics or literary criticism. The researcher further concurs with Leech and Short (1981) that most of the "few" available studies which applied stylistics as a method of analysis have been on the poetic genre, probably because of the extensive nature of novels as suggested by Adana (2012). Therefore, although the current study examines Zimbabwean and South African fiction, it differs from previous research studies in perspective, genre type (though genre is a contested notion, in this study it refers to artistic works in prosaic form), time, setting of the texts and text selection. The main area of departure in this study centers on a proposed new "eclectic" stylistics model and what is new here is the development of an amalgamated analytical framework that considers "context of use," which means that, this study goes beyond stylistics per se and interrogates the influence of contextual factors in the process of meaning interpretation of the selected Zimbabwean and South African literary texts.

### 1.6. Scope and limitations of the study

The thrust of the current study is on the stylistic analysis of selected Zimbabwean and South African fictional works that were published between 2000 and 2015.The period from 2000 to 2015 is particularly significant because it is a watershed in Zimbabwe's economic and socio-political history after independence, in as much as it is also a turbulent period, replete with uncertainty in South Africa. The events in post- 2000 Zimbabwe have influenced South Africa's socio- economic

fabric and human relations. There are many parallels and differences between the purposively selected fictional narratives as highlighted earlier in terms of political, social and economic rhetoric of the day as well as post-colonial problems and challenges such as disparities between social classes, general disenchantment of the citizenry and corrosive effects of estrangement of the "foreigner." The research examines only six novels, three from each country, these texts are only a microcosm of the novels written in English and published between 2000 and 2015, out of a significantly diverse Southern African canon which has fiction in multiple genres and multiple languages. The reason for limiting the texts is that stylistic analyses explain in detail linguistic construction of consciousnesses which is a time-consuming exercise. The primary texts are: Violet Bulawayo's *We need new names*, Tauya Jinga's *One foreigner's ordeal* Brian Chikwava's *Harare North,* Kgebetli Moele's *Room 207* Phaswane Mpe's *Welcome to our Hillbrow* and Niq Mhlongo's *After Tears*. It is however, important to note that the selected novels from Zimbabwe were published in the midst of socio-economic woes and I am particularly attentive to how the murky contexts shape these narratives. For instance, I try to explain how the selected texts have socio-political resonance and how style brings about such issues in literary discourse(s). Such questions spur interest in the stylistic analysis of these selected texts. This study is also informed by Simpson's (2004) view that while linguistic features do not themselves constitute a text's meaning, an account of linguistic features serves to ground a stylistic interpretation and helps to explain why, for the analyst, certain types of meanings are possible. The implication of the above statement is that though stylistics is primarily about the language of the text, the text's semantic value is the ultimate end of the exercise.

### 1.7. Ethical considerations

Research ethics involve a critical reflection of how data is obtained and how knowledge is constructed in the research process (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000). According to Stevens (2013) the research aims of any study should benefit society and minimize social harm therefore researchers have obligations to generate knowledge for the society. Berg (2001), commenting on qualitative research, states that social scientists delve into social lives of other human beings and therefore should ensure that they respect the welfare of these people and communities. Since this study is in the realm of qualitative research paradigm which penetrates into cultural and social practices of the societies portrayed in chosen texts, commitment is made to equality of cultures

and social groupings. No humans are manipulated or subjected to experimentation in this study. Possible interpretations rather than rigid readings are presented and detailed textual analysis is used as foundation for the arguments. All primary and secondary sources used are duly acknowledged because an acknowledgement of sources consulted for the discussions made in this study is another way of meeting requirements for academic standards and observing research ethics. Discussions in this study remain open and this is done in order to minimize misrepresentations and misinterpretations. Ethics in this research study thus refer to good conduct and establishment of clear grounds for analysis of selected texts. The researcher is also in constant dialogue with experts in the fields for guidance and as a measure for quality assurance. In addition, no financial reward is anticipated and the study is in compliance with desktop research ethics. The researcher also applied for ethical clearance from the North West University Ethics committee.

### 1.8. Research paradigm

Qualitative research derives from an interpretivist paradigm. Interpretivist researchers seek to understand "the world of human experience" (Cohen and Manion, 1994:36). Crotty (1998:67) states that interpretivism looks for "culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world." The paradigm embraces inclusivity of multiple viewpoints from different individuals and social groups. Interpretivism works with qualitative research as its methodological approach (Creswell, 2003). Interpretivist paradigm is relevant to this study because it seeks to explain and understand the human world depicted in fictional texts.

### 1.9. Research method

The study is interpretivist, grounded in a qualitative research tradition that seeks to explain, analyze and evaluate the fictive human worlds depicted in the purposively selected fictional narratives. Denzin and Lincoln (2000:3) define qualitative research as "a situated activity which locates the observer (researcher) in the world. Qualitative researchers study phenomena in their natural settings (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005).This means that qualitative research is a "naturalistic approach which seeks to understand phenomena in context" (Patton, 2001:39). "The major strength of qualitative research utilized in this thesis is that, a small sample size is chosen purposefully in order to obtain rich stylistic and thematic detailed data. Patton (2015) further

explains that the logic and power of purposive sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for in depth study which yields insights and in deep understanding of the studied phenomena. The major axes of discussions, arguments and readings of the chosen literary narratives in this study come from a proposed stylistics model, enmeshed in a close literary analysis guided by literary theory. The eclectic stylistics model straddles the realms of stylistic literary criticism and linguistics hence this multidisciplinary approach is privileged and charted in this study. It should also be noted that the study privileges Bakhtin's thoughts because of his particular attention to novelistic language. Secondary sources are consulted to prime the readings of the raw data in the primary texts for scrutiny and analysis. The approach seeks to provide new ways of thinking, examining and explicating creative works. It aims to expand contemporary parameters of conceptualizing fictive worlds. According to Leech and Short (1981) style refers to characteristics of language and by implication, this definition places emphasis on the "entanglement" of literature and its language. Thus, the present study which is linguistically mapped pays attention to styles of the literary text It is also clear that the thesis' theoretical framework is situated between the interstitial realms of literature and linguistics hence this "relatedness" and "inseparability" of the disciplines is charted in this study. Eclectic stylistics model, which is applied in this study, provides interpretive lens to discern the connections between linguistics and literary criticism. I also seek to suggest that there are infinite entry points into literary discourse. In order to demonstrate how the linguistic elements function significantly in a text to convey the messages, Khullar, (2014) and Mistrik (1985:3) define stylistics as a field of study "where the strategies of choice and implementing linguistic, paralinguistic or aesthetic expressive devices in the process of communication are investigated." The study is hinged on style and it problematizes conception of style as "a deliberate choice" made by individual writers for the attainment of specific communicative purposes and meanings. Blommaert (2015) states that from an anthropological perspective, language is captured in a functionalist epistemology; it is seen as a socially loaded tool for communicative ends. It is apparent that language from this tradition, is defined as "a resource to be used, deployed and exploited by human beings in social life" (Blommaert, 2015:7). I am interested in the implication here that language is seen as *a set of resources* that derives its meanings from the social context in which it appears. This tangent again repudiates the idea of the fixity of linguistic meanings since language is situated deeply and inextricably in the social context, an aspect which seems to get little attention from Short and Leech's earlier stylistics

model. In its attempt to unpack the complex functional role of style in selected artistic works, the present thesis takes cognizance of the fact that analysis is not limited to textual linguistic boundaries thereby insights from literary criticism on contextual significance are re-engaged. The study also pays attention to the current critical and engaging conversations about translingualism (or cross-languaging) in literary texts. According to Canagarajah (2012/2013) writers express themselves in multiple verbal systems (multiple linguistic codes), especially in the modern-day global context in which the audiences (readers) are speakers of different languages. This phenomenon influences text production and interpretation of speech (literary texts).

Translingualism refers to lexical and semantic items that are transferable from one language to another. It also implies fluidity of language systems. However, this complicates meaning-making processes since readers bring in their cultural values and identities into the reading of the texts, thus implying the significant role played by the reader in the interpretation of literary texts since meanings cannot solely come from those linguistic forms selected by the writer (Canagarajah, 2013). The intention in this study is therefore to interrogate and reinterpret these critical theoretical concepts and positioning for the development of a new stylistics analytic model which is broadened and guided by dual optics from Linguistics and Literary criticism. Therefore, the new stylistics analysis model developed in this thesis is informed by insights from various scholars and re-examination of these theoretical propositions such as "Polyphony", "Dialogism", "Heterroglossia", "Intertextuality" and "Translingualism," for the possible and evanescent insights into these textual formulations which incredibly harp on voice, articulation and identities. This is where the current stylistics model goes beyond just the graphemic (description of lexical constituents of language) and becomes a veritable instrument for literary practice.

### 1.10. Review of related literature

As already mentioned above the preliminary literature review shows that previous studies are primarily examined using theories from literary criticism. This study focuses on style in the selected Zimbabwean and South African fictional texts. However, style is not examined from the view that selected writers use it as some kind of strategy or tactical means that are necessitated by their unbridled sense of duty as the "voice" of the suffering citizens. Nyambi (2012) observes that

the post 2000 era in Zimbabwe brought into the picture "dissident voices" commenting on the unfolding crisis and therefore leading to the domination of a "crisis discourse." Manase (2014) also states that writers have tried to fictionalize this momentous and controversial era in the life of the nation by defying the interests of certain sections of the society which prefer artistic silence. The era also attracted critics and scholars such as Vambe (2008) Muzondidya (2009), Chirisa and Mlambo (2009) Raftopolous (2009) and Matingwende (2014) who looked at the decline of the economy and critical erosion of livelihoods of the citizens. Their views are useful to this study and constant reference is given to their studies in the process of interrogating the chosen texts through a proposed stylistics model. Although this study pays attention to thematic concerns raised in the fictional works being examined, it is crucial to highlight that focus is on the themes as stylistic configurations within the fictional genre. The Prague school from which modern stylistics originates holds the view that poetic language and by extension literary language, is distinct from the standard (everyday language use) in it being deviant, a view that was introduced by Mukarovsky (1971). This view informs the present study to assess whether stylistic elements in Zimbabwean and South African fictional texts are deliberate alternations of the norms of the standard language which amounts to rule breaking which is necessary in order to "capture the real mood and feeling" of a creative writer (Mukarovsky, 1971). In other words, style is examined in order to identify and support the textual messages brought to the fore, tone and mood termed "semantic value" in linguistics terminology.

According to Anderson (2014) an objective account of style is known as stylistics and the definition of the term style is problematic as it is always contestable, therefore, the necessity to have a working definition in this study. Galperin (1971) defines style as a system of coordinated and interrelated language formulations intended to fulfill a specific function of communication and aiming at a definite effect. Since style is examined from the standpoint of stylistics, it is crucial to briefly define the term stylistics as well. The term stylistics is a fusion of two words, style and linguistic, and according to Leech and Short (1981:13) "the linguistic study of style is called stylistics." Crystal (2008:460) adds that stylistics is a branch of linguistics which studies the distinctive features (varieties) of language and tries to establish principles capable of accounting for particular choices made…" Jakobson (1977) who is one of the most influential linguists on stylistics says that stylistics "is more interested in the significance of function that the style fulfills." He adds that stylistics examines oral and written texts in order to determine crucial

characteristics of linguistic properties, structures and patterns influencing perception of texts. Many scholars also believe that stylistics is a combination of linguistic analysis and literary criticism which is also echoed by Enqkvist (1973).

There are two major traditional approaches to stylistics which are linguistic stylistics and literary stylistics (Agrawai, 2010). Whereas the former focuses on scientific methods of studying linguistic features of a text, the latter dwells much on literary history, incidents of an author's personal life, sources of his inspirations, political, social and economic history of the age and only at the end gives considerations of the literary work. Halliday (1970:70) calls literary criticism "amateur psychology", "armchair philosophy" which leads to subjective interpretations of texts. He argues that a linguistic stylistics approach to texts is more objective as it starts from a positive and identifiable point - the precise verbal manifestation and later takes into account contextual factors of the discourse. A diversified stylistics model as an interpretive toolkit for the investigation of fiction is intended to suggest multiple angles. From the above discussions, it could be argued that the distinction of the fields that inform this study, does not take away the overlap, relatedness and interconnectedness which is relevant to the evaluation of literary texts. Thus, this thesis draws ideas from linguistic stylistic approach which seems to be more objective, but it does not ignore the relevance and critical contributions from literary criticism. In addition, the thesis is in constant dialogue several theoretical concepts from Canagarajah (2013), Kristeva (1980) intertextuality, Lakoff (1992) and Reddy (2007) on metaphority and idiomaticity of the poetic language already stated above are re-visited and re-interrogated as well as incorporated into the new stylistics framework in this study which is defined by its eclectic orientation.

### 1.11. Conclusion

This introductory chapter has outlined background to the study, statement of the problem, research questions and delimitation of the study. It explained rationale for the chosen research methodologies, sampling technique and theoretical concoction which is compatible with the proposed eclectic stylistics model. It further explained that the model in this study is intended to bring a shift from traditional ways of perceiving notions of style and conceptualizing fictional discourse. The study therefore has proposed that engagement with multi- disciplinary approach in exploring the polysemic nature of languaging and the complexity of meaning- making processes

could chart a way forward because it offers a more comprehensive account of topical dialogues in post-2000 Zimbabwean and South African fiction. This emerges as a critical engagement that is responsive to the presence of multiple voices, multiple viewpoints and multiple communities in fictional narratives from the Southern African literary canon.

### 1.12. Chapter outline

The thesis is divided into six chapters which maintain multiplicity and interconnectedness of the numerous discussions and engagement with various theoretical concepts is done to highlight points of interaction.

CHAPTER 1

Chapter one offers a detailed outline of this study which includes research context, research questions, justification of the study, delimitation, research design, methodology and thesis outline. The chapter also presents detailed justification for the proposed Eclectic stylistics model.

CHAPTER 2

Chapter Two defines style and stylistics which are key terms in this thesis. The review includes a brief explanation of central theoretical notions that guide the discussions and analyses in this study. The notions of point of view, heterroglossia, polyphony, dialogism, translingualism, intertextuality, rhizome, deterritorialisation, reterritorialisation, foregrounding, deviation, metaphoricity and idiomaticity form the larger part of the review chapter. The chapter also highlights how the concepts are used as a base for the discussions and analyses of the selected texts.

CHAPTER 3

Chapter Three comprises of research design, methodology, sampling procedure, research questions, research context and data collection procedures. The chapter explains in detail steps used to analyze the selected texts.

CHAPTER 4

This chapter marks the beginning of textual analysis and it is divided into two sections. The first section focuses on concepts from Bakhtin who is the most prominent figure in this study. His conception of language and novelistic discourse informs the readings of the selected texts. Polyphonic, dialogic and heteroglossic theories of the novel are critical to my dialogic reading of salient issues about social and political dystopian landscapes, diasporic consciousness(es) which include identity, the rigid polarities of inclusion/exclusion (otherness), and un(belonging) in the selected texts. Bakhtin (1981/1984) argues that language is to be seen as inherently dialogic therefore it has no fixed meanings (or an omniscient narrator). I am particularly interested in the projection of independent and sometimes oppositional voices in the narratives studied that is, the polyphonic and dialogic orientation of the selected texts. In other words my analysis in this chapter is meant to underscore the contradictions and complexities portrayed in novelistic discourses. Of paramount importance is the acknowledgement of contemporary thinking about multiple narrative voice(s) and perspective(s) since the novel allows multiple entries of narrative voices (Bakhtin, 1981). Heteroglossic lens facilitates conceptualization of multilingual and multicultural communities of the narratives. I am also particularly interested in cultural and linguistic territories (language context) in multi-ethnic contexts as the semantic basis for (place)lessness, (home)lessness and self-consciousness. I investigate language as a way to read human relations in a social context and semantic implications of language in practice (an understanding of dialogic context). Bakhtin (1981) argues that no language is ever a unitary system but rather every language is heteroglot characterized by varied-speechedness and multi-languagedness (raznochie). The second section of this chapter is framed by Canagarajah's translingualism. These theories guide the readings of the novels in this segment. Identification of translingual practices as elements of stylization is done through close reading of the novels and possible meanings are presented.

CHAPTER 5

Chapter Five is framed by Kristeva's intertextuality theory. I focus more on stylistic and thematic (intersection) as dialogues between the selected texts.

CHAPTER 6

Chapter Six also has two sections and the first one is a thought provoking section that presents more questions than answers. Deleuzian reading of the chosen novels is done in this chapter, what

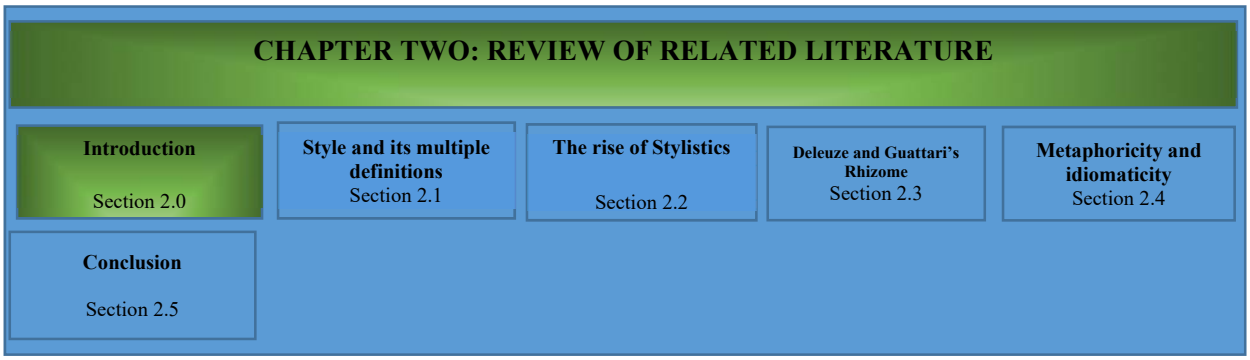
is significant in Deleuze and Guattari's (1980) ideas are the infinite possibilities of truths in the text. Rhizomatic concept, deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation provide useful framework in the examination of fictional representation of contemporary identities, space and sense of belonging. The construction and conceptualization of individual, cultural, social and national spaces in the selected novels is scrutinized. The second section of the chapter is attentive to Lakoff's (1992) and Reddy's (2007) metaphoricity and idiomaticity which provide theoretical groundings for the evaluation of figurative language and the extent to which figures of speech 'stuck" out as suggested by Mukarovsky (1971). I examine cultural, ethnic and national innuendo embedded in these stylizations.

CHAPTER 7

The last chapter summaries and presents findings, tentative conclusions and recommendations

# CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

**Stylistics in the early 21st century is very much alive and well" Paul Simpson (2004:2) in *Stylistics: A Resource book for students.***




## 2.0. Introduction

The review in this chapter covers a wide range of issues which are relevant to stylistics, which is central to this study. The review is not limited to stylists' views about their subject but it also pays a close attention to the insights coming from linguists, literary critics and philosophers while at the same time providing detail on why their concepts are worth the attention accorded to them. Philosophers such as Deleuze and Guattarri (1987) have contributed ideas which I think can be used in philosophical debates in the field of stylistics. It is also noted that most influential stylistic works in this chapter are from different parts of the world, such as the works of Simpson (1993/2004), Leech and Short (2007), Lakoff (2000), Reddy (2000) Bakhtin (1984), Kristeva (1980) Canagarajah (2013/2015) and Ngara (1982). This could be contributed to the nature of my topic as the subject of stylistics has been rarely explored by both scholars and writers except of course for Emmanuel Ngara (1982) book. Thus, it is my hope that the present comparative stylistic study might bring distinctive contribution into the field. Carter (2014:117) states that, ″the last two decades have seen increasing confidence in the field of stylistics, alongside institutional power shifts according to greater prominence to English language studies." Stylistics is a growing discipline which studies the significance of style in producing meanings especially in literary texts. These observations serve to show that stylistics has recently received a considerable amount of attention and the large and growing body of literature on the subject of stylistics and its analytical toolkit forms a base for this claim. This chapter outlines the context of the research problem in terms of the placement or positioning of stylistics in a sea of academic disciplines. However, this is not any easy task since the emergence of stylistics has attracted diverse and sometimes conflicting perspectives. One of the most problematic concerns of any study in stylistics has to do with availability of multiple definitions of the critical terms in this area which are regarded as slippery or elusive. One way of dealing with this challenge is to take heed to Viswanathan's (2007: vi) advice that, ″in our age of rapid changes in concepts, styles and modes of representation, it is more appropriate to direct our attention to multiple realities than to look for one definitive, unchanging meaning." This means that while it is important to define and understand essential terms in this study, I would avoid the temptation of offering prescriptive meanings and I treat multiplicity of definitions and perspectives as a strength rather than a problem. I would also want to argue that there are positive outcomes from this diversification and complexity which is a general character of stylistics. It is therefore, the purpose of this chapter to explore the concepts of

style and stylistics, and also provide an overview of theoretical concepts which inform the new stylistic model proposed in this study. The chapter is divided into sections and it firstly traces the ancestry of the term style and goes on to highlight definitional complexity associated with this concept, this is only meant to demonstrate my awareness of the so called ″vagueness″ and ″ ambiguity″ related to the term  Secondly, the chapter is also set to briefly outline the development of stylistics focusing more on the period from 1960s which is marked by the spread of stylistic studies to different parts of the world up to the present day stylistics. A critical engagement with the current philosophical debates underpinning the development and current position(s) of stylistics is done, hoping to cast light on fascinating new insights about literary texts which I feel, are significant as they should transform and (re)mould our present perceptions of style and its function in literary narratives. Finally, a more detailed discussion of the various theoretical concepts is presented and the objective of this conceptual exploration is to demonstrate the need for a new analytic framework in the field of stylistics which is eclectic in character. The proposed model combines ideas mainly from linguistics, literary criticism and philosophy. The idea of eclecticism is central in this study, that is, it relates to a number of theoretical and philosophical approaches which I think can be mapped onto literary texts in very compelling ways. I have also made an attempt to identify constituents of style in the selected fictional narratives which I consider fundamental to the set objectives of this thesis. It should be noted that, the selected stylistic features are not meant to be a comprehensive representation of style but rather, these stylistic elements are selected for a practical utilisation in this thesis. In doing this, I am informed by the observation made by Leech and Short (1981:14) who state that in studying style, we have to select what aspects of language matter and the principle of selection depends on purpose we have in mind.  This therefore means that using my own discretion in choosing the stylistic features is not a novel idea in this thesis. Probably just to expand on this view, both explicit linguistic elements and non-linguistic elements such as historical, social, economic, cultural and political contexts which are sometimes located outside the world of the text are considered as essential factors which contribute immensely to the reading process of selected fictional texts. The primary justification for the adaptation of ideas from the seemingly diverse disciplines is based on the premise that there is an indispensable interconnectedness of these fields which can be exploited for possible multiple accounts of style and ″perceived″ meaning(s) in literary discourse.

## 2.1 Style and its multiple definitions.

According to Saito (1997:12) ″the study of verbal art (style) dates back to ancient Greece and Rome where rhetoric, with special emphasis on oratory (effective use of oratorical ornaments), the art of composing as well as delivering a speech, was a major subject of specialist study.″ The term style derives from a Latin word ″stilus″ which means a writing instrument.″ The Chambers Dictionary, 1642 cited by Ayo (2005:29). Style and stylistics share the Latin morphological origin. The classical school of rhetoric considered style as a critical part of the technique of persuasion. The Greek rhetoricians had keen interest in the tropes and other rhetorical devices (linguistic and (or) non-linguistic- my emphasis) that were used by orators for effective argument and persuasion. Thus, the greatest contribution of rhetoric to the contemporary stylistics is the idea of style as a deliberate choice in communication for well-defined purposes. Furthermore, it is also clear that style was an integral part of meaning-making process (effect of style was either powerful and convincing argument or persuasion), ability to attain intended effect was central to rhetoric studies of style. Similarly, in modern times, style is studied in relation to its function in the meaning production process. Saito (1997) concludes that style is an ambiguous and complex term for any scientific definition and an attempt to precisely define it has been fruitless for years. A proliferation of definitions in the field is evident of the inability to reach a consensus about the term's definition. More recently, literature offers a host of definitions from different theoretical orientations, not surprising because style is studied in quite a number of disciplines such as literary criticism, linguistics, philosophy, cultural studies and other related disciplines. The definition of style has been a controversial and disputed subject within the field of stylistics for quite some time. One of the most significant current discussions in stylistics is the acknowledgement that critical engagement with ideas coming from both literary critics and linguists is essential for a robust and substantive debate on mapping the future directions in the field. What then is essential is not the wrangle between scholars in different fields, but rather the mapping of how to proceed. Although style in literary texts has been extensively researched, to date, there has been little agreement on what the term precisely means. It should be observed that style is one of the evolving terms whose

definitions are not static but rather ever- changing depending on context in which it is used, time and purpose hence its fluid and unstable definition is a permanent characteristic.

According to Verdonk(2010:5) style is a ″motivated choice″ made by the writer when using language for some defined purpose and to some effect. Verdonk views style as a deliberate choice made by the writer with a specific intention in mind, thus, borrowing from this perspective, the literary artist is viewed as in control of ″what to mean" and ″how to mean,″ which Verdonk perceives as ″calculated choices of style.″ This therefore implies that style is interwoven with meaning in the construction of a literary text. Meaning production is however, an active process which involves the artist, the reader, the text, the context, thus showing that the writer does not own a text or endorse meanings by mere choice of stylistic features (Bakhtin, 1987). Despite the fact that Verdonk seems to over-emphasise the role of the writer in meaning construction, we cannot deny the assumption that when writers engage themselves in writing activity, they have an idea of the subject(s) they want to explore.

Another definition of the term style comes from Leech and Short (2007), two linguists who have contributed immensely towards style and stylistics. They define style as linguistic habits of a particular writer. Being linguists themselves, it is then not surprising that their definition places emphasis on the study of language elements in a text, but what is interesting is that they leave the choice or selection of such linguistic habits to the critic who should have a clearly defined purpose in mind. This shows their awareness that the study of style is rarely undertaken for its own sake. Rather, it is done in order to explain the relation between language (including other non-linguistic means) and artistic function. Enqkvist (1978) also explores the concept of style and offers that style is a matter of choice, and style is a product of context as it is conditioned by the socio-cultural factors. All these three perceptions of style are of interest in the present study because I examine whether the prevailing social, political, economic and cultural conditions have a bearing on writers in their choice of how to mean in the selected narratives. Alfadil (2013) also defines style as a means of communicating one's ideas, thoughts and emotions in an expressive way, style as a way of individualizing an act of speaking or writing, style as a way of catching attention and style as a cultural mark. The significance of Alfadil's ideas comes from the view that style can serve as a cultural mark, a view which I explore further in relation to Bakhtin's concept of heterroglossia. In

my analysis, I explore ″languaging″ in the selected novels and show how language(s) become a complex stylistic tool based on the selection/s from these cultural and linguistic repertoires. In other words, this study embraces alternative meanings of style rather than fixities. I propose that multiple ″consciousnesses″ could influence the scholars who would eventually revisit their definitions and this″cycle of influence″ is a continuous phenomenon which (re)shapes the term style and practices of contemporary stylistics which should be multi-dimensional and multidisciplinary in character.

**2.2. The Rise of Stylistics.**

Although a full discussion of the historical development of stylistics lies beyond the scope of this study, nevertheless a cursory glance is necessary for a general understanding of stylistics. Nnadi (2010:11) traces the evolution of stylistics and concludes that what came to be known as stylistics in the 20th century has its origin in rhetoric in antiquity. He says the ancient forensic orators developed techniques known as figures of speech which included schemes and tropes and these were employed in the structuring and elaboration of an argument. This claim about the connection between stylistics and traditional rhetoric is corroborated by Hough (2001) who says stylistics has its roots in classical rhetoric, the ancient art of persuasive speech, which has always had a close affinity with literature. However, stylistics is different from its predecessor because rhetoric was prescriptive in that it provided guidance as to how to be persuasive whereas modern stylistic approaches are flexible based on the purpose and focus of stylistic elements of the text in order to explain particular effects (Taylor and Toolan, 1984). Another pioneering step towards a new conception of stylistics was made by Prague structuralist movement and Roman Jakobson (1948) was one of the leading members of structuralism. He was also active in the Russian formalism debates in the 1960s (Jeffries, 2010). These two movements regarded formal features of the text essential and relegated other extra-linguistic factors unimportant in the reading and interpreting process. The approach pointed out that the major shortcoming was its failure to account for the function of non-linguistic elements which reside outside the textual world but contribute, shape and inform the understanding of the text. Saussure, Jakobson, Chomsky, Barthes, Spitzer, Robert Firth, Auerbach and Bally are among the scholars who are accredited for the formation and theoretical development of stylistics and Charley Bally is regarded as the

leading voice (Saito, 1997). These scholars belong to different schools for example; Spitzer and Auerbach belong to the German school whereas Jakobson worked with both Russian Formalism and Prague structuralism. I think this sketch is insightful and takes us to the debate about the meaning of stylistics in contemporary times. Some researchers such as Carter and Simpson (2005) argue that linguistic stylistics is the ″purest″ form of stylistics, in that its practitioners attempt to derive refinement of models for the analysis of style and language and thus to contribute to the development of linguist theory. The problem is that stylistics in this case seems not to serve its own defined purposes but those of linguists like Carter and Simpson. Another problem emanates from the term ″purest form″ used by these scholars. For instance, from whose lens would be the analyses be evaluated and measured for ″purity?" This question remains unaddressed. My argument here is that while there is a degree of agreement on aspects about methodologies and style in contemporary stylistics, these should not be used to reject innovative approaches and novel tapestries of style.

Crystal and Davy (1983) perceive stylistics as a borderline discipline between language and literature which concentrates on language use in both literary and non-literary texts although recent evidence has indicated that stylistics uses insights from numerous disciplines such as literature, psychology, sociology, cultural studies and philosophy. Thus, stylistics is multidisciplinary and adaptive in nature such that its analytic framework deals with a range of issues to unpack complex human discourses. Carter (2014) adds that stylistics is more interested in the significance of function that the chosen style fulfils. I also want to suggest that stylistics is developing in a rhizomatic manner that is, it has become multi-directional discipline.

### 2.2.1. The Contemporary full-fledged Stylistic Discipline.

Stylistics has developed into a full-fledged discipline, an observation made by Simpson (2004:2) who points out that the discipline is ″very much alive and well.″ The high academic profile stylistics enjoys is mirrored in the number of books solely dedicated to this subject. Modern stylistics is flourishing as witnessed in a proliferation of sub- disciplines where stylistic methods

are enriched and enabled by theories of discourse, culture and society (Simpson, ibid). In other words, Simpson's observation argues that stylistics is not ″just alive and well″ but has spread its tentacles into other related fields where its approaches to textual analysis have been found useful and relevant. The increasing number of media and cultural studies which have used stylistic methods substantiates this claim of it being a formidable discipline which has come to stay. Stylistics is a celebration of language in all its varieties, beauty, fun, astonishing complexity and limitless possibilities″ (Crystal, 1997). Stylistics also explores how readers interact with the language of literary texts in order to explain how we understand and are affected by texts. This means that stylistics goes beyond the examination of language as it searches for possible hints leading to the understanding of the text. Stylistic choices are partly determined by the functional and ideological needs of the producer of the text and partly by the norms of the genre (Dany, 2002).

According to Batineh (2015) stylistics is criticised for its lack of a solid methodological framework to guide the analysis. Surprisingly, such criticism does not regard the absence of prescriptive stylistic models of analysis as a positive aspect which allows for flexibility in terms of choice of style elements and theoretical framework. One major theoretical strand that has dominated the field concerns its definition and position, especially in relation to linguistics of literary criticism. The controversy about methods of analysis has also raged for a long time and to some extent, the criticism has been generated because stylistics is classified either as a sub-discipline of linguistics or of literary criticism. Due to this positioning of the field, its strengths have been evaluated in line with the standard benchmarks in each of the disciplines. Unfortunately, these instruments have been used and are still by some scholars to make their arguments legitimate and valid. The research to date has tended to focus on whether stylistics should approach literary texts from linguistic or literary position and much energy has been spent yet, no satisfying new suggestion has emerged out of this debate. To avoid this dystrophy, I suggest that stylistics should be treated as a discipline which is ″informed by linguistics and literary criticism. From this position, stylistics is allowed to draw freely from other disciplines. Therefore, there are several important areas where this study makes original contributions to.

### 2.2.2. The Point of View in Literary Narratives

In this section, I demonstrate the shifting perspectives about point of view in literary texts. Rafroidi (1994) defines the point of view in fictional text as a distinct individual telling the story. The point of view was traditionally defined as the perspective or vantage point from which the narrator of prose fiction perceives the events, actions and happenings in a story (Simpson, 2004). It is a speaker or writer′s particular style of conceptualising a worldview or an angle of telling, vision, perspective and authorial interest (Simpson, 1993). The debate about the point of view in works of art has been a topical issue for a long time and much has been said. There are a number of recent developments in line with this topic which deserve to be exploited. More precisely, traditional point of view has accorded a lot of power to the author and the narrator. Lynn's (2015) doctoral thesis titled, *"Point of view in a Divided Society: The Parts and Putting "The Parts" Together"* provides detailed analysis of this concept. Lynn examines *The Parts* which is a novel and *"Putting 'The Parts" together"* an exegesis and concludes that narratives offer alternative points of view and each voice gives a specific version of reality and events. This means that the narratives which Lynn examined had disparate vantage points narrating the same or possibly many stories. The independence of each point of view survives due to lack of consensus and an inherent inability to see from the same position. Lynn interprets this variety of points of view as a reflection of a fragmented post–apartheid society in South Africa which he says has "divisions set up between people" which are within individual psyches. Although Lynn's thesis is a useful and relevant source for the reading of South African narratives, I intend to read post-2000 fictional narratives from the observation that difference and diversity are key characteristics of South African society. Therefore, multiple points of view capture life as it is lived in this society, a missing point in Lynn ′s analysis. South Africa can be viewed as contact zone, a site and space serving as a multi-cultural intersection or Bhabha′s (1994) liminal or third space. Bakhtin states that the human being in the novel is first, foremost and always a speaking human being. The novel requires speaking persons bringing with them their own unique language (and own version of life/ point of view).

### 2.2.3. Dialogism and Polyphony theory

The contested concepts of dialogism and polyphony derive from Mikhail Bakhtin, a Russian literary theorist and a philosopher of language. Dialogism and polyphony were first used in *The Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* and *Discourse in the Novel*. In this tract, Bakhtin claims that ″ any novel can be defined as a diversity of social speech types ...and a diversity of individual voices artistically organised.″ Dialogism refers to the possibility of more than one perspective embedded within a single text but the perspectives remain unmerged. Bakhtin suggests that a dialogic reading of the novel must realise the contradictory voices within the same text or even from the same character. Expanding this idea, Wheelock (2008) explains that a dialogic reading refuses to assuage a text's lacunae, tensions or inconsistencies. This reading embraces a dialogic sense of truth which has plurality of unmerged voices and multiple ″consciousnesses″ and the disparate voices are critical to dialogic interaction. A central idea in *Discourse in the Novel* is that language cannot ever have been monological. A good novel, Bakhtin argues, succeeds in creating a robust and dynamic interplay between its many characters, representing a variety of social classes, perspectives and ways of seeing the world. Occupations and ideologies provide many valid voices and alternatives (Bakhtin cited in Dalmane, 2013:19). Similarly, the polyphonic novel assumes a separation between the authorial point of view and the points of view of the characters. Polyphony refers to quasi- independent voices, within a text, which do not serve the ideological position of the author and have the capacity to hold a dialogic relationship with the author. It is regarded as an innovative theory of prose which views literary discourse as containing the voices, attitudes, perspectives or worldviews and realities of many people from different sections of the society (Bakhtin, 1984:33). The authorial voice does not dominate in a dialogic work but instead forces readers to contend with the challenging and irresolvable interaction of diverse discourses that sometimes occur within the same speaking or thinking character. The characters in a dialogic and polyphonic novel have the capacity to hold a dialogical relationship where no voice holds more importance than an/other (Intezar, 2013). Bakhtin adds that within the midst of the dialogue of interacting voices, new meaning is created, and ′it always creates something that never existed before, something absolutely new and unrepeatable" (1984:48). Dialogic and polyphonic approaches to literary texts ″unlock the languages of others″ since the potential of a text to generate

conflicting or ironic perspectives is enhanced. Nyambi (2013) observes that Bakhtin projects literary narratives as mechanisms of dialogue and speech acts are seen as communicative tools that provide new meanings and contest earlier ones by bringing in plural vantage points and a multiplicity of social values. In the same vein, Leech and Short (1981:121) state that "language is open-ended in that it permits the generation of new meanings and new forms." Such views privilege theorisation on the dialogic and polyphonic stylistic elements of literary narratives and draw our attention to the plurality of voices and social diversity of speech types from differing individual voices (Intezar, ibid and Nyambi: ibid). Multi-voicedness or double-voicedness has not been fully investigated especially with regards post-2000 Zimbabwean and South African narratives. Recent studies which have mentioned this concept in passing include Tagwirei (2014) and Nyambi (2013)where both deploy theories from literary criticism. Tagwirei looks at white writing in Zimbabwe before and after independence and his study is of little relevance to the present study as it only used for tracking the Zimbabwean literary canon. Whereas Nyambi explores "Zimbabwean crisis" from socio-literary theory and his thesis, entitled *"Nation in crisis: Alternative Literary Representation of Zimbabwe post-2000"* rightly captures the subject of focus. However, his study explicates the post 2000 era in Zimbabwe and its multi- crises. Polyphony and dialogism are briefly mentioned, and they are not accorded the attention they deserve by Nyambi. This gap makes this study relevant because Bakhtin's dialogical ontology provides new perspectives from which to read Zimbabwean and South African fiction and discourse. In other words, employing the Bakhtinian notion of multi-vocality provides an opportunity to unpack multiple realities of life. A significant proportion of doctoral theses from both Zimbabwe and South Africa, has recently made available on the internet but most of these the analyses of artistic works have used literary criticism. One of the possible reasons for the scarcity of stylistic analyses of novels could be the voluminous nature of novel to apply stylistic analysis, especially from a linguistic oriented approach which relegates other possible elements of stylization. An exceptional attention to Bakhtin's views is noted in Dalmae's (2013) doctoral thesis with the title "*The Self in and through the Other: A Bakhtinian approach to Little Dorrit.*" This is recent reference material for the study of Bakhtinian ideas in the novel. Dalmae studied Charles Dickens and George Elliot who are English novelists but this study adopts Bakhtinian lens in the reading of Zimbabwean and

South African fictional texts. Although Dalmae's doctoral is from a South African University of KwaZulu Natal, the novels studied have a different socio-cultural milieu for us to selectively apply the findings to Zimbabwe and South African settings. Of course, I am aware that literature sometimes explores universal human experiences, but I still feel the different contextual factors have some bearing in the reading of these texts hence the need for selective and cautious approach to Dalmae′s thesis. Yet, this observation is not meant to downplay the great strides made by literary scholars and critics such as Muchemwa, Zimunya, Hove, Muponde, Wild, Chihota and others from Zimbabwe and Ndebele, Sachs, Mzamane and many others from South Africa. Rigorous engagement with their ideas is reserved for the analysis and discussions on the selected texts. This thesis explores in detail these notions through a comparative analysis of the selected novels from the two states.

### 2.2.4. Heterroglossia (Raznorechie)

Heterroglossia refers to conflict between discourses or ″different speechness″ in the same language. Bakhtin (1984) argues that language is always languages since there are many ways of using the same language. He explains in *Discourse in the novel* that all languages in a heteroglot novel are specific points of view about the world; they are forms of conceptualizing the world, specific worldviews and each is characterised by its own objects, meanings and values. Discourse in the novel is an artistic whole and its construction involves combining various elements that are heteroglottal, ″multi-voiced, multi-styled and often multi-languaged.″ Such speech constitutes a special type of double-voiced discourse. Heterroglossia, once incorporated into the novel, is another′s speech, in another's language, serving to express authorial intentions but in a refracted way. The reading of the chosen narratives as heteroglot novels means considering the various languages of the hero(ine) and other characters, (the languaging) in order to describe the effects of ″doubleness″ and (or) multiplicity. This view is similar to the thinking of Jacques Derrida′s (2001) Deconstruction theory which says values in a text are socially constructed and there is no original meaning beyond or before the signs. Deconstruction approaches to text analysis promote an anti-essentialist, discursive social-constructivist stance, including a sceptic attitude towards everything that appears to be permanent.

### 2.2.5. Suresh Canagarajah's Translingualism.

Canagarajah (2011/2015) uses the term translingualism to refer to a synergy between languages which generates new grammars and new meanings due to languages in contact, a common phenomenon in multi-cultural and multilingual contexts such as Zimbabwe and South Africa in which language users have at their disposal a range of semiotic systems. Canagarajah (2013a) argues that traslingualism has been there for a long time and it is a fact of life for the millions of people in Asia, Africa and America because of the cultural diversity of the people in these parts of the world. In translingualism diversity is the norm and speakers bring different semiotic resources to their discursive interactions. Interlocutors employ negotiation strategies for effective communication and this process leads to the formation of new contact languages (Matsuda, 2014). Languages are fused into each other and they are not treated as separate semiotic systems; as a result new codes emerge. In other words, translingualism explains the seamless code-mixing, code-meshing and the use of diverse codes, a phenomenon common in multilingual settings (Canagarajah, 2013). This translingual concept is analysed in relation to the issues of identity in the novels selected for this study and how writing is used to present ethnic identities and sometimes to forge new identities.

### 2.2.6 Julia Kristeva's Intertextuality

The term intertextuality was first coined by Julia Kristeva in 1969, especially in her work, *Word, Dialogue and the Novel* that was published in (1969) and it has remained influential in the field of literary and cultural studies (Panagiotidou, 2012). Intertextuality emerged from the tradition of post–structuralism and was originally aimed at destabilising cultural values and conventional categories of interpretation. In her essay entitled ″The Bounded Text,″ Kristeva (1980) claims that any text is actually a permutation of several texts, generating an intertextuality in the spaces of a given text, in which several utterances taken from other texts intersect and neutralise one another. The literary work is an intersection of textual surfaces rather than a point with a singular and fixed meaning. I aim to show that intertextuality is prevalent in Zimbabwean and South African fiction and it is stylistically employed to achieve various effects. Allen (2002:2) states that ″intertextuality is one of most commonly used and misused terms in contemporary critical vocabulary.″

Intertextuality demonstrates that works of art, that is literature, are built from systems, codes and traditions established by previous works of literature. Texts lack independent meanings because they are intertextual and dynamic sites (Allen, ibid). Bakhtin (1984) argues that one 's words are not original but always another's words. They become one's own the moment of utterance and embodiment. Intertextuality, therefore, can be interrogated as the influence and presence of previous texts in the construction of the present one (the interweaving of intertexts) and this serves to show the internal relations of a text with other previous texts. Although Kristeva is accredited for coining the term, the idea was earlier introduced by Barthes (1977a:146-7) who writes: we know that a text is not a line of words releasing a single "theological meaning" but it is a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture (...) and the writer can only imitate a gesture that is always anterior, never original but his only power is to mix writings. Martinez (1996) points out that some scholars feel that the concept is practically impossible to deal with. Despite this argument from some scholars, I think identification and exploration of intertextual elements in the selected texts can lead to a more informed appreciation and better understanding of the literary narratives.

Allusion has been used to capture our attention to historical, social, cultural and other issues. I see it as indispensable to complement Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) understanding of literature with the insights from linguists and literary critics and this could be a fertile ground for further critical engagement. Approaching the literary text from a Deleuzian "thousand plateaus" implies continuous engagement with new ideas as they come and this process facilitates continuous shifting from sedimented convictions about the meanings of texts and of previous thoughts.

**2.3 Deleuze and Guattari's Rhizome: A Botanical Metaphor about the novel.**

A rhizome is an underground root system, a dynamic, open, decentralised network that branches out to all sides unpredictably and horizontally. Deleuze and Guattarri (1987) view the rhizome as a productive image of thought which is unpredictable, growing in various directions from multiple inputs and outputs. Deleuze and Guattarri (1987:23) explain that "the rhizome operates by variation, expansion, conquest, capture, offshoots(...) the rhizome pertains to a map that must be

produced, constructed, a map that is always detachable, connectable, reversible, modifiable, and has multiple entry-ways and exits and its own lines of flight. The multiplicity has no centre as it can take place from many dimensions and at various levels. This possibility of the rhizomatic reading takes readers outside the text in order for them to make new connections. When this rhizomatic concept is applied to creative work of art it allows whatever ideas the work triggers to lead us in different directions and as a result fresh perspectives on the work emerge (O'Halloran, 2012). Another way of reading literary narrative which as suggested in this philosophy is that, the appearance of new rhizomatic offshoots is healthy; the shoots are new turns in critical thinking (possible new truths or realities and these temporarily live as new shoots keep coming.

### 2.3.1. Deterritorialisation and Reterritorialisation

Deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation are terms coined by Deleuze and Guattarri in their philosophical work *Anti- Oedipus* (1972) and in their recent publication *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980). To deterritorialise is to erase or suppress the borders and markers of territory. They argue that deterritorialisation is always accompanied by reterritorialisation, which is the redesign of new power. I intend to explicate and problematize these ideas from Deleuze and Guattarri in relation to the notions of identity, belonging and ″strangeness″ which are linked to metaphors of territory, place, map and boundaries. What is fascinating is that in *A Thousand Plateaus*, the territory is not a fixed place or fixed identity, but rather, it is fluid and unstable, and it can shift. This privileges and problematizes the temporality of the territory and wandering that characterises human nature. I also draw on Deleuze and Guattari′s other ideas in order to provide a philosophical basis for thinking about these critical issues. Human beings (re)define themselves in relation to territory. I am aware of the problems associated with Deleuzian readings, and Buchanan (2006:146) points out that "not one of the dozens of books on Deleuze and Guattarri can tell you how to read a text in a manner that is recognisably Deleuzian.″ Probably, Buchanan needs to be reminded that literary discourse analysis is complex and its complexity derives from its central subject which is life. By extension, reading life has no clearly defined methodology, and our task is to continue trying to

(re)read as well as offering possible meanings immanent in the texts. Thus, in using Deleuzian ideas, I aim to provoke more questions that assist us to (re)conceptualise these issues from new angles. I also seek to suggest that understanding of literary narratives is a complex process which should be approached in a multifarious manner for more effective interpretive practices. The type of reading that does not insist on a single definitive or ultimate point of arrival. In other words, the interpretation should be seen as a continuous and progressive process which remains open to new perspectives and allow possible alterations of previous interpretations, due to the infinite possibilities of meanings and truths that characterise the dialogic imagination.

### 2.4. Metaphoricity and idiomaticity.

Metaphors are defined as figures of speech or stylistic features which are used in poetic language and are ipso facto distinct from ordinary language. Metaphorical expressions are assumed to be mutually exclusive within the realm of ordinary everyday language. (Bakalova, 1998). Lakoff (1979:202) claims that metaphor uses mechanisms outside the realm of everyday conventional language. Lakoff (1992) presents a modern view of metaphor in *The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor*. Contemporary views of metaphor are also proffered by Crystal (1995:421) who says metaphor plays a major role in structuring the way we think about the world, though most of these everyday metaphors go unnoticed. Reddy (2000) in *The Conduit Metaphor* argues that ordinary everyday English is largely metaphorical thereby dismissing the traditional view that metaphor is primarily in the realm of poetic or figurative language. Reddy (2000/) also adds that the locus of metaphor is thought, not language. Metaphor is a major and indispensable part of our ordinary, conventional way of conceptualising the world. Wulff (2012) explains that an idiom has two distinct meanings and it has non-literal or figurative meaning. Idioms are regarded as significant symbolic units or abstract grammatical frames which require considerable attention in reading and interpreting fictional works. The idioms and metaphors in literature have grown in importance in light of the view that everyday speech is largely plain and metaphoricity and idiomaticity characterise literary ingenuity and creativity. This study aims to contribute to this topic in relation to how idiomatic and metaphoric features of language are used to explore topical issues in Zimbabwean and South African societies through the selected literary texts in this thesis. A comparative approach is adopted in this study in the examining of style, and an attempt is made to

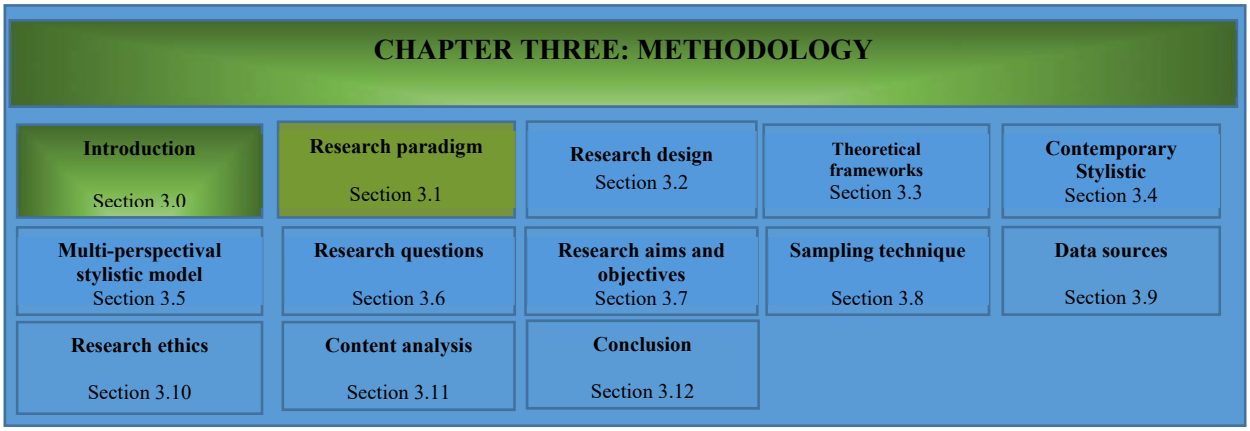
explain possible reasons why and to what effect idioms and metaphors are employed by the writers in post 2000 era.

### 2.5. Conclusion

The preceding sections and subsections in this chapter offered a theoretical springboard for stylistic analysis in this thesis. The discussion(s) above looked at point of view, polyphony, dialogism, heterroglossia, translingualism, intertextuality, and Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome, deterritorialisation, reterritorialisation, foregrounding as well as metaphoricity and idiomaticity in fictional discourse. This is not intended to be a comprehensive list of either stylistic elements or philosophical explorations which may be encompassed by the term stylistics. However, each of these theoretical strands contributes to our understanding of style though with different emphasis. Most importantly, I have tried to present my argument for the need for active engagement with these insights mainly from linguistics, literature and philosophy through eclecticism which is multi-perspectival, multi- disciplinary and multi- conceptual in this study as well as the justification of my stance. The interface between the various disciplines delineated here has necessitated and prompted the adoption of an eclectic approach. Such pluralistic perspective is adopted throughout this study as it guides the analyses and discussions. This innovative position is aimed at finding a modified stylistic toolkit for analysis of literary texts. This thesis therefore, connects to a variety of disciplines and surpasses the temptation of keeping "pure" linguistics or literary models of analysis. I have also indicated the problem associated with selection of the elements of stylization hence the selection was based on the set objectives in this study as well as my treatment of the selected narratives as complex units of diversity. In short, the point argued for in this chapter is that, in light of the more recent criticism of stylistic methods of analysis, it is essential to examine perspectives presented in such criticism with a positive mind for the good of this growing discipline of present day stylistics. As already noted above, recent evidence suggests that stylistic analysis of literary narrative that is only rooted in linguistics (that is, linguistic-oriented) ignores other fundamental avenues of reading and interpreting fictional discourse. Carter (1986) in his essay *"A question of Interpretation: An overview of some recent developments in stylistics*" makes a similar call for "a virtual shift from an exclusively text-oriented discipline" into a more diversified field which is informed by numerous related disciplines. Leech and Short (1981:13) rightly observe that the task of stylistics is not to provide a hard- and-fast technology of

analysis," which means there are various analytical approaches available which are valid and acceptable. In addition, Leech and Short (ibid) also mention that there is a cyclic motion whereby linguistic observation stimulates or modifies literary insight, (which is usually based on the critic/reader's intuition - my emphasis) and whereby literary insight in its turn stimulates further linguistic observations." Thus, the entanglement of the two disciplines is evident in this scenario and it is one of the many reasons why these disciplines work together. Therefore, the division between these disciplines is not absolute at all.

# CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY




## 3.0. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the methodology employed to explore the salient issues of this study. This chapter discusses in detail the research paradigm, research design, and theoretical frameworks, sampling techniques and stylistic analysis protocols employed. It also deals with the ethical issues relevant to the investigation of the research problem in this study. The

chapter also draws attention to aspects that render qualitative research methods relevant to this study. The main goal is to provide an overview of the qualitative research design adopted in this study as well as to provide the rationale behind the development of a new multi-conceptual stylistics analytical model emergent from this study.

### 3.1. Research paradigm

This section locates the study within the interpretivist research paradigm. The decision to adopt this interpretivist research paradigm emanated from the nature of the research questions in this study and the type of knowledge these questions seek to generate. Guba and Lincoln (1994: 105) define a research paradigm as "a basic worldview that guides the investigation." The term paradigm is described as an essential constellation of beliefs shared by scientists, a set of agreements about how problems are to be understood, how we view the world and how to conduct a research (Creswell, 2003 cited in Rahl, 2017). Paradigms contain a basic set of beliefs that guide our inquiries into a particular research (Guba and Lincoln, 2005). Thanh and Thanh (2015) contend that interpretivists believe that an understanding of the context in which any form of research is conducted is critical to the interpretation of data gathered. Interpretivism claims that reality is variable therefore it accepts multiple perceptions.

### 3.2. Research design

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000:90) argue that while research may not always unfold according to plan, it is important to have thought out the several stages and elements of research. There are numerous types of research design that are appropriate for the different types of research projects. "The choice of which design to apply depends on the nature of the problems posed by the research aims" (Walliman, 2011:9). According to Creswell (2009), a research design is a plan to conduct research and it demonstrates the intersection of philosophy, strategies of inquiry and specific methods. Walliman (2011) adds that research design provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data and subsequently indicates which research methods are appropriate. The main reason for choosing a qualitative research design is that the present study is explanatory in nature because it examines, describes and interprets literary discourse. It should be noted that research design needs to align with the research paradigm informing a particular study. Therefore

an interpretivist paradigm is the philosophical foundation that informs the choice of qualitative the methods in this study.

Creswell (2003) broadly defines qualitative research as research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical quantification and can be multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the subject matter. Creswell (1998:2) extends this and perceives a research design in qualitative context as the "entire process from conceptualising a problem, to writing the narrative." According to Marshall and Rossman (2006) it is a systematic way of resolving a research problem; this involves how the research has to be carried out and rationale for embarking on such procedures. Qualitative research is deemed appropriate for answering the research questions asked in this study because it allows interaction of various disciplines in this literary analysis. Jupp (2006) argues that qualitative research is often based on interpretivism, while Goldkuhl (2012) explains that understanding of the subjective meanings is essential in an interpretive paradigm. Creswell (1998:16) identifies some characteristics of qualitative inquiry which are relevant to the investigation in this study. These are:

a) Researcher is the key agent of data collection and analysis.
b) Presentation of "thick descriptions" where the researcher analyses and interprets the emergent patterns and themes in detail.
c) Data are collected as words or pictures (textual forms that reveal style and themes).
d) Data are analysed inductively (that is, the data is deployed to speak in defence or refutation of a specific theme and perspective).
e) Sensitivity to contextual factors. Focus is on how people interpret the world and the different ways in which reality is constructed in particular contexts. Merriam and Creswell (1994:145) state that qualitative researchers investigate "how people make sense of their lives, experiences and the structures of their world." They add that qualitative research is appropriate for exploring and describing phenomena that are inconspicuous to the researcher.
f) Flexibility accepts emergence of unexpected ideas during the research process.
g) Qualitative inquiry provides rich, detailed and complex information about the sampled texts.
h) Analysis retains complexity and nuances specific to the text/s.

Therefore another justification for the adoption of qualitative research methods in this study is that it allows a search for emerging patterns and themes through the thick and rich descriptions derived from sources purposively selected. It is also intriguing to note that qualitative methods are designed to deal with the complexities of meaning in social contexts and they are naturalistic (Holliday, 2002). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000:3) "discourse research is mainly qualitative because it is inherently interpretive since it seeks to make sense of or to interpret phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them." Silverman (2000) additionally observes that through qualitative research we can explore a wide array of dimensions of the social world. This makes it relevant to this research since it takes a multidisciplinary approach in studying and interpreting the selected fictional narratives in an attempt to unravel potential multiple avenues of the meaning-making processes. This study advances the view that social realities are multiple and complex; therefore a single worldview cannot account significantly and sufficiently for the multiplicity and complexity of novelistic discourse. This is the rationale behind a synthesis of conceptual views which guide the study of the selected fictional narratives. The use of an array of theoretical concepts is intended to reflect the diversity of the proposed stylistics model in this study. This resonates with Bruns (2016) who argues that literary works are repositories of a multiplicity of worldviews. Thus, from this view, texts encode particular and oftentimes contested representations of the world (Jefferies, 2015).

### 3.3. Theoretical frameworks

The theoretical foundation in this study is hinged upon multiple concepts. This is meant to generate a robust stylistics analytical model which is applied to the investigation of the complex intersections in the selected fictional narratives. More significantly is the fact that contemporary stylistics evinces a multidisciplinary character since it embraces other areas of language study. Lugea (2017) observes that interdisciplinary threads are evident in recent research in stylistics. In addition, it is essential to mention that this theoretical hybrid is an attempt to suggest possible pathways in the exploration of Zimbabwean and South African narratives. I hope to generate fresh insights that could trigger further interest in the study of novelistic discourse from these two nations. I also strongly feel that the theoretical concepts adopted in this study are relevant and

insightful because they have some salient commonalities. However, I must mention that Bakhtin occupies a prominent position in this study because of his immense contribution to the reading and understanding of language in the novel. Naturally, my discussion of theories that inform this study begins with Bakhtin's framework.

### 3.3.1. Bakhtinian Thought

I regard research as an on-going, well-planned and systematic activity that is undertaken in order to generate knowledge and gain new insights that can change the existing body of knowledge in a particular discipline. Throughout this research, the selected fictional narratives are viewed as complex sites of human discourses which are fluid, contested and never fully apprehended in interpretation. The narratives therefore invite multi-perspectival and multi-dimensional lens which avoid a closed homocentric philosophy in reading. This allows readers to glean numerous standpoints that are captured in these Zimbabwean and South African fictional landscapes. A decision to bring in theoretical strands from different disciplines is informed by the fact that there is a mutual link and interaction in the theories adopted in this study.

This eclectic approach is justified by the complex nature of literary discourse which requires a wide interpretive framework. I consider the conceptually infused stylistics model as a positive alternative towards appreciation of plurality of voices and meanings in fiction. I therefore adopt Bakhtinian thought whereby the novel is regarded as complex panoply of differences. Bakhtin stresses that language is not a neutral entity that passes freely and easily into private property (that is personalized utterance) of the speaker's character and (or writer's speech) intention but rather, it is always populated with the inflections of others (Bakhtin, 1981). The presence of numerous voices (what Bakhtin calls polyphony) in the novel disrupts an author's or protagonist's absolute power to mean (Panchappa, 2011). Furthermore, the fictional world is viewed as an interpersonal territory in which different voices 'speak back" to each other.

Bakhtin acknowledges the significance of the social and cultural contexts of fictional discourse and sees this as compatible with qualitative research methods which bring in the social world of the subjects into the reading of meanings. In other words, understanding of literary discourse should take into cognisance of the socio-cultural and political influences that have shaped the texts. Conceptualization of meanings which places fictional narratives in their socio-political contexts

could be a positive development in the present stylistics model. This is important in the examination of the socio- political nature of the selected texts. The investigation explores the stylistic and thematic representation of conflicting worldviews, the fascination with a human world of difference is central in this study. Blackledge and Greece (2014) comment that Bakhtin's philosophy of language and the novel offers an intricate prism through which to view historical, political and social implications of language in practice. I believe that Bakhtin's analytical framework is most germane to the analysis of the selected novels. I find it most insightful and pertinent to the descriptions of the complex nexus of language and context. I hope to build a theoretical web through a synthesis of Bakhtin's master framework of novelistic discourse with other related theoretical strands.

Bakhtin's discursive concepts provide theoretical justification for the adoption of qualitative research design in this study. The analysis includes a focus on notions of identity and (un) belonging in the context of diasporic space(s) and how self-consciousness is stylistically and thematically articulated. The study looks at how the perceptions of self are moulded in diasporic spaces through discriminatory practices inscribed, depicted and mediated in fictional discourse of the selected texts. Therefore, the inquiry is understood within Bakhtin's dialogic conception of self (Bakhtin, 1981). In Bakhtin's thought, construction of the self (which is one's identity) is shaped by a dialogic engagement with other members of the social world, that is, the self is constructed not only by an individual, but rather, this is collectively done in interactive processes (in dialogue). Bhatia (2002) and Tappan (2005) concur with Bakhtin's pragmatic view of language in their formulation of identity meanings. They explain that a sense of self does not take place in a vacuum because there are contextual factors that inform one's sense of being and belonging. These views make a compelling case for the examination of contextual factors within Bakhtin's theorization and problematization of language in the fictional landscape. The word or verbal utterance (*slovo*), for Bakhtin, is not only lexical but also contextualized (Bakhtin, 1981/1984). Meaning as a dialogical experience is constructed by factors beyond verbal (lexical) content. In other words, strict adherence to the examination and description of linguistic components of literary discourse is insufficient in the act of interpretation.

Another insightful observation is made by Holquist (1987) who states that Bakhtin sees language as "politics of representation" between the self and the other. Bakhtin (1981/1984) rejects rigid

systems of thought (monolithic readings) but promotes pluralistic vision (dialogic and polyphonic readings) of reality which is embedded in the language practices of literary discourse. A close reading of the selected fictional narratives is intended to offer avenues for more nuanced investigations of identity construction. I explore the complex process of identity formation as depicted in dialogue and polyphonic interactions of the texts. Notions of space (place) or territory and politics of location, that is, (place)lessness are prevalent in migration discourse which is a common theme in the selected texts (Buikema, 2005).

Heterroglossia is another perspective that further explains the complexity of novelistic discourse because of the co-existence of and tension between multiple linguistic codes. It proves remarkably productive as a means for capturing the characters' diverse discourses and opens up fundamental ways of reading the complex mappings that take place in multi-language of literary discourse within the selected narratives. Within the heterroglossia framework, discourse (including fictional) is friction-filled due to the interaction of social registers of different characters who present their diverse discourses. The study is able to simultaneously entertain contradictory ideas through the arguments provided in Bakhtin's heterroglossia (multi-languagedness), dialogism and polyphony (mulitivoicedness) in fictional discourse. The languages (or dialects) and voices of the characters as well as of the author interact without curtailing each other's freedom to express a sentiment, a view, a perspective and a stance.

Equally relevant is the way in which a qualitative research paradigm views knowledge in multiple forms. Contrary to the view that there is a single reality or truth, qualitative research accepts the existence of several dimensions of reality. The theoretical perspective adopted in this study arises from the strong belief in the existence of multiple versions of knowledge. Thus, the arguments in this study are a projection of various dimensions of reality. This resonates with Bakhtin's notions of dialogism, polyphony and unfinalizability of consciousnesses whereby conceptualization of realit(ies) is ever negotiated and (re)constructed. Clearly, Bakhtin is against any form of absolutism in reading of the novelistic discourse. Since the study advances the idea of polyphony of "unmerged" worldviews in narrative discourse, the analyses reflects the existence of many positions and angles of truths (Bakhtin, 1981). For Bakhtin, construction and conceptualization of truths is an on-going (unfinalized) process because the locus of meaning is ever shifting thereby generating a perpetual open-endedness that is maintained in the tension/s of narrative/s (Simpson,

2018). The novels serve as interrogative sites or public constructs which strive to open up democratic literary space.

Such recognition of multiple realities is fundamental to the reading and interpreting of the chosen narratives in this study. In line with these views of novelistic discourse, where the utterance remains open for further (re) reading, close reading and critical textual examination of the selected novels is undertaken several times by the researcher in an attempt to realise a myriad of semantic potentials. That is, the texts are seen as assortments of different perspectives and multi-languaged consciousnesses as suggested by Bakhtin (1981). In other words his theoretical framework projects a celebration of dynamism, difference, and multiplicity in fictive world (Tagwirei, 2014). Bakhtinian (1981/ 1984) views also suggest that interpretation and comprehension of fictional narratives is an active and inherently responsive process. Attention is paid to the complex nature of language as a social entity in relation to the stylistic and thematic elements of the selected texts.

### 3.3.2. Kristeva's Intertexuality and Canagarajah's Translingualism

A critical axiom in intertextuality is that an author's work will always have echoes and traces of other texts to which it refers either directly or indirectly and either explicitly or implicitly. According to Kristeva (1980) a text is always in dialogue with other texts. This implies that meanings are also shaped by other texts which exist outside the specific text under study. This sense of intertextuality is what translingualism engages with, which according to Canagarajah (2013/2015), claims that discourse constitutes multiple verbal systems and multiple speech types (multi-speechedness). Though emerging from disparate reading regimes, Bakhtin and Kristeva concur on the idea that meaning is not situated in a text, but rather it lies in dialogue between the present text, reader and other texts and context. In keeping with intertextual and translingual ontologies, the study critically examines dialogic tendencies among several writings. This also brings to the fore the active role of the researcher in the sense-making process. Thus, my reading of the narratives in this study is also informed by previous and current engagement and interrogation of Zimbabwean and South African fiction. I examine such intertextual practices as stylizations which are fundamental in a conceptualization of multilingual and multi-ethnic contexts. I demonstrate the presence of intertexts particularly with reference to the selected texts which I display a plethora of manifold linkages. As already mentioned above, I am attentive to stylistic and thematic connections among the studied narratives. The study in other words,

concentrates on explicating significant stylistic and thematic similarities as well as pronounced differences and the points of tension between the selected texts.

Kristeva (1980)'s intertextuality theory also provides a useful analytic framework in the discussion of the dialogic and pluralistic construction of meanings through a network of languages and interactions with other texts or the absorption of pre-existing and present texts. Kristeva (1980) observes that a text is comprehensible through a mosaic of quotations from other texts. From intertextuality, the selected novels should be understood as interactive sites responding to previous and current texts. This network of texts provides a wider context of possible meanings.

Another significant implication in this theory is that of the author's marginal position as well as indeterminacy of meanings (Allen, 2000). This is also highlighted by Neville (2017) who talks about contextual fluidity of meaning. It is important to note that Bakhtin and Kristeva agree again on the peripheral role of the author in the construction of meanings, thereby projecting a subversion of the traditional authorial role in texts. The study examines stylistic and thematic associations between the selected texts and reference is also made to some pre-existing novels with similar stylizations and thematic concerns in order to broaden the horizons of comprehension of the texts. Thus, an attempt is made to describe stylistic properties and thematic connectivity to earlier and contemporary fictional texts which are outside the spatial and temporal boundaries of the selected novels. My approach to reading is positioned towards problematization of the role of the author in the production of meaning/s because meaning does not exclusively reside with the writer. Intertextuality could then be seen as a dialogue between texts or an intersection of texts. The most significant claim made by Kristeva (1980) in this theory is that the novel is not an enclosed and self-sufficient whole but rather an open interactive site with evident connections within and outside its narrative space. Kahinde (2003) notes that intertextuality offers insightful lens from which to explicate some textual details from other fictional narratives from Zimbabwe and South Africa. Cross reference is made in analysing and evaluating the level of interdiscursivity in the selected novels.

### 3.3.3. Deleuzean readings of the novel

This subsection explains the significance of Deleuze and Guattarri (1980/ 1987)'s rhizomatic concept in this study. The concept of the rhizome refers to the ever expanding rootstock as

described by Deleuze and Guattarri (2000). This theory extends to the reading of narratives in this study since it draws our attention to the ideas of multiplicity and instability of human readings and meanings. Since themes of (home)lessness and (dis)location are prevalent in the selected novels, an attempt is made to debunk theorization of "poetics of place" in relation to the experiences of re-territorialisation and de-territorialisation. Their theory has implications on the concept of home and how it is perceived by characters in the novels. In rhizomatic philosophy, home is not a specific point but rather a shifting zone, especially with regards to the nomadic experiences of immigrants. There are ever-changing codes which make a "home" even away of home. It is important to note that, Deleuze and Guattarri's (1980) complex framework problematizes the idea of fixity, stability, geographical boundaries and celebrates interconnectedness, multiplication and human networks which do not have entry or exit points, thereby suggesting the porousness of geographic boundaries and political demarcations.

I acknowledge that rhizomatic reading is complex and could be contested but I find their arguments attractive and useful as they reduce the challenge of subjectivity by accepting other interpretive pathways and byways. I also argue that there are no universal truths about the social human world; therefore subjective meanings are a permanent feature. Deleuze and Guattarri promote thinking in multiplicities, implying that humans are always different but interconnected. Such flexible interpretive lens and processes are only available in qualitative research hence justifying the choice made in this study. Considering the breadth and complexity of the ideas from these two philosophers, my main objective is to borrow some of their critical perspectives as basis for analyses and discussions of stylization and themes in the selected fictional texts. In my evaluation of the selected novels, I refrain from taking a monolithic stance, but show the intricate nature in the construction of meanings. My readings therefore form just a small part of a semantic and perspectival "*bricolage*" (Hove, 2017) with multiple directions as rightly implied by Deleuze and Guattarri, (1987).

### 3.3.4. Lakoff and Johnson: Reading Figures of Speech

It is important to highlight the linguistic theory that informs the examination of metaphors and idioms in literary texts. Lakoff (1992/2000) and Reddy (2007)'s ideas on how meaning is

constructed through metaphors and idioms provide theoretical grounding for the evaluation of figurative language in the selected texts. I examine figures of speech in relation to cultural, ethnic and national innuendo in these stylizations and also establish the extent to which figurative language is foregrounded. By employing a qualitative analytic approach, the study explores language in specific contexts. Thus, the relevance of qualitative research in this study emanates from its sensitivity to contextual factors, (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005) and its ability to study various dimensions of social meanings. I concede that figures of speech are sometimes (but not always) employed to portray unspeakable truths. Therefore, in this examination of figurative language, the study also focuses on how narratives project and debate important contentious and contemporary political and economic concerns. The interpretive perspective of this study is aimed at revealing an in depth comprehension of the fictive social worlds. Mason (2002) states that qualitative research is grounded in a philosophical position which is broadly interprevist in the sense that it is concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced and constituted by people in a particular environment. She adds that qualitative research is based on methods of analysis, explanation and argument which involve "understandings of complexity, detail and context" (Mason 2002:3). The analysis here attempts to show that figurative language is not only a de-silencing stylistic strategy but also a way to "speak truth to power" (Madonsela, 2017).

### 3.4. Contemporary Stylistics: A metalinguistic field.

Drawing from the foregoing contemporary views about language and meaning interpretation, it is clear that stylistics has undergone marked developments in diverse directions. Consequently, stylistics has grown into a heterogeneous scholarly discipline. Jaafar (2014) rightly states that stylistics today is armed with techniques from linguistics and other related disciplines. This development has opened new horizons for the study of poetics. The rationale for the development of the Multi-perspectival Stylistic Model hereafter MSM, in this study is informed by the view that fictional discourse is complex and multifaceted hence not one analytical approach would adequately examine in depth its stylistics and thematic constructions (Abudulla, 2016). Therefore, MSM proposes a variety of related critical theories that provide an inclusive transdisciplinary and multi-perspectival interpretive approach. More importantly, MSM offers alternative interpretive practices in stylistics that go beyond linguistic signification and considers the fundamental role of the pragmatic dimensions of literary discourse, that is, the extra-linguistic world of the texts.

Moreover, stylistics grew out of interdisciplinary influences and has remained a diverse interdisciplinary field in its account of textual organisation and interpretative effects of style (Whiteley, 2010). Sorlin (2014) also observes that stylistics has porous disciplinary boundaries and this constitutes its defining essence. In his earlier study, Wales (2001) noted that the field of stylistics is adaptive in nature because it welcomes multidisciplinary theoretical dialogue. In his later study (2014), he concurs with Sorlin's observations and further explains that stylistics is now a flourishing discipline with a boundless appetite to incorporate ideas from a range of disciplines across the humanities and social sciences. This leaves room for new perspectives, reappraisals and reorientations of established conceptualisations of literary critique and evaluation. This essentially justifies new models that are informed by these emerging perspectives.

In this study, I take seriously Lundholt's (2004) argument that although linguistic approaches to literary works are gaining more footing each day, it is important to recognise the fact that literary discourse has more than just linguistic signification. Lundholt suggests that the Saussurean notion of langue (linguistic system) is inadequate as an interpretive framework that guides the reading of literary works. This means linguistics in its traditional sense, needs to be complemented by parole (the historical and social dimensions of languaging) in the analysis of texts as this provides an increased sensibility to the extra-linguistic worlds of fictional narratives. Many scholars today including Simpson (2007), Ngara (1982) and Jeffries (2015) have acknowledged that it is difficult to ignore stylistics' orientations to both linguistics and poetics. For instance, Fowler (1985) argues the fact that literary texts are created through language, making therefore linguistics an indispensable aid to literary criticism. Bock (1990) adds that diversity of stylistic features makes it difficult to develop a coherent and adequate theory to analyse language in the novel. Therefore, a multi-perspectival approach garners stylistics in providing different ways of reading texts and the complex nature of language. This proposition is further supported by Abdulla's (2016) argument that no single model is adequate to describe all aspects of literary style. He then develops an eclectic model grounded in Halliday's (1994) systemic functional linguistics. This caters for the complexity of human communication in fictional discourse, considering the diversity of styles in the novel. Most significantly, stylistics is multi-faceted today because of the permeability of its disciplinary frontiers. I find this characteristic important because it allows a rich infusion of theoretical conceptualisations across a variety of disciplines. The MSM developed in this study is based on diverse theoretical strands that allow reading of the focal texts from multiple standpoints.

Also, I attempt to provide a broader and nuanced understanding of literary discourse. Carter (1982) explains that linguistic evidence substantiates our intuitions when reading fictional narratives. In other words, MSM brings linguistics and poetics into fruitful conversations.

A careful consideration of linguistic clues is always vital in reading literary discourse and linguistic evidence validates arguments proffered. This approach is compatible with contemporary insights in the field of stylistics which call for more holistic approaches to textual discourse (Saito, 1997). In this model, language use is regarded as a social practice as rightly proposed by Fairclough and Wodak (1997). Therefore, linguistic descriptions and extra-linguistic factors come to play in all analyses in this study. Thus, linguistics and literary criticism are brought together and this interaction is maintained throughout this study. However, the challenge of using the novel genre for stylistic analysis is real: the practical problem is that it is impossible to identify and analyse all the stylistic features in this genre. Thus, it is more productive to note that descriptions of styles in this study are purposefully selective and subjective. Furthermore, each of the analyses in this study is guided by a specific theoretical framework used to select expressive stylisations. This is not surprising since there is no consensus on criteria for selection of stylistic features in a fictional text. The choice of elements that constitute style has been always the provenance of the researcher.

### 3.5 Multi-perspectival Stylistic Model: A shift in Stylistics

Having explored the conceptual praxis of the MSM, it is imperative at this stage to establish a link between linguistics and poetics in this study. The practical challenge is how to reconcile linguistics and literary criticism in the proposed Multi-perspectival Stylistics Model. As already highlighted, we need to take into account the growing realisation of the significance of extra-linguistic features in linguistic approaches to discourse analysis. Fairclough (1992) and Halliday (1994) acknowledge the essence of social aspects of discourse. Halliday (ibid) also notes that a text is created by its

context which is the semiotic environment. Apparently, this functionalist orientation provides a new focus on both text and extra-textual factors. This implies that we should always be conscious of the outsideness of language in discourse. One of the most significant implications is the reflections about the arbitrariness of language and obscurity of a singular meaning.

Wales (2014) observes that ambiguity is common to all languages, hence contextual clues are significant in the interpretation process. In other words, challenges associated with vagueness of linguistic signs and the polysemic nature of lexical items can be minimised by consideration of the context of the text and utterance. In particular, the recent contemporary discussions have seen a growing dissatisfaction with inquiries that ignore the role of linguistics in interpretive processes. To substantiate this claim, an increasing number of recent studies have considered linguistics insights in the examination of texts and this testifies to the need to bring the two disciplines together. For instance, Chihota (2014) generated what he termed Marxist stylistics and his model is useful in understanding the problematics of making sense, especially when we take into account the complexity of human behaviour in fictional discourse. Against the backdrop of such concerns, perhaps a more difficult question is how to read meanings which are intuitively formed and linguistically supported in line with contemporary thinking.

One of the fundamental qualities of the Multi-perspectival Stylistics Model is that textual features are read as both contextual and linguistic clues that work for semantic effect. Thus, deliberate attention is paid to textual details to check on intuitively formulated semantic arguments. In this study, focus is on Roman Jakobson (1995) who submits that language should be understood in its communicative context. This is a valid argument that is reinforced by Halliday (2003) who affirms that literary text as a social construct of language is a multi-level and multi-dimensional entity privileging different analytical tools for the interpretation of meanings. Such arguments indicate a growing discontentment with linguistic methods of meaning interpretation among semanticists. There are several stylistic approaches but all are usually text-centred (Wales, 2001). One further important difference is that stylistic enquiry involves a rigorous analysis of textual features. There has been a tendency to separate linguistics from literary criticism but what emerges clearly from Bakhtin's discussions of poetic discourse is the interplay of these two fields. Some critics insist that these are incompatible disciplines. In as much as scholars in these fields might want to ignore

this relationship, the fact remains that reading literary works is almost impossible if insights from any of these disciplines are ignored.

This study therefore, advances the argument that although linguistics has gained considerable attention and acceptance in recent discussions, literary discourse has more than just the linguistic system. In other words, langue from Saussurean linguistics is inadequate for the reading the semantic significance of novelistic stylisations. Lundholt (2004) asserts that textual analysis informs the understanding of language as a functional entity. These are pertinent observations to reading fictional narratives. Although previously, linguistics and literary criticism analyses have been regarded as incompatible, a synergetic approach is more useful in the investigation of literary discourse. These issues become fundamental when considering contemporary multi-disciplinary epistemological models. It is above all common knowledge that social, political, cultural and economic realities are constructed linguistically in the texts. Thus, considering the centrality of language in fictional discourse, makes sense to investigate linguistic elements employed in text construction. Consequently, application of linguistics models to the study of literature opens new horizons in the field of literary criticism (Jaafar, 2014). All the theoretical concepts adopted in this study are located in between linguistics and literary studies.

In the proposed model, Bakhtin's interrelated notions of dialogism, polyphony and heteroglossia are privileged. His theorisation of language emerged out of a resistance to linguistics as understood by Saussure. Bakhtin's ideas about the poetics of language are complemented by other related theoretical strands which include intertextuality, translingualism, the rhizomatic concept; deterritorialisation, reterritorialisation (Deleuze, 1978) and cognitive linguistics theory of figures of speech are adopted in the reading of the selected narratives. Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) cognitive linguistics focuses on the role of human cognition in the creation of meaning. It fuses cognitive science, linguistics and literary studies in analyses where meaning is seen as a product of the text and the human conceptualisation of it (Norgaard, Busse and Montoro, 2010). Together these theories form the basis of Multi-perspectival stylistic model proposed in the present study as an overarching theoretical framework.

The theoretical eclecticism is not a weakness but a legitimate strength of stylistic analyses as rightly observed by Jeffries and McIntyre (2010). This provides an advantage in that it offers multiple ways of investigating the stylisations and thematics of the novels. One other justification

of this theoretical infusion is that the study seeks to explore multiple languaging strategies in literary discourse. Yet another potential advantage is that each theoretical position provides a possible way of reading fictional texts. This model clarifies that stylistics is widening its engagement with other disciplines.

Jeffries (2000) and Burke (2014) assert that the strength of stylistics lies in its methodological and theoretical eclecticism. Reading the selected narratives from these perspectives provides us with a much broader interpretive model. As rightly observed by Wales (2014) stylistics today is not totally objective due to the contextualisation principle and the role of the critical analyst. In *Dictionary of Stylistics*, Wales (2014) states that the goal of most stylistic analyses is not simply to describe the linguistic features of the texts for their own sake but to explore the functional significance for the interpretation of the texts.

### 3.6. Research questions

This section recaptures the research questions as outlined in Chapter One:

1. How can one develop a robust stylistics analytical model that synergizes the salient linguistic and stylistic aspects in the selected fictional narratives? A sub question that follows is: how can one effectively bring in the insights which emanate from different traditions and ensure the model is successfully applicable to the selected texts?

2. On the level of application, the study investigates the view that there is a deep sense of sadness and despair in the selected narratives. The questions formulated in line with this view are: How do the selected writers develop nuanced styles and stylizations as new strategies of dealing with artistic muteness and providing voice to the characters such that they "speak truth and no longer whisper to power" (Madonsela, 2017). In short, to what extent do the selected writers generate expressive voices through different stylizations?

### 3.7. Research aims and objectives

This section restates the research aims and objectives. The broad aim in this study as already highlighted is to develop a multi-conceptual and multi-dimensional stylistics analytical model and apply it in the reading of the selected novels. The research objectives set out in this study are:

1. To examine and to establish problematic areas in previous frameworks which the new stylistics model attempts to resolve. The discussion of major revolutionary ideas in stylistics in Chapter Two serves this purpose.
2. To show the interaction of linguistic and stylistic aspects in meaning-making processes. The study is hinged on cross disciplinary pollination in terms of its engagement with numerous theoretical perspectives from linguistics and poetics. This intersection is also privileged where linguistic descriptions are used as a basis for arguments proffered in this study in a quest to gain complementary insights.
3. To advance dialogic discursive practices which acknowledge multi-perspectives in narration and poly-semantic characteristics of the selected novels. In line with this objective, dialogic discursive tendencies such as narrative voice (s) and point of view are brought into discussion and analyses of the selected fictional narratives in the context of current critical debates on the open-endedness of utterances and contributions made by intertextual and translingual stylistic elements in the production of meaning/s. The concept of voice is also critical in the evaluation of "dissident voices" in the selected narratives (Nyambi, 2015). My main focus here is to uncover possible contradicting voices or standpoints since there are no absolute and fixed positions (multivocality and unfinalizability concepts) in the selected literary texts as suggested by Bakhtin (1981/84). Tagwirei (2014) rightly observes that in Bakhtin's philosophy of novelistic discourse, dialogue remains open to the extent that nothing is finalized since the word keeps changing and attaining new semantic possibilities. This also implies that every reading process of fictional narratives provides provisional meanings because of this endless dialogue.

### 3.8. Sampling technique

Punch (2005) argues that all research (whether it is quantitative, qualitative or mixed method) involves sampling because no study can include the entire population. A sample is a subsection of the population selected for a particular study. Bryman and Bell (2010:182) define a sample as "a fragment of the research population that is selected for the research process." Rahl (2017:20) adds that "sampling is a process of selecting a segment of the population for investigation." It is therefore a process of selecting a sample of units from a data set in order to measure the characteristics, beliefs and attitudes of the people. The choice of a sample is determined by the research objectives. When using purposive sampling, the subjects should share certain characteristics which suit a particular research. "In purposive sampling, researchers handpick the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgment of their typicality" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2000:103). They add that in this way researchers build up a sample that is satisfactory to their specific needs. In other words, purposive sampling involves some well-defined pre-selection criteria for a specific research. Patton (2002) also states that in qualitative research, samples should be in small numbers due to the depth anticipated in studying the minutiae of such a purposive sample.

The selection of a sampling strategy must be governed by criterion of suitability. Cohen et al (2000:104) explain that the choice of which strategy to adopt must be mindful of the purpose of the research, the time scales and constraints on the research, the methods of data collection and methodology of the research. In this study, the chosen fictional narratives have some stylistic and thematic commonalties. For instance, the chosen novels comment on the prevailing social, political and economic conditions in their respective societies. In addition, qualitative research is mostly appropriate for small samples since it offers detailed descriptions and analyses of the research subject. In order to establish the salient stylistic elements and discuss these in detail, I selected only six novels. Identified styles are evaluated in relation to subtle but pertinent issues articulated in the selected novels. These are seminal novels which capture dystopian conditions in post-colonial and post-apartheid societies. The reason behind the choice of novels only is that this study is largely informed by Bakhtin's master theory of language that explains how language is utilized in novelistic fictional discourse. I establish complex practices of dialogism, polyphony and heteroglossia in the selected texts. Patton (1990/2002) offers a brief outline of the key features in purposive sampling which are:

1. Samples are selected to achieve representativeness (of the population) or comparability
2. Sampling of special or unique cases (with required salient features)
3. Sampling techniques involve selecting certain units or cases based on a specific purpose rather than a random selection. Therefore selection criteria are research specific.

### 3.9. Data sources

There two types of data sources utilized in this research and these are:

1. The primary texts which provide raw data are the six selected fictional narratives.
2. Relevant secondary data sources from a wide disciplinary spectrum provide interpretive practices and salient reading protocols that extend the possibilities of reading and interpretation in the six selected texts.

### 3.10 Research ethics

Since I have already discussed some ethical considerations in Chapter One, in this section I am particularly interested in outlining research ethics which might improve validity in the study. The importance of research ethics is grounded in the understanding that research is a social process that cannot be artificially separated from the structures of society it attempts to understand. Research is a product of its society and it generates knowledge for the same society. The multi-perspectival approach adopted in this study is another way of addressing the problem of subjective interpretations by paving way for multiple semantic possibilities. Creswell (2008:190) states that "qualitative validity means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures." This implies that constant checking for accuracy is critical throughout the research process. Another way of improving validity in qualitative research design is the explicitness of criteria employed to select the sample, collect and analyse data. The study unravels reality from diverse dimensions which I feel improves validity of the arguments raised in this study. One of the major criticisms levelled against qualitative studies is that its findings are not generalizable to larger populations beyond the contexts in which the research was conducted (Strelitz, 2005). In this study, I argue that research findings are always multiple and diverse in

humanities because of changing contexts and the researcher's active role among other factors. I contend that the stylistics analytical model developed in this study is extendable to the reading of novelistic discourse in other contexts.

Another challenge associated with qualitative research approaches has to do with huge amounts of data collected. In order to resolve this challenge, relevance of the data collected is determined by the research questions addressed as well as the qualification of data to present elements of style and thematic concerns. The narratives are also read repeatedly in order to filter the information that is specifically relevant to the study. This approach to data collection and analysis is meant to trim the possible large volumes of data.

### 3.11. Content analysis

In pursuit of the research objectives outlined in this study, close reading and content analysis of the selected fictional narratives is undertaken. Critical views about Zimbabwean and South African fiction are bought into the discussion as basis for arguments, claims and interpretations of the selected readings. Content analysis is a systematic procedure of assigning categories to portions of texts (Mayring, 2014). Hsieh and Shannon (2005:1278) define qualitative content analysis as "a research method for subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification of coding and identifying themes or patterns." Textual content analysis, according to Lundholt (2004), is based on the understanding of language as a functional and communicative entity. A similar claim is made by Hsieh and Shannon (2005) who assert that qualitative research uses content analysis and pays attention to the features of language in communication with particular focus on the content or contextual meaning/s of the text. Data are thematically categorised and elements of stylization are identified and described in relation to emergent themes.

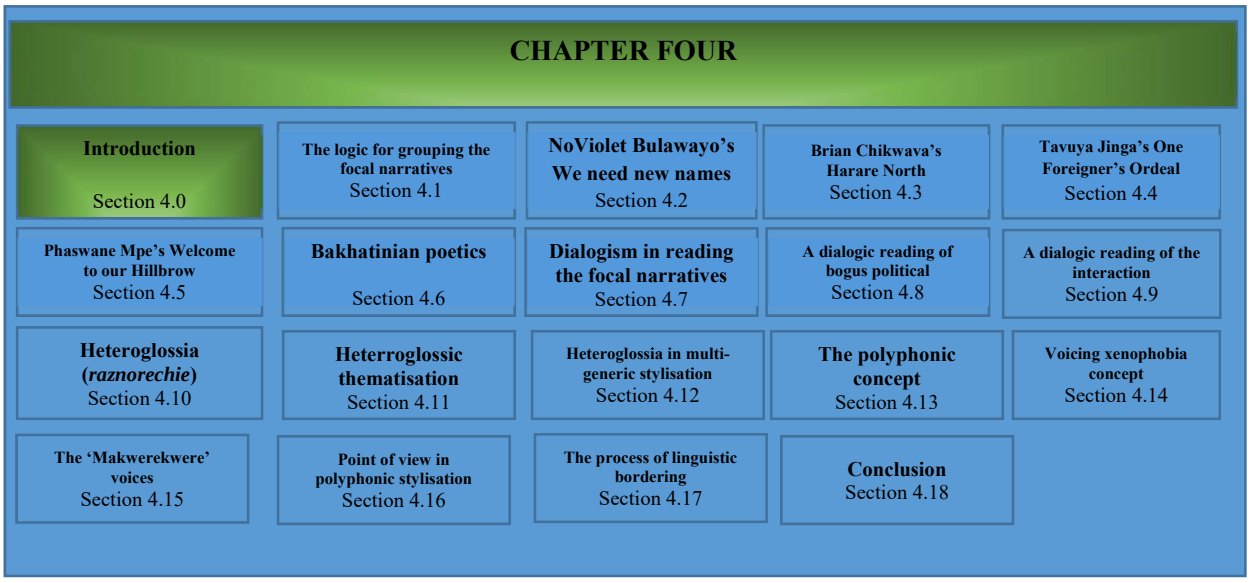
An attempt is made to enhance a broader comprehension of the selected texts as dynamic sites of meaning construction. Thus, the engagement with scholarly ideas from linguistics and literary criticism is particularly significant in opening up critical space for further debate. This clearly explains the relevance of the method in this study. The analysis is focused on an exploration of the narrative styles in relation to the concepts of dialogism, polyphony, heterroglossia and intertextuality, the rhizomatic concept, de-territorialisation, re-territorialisation and metaphoricity and idiomaticity. The study examines possible indicators of subversion of monologic

(authoritative) narrative tendencies. Thus, the analysis is aimed to establish the extent to which the texts project dialogic, heteroglossic and intertextual practices. The study adopts the view that novelistic language is a diversity of social speech types, with manifold languages and a diversity of individual voices stylistically and thematically constructed. The primary goal of this work is thus to reach a better appreciation of novelistic discourse as a complex and never-ending discursive platform.

### 3. 12.Conclusion

The chapter provided an explanation and justification of the research paradigm adopted in this study and proffered reasons for the choice made in terms of the research design, theoretical frameworks that inform the reading of the selected fictional narratives and sampling technique. The theoretical frameworks underpinning the study were also described and rationale behind their selection was offered. A common thread among theories was identified which is their ability to open up discursive spaces that welcome and celebrate different worldviews thereby widening semantic options to the reading of the selected texts. The data collection methods were outlined and ethical considerations with reference to validity issues in this study were highlighted. Possible solutions to ethical problems in relation to validity were also suggested. The next chapter engages with the specific reading of selected texts following the paradigms explicated in Chapters 2 and 3.

# CHAPTER FOUR: THE COMPLEXITY OF MAKING SENSE: POSITIONING BAKHTIN AND CANAGARAJAH WITHIN THE MULTI-PERSPECTIVAL STYLISTICS MODEL




## 4.0 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the methodological issues in this study and situated the proposed Multi-perspectival Stylistics Model (hereafter MSM) within the developments in contemporary stylistics. The present chapter marks the beginning of the analyses of the selected novels. In this chapter, Bakhtin's metalinguistics and Canagarajah's translingual theories guide the reading of stylistic and thematic issues in Bulawayo's (2013) novel *We need new names,* Chikwava's (2009) *Harare North,* Jinga's (2012) *One foreigner's ordeal* and Mpe's (2001) *Welcome to our Hillbrow.*

## 4.1 The logic for grouping the focal narratives

My selection of these four texts is motivated by a number of factors. Firstly, the novels reflect intriguing transcultural and transnational frameworks in the production of fiction in terms of text compositional form that significantly resists and troubles nationalist canonisation. These texts defy any neat categorisation and subvert prescriptive boundaries. Secondly, the dialogic sophistication of these novels shows a keen interest in exploring the complexity of human communication. Literary writing in these texts problematizes meaning-making through a unique expressive cross-cultural semiotic code utilised in multinational zones. The presentation of the nomad/traveller t[illegible]oy[illegible]*Ati*[illegible]*c*[illegible]*ousness*, further complicates the concept of imagined borders. Yet, at the same time, these novels convey the problematic rhetoric of Afropolitanism, or black internationalism, human civilisation and globalisation which constitute novel thematic conversations. The destabilisation of territorial markers of national space has significant implications for the reading of these narratives. These texts reconfigure the literary world through an expansion of the African literary canon and thereby subvert the commonsensical monolithic conceptualisations. Canagarajah (2013/2018) explains that syntactic fusion, code meshing and glossing (a synergy of linguistic codes) generate new grammars and new meanings that go beyond distinctive linguistic structures. He also points out that the new contact zones are transformative sites that are power-laden and tension-filled. This creates a number of semantic ambiguities in reading the hybrid textual qualities embedded in the selected novels.

**The 'Makwerekwere' voices** Section 4.15
**Point of view in polyphonic stylisation** Section 4.16
**The process of linguistic bordering** Section 4.17
**Conclusion** Section 4.18

The versatility of the novels therefore cannot be overstated here. For instance, although these works were written and published in the post-colonial era, they also articulate grim historical details of the colonial past. The novels articulate a troubling schizophrenic psychosis in post-2000 fictional characters. My attention was drawn by the disturbing circumstances of humanity that are crafted with wit and persuasive vividness. The most salient aspect of these narratives is that all of them except Mhlongo's *After Tears*, are debut novels that interrogate migration, diasporic sites and the insider-outsider binaries. On the stylistic plane, there are significant auto/biographical echoes that feature in these narratives. Finally, the narratives' stylistic and thematic constructions capture the attention of a wide audience. It is therefore prudent to analyse these narratives together because of the evident (dis)connectedness since the study uses a comparative approach.

### 4.2 NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*

NoViolet Bulawayo is a Zimbabwean female writer based in America. Her narrative follows the life of Darling, who at the beginning of the novel is a ten-year old girl living in a slum ironically named Paradise. Darling and her friends from Paradise languish in poverty to the extent that they steal guavas from a rich neighbourhood to feed themselves most of the time. Part of the novel is set in Zimbabwe and the other part is set in America where Darling goes to join her aunt, Fostalina, f[illegible] Darling and others of her kind find that America is home to Americans, not o[illegible] A[illegible] ep[illegible] s[illegible] itly stated in this novel, the textual details support this interpretation of space a[illegible] ov[illegible] na[illegible] l[illegible] the Los Angeles Times Booker and Inaugural Elisalat Prizes in 2013, the same year it was published.

**Heteroglossia (*raznorechie*)** Section 4.10
**Heterroglossic thematisation** Section 4.11
**Heteroglossia in multi-generic stylisation** Section 4.12
**The polyphonic concept** Section 4.13
**Voicing xenophobia concept** Section 4.14
**The 'Makwerekwere' voices** Section 4.15
**Point of view in polyphonic stylisation** Section 4.16
**The process of linguistic bordering** Section 4.17
**Conclusion** Section 4.18

### 4.3 Brian Chikwava's *Harare North*

Brian Chikwava is a Zimbabwean writer based in the United Kingdom who has made an impact at both national and international levels. His novel *Harare North* has won a number of international awards. The novel is set in London and the main character is a fugitive and a former killer agent in the Robert Mugame regime. He is brutal and merciless, a member of the 'jackal breed.' Chikwava's protagonist is metonymic of the conservative Zimbabwe African National Unity Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) nationalist supporters who do not embrace political and ideological

change. He was trained to beat and kill perceived "enemies of the state." Those who dare challenge the Mugabe regime receive plenty of 'forgiveness' from the "jackal breed "youths who are part of the repressive state apparatus (Althusser, 1970). The novel explores in great detail London's landscape which is renamed Harare North, emphatically coined to highlight the massive presence of Zimbabweans in England. Navigation of this space by immigrants is marred by multiple challenges such as disillusionment, exploitation and segregation.

### 4. 4 Tavuya Jinga's One Foreigner's Ordeal

Tavuya Jinga is also a Zimbabwean novelist writing from the diaspora. The novel marks his maiden entry into the literary landscape. Only Chapter One and a small part of Chapter Two are set in Zimbabwe. The rest of the text is set in South Africa, bringing together the two neighbouring countries through its fictional border crossing. The most interesting part of this novel is the attempt to construct a borderless human space. This subversion of cartography offers fictional liberty to examine and question the cultural, economic, political and social challenges confronting both South Africa and Zimbabwe. The protagonist is a Zimbabwean teacher who flees his homeland during the peak of the nation's economic and political crises. Before he departs, readers are informed of a myriad of economic, political and social problems in that this teacher encounters in Zimbabwe. Just like any other citizen who fled Zimbabwe in 2008, the teacher's pitiable condition is a push factor. Previously, he had no such vision and patriotic spirit, but he regards his flight as a survival instinct that does not require prior planning or reasoning.

### 4.5 Phaswane Mpe's *Welcome to Our Hillbrow*

Phaswane Mpe is a South African writer. His novel captures post-apartheid experiences of rural-urban migration through the two protagonists, Refentse and Refilwe. Together with a group of friends, these young people live in the "dog eat dog" environment of Hillbrow in Johannesburg, South Africa. The city is a crowded multinational space characterised by crime, violence and a heavy presence of African immigrants. The novel moves from Hillbrow to Tiragalong, a rural village from where Refentse hails and then takes its audience to Oxford Brookes University in England where Refilwe goes to study for her Master's degree. All these locations serve as spaces for the articulation of thematic signposts in Mpe's narrative.

### 4.6 Bakhtinian poetics: Metalinguistics theory in the Multi-perspectival Stylistic Model

It is pertinent now to turn our attention to the theoretical notions that inform the reading of these texts in this section. Dialogism, heteroglossia and polyphony are concepts that inform the readings of the narratives discussed and interrogated here. Bakhtin views the novel as a "multiform in style and variform in speech and voice" (Bakhtin 1984:261). This observation invites new ways of reading fictional texts and speaks into the complexities of sense-making.

### 4.7 Dialogism in reading the focal narratives

According to Bakhtin, the novel is the most dialogical system, characterised by opposing and divergent voices. Bakhtin (1986) contends that language is dialogic by nature and using language is participating in dialogue. He affirms that the multiplicity of conflicting worldviews is realized in the realm of language. Dialogism acknowledges the multiplicity of voices and dynamics of the relations between individuals and society (Holoquist, 2001). Bakhtin (1986) contends therefore that the meaning of an utterance is always half someone else's. His observations have significant implications about the nature of human language.

Bakhtin's interest in the cultural and social aspects of language led to his concerted investigation into dialogism as a theory. Dialogism developed in response to monologism and Bakhtin (1986: 69) asserts that every speaker or author is a respondent to a greater or lesser degree. The author is not, after all, the first speaker, the one who disturbs the eternal silence of the universe. Dialogism refers to "the necessary relation of any utterance to other utterances" (Bakhtin, 1981:8). This insight destabilises the idea of point of view by blurring the individual views and creates ambiguity as to whose thoughts are consequently transmitted. The claim that all utterances are part of a matrix of utterances creates hermeneutical complexity and makes fictional narratives remarkably sophisticated. Bakhtin proposes that we understand texts or utterances because of their connection to earlier patterns of meanings, utterances and words. What Bakhtin underscores here is that meanings are not individually constructed by the author or the characters in the novel but rather emerge from interactional relationships. This is a remarkable shift from traditional linguistics because from a Bakhtinian sense, the text is no longer the source of meaning production as established in the structuralist perspective. Kalua (2007) comments that Bakhtin's concept of dialogism regards language as a porous, hybrid and open-ended phenomenon.

In light of these observations, it is appropriate to argue that the dialogic principle liberates fictional characters to engage in dialogue. Furthermore, this dialogic notion troubles traditional views about authorial intentions since the author loses the monopoly to mean. Bakhtin (1984:69) argues that meanings and truth cannot be limited to a single consciousness but are rather generated from a multi-voiced discourse by all social participants because reality is born "in the point of touching different consciousnesses." I examine this dialogic orientation of the novels in order to underscore contradictions and the semantic incompleteness in multiple narrative discourses which depart from a monolingual closure of the text. Elaborating on dialogism, Lodge (2000) explains that the medley of styles and voices makes the novel genre a democratic, anti-totalitarian literary form in which no ideological or moral position is immune from challenge and contradiction.

Firstly, I begin by reading how these texts fictionalise and interrogate migration by those who remain in the homeland and those who leave. My discussion of these narratives explores representations of the conflicting views of these characters. The novels studied in this thesis subvert any monologic reading of migration but rather problematise the nomadic concept. Even the narrator's views do not constitute the ultimate authority. Dialogism, in this regard, is a descriptive metalinguistic term that refers to the conflicting forces within language and cultural linguistic diversity. Furthermore, Bakhtin's theorisation of language shows the limitations of Saussurean linguistic analyses of the novel and offer a hermeneutical model for poetic discourse that considers language as a multi-dimensional social phenomenon. This privileges interpretive processes that take into account the pragmatics of the text thereby departing from Saussure's langue/parole distinction.

The inconsumerability of perspectives is highlighted in the following extracts from *We Need New Names*, *One foreigner's Ordeal* and *Harare North.* Those who leave Zimbabwe in search of greener pastures see exile as the only alternative route but those who remain behind hold on to patriotic discourse and view the migrants as skeptics and unpatriotic. Chipo accuses Darling of abandoning her country in the following passage:

Just tell me one thing. What are you doing not in your country right now? Why did you run off to America, Darling Nonkululeko Nkala, huh? Why did you just leave? If it's your country, you have to love it to live in it and not leave it. You have to fight for it no matter what, to make it right. Tell me, do you abandon your house because it's burning or do you find water to put out fire?(---)

you left the house burning and you have the guts to tell me, in that stupid accent that (...) this is your country (Bulawayo, 2013: 286).

This viewpoint is, however, deconstructed through Darling's reminiscence:

If I were at home I know I would not be standing around because something called snow was preventing me from going out to live a life. Maybe me, and Sbho and Bastard and Chipo and Godknows and Stina would be playing Find Bin Laden or country-game or Andy-over. But then we wouldn't be having enough food, which is why I will stand being in America dealing with snow; there is food to eat here, all types of food. There are times, though, that no matter how much food I eat, I find the food does nothing for me, like I am hungry for my country and nothing is going to fix that (Bulawayo, 2013: 153).

As readers, we cannot help but sympathise with Darling and other immigrants like her who suffer from homesickness but recognise that going back is not an option. This pain emanates from the fact that she has no hope to get the much needed papers and it amplifies the bitterness that builds up from this realisation. The parataxis captures a strong attachment to the homeland but this same home is a "house of hunger," making it unhomely and claustrophobic. She cannot risk going out of America and never coming back again because home is a place of denigrating poverty. Here, the novel becomes a site of contestation: it debunks the Zimbabwean state's denial of crises and labelling of those who left the country as non-patriotic citizens.

The significance of dialogism in this study is its keen interest in how fictional discourse creates a democratic space through pluridiscursivity in which meanings are always contested and reconstructed. The narratives convey the interaction of distinct positions borne by different characters in some resemblance of Socratic dialogues. Characterisation is further employed to show how even "patriotic citizens" who serve as state apparatus are forced to leave the national space and become nomadic subjects. Both Chikwava and Jinga's protagonists passionately love their country but they leave Zimbabwe under compelling though different circumstances. The phrase "you abandon your house because it's burning" etches a grim image of the nation, an outright admission that the house (country) was no longer safe to live in. Jinga's narrator flees from the multiple problems that include incapacitation, hyperinflation, eroded remuneration and severe shortages of basic essentials, including cash. In this way, the narratives are 'incompatible

with the totalitarian universe' since they resist endorsing the official monologic discourse (Kundera, 1988/2003:4). For Bakhtin (1986) every aspect of expression is determined by actual conditions of an utterance and its immediate social situation. This means that the context is the constituent factor in understanding the linguistic form, making the utterance simultaneously individual and social. The insight correlates well with Halliday's (1994) systemic functional linguistic framework.

Jinga's narrator, also talking about a pastor whom he met on his way to South Africa, sarcastically says:

The nature of the pastor's business in South Africa was a matter of conjecture to me. He might as well have been part of the trail of unpatriotic doctors, nurses, artisans, technicians, sportspeople, accountants, builders, engineers, lecturers, teachers, soldiers, policemen---you name them. I am even sure that some of the ghost workers, particularly those from the Ministry of Youth, Gender and Employment creation felt insulted by the salaries they received, left their ghost stations and headed out of the country too (Jinga, 2012:15).

This passage speaks of the endless list of skilled workers fleeing the deepening economic problems in Zimbabwe. The use of ellipsis and sarcasm in this extract foregrounds the brain drain and economic collapse in post-2000 era. Bakhtin offers a paradigm for diversity and pluralism. Even the "ghost" ZANU PF loyalists who benefit from a corrupt government ministry leave the country in this time of a volatile economic situation. The biblical allusion *"How many of my neighbours' servants have bread enough to spare, and I perish with hunger*" is deployed as the title of Chapter one in Jinga's novel to summarise the desperate situation that prompted flight into the diaspora. The country's inflation had reached 231 million percent and the nation had become a "financial grave."

Similarly, the unnamed protagonist in Chikwava's novel demonstrates his undying support of the regime. His hostility towards opposition members testifies his unflinching political loyalty to Mugabe and ZANU PF. Yet, migration becomes a necessary option to escape the long arm of the law. When the narrator faces some challenges in London he tells us, "but right now me I sit tight because there is no reason going back home if you can't buy your freedom from them… those hyenas" (Chikwava, 2009:21). He needs money to "buy" his freedom from a corrupt legal system

but the economic situation in Zimbabwe does not offer him a chance to raise the money needed. He is a self-contradictory character who supports the same system with "greedy hyenas" that threaten his existence in Zimbabwe. Therefore, his migration to London is a rare admission by a ZANU PF supporter that life in Zimbabwe has become unbearable. This is a peculiar discourse because throughout the novel, the narrator uncritically and gullibly defends Mugabe's government. The following passage is telling evidence of unguarded truth from a regime supporter:

Even the beer drinking people who used to mock Shingi's paternity are "stuck in they hovels in the township bawling they eyes out because price of everything jump up zillion per cent and they can't afford food or brew now, all them big stomachs gone, they belts is down to they last holes but trousers is still falling down, big fat cheeks now gone … (Chikwava, 2009:12).

The dire conditions within the national space send citizens packing. They run away from conditions of deprivation and precarity, hoping to get solace from the "neighbours (host countries), who have plenty to spare." Visual imagery effectively projects pathetic memes of starving citizens. However, the Zimbabwean government, in its mission to hide its failures, blames migrants. Mangena, (2015) observes that in post-2000 era, Zimbabwe became a crisis ridden state yet the government refused to acknowledge this harsh reality. A suffocating national space in Zimbabwe causes a longing for alternative lives elsewhere. Thus, the passages cited above subvert patriotic narrative, providing space where such a parochial nationalism is interrogated and problematised.

In a related theme, Bulawayo employs the child narrative voice to articulate family fragmentation caused by migration, and the filial ties broken in the process.

Father comes home after many years of forgetting us, of not sending us money, of not loving us, not visiting us, not anything us, and packs in the shack unable to move, unable to talk properly, unable to do anything, vomiting and vomiting, Jesus, just vomiting and defecating on himself (Bulawayo, 2013:89).

The innocent eyeball narrative perspective here and grotesque elements reveal a shattering sense of rejection and abandonment. Darling's inner sentimental voice is heard though her thoughts are not explicitly uttered. She criticises her father for abandoning the family in the heat of economic woes and only returns home to die. This man is infected with HIV and he is now a "long bundle of ugly bones" with a "shrunken head" and "pinking lips." We understand that Darling's apathy,

she perceives her father's migration as betrayal of the family. Her thoughts inscribe her anger and bitterness in indelible marks. The interior monologue captures Darling's indifference:

I do not turn to look at him because I don't even want to look at him. He keeps saying, my boy, my boy, until I finally say, I'm not a boy, are you crazy? Go back (…) to where you come from with your ugly bones, (...) but I'm saying it all inside my head. Before I have finished saying all I'm trying to say he has shat himself and it feels like we're in a toilet (Bulawayo, 2013: 91).

When the seriously ill father continuously coughs, Darling does not feel for him but rather remarks " I hate you for this, I hate you for going to that South Africa and coming back sick and all bones" (Bulawayo, 2013: 96). The anatomical metaphors conjure a succinct image of a dying man in the presence of his unsympathetic daughter. Nevertheless, Darling's attitude towards her father is contested through consideration of the factors that forced him to leave his family behind in the first place. The man is a university graduate whose hopes and desires to feed his family are crushed by the economic implosion in post-2000 era. Darling uncritically says, "Mother had not wanted father to leave for South Africa (…), but it was at that time when everyone was going to South Africa and other countries" (Bulawayo, 2013: 91).

We re-assess our initial reading of his leaving and his abandonment of the family when we get to know about the biting poverty in his family through his response to the wife's disapproval:

"You all don't get it, do you? Is this what I went to university for? Is this what we got independence for? Does it make sense that we are living like this. Tell me!" (Bulawayo, 2013: 92).

Historical memory employed in this passage communicates the choking sense of living in dehumanising conditions. Darling's father bemoans egocentric behaviour of the black bourgeoisie in post-independence era. These characters have different outlooks, yet readers are compelled to consider the man's plight as head of the family. There were no choices available to any man in his situation. The rhetorical questions in his response capture his desperation and frustration with the parlous economic environment. Certainly, at this point we generate a set of new meanings derived from our new understanding. We condemn and simultaneously sympathise with him. Such mixed reactions are stirred by the dialogic construction of the text when the characters speak for themselves.

Likewise, Mpe's narrative employs dialogic discourse as an effective stylistic feature of novelistic discourse to confront any kind of absolutism. The preoccupation with dialogic discourse is established in the novel's rejection of monologic attitudes, perceptions and values. For instance, Vambe (2019) criticises what he regards as "bizarre remnants of apartheid" when he points out that native South Africans project images of themselves as authentic, clean and pure, whereas African immigrants are imagined as dirt, impure and promiscuous. The makwerekwere women are blamed for their "sugar-coated kisses that destroy any man" (Mpe, 2001:3) and Lerato "could not say no to any drop of semen found flowing aimlessly in the streets" (Mpe, 2001:82). Such retrogressive attitudes are interrogated through the unmerged worldviews in the text. As readers, we encounter different worldviews and voices that often never come to an agreement. It is through this dialogic stylisation that we reflect on contemporary hermeneutics vis-a vis the significance of the multiplicity of worldviews in novelistic discourse viewed by Bakhtin as human interactional space. It is important to bear that there is always more than one logic and perception in each utterance.

### 4.8 A dialogic reading of bogus political independence in post-colonial African societies

According to Bakhtin (1981/86) discourse is a site of struggles between centralising authoritative (monologic) forces and decentralising (dialogic) forces. He adds that human consciousness is not a unified entity but rather, it is always conflict-ridden between different consciousnesses. The metalinguistic theorisation of fictional discourse regards the novel genre as a discursive platform where narratives from the state and those of ordinary people are presented to call for the attention of the readers.

Elsewhere, Bakhtin states that we live in a world of others' words and man's consciousness develops out of other's consciousnesses. It is in this light that we attend to the narratives from both the state and citizens. The encounter between Paradise residents and the NGO people reveals how failed states sustain their economies through begging from Europe. This dependency syndrome is seen when Africans always carry a begging bowl to solve self-made problems. The

NGO case in *We need new names* is a good example of how post-colonial Zimbabwe relies on the west. However, the relationship between these western-sponsored donor organisations and the poor masses in Africa who receive donations is characterised by suspicion and mistrust. Even the children from Paradise slum have reservations about NGO people whose smiles look like "grinning dogs." The smiles are both false and intimidatory. Most importantly, both adults and children seem to be embossed to receive donations from the NGO people who have taken the "parental role" over the poor African masses. The government of a failed state has reduced its citizens to destitutes who rely on begging from foreign donors. Paradise slum becomes a trope for impoverishment, marginality and suffering. The narratives criticise such conditions that lead to loss of dignity and self-respect of the African humanity.

The euphemistic metaphors of Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) and black power convey the hollowness of independence in both South Africa and Zimbabwe. Clearly ordinary people got mere illusion of independence. The implementation of such projects is characterised by corruption and exclusion of the very people who are supposed to benefit. In *Harare North* poor villagers are forced to leave their land and pave way for a diamond company that belongs to a government minister. These villagers had been previously evicted by white colonisers and the post-independent government does not bring any relief. The conditions of ordinary citizens in postcolonial further contest the state narratives about socialism and equity. The reality is that the divide between the rich and the poor is profoundly widened replaying the colonial encounter. This further speaks of the unfulfilled national aspirations about egalitarian or classless African societies which remain an elusive dream. Africa lags behind in terms of economic development as clearly highlighted in the game played by the children in *We need new names* in which everyone wants to be Australia, Britain, Canada, Greece, Germany, France, Italy, Russia Switzerland and USA. Each of these is a "country of countries" apparently because of their economic strength. The USA is even called "the big baboon of the world" (Bulawayo, 2013:49), emphasising its economic strength whereas Zimbabwe is "a terrible place of hunger and things fall apart." Zimbabwe is carved as one of those countries that "sit at the border and watch the countries of countries play" (Bulawayo, 2013:50). Unfortunately, the Zimbabwean government is not self-critical, it prefers a deceptive and sanitised discourse that does not address the problems faced by its citizens.

Put in other words, economic independence is a dream deferred for majority of black people in post-colonial African states which is synonymous with bogus independence that offers nothing to the suffering ordinary citizens. It therefore, appears that economic freedom is more important for the common man whose bare life is illustrative of political betrayal. The novels converge in highlighting the perpetuation of the disparities between the rich and the poor in post-colonial South Africa and Zimbabwe. Upward social mobility for most ordinary citizens is stifled. The two nations in question project differing scenarios where the Zimbabwean economic and political conundrum makes life unbearable, turning citizens against each other with the ruling elite promoting hate speech against members of the opposition parties as indicated in *Harare North*, *One foreigner's ordeal* and *We need new names,* while in South Africa the problem of corruption reeks to the core. Zimbabwe's 'Look East' policy is criticised in the following extract:

China is a red devil looking for people to eat so it can grow (--). I think China should be like dragon, Bastard says. That way, it will be a real beast, always on top. I think it must be an angel, Sbho says, with some superpowers so that everyone will be going to it for help, like maybe pleading or dancing to impress it, singing China, China mijibha China, China wo! (Bulawayo, 2013:47-48).

The semantic significance of this extract is captured through metaphors of the beast, devil and dragon as well as personification where China feeds on human flesh to nourish itself. China is also ridiculed as an angel serving begging poor countries that in return sing praises to it. The singing amplifies the vulnerability and dehumanisation of the states that survive through begging. The relationship between China and Zimbabwe is conflicted in this passage. A pessimistic tone pervades the narratives from Zimbabwe. Sadly, citizens helplessly watch their government making poor economic and political decisions that ultimately reduce them to the "wretched of the earth." The oppressive conditions, political violence, denigrating poverty and evictions point to the hollowness of independence for the ordinary people.

### 4.9 A dialogic reading of the interaction of constitutional rule and economy

In a very insightful book, *Why nations fail: The origins of power, prosperity and poverty*, Acemoglu and Robison (2012) explain the complex interaction between democracy and the economy of every nation. My reading of the fictional narratives in this chapter reveals profound economic disparities between South Africa and Zimbabwe. These differences are most visible in areas such as the infrastructure of the two nations, (in)stability of national currency and (un)availabity of basic commodities. Jinga's novel, *One foreigner's ordeal,* makes remarkable comparisons which obviously elicit the reader's attention. The narrator's movement from Zimbabwe into South Africa makes him notice the shocking differences where one side of the border has "hungry looking" and poverty-stricken police whose uniforms tell a sore story of anguish, this same side, is a dry land with "empty shelves" in shops except "toilet paper" which is probably available because the citizens regard it as some luxury for the elite class. The roads are in a poor state of disrepair and teachers receive a salary equivalent to or less than a South African "fifty rand" note. Yet, on the other side of the border, the police are "paunchy" and they have "plump hips," banks have cash, shops have goods and Zimbabweans flock into Musina to get pens, books, food, "(everything) and anything except toilet paper" (Jinga, 2012:14).

The fundamental question is, why do the two neighbours differ in such significant ways? I argue that understanding why such profound differences exist is very important in order to identify possible solutions. Clearly the political processes in these two countries shape their economies and the livelihoods of their citizens. Thus, the reasons for such differences stem from the very different political institutions on the two sides of the border, which create very different economic, political and social conditions for the citizens. According to Acemoglu and Robinson (2012) the ability of citizens to control politicians is critical for the economic and political prosperity of a nation. It is apparent that in post-2000 era, common Zimbabweans lost the voice to "speak to power" and their capacity to control the events in the political domain. The following passages support this perception:

> In the days after the voting (…) Paradise didn't sleep. The adults stayed up for many nights, dizzy and restless with expectation, not knowing how to sit still, not knowing how to bend low inside the shacks, not knowing how to sleep, not knowing how to do anything anymore except stand around fire and talk about how they would live the new lives that were waiting for them (…) The first thing I will do is get a house where I will stand up to my full height

> (--). I am going back to finish my final year at university(…). I will call back those who have gone abroad tell them to come back home and live like human beings again (…).We will start living. It won't be the same again. Come change, come now (Bulawayo, 2013:134-135).

The talk about change stops when Bornfree, one of the opposition activists, is taken: "that did it, that made adults stop talking about change" (Bulawayo, 2013:134). The inhabitants of Paradise "returned quietly to the shacks to see if they could still bend low." Repetition and the simile "to live like human beings again" capture the level of anxiety and also indicate how citizens' dreams to get better livelihoods and change their current living conditions are shattered by an autocratic political system that abuses its power and silences any protest voice. The Paradise inhabitants are dehumanised by their present precarious conditions and therefore yearn to be 'humans' again. Agamben's (1998) notion of 'bare life' aptly captures the living conditions of the Paradise community. Their desires to have decent livelihoods (rehumanisation) constitute a fundamental right which should be honoured. Yet, Mugabe and his administration deny them this essential constitutional right. Most significantly, the excerpt conveys a sad political reality in Zimbabwe where elections could not be used to dislodge ZANU PF from power. In this way, Paradise inhabitants are excluded from citizenship and become muted and unclassifiable bodies. Paradise becomes a microcosmic setting which represents the conditions of abjection and precarity of ordinary Zimbabweans whose fate lies in the hands of a brutal regime. Citizens yearn for change yet the politicians undermine this right through rigging elections. Those who insist on political change are beaten up, intimidated or assassinated in a vindictive suppression of free speech in Zimbabwe:

> Bornfree's coffin is draped by a flag with black, red, yellow and green stripes with a white heart on the front. We have seen quite a few coffins like that lately; it's the Change people, like Bornfree, in the coffins. And next, comes the throng of mourners. This is the first time we are seeing these many people at Heavenway. It's just bodies all over, clogging the narrow paths. Many of them are wearing the black T- shirt with the white heart at the front or with the word *Change* (--). They whistle, (and) raise their fists. They chant Bornfree's name (--). These mourners are angry. (Bulawayo, 2013:134).

This passage offers a sufficient description of human rights violations where opposition members are brutally assaulted and killed. This is compounded by the legitimacy crisis of the Mugabe-led government. It is also significant to examine the country's political context and the aggravating effects of economic decline. The increased abject poverty among those who occupy the liminal space is a grave matter for Paradise residents. These citizens voted for change but they are bludgeoned into submission to visible autocratic practices. Such political structures curtail citizens' freedoms and they have no other choice but to flee or resign to their fate. It is this utter desolation that is without hope of changing the economic and political circumstances in Zimbabwe, the people move out in "droves." Contested elections in Zimbabwe have been the root cause of discontent, disillusionment and economic instability (Graham, 2006, Nyambi, 2013, Mangena, 2015), a scenario that still persists in post-Mugabe era.

From this reading, the narratives carve a politically transformative agenda. Literary discourse challenges the status quo and calls for change. In line with Bakhtin's observations, the novel is a pliable and complex form which allows multi-level interaction to take place. Thus, Bakhtin's theories of the novelistic language celebrate diversity and freedom of expression. The novel affirms ideas of freedom and justice that are promoted through double-voiced discourse. We understand the plight of the ordinary citizens whose political protest is suppressed. According to Bakhtin, the novelistic discourse is open-ended, meaning there is neither a first word nor last since past meanings are revisited, interrogated and re-contextualised. In other words, dialogue extends its roots into the distant past and progresses forward to a boundless future.

The narratives from Zimbabwe are born out of the economic and political turbulent period and they suggest that politicians' insatiable greed for power causes suffering and pain for the ordinary people, projecting them as discourses of precarity and isolation. There is visible concentration on the world of the deprived and suppressed citizens. Citizens crave for socio-political and economic reforms in Zimbabwe. This is more accentuated in *We Need New Names* where the citizens "scurry" from increasing state repression and poverty. Sorlin (2016) calls this fictionalisation of politics when novels provide a compelling critique of the political domain. There are telling moments when narratives from the state are interrogated and casually rejected as self-serving discourse. Most of the post-colonial problems emanate from poor political administration. The title *We need new names* is therefore, an urgent call for identity reconstruction that restores the dignity

of the precarious citizens who yearn for redefined livelihoods. The reference to new names becomes an act of becoming. This finds linguistic articulation in condemnation of "kaka" livelihoods in the shanty town Paradise which becomes a metonymic site reflecting the condition of the precariat. The suppression of people's liberties and infringement of human rights is well articulated, specifically amongst Paradise inhabitants such as mother of Bones and other congregants who turn to Christianity to escape the harsh reality of their kaka existence. Christianity becomes an escapist strategy privileged in the manner the congregants focus on an illusory after life as a consolation. However, contrary to the view that religion is the opium of the world, the novels studied in this chapter project Christianity as a pathetic and fruitless search for sanctuary. Those who seek help are more vulnerable as they become victims of spiritual and often sexual exploitation. Cultural and religious disfigurement is articulated through an effective linguistic stylisation in the naming of the man of cloth "Birchington Mborro", a name that conveys a shocking level of moral decay.

I examine the contemporary economic problems in Zimbabwe in relation to the political context in Zimbabwe. Certainly, political stability is critical for the economic prosperity of this nation. When fundamental principles of democracy are violated, the economy suffers, yet justice must prevail. Sadly, Southern African leaders ignore this fact and point fingers at "invisible enemies, or sanctions by the West." The political suppression in Zimbabwe affects Zimbabweans as well as neighbouring countries like South Africa and Botswana. Certainly, South Africa feels the economic pressure on its resources. While I do not condone xenophobia, it is critical to note that ordinary South Africans, to some extent have genuine reasons to be concerned about the stiff competition for resources and services as highlighted in children's essays at the end of Jinga's novel. In this way, the narratives also suggest that it's important for political leaders in the Southern African region to boldly confront and resolve political problems in Zimbabwe because they spill over national boundaries. Clearly, South Africa cannot be striving economically and politically when Zimbabwe is facing multiple crises including political instability. The present political leaders also need to realise that Africa must stop nurturing dictators for the collective prosperity of the continent.

### 4.10 Heteroglossia (*raznorechie*): multi-languaging in fictional narratives

Bakhtin (1984) celebrates the novelistic genre for exploiting the heterroglossic tendencies of language. Heteroglossia, for him, is a celebration of linguistic diversity in multi-speechedness of novelistic discourse. The novel, according to Bakhtin (1984) orchestrates all its themes by means of heteroglot style. The language of a novel is a "system of its languages" (and by differing individual voices that flourish under such conditions." Thus, in Bakhtin's conception, the novel has stylistic diversity due to its inclusion of a variety of literary and social discourses and different voices artistically organised. In this respect the text is positioned in social worlds and its languages could not be understood in abstract terms. This view further subverts the authority of monologic discourse since it emphasises diversity of speech types and languages. It also brings to the fore, the limitations of textualist approach which claims that meanings are linguistically constructed undermining the role of the context that informs the text. Bakhtin's theorisation of novelistic language attests to the shifting and slippery nature of language. He underlines that dialogue is always situated in social conditions of utterances thereby privileging a combination of both textualist and contextualist approaches. Heteroglossia also takes place through cultural and linguistic assimilation in the new environment. Readers encounter double-accented speech and multiple propositions which are embedded in the blending of languages within the novelistic discourse. Thus, it could argued that Bakhtin's heterroglossic and polyphonic models of discourse become tropes of freedom of expression, hybridity and multiplicity. This is compatible with the observation that heteroglossia signifies the strata of socially determined linguistic forces within a language and its products, dialects, socio-ideological languages and genres embody differing values, conceptualisations and social experiences as well as the contingent social and historical forces that form language (Morson and Emerson, 1990). This further reflects on the importance of pragmatic hermeneutics that takes in account the social world of the texts.

In this study, I adopted readings that consider the stylistic and semantic implications of the internal stratification of language. The various languages reflect on age groups, class, and gender, cultural and linguistic orientation. For instance heteroglossia allows a tension-filled intermingling of natives and *makwerekwere* discourses. Heteroglossia is a useful framework in reading the multi-languaged and multi-positionality of fictional discourse. Most significantly, I examine the semantic depths of language practices in literary works, informed by Bakhtin who claims that heteroglossia is present even in a single language through linguistic registers. The novel is viewed as a model of society by Bakhtin. The implication of this view is that discourse reflects the

conflicts, tensions and struggles between different worldviews. It is useful in reading the social construction of knowledge. Interpretation of literary discourse is a complex endeavour that requires an extension of scope. The otherness of language prevails in social and class dialects or a distinct dialect, jargon and personal idiosyncrasies. Bakhtin also adds that it is difficult to study literature apart from an epoch's entire culture. Thus, the novel becomes a dialogic platform of languages and literary traditions. The narratives express cultural transformations through the emergence of new hybrid cultural and linguistic forms. These dialectological forms affirm mutual intelligibility (Wales 2014) wherein the interlocutors try to accommodate each other.

### 4.11 Heterroglossic thematisation of anguish of the precariat

The shanty town, Paradise, in *We need new names* is a creation of state evictions as a direct result of *Operation Murambatsvina*. It is an enclave and an abhorred site imposed on citizens by the government. The excruciating distress of citizens is made more present and acute in the following citation:

> The men driving the bulldozers are laughing (--) Then the lorries carrying the police with those guns and baton sticks and we run and hide inside the houses, but it's no use hiding because the bulldozers start bulldozing and bulldozing and we are screaming and --) M… t… …nt of a bulldozer and says, I we… …to bulldoze the first b… …se go down, you dog shit. One ugly policeman points a gun to her head (---)the policeman does not kill her but hits her with a gun on her head---and the blood that gushes from mai Tari's head turns the policeman boots red-red (Bulawayo, 2013:65-66).

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My reading of Bakhtin's work brought new perspectives on novelistic stylisation. A number of stylistic devices are employed in this extract to create a melancholic tone as well as a disturbing picture of the excesses of sovereign power in Zimbabwe. Firstly, it's a harrowing experience for the victims of Operation Murambatsvina and readers begin to wonder why the police behave in such malicious and sadistic attitudes. The ugly policeman, guns and baton sticks symbolically suggest state violence and oppressive machinations. Secondly, the woman's mixture of astonishment, anger and defiance is captured through an interjection as well as an inter-sentential code-switching from English to Shona "kwete!" According to Kabede (2010) the territory of

language plays a fundamental role in a person's sense of self and belonging. These people have become non-citizens whose existence does not matter. Bakhtin (1984) also posits that language is never neutral or static because all utterances are ridden with contradiction and filled with tension. In this case the tension is between the evicted people and the state. A heterroglossic stylisation is evident when the two languages, English and Shona, are merged to construct a common identity of victimhood. People from various linguistic backgrounds were victimised by the Zimbabwean government. Thirdly, the offensive diction "dog shit" registers her fury. Paradise inhabitants are all victims of *Operation Murambatsvina*, the 2008 Zimbabwean moment of obscene impunity when the ZANU PF led government callously razed the shanty settlements of urban dwellers who had dared vote against a kleptocracy hell-bent to retain power at all costs. Thus, Mai Tari's linguistic choices demonstrate how the brutalised, angry and displaced citizens express their raw fury. She also calls the police involved in evictions, thoughtless and ruthless dogs "*imbwa*." The army and police in Zimbabwe turn against citizens and therefore are criticised for serving as state repressive agents who impose citizenry muteness. Finally, lexical duplication "bulldozing and bulldozing" "screaming and screaming" and "red–red" doubles the pain of the helpless victims of this clean-up programme. The scene also shows that the Zimbabwean government has no regard for the ordinary people. The evicted people move to Paradise and the physical details of this site speak about poverty and suffering. Due to a stolid masculine socialisation in Zimbabwe, Paradise men do not shed their tears in public but rather hide their pain which is reflected in the following passage:

Generally the men always tried to appear strong, walked tall, heads upright, arms steady at the sides, and feet firmly planted like trees. [The] solid Jericho walls of men. But when they went out in the bush to relieve themselves and nobody was looking, they fell apart like crumbling towers and wept with the wretched grief of forgotten concubines (Bulawayo, 2013:76).

A biblical allusion to the wall of Jericho foregrounds male ego that informs the pretentious act of these men who hide their sadness and shame. Just like Okonkwo in Achebe's *Things fall apart,* men from Paradise suffer in silence in their desperate effort to act 'manly.' However, this pretence does not help but imprison these men who still "fell like crumbling towers," from the citadel of male authority. This simile articulates fragility of the politically castrated and tormented male figure. The extract conveys the state's callousness and in the destruction characterising its

Murambatsvina programme. The state does not offer its citizens an alternative place to live; neither does it care about the impact of these evictions on the livelihoods of the displaced people. The desperately protesting voices are ignored. From these passages we understand that the emergence of Paradise could also mean their attempt to construct an identity and claim national space on the margins of society. A related theme is presented in Jinga's narrative when the teacher-protagonist finds himself a subject of mockery in South Africa:

> In the community in which I lived, someone was closely tied to where one worked. To be jobless was synonymous with being nameless or insignificant. *Ke mang monna yola? O bereka kae?* People would ask of me. Who is this man? Where does he work? Is this man your wife? This last question was directed at my host. He was my sister's husband. In my culture this is the ultimate insult. Men do not make wives out of other men, more so when those people are their in-laws. In fact, a wife's brother enjoys royal status and is held in great awe by a brother-in-law. I was thus very offended and could have waged the Third World War on the man if only I had the resources (Jinga, 2012:45).

The ensuing sense of loss and cultural dislocation revealed in this passage emanates from the fact that the narrator is a professional teacher whose presence in South Africa has been forced on him by the circumstances in his homeland. However, his new status as an unemployed immigrant emasculates and qualifies him as the "wife" of his male host who obviously provides for him. From a Zimbabwean cultural position "men" provide for their families therefore the Sotho community here is possibly right in its gender designations which are suffused with ridicule and sarcasm. Bakhtin also observes that a novel is a structured stylistic system that expresses the differentiated socio-ideological positions (Bakhtin, 1981: 300). It is important to also note that, the narrator and the Sotho community are informed by different cultural and social perspectives. South Africa legalised homosexual relationships and therefore there is nothing unusual about such questions. Yet, the narrator's Zimbabwean background informs him against such relationships (although they exist but considered illegal). Hence heteroglossia in the cited excerpt foregrounds language as the material of conflicting cultural and social ideologies, articulating simultaneously two cultural positions (Hirschkop, 1986).

### 4.12 Heteroglossia in multi-generic stylisation

Hybridisation of genres is a characteristic of transnational literature. Seyhan (2001: 9) defines transnational literature as "a genre of writing that operates outside the national (and generic) canon(s) which addresses issues facing deterritorialised cultures, and speaks for those in 'paranational communities and allegiances.' This overthrows the traditional conventions and narrative writers enjoy the benefit of transgressing the borders of restrictive writing. Heteroglossia creates diversity of meanings since each language represents a worldview. Fowler (1989) and Wales (1989) acknowledge multiplicity of genres in contemporary literature. Similarly, Stam (2000) commenting on modern cultural life, problematizes genre theory. Since the narratives have other genres embedded in their compositional form such generic hybridisation and translingualism sustain a complex human interaction in pluri-signification. The texts re-accentuate genres and provide space for a dynamic view of the novelistic genre. Epistolary mode, media texts and verse are some of the genres embedded in the structural stylisation in *One foreigner's ordeal*, *Harare North* and *We need new names*. Duality in identity construction is reflected in multilingual characters. The novel utilises these genres for their expressive capacity. Bakhtin (1981: 5) adds that in an era when the novel reigns supreme, almost all the remaining genres are to a greater or lesser extent "novelised." Thus, the narratives draw upon the plurality of genres and discourses; in other words, the narratives are generically heterogeneous, songs, poetry and media discourses that constitute a part of the carnival in textual construction of the novels studied in this chapter. A further point to make about this example is the hybridisation of genres; for example, the music genre in *Welcome to our Hillbrow* through "Stimela song" and "See the world through the eyes of a child." The sonic strategy captures the pain and suffering of neglected and homeless children (Mpe, 2001:55 and 59). In much the same way, in *We need new names,* songs are deployed to calm the nerves of the immigrants who are stressed like Tshaka Zulu and Prince. Fostalina sings a lullaby for Prince when he starts talking to himself:

> Sobasbiy'abafowethu [we continue burying our brothers]
>
> Savavuka sawela kwamany'amazwe [we found ourselves in other countries]
>
> Laph'okungazi khon'ubaba lomama [where my father and mother have never been]
>
> S'landel' inkululeko [looking for freedom] (Bulawayo, 2013:159).

This is a sorrowful song that conveys immigrants' sadness emanating from their sense of entrapment. However, it is of paramount importance to acknowledge that Prince's nervous breakdown is a result of violent encounter with Mugabe regime. A Shona song "Ziwere Ziwere" by Zimbabwean musician Oliver Mtukudzi is used to express political themes as well as show how South Africans and Zimbabweans have shared music interests in *One foreigner's ordeal*.

The inclusion of poetry genre in the novel adds an emotional layer since it reveals the mood and tone of personage. In addition, it has rhythmic and phonological accoutrements. Jinga's novel also ends with a mournful verse titled "An elegy from the diaspora." The persona bemoans his country of birth Zimbabwe; it is a funereal poem that highlights Zimbabwe's past. The country fought against colonialism and produced well educated citizens and all this was lost in post-2000. The nation is plagued with diseases and hunger in this poem. The poem essentially ridicules the Zimbabwean government and it is a bold attack on those in political positions who seem to be responsible for the multiple problems the nation is currently facing.

Jinga further employs the epistolary mode to mock and criticise the Mugabe regime. The satiric climax is reached through direct address to the "dad" who is the president of Zimbabwe. This "dad" tends to discriminate his children and the child pleads with him to be "gentle." Media genre is also employed to articulate xenophobia in South Africa. The Sowetan newspaper reports on xenophobia incidents and the unfairness of South African legal system is exposed. Immigrants' misery is heightened by official silence and South African government's reluctance to act against xenophobia attacks. The people who kill foreigners are pardoned by the courts. In a different but related theme, European newspapers also report that Zimbabwe has run out of toilet paper reinforcing negation of African states. The reference to Mugabe as the "old president" castigates the Zimbabwean leader Robert Mugabe.

In *Welcome to our Hillbrow,* fantasy is employed as a narrative technique by Mpe. It is used to articulate reality. The construction of reality through fantasy is very effective in showing the slipperiness of generic boundaries.

**4.13 The polyphonic concept: A cacophony of contesting voices**

My reading of the focal texts in this section is influenced by Bakhtin's polyphonic notion. I examine his preoccupation with the construction of voice as a stylistic feature for thematic presentation. Bakhtin (1981/1984) asserts that meaning is always located in the social conditions and does not exist in isolation. This point has been illustrated with a close reference to the selected texts. He also contends that meanings spring from the socio-political environment. Therefore, my reading here attends to the various propositions and I take reading as temporal and always incomplete because social conditions are always in a flux. In other words, I acknowledge the incompleteness of the interpretations in this study and therefore leave room for other possible understandings in other contexts or by other readers. I cannot claim any finality since I have adopted readings that reject assigning a fixed truth. This conception of fictional narratives has its share of problems, especially when considering the proliferation of other subversive meanings. Bakhtin's approach to novelistic discourse allows reading of the narratives from a multiplicity of perspectives that opens up multiple avenues for appreciating t literary texts. The concept of polyphony is relevant when examining authorial presence and point of view in the speeches of characters.

The elusiveness of authorial intent is emphasised in Bakhtin's theorisation of novelistic discourse and my readings are open to the semantic ambiguities that arise from the problematic concept of narrative voice. The voice in Bakhtin's philosophy of discourse is the speaking consciousness and it has a will and overtones behind it. The polyphonic and dialogic orientations upset authoritarian and officially sanctioned discourses. This destabilises the previously monologically constructed discourses that close down the voices of others. Bakhtin adds that characters as sources of voices must always be attentive to the other in interaction. His other central argument is that plurality of worldviews is an essential feature of the novelistic discourse because it does not privilege the artist's views. Bakhtin thus, argues that the novel represents a polyphonic contestation of discourses whereby any form of signification is relative.

What implications does this have on our reading of fictional narratives? Bakhtin's ideas have implications for the understanding of the narratives in this study. For instance, he underscores the plurality of independent voices and unfinalisability of utterances. This rejects absoluteness of truth of any word (*slovo*). The issue raised in his polyphonic theory is that reading should be undertaken in pursuit of different perspectives and my discussion of the texts in this chapter affords different

readings of the same texts. I adopt this approach in order to consider fictional narratives' presentation of various critical orientations. This is important for my purpose in reading dissenting voices. I concur with Blackledge and Creese (2014) that Bakhtin's theory offers a novel prism through which to view the political, social, cultural and economic contexts of language. I find Bakhtin's theories quite useful and very relevant in examining language as a social practice. I also read the texts as multi-voiced consciousnesses with a complex interplay of values, tones and attitudes. This compositional diversity of the focus narratives is examined in this chapter.

### 4.14 Voicing xenophobia and prejudices: The migrant *homo sacer*

In *Welcome to our Hillbrow* Refentse's cousin remarks that makwerekwere are responsible for crime and grime in Hillbrow:

> (...) he held such foreigners responsible, not just for the physical decay of the place but the moral decay. His words were echoed by many others - among them the white superintendent …(Mpe, 2001:17).

Refentse's cousin and the white superintendent present xenophobic voice which is heard through these characters but most importantly we should also note that both characters' prejudices are p th Th k ssive system that put humans into categories and some of these groups became the "undesired other" in the same way African immigrants are the 'other' in post-apartheid environment. The white superintendent has mastered the language of hate and exclusion and this is deeply entrenched in him therefore struggles in the new political context. This passage also suggests that the fight against racism and other forms of exclusions takes more than just a political ideology. The new political thinking needs to reflect in the ways people from different races, social classes and nations relate with each other. In addition, the Department of Home Affairs' treatment of immigrants as detailed in *One foreigner's Ordeal* does not show a shift from the apartheid political ideology. The narrative conveys the precarious existence of the migrant and vulnerability of othered bodies in the present South Africa. This precarity is heightened by the state's deliberate silences and exceptionalism in what Agamben (1998) calls practices of the sovereign power that deny the migrant '*homo sacer*' protection and security. For instance, Anderson (2010) and, Paret and Gleeson (2016) note that the state produces bare life for the precariat migrant figure through deportations, lack of legal

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protection, deprivation of social services and loss of human rights. These exclusionary practices are embedded in criminalisation of migration and problematic conception of authentic citizens. For Mbembe (2003) the necropolitics of the necropower place the migrant in realm of illegality. Thus, the novel presents the limits of rainbow nation and its hypocritical dealing with African immigrants. Similarly, historical allusion to Walter Sisulu who is believed to be originally a Zimbabwean reminds South Africans about the contributions made by other Africans in the region. It is an articulation of South Africa's exceptionalism, a ghost of apartheid as well as remnants of colonialism.

In *One foreigner's ordeal,* the maxim "*Batho Pele*, (People first)…We belong, we care, we serve" at the K. T. Motobatse hospital where the protagonist visited when he injured his leg becomes ironic as it loses its meaning when the term 'people' excludes foreigners. The narrator tells us that:

> One discovers that the people he fears most are black ones. This race group one thinks he is supposed to belong. Put me in a truckload of goats and I would not mind travelling in their company from Pretoria to Johannesburg or anywhere else. (…) But put me in a taxi, in the company of people who are black as me, I will shrink, wilt, and withdraw into my cocoon! The moment people discover that I speak a language different from theirs; they will turn heads sharply and snort their noses in disgust (Jinga, 2012: 73).

This passage offers a critical tone that is effectively carried in the metaphorical sense of "cocoon." This metaphor reveals immigrants' restricted existence because going out of bounds is dangerous for them. This highlights that local/makwerekwere or Bale ka mo (insiders) /Matlwantle (outsiders) dichotomy is problematic and complex within the social and political maelstrom in present-day South Africa. Such imaginary binaries subvert humanist philosophy of 'Batho Pele' (People first). For example, in *One Foreigner's Ordeal*, Zimbabwean professionals are turned into farm labourers and domestic workers driving "animals, toilet brooms and isikolobos" (Jinga, 2012: 103). The narrator, who is a qualified teacher and has served for 15years in Zimbabwe, gets an orange picking job at a farm in South Africa. Another character, Mrs Razaro, also a Zimbabwean teacher, searches for domestic work to serve as a maid. These are marks of dehumanisation. Hence, it is appropriate to argue that immigrants are greeted with suffering, oppression, discrimination and injustice. They only access jobs that are tedious and menial.

In *Welcome to our Hillbrow,* Tiragalong villagers' prejudiced perceptions are also presented in the following passage:

> You had quarrelled with your mother because you insisted on being in love with Lerato, a Hillbrow woman - as Tiragalong insisted on labelling her. (…) Your mother knew that all Hillbrow women were prostitutes who spend their nights leaning against the walls of the giant buildings in which they conducted their trade of under-waist bliss. (…)Your mother had never been to Hillbrow nor to any part of Johannesburg. (Mpe, 2001:16).

For these villagers, Hillbrow is a symbol of moral corruption and every woman in this space is therefore unsuitable for either dating or marriage. The villagers' attitude towards Hillbrowian women is informed by a masculine tradition that feminises immorality. Yet, the negative depiction of both rural and urban spaces problematizes traditional marks of rurality and urbanity. The narrative reveals malleability and permeability of such spatial bordering practices. In other words, it is not very easy to draw boundaries between the rural and urban spaces. This destabilises the imaginary borders erected by humans. The novel seeks to enact change by disrupting and challenging the normative romanticisation of the rural site in contemporary societies. Resistance of stagnant traditional views is reflected in the way both spaces are characterised by violence, selfishness, betrayal and insecurities. Samson (2017) observes that Hillbrow has become territorially stigmatised as a site of gritty crime, racism, xenophobia and violence. It is also painted as a dystopian space compounded by its very physical deterioration. Hillbrow is a locus of all that is dangerous, a site that has swiftly turned into a wasteland (Samson, 2017). Although the swift decline of infrastructure in the city suggests the immediate failure of post-independence state, this reading does not disregard the visible porous nature of boundary markers. The novel effectively obscures the divide and complicates such binaries. This attests to the transgression of boundaries where the idealised view of the rural landscape is contested. The two places share a number of challenges. The boundaries are blurred and collapsed to emphasise that spaces should belong to humanity in general and not used to divide the same spaces. The narrative articulates the differences of space which is deeply entrenched in the above quote.

Significantly all the novels studied here employ the narrative style that moves beyond the boundaries of cultural, geographical and linguistic boundaries. This becomes an articulation of transnational spaces and a call for human freedom in mobility and writing. This attitude is also

closely tied to the thematic concerns of these works. In addition to this reading, these dimensions of spaces and borders also highlight the problematics of stereotypical views. Places should not be used as a defining category of human traits. For instance, Hillbrowean women are all labelled prostitutes and vectors of sexual diseases, especially AIDS. Mpe's narrative objects to such provincial and narrow attitudes and subverts the monolithic depiction of this space. Such uncritical negative labelling is also reflected in the manner in which African immigrants are perceived as criminals and drug peddlers. They are undesired makwerekwere whose presence in both South Africa and England brings AIDS. In England AIDS is perceived an "African disease" and a problem of the uncivilised world. The first person communal plural voice in *Welcome to our Hillbrow* and *We need new names* becomes a much needed transformation in human reasoning.

Ironically, only women are condemned for prostitution and therefore gender binaries find expression here. Gendered discourse is also present in Refentse's reaction to Lerato's sexual encounter with Sammy:

> The result was that when you found your Lerato moaning together with Sammy in your bedroom that morning, your enthusiasm for life got badly shattered. This was partly because you had invested too much faith in Lerato, as if she was incapable of committing the same deeds that you had committed (Mpe, 2001:40).

The narrator's remarks about Refentse's attitude when he discovered that Lerato had been unfaithful to him bring us to the discussion of another major issue in patriarchal society. To understand the implication, we need to consider the cultural context of the text. We also acknowledge that Refentse had been sexually involved with Sammy's girlfriend Bohlale in much the same way. The narrator then seems to provide a commentary on gendered perceptions about morality which are informed by phallocentricism. South Africa, just like most African societies, has a culture that is sexually permissive to men. Such gendered discourse subjugates women and this passage serves as a cultural critique. It is thus hardly surprising that Refentse feels extremely betrayed to an extent that he commits suicide. Perhaps, his death underlines that contemporary African societies need to rethink about some of the harmful gender values. Despite the fact that Refentse is an intellectual, his ideas of masculinity remain rigid and he regards Lerato's sexual behaviour unforgivable. Her sexual conduct speaks of the feminine capacity to bring change. Gender slurring in this case destroys both sexes as we later witness Lerato overburdened by a

guilty conscience and ultimately killing herself. As is often the case, in patriarchal society the woman takes the blame for adultery.

On another level, Refentse is a symbol of acculturation. His African traditional background condemns Lerato's sexual deviant behaviour and his western orientation obtained through education informs his radical action to date Lerato against his mother's recommendations. From this reading, his suicidal death becomes a symbol of the tragic consequences of fissures in identity. He fails to align himself with either of the two cultures and this causes restlessness. And yet, we cannot ignore Lerato's sexual encounter with Sammy who is Refentse's friend as an act that deconstructs gender binaries and liberates female sexuality. Lerato successfully transgresses established sexual norms in African society and this becomes an act of reconstruction of womanhood in the contemporary African context.

### 4.15 The "Makwerekwere" voices: The people of strange and unfamiliar accents

Each voice in the novel speaks from its ideological position. Constructed authoritative state rhetoric is contested and destabilised through horrific images of violence uttered in other voices, offering a panoply of conflicting views and multiplicity of meanings. Since my analysis of the texts is guided by polyphonic theorisation, I therefore attend to Bakhtin's centripetal and centrifugal forces at play in discourse. When they become tired and exasperated of their home country, Zimbabwean citizens flee. Unfortunately, a new set of problems awaits them. The foreignness of a new environment further alienates immigrants. The snow and "coldness" in America, for instance, serves to reveal unfamiliarity with the American landscape and the strangeness of this new environment. Immigrants dis/located to this alien space find the place cold and markedly different from home. Darling says this about the American weather:

> What you will see if you come here where I am standing is the snow. Snow on the leafless trees, snow on the cars, snow on the roads, snow on the yards, snow on the roofs…snow, just snow covering everything like sand (…) It is a greedy monster too, the snow (…) it has swallowed everything. Where are the flowers? The grass? The ants? The litter? Where are they? As for the coldness, I have never seen it like this. I mean, coldness that makes like it wants to kill you, like it's telling you, with its snow, that you should go back where you came from (Bulawayo, 2013:148).

The repetition of the lexical term ‘snow’ reinforces its ubiquity, its cumulative presence inscribes an uncanny gesture that pushes the migrant outside of the new site. Likewise, Refilwe and her colleagues at Oxford Brookes complain about the English people’s attitude:

> A! These English are really strange! They simply greet you and from then on, they pretend that you no longer exist! (…) They are as cold as their weather (Mpe, 2001:105).

This depiction of the unfriendly weather is profoundly dramatized and reconfigured in these narratives as much as it is thematised in *The Lonely Londoners* (Selvon, 1983) whose narrator laments about the coldness in London. The unwelcoming weather of these places symbolically illuminates the unhomeliness of these sites to immigrants (Mavezere, 2014; Naidoo, 2017). Bakhtin argues that the perspective of the author as the creator of any novel is important but it is not the only point of view since the author’s voice coexists with those of the characters. Through the immigrant character in this narrative, we learn about America which entices and lures non-Americans from afar.

The above passages juxtapose and problematize the concepts of home and (un) belonging and convey the ambivalence of such notions. The narratives bring into tense conversations the problematic normative construction and conceptualization of home. Is home a geographical place where one is born into? Or a place where one feels secure, comfortable, and free and enjoys a sense of belonging? Is there a home at all for the marginalised immigrants? African immigrants who are in South Africa acquire the new defining label “makwerekwere” which literally means “people of strange and unfamiliar accents’ (Jinga, 2012:.178). This label estranges foreigners and positions them as the outsider other. The “we/ they” dialectic fosters division markers of (un)belonging and the insider-outsider conundrum. However, the ambiguity of such labels is carried in the vagueness of the reflexive pronoun “we” which could be reference to singular and plural nature of the “we’ group.

The novels fully convey the immigrants’ painful realisation that America, South Africa and United Kingdom are not sanctuaries for the suffering humanity. For instance, America is initially viewed by Darling and other immigrants as a place of fortune, pleasure and promise. The assumed sanctuaries have strict restrictions on those who seek refuge. Darling later realises that immigrants have slim prospects in both facets of education and employment. The idyllic America she

previously regarded as a land of promises where dreams are fulfilled, a respectable place according to the children's country game, in reality thwarts and distresses foreigners. Darling, just like most of the African immigrants, recognises the inconsistencies in discourse about European comfort. Immigrants fail to recover from the shock caused by this dissonance which renders their initial impression just an illusion and mental construct that is fallacious and far from realities of America (and England). This space is uncomfortable and it is what Fanon (1967) terms a zone of non-being where immigrants are turned into non-persons. Darling encounters such harsh realities about America and she registers her shock: "The place does not look like my America, doesn't even look real" (Bulawayo, 2013:150). Darling's statement here projects an oppositional voice to dominant discourses about this place since there are "dividing lines between the frontiers of humanities in America. Americans maintain the 'stand your ground policy" (Masemola, 2014), and in the present-day politics of Donald Trump seeks to erect new walls to stem the entry of Latin Americans into its territorial borders. There is a disjuncture between a mythical view of America as a biblical land of milk and honey and the bitter American realities experienced by immigrants. Segregation and surveillance are ever present therefore immigrants find themselves trapped in these spaces. Immigrants are in a state of in-betweenness, a 'third space' according to Bhabha (1994) that is neither inside nor outside. The novels *Harare North* and *We need new names* end with characters in a state of weariness and despair perhaps to highlight the numbing effects of living in an alien and alienating space.

### 4.16. Point of view in polyphonic stylisation: The subaltern speaks to power

Polyphonically constructed narratives appeal to readers to listen to the multiple voices (truths). Fowler (1986:9) posits that angle, perspective or point of view "concerns position taken up by the speaker or author that of the consciousness depicted by the text, and that implied for the reader or addressee." Tagwirei (2016) further observes that point of view is an important stylistic dimension of narrative text. There are several dimensions of reality because each voice has its unique way of perceiving reality (Bakhtin, 1984). Budapest and Paradise are juxtaposed to show a stratified and polarised society: the spatial locations enjoin in acclaiming the schisms and rifts between the affluent and the wretched of the earth. Through this parallel depiction of the two communities, the narrative invites attention to the differences of both locales. There is a sharp contrast and inequalities are evident in the huge gulf between the privileged class and the depraved poor people

in shanty communities. The sordid image of the "wretched of the earth" is further compounded by a detailed description of Paradise, a slum with tiny shacks whose naming mocks the realities of its inhabitants. Paradise is an impoverished site of exception from Agambenian sense, whose residents are objectified by the sovereign power. The sadness and anxiety is indelibly inscribed on their faces heightening the inhuman of this space. This stands in marked contrast to Budapest which is an affluent suburb with "walled and gated houses." The description of the two environments makes the reader visualise and understand that these two sites are worlds apart. Bulawayo's children are conscious of their marginal existence and they endure the shame of being shack dwellers. In the novel *We need new names,* Darling and her friends observe that:

> Budapest is big, big houses with satellite on roofs and neat gravelled yards or trimmed lawns, and the tall fences and the durawalls and the flowers and the big trees heavy with fruit that is waiting for us since nobody around here seems to know what to do with it. It's the fruit that gives us courage, otherwise we wouldn't dare be here. I keep expecting the clean streets to spit and tell us to go back where we came from (Bulawayo, 2013:4).

This quote presents some critical remarks that help us understand the plight of Paradise inhabitants. This character understands her peripheral position and is critical of the apparent economic and social differences. The novel ascribes a voice to the subaltern to speak for themselves. Through this presentation, the novel presents a plurality of consciousness, each with its own world. We begin to understand the multiple realities of this space: the world of the poor and that of the middle class section.

In another related scene, a Lamborghini, which is a very expensive car, is seen by the children driving into one of Budapest houses. This Lamborghini becomes a symbol of material wealth for the bourgeois in Zimbabwe while the shacks in Paradise where the children narrators come from symbolise precarity. The slum has "tiny shacks crammed together like hot loaves of bread" and dusty red path, piles of junk and faeces" (Bulawayo, 2013: 26). Such visibility of poverty serves as socio-political critique. The faeces that are used to write "Blak Power" on the bathroom mirror tell a story of political betrayal. The bold imagery of excreta and the wrongly spelt "Blak" are masterfully crafted in this graffiti to mock the black empowerment promise which has only turned out to be an enactment of violence against whites and poor black people presumed to be opposition members. State discourse about black power is just as disgusting as faeces or "kaka" used to write

because it has not materialised into a promissory reality for common Zimbabweans. Mavengano and Hove (2019) posit that the human excreta used as scattlogical background also suggests decay, disgust and rot within the national space. The phrase, "Black empowerment" is inverted and racialised discourse that depicts a fractured nationalism. The ruling party strives to reconstruct particular self-serving versions of nationhood and belonging. Each time the children from the shanty town eat stolen guavas, they go through a "painful defecating process," enacting the pain of living in a failed postcolonial Zimbabwean society. This focalises the voice of a common citizenry positioned at the receiving end.

In a similar way, Mpe's novel makes a parallel social commentary in the following passage about the state of the city in the post-apartheid era:

> From what you heard about Braamfontein, you never imagined that you would find all these dirty children, occupying themselves by taking turns at glue. But here they are. You cross Biccard Street, which as you learn, takes you straight into the city (Mpe, 2001:13).

The second person narrative voice in this passage makes both personal and collective viewpoints. Poor loitering street children are not expected in a post-apartheid society and their visibility in the city shows the unabated and continual presence of social classes in Johannesburg. According to Bakhtin (1986) utterances reflect addressivity. The second person voice here addresses another character, Refentse, but the use of pronoun "you" has profound implications on the semantic effect of this utterance. Acknowledging the context of Mpe work, we are tempted to speculate on the effect of such linguistic choice. One possible reading is that the utterance is responding to the discourse about the new dispensation that has not brought the much anticipated change. Mentioning the street children reflects the novel's concern with the plight of ordinary citizens. It apparently emphasises the conditions of these people still languishing in poverty in new South African society. Another reading suggests that this utterance reminds the young nation to be patient with the new government because meaningful change is a gradual process. The utterance prevaricates therefore on the economic, political and social nuances. It is a call for economic, political and social reforms. The "city of gold" has no gold to offer to the street children who live in precarious conditions of utter poverty. Thus, the passage reflects unfulfilled dreams of poor South Africans and the failures of post-apartheid society. Political freedom without the economic change among those previously oppressed is insignificant and meaningless.

Much the same way, the unnamed narrator in *One Foreigner's Ordeal* is from the "wretched" proletariat. Readers are told that the narrator is a teacher fleeing from the economic woes in Zimbabwe. Darling, a narrator in *We Need New Names*, narrates from the position of marginality. The impact of the double-prism narration is the focalisation of the worldview of the oppressed people. Prominence is given to Zimbabwe's political and social problematics as well as the daunting ordeals and anguish of those who fled from the misery and "wretchedness" of their motherland. Reminiscences and flashbacks are constituent parts of the narrative techniques employed to present extremely touching accounts of the victims and sufferers. The collective voice of the narrators speaks in the plural and captures the experiences of ordinary citizens who have been turned into decrepit strangers by circumstances at home. Theirs are voices that belong to the wounded and hounded citizens since they speak for Zimbabweans at home and in the diaspora who are haunted by a sense of alienation. These voices 'speak back to power' and contest defective narratives. The narrators adopt a variety of narratorial voices and themes are communicated through the interaction of multiple perceptions. The narrative voices in these storylines privilege the harrowing experiences of immigrants occupying liminal zones or sites on the periphery, an experience that Bhabha (1997) eerily describes as 'to be un/homed is not to be homeless.' This is what Mangena (2015) calls writing from a position of subalternity. I regard such solidarities with the underclass as writing from below. Both narrators contest state narratives that obscure the government's failures: in their vocative and phatic functions, these voices mobilise tonalities of rage, angst and the provocative in order to subvert the grand master narrative.

The narrator in *We need New Names* says:

> When things fall apart the children of the land scurry and scatter like birds escaping a burning sky (…) Look at them leaving in droves despite knowing they will be welcomed with restraint in those strange lands because they must not sit comfortably lest they be asked to rise and leave, knowing they will speak in dampened whispers because they must not leave footprints on the new earth lest they be mistaken for those who want to claim the land as theirs. Look at them leaving in droves arm in arm with loss and lost, look at them leaving in droves (Bulawayo, 2013:145-146).

Here the economic implosion of the Zimbabwean nation is rendered as extremely scary: citizens leave in "droves", equated to flocks of birds. Repetition is forcefully used to invite the reader to

'look at them', making the gaze a monumental verb. The metaphor of a "burning sky" shows that the lives of citizens are at stake therefore they flee for dear life despite the fact that they would not be unaccepted in the new borders (Mavengano and Hove, 2019). It is worth noting that the narrative does not present a direct critique of the hand behind the "falling apart of things," but rather mourns the plight of the precariat. The political context in Zimbabwe limits artistic freedom of expression. Yet, at the same time, the semantic ambiguity here is employed as artistic arsenal to condemn the Mugabe government for making ordinary citizens vulnerable. In foreign spaces, the immigrants lost their expressive freedom and speak in "dampened whispers." Disambiguation in reading such semantic representations is usually achieved through contextualisation of the utterances. The isolation and segregation of migrants cause extreme discomfort and the ultimate nervous breakdown arising from a sense of insecurity and uncertainty. Fear is deeply entrenched in the psyche of the migrant. Both visual and auditory sensual domains evoke sympathy for the migrants who are victims of forced departure. In *One Foreigner's Ordeal*, the nervous condition of immigrants is expressed through intertextual stylisation:

> An immigrant feels uneasy whenever a thought crosses the mind that the residence status is yet to be regularised. To borrow from Chinua Achebe, people without travelling papers feel the same discomfort that old people do when "dry bones are mentioned in a proverb." The mere sight of a police van is enough to send shivers down the spine. It gives people an awkward feeling to discover that for the first time in their lives, their status has changed from being law-abiding citizens into something else whose spoor the police or immigration officers are keenly interested in (Jinga, 2012:41).

A strikingly similar scene is captured in *We Need New Names*, when the narrator observes:

> When they debated what to do with illegals, we stopped breathing, stopped laughing, stopped everything, and listened. (…) And because we were illegals and afraid to be discovered we mostly kept to ourselves, stuck to our kind and shied away from those who were not like us. We did not know what they would think of us, what they would do about us (…) We hid our real names, and gave false ones when asked (Bulawayo, 2013:242).

> (…)And when at work they asked for our papers, we scurried like startled hens and flocked to unwanted jobs, where we met the others, many others. Others with names like myths, names like puzzles, names we had never heard before (Bulawayo, 2013:243).

The passages reveal an enclaved existence of the criminalised and enslaved immigrants. In *One Foreigner's Ordeal,* through historical allusion, the narrator also bemoans exclusionary cartography as a brainchild of colonialists who left African divided. The narrator has this to say about the Limpopo River that serves as an artificial boundary and inscription of difference between South Africa and Zimbabwe:

> This is the river whose majesty way back in 1884, at the Berlin Conference, the hawk-like eyes of the colonialists did not miss. It became a useful physical feature for their partition of Africa agenda. Communities which had interacted closely for centuries, which in some cases spoke the same language or sister language varieties, found themselves belonging to separate countries. Some suddenly became insiders and others outsiders. This is the river whose mere existence some people believe is enough to result in many biological, intellectual and behavioural differences between the black people who inhabit opposite sides of its bank. This is the river which Ngugi wa Thiong'o might have wanted to call "the river between" (Jinga, 2012:10).

The reconnection to the earlier eponymous title of Ngugi wa Thiong'o's novel, together with the metaphor of the river here serve to convey fragmentation of the African communities. Furthermore, this cross textual positions Jinga's narrative within the African literary corpus that speaks to the decolonial project. The river marks a site of separation as well as a contested frontier that makes navigation problematic. The novel unmasks the intricacies of colonialism. It further calls for deconstruction of the Berlin authored borders, used by Ayi Kwei Armah's "destroyers of Africa" to classify and differentiate African peoples. Ironically, the 'dark continent' in pre-colonial times kept its humanity unified, contrary to Joseph Conrad's 'primitive and savage African' in *Heart of Darkness*. In this way, the novel troubles Eurocentric epistemologies. I also read this as essentialist and nativist narratives about Africa's admirable past, the 'primitive' African was more humane than the post-colonial subject. However, the sad contemporary reality is that even after the demise of colonialism, Africa maintains the Berlin cartography to divide its own people. In other words, the passage above serves as anti-imperialist inscription which also

articulates and interrogates the present African (dis)connections. The passage also exposes the divisive nature of colonialism and the need to reconnect Africa and reverse colonial vestiges that still exist in postcolonial era. It is a discourse of decoloniality, rebirth or renewal and reconstruction of the African continent (Ngugi, 1994). The novel points out the debris of imperialism and the need to re-think about othering practices. Do the current African leaders think about a common African continent? African leaders need to think about reconnection and reconfiguration of the continent. The realities emerging in the novels examined in this study convey lack of political commitment towards undoing the Berlin cartographies. Therefore no rebirth of Africa is possible. Thus, Jinga's reintroduces critical dialogues and philosophical questions about Africanism, Pan Africanism, and African Renaissance vis- a- vis African humanity.

Political suppression is one of the major themes in the selected narratives. The deaths of Bornfree and Freedom convey thematic concerns of political intolerance, curtailment of freedom of expression and use of brute force by ZANU PF. In Zimbabwe, members of the opposition party, Movement For Democratic Change (MDC), are labelled "sell-outs, friends of colonialists, paid by "America and Britain" to sell the country to whites (Bulawayo, 2013:141).The incident where Bornfree in butchered to death tells a macabre story of the death of conscience and the genesis of autocratic tendencies in Zimbabwe.(Mavengano and Hove, 2019). The death trope has multiple semantic implications. It reflects betrayal of the fecund ideals of independence by postcolonial autocrats. On one hand, his death inscribes restraints and silence from a monolithic political institution in Zimbabwe. ZANU PF's monologic tendencies that viewed Mugabe as "one centre of power" and '" president for life." This dictatorial power limits individual's autonomy. Mbembe (2010) rightly points out that the autocratic can abolish or grant liberties in the postcolony. Bakhtin's equal rights of consciousness and construction of truth in dialogic framework are denied in ZANU PF monologism. Barani and Yahya (2012) write that monologism at its extreme, denies the existence outside itself of another consciousness with equal rights. Bornfree's defiance is punished by death. In this respect, ZANU PF's monolithic narrative becomes the ultimate word, fixed truth that rejects polyvocality and polysemanticism. His assassination significantly speaks about the fate of ordinary Zimbabweans who cannot remove the repressive regime from power. Ordinary people are denied political agency by the necropower and have become "zombified citizens" (Mbembe, 1992/2001a). However, through dialogic and polyphonic theorisations, we realise subversive plurality of consciousness. Bornfree's political activism and death also speak

about his determination to "speak truth to power" (Madonsela, 2017). His political martyrdom resists the oppressive regime that strives on brutality and coercion. Thus, Bulawayo's novel contributes to the protest tradition in African literature. The dialogic and polyphonic paradigms promote expressive freedom in discourse and highlight what Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie calls "the danger of a single story" in the construction of the human world. This also shows the limits of the sovereign power. The novel privileges the urgency of the repressed people who refuse to be the objects of consciousness imposed by the regime. Paradise becomes a site of contestation, its inhabitants refuse to be part of muted groups. This is because from Baktinian sense, reality or truth is an outcome of dialogical opposition in double-voiced discourse (Bakhtin, 1984). Therefore, Bakhtin's philosophy of language suggests utopian vision of the world that does not privilege certain voices at the expense of other voices perceived insignificant.

Historical allusion to 2005 Operation Murambatsvina is privileged in these novels. Baby Freedom, for instance, dies during the violent 'clean-up' programme. In *The Uncertainty of Hope*, a novel by Tagwira, two toddlers die when the shacks they were sleeping in were bulldozed by the state police. A similar incident is articulated in *We need new names,* a child dies in the process.

Due to the gross violation of human rights by the Zimbabwean government, citizens become enervated but they are still determined to change the leadership. One of the slum dwellers, Messenger, says:

> Well your God is listening because the change everybody's been crying for is finally here. Yes, it is watch, Bornfree adds. He waves his stack of papers and I see the words Change, Real Change at the front" (Bulawayo, 2013: 29).

These young people are impatient with an inchoate ZANU PF leadership such that they boldly campaign for change. However, Mother of Bones, who epitomises elderly people, is very cautious in her approach to change in Zimbabwean politics. She would welcome change but she warns against extreme excitement in removing Mugabe and his party's leadership through popular protest marches or the ballot box:

> A fool, Mother of Bones says. (…) What do they think they are doing yanking a lion's tail? Don't they know that they will be bones if they dare? (…) You will ask me tomorrow when there are real bones; she says and just looks away at the sky (Bulawayo, 2013:30).

Her prediction comes true when Bornfree is brutally killed by state sympathisers for supporting the opposition. Symbolically, Bornfree's death is a demonstration of how those who dare "challenge the lion" get eliminated as dramatized by the children. Most significantly, political enemies are eliminated in the presence of Paradise community to instil fear. There is a way in which this narrative allows the historical telescope to provide impetus to the fictive world, etching in the process the politically motivated violence in Zimbabwe. The metaphor of a ruthless lion acquires full meaning in the Zimbabwean political context where Robert Mugabe made history for prosecuting and "silencing" opposition members who dared challenge his political authority. The expressiveness of figurative language serves to defy artistic immolation distributed by the powerful politicians. In this case metaphor is used to remove all expressive barricades and no "sacred cow is spared" (Nyoni, 2015: 12).

Satire is used to ridicule social and political ills. Even taboo subjects find expression in satirical texts. Satire gives writers some latitude to raise questions about serious and sometimes very sensitive subjects which are often controversial to discuss openly. Its expressive capacity lies in semantic ambiguities that rely on contextual background for interpretation of the text. Satire is often strategically deployed to reveal the follies and ineptitudes of man in political, social and religious realms. Jinga appropriates satire to fire a salvo of injunction showing that it is irresponsible and ridiculous that the Zimbabwean government tarries to issue travelling documents to its citizens:

> Acquiring the second official travelling document - the passport - was even a more gruelling task. More enemy currency was required. At least the time when my friend and I were making our entry into South Africa, it took a couple of years to get a passport - about half a decade to be exact. It is not my intention to bore you to death with trials and tribulations of acquiring a Zimbabwean passport, dear reader. For this, I refer you to the office of the Prime Minister, one Morgan Tsvangirai, an incumbent to that high office has a personal testimony (Jinga, 2012:12).

The government's attitude also portrays hypocrisy in its relationship with the west. The above quotation criticises inefficiency in service delivery by the Home Affairs Department in Zimbabwe. The narrator ridicules Zimbabwean politicians for recklessly labelling the west and members of the opposition party "enemy of the state." This official state rhetoric is contested by Jinga's

narrator who shows an awareness of government's diversion narrative characterised by distortions and misrepresentations of the west which is used as a scapegoat by ZANU PF leadership. Gordon Brown and Tony Blair (former British prime ministers) and George Bush (former US president) are blamed for everything that goes wrong in Zimbabwe. The Mugabe led government misinforms the nation through a spurious blame game. Ironically, Zimbabwe needs the "enemy's currency" more than its own worthless currency for economic and social survival. It is through satirical language that we get to know about the ambivalence and irony of Mugabe's declaration that "Zimbabwe will never be a colony again" and the present day discourse, "Zimbabwe is open for business." The self-contradiction nature of the ruling party politicians is interrogated and contested. These politicians condemn the west, but at the same time appeal for the removal of sanctions that stop them from going to Europe. On the one hand, there is a call for re-engagement with the west and the world at large yet, on the other hand, we are told that "Zimbabwe is not in a hurry to re-engage the west." Put simply, the rhetoric about the sovereignty of Zimbabwean nation coming from the leaders who are holding begging bowls is ridiculed here. The Zimbabwean government depends on the "West" for economic survival and this dependency syndrome that takes away the much talked about sovereignty.

The Zimbabwean government's sadistic treatment of opposition members is also alluded to by mentioning the MDC president and then Zimbabwe's Prime minister, Morgan Tsvangirai, who had a torrid time securing travel documents. The narratives underscore the complex perceptions of (un)belonging. They are in conversation with the ambivalent notions of national identity and the rights of citizens. Opposition members are victimised by the state for not being politically correct. In *We Need New Names* the same theme of the politics of displacement, homelessness and belonging is articulated. Those who are labelled enemies of the state are either brutally killed or violently displaced. Readers are left to wonder about the defining dialectics of a citizen-non-citizen and the insider-outsider. Nyambi (2013) comments on Murambatsvina in the novel *The Uncertainty of Hope*, and concludes that politically motivated exclusions were dramatised through the clean-up programme. It is apparent that some citizens are more Zimbabwean than others in the Orwellian sense. The narratives destabilise the perception of citizenship as a construct linked to race and indigeneity.

## 4.17 The process of linguistic re/bordering

The novels adopt multilingual and multicultural modes of address to represent transnational spaces which are characterised by multi-languaging and translanguaging (Blommaert, 2010). Canagarajah (2011) argues that translanguaging is performative or pragmatic approach to language use, that is, it is triggered by the linguistic needs of the local contexts. The translingual orientation acknowledges the critical role of interlocutors and social contexts in shaping language use. In *We Need New Names*, English, Shona and Ndebele are deliberately interwoven into the fabric of n… se… to… …u… be further understood as a way of "breaking down" linguistic and cultural borders. The selected n… pl… is… …or… …ation of English. Kachru (1992) regards these linguistic strategies as part of non-native speaking which foster linguistic justice. For instance, the following citation reveals code-mixing, the linguistic repertoire of migrants demonstrates multiplicity of linguistic codes: "Madoda, vakomana how we worked, how messages of hunger, help needed and kunzima, it's hard, things are tough," came from home (Bulawayo, 2013:244). When immigrants receive such messages about the starving relatives back home, they take any job available.

**Heteroglossia (*raznorechie*)** Section 4.10
**Heterroglossic thematisation** Section 4.11
**Heteroglossia in multi-generic stylisation** Section 4.12
**The polyphonic concept** Section 4.13
**Voicing xenophobia concept** Section 4.14
**The 'Makwerekwere' voices** Section 4.15
**Point of view in polyphonic stylisation** Section 4.16
**The process of linguistic bordering** Section 4.17
**Conclusion** Section 4.18

Immigrants grapple with numerous challenges of living as strangers and foreigners. They learn new codes of expression as a language assimilation strategy as well as creation of distinct linguistic identity. In *One Foreigner's Ordeal*, English, Shona Sesotho, isiZulu, isiNdebele Afrikaans and tshiVenda, are mixed to generate intricate panoply of experiences and voices in the discourse. However, it is essential to observe that even within this tapestry of voices, immigrants still suffer due to social, cultural, linguistic and economic marginalization despite their concerted efforts to belong. Exclusion of immigrants by both South African and American insiders is articulated. The respective governments seem not to be bothered by the plight of immigrants. The narratives convey the complexity of existence in marginal spaces as *makwekwere*. Immigrants in both spaces struggle

to cross the linguistic divide and even in the midst of efforts to sound like natives. This is seen when Fostalina, who has lived and worked in America for several years, repeats and practises her English in front of a mirror. This brings into conversation the problematic discourse from Silasi (2005) about Afropolitanism or black internationalism. Africans who aspire to be global citizens become victims of othering practices. Fostalina finds it difficult to place an order because the white sales lady on the phone declares Fostalina's accent incomprehensible: "I'm sorry, I don't know what you mean, ma'am," she says finally (Bulawayo, 2013:195). The sales lady's conception of linguistic proficiency is informed by her white sensibility. Darling makes the following observation about the problematics of language and languaging faced by immigrants in America:

> The problem with English is this: You usually can't open your mouth and it comes out just like that - first you have to think what you want to say. Then you have to find the words. Then you have to carefully arrange those words in your head. Then you have to say the words quietly to yourself, to make sure you got them okay. And finally, the last step, which is to say the words out loud and have them sound just right. But then because you have to do all this, when you get to the final step, something strange has happened to you and you speak the way a drunk walks (---). It's as if you are an idiot (Bulawayo, 2013:193-194).

The condition of nervousness in multilingual contexts and multilingual interactions to portray transnational relations is detailed by Suresh Canagarajah, (2011). Free and natural expression is curtailed when one is not using one's native language. People in such transnational spaces as depicted in Bulawayo's novel are always conscious of linguistic dissonance. Darling also says:

> In America we did not always have the words. It was only when we were alone, we summoned the horses of our languages and mounted their backs and galloped past skyscrapers. Always, we were reluctant to come back down (Bulawayo, 2013:240).

Darling also adds that "English is like a huge iron door and you are always losing the keys." The comparison and metaphor in this sentence serve to emphasise the challenges of learning a new language. When she fails to communicate with an English sales lady, Fostalina "has this look-I have seen it many times before but I still don't know whether to call it pain or anger-or sadness, or whether it has a name" (Bulawayo, 2013:197). The clipped sentences and sentence fragments

further communicate the choking sense of living as an outsider. Similarly, in *Harare North*, the narrator bemoans Tim's English accent in the following quotation:

> It has been hard. Everything. Tim - his accent and cockney thing, you can't hear anything. And when you hear it don't make sense and you have make your anus tight and listen up to figure things out. Even small things (Chikwava, 2009: 82).

Despite the fact that this character is partially illiterate and probably suits Sekai's description of him when she says, "Green Bombers are just bunches of uneducated thugs," this however, does not take away the fact that new linguistic codes in the new environment are part of immigrants' nightmare. Immigrants do not only miss their home countries but they also miss the flexibility and expressive capacity of their native languages which seem to loosen their tongues in communication.

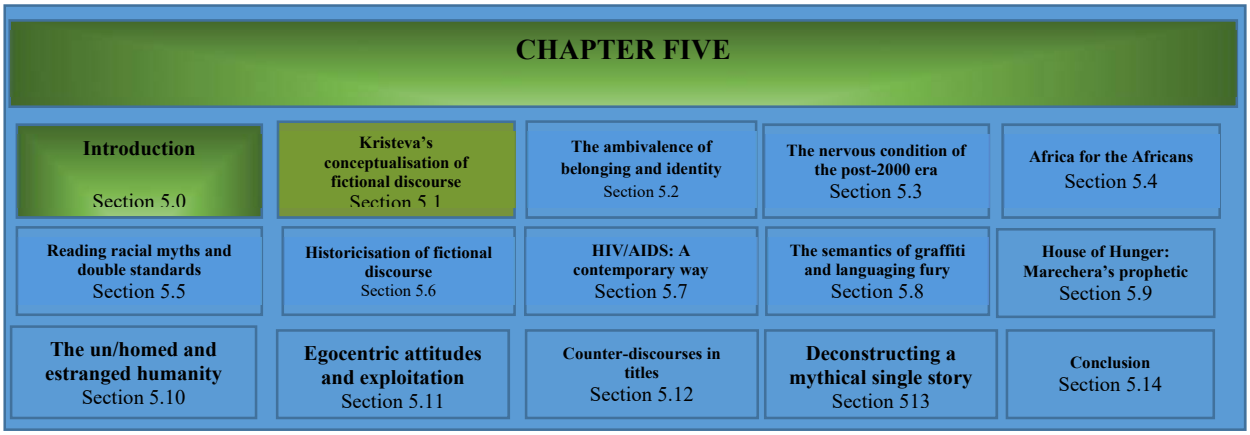
Thus, translingual stylistic features have realistic, inclusive and transformative functions. Wilson (2012) states that the movement between languages, is sometimes deliberate and purposeful. For instance the narratives construct black internationalism and what Selasi (2005) calls Afropolitan citizens who move across national and regional borders. Thus, the act of communication becomes a process of contestation and identification. Translingualism is a desirable turn towards more inclusive communication practices in contemporary societies (Canagarajah, 2017). However, sometimes what emerges in these ambivalent cross-roads is a shattering sense of placelessness in the migrants. Thus, these narratives present troubled relations of the deterritorialised people in the emergent globalised literature (Seyhan, 2001).

## 4.18. Conclusion

As noted from the foregoing discussion, the multiplicity of speaking voices is a revolutionary position that invites reassessment of traditional hermeneutical practices. In addition, a text is not just a linguistic construct but a social phenomenon which is a shift from Saussurean theorisation

of language. Conversely, evaluation of linguistic components is relevant but inadequate because it offers a limited micro-linguistics conceptualisation of fictional discourse. From Bakhtinian linguistic philosophy, a text does not produce constant messages but rather present a dynamic tension between centripetal and centrifugal social forces. Furthermore, fictional texts are polysemic, they continuously acquire new meanings through de/ recontextualisation. In view of the above submissions, Bakhtin's theoretical concepts and transilingualism have points of convergence. Translingualism suggests alternative perceptions about linguistic competence and proficiency which depart from traditional language conventions. These theories put forward a transformative heterroglossic speech which is attained through cross-cultural and interracial snippets of language. In this regard, languaging is an act of contestation and taking down boundaries.

# CHAPTER FIVE: INTERTEXTUAL PARADIGM: COMPLEX CONVERSATIONS IN TEXT PRODUCTION/ RECEPTION AND INTERPRETATION




## 5.0 Introduction

The preceding chapter examined the dialogical and polyvocal attributes of novelistic discourse, qualities that bring into sharp focus the contested multi-perspectival in human interaction. Kristeva, just like Bakhtin, stresses that language cannot be studied in isolation from the context in which it is embedded. Both share the idea that linguistic meaning is flexible and dynamic since it is based on usage and context. Chapter Five interrogates the selected texts from an intertextual paradigm which is part of the theoretical assemblage in the Multiperspectival Stylistic Model. The chapter strives to show how Kristeva's ideas inform contemporary hermeneutic practices.

## 5.1 Kristeva's conceptualisation of fictional discourse: shifting perspectives in linguistics and poetics

The term intertextuality was coined by Bulgarian linguist and poststructuralist, Julia Kristeva in 1966. Kristeva's intertextuality theory problematizes long-standing assumptions about authorial

intention because the text is read in relation to other texts, which creates a complex web of textual intersections. Intertextuality has its origin in Saussurean structural linguistics and also draws from the works of Barthes and Bakhtin. Most significantly, Kristevan theory modified Saussurean, Barthesian and Bakhtinian thoughts. Kristeva (1993) claims that the word is a meeting point for textualities and dialogues in which the participants are the writer, the reader and the socio-cultural context all intertwined. This means that language/text is a manifestation of a nuanced multiplicity. Equally relevant is the claim that meaning arises from this complex interplay rather than being a mere product of linguistic composition of a text. Kristeva adds that because of the influence of other texts on the author/reader's consciousness, texts are always filtered through codes which bring to the full weight of the utterance/word. Put in other words, Kristeva subverts the ideas that viewed language/text as a closed entity. Her views privilege contemporary interpretive practices that recognise the reader's active role in the interaction with the text and meaning-making processes. Together, these ideas obliterate the divide between linguistics' objective and literary criticism's subjective readings. We need to consider the fact that readers are from a heterogeneous group. They bring in their personal experiences, perceptions and knowledge, a view that has been emphasised in both reception and reader-response theories. Thus, the proposed Multi-perspectival Stylistic model privileges multiple interpretations considering the diverse factors that inform the meaning-making process. Furthermore, literary texts become sites that reflect human conflict over meanings of language. Poetic language should be understood as conveying multiple semantic possibilities therefore objective analysis for a singular interpretation and meaning is untenable (Nolte, 2012). The interaction between linguistics' scientific objectivity and literary theory's subjectivity in reading literary discourse is privileged in this study.

In addition, reading fictional discourse is a complex activity since there is no standard instrument used to evaluate the individual interpretations of a particular text. Kristeva (1966) contends that every expression carries with it semantic freight from other contexts. This resonates with Barthes' (1988) view that a text is a galaxy of signifiers. Barthes further argues that a text is not a line of words releasing a single theological meaning but rather a multidimensional space within a tapestry of writings and none of them original. This means there is need for increased sensibility to the inextricably entangled fictional works during the reading process (Mavengano and Hove, 2019). Barthes suggests alternative interpretive practices that go beyond linguistic signification. We also note that from the intertextual model, reading is an ongoing dialogic conversation because the old

texts are recontextualised and re-interpreted, pointing at unfinalizability of meaning or semantic open-endedness of fictional texts. Thus, these texts are viewed as ephemeral constructs which attain semantic value from an evolving social world of the text. Elsewhere, Canagarajah (2019) rightly observes the distinction between context and text, submitting ultimately the recognition that the world is troubled in contemporary hermeneutical practices.

Significantly, in an intertextual paradigm, the author loses the power to mean. These discussions contest previous epistemologies about reading and writing practices that clearly need re-evaluation. The idea that a text is never independent and original presents a departure from the critical realist interpretive norm. Bloom (1994), commenting on the Western literary tradition, observes that great writing is always rewriting or revisionism. He talks about how canonical texts are rewritten in contemporary fiction through intertextual stylisation. These ideas have profound implications for analysis and interpretation because reader/writer dichotomy is problematized since they are both critical in the process of constructing meanings. Canagarajah (2019) remarks that a more complex conception of texts emerges because the production-reception continuum is fundamentally blurred. The text and meanings arise from a complex networked maze of collective text construction processes. Another important point is that a text is not a product but rather an activity that goes through continuous cycles of production and reception. This problematises Saussurean thinking because language in current discussions is viewed as a dynamic signifying system and meaning does not arise solely from linguistic elements of the text but rather co-produced through dynamic interstices. The dialogic interaction of the author, present text, related texts and the reader becomes essential in the meaning-making process. This advances interpretive practices that privilege assessment of the nature of these manifold interactions and linkages. Furthermore, the reader's interpretation draws upon his memory of an intricate web of previously read texts because "no text is read independently of the reader's experience of other texts" (Eco, 1979:21). This brings extra layers of meanings which are not always linguistically constructed. In other words, the textual interpretative trajectory is inconclusive, calling on readers to explore the textual entanglement and dialogic selves which facilitate a (re)discovering, (re)contextualising and (re)constructing of ambivalence and negotiation of meanings (Mavengano and Hove, 2019).

Kristeva (1980:66) also asserts that texts are products of pre-existent codes, discourses and texts since "any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; each text is absorbed and transformed by

another." She posits that there are always new ways of reading old texts. The existing meanings are significantly altered by the arrival of a new set of narratives that generates new meanings. In addition, the conceptualisation of the author/reader and the text is altered considering the infinite maze of such a textual web (Hartman, 1992). These are fundamental issues that offer new lenses about reading and sense making of fictional discourse. For instance, reading becomes a process of moving between the texts and reinterpretation of those previously read. Another implication is that meaning has no originary source since it emerges out of an interaction of the author, the reader and the text/ other texts.

According to Riffaterre (1984), intertextuality is an operation in the reader's mind. This is an acknowledgement that readers actively shape the meanings of texts through tracking of textual dialogues, making this approach a significant one in this framework. In other words, readers actively engage with the text through the co-construction of knowledge. Kristeva (1986) also views the text as a dynamic site in which relational processes and practices are the focus of analysis instead of any single and static linguistic structure. Allen (2000/2011) adds that readers keep discovering multiple potential meanings in each text. From this conceptualisation, the meanings of fictional works are in a flux and dynamically changing (Allen, 2000). Therefore no interpretation is ever final since every utterance (word/ text) is a response to previous utterances (words/ texts) and elicits further responses constantly entering into dialogue with past, present and future utterances (Bakhtin, 1984). An intertextual analytical framework becomes indexical in assessing these significant interactions and their implications for the processes of meaning construction.

Kristeva (1986:37) posits that every text is constituted by "a mosaic of citations, every text is the absorption and transformation of another text." This is informed by Bakhtin's (1984) observation of the dialogic self and how this generates a polyphonic, carnivalsque realisation that no utterance is independent but rather all utterances respond to previous utterances and to pre-existent patterns of meaning and evaluation. Halliday (2003) endorses the view that each text is a combination of intertextual cycles of the chain of texts which make the history of that text. These observations, culminating in what Peirce (2001) calls phaneroscopy (the holistic signifying process), provide useful insights for the interpretation of the selected texts in this study.

## 5.2 The ambivalence of belonging and identity

One of the common thematic threads in the narratives studied in this chapter is doubleness of the self and ambivalence in multicultural sites. This is evident in the manner the characters strive to define themselves in relation to culture and language. Darling is one example of such characters in *We need new names.* She says; "In America, roads are like the devil's hands reaching all over, just the sad thing is, they won't really take you and me home" (Bulawayo, 2013:142). The extract establishes Darling's homesickness and her negative view of America lies in its similarity to the devil. The extract also illustrates the tragedy of undocumented immigrants who are trapped in America. Bulawayo, much like Chikwava and Mpe, portrays America and London's hostility towards "outsiders" making the places unpopular to immigrants. Some immigrants find themselves trapped in Europe by its restrictive immigration policies or what Jukka (2018) calls administrative bordering practices. Thus, their stay in European space is forced on them and this destabilises the idea that Europe is the desirable final destination for most African immigrants (Ramlan, 2016). However, we note Darling has no home to return to, not only because she does not have the important travel documents, but the idea of returning does not appeal to her since "home" is "in tatters." What remains in her is similar to "native nostalgia" from Jacob Dhlamini's (2009) terminology because the novel projects a troubled childhood. We can also read about her watching of internet porn as evidence of the inevitable contamination of her cultural upbringing. She is no longer comfortable with her mother and friends because she dreads calls from home, further conveying her disconnection from her people back in Zimbabwe. She is neither American nor Zimbabwean culturally and linguistically: she has become a cultural misfit, an immigrant body that lives in the interstitial spaces bounded by both cultures. The frustration in negotiating space and acceptance affects her on the psychological level as an immigrant character. The anxiety of being different paralyses these characters. As a result, Tshaka Zulu, Shingi, Kojo and Darling

become depressed in foreign territory and the recognition that they are undesirable. Living on the periphery prevents these immigrants from meaningfully participating in the social sphere and adds to their alienation. In other words, immigrant characters are always conscious of their status as outsiders and this traumatises and cripples them with fear of their very vulnerability. They are located at the edge of the host country to avoid confrontation with the host communities. A striking scene appears in *We Need New Names* as the narrative closes, and we see Darling's increased restlessness. Perhaps the most moving moment is when Kojo roams the streets like a crazy person. Despair and helplessness are characteristic experiences in this novel.

In America, immigrants hide their identities in their attempt to belong to the English society. Zimbabwean accented English and cultural differences keep Darling and Fostalina outside. The permissive American culture spoils its young ones and Darling instinctively disciplines a white child when he misbehaves at a wedding:

> I grab the little brat and go pha- pha- pha with three quick slaps and rap his head with my knuckles twice. It's only when I sit back down that I realise what I have done. The white people have gasped (Bulawayo, 2013: 183).

Belonging here means hiding the self but the self is impulsive as evident in this scene. Hiding the nudging of the self is a stressful business. This incident also serves to reveal Darling's strangeness to the American culture. This theme persists in this novel as another illegal immigrant, Tshaka Zulu, despite living in America for many years yearns for a country which he never returns to. We see how Tshaka valorises the heroes from the continent of his birth, highlighting his detachment from the immediate American environment he lives in:

> His room is like in a museum of remembrance or something - the walls are choking with newspaper clippings of Nelson Mandela when he came out of jail, pictures of our president when he first became president, a picture of Kwame Nkrumah, Kofi Annan, a big picture of Desmond Tutu, pictures of Miriam Makeba, Brenda Fassie, Hugh Masekela, Lucky Dube, Credo Mutwa, Bebe Manga, Leleti Khumalo, Wangari Maathai, and so on. (Bulawayo, 2013: 235)

In this quotation, the collage of pictures serves as an essential marker of Tshaka's South African identity. Sadly, he is physically alienated and denied the quintessential African identity he is so

proud of displaying in this self-made gallery. Here, identity is a mental construct and this heightens the fate of undocumented immigrants whose sense of claustrophobia arises from their illegal status in America.

In yet another passage, entrapment and claustrophobia are thematically sustained through Fostantina's perceptions of physical beauty. Her perceptions are informed by American culture. She tries to abandon the "undesired African body" as a strategy to assimilate into American culture. Fostalina's body becomes an "object of consciousness" (Fanon, 2001:326). Desperately yearning to belong, Fostalina diets and exercises in her attempt to garner an American slim body that practically enlarges her double consciousness. Kojo, who is her husband, says "there is nothing African about a woman with no thighs, no hips, no belly, and no behind." Ironically, Fostantina's efforts make her lose the body that made her attractive and desirable. The English society's definition of beauty and physical fitness is brought into sharp focus. This statement further reveals a stunning fact about the futility of abandoning one's culture and trying to belong to a new culture. Total assimilation is almost impossible because her slimness does not make her American. She still carries the burden of being misunderstood when using the English language. Fostalina's interlanguage speaks of her ambivalence and duality. It also assigns her a foreign identity in America. Ramlan (2016) comments on cultural hybridity and points out the challenges encountered in the processes of belonging and identification. Bhabha (1991) in *The location of culture* explains what he terms a third space which he says allows alternative subject positions. Sadly, the result of Fostantina's effort is disappointing because she further disconnects herself from both cultures. The skeleton body appearance disqualifies her as an African woman at the same time her poor English accent and pronunciation mark her as an outsider in America. Kojo's parents advise him to feed his wife whose thinness is a shame to Africans. Fostalina's slim body is rejected by both her husband and in-laws which symbolically deconstructs Eurocentric ideas about beauty and attractiveness. Ironically, the white bride at the wedding in America is fat and probably this makes her attractive and a suitable bride for the African man she marries. Fostalina dislikes the bride because the bride is too fat in her view. Here again the plight of black immigrants is seen in the way they over-do things probably as a reflection of inferiority complex and fissures in their identities. She thinks that her African identity is not good enough and prefers an American identity. Her preference of English identity reflects self-hate and her desire to (re)construct the self. In contrast, the narrator in *Harare North* strives to keep his Zimbabwean political identity as

a strong Mugabe supporter. His linguistic identity is also stable throughout the novel. He is metonymic of conservative ZANU PF supporters who do not believe in ideological change within the political realm. Yet, this character is deplorable because of his inability to critique the past and redeem himself. He is a gullible follower of Mugabe who is uncritical of the political actions of his party. It is most appropriate to argue that this character epitomises the hypocrisy and selfishness of ZANU PF loyalists. His naivety lies in his gratuitous support of the same system that has victimised him and his people. He is a political zombie that cannot think outside ZANU PF's divisive political machinations. He is a constituent part of what Althusser (1970) calls the ideological state apparatus.

We must not forget that this character is a product of a brainwashing project manned by fractious operatives derogatorily named "green bombers." Hence, he also symbolises political dogmatism that refuses any form of different political orientations in Zimbabwe. Most importantly, he feigns ignorance of the economic and political realities in his country, allowing and endorsing his most cherished political leaders to exploit gullible supporters who just take orders. The most obvious evidence is when he admits that he joined the so-called "green bombers" due to biting poverty. Before he departs, readers are made to understand about a myriad of economic, political and social problems in Zimbabwe. Secondly, we notice his naivety when he realises that the commander of the "green bombers" is a trickster who takes advantage of him. He seems not to be bothered much about this discovery. Thus, the novel satirises and ridicules such supporters who are turned into mindless bodies:

> Mother's village area is now going to be taken over by mining company that belongs to commander of armed forces and villagers that don't want to move have been telled that the army and green bombers is coming to move them. That's what I read yesterday at internet café. But that is all propaganda because this story is in the Zimbabwean Independent, the newspaper that never like our government. What you believe is your best weapon, I know (Chikwava, 2009: 89).

The oppressive Zimbabwean regime thrives on impoverishing and enslaving the mind of the common man. The young African generation that must represent fresh ideas is corrupted and poisoned by egocentric politicians. Ironically, he is anti-west just as his political party but flees to London for protection when the Zimbabwean state comes for him.

### 5.3 The nervous condition of the post-2000 era

It is necessary to point out that post-colonial narratives examined in this study portray characters who suffer due to entrapment. A collage of bitter experiences is captured in *Harare North*, *Welcome to our Hillbrow* and *We need new names* where characters either lose their sanity or commit suicide. Bhabha (1994) explains that living in the spaces in-between is an unsettling experience. He adds that the in-between is an ambiguous and shifting zone of instability. I read this as an expression of corrosive effects of displacement, acculturation, disorientation and being an outsider. In *Harare North* and *We Need new names*, extreme agony drives the characters to insanity. The immigrant's psyche is fractured in Chikwava's unnamed protagonist and his childhood friend, Shingi's mental condition at the end of the novel demonstrate that the characters have been overburdened by non-being. The narrator is haunted by his past and present life experiences. He hallucinates about Shingi. The narrator thinks there are people following him who want to punish him for his sins from the past. He is a traumatised soul on the run, but this time he is not running away from the Zimbabwean police or the London immigration officers, but rather, the voices in his head:

> Forgiveness is the best kind of punishment. You don't know when or from which direction the rock of truth will come tearing through the air to smash your head and bring everything to one final end. Half naked, you turn into Electric Avenue and walk. You start to hear in tongues, it feels like Shingi is on his way back to life. You can tell you know it; Shingi is now coming back. Already there is struggle over your feeties, you are telling right foot to go in one direction and he is telling left foot to go in another direction. (…) You stand there in them mental back streets and one big battle rag even if you have no more ginger for it (Chikwava, 2009: 229-230).

The psychological state of the narrator here shows two aspects. First, he is a victim of the negative impact of prolonged pain and a sense of helplessness that haunts him. Second, he is a restless character because the memories of his violent acts keep resurfacing. The novel uses this character to emphasise the grim fate of those that participated in the ZANU PF machinations. The youths who are manipulated and exploited by politicians are later abandoned and forgotten.

The migrant discourses recreate characters in schizophrenic and dysphonic conditions through disenchantment, heartbreak, discrimination, frustration fear, detachment and uncertainty. Elsewhere, Stefano (2002) talks about the tension of knowing two worlds, (the homeland and the host country) and never being able to arrive or entirely depart. His observation here also conveys the ambiguity of home and belonging. In this sense, immigrants occupy the liminal space between being and nothingness.

In addition, immigrants' hopes and dreams are dashed on arrival as the harsh realities of the host societies begin to unfold.

> And when we got to America we took our dreams, looked at them tenderly as if they were newly born children, and put them away; we would not be pursuing them. We would never be the things we had wanted to be; doctors, lawyers, teachers, engineers. No school for us, even though our visas were school visas (Bulawayo, 2013:241).

Character construction as an essential style highlights the damaging effect of living as an alien. Darling, uncle Kojo and Tshaka Zulu are some of the immigrants who have come to realise that America is home only to Americans. Immigrants suffer due to a depleted sense of worth and an acute awareness of the undesired other. The theme of dislocation shows the complex interplay of the physicality of place and sense of self. Immigrants are conscious of the implications of being foreigners:

> And because we were illegal and afraid to be discovered we mostly kept to ourselves, stuck to our kind and shied away from those who were not like us, we did not know what they think of us, what they would do about us. We did not want their wrath, we did not want their curiosity, and we did not want attention. We did not meet stares and we avoided gazes. We hid our real names, gave false ones when asked (Bulawayo, 2013:242).

These citations are powerful and evocative. Mobility enables people to leave their geographical space behind but immigrants find the new territories unsettling. These passages magnify a gloomy atmosphere and readers share the experiences of desperation, anguish and frustration of these immigrants. The extract also illuminates the process of psychological bordering at play. Criminalisation of undocumented immigrants in America (British and South African) increases their sense of insecurity. Selvon's notion of "keep the water white" in *The Lonely Londoners* is a

daily experience for the immigrants. The otherness of immigrants is heightened as the sojourner belongs to the underclass of America and they must stay on the fringes of this society. America, just like London in *Harare North* and Joburg in *Welcome to our Hillbrow,* is a space where people are culturally, economically, racially, and socially defined as othered bodies.

Immigrants suffer from a shattering sense of placelessness. The immigrants do not belong to either their homelands or the host countries. Those that are illegal and undocumented African immigrants in Europe find it difficult to return or visit their relatives, meaning that they are completely separated from their bloodlines.

> And when our parents reminded us over the phone that it had been a long, long time, and that they were getting old and needed to see us, (…) we said, We are coming, mama, siyabuya baba; we are coming gogo, tirikuuya sekuru. We did not want to tell them we still had no papers. And when they grew restless and cursed America for being the greedy monster that swallowed their children, swallowed the sons and daughters of other lands and refused to spit them out, we said We are coming very soon (Bulawayo, 2013: 248)

In *Harare North*, despite the fact that the narrator does not want to live in London for long, he never gets the chance to return. He is roaming London streets at the end of the novel like "an *mgodoyi* - the homeless dog." This analogy of the wandering dog tells us about immigrants' state of dislocation and incarceration in the diaspora. He has been denied human compassion therefore becomes a hermit. Similarly, Darling unfortunately notes the impassable cultural and linguistic divide.

Equally important is the fact that as readers we are drawn into the unrelenting agony of these characters. The narratives paint a pessimistic view of immigrant life in new environments. The characters sink into pessimism and life becomes a meaningless journey. The image of "mgodoyi" is employed to etch the life of a wandering immigrant with no place to claim their own.

### 5.4 Africa for the Africans vis -a-vis political pragmatism in Africa

An intertextual reading of the selected fictional narratives reveals stylistic and thematic (dis)connections in these works. For example, the rhetoric of post-colonial political leaders in Africa is under scrutiny in the fictional narratives in this study. The Zimbabwean state post-2000

has redefined a number of terms such as (non) citizen, (un)belonging and nationhood. The novels interrogate these new definitions. In post-2000, the Zimbabwean government introduced two major programmes that had a massive impact on the livelihoods of its people: the land reform and clean up trash, infamously known as Operation Murambatsvina. Magosvongwe (2014) and Nyambi (2013) analyse these programmes, the former looking at the land issue in detail and the latter examining a number of challenges including Operation Murambatsvina and the land redistribution in his doctoral thesis *Nation in crisis: Alternative literary Representations of Zimbabwe.* ZANU PF has consistently defended its clampdown on whites, citing historical inequalities. Surprisingly, there appears to be a contradiction because both whites and blacks who are perceived to be enemies of the state are victimised. "Enemies of the state" are members of the opposition parties and their race does not count much. *We need new names* strongly castigates the ZANU PF government for victimising and pushing some citizens to the periphery. The ruling party defines who belongs to the "independent" Zimbabwe and who does not. Zimbabweans are projected as a monolithic mass of ZANU PF loyalists. This qualification excludes "perceived" opposition members who then become "bastardised" citizens, a name given to one of the children born and raised in the eponymous location called Paradise. These citizens lost their right to be called Zimbabweans. Their illegitimacy is punctuated in phrases such as "puppets of the west," "MDC hooligans" and "opposition criminal elements," used during the Mugabe and post Mugabe periods. The deliberate name-calling of dissenting voices is purposeful. "Hooligans" and "criminals" are a threat to "peace loving citizens" therefore the sovereign justifies its brutal clampdown and use of raw power on such "criminal elements" of the opposition party. The motifs of absolute power, repression and torture remind us of Achebe's (1987) *Anthills of the Savannah*. This is in conflict with the rhetoric of peace and unity conveniently utilised by the ruling party in 2018 harmonised elections.

In *We need new names*, black Zimbabweans are violently evicted from their homes. Darling is traumatised by her experience of Murambatsvina and she narrates:

> I dream about what happened back at our house before we came to Paradise. I try to push it away but the dream keeps coming and coming like bees, like rain, like the graves at Heavenway (Bulawayo, 2013: 65).

The dream is a flashback of the state-led evictions of black urbanites. The evicted people later live in a slum they deliberately name Paradise, under pitiable conditions. The child remembers "men driving the bulldozers laughing and she hears adults saying, Why, why, why, what have we done, what have we done, what have we done?" Victims of Operation Murambatsvina further say:

> They shouldn't have done this to us, no, they shouldn't have. Salilwel' ilizwe leli, we fought to liberate this country. Wasn't it like this before independence? Do you remember how the whites drove us from our land and put us in those wretched reserves? I was there, you were there, wasn't it just like this? (Bulawayo, 2013:75)

The extract conveys deep cynicism about independence and its meaning for the ordinary people. Rhetorical questions and intrasentential code-switching capture disbelief and shock caused by the events unfolding in post-colonial Zimbabwe. Those who support the opposition parties, especially the Movement for Democratic Change, (MDC) are brutally assaulted and killed. The national space is strictly regulated by the state. The same theme is also articulated in *Harare North*. This foregrounds themes such as political suppression, political hypocrisy and betrayal of the masses who actively participated in the shaping of the state during the liberation struggle. This destabilises official and state-sanctioned narratives in Zimbabwe. It conveys political polarisation and the government's attempts to stultify alternative narratives (Nyambi, 2013). The post Mugabe era has also seen the emergence and entrenchment of polarities between official discourse and the realities of the charged politics in Zimbabwe. The passage captures public protest against state repression in Zimbabwe, a scenario that has not changed much even after the demise of Robert Mugabe, in November 2017. The current president's popular slogan "*Pasi nemhandu*" (down and away with dissidents) publicly condemns and threatens dissenting voices in the "Second Republic" or post Mugabe nation making him a replica of Mugabe. The ruling politicians have no conscience and they regard members of the opposition as "state enemies" that have to be brutally dealt with. The state's brutal killings of protesting civilians on August 1 in 2018 and the recurrence of the event in January 2019 are illustrations of compelling evidence of ZANU PF's autocracy. The party is not ready to relinquish the same political power that it has enjoyed and abused since the country got independent in 1980.

The authorised state discourse creates and promotes racial tensions that are ironically similar to those fomented during the colonial period. The post-colonial paradoxes are explored. It is quite

disturbing to note the dichotomy between political rhetoric and existential realities of the post-colonies. The leader of the third "Chimurenga fighters" says this when his group attacks a white couple in Budapest:

> Somebody please tell this white man here that this is not fucking Rhodesia! (…)Know this, you bloody colonialist, from now on, the black man is done listening, you hear? This is a black man country and the black man is in charge now. Africa for Africans only (Bulawayo, 2013:118).

The Third Chimurenga fighter also screams, "Kill the Boer, the farmer, the khiwa! Strike fear in the heart of the white man!" (Bulawayo, 2013:111). The above scene ensconces violence against whites. Most apparently, here is reverse racism in post-2000. The Chimurenga fighter constructs a narrative of humanity that is very limited in scope. Muchemwa (2010) observes that the word Chimurenga is suffused with a grammar of violence that has been part of invented and choreographed historical narratives in Zimbabwe. Despite the fact that colonialism created racial inequalities, the narratives condemn violence as a means of correcting such inequalities. This is also a mockery of divisive and self-serving political ideologies that are only meant to maintain the status quo. The white couple in this scene is humiliated and ill-treated. Thus, the wrongly spelt "blak power" amplifies the wrongness of state funded atavistic discourse. It could be a telling evidence of mockery and an attack on the deceitful and manipulative nature of ZANU PF politicians. This reading gains credence if we consider the selfish siphoning of mineral resources mentioned in *Harare North*. Villagers are evicted to pave way for a mining company that belongs to a government minister. The villagers become victims rather than beneficiaries.

*One foreigner's Ordeal* and *Welcome to Our Hillbrow* also reveal post-apartheid inconsistences. South Africa, the rainbow nation, segregates and deports African immigrants who are also derogatorily named "makwerekwere or mapolantane." Discriminatory boundaries are still problematic in South Africa. Violence, hatred and criminalisation of the black body are some of the apartheid legacies that linger on in the postcolony. Sadly, black South Africans regard their kith and kin from the continent as "immoral," "dangerous criminals," drug dealers" and "diseased bodies." Such segregatory images were used by whites against blacks during apartheid and now the same incendiary languaging is perpetuated by blacks. Such self-denigrating attitudes reflect the need for total decolonisation of the African mind-set. Under apartheid, blackness is condemned

whilst whiteness is sanctified and valorised. Under the post-apartheid dispensation, the immigrant black body is attacked in some atavistic manner while the white body is never perceived as an immigrant. To make matters worse, African immigrants are beaten up by black South African security guards for being "a cheeky immigrant" and they seek information from "cold and unfriendly looking" Home Affairs officials who frequently threaten to take "cheeky immigrants" to Lindela Repatriation Centre (Jinga, 2012: 52-53). The same way the whites used to beat up "cheeky natives" during apartheid era, black South African guards have adopted similarly violent practices. They "team up" and use their batons to discipline the "aliens." We are also made aware that "makwerekwere knew they had no recourse to legal defence if they were caught and police could detain or deport them without allowing them any trial" (Mpe, 2001:23). This means that undocumented "makwerekwere" are at the mercy of security agents and Home Affairs officials whom they cannot report. Their illegal presence in South Africa renders them vulnerable bodies. What is even more disturbing is how high ranking politicians seem to forget the essence of the liberation struggles of their people. The black African immigrants have become the "black others" in post- apartheid South Africa. The present South African president, Cyril Ramaphosa, recently reignited xenophobia in his speech against perceived "foreigners" who have become "too many" and must go back to their countries. In other words, post-independence African governments need to deal with the socially constructed apartness of Africans in their societies and respect individual human liberties. Ironically, the violation of human rights is considered a thing of the past in the South African Constitution, as evident in the following passage:

> No one seemed to care that the treatment of the makwerekwere by the police and the lack of sympathy from the influential Home Affairs, ran contrary to the human rights clauses detailed in the new constitution of the country. Ambiguities, paradoxes, ironies…the stuff of our South African and Makwerekwere lives (Mpe, 2001:23).

Both the African National Congress politicians and the Home Affairs Department are under the radar here. A common dislike of African immigrants is further satirised in the following extract:

> Makwerekwere stretching their legs and spreading like plants filling each patch in Hillbrow coming to take our jobs in the new democratic rainbowism of African Renaissance that threatened the future of the locals (Mpe, 2001:26-27)

This idiomatic expression reveals how some black South Africans get irritated by the fact that their kith and kin are making a living in the country. The satirical reference to the "new democratic rainbowism" concept insinuates inclusivity, freedom and pluralism in post–apartheid South African society. Yet, this pluralist political ideology is threatened by xenophobia. The Constitution is reduced to a mere document that is divorced from the realities of the new nation. Thus, literary discourse potentially serves as an interrogative platform that also contests hegemonic discourses. Both the African National Congress (ANC) and Zimbabwe African National Unity Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) are under scrutiny in these narratives. The clashes and contestations over truth, according to Bakhtin (1981), are ever-present in novelistic discourse. Apparently, there are stylistic and thematic parallels between these narratives. For instance, the novelists regard literary works as discursive sites to examine and question post-colonial ironies and ambiguities. Furthermore, the narratives reveal a disjuncture between the Pan-Africanist concept of the post-colonial African states and territorial border realities on the African continent. Navigation of South African space by African immigrants is highly regulated, despite the rhetoric of African brotherhood and comradeship in Pan-Africanism, the African Renaissance and Ubuntu. According to Mbigi (1997) Ubuntu is an inclusive humanistic philosophy that promotes cohesion, hospitality solidarity and the general welfare of the African peoples. This philosophy emphasises the interdependent nature of all humanity, yet the selected texts speak of Africa that is divided.

### 5.5 Reading racial myths and double standards

Mtose (2011) argues that contrary to the perceptions that the end of apartheid sounded the death knell for racism in South Africa, many black people still experience racism. The most palpable comes from Adam and Moodley (2000) who posit that black South Africans internalised racist definitions and labels of man of colour. The inferiority complex is seen when farm workers laugh at the insults from the white farm owner in *One Foreigner's Ordeal*. They are economically powerless and therefore are passively subjected to the ill-treatment by a white boss. This depiction of racial relations also reminds us of the fact that the farm came into existence as a colonial institution where new fences created new borders demarcating the farm territory. In these new

internal borders, blacks worked as farm labourers, maids and cattle minders. Denigration of black humanity is conveyed through these black workers who have lost their self-pride.

It could be also argued that apartheid definitions of blackness and whiteness still persist in the post-apartheid era. This passage is an articulation of Calvinist or Volk nationalism because whites still hold privileged positions in post-apartheid society. The economic supremacy of the white farmer allows him to insult and humiliate black workers who occupy an inferior position as farm labourers. It is necessary to consider the fact that such power imbalances were introduced during the colonial era through dispossessed blacks who lost their land and turned into farm workers for survival. The conversation between the black farm workers and the white farmer re-enacts polarized and tense apartheid racial relations. The white farmer's ideas of whiteness have not changed, with this understanding, we realise that the master–servant relationship was imposed on blacks, a scenario that persists in postcolonial societies, contrary to the narratives about the end of racism in today's world. Furthermore the idea of fenced and gated farms is evocative since it draws a remarkable parallels with historical separatist ideologies. In fact, the farm community defines itself in a visibly static way, for instance the white farmer's cold and offensive attitude towards backs is stunning evidence of racism. The fence and gate symbolically capture territorial myths and remnants of apartheid. The ideological construction of the farm inscribes an Afrikaner territory that is a site of divisions. The living conditions of black workers confirm and validate their transience and peripheral position. Sadly, the white farmer remains aloof showing that crossing the boundary fences between races is still problematic.

We witness the same exclusions and tropes in Mpe's narrative. The English society's racial discrimination and misconceptions about Africans are revealed through "disease screening of Africans" in *Welcome to Our Hillbrow*. MacKenzie (2003) states that discrimination on the basis of skin colour and ethnic background is still evident in the United Kingdom. Similarly, in *We Need New Names*, the ambivalence of NGO people is patently clear. They focus on taking pictures of 'hungry looking children' from Paradise who are in "tattered clothes," pictures of a ten year pregnant girl Chipo and Godknows' "black naked buttocks" whose inescapable poverty is comparable to that of the biblical Lazarus but one of the children Bastard says, "… when they look at my picture over there, I want them to see me. Not my buttocks, not my dirty clothes, but me" (Bulawayo, 2013:53). The child is aware of the dehumanisation of the poor that is going through

such selective photography and the subsequent circulation of these images of destitution. The NGO people also take pictures of political violence when Bornfree is killed. All these negative images are taken to Europe and disseminated to support Eurocentric naturalised stereotypes that define Africa as a place of deficit and human abuse (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013a). Thus, the messianic role of the NGO people is not a humanitarian gesture since they come to Africa with a hidden agenda of getting evidence to negate African humanity and validate stereotypes that they have historically accumulated and archived. Most importantly, the pictures serve to portray African communities as "zones of dependency and peripheriality" (Said, 1989:207). Interestingly, children criticise the inhumane treatment they are exposed to by the NGO whose disdainful attitude is visible because they do not want to be anywhere close to the dirty, hungry-looking children from Paradise slum. In a similar case of poor racial relations, Darling tells us about her ordeal at Washington High School in America:

> When I first arrived at Washington, I just wanted to die. The other kids teased me about my name, my accent, my hair(…), it kept going and going so that in the end I just felt wrong in my skin, in my body, in my body, in my clothes, in my language, in my head, everything (Bulawayo, 2013:165).

The use of parataxis in this passage stirs our attention, highlighting an endless list of things that Darling is teased about because she is a black African immigrant. African immigrants are the subject of mockery and Tom, a young male immigrant, commits suicide because he is constantly tormented by white children who call him a "freak." We see the painful manifestation of racism in the present day world of the globalised universe. In *Harare North*, newspapers in London have nothing good to report about Zimbabwe; they circulate images of "an old president" and they write about "Zimbabwe running out of toilet paper" as well as ethnic wars in Rwanda. The focus on the negative and vulgar in Africa surreptitiously suggests that there is nothing positive about Africa that is the worth news in London. Together, these passages reveal an important reading about the complex race relations characterising the globalisation metanarrative. It is in this context that we notice the need for continued examination of racial relations in the contemporary world. It is also worth noting here, that the discourse about racial blindness is challenged. The world is still as polarised on racial lines to the extent that it entrenches stereotypes.

Furthermore, the maintenance of colonial power structures should be a cause for concern. Robbe (2018) observes that in recent years, South African fiction has registered the feelings of disappointment and a general impasse that signify a crisis in the post-apartheid imaginary. Indeed, the fact that white immigrants in South Africa get immediate help from Home Affairs department is telling evidence of the perpetuation of a black inferiority complex. Black South Africans dehumanise their own black "makwerekwere" but ironically the same officials are ready to serve those who are white skinned. Black Africans still valorise the coloniser. These novels also make enormous appeals to postcolonial African governments to re-examine their relations with the former imperial world. In so doing, African leaders could save the continent from further political repression and denigration of Africans. Fostalina is another example of double standards: she disapproves interracial marriages but struggles to enter and get accepted into the same English culture. In this way, Fostalina is a symbol of self-contradiction. Such self-hatred and racial paradoxes also reflect when she sleeps with her white boyfriend, cheating Kojo whom she leaves with just like her fictional counterpart, Sekai, who also sleeps with a white man but is married to Paul, a black character. Similarly, whites regard African immigrants as diseased bodies but in spite of this discriminatory attitude, they choose black African female immigrants as sexual partners. Both races and sexes are blind to the racial divisions when it comes to sex. The sexual impulse recognises no boundaries and it is stronger than racist or any other discriminatory attitudes. In a novel *The Madonna of excelsior*, Zakes Mda explores in detail such racial paradoxes and white hypocrisy in much the same way. In view of the above submission, these narratives convey the struggle for inclusion.

### 5.6 Historicisation of fictional discourse: A backward gaze

From an intertextual perspective, no text is free from the influence of history and society. Kehinde (2003:375) endorses the observation that intertextuality is well-established in the works of contemporary African writers. He posits that African "literature does not evolve within a vacuum." Rather, it depends on the socio-political realities of its enabling milieu and the precursor texts. Thus, African writers also depend on earlier texts for their styles and themes. From this perspective, it is possible for styles in the texts to have a different impact on readers. The readers do not notice the same things nor are they affected in the same way. As already highlighted in the foregoing, historical allusion is a strong intertextual narrative device employed for the development and unfolding of themes in the narratives studied in this chapter. De Kock (2000) asserts that colonial history speaks to the postcolonial present. He contends that historical facts are important and writers should move away from fiction that encourages colour blindness. He argues

that anti-apartheid narratives are still very relevant in the contemporary world. This resonates with Mzali (2012) who states that colonial history should not be obscured by the fanciful concept of globalisation in fiction. Put simply, memory and remembering are crucial in glocal and global discourses.

I also think that historicisation of fiction should entail looking back in a bid to avoid a repeat of colonial ills that ravaged Africa and humanity in general. I believe this is necessary if we are to draw lessons from the past and improve our present world. Bringing races together is more reasonable than promoting racial difference and conflict. In other words, confrontation with racism and exclusionary practices is one step towards finding solutions to human conflicts. This reading, however, does not condone racial segregation practised by both blacks and whites in postcolonial societies. For instance, Sisulu's (2002) *Walter and Albertina Sisulu: In Our lifetime* is also re-positioned in Jinga's novel to show how black South Africans and Zimbabweans worked together to topple the apartheid system. The novel castigates the new "black-on-black apartheid" in the post colonies when the narrator sadly says, "it appears to me it will take more time for black-on-black apartheid to end (Jinga, 2012:44). This form of apartheid is manifest when African immigrants are blamed for "stealing jobs" and seen as "vectors of diseases." Similarly, Mpe's *Welcome to our Hillbrow* presents a voice of reason in the following statement: "You would want to add that some Makwerekwere were fleeing their wanton countries to seek sanctuary here in our country in the same way that many South Africans were forced into exile in Zambia, Zaire, Nigeria and other African and non-African countries during Apartheid era" (Mpe, 2001:19).

At the same time, Zimbabwean compatriots ill-treat each other when they meet in the diaspora. The protagonist in *One foreigner's Ordeal* is addressed in Sesotho by a Zimbabwean compatriot who takes pride in mocking and insulting new arrivants for their unfamiliarity with the linguistic landscape of South Africa. This theme is also sustained through state repression and terrorism against citizens by a black Zimbabwean government. The Mugabe regime kills its own people whom it is supposed to protect. Ordinary black Zimbabweans also kill each other for political capital in *Harare North* and *We need new names.* Differences in political perceptions are punishable by torture and death. Surely, "black-on-black apartheid" is a cause for concern in post colonies. A similar scene of violence against kith and kin is evident in Mpe's novel when Tiragalong villagers kill each other. The killings are motivated by baseless accusations of

witchcraft. These narratives problematise Ubuntu philosophy through inscribing images of hate and intolerance.

As previously mentioned, intertextual reference to books about apartheid ills from George Bizos's book *No one to Blame* and Eleanor Sisulu's *In our lifetime* brings the grim past into current conversations in fictional discourse (Jinga, 2012:44). Colonialism has received expression in a number of African narratives. Recently, Zakes Mda's *The Madonna of Excelsior*, Malope's *Dancing in the dust*, Mpe's *Welcome to our Hillbrow,* Mhlongo's *Dog eat dog* and *After Tears*, Moele's *Room 207*, are among many other fictional works that have gazed into the South African colonial past. In Zimbabwe, thematisation of colonial history features characterises several narratives such as *The uncertainty of Hope*, *Harare North, The House of Hunger, Waiting for the rain*, *Bones*, *We need new names, One foreigner's ordeal* and *Echoing Silences*. Black struggle against colonial administrations is privileged in these narratives. The pathetic position of a white couple whose home is ransacked by the Third Chimurenga fighters in *We need new names,* however, highlights a new dimension of racism. The rampage bespeaks the helplessness and insecurities of whites post-2000 Zimbabwe. Former President Mugabe seems to have forgotten his inaugural speech:

> If yesterday, I fought you (whites) as an enemy, today you have become a friend and ally with the same national interest, loyalty, rights and duties as me (…) The wrongs of the past now stand forgiven and forgotten (Mugabe, 1980).

This inaugural speech defined a new nation with a new philosophy towards racial harmony and respect for the rights of the citizenry. Yet, in the post-2000 era when Mugabe and his party faced an increased crisis of legitimacy, the country witnessed palpable autocracy set on the palimpsest of a self-serving political culture. The nation became a divided land (Mlambo, 2013, Nyambi, 2013 and Mangena 2015). ZANU PF politicians re-enacted and repeated racist discourses in economic, political and social domains to justify brutality against whites who were falsely accused of supporting a "British's puppet" opposition party, the MDC. Thus, the country's colonial past became a useful archive for the political ideological structure to maintain the status quo. Whites in Zimbabwe became an easy chromatic scapegoat. It is not an overstatement to say that ZANU PF politicians abuse power and employ intimidation strategies to muzzle growing political dissent where racism is deliberately and purposefully choreographed to re-enact the schisms of lore. When

Zimbabweans felt cheated in the post-2000 elections and contested the legitimacy of the ruling party, the state increased the tension through coercive tactics and marginalisation of some sections of the society, thereby highlighting black nationalism in crisis. Whites and opposition members became the perceived "others" and unwanted enemies of the state. This is what Timothy Brennan (1990) refers to as the amorphousness of the country. The nation took a step back to adapt colonial oppressive practices and some of these were perfected to the satisfaction of the postcolonial oppressors.

Historicisation of events in fiction also thematises colonial legacies as highlighted in *Harare North, One Foreigner's Ordeal, We Need New Names* and *Welcome to Our Hillbrow.* Blacks and whites sit on opposite sides of the economic fence in Bulawayo and Mpe's novels. The poverty of black people reflects the historical inequalities that were caused by dispossessions and forced removals during the colonial era. For instance, land grabbing by the colonialists robbed blacks their fundamental source of livelihood and left them suffering. The arrival of whites in South Africa marked the introduction of territorial and legislated segregation of races. Kagiso Malope's novel *Dancing in the dust* chronicles black people's agony under apartheid regulations. Such despicable and atrocious histories of colonialism need to be addressed amicably in the heyday of independence. Whites and a few elite blacks live in Budapest and this place accommodates vast economic differences (Fetterolf, 2017). Whites relocate to more convenient places and leave post-apartheid Hillbrow that has become a space for poor struggling blacks. Races maintain their chromatic apartness through economic and social inequalities that prevail. The profound inequalities cause black people's distress and this theme finds expression in Magona's *Mother to mother*, Moele's *Room 207*, Mhlongo's *Dog eat dog*, Matlwa's *Coconut* and Zakes Mda's *Ways of dying*. The majority of black people still live in bleak conditions as rightly observed by Manase (2001). The economic and social disparities lead to a nervous condition among the deprived sections of the post-colonial societies. Placing these narratives into conversation enables an examination of how history is infused into contemporary realities.

It is also important to note that racism is complex and multifaceted as reflected in this profoundly horrifying and confessional passage:

> There were other chilling stories of what happened in the kitchens. Of white madams raped and gagged by their South African garden boys - that is, black men to whom they could

> not afford to show any respect; of white men found hanging like washing waiting to dry, because they refused their so-called boys and girls permission to go home to bury a close relative; of whites killed simply because they were wealthy and tried to protect their wealth when robbers came to redistribute it; of whites hacked just because they are white, an embodiment of racial segregation and black impoverishment (Mpe, 2001:23).

The extract draws our attention to the complex manifestations of racism in the post-apartheid era. In this sense, racism is portrayed as a double-edged sword that victimises both the racists and the victims of racism. The emasculated black man, the "garden boy" enacts revenge with an unprecedented fury that lays claim to the inveterate.

### 5.7 HIV/AIDS: A contemporary way of dying

HIV and AIDS is a major theme that features in all the four narratives examined in this chapter. The world should move away from viewing AIDS as a 'fruit of sin,' "an African disease," or a "makwerekwere problem." A woman from Paradise kills herself after discovering she has HIV. The narrator in *Harare North* thinks everyone who has been to prison has AIDS. There is pervasive stigma associated with the HIV and AIDS and this arises from the misunderstanding of the pandemic. For instance, it is viewed as a disease associated with "immoral" homosexuals: according to Tiragalong villagers the virus is "the shit that the greedy and careless penises sucked out of the equally eager anuses."

These villagers wrongly believe that they are safe since they do not engage in undesirable sexual contact. Tiragalong villagers believe HIV and AIDS are brought into South Africa through "makwerekwere." The villagers also think AIDS is a problem of South Africans who engage in sex with African immigrants. These views require critical evaluation in the context of AIDS and other contemporary social problems. Furthermore, such conclusions do not take into account other possible ways of getting the virus. Consequently, those who get infected are subjects of ridicule. AIDS, just like crime, is associated with "strangers." African immigrants are "put through lengthy medical checks" at Heathrow in England because they "were sole bringers of AIDS." Yet, in Johannesburg:

> There were white prostitutes in Hillbrow. And white criminals who sold drugs, who were happy to see Makwerekwere serving as the butt of the vicious criticism (…)There were whites who sold liquor and glue to street children (Mpe, 2001:103).

In *We need new names,* Darling's father is kept away from the glare of the slum community. Adults fail to acknowledge the fact that HIV and AIDS have become part of the contemporary reality and that this requires a universal effort. The child character, Stina, metaphorically advises, "it's no use hiding AIDS (…) it's like hiding a thing with horns in a sack (…) one day the horns will start boring through the sack and come out in the open for everyone to see" (Bulawayo, 2013: 100). The innocent eyeball narrator style is well-crafted satire that attacks the denialism of the adults in admitting that the disease is a part of the modern day realities. I find this advice fascinating since it highlights serious perceptual and social shortcomings. The narrative technique here provides an eyewitness account by children from the slum, who are, ironically, more informed than adults. Thus, the child's narrative voice satirises and ridicules the views of unreasonable adults. All the four novels inscribe AIDS as a theme and how infected people are stigmatised and condemned for having the disease. The narratives also condemn ignorance and stereotypical attitudes about the HIV/ AIDS pandemic. The unnamed protagonist in *Harare North* professes his ignorance when he argues that "HIV negative" means one has the virus. Sekai's brother commits suicide just like one woman in Bulawayo's novel.

My other focus here is to engage with the layers of meaning embedded in Heavenway, a graveyard with newly dug graves in the context of HIV and AIDS. In *We need new names,* a number of newly dug graves in Heavenway graveyard convey the fact that AIDS has become a contemporary way of dying (a way to meet one's creator). This reading resonates well with Zakes Mda's *Ways of dying* This interpretation is also captured through the child narrative voice in the following extract:

> I used to be very afraid of graveyards and death and such things but not anymore. There is just no sense being afraid when you live so near the graves; it would be like the tongue fearing the teeth (…) and when you know maths like me then you can figure out the ages of the buried and see that they died young, their lives short like those of mice (…)It's this sickness that is killing them (Bulawayo, 2013: 133).

Children from Paradise witness burials taking place every time and the metaphor of the "tongue and teeth" above serves to show that death has become part of the children's daily experiences hence they are no longer afraid of it. South Africa, just like Zimbabwe, has felt the impact of the pandemic and the narratives call for urgent action re-directed at social transformation.

We therefore discern resignation and pessimism in the narrator's "welcome" in Mpe's narrative. The complexity of the novel's welcome lies in its multiple semantic meanings. It could be a euphemistic welcome to a world of numerous challenges. Humanity in the 21st century lives in a corrupted and diseased. Rafapa (2018) concludes that the pervasive theme of AIDS in postcolonial literary works is also a metaphor of diseased and non-democratic postcolonial states.

## 5.8 The semantics of graffiti and languaging fury

*We Need New Names* exploits the multimodal ensemble of graffiti grammar to inscribe multiple semantic connotations. The interplay between the linguistic and visual in graffiti makes discourse complex and problematic. Kress and Van Leewen (2006) studied multisemiotic discourse extensively and concluded that a text communicates through a number of semiotic codes and these modes complement each other. Elsewhere, in a doctoral thesis entitled "A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Graffiti written in Shona and English found in selected urban areas of Zimbabwe," Mangeya (2014) asserts that graffiti is a distinct form of communication as well as a part of discursive practices in contemporary society. He adds that graffiti is a 'modern' language of the poor and the peripheral used to express repressed impulses and bottled up rage. Graffiti here becomes a medium

for cultural, social and political contestation. My reading here is in line with Ibinga (2010)'s submission that language translates the mind-set of the inhabitants of a particular space.

In *We need new names*, the major feature of the Paradise children's graffiti are the "big penises" foregrounding the sexual perversion of the discourse. The enactment of gender and social hierarchies cannot be overstated. These children do not know the "shape of vaginas but penises," since some of the children in Paradise are victims of sexual exploitation by male characters. The "big penises" are foregrounded because these children are also victims of failed state led by male-dominated regime. The male figures are part of the moral deprecation and corruption. The size of these penises also suggests the magnitude of the carnal problems in Zimbabwean society. These ever-erect penises are condemned because they are used to molest and sexually abuse children and women. This exacerbates the contemporary anxieties about HIV/AIDS pandemic and the early deaths in many families (an example of Darling's father). We also read this graffiti grammar as an artistic means to show solidarity with the oppressed and downtrodden whose discourse is foregrounded through this linguistic and graphemic innovation.

Thus, graffiti becomes a unique semiotic code employed to explore the forbidden and the undesirable elements of sexuality. Bulawayo portrays loss of child innocence that is brought about by social, moral and economic degeneration. Children's graffiti undermines the restrictions and prohibitions immanent in Zimbabwean society about cultural taboo, coarse and vulgar language. The multi-sensory stylisation invites attention and interpretation. The hypocritical adult society abuses children and they should not preach about morality. If they expect sex to be a taboo subject for these children who are raped and impregnated by adults, then they should not stalk the nights and shacks with erect big penises. In other words, the graffiti by these children mocks their innocence in as much as it chastises adult society for publicly scripting the big penises on walls and bridges. The publicity of such vulgarity underscores the innocence and naivety of the children, contesting essentially that the slums are a breeding space for such treachery and obscenity. Ten-year old Chipo is sexually abused by her grandfather who is supposed to protect her. When these children cannot verbalise their traumatic experiences, the grammar of graffiti becomes a mode of expression against muteness. Similarly, Darling watches Reverend Bitchington Mborro sexually abusing one congregant from his church in public. When at home, the mother of the violated girl invites a boyfriend into the shack at night and Darling, then a ten-year old child, listens to the two

"moaning and panting" and the bed "shuffling like a train." This clarifies the children's knowledge of the "adult game they play" and the "big penises" which they draw on walls in Budapest, another oddly named affluent locale in a fictional Zimbabwean town. Darling remembers her childhood days in Zimbabwe when she says:

> Once, when we hit Budapest, we took with us a bag of black markers we had gotten from the NGO people and we went crazy on the durawalls. We drew penises, big penises, rows and rows of them, since we didn't know what vaginas looked like, then we complemented the penises with words like golo, beche, (vagina) (…) ntsbompi, bolo, (male organ) zeka and every other obscenity we could think of (Bulawayo, 2013: 276).

Vulgarity further reveals a contemporary artistic sensibility to the realities of the world of the characters. The use of the scatological imagery and vulgar by Bulawayo's characters is an index of a protean space inhabited by the marginalised and stigmatised communities. It also conveys the fact that normative and sanitised language is not part of slum existence; the normative is excised and re-placed by vulgarity. Vulgarity becomes an invented construction of a new linguistic identity of the inhabitants of a microcosmic location provocatively named Paradise. Bulawayo constructs children who violate and subvert all linguistic taboos and norms. This linguistic aesthetic also conveys the inadequacy of existing definitions of children/adult dichotomies. In Paradise these binaries do not exist at all since children are familiar with the subject of sex and how it is performed. The linguistic frankness shown by these shack inhabitants is peculiar to these sites where all specimens of human vile and vice prevail. Vulgarity is therefore conveyed as a realistic construction and representation of the linguistic codes in slums. In other words, the linguistic code of the slum becomes noticeable because it is deviant from the sanitised and moralised national linguistic norms in Zimbabwe. Put simply, graffiti and its perverse grammar subverts hypocritical tendencies in modern societies where normative and sanitised linguistic practices are expected from slum communities where even children witness unrepressed libidinal and sexual orgies in families (through parents and close relatives) and in public displays (by men of cloth).

Newbold (2015) explains that Chipo is a Shona name which means children are gifts not to be abused and abandoned. Graffiti in this instance is used as a subversive discourse that protests against adult hypocrisy and victimising the child. These children are products of a bastardised culture and a socially corrupted space. One of the children is named Bastard to roundly pronounce

the fate of these poor and defenceless victims of the adult world. Children thus use the language they have mastered to vent their raw experiences of marginal existence and victimhood.

On another level, we can also read graffiti as an act of vandalism where children from Paradise make their presence and agony known to the privileged Budapest community. In this sense, children from the slum defy the culture of silence and complicity. The graffiti inscribed on the clean durawalls fights for visual and existential recognition and therefore, becomes part of a discursive protest whereby the children speak out against social and economic abuse. In this respect, the novel evokes empathy for the precarious children. Graffiti becomes a significant stylisation and languaging anger, pain and anguish that has become the paraphernalia of the children in this narrative.

Graffiti and its excessively vulgar grammar is also further employed to mock the Zimbabwean government's propaganda discourse of black empowerment. It is an emotive and scatological linguistic code that serves to project contemporary realities in displaced and dispossessed African societies. In this sense, language is utilised as a powerful stylisation and thematisation strategy, especially with the realisation that the victims had previously owned "real-real houses." The Robert Mugabe's administration justifies farm invasions and land grabbing as a necessary move to empower the black majority who were previously robbed of their land by colonialists. Ironically, the move benefits a handful of powerful politicians. The graffiti inscription "blak power" written with human faeces mocks the flopped black empowerment narrative which was used by selfish politicians to manipulate citizens for the entrenchment of corrupt and abusive power. This 'blak power' message also punctuates grave human rights abuses by the Mugabe regime. The ZANU PF government uses exclusionary discourse which is heightened by the chromatic label "blak" and therefore endorses the otherness of the white citizens in Zimbabwe.

### 5.9 House of Hunger: Marechera's prophetic curse

Jabu, who had millions of Zimbabwean dollars, could not even buy a plate of sadza (pap). Jabu decides to use the notes as souvenirs for his wife and children (Jinga, 2012:7). The decline of Zimbabwean economy broke all historical records of inflation in the archives.

> Jeff said he had discovered his salary and that of his teacher wife could not sustain the couple and their only child. Since there was a shortage of everything in Zimbabwe, he was in Musina on business to buy anything (…)Yes, anything except toilet paper. That is all shops have in Zimbabwe (Jinga, 2012:14).

The fact that only toilet paper is the only commodity available in shops emphasises the level of desperation and starvation in the country. Further, there is a suggestive implication that without food to digest and process, even the toilet paper becomes a mockery of living in a parlous state where citizens cannot even use the toilets because there is nothing to defecate. Citizens who rarely eat could not be expected to visit their toilets regularly. Toilet paper has become a luxury only for the few rich people and those ordinary Zimbabweans who have the privilege of a regular no longer use toilets since:

> The absence of water rendered toilets unusable unless of course residents were willing to have a rancid smell hovering in their homes. They did not seem to like it so they turned to the town's pathways and byways for relief. Thus **Bush** toilets became fashionable (Jinga, 2012:3)

The narrator observed that pathways and byways had "**Brown** human faecal matter" and **Blair** toilets could have served them better but these have not been part of the town's physical planning (Jinga, 2012:3).The passage attains its satirical peak through foregrounding the names of the European leaders. In the post-2000 era, Zimbabwean government has never missed any opportunity to condemn these leaders for all its socio-economic and political problems. This diversion narrative is utilised against the realities of ZANU PF's maladministration and self-inflicted economic harm. The Zimbabwean government is not self-critical, the narrative about Western imposed sanctions on few politicians have been utilised to justify every failure that results from ZANU PF's misrule. Visual imagery and satire effectively convey the extent of malaise in Zimbabwe.

A similar theme in conveyed in *We Need New Names* where mother of Bones laments the economic meltdown in Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean currency she kept in her shack has lost its value and becomes useless overnight. This speaks about the tragedy of a nation in crisis of political leadership. She registers her pain and condemnation of the government in the following words:

> And the American money they are talking about…just where do they think I will get it, do they think I will just dig it up, huh, do they think I will defecate it? (Bulawayo, 2013:25).

Jakobson (1995) observes that language should be understood in its communicative context, alluding to the pragmatic considerations in the expressivity of discourse. This brings into picture Halliday's (1994) sociosemiotic understanding of language in systemic functional linguistics, which is a shift from microlinguistic to macrolinguistic approaches. The word defecate serves as an emotional intensifier of the utterance. The emotional tenor of this character's utterance jars the reader's sensibility to the scatological imagery evoked here. The inhabitants of the marginalized spaces are so overburdened by the collapsing Zimbabwean economy to the extent that defecating and all its unsayable concomitants become metonymic of their emasculation. Citizens feel insulted by their government therefore they vent their disappointment through deliberately scatological and raw language. Darling, the protagonist, and her friends live on the fringes of society. The sordid details of the slum compel the reader to sympathise with these children who fall victim to their existence on the margins of a dysfunctional slum. They have been jettisoned out of a dysfunctional economy epitomised by hyperinflation and a devalued Zimbabwean currency. The educated people are the most frustrated. The university graduates such as Darling's father and skilled workers such as teachers flee in great numbers (Mavezere, 2014). Migration of skilled workers negatively affects the young people in schools. Children living in Paradise no longer attend school. Darling says "I don't go to school anymore because all the teachers left to teach over in South Africa and Botswana and Namibia and them, where there's better money" (Bulawayo, 2013:30-31). The country is disintegrating and it has become a "house of hunger." As if to reinforce the ugliness of the state, the common children's game is loaded with meanings:

> Nobody wants to be rags of countries like Congo, like Somalia, like Iraq, like Sudan, like Haiti, like Sri Lanka, and not even this one we live in- who wants to be a terrible place of hunger and things falling apart (Bulawayo, 2013:48).

The term "kaka," which literally means human faeces, is also deployed as a recurring motif in *We need new names* that underscores the grim image of a nation facing multiple problems (Mavengano and Hove, 2019). "Kaka" is a term that reflects a repulsive homeland, frequently associated with images of excrement, rags, wretchedness, sickness and newly-dug graves at Fambeki. Moyo, Gonye and Mdlongwa (2013) commenting on the post-2000 scenario hint at the claustrophobia of

home. The presence of Non-Governmental Organisations, "NGO people," helping Paradise inhabitants reveals the humanitarian crisis caused by poverty, violence, social injustice and inequalities, dehumanisation of citizens, starvation, deterioration of living standards, hyperinflation, exclusion and marginalization. The term kaka also evokes disgust and growing pessimism that triggers an urge to "escape, leave, flee, quit, emigrate, move," desert the debilitating poverty, entrapment and crippling economic implosion (Bulawayo, 2013:145). Such presentation of Zimbabwean society also subverts the state narrative about nationalism and patriotism. Wodak (2011:7) calls this "fictionalisation of politics" where the political sphere finds expression in poetics.

Although South Africa has its share of economic challenges in the post-apartheid era, it is fair to conclude that they are less polemic in both *One Foreigner's Ordeal* and *Welcome to our Hillbrow.* In the former, contrast and imagery are employed to show a great difference in road infrastructure of the two nations:

> We continued to travel southwards on Africa's busiest overland route - N1.The N1 is a highway that takes travellers across the vast expanse of land that South Africa is, from Cape Town right into Zimbabwe. It undergoes a name change, branches, becomes a thin and potholed shadow of itself when it immediately enters Zimbabwean soil (Jinga, 2012:18).

In fact, the narrator is hypnotized by the beauty of South African infrastructure as evident in the title of Chapter Three of the novel: "I was mesmerised by almost everything as if I was a man from a distant planet" (Jinga, 2012:18). To understand the implication of this title, we need to consider its economic context. The title takes on political connotations in expressing the narrator's feelings of isolation and dismay. We see the actualisation of economic differences. From the opening pages of this novel, the writer presents a litany of socio-economic problems, but when the narrator gets into South African space, he bemoans and satirises the pathetic conditions of his country. He is shocked to realise the two states are economically worlds apart:

> Up the in the direction of Standard Chartered Bank I went and was mesmerised by almost everything (…). By what trick could the banks keep queues short? How did shops manage to keep prices of commodities in single or double digits? How come coins could still buy

> something? How come one hundred thousand Zimbabwean dollars could not buy half a dozen eggs yet a hundred thousand could buy a decent car? Why were people who acted as bureau de changers missing from the streets as was common practice in Zimbabwe? How come people on the streets seemed to have a lot to smile about? (Jinga, 2012:25).

It is undeniable that this extract is filled with well-crafted satire. South African space is socially and materially enriched whereas Zimbabwean cartography appears dissonant and impoverished. The novel also expresses this through the behaviour of the police on each side of the border. A sharp socio-economic contrast is captured through the visual images of hungry Zimbabwean police vis-a-vis fat-looking South African police. The Zimbabwean police wears a faded, frayed and torn uniform whereas the South African counterpart wears a neat blue uniform. These grim physical details expose poverty and attenuate the differences between the two states. In much the same way, it seems these are also physical boundary markers. The intertextual reference to Marechera's apocalyptic title of his canonical text, *The House of Hunger* effectively focalises the post-colonial crisis. Allen (2011) posits that a network of prior texts or textual cross-fertilization provides the context of possible meanings of the present text and argues that identifying intertext is a case of interpretation. The reader's recognition of this intertextual stylisation facilitates a comparative understanding of the profound intersection between the colonial world of Marechera;s text and the dystopic condition in post-colonial Zimbabwe vis-à-vis human deprivation, disenchantment and suffering. The distinction between the two periods is blurred and troubled through rewriting and recontextualising of Marechera's text. Sadly, the curse has persisted in the present day post-Mugabe era since there is no evidence of a rebirth of the Zimbabwean nation, thereby projecting a tragedy of a nation. It is most appropriate to say, certainly, the narrator here is an economic alien, a man from one planet of hunger and shortages and the kaka land of *We need new names* where citizens look "worn out from sickness and troubles" (Bulawayo, 2013:27). The lexical items "kaka" and "alien" are effectively used to illuminate the revulsion of the citizens in a state that engenders alienation and invisibility. In *One foreigner's ordeal*, the last chapter of the novel is entitled "But I am not a Zimbabwean." This constitutes a summation of alienation and detachment from a choreographed national identity that makes one despicably vulnerable (Bulawayo, 2013:168).

## 5.10 The un/homed and estranged humanity

In this segment, I investigate the politics of place, home and identity formation processes. The connection between the notion of home and the experience of a new place is crucial in these narratives. Brah (1996) notes doubleness and multiplicity of meanings ascribed to the notion of home. For Brah, home is not just a place of origin but the feeling of being at home. Put simply, being un/homed is an experience and this is significant when reading the selected narratives. In this sense home is not a fixed locale but rather a lived experience of being homed, the sense of space and containment, including the tenacity to hold on to both the beautiful and the ugly that circumscribe identifying with such space and beings.

When they become intimidated and exasperated of their home country, citizens flee. Unfortunately, a new set of problems awaits them. The foreignness of a new environment further alienates immigrants. The snow and "coldness" in America and London, for instance, make up unfamiliar the American landscape and enhance the strangeness of the new environment. Cuba and Hummond (1993:8) state that "people use their environment to forge a sense of attachment." Immigrants are dis/located to this alien space because they find the place cold and markedly different from the familiar homeland. Darling says this about the American weather:

> What you will see if you come here where I am standing is the snow. Snow on the leafless trees, snow on the cars, snow on the roads, snow on the yards, snow on the roofs…snow, just snow covering everything like sand (…) It is a greedy monster too, the snow (…) it has swallowed everything. Where are the flowers? The grass? The ants? The litter? Where are they? As for the coldness, I have never seen it like this. I mean, coldness that makes like it wants to kill you, like it's telling you, with its snow, that you should go back where you came from (Bulawayo, 2013:148).

The most significant contribution of this passage is presented through the adjectival phrase "a greedy monster" which demonises American weather through personification. Likewise, the narrator in Jinga's novel finds the behaviour of Home Affairs officials shocking. The realities of the rainbow nation are horrifying as black immigrants are alienated and segregated (Naidoo, 2017). Navigation into and within South Africa is strictly regulated. In *One Foreigner's Ordeal,* the protagonist's education is rendered irrelevant and useless as he struggles to secure legal status. He is mocked and humiliated by a less educated South African "boss" when he becomes a '*mothusi wa mosomi,'* a worker's assistant during the construction of *mokhukhu*. The narrator says, "Cognisant of my diminished social standing, I made serious efforts to seek any form of employment" (Jinga, 2012:45). Educated Zimbabweans are reduced to a laughing stock as another former Zimbabwean teacher becomes a cattle minder in South Africa. Turton (2005) affirms that displacement is not just about loss of place and the pain this entails. It is also about the struggle to carve a place in the world (to be housed). Migrant characters struggle to define and position themselves in the new sites. As the result, they are constantly overwhelmed by the unfamiliar circumstances they find themselves in. The transformation from a teaching professional to a farm labourer is and disturbing. I also find another compelling instance about the un/homed immigrant in *We need new names,* Stina, who says:

> Leaving your country is like dying, and when you come back you are like a ghost… a lost ghost returning to earth, roaming around with a missing gaze in your eyes (Bulawayo, 2013:160).

In *Harare North*, being un/homed takes various forms. The narrative shows that some citizens are un/homed in their homeland. The protagonist is told that the villagers in her mother's rural home were ordered to relocate to pave way for mining activities:

> This village, mother's family have been there since 1947 when they was moved from fertile land in Mazoe because the land have been given as reward to some British second world war veteran. Now they have to move again? (Chikwava, 2009:74)

This amplifies the villagers' placeness in both colonial and post-colonial times. Historical allusion as well as the use of the rhetorical question convey the plight of the villagers. Ironically, despite the fact that the narrator is a former killing agent of Mugabe and ZANU PF, his family is evicted

by the state. The narrator is also estranged from the national space by the tremendous fear of corrupt state institutions in Zimbabwe. Mugabe and his party ZANU PF do not remember and appreciate the service of their killing machinery.

Estrangement and displacement appear in Mpe's narrative through symbolism and personification of the city. The city is a strange place and both "foreigners" and South African migrants find the place hostile, making its inhabitants feel suffocated and some become crazy or commit suicide. Hillbrow is a crime infested place where both men and women are raped, daring prostitutes are everywhere, street children sniff glue and take drugs, people are violently murdered in the night and "makwerekwere" are arrested, exploited and deported. All these traits of the city make it a difficult site to live in. The inhabitants of this space are tense with fear and anxiety about what the future holds for them. The first pages of the novel chronicle endless challenges in the metropolitan space. The shock that awaits migrants who hope to improve their lives in the "city of gold" has some psychological implications which are seen in the desire to escape such a maze and cul-de-sac through death.

### 5.11 Egocentric attitudes and exploitation of those in distress

Mockery and ridicule are employed to condemn vices in the social and religious domains. Desperation makes people seek intervention and intercession from the supernatural world. Sadly, the unsuspecting citizens are manipulated and exploited by religious pretenders and bigots. Both traditional healers and men of the cloth are driven by greed and egocentric motives. Satire exposes religious charlatans such as fake diviners or prophets and traditional healers who are deceitful, pretentious and manipulative. A large sign at Vodloza's shack in Paradise has got the following inscription:

> Vodloza, BESTEST Healer in all of this Paradise and beyond will proper fix all these troublesome things that you may encounter in your life: Be-witchedness, curses, bad luck, whoring spouses, childlessness, poverty, joblessness, AIDS, madness, small penises, epilepsy, bad dreams, bad marriage, competition at work, dead people terrorising you, bad luck with getting visas especially to USA and Britain, nonsenseful people in your life, Things disappearing in your house etc. etc. etc. Please payment in FOREX ONLY (Bulawayo, 2013:27).

Bulawayo employs capitalisation for intensification effect. Ironically, Vodloza claims to have solutions to poverty yet the healer lives in a shack in impoverished poor slum. Prophet Revelations Bitchington Mborro also takes advantage of the collapse of the health services in the nation and demands "two fat white virgin goats and five hundred US dollars" for his cleansing prayer sessions (Bulawayo, 2013: 99). Both Vodloza and prophet Mborro are liars. Mborro, just like the eponymously named pastor in South Africa, has embarrassing carnal weaknesses. The narrator in *One foreigner's ordeal* collects some flyers made by South African diviners who claim to offer services such as:

> 100% guaranteed, pain free abortion, get pregnant fast, miracle enlargement of the male sex organ, reducing women's private parts to normal size, look more beautiful by using liduwa oil, breast and hip enlargement (…) quick divoce without consulting lawyer (…) bind lover with chipula oil (…) attract customers to your business using woza oil (…) financial problems solved by special water (Jinga, 2012: 26-27).

From these passages we get to know about the multiple social problems that haunt the people in these societies. As a result, many people have lost their conscience and have adopted survival of the fittest philosophy. Even the men of the cloth who are supposed to be models of moral uprightness have lost the moral sense of what is right and wrong. They take advantage of current economic and social problems and exploit others for survival. Mborro's selfishness is exposed when he demands forex from a family that is very poor and in extreme distress. In Mpe's novel, Tiragalong villagers are turned against each other by fake "bone throwers" who would make it a point that they know everything about the community:

> The bone thrower had not come to his impressive reputation for nothing. He was a clever man. He knew the importance of knowing people. Everywhere he stayed, he would make it his business to get to know the community, the clan links, the family histories and other such useful details. Very little happened that escaped his eyes and ears. (Mpe, 2012:77).

Trickery at its most treacherous is apparently conveyed in this passage. The information gathered is used to impress unsuspecting people who visit the bone thrower for spiritual help. Most unfortunately, some women are declared witches by such fake diviners and they get necklaced.

Through these characters, the narratives criticise wayward and selfish people who use the mystique of religious healing to scam the wretched of the earth, a la Fanon.

We need to also observe that the South African police exploits undocumented immigrants and get bribes. The police officers are corrupt, they take bribe from desperate immigrants a thematic concern that features in both *One foreigner's ordeal* and Welcome *to our Hillbrow*. The narrator in the former novel tells us that, "One passenger actually mentions that a fifty rand note, handed discreetly to a policeman or policewoman can serve the same purpose as a travel document" (Jinga, 2012:20). Thus, the narratives portray the shocking levels of moral degeneration in contemporary African societies, a degeneration that pervades all facets of life and encrypts the African sense of humanity.

## 5.12 Counter-discourses in titles

Pes (2015) posits that titles to literary works are significant stylisation and thematisation strategies since they guide interpretations of the texts. The hermeneutical purpose of the titles deserves attention. The titles *Harare North*, *One Foreigner's Ordeal, Welcome to Our Hillbrow* and We *Need New Names*, could be interpreted in many ways. Chikwava's title, *Harare North*, could be read as a subversive discourse in the sense that in post- 2000 era, pro –ZANU PF media outlets and some few literary works such one from Mutizira, paint the west as a political black sheep imposing its agenda on a sovereign state, Zimbabwe. However, *Harare North* subverts this discourse by highlighting that Zimbabweans flocked to the west during the time of economic and

political upheaval in Zimbabwe. Another possible reading of the title could be historical reference to colonial period when Zimbabwe was a British colony. Ironically, in post-2000 era, Zimbabweans view America and Britain as economic sanctuaries. Therefore, the title is also a reference to massive numbers of Zimbabwean immigrants in Britain (and the west). In the novel, the narrator tells us how the British High commission workers who issue visas take stringent measures to discourage, frustrate and stop the Zimbabwean "natives" from going to London:

> But that's how all them people from home behave when they is in Harare North; sometimes you talk to them on the phone asking if they don't mind if you come and live with them and they don't say no because they don't want you to think that they is selfish. They always say--- OK, just get visa and come---' when they know that the visa is where everyone hit the wall because the British High commission don't just give visa to any native who think he can flag down jet plane, jump on it and fly off to Harare (Chikwava, 2009:6).

Yet, the title of the text ridicules and satirises such effort which is proven useless since Zimbabweans leave in massive numbers and Britain becomes an extension of Harare, the capital city of Zimbabwe. Magosvongwe (2014) also notes that London and Harare are merged into a single space in the novel. She adds that the novel inscribes black Zimbabwean identity on the landscape of England. Therefore, renaming of London is an expression of Zimbabwean immigrants' economic and political entitlement to this space. Thus, the anti- west rhetoric from the Zimbabwean government once again loses its meaning.

The title *We need new names* suggests an urgent craving for reconstruction and redefinition of present humanity, new forms of (un)naming, new homes defined by political and social landscapes that promote the dignity of both citizens and non-citizens. Citizens register their rejection of a kaka (shit) national space that is tension-filled, replete with a kaka political leadership that is selfish, divisive and ruthless, kaka existence that dehumanises ordinary people and kaka identities imposed on others (Mavengano and Hove, 2019). The use of a collective pronoun "we" reflects a common craving for new existence. It could be also read as a call for some restoration of social, economic and political sanity in the postcolonial state. The need for radical changes and a return of conscience and democratic practices primes the narrative. In addition, the title also projects an

ineluctable longing for new human relationships that remove foreignness and allow meaningful interaction of humanity across ethnic, cultural, national and linguistic boundaries.

New names are identity inscriptions that restore dignity, respectability, security, confidence and acceptance in both national and diasporic spaces. This is a call for new national identities that are neither pitiable nor expendable. The title could also be understood as a desire to discard the ascribed "makwerekwere" identity and other names that bolster shame (Naidoo, 2017). It is a title that portends change from a life that is dogged by endless suffering and disillusionment. The novel's transformative agenda points at the urgent necessity of becoming a new desirable humanity. My reading of the title here is supported by Nyoni (2015) who observes that the selection of the word "need" instead of want reflects the gravity and urgency of the matter. The need to abandon the unpalatable names and assume new positive defining categories and labels is fundamental. The need for new names further implies revolt against victimisation that comes with naming and definitive categories where some citizens or non-citizens become "us" and "others" fit into "them" binaries. Such rigid polarities of inclusion\ exclusion are put into conversation. It is again a call for political and social transformation where the repressive state must respect human rights.

The semantic significance of the title *One Foreigner's Ordeal* lies in the lexical choices made The title foregrounds the catastrophic consequences of poor governance that has led to the demise of a nation and the difficulties of migration. The wretched homeland has turned its citizens into undesired foreigners (makwerekwere, the unwanted stranger). The foreigners experience a torrid ordeal in new environments. The title summarises the otherness of immigrants and the painful existence in isolated sites, the precariousness of the underclass (Siziba, 2017). The title registers immigrants' nightmare which is a collective experience of (il)legal or (un)documented "foreigners." The ordeal entails the elusive search for sanctuaries, documents and jobs. Agony in this ordeal is punctuated by rejection, isolation and exclusion. Immigrants get menial jobs that have attracted the infamous acronym BBC which means British Bottom Cleaners in *Harare North*. The acronym summarises and punctuates the grim fate of immigrants who secure detestable jobs. The undocumented immigrants secure jobs in care homes, and they also work as "sewage drain cleaners." Aleck is picking old people's kaka off beds (Chikwava,2009:118) Similarly, In *One Foreigner's Ordeal*, the BBC jobs take the form of "mkhukhu construction," "orange picking" and

"cattle heading" by Zimbabwean teachers who have suddenly become the "wretched" immigrants in South Africa. Unrelieved misery of the common man is foregrounded in these texts. The narratives interrogate names used to define immigrants, the poor, and members of the opposition parties labelled enemies of the state "mhandu and hooligans" in the present politics of the "new dispensation." All these groups of people are marginalised and they live on the fringes of the society.

The unnamed protagonist is a foreigner who is denied any stable identity and dignified existence in both the homeland and the host country. Despite the fact that Jinga's protagonist acquires legal migrant status in South Africa, he feels insecure due to xenophobic attacks. In addition, linguistic and cultural differences are easily detectable by South Africans:

> Wherever I go, I always get surprised at how conspicuously foreign I look. Some South Africans just give me a cursory glance and begin to address me in English long before I open my mouth for them to sample my "rather strange and unfamiliar" accent (Jinga, 2012:180).

This points to the difficulties encountered in trying to form a new identity. One's identity is deeply entrenched in their DNA and the novels trouble this construct in multi-layered stylistics such that we get the sense that identity-construction is a messy, elusive and unfinished process. A replica of Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* is seen in the conditions of migrants in South Africa, America and Britain where the characters in these narratives are haunted by anxieties and possess acute awareness of their schizophrenic existence. Due to their status at the periphery, on the margins as immigrants, they are denied a sense of worth. Likewise, Mpe's title, *Welcome to Our Hillbrow* is laden with semantic signification. The title is also reflective of the ethnically and racially heterogeneous space. It is apparent that the novel appeals to readers to reassess colour and, ethnic and national consciousnesses. Through spatial connections and transculturalism, the novel privileges human solidarity and suggests a consideration of a world without borders. The title conveys a progressive philosophy that underscores collective ownership of the world. The title also captures cosmopolitan and universalist ethos, which reflect the aspirations embedded in the narrative of a 'Rainbow Nation. The attributive pronoun "our" in "our Tiragalong, our Hillbrow, our Heathrow, our Oxford, our England and our Heaven" together with intercontinental navigation support this reading. For Mpe, both the Earth and the Heaven should be shared terrains, free from

constraints and restrictions. The novel thus, presents an inclusive human philosophy of Ubuntu, a worldview that subscribes to the common good of humanity (Mbigi, 1997). In other words, humanity should enjoy freedom of mobility and interaction. Dass (2004) rightly contends that to be welcomed is to be positioned and the collective pronoun "our" conveys collective ownership of all the places mentioned in the novel. However, such an ideal world remains a product of creative the imaginary far from the reality. From these readings, it is apparent that titles offer interpretive clues that significantly open up multiple semantic possibilities.

From the foregoing discussion, it has been observed that the selected novels have interesting stylistic and thematic strands. They are rich intertextual novels, with a focus on the precarious conditions of the ordinary people. The anxieties and experiences of migrants get inscribed through artistic expression. Apparently, the narratives reflect post-2000 realities in both South Africa and Zimbabwe and how these lived and invented conditions impact on the livelihoods of the common people. It is particularly important to note that none of the three localities, namely, Europe, South Africa and Zimbabwe, is idealised although Zimbabwe's socio-political problems are more visible and complex than the other two spaces. Although the migration process is characterised by multiple challenges, it is also essential to acknowledge that diasporic sites offer emancipatory opportunities to some immigrants. For instance, some of the characters in these texts are economically empowered since they earn stable currencies in their respective diasporic places. Darling, in *We Need New Names*, gets both educational and employment opportunities. Fostalina also buys a nice house for her family back in Zimbabwe.

Furthermore, the novels do not just speak to each other but rather; they go beyond the confines of national boundaries and interact with other texts from renowned African and non-African writers and critics such as Ngugi, Achebe, Selvon and Fanon. Thus, the narratives contribute to the postcolonial metanarrative of African fiction. In addition, the narratives make a compelling case for transnational consciousness whereby even writing is no longer confined to the national and regional borders. The diverse meanings of these fictional narratives as perceived from the lens of intertextuality are protean in nature and should not be read and interpreted as autonomous entities but rather as products of previous works offering a mosaic of meanings. The novels give account of the perennial problems faced by ordinary citizens and the dreaded process of migration.

### 5.13 Deconstructing a mythical single story

The novels contest sanitised Eurocentric discourse by highlighting destroyed promises of America as a perceived archetype of human civilisation and democracy. Yet, the America experienced by immigrants is cold and harsh due to racism, violence, and poverty, inequalities and exclusionary practices. Darling hears "bang-bang of gunshots" in American streets. The invented name "Destroyed Michigan" in *We need new names* therefore, conveys immigrants' disappointment. It spells the vanity of dreaming and hoping for a civilised world when perceived champions of civilisations are ridden with human vices such as police brutalities and harassment. Contrary to the idealist depiction of the West, the visibility of criminality, poverty and violence in America subverts European mythology and misrepresentations of Africa as a place of catastrophe, disease, hunger, poverty, savagery and suffering. This is a single story about Africa constructed by the power structures of the world. Adichie (2009) rightly notes that such a single story creates stereotypes but the story is always incomplete in the absence of other stories. The novels studied in this chapter disrupt such racial biases and present Afrocentric thoughts as self-representation as well as counter-narratives. The novels present alternative stories by Africans. Thus, from this presentation, literary texts serve as sites of contestation. For instance, *We need new names,* exposes a disjuncture between the idealised America and the lived realities. Darling says, "a woman few houses down from ours drowned her children in a bathtub" (Bulawayo, 2013:190). Furthermore, the presence of police cars and beggars in American street conveys misconceptions about America. This alternative narrative is told by the inhabitants of the periphery to resist false binaries and troubles the perception that America and Britain are ideal models for human civilisation and democracy. Similarly, Refilwe in *Welcome to Our Hillbrow* registers the shock that greeted her at Heathrow when she witnessed the treatment of Africans and has this to say:

> (…) in our England in the new millennium, in the early part of the twenty-first century Nigerians and Algerians are treated like pariahs in our white civilisation.(Mpe, 2001:101).

The passage mocks and criticises the European version of human civilisation which is marked by structural exclusions of other races (Danneburg, 2012). The reason for the ill-treatment of these African immigrants in England is based on speculations and generalisation that:

> They were all drug dealers or arm smugglers engaged in trading weapons for their civil war-wrecked countries." They were criminals masquerading as students or as professionals coming into our England (…) Africans from the West were sole bringer of AIDS and all sorts of other dirty illnesses to this centre of civilisation. Our Heathrow strongly reminded Refilwe of our Hillbrow and the xenophobia it engendered She learnt there that there was another word for foreigners that was not very different in connotation from Makwerekwere or Mapolantate. Except that it was it was a much more widely used term Africans (Mpe, 2001:101-2).

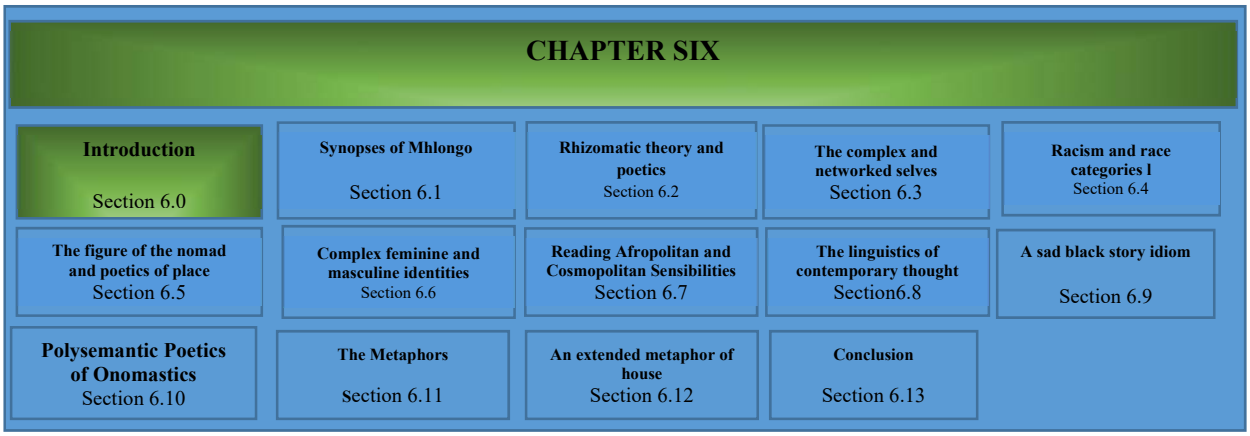
The negative classification of migrants as aliens, economic parasites, illegals, vectors of diseases does not promote harmonious human relations but rather causes conflicts and divisions. Such racial discourses fuel discriminatory practices and attitudes. The above passages problematise the narratives about Europe being a centre of civilisation and human comfort. Such prejudiced and discriminatory attitudes are harmful to human relations. The dysphemia terms aliens and foreigners denigrate and dehumanise the perceived Other.

**5.14 Conclusion**

The examined narratives in this chapter subvert traditional categories which have been taken for granted. These narratives are fundamental texts in delineating discourses of otherness. The texts studied in this chapter also reveal that borders are porous and sometimes elusive. While there are overarching similarities in these narratives, South Africa and Zimbabwe have different economic and political environments which feed into the fictional narratives. It would be wrong to suggest that South African's political sphere does not receive much attention and is represented as a peripheral subject in the novels discussed. Rather, it is significant to remark that political themes relating to South Africa are articulated in a subdued manner because *Welcome to Hillbrow* captures the period just after the demise of apartheid. Jinga's novel confirms Mpe's initial assessment of the rainbow nation which parades some ugly features two decades later. Yet, the Zimbabwean political environment is much a central subject of scrutiny in all the narratives that address this thematic concern. Politics feeds into every other facet of life in post-2000 Zimbabwe and this problematic entanglement is explored in detail in the novels. By privileging narratives of the people living in marginal spaces of the contemporary world, the anguish of the common man is

registered through migrants who lead a "rubbish life" in *Harare North* and poor Zimbabweans forced by their state to live in precarious conditions. The bleak economic, political and social landscape is summarised by the intertextual references to texts such as The *House of hunger* as well as The *Wretched of the Earth*. Clearly, in Zimbabwe, the act of speaking to power is a risky business that attracts torture and death. The brutal killing of opposition activists in *Harare North* and *We need new names* provides ample evidence of this interpretation. Those who dare challenge the "garwe" of the post-Mugabe administration are abducted and tortured if they are luck or they go to their early graves which shows the continuation of Mugabeism in the present-day Zimbabwe. Mbembe (2001) noted that public executions are part of the postcolonial semiotics of power meant to create a permanent atmosphere of fear. Thus, the studied narratives suggest that visibility of democracy in every sphere is essential if the country is to curtail the present multiple challenges. In addition, while preserving memory is critical, the narratives discussed in this chapter concentrate more on the debilitating contemporary conditions. Historical details are articulated comparatively to register artistic/public discontent with the current state of affairs in both nations as well as illuminating the nebulous racial constructs that require critical assessment.

# CHAPTER SIX: ALTER/NATIVE HUMAN RELATIONS IN RHIZOMATIC THOUGHT AND READING FIGURATIVE STYLISATIONS FROM A LINGUISTICS PARADIGM




## 6.0 Introduction

The previous chapter concentrated on Kristeva's intertextuality theory that problematizes long-standing assumptions about text production, reception and interpretation. Intertextuality suggests new hermeneutic practices which depart from the traditional conceptions language and poetics since the text is read in relation to other texts, which creates a complex web of con/textual intersections. The current chapter's main thrust is on insights from rhizomatic and linguistics theories in the scope of the proposed Multi-perspectival Stylistics Model (MSM). It is designed to advance dialogic discursive practices that acknowledge theoretical assemblages in the conception of language and poetic discourse. Following Deleuze and Guattarri's (1987) ideas in *A Thousand Plateaus*, I analyse the selected texts together, showing how they dis/connect in rhizomatic ways. I look at points of intersection as well as "lines of flight" that Deleuze and Guattari (1987:7) perceive as "any part of a rhizome [that] can be connected to any other, and must be." I view literary texts as assemblages of multiplicities which are not closed entities but rather de/reterritorialise in complex ways, forming new plateaus. Deleuze (1995:7) describes what he calls "reading with love" as, "tearing the book into pieces, getting it to interact with other things,

absolutely anything" and exploring different reading pathways. In this regard, the poetic and prosaic texts are not viewed in terms of structured systems but rather, as fluid and constantly changing for "new ways of functioning" in different contexts. Since this study takes a multi-perspectival stylistics approach, I therefore, examine the nuanced styles and stylisations as fundamental loci for the critical assessment of contemporary conceptualisations of identities, place and space in the context of an ever-changing socio-political environment. This is intended to shed light on new readings of human relations in the selected novels. Most significantly, I read figures of speech from a cognitive linguistics paradigm. Cognitive linguistics is another growing interdisciplinary area that offers new lenses and insights into the study of literary discourse. I am particularly interested in its attention to the human mind's cognitive processes and the reader's imaginative reconfiguration of the text/textual styles vis-à-vis the knowledge of the social environment and personal experience in order to frame new semantic hypotheses (Gambino and Pulvirenti, 2019). Interestingly, both rhizomatic theory and cognitive linguistics consider the social world not as a separate entity of human meanings but a constitutive part of signifying systems.

### 6.1 Synopses of Mhlongo's *After Tears* and Moele's *Room 207*

Nicholas Mhlongo's (2007) *After Tears* and Kgebelti Moele's (2006) Room *207* are South African narratives published in post-apartheid era. Both texts depict in very insightful ways, the enduring problems in post-apartheid South Africa. The novel *After Tears* is a story about Bafana Kuzwayo who has just failed his law degree at the University of Cape Town in South Africa. Bafana does not tell his family the truth that he failed his degree so he pretends that he has a debt of R22 000 in arrears for fees. Rea, who is Bafana's mother, makes frantic efforts to ensure that her son gets the results and becomes an advocate. She advertises their "Chi" house for sale and in the process uncovers a family secret.

The plot of *Room 207* follows the life stories of six young male characters who live in a rented one-roomed apartment for eleven years in Hillbrow, Johannesburg, South Africa. These young South Africans migrate to the city to fulfil their dreams of getting a good university education and formal employment, making them participate in the envied upward social mobility. However, in the city, dreams and hopes are replaced by despair, frustration and a sense of failure. The narratives project the paradoxes and controversies surrounding conversations on race relations, the post-

apartheid era and belonging in contemporary national space/s which ultimately trouble the entire processes of identity construction.

### 6.2 Rhizomatic theory and poetics

Gilles Deleuze worked together with Felix Guattari in their seminal work *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, in which the concept of the rhizome is described in detail. The metaphor of networks is central in rhizomatic theory and is very useful in reading contemporary identities and conceptions of place and space. A rhizome is a subterranean stem which has multiple entry-ways and exits. According to Deleuze (1993) a rhizome ceaselessly establishes connections, therefore multiplicity becomes a defining construct of this concept. Grosz (1994) explains that in Deleuzian vocabulary, multiplicity refers to an ever-changing, non-totalizing collectivity. Deleuze and Guattari (1987:7) offer new conceptualisations of language/discourse because they posit that human language is in multiplicities, therefore, there is no singular universal language, but "only a throng of dialects, patois, slangs and specialised languages with no ideal speaker-listener." Furthermore, for Deleuze and Guattari (1987), the arbitrariness of the linguistic sign requires something external to language make sense of the sign; this is an essential difference from Saussurean conceptions of language that prioritise the linguistic structure and disregard the non-linguistic aspects. Thus, the rhizome provides new hermeneutical tools for understanding poetic discourse. Deleuze and Guattari (1987:81) also problematize the distinction between *langue* (linguistic system) and *parole* (usage) when they argue that "the meaning and syntax of language can no longer be defined independently of the speech acts they presuppose." In this argument, they privilege a functionalist perspective which brings together the linguistic structures and their role in the context of use. It is thus, critical to mention that in rhizomatic theory, readers take discursive journeys going outside the current text during reading. This implies a shift from Saussurean and Chomskyan systemic and structural approach which focuses only on the linguistic composition of the text (Aurora, 2017). Contrary to the structuralist model, Deleuze, (1990) views meaning as an unpredictable event that happens outside the given linguistic structure. Thus, the text, in a rhizomatic sense, is made up of a complex discursive web. This means reading is a critical assessment of this network. In other words, an engagement in reading underscores a subjective human interpretation of truth/ reality.

Another interesting term in rhizomatic theory is de-territorialisation which is a notion of ruptures and fissures. It refers to change or movement that produces modification to the previously constructed assemblage. In other words to de-territorialise is to free up the fixed ideas, relations or structures thereby uncovering the limits of such structures. Together, these ideas suggest that rhizomatic conceptual framework refuses fixity of the normative cultural, linguistic, national and racial traditions and privileges. In its sweep, de-territorialisation theorises flexibility, impermanence, multiplicities, interconnectedness and mutability. This complicates and marks the limits of all normative conceptions of identity, place and space. Thus, the process of identification means the coming and going, the occupation of the spaces in between. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) further explain that the location in between is not a stable point but a site of metamorphosis. Elsewhere, in a related discussion, Ko and Bal (2019) write that rhizomatic thinking (including literary writing and reading) is a boundary-crossing endeavour to enter new spaces in which every entry suggests mobility, in contrast to the rigidity of striated space.

The present chapter teases out conversations about identification and delves into critical discussions of circumstances that inform identities in contemporary times. The discourse about identity is usually constructed around issues of belonging and perceptions of the permanence of place and space. This subject has received critical scholarly attention but more recently the focus has shifted to how emergent and networked societies inform identities. The question of identity and sense of place/space remains a nebulous and highly contested topic, especially when we consider that there is no consensus among scholars about what constitutes identity.

Hall (1987) argues that the post-modern subject has no fixed, essentialist, or permanent identity since identity has become a “moveable feast” (trans)formed continuously in relation to the ways we are (re)presented and addressed in different cultural systems and socio-political environments. Interestingly, Hall (1995) further observes that in contemporary times, old identities which stabilized the social and political world for aeons are in decline, giving rise to new identities that have caused fractures and fissures in the modern notions of the individual. These are critical dimensions about the impossibility of achieving a complete and unitary, uncontested and autochthonous identity. This resonates with rhizomatic thinking because a rhizome allows an ongoing assemblage which undergoes permutations and transformations. Just like a rhizome, identities are never unified, never singular or stable, but multiply constructed across different,

often intersecting and antagonistic discourses, practices and positions (Hall, 1996). The re-territorialisation or "lines of flight" are possible in any direction (Deleuze and Guattari (1980:21). The 'lines of flight' refers to the movement or connection between nodes in the process of becoming. From a rhizomatic conceptualisation, the present chapter assesses stylistic re/presentations of identity and sense of place/space in selected fictional narratives.

Goldberg and Solomos (2001) note that the term identity has taken on many different connotations that sometimes it is obvious that people are not talking about the same construct. Part of the problem is that contemporary perceptions of identity further complicate our conceptualization of this term. For example, Hall (1994:122) proposes:

> Rather than speaking of identity as a finished thing, we should speak of identification, and see it as an on-going process. Identity arises, not so much from the fullness of identity which is already inside us as individuals, but from a lack of wholeness which is 'filled' from outside us, by the ways we imagine ourselves to be seen by others.

He also adds that identity is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think. Perhaps, instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, which the new cultural practices represent, we should think of identity instead as a "production" which is always in process, and constituted within, not outside representation (Hall, 2003: 222).

Elsewhere, Lyotard (1984:15) argues that "a self does not amount to much, but no self is an island; each exists within a fabric of relations that is now more complex and mobile than ever before." For Gilroy (1993) identity is unfinished, unstable and mutable. Similarly, Bhabha (1994a) adds that identity is never *a priori* or finished product but rather, a problematic process. Needless to say, these views redefine traditional parameters of identity/self and conception of place/space. The idea of movement and mediation overrides the claims of roots and rootedness because absolutism is displaced by more mobile identities (Hove, 2018). Hall (2003) thus, rightly argues that identity does not originate from a fixed root and proceed in a straight, unbroken line. Considering the fact that the rhizome is anti-genealogy, anti-structuralisms, but welcomes variations and multiplicities, it becomes an indispensable framework in examining the dynamic formulations of identities, place and space in contemporary writings. The theory recognizes the complexity and the multifaceted pathways available in identification and place/space making.

### 6.3 The complex and networked selves

The selected narratives in this study coalesce in their representations of fluid, precarious and tenuous identities which defy cultural, linguistic and geographical borderlines in economies challenged by the incipient encroachment of globalisation. Remarkably, the novels create an innovative literary space beyond the rigid confines of colonial and postcolonial cartography. From a rhizomatic thinking, identification takes place in a web of complex and multiple connections h[illegible] fixed nor a complete 'assemblage' but rather an on-going process of '[illegible]n [illegible]h[illegible]; it is always in the middle, between things, inter-being, and *intermezzo*. Deleuze and Guattarri (1987:25) explain that a tree is filiation, but the rhizome is uniquely alliance. The tree imposes the verb "to be" but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, *and…and…*"). These are provocative ideas that make us (re) consider our conceptualizations of identity, place and space in contemporary times in which displacement, migration and mobility inform the processes of 'becoming' in fictional narratives. LaRue (2011) observes that in rhizomatic semantics, the human is understood as a nexus rather than a solid form. The concept of the rhizome emphasises constant de/ reterritorialisations and offers a break from an understanding of the human as a point to be entered. There are no points or positions in a rhizome such as those found in a structure, tree or root (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987:8). I am interested in how post-colonial subjects engage in 'becoming' and the kind of identities constructed as portrayed in selected literary texts. Thus, the present chapter builds upon these ideas and contributes to the current debates about identity and place/ space.

Polysemantic Poetics of Onomastics Section 6.10
The Metaphors Section 6.11
An extended metaphor of house Section 6.12
Conclusion Section 6.13

### 6.4 Racism and race categories: A shift from Cartesian binaries of human existence

An examination of the selected novels shows that race and identity are closely linked. Commenting on South African race relations, Patterson (2017) notes that the promises of freedom and social cohesion enshrined in the notion "rainbow nation" are interrogated in post-apartheid novels because racial apartness, hatred and inequalities still prevail. Mbembe (2014) also regards the subject of race as a messy terrain considering the racial tensions and clashes in post-apartheid society. Similarly, Milazzo (2013) asserts that in post-apartheid society, blackness is a site of struggle supporting the claim that South Africa has remained a divided and contested space.

Clearly, all the selected novels in this study show an in intense interest in mis/representations of race identities. The national space in South Africa is marked by tense divisions and abjection of the perceived others. It is however, interesting to note that the narratives challenge racially stereotyped notions and suggest alternative exuberant relations. The selected novels in this study share the view that Africa is not yet decolonised. For Fanon (1967:3) decolonisation is a violent process bent on "the creation of new men" and reversal of colonial conditions. Corroborating this idea, Hwami (2015) adds that there is no genuine decolonisation in Africa because re-humanisation of the colonised is not yet finalised. Matome, one of the characters in Moele's novel, *Room 207* points out the need to "de-slave-ise" the mind of the post-apartheid subjects. Both *After Tears* and *Room 207* fictionalise the everyday reality of precarity and racial tension in the contemporary South Africa.

It is worthwhile to examine the in/accessibility of education as one of the contentious discussions in post-apartheid South Africa. The plight of black students at "great institutions of education" contributes to the "sad black stories" of failure and misery. There is a shocking number of university dropouts in *Room 207*. This is indicting evidence of racial and economic disparities in post-apartheid society. A further disturbing scene appears when, in *After Tears*, Bafana becomes depressed because he has to repay the government loan extended to him during his studentship at the University of Cape Town amounting to R56 000. It appears, for black students, poverty haunts them and exacerbates their ultimate failure and dismay. The poor black students find it difficult to cope with the overwhelming sense of indebtedness. The rich/poor binaries are part of colonial and apartheid legacies that need to be revisited in order to address such incongruities.

Race and racism are also central themes in *Welcome to Our Hillbrow*, *We need new names* and *Harare North*. The black African immigrants experience punctuated agony because they are the unwanted abject bodies in host societies. In another context, Ko and Bal (2019) point out the oppressive nature of the Cartesian mode of thinking that has promoted profound divisions among the human family. For instance, black people are regarded as a potential threat to the white societies. African migrants are dehumanized in these "zones of non-being" (Fanon, 1963). There are always the dividing lines between the frontiers of these chromatic experiences in America because "Americans do not have exactly a smile-smile but just a brief baring of teeth" (Bulawayo, 2013:174). In both the British and American societies immigrants are turned into Fanon's "the

wretched of the earth" by taking on demeaning jobs of cleaning "kaka (faeces) off some white wrinkled old man" (Bulawayo, 2013:15). The tragic effects of racism make immigrants "sit with one buttock" and "speak in whispers", reflecting the total discomfort in these new places. Siziba (2017) claims that the namelessness of Chikwava's protagonist foregrounds the invisibility of African immigrants in London so aptly dramatized in Ralph Ellison's *The Invisible Man*.

Masemola (2014) regards America as a zone of exception that inscribes invisibility and non-being for black people. He comments on Obama's rhetoric of a non-racial American society and points out the challenges of erasing the race marker. Masemola cites the shooting of Treyvon Martin as telling evidence of 'stand your ground policing' which is grotesquely visible in the present-day racialised discourse of Donald Trump and his administration. Masemola (2014) further argues that racism hides behind the cloak of colour-blindness and other racial myths. He draws attention to the disjuncture and inconsistencies between political rhetoric and *racing* reality. Politicians' paradoxical and often ambivalent behaviour could also be discerned from Mnangagwa's rhetorical utterances in the present Zimbabwe where he scandalously claims that "The voice of the people is the voice of God," and "I am as soft as wool; a listening president." Contrary to all this empty political rhetoric, when ordinary people actually "voiced" their grievances through demonstrations in August 2018 and January 2019, the Zimbabwean army and police descended on them and used live ammunition to silence the 'voice of God.' ZANU PF's toxic and kamikaze political discourses create systems of exclusion and divisions between the perceived 'white' enemies/black indigenous people, patriotic/unpatriotic citizens, nationalists/puppets or sell-outs.

We should note that whiteness is sanitized in a bid to maintain racial identities constructed during colonialism. Mpe's novel, *Welcome to our Hillbrow,* shows that the English society in London thinks Africans from the west bring AIDS and other contagious illnesses to this centre of human civilization. In a rhizomatic perspective, such racial binary oppositions are contested. Ironically, one's positioning in the "mother of human civilization" is definable by the particularities of race. The English society's false claims and exclusionary perceptions are challenged. The politics of cartographic binaries is at play here. In this sense, the black bodies take on preconceived socio-spatial stereotypes meant to promote alienation of the "Other." It is unfortunate that media reports in South Africa claim also that "AIDS's travel route into Johannesburg was through Makwerekwere and Hillbrow was the sanctuary in which these Makwerekwere basked" (Mpe,

2001:4). However, Refilwe contests such racial prejudices when she mentions that "there were white prostitutes and white criminals who sold drugs to street children in Hillbrow" (Mpe, 2001:103). It is clear that the imperial voyages from Europe to Africa were never restricted through border policing and institutionalized racial injustices. Ironically, one's positioning in the "mother of human civilization" is definable by the particularities of race, border policing and an elaborate surveillance machinery. This view exposes the indicting irony about the English society. White civilization exhibits serious limitations. The English world is as ignorant as the uneducated protagonist in *Harare North* who thinks being HIV negative means one has AIDS. Such similarity is not a mere coincidence but a mockery of the faulty view that Europe is the "origin" of human knowledge and literacy. The English society's false claims and exclusionary and monolithic perceptions are challenged in this narrative. The novels demonstrate that intercultural and interracial relations are possible lines of human connection. Refilwe and her Nigerian lover offer a humanised challenge to pre-determined categories in as much as the marriage between a white American woman and a black Zimbabwean in *We Need New Names* reconstructs a racial rhizome.

The narratives also contest "naturalised" derogatory representations of Africa. African lives are framed by hunger, disease, poverty, suffering and violence. The BBC journalists in Zimbabwe capture Bornfree's funeral with the sole intention of endorsing Eurocentric images of the "barbaric and violent" Africans. Ironically, both America and Britain have their share of violence because there are "bang-bang of gunshots in the neighbourhood and a woman kills her children in a bathtub" (Bulawayo, 2013:188). Darling describes America as 'unreal' because of these ugly realities. In *Harare North,* the British police shoot and kill an unarmed Tshaka Zulu who is mentally ill. Yet, this act of violence against civilians is not captured by the BBC journalists thereby exposing the entrenched hypocrisy of the English society. The reality in these two European societies is far from the idealised picture. Being in America or the United Kingdom does not take away poverty because migrants still struggle to feed themselves. Therefore, it is appropriate to say hunger, poverty and violence are not exclusively African problems.

Elsewhere, Onyango, Odhiambo and Ogone (2018) suggest that humanity should transmute imagined boundaries of ethnicity, nationality and race. The selected novels articulate human solidarity on an international scope. They propose a multi-cultural discourse, and simultaneously the novels suggest change of attitudes and perceptions about identity in an increasingly diverse

world. They problematise any form of exclusions and stereotypes that are grounded in hegemonic mono-cultural discourses. The novels consciously engage with complex interconnecting modes of existence, multiple interactions of living and becoming. This is in line with Deleuze and Guattarri's rhizomatic model. From a rhizomatic perspective, heterogeneity is a fundamental quality of humanity. In *Welcome to our Hillbrow*, the human world is brought together. Heathrow, Lagos, Hillbrow are part of "Our World" (Mpe, 2001:13). The capitalization of the pronoun "Our" is suggestive of co-ownership of shared beliefs and values across humanity (Putter, 2012). The narratives, thus fit into the on-going troubling conversations about racial equality.

### 6.5 The figure of the nomad and poetics of place and space

Massey (1993) draws our attention to the need for new modalities and strategies of identification that recognise a network of social relations in self-conception as well as the intersections of different locales for place/space making. Massey (1994) further proposes a dynamic conception of self, place and space. This is endorsed by Kaplan (1996) who contends that nomadic modes defy the traditional binary logic and welcomes new identitarian trajectories. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) describe nomadism in terms of multiplicities and ruptures because nomads welcome heterogeneity and interconnectedness. Nomads also embrace navigation instead of destinations. They disconnect from the old territories and chart new trajectories, which constitutes deterritorialisation in the Deleuzian sense. The selected narratives privilege nomadism through the construction of nomadic subjects who have no sense of rootedness and therefore de-territorialise fixed/ essentialist identities.

Thematisation of migration and border crossing practices are utilised to promote nomadology in the textualized lives of characters and protagonists. Bafana and Vimbai in *After Tears* resist the limits of fixity. Bafana's constant mobility between Soweto Township and Johannesburg city centre resists the centre/periphery dichotomies of imperial logic. The nomadic trajectories are conveyed through his interaction with numerous geographical spaces such as Cape Town, Johannesburg and Soweto. Such trajectories convey agency and a sincere quest for liberty. The mobility of characters from a peripheral site to the metropolitan city previously meant for the exclusive white dominated space defies confinement and fixity to a particular location. The figure of the nomad becomes a significant trope which highlights fluidity and shifting conceptions of the

self in relation to place and space. Vimbai, a Zimbabwean immigrant in South Africa, embraces this nomadic logic in her interaction with Bafana's family. She realigns her identity to facilitate intercultural relations by participating in cooking during Nyawana's funeral. When Vimbai fails to secure a work permit in South Africa, she moves away from the striated space in search of alternative spaces that offer her agency. The same could be said about the characters in *Room 207,* where Noko reveals "I stay there in room 207. We stay there, although we don't really say we stay there. It's a temporary setting since and until… I can't tell" (Moele, 2006:13). Our attention is drawn to the dynamics of belonging in this excerpt. The narrator here has no sense of attachment to the place of abode which becomes a problematic metaphor of location and identification. Deleuze and Guattari (1980:380) suggest that the life of the nomad is the *intermezzo*, meaning nomads do not stay in fixed locations but rather constantly move freely through spaces. These ideas present a nuanced conceptualisation of place and space. Bevill (2017) contends that nomadism subverts essentialism and binarism, thereby widening the possibilities for identity formation. Nomadic thought privileges the interaction of striated and smooth spaces which is an innovative ontology of existence. The striated spaces are enclosures that limit alternative ways of becoming. Bevill (2017) adds that nomadic identity is marginal with no anchors because it is constantly in motion. This is a refusal of identities to be confined to a particular place because nomads do not belong anywhere (Massey, 1993). Thus, a moving self is a site of contestation, one that resists sedentarisation or anchoring. The protagonist in *Harare North* and Shingi walk in the USA and resist the structures of power that define humanity in binary terms. It could be argued that in *After Tears*, Nyawana's physical disability serves as metaphor of restrictions and confinement. His mobility is limited and he dies in the process of exercising freedom. Thinking nomadically and rhizomatically allows humans to have access to multiple places in line with globalisation discourse. Thus, Nyawana's crippled and diseased body becomes a grotesque national allegory where his physical deformity symbolises fragility and unsettled subjects who have been crippled by the "kaffirs" trauma. He dies a non-believer who neither believes in God who does not consider the plight of the poor black people, nor ANC politicians who have betrayed the people. He seems to regard Christianity as a mere diversion from his abject condition, a reminiscence of Mhlongo's *Dog eat Dog* in which the protagonist declares:

> I was convinced that God was white and either English or Afrikaans simply because it had taken him so many years to get the interpreter to translate exactly what the blacks and the poor wanted in their endless prayers" (Mhlongo, 2004:182).

The novels suggest change of attitudes and perceptions about identification in an increasingly diverse world. They problematise any form of exclusions and stereotypes that are obviously grounded in hegemonic mono-cultural discourses.

### 6.6 Complex feminine and masculine identities

Characterisation and narratorial voice are some of the essential stylisations that are useful in reading the complex representations of contemporary gender identities in the selected texts. As earlier alluded to, phallocentric attitudes remarkably dominate in the selected texts. The narrative strategies in the novels *After Tears* and *Room 207* perpetuate denigration of women since they privilege the male gaze. Noko, the male narrator-protagonist in *Room 207*, says it is *ntepa* (female genitalia) that brings Justice's downfall. Noko ignores the fact that Justice is an irresponsible male character who squanders what he inherited from his father and enjoys the pleasures of the city including beer or "the war against the Isando god" and ultimately drops out of university. We are told that Justice had "surrendered" his life to the *ntepa* and "it had taken him [a] prisoner" (Moele, 2006:31). Readers are also told that "They'll [women] make you lose your direction and by the time you wake up, your life is all a waste (Moele 2006:171). This is a problematic representation of women that seeks to valorise phallocentricism and demonise gynocentricism because *ntepa* is depicted as a weapon for the destruction of the male. Ironically, such representation needs a critical assessment in view of the failures of all male occupants in *Room 207* and Justice's later remarks, "*Ntepa* is a worthless, useless, shitty thing (...) No, and I'm lying. It is a very powerful thing that needs to be respected, and if you disrespect it…" (Moele, 2006:31). The ellipsis here suggests the utter lack of words to explain the consequences caused by reckless sex. We must note that in rhizomatic thinking, "every assemblage is collective" (Deleuze, 1993:255), therefore humanity is incomplete without active participation of both sexes. This has profound implications for understanding of humanity as an assemblage. Adopting the rhizome as a concept advances gender complementarity and equity for the common welfare of humanity. Baseli becomes a doctor and another female character, Tebogo, becomes a lawyer and she has money, a car and a townhouse whereas the six male characters rent a single room for more than a decade. These success stories

of female characters, instead of being celebrated, are viewed with scorn by men whose patriarchal power is threatened. It is obvious that male characters are entrapped and unable to escape without women's help. This raises compelling questions about gender relations in contemporary times. In *After Tears,* Zero, a male character, describes a woman in the following demeaning language. "I'm starring at the cheesiest thing (…) I have never seen thighs as beautiful as these. She is a complete system with surround sound and loudspeakers" (Mhlongo, 2007:201).

According to Nichols (2019), South Africa is not yet a gender progressive space adding that Mhlongo, in *After Tears,* exposes the vulgarity of a misogynistic masculinity. Afolayan's (2010) has rightly argued that the African novelist does not write from a tabula rasa, but from a mind that has been contaminated by colonial experiences. Put simply, gender dichotomies that place women in subaltern positions are some of the enduring colonial effects. Both colonialism and apartheid have had an enormous impact on gender relations (Muchemwa, 2013). The history of South Africa becomes relevant in a rhizomatic reading of these novels where readers need to "journey into the past" in order to make sense of the present gender relations. Negation of women is embedded in male characters' fascination with women's bodies as well as the representational language used to refer to women such as "angels of the night," "bitches," "members of the female species," and" whores and golden incubators," all used in the novel *Room 207* to convey patriarchal hegemony and subornation of women. In *After Tears,* Zero's patriarchal and sexist perceptions are evident when he says women 'are living advertisements for AIDS" and their nice curves are dangerous (Mhlongo, 2007:49). The novels redefine humanity by shedding light on the perspectival limitations of gender stereotypes. In this respect the narratives authorise alternative gender stories and suggest new ways of thinking about gender identities in the changing socio-political circumstances. LaRue (2011) remarkably posits that there is need to expand the concept of humanity beyond the binary logic which rejects the perceived "other."

In *Room 207*, we are told that boys are taught at a tender age that, "poking [having sex] of a member of the female species" is a precondition for admission into "boys' room." This is a dangerous conception of manhood especially in current era of HIV and AIDS pandemic. Muchemwa (2013) notes that in Africa, these patriarchal practices and forms of masculinities are historically informed. Yet, the rhizomatic theory is against any form of restrictive and normative structures. The theory inaugurates new modes of gender relations. Such phallocentric

representations of women are not passively accepted by the modern women who refuse to be muted and side-lined. In *After Tears*, Bafana's family appears to represent a masculinity in crisis. All key decisions are made by Rea, who is Bafana's mother. She radically traduces the normative cultural and gender relations by selling the house without her brother Nyawana's consent. Her actions speak about women's cultural and gender de-territorialisation efforts in their quest for freedom and emancipation. We need to also observe that male characters, Bafana, Guava and Nyawana are financially crippled. In this sense Nyawana's physical deformity, incarceration of Guava at Sun City prison in Johannesburg and Bafana's academic failure become symbolic expressions of the paralyzed and troubled traditional masculinities. Similarly, in *Room 207*, Molamo becomes an "Rra- ba ki," that is a "thank you man" and "a kept man" when he started to live with his girlfriend, Tebogo. The narrator shares with us that, "the thing he feared: the *khayalami* he was going to wasn't his place, it was Tebogo's place, and everything in it, Tebogo had worked hard for" (Moele, 2006:220). Molamo becomes a symbol of a bruised male ego; his fear attests to the burden of traditional masculinity that expects men to serve as providers for the family.

The narratives also present a complex spatial of gender. Samson (2016) notes that urbanity of black women is still denied in post-apartheid era. Noko, who is the protagonist in *Room 207,* walks naked in streets of Hillbrow and Nichols (2019) reads Noko's nudity as symbolic liberation, empowerment as well as signal of his vulnerability. Yet, it is not only men who claim freedom in the cityscape. The city offers women opportunities to empower themselves through education and formal employment. While most of the male characters in *Room 207* become university dropouts, the female characters grab the opportunity to become independent and economically empowered. This ambivalent depiction of the city-university space complicates the new roles in post-apartheid era. Fathering a child is proof of male virility but Modishi is denied this male privilege by Lerato when she aborts the unwanted pregnancy. Hove (2014) observes that sex for subordinated masculinities is an act of "performing maleness" on women's bodies. Such men believe in their phallic strength to impose and assert themselves. Hove's observation is shown in *After Tears*, where Zero tells Bafana that there is a minimum of 'five chicks for every dick in Soweto' (Mhlongo, 2007:49). Yet, the new woman is in charge of her sexuality; she rejects the compartmentalisation and fixity of her body. Thus, Lerato's abortion foregrounds women's

resistance to an imposed motherhood. Elsewhere, Nnaemeka (1997) has posited that motherhood is a patriarchal institution imposed on women.

Furthermore, although Johannesburg city is largely a patriarchal space (Putter, 2012), the modern day women demand their visibility in this space. The post-apartheid city emerges as a site of ambiguities and transformations. On one hand, Hillbrow is a "striated" and dangerous space for women which limits their mobility and freedom. On the other hand, the city provides "smooth space" or transformative potentials into previously marginalised sections of the society. For example, Michelle, a daring white female, visits Hillbrow at "night and walks herself to room 207" (Moele, 2006:39). In the same way, Molamo is shocked when his girlfriend Baseli visits him during the night (Moele: 2006:139). Such characterisation is an articulation of an overt new female consciousness that breaks the silence and resists gender binaries. These women "do not act female" in their attempt to transform the city. The mobility tropes here inscribe female presence and convey the permeability of a previously male-dominated space. Women's movement in the city is an expression of female agency and self-assertiveness. Therefore, the city is a site of becoming as female characters transgress traditional gender and spatial bordering. Women are also accorded economic autonomy thereby jettisoning the dependency syndrome and the "man as a head" biblical myth.

Apparently, the selected narratives show that gender identities are increasingly becoming complex, fuzzy and problematic in contemporary times. The ambivalence surrounding such identities stems from transformation in the cultural, political and social realms. Mkandla (2015) observes that contemporary Zimbabwean literature reveals that men find it difficult to sustain the normative masculine roles in a changing socio-economic environment. Women take on 'breadwinner' roles which destabilise and re-territorialise gender power structures. Remaining a 'man' within the confines of traditional masculinity is impossible in harsh economic conditions; this fluidity paves way for new gender flights. This ultimately modifies and complicates the hegemonic male authority. In this way the narratives serve as sites of contestations over gender meanings. Women assert their presence in society by actively participating in domains previously manned by the male gender, fostering and inventing new gender relations.

The novels defy fixed strictures as new paths are formulated and normative paths collapse and blur the gender borders. Apparently, phallocentric behaviour and prohibitive attitudes are destabilized

by rhizomatic gender ruptures. Interestingly, the novels expose the fallacy of stable gender binaries since these are subject to changing social conditions. For Deleuze (1993) a rhizome is in constant shifting or movement allowing new formations. In the same vein, gender relations are reconfigured in the process of becoming. The muffled feminine voices reclaim recognition in sometimes subtle ways leading to new readings of gender narratives and new insights about contemporary identity trajectories.

Similarly, the novel *We Need New Names* presents a troubled masculinity. Darling's mother indulges in sex with an unknown lover who visits her during the nights. The husband has abandoned her by moving to South Africa, paving way for new sexual connections. Chitando (2016: 117) has rightly observed that in post-2000 Zimbabwean society, "men are castrated by both the economy and the state." Much the same way, in *Harare North,* Sekai cheats on Paul and the narrator sympathises with the latter for "pounding front bum that have already been thief by the pointy-headed Rasputin' (Chikwava, 2009:102). This libidinal act subverts and undermines patriarchal norms.

The narratives also expose and attack the excesses of subordinated masculinity. In *Room 207*, Molamo's remarks speak of male's frustration, precarity and misplaced anger in post-apartheid society. Molamo confides in Matome:

> I am not happy Matome. I pretend to be a happy individual, but look at me, look at me carefully. Let me lay my life out for you: I have fathered four children, [with four different women] but I am not a father; I use and abuse every female and leave them crying. How long has Tebogo mothered and wifed me? But I have always used her. Worse, I call her a whore and she is the mother of my first-born child (Moele, 2006:88).

In one of the telling moments, Noko also points out that, "nobody ever said anything about love and loving people …everything I have learnt about human relations I have learned in the street the hard way" (Moele, 2006:174). This character bemoans cultural dislocation and lack of moral value-training in contemporary times which makes it difficult to restore African ethos and values or Ubuntu philosophy. In much the same way, in *Harare North*, the economically disempowered male character in desperation joins the 'Green Bombers' terrorising perceived 'enemies of the state.'

Ironically, this character is sexually abused in a Zimbabwean prison. He is thus, metaphorically, feminised. He epitomises a politically exploited and subordinated masculinity. Sadly, he feels a 'man' in his performance of violent acts against perceived enemies. His narrow-mindedness is reflected when he takes pride in the dance of violence enacted by "the boys of jackal breed" which refers to ZANU PF's youth militia terrorising perceived opposition party members. Although he comes from the impoverished class in Zimbabwe, he is uncritical in his participation in the state-sponsored orgy of violence. He disregards the fact that his poverty is a result of Mugabe's parlous administration of the country. He even plans to burn down Paul and Sekai's house in London for calling Mugabe a "stubborn old donkey." He intends to raise money in order to perform a cultural ritual for his late mother. The "umbiyiso" is a cultural spiritual appeasement that could be interpreted as a metaphor for spiritual exorcism. He desires to forge a new dignified male identity different from that of the offender who committed obscene crimes against humanity. It could mean that his dead mother serves as metonymy of the offended people: if he appeases her spirit, then he would have exorcised the demons of the past and this would allow him the recuperation that he so desperately needs. In *We need new names,* such undesirable masculinities are also presented through Chipo's grandfather and Prophet Bitchington Mborro who both sexually abuse female characters. This behaviour is condemned by Darling and her friends through the graffiti representations of the destructive 'phallus.' The destructive phallus is amplified if we consider the fact that children from Paradise slum live in squalid conditions created by Robert Mugabe's Machiavellian, authoritarian and necro-political exercise of power.

We can also interrogate the gender identities constructed by migrants in an increasing global culture. Black African masculinities in diasporic spaces struggle to adjust to new cultural environments. Male characters feel overburdened by anxiety and the enveloping sense of loss. They want to hold on to patriarchal ideologies. For instance, Kojo, a Ghanaian, dictates to Fostalina, his partner in America, the definitive duties of a wife. He states, "In my country, wives actually cook hot meals every-day for their husbands and children" (Bulawayo 2013:156). However, Fostalina resists this and immediately reminds him that they are living in America not Africa. In addition, Fostalina's new 'slim' body offends Kojo who desires a 'fleshy African woman.' Kojo laments, "Look at you, bones, bones, bones (...) there is actually nothing African about a woman with no thighs, no hips, no belly, no behind" (Bulawayo, 2013:134). The body semiotics projects female résistance and the shifting power dynamics. The body becomes an

inscription of new gender identities. The new socio-cultural context provides alternative lines of flight for female gender identification. This is compatible with rhizomatic theory because a rhizome has hybrid connections, since it operates in space without boundaries. It (re)connects over fissures and gaps, deterritorialises and reterritorializes itself at once (Deleuze, 2005:233).

The same holds for the novel, *Welcome to Our Hillbrow* where women are denied meaningful roles. The cityscape is a site of hegemonic black masculinity that attempts to stifle women's agency and meaningful change. Women are viewed as a moral threat, "Hillbrowan women are loose-thighed with voracious [sexual] appetite and thighs in search of wandering penises" (Mpe, 2001:116). Women are also viewed as sexual objects because they provide short-lived "under waist bliss." However, men are warned to be on guard because these "women were bound to bring disasters upon any man's life" (Mpe, 2001:44). Such representations are incongruent with contemporary consciousness of humanity. The negation is meant to inscribe tropes of invisibility and insignificance upon the women. Female gender is degraded and stigmatized. Women's sense of autonomy is resisted by a male dominated society. Morrell (2001:18) observes that "South Africa until recently was a man's country. Power was exercised publicly and politically by men." However, the selected narratives expose the limitations of such gender discrimination. Women are rhizomatically making inroads into male territorialised areas opening these spaces for both sexes.

### 6.7 Reading Afropolitan and Cosmopolitan Sensibilities

The selected fictional narratives articulate significant cultural and linguistic shifts. Said (1993: xxv) notes that all cultures are involved in one another, none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogeneous, extraordinarily differentiated and constituents of 'a thousand plateaux' in Deleuzian terminology. Sen (2004) concurs that cultures and nations are neither unitary nor static entities. No culture, past or present, is a conceptual island unto itself, except in the imagination of the observer. Eze (2016) has observed that being African is not reductive to colour or autochthony rather being African is expansive. These reflections echo the principles of Afropolitanism and cosmopolitalism which privilege multiple consciousnesses and numerous connections because to "be" is to relate with people from diverse ethnicities. The narratives in this study construct new vistas for becoming and new stories of humanity that are not tied to a particular landscape or race.

Eze (2016) notes that Afropolitanism is complex and complicated but it brings a significant shift in conceptions of African identity in 21st century and privileges global conversations with people from different ethnic and racial backgrounds. These observations are significant in discussing rhizomatic cultural and linguistic identification.

One way to conceptualize cultural hybridity is to consider how the narratives have constructed characters who straddle two or more cultures. It is only by engaging with such representations that we can begin to understand the ambivalence of cultural identification. The aspirations of a common humanity are further reflected in subjects who travel between cultures and interstitial spaces. In addition, the pluralingual and multicultural textauality dismantles the hegemony of the English and unsettles its perceived primacy as a medium for articulating both the lived and literary experiences. The presentation of African thoughts and expressions in these texts reflects the importance accorded to African oral-aural traditions in spaces where whiteness was previously the privileged and undisputed mediating chroma. A rhizome has multiple interacting parts therefore welcomes numerous relations. This is why it is essential to destabilize cultural and linguistic essentialism. This reading concurs with Steiner (2010) who notes that conflicting identities are negotiated and appropriated through languaging and language use in the African novel. Therefore, the accents of African migrants in America and Britain long ridiculed as non-natives problematise claims about language ownership. It is particularly significant if we consider such linguistic innovations as gestures of resistance, a Calibanesque version of subverting the language of the colonising Prospero. In this way, the narratives respond to debates about language rights. In *We need new names,* Fostalina's English accent is assumed unintelligible by the white sales lady in America. From a rhizomatic sense, any barriers to articulation are refuted since they are based on the notion of closed unitary systems. Thus, linguistic construction of the texts helps to chart a new consciousness. The novels probe and reject monolithic formulations of cultural and linguistic identities.

Immigrants assert their presence in new spaces through language. Nevertheless, language is also used to convey migrant characters' inability to be linguistically adaptive to the new societies. In this case, immigrants are linguistically marked as outsiders who cannot fit into the mainstream. Their narratives become, ipso facto, blended African narratives about precarity as acts of communication possessed of their own aesthetics and truth-values, that the reader is called upon

to respond imaginatively in order to challenge the injustice of the global spaces in which the sojourner finds temporary and elastic respite.

In Zimbabwean fictional texts, Ndebele and Shona are utilized by immigrant characters to connect with their families in Zimbabwe. Shona and Ndebele words also foreground a particular identity, yet this identity is ruptured by the English habitus and culture. Apparently, each linguistic code is a strand that makes up an individual in a rhizomatic web. Most importantly, this becomes part of the assimilation process that facilitates navigation of new cultural terrains. Immigrants have to learn the language and culture of the new society thus making new cultural and linguistic connections.

We note that *Harare North* radically transforms the English language to suit semantic and expressive intentions of the non-native users. English is deterritorialised by the immigrants. These linguistic innovations are distinct from both British and Zimbabwean societies. Bhabha (1994) asserts that cultures are never unitary silos from which we retrieve linguistic and semantic constructs. Therefore, identities are endlessly re/constructed in intercultural interactions. The contemporary world therefore is becoming a complex cultural and linguistic web. The narratives effectively suggest a new human space that is expansive in nature and unbounded by any barriers.

In *Welcome to our Hillbrow* and *Room 207* metropolitan identities in the cityscape are represented through hybrid linguistic codes. In keeping with Deleuze and Guattarri's argument that metamorphosis in the rhizome facilitates deconstruction of old structures and formation of new ones, new lines of flight in which all forms and significations collapse becomes evident in the linguistic resources that the characters bring into their conversations about petty and weighty matters. The utilization of untranslated cultural terms and idiomatic expressions becomes an endorsement of the diversity in cultural expression. "Makwerekwere" (foreigners) are accused of "stretching their legs and spreading their legs and spreading like pumpkin plants" (Mpe, 2001:26). Transgression of linguistic boundaries foregrounds and privileges a multicultural, multinational and global orientation. A culturally hybridised identity is quite pronounced and celebrated through the fusion of isiZulu, seSotho and appropriated English language in *After Tears, One foreigner's Ordeal* and *Room 207*. Notably, the linguistic plurality of contemporary societies has a mark on the kind of identities formulated. The narratives create a polyglossic literary space that deconstructs monolingual hegemonic discourses. Multilingual and transcultural stylisations are

remarkable qualities of the narratives which concretise the slippages of cultural identities and the porous linguistic borders. The novels speak to the aspirations of transnational literature. In other words, the selected novels inscribe polysemy and modify existing perceptions of the monoglossic.

Seyhan (2001) defines transnational literature as a genre that operates outside the national canon since it is written for de-territorialised communities. This observation is most compelling as it hints at the complex becoming which privileges multiplicities of identities. The cityscape speaks to the narrative of "cosmopolitanism from below" (Appadurai, 2014), which is influenced by mobility and migration. For Mbembe (2007:29) Johannesburg is the centre of Afropolitanism par excellence. However, Afropolitan and cosmopolitan identities are threatened by colonial legacies in spatial structures. Interconnectedness is part of the decolonisation discourse that speaks of humanity in its diversity. The narratives employ nuanced styles that portray ruptures from colonial and apartheid constructions of urban space. O'Shaughnessy (2012) and Moodie and Mdatshe (1994) also argue that the effects of apartheid are deeply embedded in the contemporary city, creating sites of dislocation. This points at the problematic of making racial inclusivity a lived reality. Jones (2013) views the cities as dreamscapes of possibilities but further argues that post-apartheid literature conveys deep cynicism about the rhetoric of change and racial equality. In *Room 207*, the narrator articulates this mobility trope:

> Turn right into Twist, walk with me here. Relax, you aren't in any kind of danger. Walk like a true Hillbrowean. Walk it like it belongs to you, because me and you, we have inherited this. It's ours now (Moele, 2006:158).

Elsewhere, Muchemwa (2013), including Moodie and Mdatshe (1994) posit that in the colonial city, the colonised were treated as temporary sojourners and consequently confined to camp-like conditions of the mines and township. Soweto symbolically reminds us of colonial spatial frontiers. For Muchemwa (2013) the township is inextricably connected to the city and the boundary that separates these sites is fraught, fragile and less visible. Thus, the novels project decolonisation discourse that rejects the centre-periphery model of the colonial/ apartheid times. The township or *ekasi* is euphemistically labelled a "hell" by PP in *After Tears*. The novels transcend bounded discourses because the territory is not the map (Janz, 2001). The texts foreground troubled (dis)connection and complex contemporary theorisations of place and space.

Traditional identities fall away as new connections arise leading to hybridised becoming. This creates the connection principle with infinite possibilities of networks.

In post-apartheid literature, Hillbrow serves as an expression of multi-ethnic, multiracial and multinational discourses (Ibinga, 2010). The collective pronoun 'our' in Mpe and Moele's novels speaks to the heterogeneity and multiplicity traits of contemporary Hillbrow. The narratorial voice acknowledges and sustains the presence of the other. In *Room 207,* Hillbrow is described as "Our little mother earth in Africa, because here you'll find all races and tribes of the world. Here you find Europeans, Asians that by fate have become proud South Africans" (Moele, 2006:19). The interracial relationship between D' Nice and Michelle, a white lady, demonstrates transgression of racial restrictions placed during apartheid era as evident in Mda's *Madonna of Excelsior*, Fugard's *Master Harold and the boys*, Lewis Nkosi's *Mating Birds* and Mhlope's *Dancing in the Dust*. This is an optimistic post-structuralist theorisation of society that provides a fundamental shift from particularistic perceptions of identities. William (2014) cited in Emke (2019) explains that post-structuralism seeks to investigate alternative realities and resists settled or universal truths. Embracing the rhizomatic thinking allows us to tease and appreciate cultural, racial, and linguistic differences. The cultural and linguistic border crossing reflects complex assemblages that mediate social spaces. Most, importantly, the narratives show how sites of contact engender new perceptions and facilitate the construction of hybrid identities that reflect difference as a norm. The novel *Room 207* contests and deterritorialises long standing ethnic and linguistic attitudes and perceptions by adopting an in-between linguistic code, *tsotsitaal* or urban dialect. This linguistic code is not confined to mono-cultural space. Thus, the myth of language as the ultimate marker of a fixed identity is challenged by asserting and signifying the presence of multiple cultures. The transcultural nature of these novels has an impact on both cultural and national identification since it demystifies claims of linguistic determinism.

This way, all the identity categories discussed above are sites of anxiety and contestation of established epistemologies. There is no single stable identity, but rather, possible lines of flight in the ever changing complex web of identification. Since from a rhizomatic theory totalizing of knowledge is frowned upon, this study acknowledges that the ideas raised here are temporary and subject to more connections that lead to (de) reterritorialiazation. There are numerous possible lines of flight in the academic rhizome that could be exploited for more new insights. In fact, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) reject the dichotomy between standard and non-standard languages

and state that there are major languages associated with domination and power in society. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) further argue that language is inseparably permeated by political and social dynamics of power. This argument is compatible with Bakhtin, Kristeva and Foucault's ideas about language and discourse. Therefore, identities are endlessly constructed in intercultural interactions and the contemporary world is becoming a complex cultural and linguistic web. The narratives effectively suggest a new human space that is expansive in nature and unbound by any barriers.

### 6.8 The linguistics of contemporary thought and figurative stylisations

According to Saeed (1998:302) metaphor traditionally has been viewed as the most important form of figurative language use, and was regarded as reaching its most sophisticated forms in literary or poetic language." Contrary to this claim in traditional linguistics, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) in their Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) postulate that metaphors are pervasive in everyday life, not just in language. By this, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) dismiss the traditional linguistic model that views style as deviation from the everyday linguistic norms and also suggest that the dichotomy between figurative and literal language is artificial. The term metaphor occupies a central position in cognitive linguistics. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), metaphor is not a merely linguistic or ornamental device or a stylistic resource, but rather, a cognitive phenomenon. They further explain that metaphor is a cognitive device that allows us to understand and experience a relatively abstract subject matter in terms of a more concrete construct. In conceptual metaphor theory, metaphor is defined as mappings from a source domain onto a target domain. In the traditional view, metaphor is a linguistic phenomenon but Lakoff and Johnson (1980) posit that metaphor is a property of concepts rather than words and the term could be used in a general sense to mean figurative language. In other words, metaphor is a salient feature that operates at linguistic and cognitive levels. This is a point of departure from the traditional conception of metaphors since in cognitive linguistics metaphor is important in the process of understanding, creating and categorising reality.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) contend that conceptual metaphors structure thinking and knowledge, thus, cognitive linguistics provides new perspective of metaphor. In the same vein Veliz (2015) views metaphor as a semantic vehicle. This has some serious implications for current understanding of figurative language. Gambino and Pulvirenti (2019) postulate that the study of literature and arts in general has been recently enriched by the changes in the heuristic paradigms regarding the very essence of cognitive processes implied by the artistic experience. Cognitive linguistics explores new interdisciplinary relations in the study of poetics. It concentrates on the mechanisms of thought and the poetic text merely triggers cognitive processes.

Cognitive linguistics is a new paradigm about reception and comprehension of texts (Gambino and Pulvirenti, 2019). In other words, cognitive linguistics describes the processes of cognition. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) also observe that language is an integral part of cognition, meaning that languages are semantic systems. This view is supported by Guzzo, Naranjo and Suarez (2010) who attest that recent research in cognitive linguistics has shown that metaphors are significant in the normal act of comprehension. These claims are incompatible with traditional conceptions of language. Lakoff and Johnson (1999) have also argued that language cannot be divorced from context, perception, memory and emotion as earlier suggested by Chomsky in his development of the theory of syntax and generative grammar. The utilisation of metaphor transcends linguistic domains because it connects the extra-linguistic reality with the world of the mind through language. This suggests that the structural dimension of language is inadequate since it disregards the cognitive, experiential and socio-cultural dimensions of meanings. This marks another shift from the positivistic paradigm in Chomskyan conceptions of the linguistic sign**.** Cognitive linguistics framework is more concerned with the interaction of linguistic structures and cognitive structures and processes that underlie the production and reception of language (Semino and Culpeper, 2001). The individual's experiences of the social world informs meaning-making processes. The human social environment is brought into picture thus, Werth (1999:21) calls this a "more human linguistics" since it acknowledges the importance of human experience and knowledge. The reader becomes an active agent who brings into reading pragmatic, experiential and imaginative encounters and experiences constitutive of prior knowledge. In cognitive linguistics, perception is an active process in which information is received by sensory organs and transformed to the human brain area (Gibbs, 2010). The sensory quality of language, for instance in imagery, points at bodily and experiential basis of meanings. Cognitive linguistics is cognisant

of human rationality in the interpretation process (Johnson, 1987). It also considers the emotional effect of poetic discourse (Gavin and Steen, 2003). This has profound implications for current understanding of cognition because the dichotomy between the human mind and the body in meaning construction is blurred.

These are insightful ideas make us reassess the traditional interpretive frameworks and models. Most notably, stylistic analyses should shift from mechanistic descriptions of linguistic structure because the focus in cognitive linguistics is not on the text but rather on the context and the role of the human mind in the interpretation of literary texts. The linguistic structures only trigger cognitive abilities and this is a fundamental landmark in stylistics studies that brought cognitive stylistics into the picture. With this in mind, it could be argued that it is pertinent to consider new stylistics frameworks that pay more attention to this interface in poetics in order to gain new insights into reading and cognition. Antunamo (2004) notes that reader's prior experience is the motivation for what is meaningful in the human mind. This brings a fresh awareness of the conceptual and experiential basis of meanings. This is congruent to the ideas from reader response/ reception model discussed in the previous chapter. This invites a reassessment of conversations about reading and meaning making in literary studies.

Apparently, from a cognitive framework, literary meanings do not arise from mere language use and stylistic strategies, which is a remarkable shift from the formalist to a contextualist approach. This challenges linguistic accounts that overlooked the fundamental role of contextual knowledge in reading and interpreting literary texts. Furthermore, literary texts are subject to different readings and interpretations because reading bring into the text dynamic and diverse experiences (Hodge, 1990). The implication here is that a single objective reading is problematic due to the readers' subjective views and personal experiences of the social world. This current view of language brings together semantics and pragmatics blurring the divide between the two areas (Verdonk, 2002). Pragmatics is more relevant and useful for the reader's inferential capacities and disambiguation of polysemous textual elements. In other words, pragmatic knowledge is utilised in making well-informed semantic hypotheses. Therefore, the reader's understanding of the illocutionary force of text is not only facilitated by the linguistic composition of the text but rather comes from outside the text world. The outsideness of meanings is critical in the theories discussed

in this study. The dynamic mental mapping in meaning-making processes is shaped by the reader's past and present experiences. Obviously different readers generate different interpretations.

### 6.9 A sad black story idiom: An apocalyptic vision of post-independence era

The idiom "a sad black story" is a polysemous linguistic expression that generates numerous interpretations. This is not surprising since poetics grapples with the complex reality of the human world. The idiom is part of emotive language in the novel *Room 207* that reveals discomfort, disillusionment and unhomeliness of the post-independent national space. Therefore, it could be also considered as a perceptual metaphor that projects the feelings and attitudes of post-apartheid subjects. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) have highlighted that figures of speech can be interpreted differently by different readers. They posit that the human mind interacts with both the text and the environment in order to construct new images and new meanings. Freeman (2007) also notes that the text mirrors the mental processes and dynamics of the author which could be traced back to the linguistic, stylistic and rhetorical composition of the text. Thus, in a cognitive linguistic paradigm, the text triggers readers' imaginative faculties and meanings arise from this interaction between the author, text, reader and the social world. The reader "semanticises" the non-semanticised textual elements by bringing in their emotions, perceptions and memory during the literary experience. The colour adjective is a significant component of this idiomatic expression. The fact that it is an idiom with colour adjective complicates its reading because it attains multiple expressive potentials. It is important therefore to consider the semiotic politics of colour in the historical context of South Africa because, according to Geeraerts, Kristiansen and Piersman (2010), figurative language derives its semantic value from the context in which is used. They further explain that cognition is socially and culturally situated which is a sociolinguistic dimension of comprehending language. An obsession with colour and body semiotics are reminiscent of colonial and apartheid days when the chromatic detail of the body had preconceived identities and meanings inscribed on it.

The cognitive linguistics approach, just like dialogic and intertextuality theories, also challenges the closure of meaning interpretation because the text acquires new readings from the readers' new social environment and new experiences. The point here is, my reading/ interpretation of the texts is tentative and subjective, leaving the room for contestation and re-reading. This view is much

akin to Bakhtinian concept of the unfinalisability of meanings. The idiom "a sad black story" also draws our attention to conceptualisations of nation and nationalism in post-apartheid era. It serves as a trope that speaks about a shameful, deplorable past as well as a tragedy of black humanity in post-colonial African societies. An intertextual reference to Marechera's *House of Hunger* arrests the reader's attention and foregrounds the abject conditions of post-apartheid subjects. "I am reading a Zimbabwean book, *House of Hunger*; I'm not getting it and funnily enough I'm living in a house of hunger" (Moele, 2006:170). The narrative voice in this passage relates to the stories of pain, subjectivity, stagnation and suffering. This depiction of the postcolony queries post-colonial myths and idealised perceptions of self-governance and democracy. These South African novels deploy the trope of urban palimpsest and censure the narrative of a new non-racialised society. Nichols (2019) observes that *Room 207* and *After Tears* are post-apartheid novels that deconstruct national narratives about newness and freedom. The regrettable post-apartheid conditions do not pave way for the re-humanisation of the abject other. The oligarchical figures of power in postcolonial African states have forgotten about the aspirations of the masses. This tragedy of African humanity emerges from "black betrayal" (Moele, 2006:145), which means that black political leaders are imperfect architects of a new order. The ordinary black people are outraged by the uncaring attitude of the ANC government which has turned South Africa into a "world of lies" (Moele, 2006:144) and these politicians capitalise on their relations with the global capital since they are "honoured everywhere" and respected by white people." These sentiments have serious implications for the national reconciliation project. Fanon (1967:87) has earlier highlighted that native bourgeoisie replaced white bourgeoisie in postcolonial states. In a similar vein, Mandaza (1998) puts forward that the postcolonial state is modelled on the European bourgeoisie which means that the postcolonial world was stillborn. In other words, to some extent, the post-independent era preserves colonial and apartheid categories of blackness and whiteness. An angry crowd in Soweto protests against these capitalist politicians. Zero like the other protesters, registers his anger:

> Ever since we voted for them they don't give a fuck about us anymore (…). The government is taking us for shit. This is Msawawa, our matchbox city, and we'll show them like we showed the apartheid government before them (Mhlongo, 2007:158).

Post-apartheid subjects respond to deferred dreams about freedom and equality. Such narratives need to be interrogated in the context of current lived experiences. Celebration of blackness is also an expression of protest discourse because very few ordinary people benefit from the ANC programmes such as Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) and Rural Development Programme (RDP) because of inept and corrupt government officials. In *After Tears,* the protesters in Soweto Township convey their grievances in the following passage:

> The politicians talk like angels when they need votes and behave like chimpanzees once they've got them (…) In the past we've fought and defeated the monster of apartheid, comrades Amandla, comrades Amandla! Now we are faced with the monster of capitalism (Mhlongo, 2007:160).

The narratives regale stories about a suffering humanity and the phrase 'a sad black story' underscores the lamentable conditions and dreaded existence of the subaltern whose lives are threatened by both national and global politics. The post-apartheid subjects are engaged in an endless chase of dreams which stultifies social mobility. There are street children, vendors and criminals who survive through stealing and killing in Hillbrow. There are shacks in places surrounding Johannesburg which is compelling evidence of the abject poverty in this "stormy rainbow nation" (Moele, 2006:143).The Zulu boy, a character in *Room 207*, offers a very illuminating analysis of the post-apartheid condition, when he laments that, "we are all living and laughing at our own misery here." He also adds that "it's cold and inhuman living here" (Moele, 2006:197). We are humorously told that these characters are living a "choice-less existence" and have learnt to make their lives "choice-ful" in "a house of hunger" (ibid: 72-73). What is apparent in Moele's novel is that the majority of black people have not benefitted from the post-apartheid political environment.

The post-apartheid black government has also failed to maintain the inherited infrastructure to the extent that its current state qualifies as another sad story. The glamour of Jo'burg is fast disappearing. We are told that the "Windybrow Arts Centre used to be called the Windybrow Theatre but… it's a sad story too" (Moele, 2006:158). Ellipsis here conveys ineffable negative transformation of the post-apartheid city. Tropes of decay and rot foreground general deterioration of the inner city infrastructure, "people are now living in a rubbish dump, rotting street and buildings" (Moele, 2006:62). Clearly, the dilapidation of the city buildings is a sad story that

projects a disturbing picture of post-apartheid South Africa in particular and postcolonial African societies in general. The city environment underlines the pathetic living conditions of the poor. Nonetheless, the ANC government is not solely responsible for the dilapidation and rot in the cities. Moele's novel offers an alternative explanation through the narrator's observations in the following monologue "(…)"that voice in me asks: Why this crumbling? And then it answers itself: A former master can't serve a former slave" (Moele, 2006:149). By implication, this refers to the question about property ownership in the city. The buildings in the city are owned by the white "former masters" who are now reluctant to provide necessary maintenance services for the black tenants or "former slaves." In this sense the two races retain their colonial antagonisms and identities.

One other possible reading of the idiomatic expression "a sad black story" points at monolithic narratives that resist multiplicity and diversity in the post-apartheid environment. In this case, the emphasis on black colour becomes an inscription of Negro identity. Gqola (2001) has noted a return to Black Nationalism and Nativism in the present South Africa especially in self-serving political discourse. This 'return" aims to conceal the current government's failure and highlights the fact that racial antagonism is still present in South Africa. The endorsement of Black Nationalism conveys the paradox and ambivalence of a rainbow narrative which is not yet a lived reality. The elusiveness of the rainbow is another matter for exploration: its mesmeric colours are as intangible as the material expectations of the citizens in the post-apartheid era. In other words, emphasis on blackness registers deep racial cleavages within the national narrative about a non-racial society. Hillbrow as a setting of the novel, *Room 207* captures spatial memory of apartheid era. This setting is also employed to juxtapose the two periods therefore the mobility trope becomes a subversion of previous containment. Navigation of the city space by black characters legitimises their presence and speaks about the quest for equality.

I would also want to argue that in South Africa just like in Zimbabwe and other formerly colonised states, the narrative of blackness is incomplete without making reference to other racial groups. Therefore the phrase "a sad black story" is extendable to mean a sad narrative of humanity characterised by inequalities, social conflict, injustices, stereotypical views and racism. The inhumane treatment of the perceived 'other" whether white or black is another ugly version of the sad metanarrative of humankind. Interestingly, in *Room 207*, an oral conversational quality

acknowledges the participation of 'other.' Most significantly, the other is always present in the narrative dialogues and monologues of the novel. This narrative strategy resists all forms of discrimination that inscribe invisibility of the" other" and reject new models of human world.

### 6.10 Polysemantic Poetics of Onomastics

The current discussion on the semiotics problem today focuses on obscurity and opaqueness of meanings. However, according to Mavengano and Hove (2019) figurative language evokes multiple semantic possibilities which can be utilised against artistic muteness in repressive states (or in situations where truth telling is viewed as a threat to national narratives). The novels examined in this study show that marginal groups find voice and audibility in using figures of speech. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) submit that metaphors sometimes hide or highlight complex aspects of reality. This implies that figures of speech can be used to express inaudible and 'taboo' topics by muted groups. Yet, at the same time, I acknowledges the fact that making sense is a murky business considering the ambiguities and ambivalence of figurative language which allow meaning extension and semantic variables. According to Turner (2002), in cognitive poetics, readers' experience and memory inform the meaning-making process. These ideas are useful in the proposed multi-perspectival stylistics model proposed in this study because it intends to supplement the existing methods of literary analysis by incorporating such significant insights about reception and cognition of linguistic constructs. The cognitive linguistics paradigm provides a shift from structuralist perspective, casting light on the enormous role of the reader in cognition. The interaction between linguistic form and the reader's mental processing is pertinent for cognitive linguists. Maale (2015) explains that cognitive abilities entail perceiving, remembering, analogising, inferring and representing things mentally. Most importantly, the reader brings into reading a large repertoire of schematic knowledge that is retrieved when needed as a basis for understanding new literary experience (Aitcheson, 1994). Apparently, human language is a complex phenomenon, therefore it is very pertinent to come up with alternative models to investigate this complexity.

Contextualisation is also very useful in the disambiguation process, particularly when a semantic complication arises. This way, cognitive linguistics framework draws our attention to the situatedness of human speech. This means that human semantic cognition is culturally specific, contrary to Chomsky's universal grammar. In addition, poetic style helps to create mental

representations (Stockwell, 2009) and the complex process of decoding linguistic data takes place in the mind (Cook, 1994). Furthermore, cognitive linguistics draws our attention to the importance of sensorimotor system (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999). Evans and Green, (2006) explain that meaning construction is conceptualisation. Gibbs (1994) contends that figuration is not merely a matter of language but provides much of the foundation for thought, reason and imagination. The novel *After Tears* utilises a racial metaphor in the eponym Verwoerd. The dog is named after apartheid architect Hendrik Verwoerd. The name generates lexical ambiguity and the South African historical context informs semantic associations evoked by this name. The name becomes synonymous with apartheid and serves as a political metaphor that stokes apartheid memory. Interestingly, in post-apartheid era, the bearer of the name is a "dog" which foregrounds character assassination. In this regard the politics of memory is at play in authoring the painful remembrances about the utter dehumanisation of black people during colonialism and apartheid. The name Verwoerd as a source domain is utilised to bring into picture the historiography of apartheid which is the target domain/ conceptual metaphor.

In another thought provoking scene in *After Tears*, Bafana is mauled by the dog Verwoerd in a dream. This presents a disturbing picture and troubles the narrative about racial harmony in South Africa. It is this awareness of South African historiography that leads to such interpretations and conclusions. The black people regard their present suffering as traceable to apartheid days. Nyawana alludes to apartheid racial discrimination when he says, "Hey, Verwoerd! Uyabandlulula! You discriminate!" (Mhlongo, 2007:17). The apartheid remnants persist in the post-apartheid era as symbolised by Verwoerd's stay with a black family in Soweto Township. Even when Rea and her family move from their Chiawelo home in Soweto, she instructs Bafana, "don't forget to load Verwoerd in the van when you come to Naturena tomorrow" (Mhlongo, 2007:213). At the same time, the taking of Verwoerd could be read as a rare moment of reconciliation between the perpetrator and the victim. Rea's kind gesture reflects reframing the complex racial relations in line with conversations about forgiveness, reconciliation and inclusivity embedded in the Rainbow Nation metaphor. From a cognitive linguistics perspective, the polysemous senses of the name Verwoerd are contextually informed pointing at the fact that the reader engages in an evaluative activity in meaning making. Antunamo (2004) offers an insightful observation when he states that the traditional dichotomies between the linguistic knowledge and real social world knowledge, literal and figurative, are destabilised and contested in cognitive

linguistics approach. He further explains that there is no clear distinction between linguistic knowledge and encyclopaedic knowledge. Similarly, Langacker (1987) has earlier highlighted that the line between these two types of knowledge is artificial because lexical items or semantic units need to be situated in specific conceptual environment. Langacker adds that all linguistic units are context-dependent which again shows a paradigm shift from the objectivist linguistic perspective.

As already stated above the dog's name has multiple significations, this is why it is also possible to have multiple interpretations. Ironically in post-apartheid era former colonial oppressor is displaced from the comfort of urban centre and now resides in Soweto, previously a site of black dehumanisation and marginalization. Perhaps this is meant to make Verwoerd experience hunger, deprivation and vulnerability that define the township life. However, Verwoerd's hostility towards Bafana is rather telling and significant:

> My uncle's dog, Verwood, was sleeping under the apricot tree as the BMW entered our small, dusty driveway. (...) But Verwoerd wasn't impressed by my presence. As soon as I climbed out the car, he gazed at me once with his jewelled eyes, then wrinkled his black lips up to show his fangs before he started barking (Mhlongo, 2007:16).

The dog's behaviour underscores unchanging racial attitude. The former oppressor is exposed to dehumanisation suffered by black people in township thereby hinting at the existing paradoxes enshrined in narratives about colour blindness. Such perpetuation of false images of racial harmony and end of racism is interrogated in the above passage. The possibility of interracial friendship and companionship is troubled because the reader recognises the dog's aggressive action and fury which are communicated through the descriptive details of the dog's "bare teeth and "its fangs" ready to attack at any time. It is no coincidence then that in his new habitat, Verwoerd has become a starving dog. It is most appropriate to read Verwoerd's new status as an expression of the psychological discomfort suffered by the white Afrikaner in post-apartheid. The dog's degraded position becomes a symbol of embattled Volk nationalism. We must also note that Verwoerd assumes animalistic behaviour to convey inhumane nature of apartheid.

### 6.11.The Metaphors of the "New Millennium" and "After Tears": Questing for Rebirth

All the focal novels interrogate the discourses of newness, fresh start and post-coloniality. According to Nichols (2019) Moele and Mhlongo employ irony and satire as narrative strategies

of commenting on some of these problematic narratives in post-apartheid era. Fallacies, illusions and myths associated with these terms are projected symbolically through the injury and subsequent death of Nyawana during the New Year celebrations. His injury suggests a faulty beginning and thwarted expectations of the masses. The ordinary people have great anticipation from the new political dispensation which is suggested by the daily count down as a narrative strategy in *After Tears*. Unfortunately, The New Year and new millennium bring Nyawana's tragic death instead of life and rebirth. Nyawana's injury and his ultimate death metaphorically bodes a pessimistic depiction of life in post-apartheid/ post-independent era. The short-lived celebration of the arrival of the New Year in Soweto symbolically reflects the naïve euphoria of the masses at independence.

The novel *After Tears* foregrounds the contemporary existential circumstances that are inconsistent with the expectations of the common man. Mhlongo's narrative articulates post-colonial sensibilities and offers an intense scrutiny of the era under the black government. Disappointment, stasis and despair ironically mark the "after tears" period. The novels thus, authorise narratives of resistance coming from the margins of the society. The most polemical question is: what comes after suffering during colonialism and apartheid? Contrast, irony and satire are deployed in the following passage to suggest ambivalence of the post-apartheid city/ national space. The narrator in *Room 207* addresses the unnamed guest:

> Pass through this once grand entrance. It used to be the only door here when apartheid was the greatest security guard to all white people, but not anymore. Democracy is here with its security gates, iron bars and security guards. Pass through another security door, not fashionable this one, but built for function (Moele, 2006:157).

The narrator seems to provide a commentary on post-apartheid ironies because the new political environment has kept the "iron bars and security guards in place." Milazzo (2013) commenting on post-apartheid fiction written by black writers observes that contemporary South African novels continue to direct our attention to the multifarious legacies of apartheid. Such narratives invite us to witness the enduring differential value of black and non-black lives. The pathetic living conditions of blacks in post-apartheid society is a subject that has found attention in a number of novels such as Mhlongo's *Dog eat dog* and *After Tears*, Moele's *Room 207*, and Mpe's *Welcome to Our Hillbrow*. Bock and Hunt (2015) add that although apartheid officially ended in 1994, race

has remained a primary identity marker in South Africa. Paradoxically, discrimination and injustices are still present, pointing to the ambiguous nature of the narratives about rainbow nation. This implies that despite the legal stance of non-racialism in the South African Constitution, nuances of racism have remained a reality of the 'rainbow nation.' These remarks are significant, especially if we take into consideration the historical circumstances that led to economic inequalities. From these readings, it is clear that the African National Congress has failed to meet the expectations of black majority. Thus, there is need to 'live the talk' and make rainbow nation a reality for the majority of suffering people. Addressing the socioeconomic inequalities is a necessary move towards creating social harmony.

These observations are insightful and they point out futility of a mythical narrative about rainbowism. They bring into question the motives behind a romanticised and sanitised use of the term rainbow nation that emphasizes 'illusions' of equality, justice and racial harmony. By raising this question, we are bound to rethink about ways of creating a democratic space that promotes health human relations. This is a very necessary reassessment that might bring the much-needed political and racial transformations. Patterson (2017) argues that South Africa is not healed from its past, freedom has been gained and yet remains elusive.

Thus, scholars have seen non-racialised narrative as just a myth or a fallacy which has lost its relevance. Msengana (2006) argues that race and colour have remained principal axes of consciousness because people think about themselves in terms of racial categories. Bhabha (1993:121) highlights the complicated nature of historical memory when he explains that "remembering is never a quiet act of introspection or retrospection. It is a painful remembering, a putting together of the dismembered past to make sense of the trauma of the present. Gqola (2001) also submits that a lot of change is needed in terms of human relations because memories of the past are still painful. This underlines unresolved racial tensions that persist in post-apartheid society.

Another area that is incongruent with the discourse of newness is the way African migrants are treated in South Africa. Just like in *Welcome to our Hillbrow*, the undesirable African immigrants become a scapegoat for social ills in South Africa. Zinhle blames Vimbai for Bafana's irresponsible and criminal actions. When Vimbai who is a Zimbabwean and Bafana's friend inquires whether the latter had actually lied about his law degree results, Zinhle angrily retorts

"Yes, he was a very nice boy until he began associating with you foreigners" (Mhlongo, 2007:218). Zinhle's utterance is a manifestation of prejudices constructed around othered bodies in South Africa. It a diametrical labelling of people as insiders/ outsiders, citizens/ non-citizens, moral/immoral and natives/foreigners. The state's necrotic power promotes stigmatisation and surveillance of the "Other" through "stripping of rights" and conferring of illegal status (Agamben, 2005). We need to rethink our conceptualisation of Africanness and the meanings encoded in Pan Africanism and Negritude philosophies which become hollow in in the present treatment of the African migrant in South Africa. The complexity of making meaningful conversations and establishing warm relations across Africa is visible. Just like in *Harare North*, *One foreigner's Ordeal* and *We need new names*, *After Tears* echoes the challenges encountered by immigrants in host countries. In this case, the proposed marriage between Bafana and Vimbai is meant to undermine the sovereign power since it creates impossible legal conditions for Vimbai's stay in South Africa. In *Welcome to our Hillbrow*, state surveillance and bureaucratic bordering practices push the "makwerekwere" (foreigners) to get a member of the police or a sympathetic South African companion to help organise a false identity document for a nominal fee (Mpe, 2001:21-22**)**

The Berlin cartography is sustained in xenophobic discourses posing a challenge to the discourse about African identity. Yet, it could be argued that Bafana learnt dishonest from his family, the ill-gotten house and RDP houses corruption scandal that involves his two uncles are clear cases of criminality. Before this marriage scene, Bafana's mother praises Vimbai for her good behaviour and intelligence. It is thus, not surprising that Yomi, a Nigerian migrant in South Africa, is criminalised. This de/valuation of non/citizens justifies exclusions and inclusions within the nation space. In *Room 207*, the narrator makes this comment:

> Here is Hotel Lagos. That's what Matome calls it. The Sands Hotel. It's Lagos in the heart of Johannesburg. In Nigeria, corruption is what they all make a living from, and they are here too with their corrupt ways (Moele, 2006:160).

The narrator's prejudices towards "all" Nigerians is based on few "Nigerian brothers" in Hillbrow, whom he regards as corrupt. The novels interrogate such xenophobic and generalised perceptions.

Delport and Lephakga (2016) have put forward that the existence of townships in South Africa is an enduring colonial legacy of spatial divisions. Patterson (2017) also notes that post-apartheid novels convey public anger directed at ANC leadership which fails to correct injustices. Paradoxically the "tears remain in the eyes" and 'become a subversive language' of the perpetual sufferers (Hove, 2017). Sadly there is no happiness "after tears." There is no celebration after a "long walk to freedom" highlighting the controversial nature of discourse about transition and new nation. Mhlongo's title is a question of opportunities available to the peoples of South Africa. Post-apartheid politicians who were entrusted for the betterment of all become selfish and arrogant. Black population remains marginalised and poor. The shattered dreams of the ordinary people are embedded in images of decay and dilapidation in Hillbrow which speak about the rottenness in post-apartheid/ colonial states. (Rafapa, 2018) posits that HIV and AIDS are metaphors of sick post-apartheid nation. Milazzo (2013) comments that the novel *Room 207* paints a bleak picture of post-apartheid South Africa. This leaves no room for "after tears" celebration.

Blacks are still wallowing in poverty and the narratives create a melancholic atmosphere. The house conflict in *After Tears* stimulates a contested subject about property rights which is perhaps a revival of Thabo Mbeki's discourse of two nations in South Africa, though he deliberately ignored the fact that these nations are not merely based on race. I wish to submit that contemporary South Africa just like Zimbabwe, has two nations, one belonging to the poor, marginalised subaltern groups and the other nation belongs to the bourgeois elite irrespective of their races. There is no denying the fact that the selected novels in this study all end on a note of uncertainty about the future of the characters who seem to be trapped and unable to change their precarious identities. As the narrative closes, in *Room 207,* we contemplate the fate of these people through Noko's overwhelming sense of disillusionment. Another significant parallel is presented in *After Tears,* Bafana is haunted by a feeling of failure as he leaves for Cape Town. The fate of these protagonists is not clear showing ambiguities and elusiveness surrounding the future of post-apartheid subjects. The same can be said about *Welcome to our Hillbrow*, the demise of the protagonist-narrator marks the end of the novel. Refilwe becomes a scarecrow being HIV/ AIDS victim. Similarly, Zimbabwean novels project the tragedy of the post-colonial nation in the hands of an incompetent, brutal and power hungry ZANU PF leadership. Mugabe's autocracy and the present-day military dictatorship have created anguish, precarity and weariness amongst the citizens. The post-Mugabe regime's arrogance is embedded in its emphasis on "Constitutional

Court outcomes" that declared ZANU PF a winner in 2018 elections. Yet, the question of legitimacy coupled with human right abuses continue to haunt the nation. Zimbabweans who get fed up with the current political cul-de-sac and left the country in search of greener pastures have been reduced to Agamben's (1998) figure of *homo sacer* in their new positions as undesired immigrants in host societies. All the texts end in suspense leaving readers wondering about what will then happen to these characters. In many ways, these texts emphasise the anxieties related to the future of the postcolonial states. The narratives condemn the postcolonial leaders who have turned into tormentors of their people and generate misery and suffering. It follows then that the much celebrated political struggles against colonialism and apartheid did not benefit the common man. The titles, *Afters Tears*, *Room 207*, *One Foreigner 's Ordeal, Harare North* , *Welcome to Our Hillbrow* and *We Need new names* convey bitter satire that sustains a scornful tone. Molamo, a character in *Room 207,* and one of the Hillbrow inhabitants views blackness as a punishment from God. This invites a comparative reflection of the Oedipus crisis. His remarks again question and trouble the meanings of democracy and the postcolony in Africa, taking us back to Mandaza's (1983) argument that the postcolonial world was never born in Africa. D'Nice is dismayed to witness the pitiful state of the people of colour in his conversation with another character Lerato:

> There is nothing we have to be happy about, Lerato. Because, in the only Book God has on His green earth, it says that we are the tail of this life. Why do you think where we are living always turns into dirt? The bible says we are the tail after the anus. Ours is a dead life that we are living (Moele, 2006:95).

The enslaved and marginalised citizens actively contest and trouble official narrative from the post-colonial belligerent politicians.

We must also note that the indigenous African cultures have been corrupted by global capitalist culture. A young man with his new BMW car and a laptop watching a movie at the cemetery (Mhlongo, 2007:197). This scene is a stunning demonstration of violation of cultural taboos. It reflects humanity entrenched in capitalist culture and people have an obsession with material possessions. Molamo and Noko in *Room 207* disguise their reality of poverty and suffering by "looking expensive" and using "fake rand notes" to get girls (Moele, 2006: 175). The pretence is informed by an illusion about good life. The unfulfilled dreams have devastating effects on black youths. The suicidal cases in *Welcome to Our* Hillbrow and *Room 207* are telling evidence of the

traumatised black psyche. Escapism is captured through excessive drinking and smoking habits, sex orgies and criminal acts, all convey self-destructive behaviour of the frustrated characters. The motif of "out of Hillbrow party" makes a remarkable parallel with Sowetan residents' quest for after tears celebration.

The aspirations of the common man remain unfulfilled despite the fact that the postcolony continues to offer false hope in diversion empty rhetoric like the current "Vision 2030: Zimbabwe will attain a middle class economy." Indeed these narratives together offer a scathing attack on corrupt and egocentric post-apartheid/colonial politicians, reminding us of Achebe's *A man of the people* and Tagwira's title *The uncertainty of hope which* express disenchantment and frame a grim picture of African humanity. The new Johannesburg is under "the control of the black man" and it has become a land where the weak, the poor, the rich and the powerful- powerful enough that they can rob you of your own life mingle and mend (Moele, 2006:69). A sad spectacle is captured where the ruling black leaders enrich themselves betraying the people (Warmers, 2011). Chi residents have turned into scavengers who attend funerals to get food, this underscores their sorry state. Nina makes this remarks:

> Look at how full this place is! Somehow I don't think that they all come to pay their last respect to the diseased. These people are just here to eat because they live in poverty (Mhlongo, 2007:197).

The mourning and shedding of tears did not stop in post-independent era because only those in political positions enjoy the benefits of "after tears" whilst the masses languish in poverty holding onto the politicians' numerous unfulfilled "visions."

### 6.12 An extended metaphor of house

Another area of engagement with the notion of identity is through assessment of the metaphor of home with other related notions such as belonging, place, roots and routes. The notion is sometimes associated with connotations of hospitality, intimacy, friendliness and harmony. In this section, our attention is drawn to the semantic problematics of the term home. The ambivalent position of the subaltern poor ordinary people in the postcolonial era is illuminated in the studied novels.

Thus, belonging, like identity is not a destiny or a sense of arrival but rather, transient. Because a rhizome maybe broken, shattered at a given spot, but it will start up again on one of its old or new lines (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). South Africa is a troubled "home" for both immigrants and the perceived 'insiders or locals." The country's unhomeliness is caused by apartheid legacies of racial tension, segregation, social inequalities and violence. The following citations lead to such interpretation. One of the characters in the novel *Room 207* observes that:

> (…) if you're black and you failed to get rich in the first year of our democracy when Tata Mandela came to power, you must forget it - you will live in poverty until your beard turns grey" (Moele, 2006:15).

This observation is a perfect analysis of the post-apartheid society that retains apartheid and colonial scenarios since it continues to destroy black lives. Images of wasteland, decay and rot in Johannesburg city centre and Soweto Township amplify the tragic conditions of black humanity in post-apartheid society. Johannesburg is a" dream city" for the black youths yet these "dreams die each and every minute and each and every second dreams are born (Moele, 2006:19). Hillbrow in both *Room 207* and *Welcome to our Hillbrow* is a site of trauma and urban bleakness. The unhomeliness of the urban space remains showing the paradoxes of (un) belonging in un/changing cultural political and national space despite the attempt to create new humanism that transcends colonial and apartheid divisions. These novels convey the murkiness of existence and uncertain trajectories of postcolonial subjects who are materially impoverished. Nichols (2019) notes that the description of the house that belongs to Bafana's family in Mhlongo's novel *After Tears*, conveys a picture of poverty. The use of visual imagery to capture the 'dirty window, small yard, small dusty driveway, the unplastered brick wall together with presence of "roaches and rats" support this reading. The township space just like the city centre portrays unhealthy living conditions. In *Room 207*, the room is also dirty and the six men share it with a family of rats hence the occupants crave for the "out of Hillbrow party." In *After Tears*, we are told that since 1968 black people had no legal title to the land that they occupied in urban areas like Soweto (Mhlongo, 2007:72). These historical injustices of apartheid need to be corrected. Clearly the unhoused post-apartheid subjects seek re-habitation. Rea, Bafana's mother has this to say about their house in Soweto, "all the memories in this place are bad ones" (Mhlongo, 2007:25). The city which serves as metonym of the national space is not a home for the poor black people. These people have no

sense of place. In a very illuminating scene, Noko a protagonist-narrator in *Room 207* wishes to leave Hillbrow and never come back:

> Someday I'm not going to miss this place, period. I'll be happy to move far away from it and, when I have moved far away I will never visit, even to pay homage, because there'll be no reason to do that.(Moele, 2006:167).

The Chiawelo house has cracks and invaded by cockroaches which is reflective of the cracks in the post-apartheid society. Nuttall (2004) notes that the post-apartheid society encounters new forms of conflict that arise from race and class differences. The township in post-apartheid era is still a physical terrain that speaks of disease, death, impoverishment, violence, vulnerability, sexual promiscuity and suffering. The historical colonial and apartheid conditions speak to the present realities in townships. In *After Tears*, the township is a site of ambivalence and inconsistencies because on one hand, it remains peripheral and retains its apartheid power structures. On the other hand, it serves as a shared community space where black Africans demonstrate African sensibility of communalism. This complicates the township as a historical construct. Such ambivalence deconstructs historical spatial divisions. These novels to some extent project an unforgiving stance by authorising the stories of the repressed people. Their refusal of discourses that obscure historical realities of inequalities and racism is amplified when PP, one of the mourners and a friend to the deceased Nyawana declares that:

> I think Rea is mad (…) I mean how could she choose AVBOB out of all the services that are available here *ekasi*? (Township). I think bra Dingaan's Rose Funerals could have handled this funeral better, but Rea chose the Afrikaners!"
>
> "Don't be a racist, so far they've handled it perfectly well" Nina cautions PP who further argues, "You're still young Nina, (…) This undertaker will only bring more death here *ekasi* because the owners are racist AWB Afrikaners (Mhlongo, 2007: 198-9).

PP dismisses Nina whom he says is young therefore lacks historical consciousness that informs his dislike of the Afrikaners. There is no doubt that for PP historical memory of colonial/ apartheid atrocities and injustices is important, it is a 'looking back' and rewriting national narratives through what Hove (2016) calls "dialogues of memory' that resist obliteration of a painful historical trajectory. These remarks illuminate deep fractures along racial lines and underscore the fact that

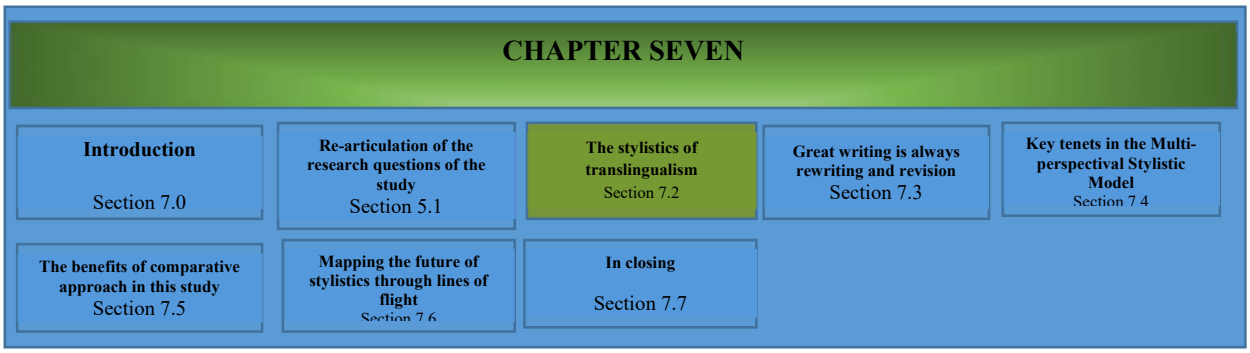
post-apartheid South Africa is still fragmented. The wounds from the harrowing past are deep to be easily forgotten**.** Samuelson (2008) rightly observed that the past is buried but not dead. Indeed the narratives defy artistic muteness suggested in reconciliation discourse. Clearly, ignoring such unresolved racial conflicts is not the best approach to bring about a non-racial society. Hartley (2014) has observed that rainbowism remains an abstract notion that is devoid of semantic significance in relation to the realities in South Africa. In the same vain, Rafapa (2018) argues that colour blindness is just a myth that obscures the reality of racial apartness and strife. In other words, the rainbow nation narrative perpetuates a self- serving single story and supresses alternative narratives of resistance especially from previously oppressed black people. Mbembe (2014) regards the subject of race as a messy terrain considering the racial conflict in post-apartheid society. In light of this realisation, I submit that the discourse around utopian vision of non-racialism in South African is a murky and vexed terrain that requires further scholarly inquiry. Probably, we need to grapple with the following contentious questions. For instance, what then is the ideal framework for creating and sustaining a rainbow nation? For whose benefit are such narratives constructed? How can the cotemporary South Africa remember its history? Lastly, and most significantly, is the dream about non-racial society as a panacea for racial conflict attainable at all? The narratives reveal a tragic fate of searching for a home. The selected novels consciously engage with complex interconnecting modes of existence, multiple interactions of living and becoming. This is in line with Deleuze and Guattarri's rhizomatic model because heterogeneity is a fundamental quality of humanity. Rhizomatic thought also privileges new sensibilities of nation and nationhood. Together, people from diverse cultural, linguistic and geographical backgrounds form a rhizomatic humanity without prejudices against women and "lekwerekwere."

## 6.13 Conclusion

By way of concluding, identification is a more complex process that can never be fully exploited. Deleuze and Guattarri's rhizomatic and cognitive linguistics frameworks are insightful and relevant in the ways they suggest new thinking when debating nuanced poetic discourse. Rhizomatic theory challenges prior and current understandings of existence. Existence is defined by continual flows and fluctuations. In light of the foregoing, it is appropriate to say that there are several planes of identification and place/space conception. The chapter has stressed instability and fluidity of contemporary identities. This concurs with the argument that humans are multi-

faceted and ever-evolving rather than singular and fixed. Deleuze and Guattari trouble the conceptualisation of self in terms of "I" but rather a self as multiplicity. Read together, the novels present compelling ways to think about the danger of absolutism. The notions of identity, place and space have become ambivalent and complex. Therefore, the narratives studied privilege de-gendered, denationalised and de-racialised identities. Also, the cognitive linguistics framework discussed in this chapter, offers new dimensions of interpreting poetics that explore the interface between language and cognitive structures and the social world. There are insightful research findings from Schema theory that can be utilised for further discussion this growing multi-disciplinary approach. The novels serve as discursive sites where intercultural and interracial relations are possible lines of flight for human connection.

# CHAPTER SEVEN: SUMMARY, KEY OUTCOMES AND POSSIBLE FUTURE DIRECTIONS THEORETICAL ASSEMBLAGES IN A MULTI-PERSPECTIVAL STYLISTIC MODEL




## 7.0 Introduction

The previous chapter highlighted the complexity of identity de/construction processes and place/space conceptions in the context of migration, mobility and increased transnational and cultural conversations in contact zones of the contemporary societies. This chapter summarises the main arguments developed in the preceding chapters by reflecting on the research findings and presenting tentative conclusions. In doing this, insights from the theoretical frameworks that make up Multi-perspectival Stylistic Model are utilised to establish the nexus between these theories in this study.

## 7.1 Re-articulation of the research questions of the study

The broad aim of this thesis was to develop a robust multi-conceptual and multi-dimensional stylistics analytical model that draws from Bakhtin, Kristeva, Deleuze and Guattari, Canagarajah and theorisations in cognitive linguistics' theorisation on figurative language from Lakoff and Johnson, theorists who privilege discursive and stylistic constructs in order to grapple with complex textual semantics. This study therefore is connected to a number of related interpretive and interdisciplinary studies.

The research question formulated to address the theoretical-methodological aspects was:

3. How could one develop a robust stylistics analytical model that synergizes the salient linguistic and stylistic aspects in the selected fictional narratives? A sub question emerging from the main one was: how could one effectively bring in the insights from the interdisciplinary fields which emanate from different traditions and ensure the model is applicable to the selected texts?

4. On the level of application, the study investigated the view that there is a deep sense of sadness and despair in the selected narratives. The questions formulated in line with this view are: How do the selected writers develop nuanced styles and stylizations as new strategies of dealing with artistic muteness and providing voice and audibility to the characters so that they "speak truth and no longer whisper to power" (Madonsela, 2017). In short, to what extent do the selected writers generate expressive voices through different stylisations?

### 7.1.1 Addressing Research Question 1: Broadening the horizons of stylistics through the rhizome and multi-disciplinary nomadic trajectories

Addressing research question 1, the study developed and refined a multi-perspectival stylistic model of reading poetic discourse with the aim of providing fresh heuristic tools. According to Mugair (2013) stylistics is an ever-developing enterprise and new approaches emerge all the time. The proposed Multi-perspectival Stylistics Model in this study provides multiple theoretical positions from which poetics discourse can be studied and interpreted. It provokes us to think about language and meanings in more complex ways through diverse standpoints it adopts in reading the word in the world. The MSM was developed to offer new insights in the application of these somewhat disparate but nonetheless convergent theories. The MSM subscribes to the view that stylistics should develop rhizomatically in different directions, taking lines of flight wherein definitive disciplinary borders are contested in contemporary philosophical debates because cross-disciplinary conversations are privileged. Bringing the various theoretical framework was not as much a challenge since all the theories have a point of convergence in post-structuralist traditions. It must also be pointed out that areas of divergence in these theories are significant in providing liminal spaces amenable for the construction of new epistemologies and new methodological

perspectives. The points of divergence are fertile areas for possible development of new philosophical assemblages and academic "lines of flight."

### 7.1.2 Addressing Research Question 2: The pervasive sense of loss, despair and sadness

The novels studied convey deep cynicism and uncertainty about the prospects of post-colonial subjectivity and the palpable gains of independence. The demise of apartheid and colonialism in South Africa and Zimbabwe respectively raised hopes for the general people who expected their lives to improve. Ironically, it is in this period that the novels studied in this thesis depict subjectivities who participate in futile searches for home, belonging and anchorage. The period is deeply marked by bleak lives, expedient masquerades and masculinised public ceremonies, socio-economic inequalities, disenchantment, marginalisation of the poor, fetid misery, poverty and sponsored state violence and its callous impact on citizens and non-citizens alike. The narratives convey a pervasive sense of insecurity and a nervous condition that haunts the post-independence subjects. The Zimbabwean texts, however, show that these themes are more polemic than in South Africa because of the ruling party's necropolitics, narcissism and repressive state apparatuses. In the same way, the post-apartheid era is torn and shredded by racial strife, palpable xenophobia, disorientation, poverty and the decay of urban infrastructure which parallels the trajectories of post-colonial subjects whose living standards are marked by precarity of the underclass and "things falling apart." The grotesque images of phalluses and faecal matter in *We Need New Names* are deployed in amplified styles to criticize "fathers of the nation" who resort to egoistic ceremonies of pomp and pride, culminating in agonising human rights abuses commissioned by the state so as to hold onto power in the post-independence era in Zimbabwe. The trope of dictators is pervasive in Zimbabwean texts and the nation is transformed into a "kaka" state, a term that reeks of revulsion for everything that has gone wrong within the nation space. Driven into barren lives, ordinary Zimbabweans opt to leave but become kaka cleaners in America and Britain, again re-inscribing the kakaness and depravity of their country. Bulawayo's novel metaphorically projects the bare lives of common Zimbabweans through the image of the "neglected mangy dog" (a la Louis Bernado Honwana's eponymous title) that is crushed to death as it scavenges for food.

In addition, the novels as already discussed in the foregoing chapters interrogate the conversations about Africanism, cosmopolitanism and transnationalism. Yet, the narratives amplify dystopia and show the problems related to utopian narratives that speak about dignified existence.

The texts also show that speaking and audibility become the weapon of the muted groups against state-sanctioned silencing. My reading of these fictional texts establishes competing narratives from various social groups all contributing to the complexity of the metanarrative about postcolonial exigencies of living. The novels provide diverse worldviews. Poetics is presented as a locus for the counter-discourses and also offers room for the subaltern to "speak truth to power" (Madonsela 2017) or "talking back." The texts in my corpus convey the voices from the precariat such as immigrants, women and the politically silenced common man who has been reduced to the Agamben figure of *homo sacer*, meaning, a subject whose life is unworthy and therefore can be killed (literally or metaphorically), with impunity. Yet, the narratives present subjects whose speaking is an act of resistance. The act of speaking becomes a "weapon of the weak" as rightly suggested by Agamben (1998). In other words, the novels highlight the subtle acts of resistance by those denied membership, especially by the state in the societies discussed in this study thereby showing the limits of the sovereign power to mean and construct reality. The biopolitical mechanisms are strongly contested and readers have access to alternative stories from the marginalised.

In a similar vein, the corpus in this study demonstrates an orientation towards Bakhtin's dialogic and polyphonic discourses that resist monolithic perspectives which privilege 'a single story' telling. Poetics in these novels is a platform for challenging and enactment of the marginal voices that articulate the disquieting realities of the human condition. The novels highlight the suffering endured by the marginalised people mainly caused by political maladministration, greed and gratuitous selfishness of the ruling class. The study emphasises the need for a reconceptualisation of sense-making in line with Bakhtin's theorisation of novelistic discourse that refutes empiricist and objectivist models of languaging the world. It is in this sense that I argue for a hermeneutic inquiry that takes from both linguistics (objectivism) and poetics (subjectivity) because linguistic constructions assume meanings from the social world (Volek, 2014). Dialogism and polyphony challenge what Foucault (1980:13) termed "regimes of truth" from the powerful in society. Manichean binaries are also interrogated and dismissed as fallacious and deceptive. Dialogic and polyphonic constructions as well as intertextuality of the texts analysed in this study promote acting against silence. The muted groups reclaim their expressive voices and artists address the multiple problems confronting their societies through such discourse models. Bakhtin's theorisations of poetic discourse and language show a shift from perceptions about subordinated

groups presented in the spiral of silence and muted group theory in which language is encoded to serve the needs of the dominant and oppressive groups while ignoring the marginalised and oppressed groups' capacity to' speak back.'

Bakhtin (1981) claims that the subaltern speaks to the dominant group in dialogic and polyphonic varieties of novelistic textuality. The analyses in this study demonstrate that the dominant groups and the state have no monopoly to meaning/s. Artistic muteness is also contested and subverted through the adoption of a writing mode that engages characters in dialogue. Bakhtin (1986) contends that language is dialogic by nature and using language is participating in making sense of the world. He affirms that the multiplicity of conflicting worldviews is realised in the realm of language. Dialogism acknowledges the multiplicity of voices and dynamics of the relations between individuals and society (Holquist, 2001). Bakhtin (1986) contends therefore that the meaning of an utterance is always half someone else's. This insight destabilises the idea of a point of view by blurring the individual views and creates ambiguity as to whose thoughts are ultimately transmitted. The claim that all utterances are part of a matrix of utterances creates a hermeneutical complexity that inaugurates fictional narratives as remarkably complex and sophisticated inscriptions.

### 7.2 The stylistics of translingualism

Translingual stylisations capture a number of semantic ambiguities in reading the hybrid textual qualities embedded in the studied novels. It is evident that language users in multicultural and multilingual contexts utilise translanguaging in order to create a social dialogue and project everyday politics of language. Language users draw from the available linguistic repertoires in everyday interaction and the distinction between native and non-native is contested through such translingual practices. This means that translanguaging and its dynamics constitute another theoretical framework that challenges linguistic hegemony as well as Eurocentric centre/ periphery binaries (Canagarajah, 2019). As the foregoing chapters have shown, the texts studied here utilised translingual strategies to present polyphonic and polycultural discourses that reflect the emerging linguistic realities of contact zones in the modern societies that are hybrid and mobile.

It is quite clear that translingual paradigm shifts from structuralist orientations and takes a post-structuralist route by synergising diverse linguistic codes (Canagarajah, 2018). The results of the study outlined in previous chapters demonstrate that translingualism or the polyphony of multiple languages in contact recognises linguistic diversity and cultural hybridity in everyday interactions. It is imperative to recognise that translingualism is a linguistic theory oriented towards linguistic

heterogeneity since it resists monolingual biases and linguistic imperialism (Matsuda, 2006). Canagarajah (2013) argues that no linguistic code is superior. This recognition of the translingual paradigm also troubles Chomskyan generative linguistics and the binaries between linguistic competence and linguistic performance. In essence, the translanguaging recognition of languages and codes in contact relegates competence and privileges linguistic performance manifest in the superlatively dynamic ways of language usage.

The results in this study underline the idea that linguistic borders are not impervious and closed as claimed in Sausserean structuralism. Drawing from these reflections, a translingual paradigm forms part of the theoretical composition in this multi-perspectival stylistic model and provides the analytical tools for reading language use in contact zones. In addition, translingual practices drew my attention to the situationality and variability of language use in diverse contexts discussed earlier on in the previous chapters. This claim is consistent with Bakhtin's polyphonic philosophy of language discussed in Chapter Four, which emphasised historicity and situated contexts of language use that should be radically considered in interpretive processes. Bakhtin (1981) calls this the "outsideness" of language which is as pertinent as the linguistic elements of the text. It is essential to restate that these theories present the sociological dimensions of language. Put simply, language is a social phenomenon whose use is determined by the immediate social world where interpretive assessments become the domain of human readers who by nature are social animals. Thus, it follows that the positivist and objectivist model of text analyses fall short of the complex conceptualisation of language in use and discursive practices.

### 7.3 Great writing is always rewriting and revision

In this penultimate segment, I want to acknowledge the fact that this study is an intertext because of the allusions, references and quotations taken from "a thousand plateaus" (Deleuze and Guattarri) and diverse assemblages in the academic field. The archive in this thesis demonstrates and amplifies robust poetic dialogue and textual conversations within the African canon and beyond. These creative textual conversations engender a necessary reformulation of the literary canon. One of the findings in this study is that the focal texts connect thematically and stylistically in intricately nuanced ways. The study explored the shift of focus from the author to the interaction between the primary texts, readers, and other literary configurations. This shift is privileged in contemporary hermetic and interpretive practices. Following Kristeva's theorisation of poetics, I examined the complex maze of textual relations in poetic discourse. I limited my focus to the

thematic and stylistic conversations in the primary texts. However, there are multiple dimensions of textual connections that could be explored in future research. In other words, the readers' knowledge of various literary texts is integral to the effective reading of intertextual stylisations. The study makes these subtle conclusions:

1. Texts are open to thematic and stylistic influences from other texts.
2. Literary texts are complex polysemous configurations and open vistas whose origin is difficult to trace.
3. Readers play a central role in recognizing intertextual references and make links in the process of meaning-making.
4. The novels do not just speak to each other within the traditional canonical divisions but they go beyond the confines of national and regional boundaries and interact with other texts from renowned African and non-African writers and critics such as Marechera, Ngugi, Achebe, Selvon and Fanon. Thus, the narratives contribute to the postcolonial metanarrative of African fiction.
5. The corpus of Southern African texts studied demonstrates that novelists rewrite classical texts such as Achebe's *Things fall Apart* and Marechera's *House of Hunger* in *We need new names,* Ngugi's *The River Between* in *One Foreigner's Ordeal*. Moele's *Room 207* and Mpe's *Welcome to our Hillbrow* are intertexts that subtly connect to other experiences in the oeuvre of postcolonial subjectivities. *Room 207* makes significant intertextual references to *House of Hunger* in order to effectively capture the dystopic conditions in a representative post-apartheid city. These are only a few cases cited here to support the logic that the narratives studied in this thesis deploy intertextuality to reframe the canonical literary tradition and at the same time, the texts vividly convey the transgression and crossing of the borders of canonical and literary traditions through novel stylisations.

### 7.4 Key tenets in the Multi-perspectival Stylistic Model

This research established that there are long-held assumptions about language and interpretive practices that are no longer sustainable in view of new insights from both linguistics and poetics. Hence in this subsection, I present the primary tenets in the Multi-perspectival Stylistic Model developed in this study.

1. Reading and interpretation of poetic discourse generates only tentative truths since both language and poetic discourse are multi-dimensional in nature. In the same way post-

structuralist thought refutes absolute truth in favour of partial truths that constantly change through re-interpretations, the MSM problematises the dangers of a single story. In other words, MSM is compatible with post-structuralism rather than ignoring the human and contextual aspects in sense-making processes.

2. There is always a plurality of meanings because there are no fixed meanings in poetic discourse. Truth is not a single absolute but rather emerges from dialogic, polyphonic and intertextual constructions of discourse (Bakhtin, 1984). Furthermore the MSM subscribes to hermeneutic traditions that regard understanding as subject to contradictions and contestations over meanings. MSM privileges Bakhtin's claim that social reality is heterogeneous.
3. The MSM emphasises attention to hermeneutic practices that rely on encyclopaedic knowledge of the reader yet still recognizes that the same linguistic constructions can function differently for different people in different contexts and circumstances (Volek, 2014). In essence, the claim of stable signification ignores subjectivity and variability that come with different readers and different contexts. Contemporary hermeneutics claims that human interpretation of reality is mediated in socio-cultural contexts. Gadamer (1993) calls this historicity of language in sense-making. Significantly, this observation brings together pragmatics and semantics in the approaches embedded in MSM.

4. Human reality is complex, ever-evolving and multi-faceted. This dynamism essentially displaces empiricism and its positivistic outlook. The MSM underscores the importance of new hermeneutic traditions that embrace the polysemantic nature of novelistic discourse. Much akin to post-structuralism, the findings from this study show that there are numerous perspectives of reading and understanding poetic narratives because each perspective uniquely brings out new insights leading to new realities (Richerme, 2013).

5. Apparently meaning making is not merely informed by the linguistic construct of the texts but brings in extra-linguistic factors. The human being is dis/located within a range of socio-cultural and historical conditions (Brockmeir and Meretoja, 2014), offering therefore a more nuanced approach to reading of poetics. Therefore it is difficult to have a single reality coming from different readers. Human subjects are central in reading and meaning

interpretation therefore the claim of universalism is critically questioned in MSM. MSM, like post-structuralism, aims to discover the covert and nuanced meanings, recognizing in the process the plurality of diverse and even contradictory meanings.

6. Human cognition is inextricably connected to the body, mind and knowledge of the social world. There is a marked shift from the author intention to a new interest in textuality, context and readers' perception. Readers actively engage in evaluative and reflective processes in the exigencies of interpretation.

7. The MSM is anti-objectivist: it explores experimentalist uses of language and the licenture of writing in spaces that defy conformity to tradition/s.
8. Drawing of cognitive linguistic components, the MSM privileges cognition of meaning instead of focusing on linguistic constructions or textual compositional elements. The reader's prior knowledge informs reading and interpretations, taking into the agonizing process the entire archive of intertextual knowledge and contextual knowledge.

**7.5 The benefits of comparative approach in this study**

This section highlights the usefulness of the comparative analysis adopted in this study. Initially, the comparative approach was purposefully chosen to attract diverse audiences particularly from Southern Africa to engage in nuanced readings of the selected texts. Related to this point is that the narratives' stylistic and thematic constructions appeal to a wide audience. Secondly, a comparative approach broadened my understanding of the South African and Zimbabwean literary corpus in this thesis. I am confident that readers of this study find it insightful because it provides a broader frame of references for future studies in both linguistics and poetics. Thirdly, the analyses and discussions of the texts in this study engage with the cultural and socio-political dis/connections of the milieu of production and enunciation. This exploration of nuanced meanings of these narratives from a comparative approach is compatible with the theoretical concepts of intertextuality, dialogism, polyphony, translingualism and rhizomatic thought. For instance, the novels were examined as intertexts privileging the intertextual references to other literary texts within the African literary canon and beyond, signposting the discussion of semantic possibilities embedded in such textual dialogues and stylisations. Through comparative analysis, the study

discovered the correlations between innumerable thematic concerns and the infinite layers of meanings. In other words, a comparative approach in this study generated a new literary landscape for the discovery of new ideas and literary contexts that stimulated novel insights.

On the thematic level, while the South African novels concentrated much on post-apartheid experiences of rural-urban migration, narratives from Zimbabwe amplified how the country's failed economy, biting poverty and volatile political environment forced Zimbabweans to "flee in droves." The narratives re-inscribe how these immigrants are further victimised in host societies. The cold reception they received reduced them to Agamben's (1998) figure of *homo sacer* whose life is bare and precarious. Furthermore, the Zimbabwean fictional narratives show that ZANU PF youth militia, (green bombers), ex-combatants and overzealous supporters of the ruling party appropriate power to wreak havoc on the "politically marked Other." Such state apparatuses have become the "petty sovereign" that implement coercive acts and actualise the necropolitical power. In addition, the xenophobic attacks in South Africa and political violence in Zimbabwe, especially in the post-2000 era, become telling evidence of Mbembe's concepts of conviviality and mutual zombification. These stylisations enhance meaning-making within the context of the multitude of 'voices' on the subject of the profanities of the postcolonial state in a way that plays around with attitudes, emotions and opinions of the haunted. These are texts that actualise the audience's potential to vulgarize and subvert initial meanings of political and economic independence now is prostate paralysis. Ordinary people who are victims of state generated poverty, hunger, and general conditions of precarity participate in "cheap imitations of power" Mbembe, 2001). Another thematic observation is that all the novels studied restate that decolonisation is not yet accomplished. The "disciplined bodies" of the post-colonial subjects become accomplices of the sovereign power that oppresses them (Mbembe, 2001). The conviviality of the post-colonial subjects is articulated in Chikwava's *Harare North.* The narrator/ protagonist is a victim of economic situation and political polarisation in Zimbabwe, yet, he exercises the sovereign power against suffering fellow citizens in his capacity as a member of brutal ZANU PF youth militia. He participates in "disciplining" the "change people" for "throwing their tails all over and voting for opposition party" (Chikwava, 2009: 209). This character, like many of his calibre, supports his zombification which he sadly misinterprets as patriotism. The same conviviality with power is reflected through ordinary South Africans in their treatment of African immigrants. Instead of confronting the ANC government for generating conditions of poverty and perpetual misery, South

Africans burn and hound fellow victims of post-colonial self-aggrandizing leaders. South Africans fail to examine fully the root cause of their poverty and precarity but gullibly accept official narratives that turn them against African immigrants. By doing this, ordinary citizens naturalise and normalise their present precarity thereby becoming oblivious of the failures of the ruling bourgeois. Mbembe (2001) describes the impotence of zombified citizens who uncritically accept scapegoating and diversion narratives that blame the African migrants for "snatching" jobs and women meant for South African citizens. It is quite disheartening that the post-apartheid "state victims" participate in necropolitical violence against the African other.

The novels central to this thesis also convey a state of abjection experienced by ordinary citizens and non-citizens. Grotesque elements and the aesthetics of vulgarity are utilized to mock and attack the corrupt leaders in the postcolony. The Zimbabwean autocratic leadership reduced its citizens to the status of "the wretched of the earth" who flee the unhomeliness in the national space and take "bum wiping" or "BBC" jobs in host societies. Disenchantment and betrayal of the ideals of the liberation struggle are pervasive themes in contemporary Southern African novels examined in this thesis. Although the South African ANC and Zimbabwe's ZANU PF are ridiculed, it should be clear that the Zimbabwean fictional texts share a preoccupation with the semiotics of power and the obscene performance of such power through brutal killing of opposition members which cannot be said of the South African political landscape.

These novels share another common feature in the way they construct a borderless human space through a deliberate subversion of colonial cartography. The narratives engage in discourses about African internationalism, cosmopolitan African Renaissance, Pan-Africanism and Africa's decolonisation project since relations among Africans within the continent is problematic and hypocritical. Africans need to rethink about continental integration before seeking to reach out and establish healthy connections with other humanities of the world.

The texts examined here also show the sad spectacle of unsheltered or "unhoused" post-independence subjects as metaphorically presented through losing RDP houses in *After Tears,* existence of Paradise, a shanty town, in *We need new names* and the poor living standards of South African black workers at a farm in *One foreigner's ordeal in* contrary to the "sheltered lives" of the Afrikaner farm owners. However, in *After Tears* even the Volk has become vulnerable in the

post-apartheid era. The novels thus illuminate the fate of post-independence subjects whose existence has been immensely affected by the overwhelming sense of despair, vulnerability and helplessness. Mhlongo's text, *After Tears*, shows the carnival of the precarious during the "after tears party" exposing social vices and political impunities in post-apartheid society. Moral corruption is dramatised through culturally deracinated characters whose behaviour and attitudes towards life and other members of the society amount to a shocking spectacle metonymically captured in the novel *After Tears*, through a young man watching a movie from his laptop at the graveyard while other mourners are still burying the deceased.

## 7.6 Mapping the future of stylistics through lines of flight: The intersection of linguistics and poetics

I find the ideas of Clarke and Parsons (2013) very insightful in my final discussion of the relationship between linguistics and poetics. It is necessary for both linguists and literary scholars to become rhizomatic researchers and rethink linguistics and poetics. This means moving away from "striated "disciplinary spaces to "smooth" spaces that embrace flexibility, expansion and diversity. In other words, we need to forfeit what Deleuze and Guattari (1980/ 1987) term the "tree structures" of epistemological approaches and take new research trajectories in both linguistics and poetics. The post-structuralist views adopted in this study present that shift from linear thinking. Therefore, it cannot be over-emphasised that contemporary stylistic models should take diverse pathways contrary to arboreal conceptions of knowledge construction. This means that both linguistics and literary studies should embrace new lenses and new insights from other disciplines in a trans-disciplinary approach (Clarke and Parsons, 2013). My discussion of the fictional works in previous chapters shows that interpretation needs to integrate both objective and subjective approaches to avoid "false analytical ruptures" that ignore the relevant attributes of the previous epistemic models in both linguistics and poetics. Rhizomatic researchers live outside the current state of affairs and considering the idea that reality is provisional, such researchers must live in a plane of immanence. Such researchers problematise the status quo and working with prescriptions imposed by disciplinary traditions or "ways of doing things" usually stated by the watchful eyes of 'fathers' in the academia. My engagement with the various conceptual frameworks in this study has indicated the need for rhizomatic conversations across diverse disciplines, thereby breaking with traditions and exploring new avenues. Drawing from the

foregoing observations, I recommend that academic and conceptual conversations are essential for multiple entryways and exits in both linguistics and poetics. Furthermore, an on-going philosophical inquiry that continues to interrogate existing epistemologies and practices in order to find new areas of engagement is most needful at this juncture and the Multi-perspectival Stylistic Model is one such trans-disciplinary approach.

### 7.7 In closing

As a way of concluding, I maintain the position taken by linguists that stylistics provides explanatory and descriptive power. This means that the attention accorded to the linguistic composition of texts remains relevant and necessary for sound evaluation and sense-making process. It has been highlighted in the thesis' cognitive linguistics framework that the novels' texture sets up the cognitive processes that ultimately lead to meaning construction. One of the essential insights from all the theories used in this study is that the social world and context is an integral interpretive domain, therefore ignoring its contribution as a heuristic element has serious implications. The context offers new shades of meanings. One important aspect that I should re-emphasise is that the Multi-perspectival stylistic model recognises the reader's active participation in meaning-making process, especially in bringing encyclopaedic knowledge in understanding both linguistic and extra-linguistic cues from within and outside the text. This fundamental dimension in MSM has not been seriously emphasised in antecedent studies and is therefore a major contribution to the ever-expanding epistemic horizons.

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