

**RECONSTRUCTING IDENTITY IN POST-COLONIAL BLACK SOUTH AFRICAN  
LITERATURE FROM SELECTED NOVELS OF SINDIWE MAGONA AND KOPANO  
MATLWA**

**by**

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**DEDICATION**

This study is dedicated to my mother, Catherina Morongoa Montle and the memory of my late father, Elicent Pheeha Montle.

**DECLARATION**

I declare that the dissertation hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo, for the degree of Master of Arts in English Studies is my work and that all the sources that I have used have been acknowledged and that this work has not been submitted at this or any other institution.

.....  
**MONTLE M. E**

.....  
**DATE**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to humbly extend my heartfelt appreciations to the following:

- Jesus Christ the author of my life, my redeemer, my Lord. Thank you Lord for strengthening me throughout the course of this study. May all glory, honour and dominion be to you.
- My mother, Catherina Montle for her unwavering support and parental love.
- My supervisor and mentor Dr M.J Mogoboya. Thank you very much sir for seeing a potential in me. You challenged me to my push myself to the edge of my limits and far beyond.
- My little brother Mathews Montle for his interest and support for my study.

## **ABSTRACT**

This study seeks to examine the concept of identity in the post-colonial South Africa. Like any other African state, South Africa was governed by a colonial strategy called apartheid which meted out harsh conditions on black people. However, the indomitable system of apartheid was subdued by the leadership of the people, which is democracy in 1994. Notwithstanding the dispensation of democracy, colonial legacies such as inequality, racial discrimination and poverty are still yet to be addressed. As mirrored in Sindiwe Magona's *Beauty's Gift* (2008) and *Mother to Mother* (1998) and Kopano Matlwa's *Coconut* (2008) and *Spilt Milk* (2010), the colonial past perhaps paved a way for social issues to warm their way into the democratic South Africa. This study will use the aforementioned novels penned in the post-colonial period to present an evocation of identity-crisis in South Africa. It will then employ these methodological approaches; Afrocentricity, Feminism, Historical-biographical and Post-Colonial Theory to assert and re-assert the identity that South Africans have acquired subsequent to the political transition from apartheid to democracy.

KEY WORDS: Apartheid, Colonialism, Democracy, Identity, Post-Colonialism

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

AD : Anno Domini

AIDS : Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

ANC : African National Congress

BC : Before Birth of Christ

EFF : Economic Freedom Fighters

FFF : Five Firm Friends

HIV : Human Immuno-deficiency Virus

TRC : Truth and Reconciliation Commission

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1. BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

South Africa is one of the former colonies that triumphed over the political system of oppression. The struggle against the totalitarian regime of white domination led to a tremendous political upheaval which resulted in the dictatorial government of apartheid conquered by the progressive forces which fought for independence. Eegunlusi (2017: 2) asserts that the considerations that were given to African identity during the pre-colonial period are not the same as during colonial and post-colonial periods. Thus, the re-establishment of the democratic society of South Africa gave rise to a crucial shift of identities. Kochalumchuvattil (2010: 109) affirms: 'The search for identity has always been a key issue facing mankind in its striving after significance and meaning. However the African understanding of self is in crisis having been assailed from a number of directions.'

To date, prominent literary scholars such as Radebe, Rafapa, Ojoniyi, have singled out identity as a prospective phenomenon that moulds the reflexive rapport between South Africans and their roles in the post-colonial period. Furthermore, the overarching mission of the autonomous leadership that took control since 1994 has been to reconstruct an independent state that is devoid of colonial traits that, if not properly addressed, could degrade South Africa into chaos. Rosenberg (1996: 86) notes:

The commission grew out of South Africa's transition to democracy. It has two goals: to help heal the victims of political violence of the apartheid years, and to help heal society and create a new culture of respect for human rights, where such things could never happen again. It is supposed to uncover the large truth about violence, the patterns of abuses, and how they were ordered. But it is also responsible for telling the small truths: the shackles burned and the bullet that cost the peaceful protester his eye...

This study is premised on South Africa's attempt to re-define and re-locate herself during the post-colonial period. It aims to investigate versatile facets of identity in the post-colonial South Africa, which serve as a microcosm for Africa. It will then synthesise a variety of literary texts within the epistemological framework of social mobility to bring to

limelight the beastly challenge of identity-crisis. A special focus will be put on Sindiwe Magona's *Mother to Mother* (1998), *Beauty's Gift* (2008) and Kopano Matlwa's *Coconut* (2007) and *Spilt Milk* (2010). These novels protest, among other things, against the capitalist monopoly in relation to the present and future South Africa.

## **1.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

According to Manning (2013: 319), 'African history and world history each became substantial fields of historical study in the aftermath of the Second World War.' Furthermore, Africa is a culturally diversified continent which is constituted of 53 states and it is the second largest continent in the world with 23 % of the world's entire land area and 13% of the world's population (James *et al.*, 2009). The people living in Africa are referred to as Africans. Mogoboya (2011: 18) defines Africans as people who naturally belong to Africa, 'they are natives of Africa either by history, culture, or consciousness, which means that they are indigenous, to Africa and, as such, qualify to be called the original inhabitants of the continent.'

Rodney (1973: 24) asserts that African and Asian societies were arising autonomously until they were annexed directly or indirectly by the capitalist powers. Ostensibly, the coalition of European powers divided and colonised the African states amongst themselves. Manning (2013: 320) states: 'African historiography highlights a prominent but imbalanced set of global interactions in the African past, with disproportionate emphasis on Europe.'

The colonisation and division of African states still haunts Africa even after her emancipation. It is condescendingly masquerading as humanitarian aid and poverty alleviation programmes. This is neo-colonialism which serves as one of the salient recurrent discussions in the present-day African literary studies. For better understanding, this study will be contextualised into three main parts: pre-colonialism, colonialism and post-colonialism (neo-colonialism).

Europe conspired to conquer Africa and perpetuate Western ideologies throughout the continent. Mogoboya (2011: 3) articulates: 'Europeans annexed Africa in *circa* the seventeenth century, with an elaborate and conscious aim of expanding their empire in mind.' The colonisers introduced Western culture in African societies, built churches and schools, of which, were and are still religiously motivated. For instance, there are Christian schools, Muslim schools and Catholic schools in the post-colonial South Africa such St Paul Catholic School based in Limpopo, Groblersdal.

As Rodney (1973: 15) points out, the ordeal of colonialism for the larger part of Africa perhaps cemented the existent classes (capitalists) that seem to be partially crystallised and changes appear to be gradual rather than revolutionary. Adams and Abubakar (2016) assert that Africa is considered as politically the most unstable continent marred by poverty and ethnic strife.

### **1.2.1 Pre-Colonial Africa**

Manning (2013: 325) postulates that there are scholars that made detailed investigation of Africa as a part of their studies such as R. J. Barendse and M. Rediker and these researchers are seemingly beyond those who initially trained in African history. Moreover, it is important to highlight the historical times that enumerate the notable events that occurred within different regions of Africa:

**Berber North Africa** - about 1000 B.C.

**East Africa** - about A.D. 700.

**Egypt** - about 3000 B.C.

**Ethiopia** - about A.D. 0

**Nush** - about 1000 B.C.

**The Forest lands south of the Western Sudan** - about A.D. 1000.

**Western and Central Sudan** - about A.D. 300.



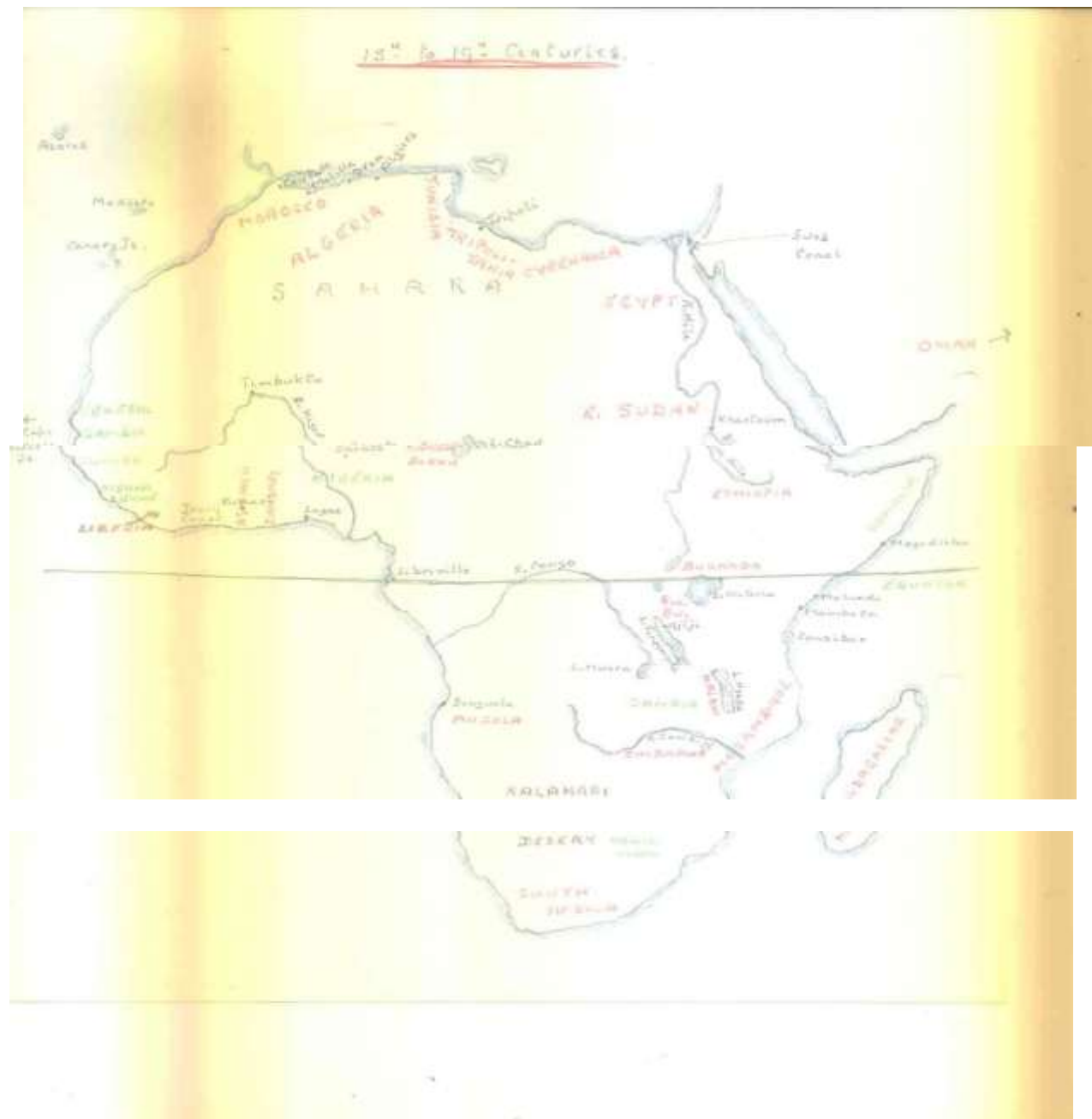
Braun (2014: 1) avers: 'Africa is central to human history. It is the continent where our species arose, where some of the greatest ancient civilisations thrived...' Prior to the advent of white dominance in Africa, the latter was a sovereign continent that presumably had four great language families: Afro-Asiatic, Nilo-Saharan, Niger-Congo, and Khoisan from which all modern African languages have originated. Adams and Van de Vijver (2017: 114) state: 'with over 1,2 billion people across 58 countries and between 1 200 and 3 000 ethnolinguistic groups, Africa is one of the most culturally diverse regions of the world.'

Along similar lines, she (Africa) had her own traditions devoid of the European influence. Africans relied on hunting, fishing, livestock and general subsistence farming for their survival. Rodney (1973: 66) states:

One way of judging the level of economic development in Africa five centuries ago is through the quality of the products. Here a few examples will be given of articles which came to the notice of the outside world. Through North Africa, Europeans became familiar with a superior brand of red leather from Africa which was termed 'Moroccan leather'. In fact, it was tanned and dyed by Hausa and Mandinga specialists in northern Nigeria and Mali.

Chaves *et al.* (2012) maintains that over the course of pre-colonial Africa most transportation was by head portage and this was very inefficient economically. In the present time, Rodrik (2016: 15) asserts: 'On the upside, Africa also harbours some emerging and relatively fast-growing economies, which has led to greater participation in both regional and global economic markets.' Parts of Africa which were factually centralised politically seem to possess a better communal provision and economic advancement (as measured by light intensity at night) today than parts which were barely centralised politically (Gennaioli & Rainer, 2007).

**Figure 1.1: Map of Ancient Africa**



**Analysis**

This map shows different states of Africa prior to the arrival of colonisers. The colonial map of Africa (see p.12) displays different names of countries compared to the pre-colonial map. For example, the North Western part on the pre-colonial map is named *Sahara* and on the colonial map (see p.12) is referred as the French West Africa.

In the wake of the practices of the ancient traditions of Africa, James *et al.* (2009) claim that the early inhabitants of Niger-Congo languages hunted with bow and arrow, and fished with hook and line. Osafo-waako and Robinson (2013: 7) assert: 'We find very strong positive correlations between political centralization and all these public goods outcomes suggesting that the relative lack of political centralization in pre-colonial Africa may indeed be an important part of the story about African underdevelopment.'

#### **1.2.1.1 Early Southern Africa**

The languages and cultures from the Niger-Congo and Khoisan widened across the whole West and Central Africa, and later to the southern reaches of the continent. Heywood (2009: ii) in his book on *History of South African Literature* discusses selected poems, plays, and prose works in five literary traditions: Khoisan, Nguni–Sotho, Afrikaans, English, and Indian.

Into the bargain, small Bantu-speaking communities of ironworkers and farmers had settled all over Southern Africa, excluding only the drier regions of Central and Western Botswana, Namibia, and the Cape of Good Hope region of South Africa. From the 7th century, cattle keeping came to be associated with the rise of chiefs. Owners of large herds were able to lend cattle to poorer people for milk (James *et al.*, 2009).

#### **1.2.2 Illustrations of historical activities of the peoples of Africa**

Africa's cultural traditions are extremely diverse. Traditionally, art, music, and oral literature served to reinforce existing religious and social patterns. During the colonial period, some educated city dwellers rejected traditional African cultural activities in favour of Western cultural pursuits, but a cultural revival sprang up with the rise of African nationalism and independence in the mid-20th century (James *et al.*, 2009).

**Figure 1. 2: Khoisan Cave Paintings**



**Analysis**

This image presents the primeval cave paintings crafted by Khoisan people in eastern Zimbabwe.

Paul Almasy/Corbis

**Figure 1.3: Ceremonial Mask, Nigeria**



**Analysis**

This is a yam-cult dance mask from Nigeria. Dance masks such as this one were believed to give the wearer supernatural powers.

Raffia Wood/CORBIS-BETTMAN

**Figure 1.4: Zulu Beehive Houses, South Africa**



**Analysis**

This image shows the pre-historic shelters in Zululand. This traditional architecture here consists of beehive houses constructed of layers covering a framework of wooden strips. These houses are usually laid out in a circle.

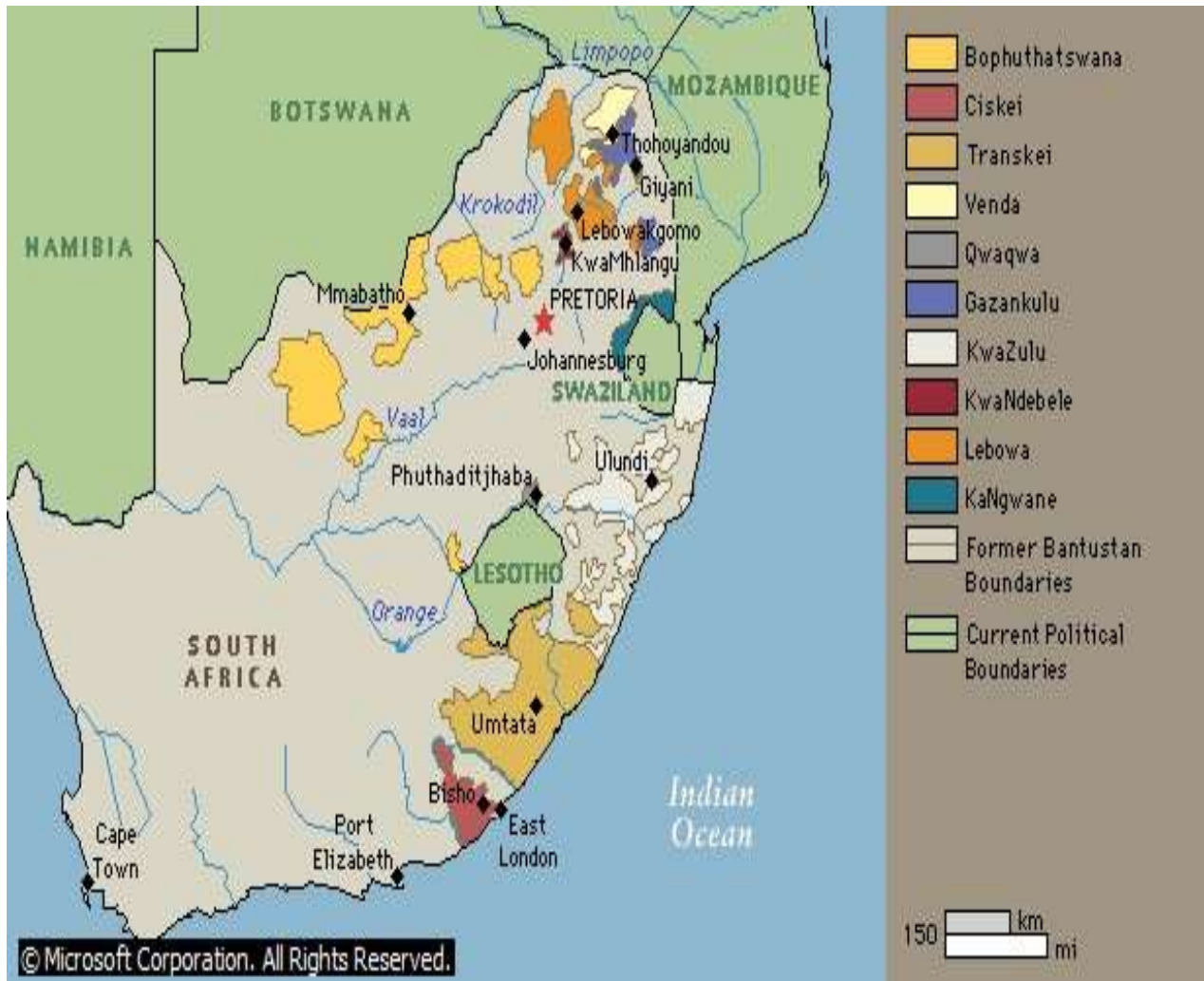
**Figure 1.5: Zulu Headmen and women**



THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

This is a photograph of three Zulu headmen and women. The women are wearing their cultural dance costume while the men have put on their traditional warrior clothing and are carrying the distinctive Zulu shields.

**Figure 1.6: Former Bantustans in South Africa**



The South African government in 1995 divided the black tribes into ethnic groups and assigned each group to a separate area. A total of ten Bantustans were established as part of racial segregation.

### 1.2.3 Colonial Africa

Africa became a trophy for the European competition in the 1870s which was intensified when Belgian king Leopold II got involved. She (Africa) became increasingly dominated by European traders and colonisers. The European traders sent millions of Africans to work as slaves on colonial plantations in North America, South America, and the Caribbean (Smith *et al.*, 2009). Rodney (1973: 59) states: 'In large parts of Europe, when communalism broke down, it gave way to widespread slavery as the new form in which labour was mobilised. This slavery continued throughout the European Middle Ages, with the Crusades between Christians and Muslims giving excuses for enslaving people.'

Kelley (2000: 27) notes: 'colonial domination required a whole way of thinking, a discourse in which everything that is advanced, good and civilised is defined and measured in European terms.' Europeans sought to take over Africa's wealth: mining accessories: (gold and diamond), livestock and farms. In the late 19th century, European powers seized and colonised virtually all of Africa.

The existence of the European rule in Africa threatened the African culture which held, *inter alia*, the African identity. Ward (2008: 25) declares: 'acculturative processes or outcomes are often measured using identity and identification.' Therefore, altercations in beliefs, norms, values, language, and religious and cultural practises are regarded as pointers that could be shaped by acculturative change (Sam & Berry, 2010).

Wole Soyinka in his play, *Death and the King's Horseman* (1975), mirrors some of the conditions that Africans endured during the colonial period. He portrays the inception of colonialism in Africa and how the Europeans attempted to bring the African culture to extinction and replace it with the Western decree.

Soyinka (1975) conveys a series of events that portray the European invasion of Africa such as the suicidal death that Elesin as the king's horseman was supposed to commit in order to help the spirit of the king to ascend to the afterlife. This seems to be customary in the Yoruba world in the story. The horseman is expected to honour his culture and perform the suicidal death ritual. However, when the colonial elites get involved, Elesin

dishonours his African culture and strays away from his duty as a Horseman and perceived it as unfair to take his life.

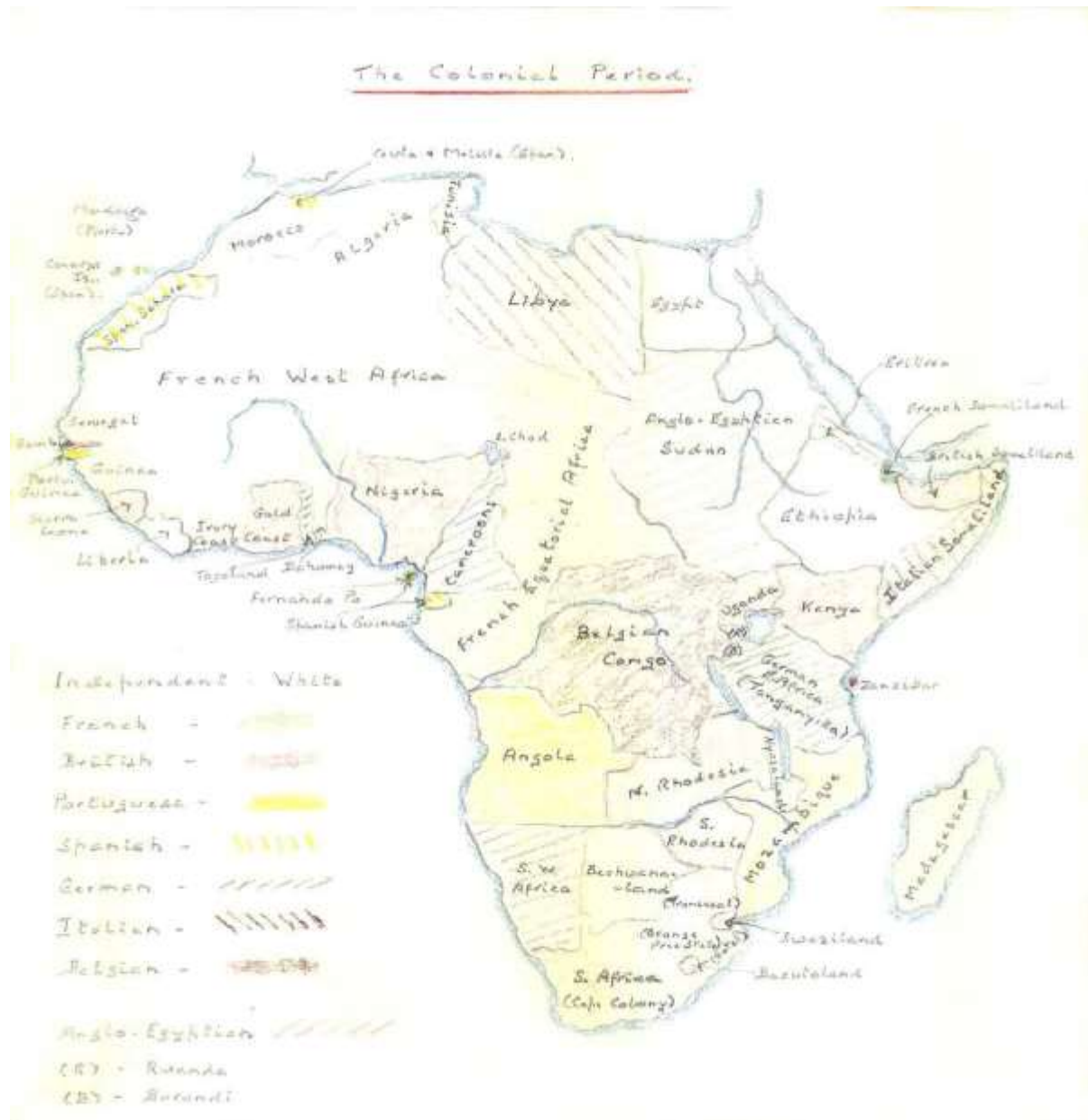
As demonstrated in Soyinka's *Death and the King's horseman*, colonialism invaded Africa and planted a seed that caused notable changes that still predominate today such as the pre-eminence of the English language. Colonialism meted harsh conditions on Africans. The latter were tortured and forced to migrate from Africa to other continents as slaves. Even the children of African descendants who were born in other continents were still subjugated on the basis of their black skin colour. This is demonstrated by the movie: *Twelve Years a Slave* (2013).

*Twelve Years a Slave* reflects on the hardships that black people endured during the reign of oppression. They are treated as disposable commodities, traded and enforced into slavery. Black men and women are raped, killed and forced to do hard labour. They are residing at an impoverished slum, working in the white men's farms without any remuneration. The movie opens with this statement: 'This film is based on true story,' and closes with this remark:

Solomon Northup was one of the few victims of kidnapping to regain freedom slavery. Solomon brought the men responsible for his abduction to trial. Unable to testify against the whites in the nation's capital, he lost the case against the slave pen owner, James Burch. After lengthy legal proceedings in New York, his kidnappers Hamilton and Brown avoided prosecution. In 1853 Solomon published the book *Twelve Years a Slave*. He became active in the abolitionist movement, lectured on slavery throughout the Northeastern United States and aided fugitive slaves on the Underground Railroad. The date, location and circumstances of Solomon's death are unknown.



**Figure 1.7: Map of Africa: The Colonial Period**



**Analysis**

This map presents the conquest of Africa by colonial powers. It shows African states controlled by different European elites. The key on the left-hand side of the map represents colonisation on the map. For instance, the key shows that Angola which is shaded in yellow was colonised by the Portuguese.

#### 1.2.4 Post-Colonial Africa

Fanon (1963: 170) notes: 'Colonisation is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures and destroys it.' In the heart of the Africa, lies colonial overtones that attempt to perpetuate the socio-cultural and economic polarisation in the post-colonial era.

Post war, Britain and France were the first European powers to extricate themselves from their colonial territories. Nevertheless, countries that had large numbers of European settlers, such as Kenya and Algeria were granted independence after a hard struggle. Nkealah (2011: 1) avows: 'Many contemporary African literatures have experienced an evolution, shifting focus from the evils of colonialism to the disillusionment that followed the attainment of independence in the 1960s.'

Manning (2013: 324) affirms: 'At the turn of the 1990s, the world underwent shocks of political change but also waves of economic and cultural interplay.' The ending of colonialism in Africa introduced a new identity. Subsequent to dethronement of colonialism, Africans were set to attain a new identity. Ultimately, a novel identity as free independent Africans was achieved, but with it, came new challenges. These challenges include moral decay, gender and sexual identity, debasement of standards, inequality, autocracy, corruption, nepotism and poverty.

Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1965) dovetails the conditions after colonialism in Ghana. The Ghanaians elected black leaders who promised them revival. This brought a sense of relief as the people of Ghana hoped for a better life. However, after defeating White supremacy, the Ghanaians found themselves with another ace up their sleeves.

The black leaders demonstrated in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* seem to have adopted a colonial leadership style in disguise. They turn their backs on their own people, following what could be referred to another version of colonialism. They practice immoral acts such as corruption, bribery, fraud and look after their interests only and neglect their

people's interests. This makes the situation worse as only few black people, particularly those in power, were free from colonial attacks such as poverty and inequality.

Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God* (1964) also brings to limelight the invasion of colonialism in the African. Achebe presents the colonial influence in Nigeria during early twentieth century. This novel reveals the tactics that the European powers have initiated in order to outwit the African natives and colonise them with the dominant trick being religion. There is a clash between Christianity and African culture in the novel. Achebe believes that there is hypocrisy in the heart of Christianity which is introduced to the villages. He asserts:

'You say you are the first Christian in Umuaro, you partake of the Holy Meal; and yet whenever you open your mouth nothing but heathen filth pours out. Today a child who sucks at his mother's breast has taught you the Scriptures (p. 38)

In line with the above, Achebe points out Christianity as a strategy that colonisers use to outsmart Africans and have dominance over their continent. People of Umuaro converted to Christianity which is under the British influence and seemingly promote British principles.

Christian missionaries from Europe confront the Nigerian culture and eventually win some of the Nigerians to convert to Christianity. Achebe reinforces the loss of cultural identity in Africa because of European ideologies have been infused into the mindsets of Africans. He states: 'The Christian harvest which took place a few days after Obika's death saw more people than even Goodcountry could have dreamed' (p. 186).

Achebe (1965) uses the character of Ezeulu, the chief priest of Ulu who looks after the cultural practices of his people to challenge colonial strategies. Furthermore, Christianity threatens Ezeulu's position as a Nigerian leader. To that noted, Ezeulu sends his son Oduche to go and join Christianity in order to discover the British empire's source of wisdom. Ezeulu affirms: 'I have sent you to be my eyes there' (p.189). Ezeulu sends his son to learn the tricks that he believes the Christian missionaries are performing to conquer his nation.

Oduche becomes part of Christianity and submits under the missionary, Mr. Goodcountry. The latter teaches Oduche Christian doctrines that contradict with the Nigerian traditional rituals that the people of Umuaro are practising and tries to persuade him to go against the culture that he embrace prior to becoming a Christian convert. This could be evidenced by the incident where Mr Goodcountry informs Oduche to kill the sacred python. Mr Goodcountry notes:

If we are Christians, we must be ready to die for the faith,' he said. 'You must be ready to kill the python as the people of the rivers killed the iguana. You address the python as Father. It is nothing but a snake, the snake that deceived our first mother, Eve. If you are afraid to kill it do not count yourself a Christian (p.36).

### **List of African countries and independence dates**

The table below indicates African societies and the colonial powers that they submitted that under. It also shows the dates which the African societies attained independence.

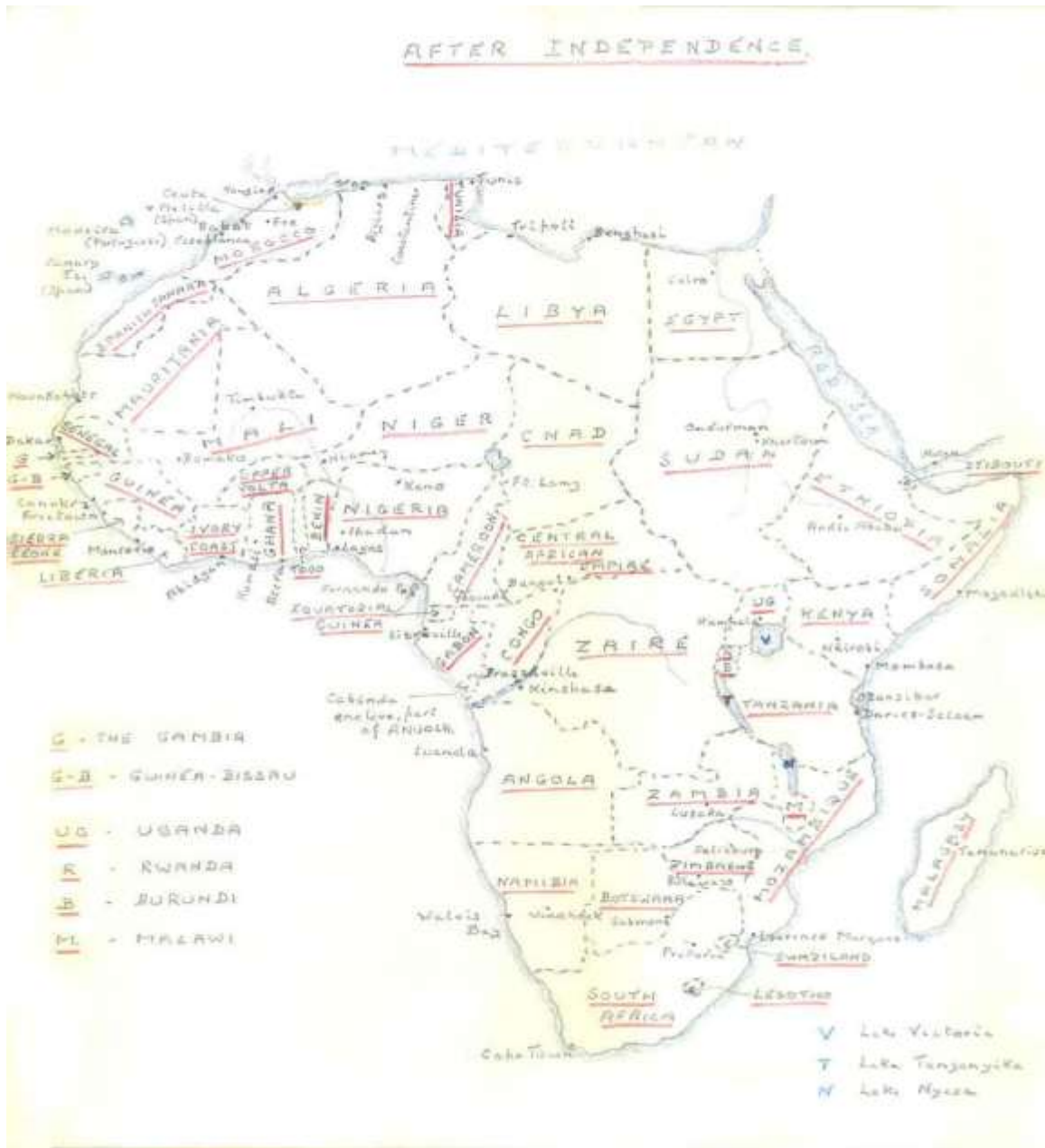
COUNTRY	DATE OF INDEPENDENCE	COLONIAL POWER
Ethiopia	Ancient	--
Liberia	July 26, 1847	United of America
South Africa	May 31, 1910	Britain
Egypt	February 2, 1922	Britain
Libya	December 24, 1951	Italy
Sudan	January 1, 1956	Britain; Egypt
Morocco	March 2, 1956	France
Tunisia	March 20, 1956	France
Ghana	March 6, 1957	Britain

Guinea	February 10, 1958	France
Cameroon	January 1, 1960	France
Togo	April 27, 1960	France
Senegal	June 20, 1960	France
Mali	June 20, 1960	France
Madagascar	June 26, 1960	France
Congo, Democratic Republic of the	June 30, 1960	Belgium
Somalia	July 1, 1960	Italy; Britain
Benin	August 1, 1960	France
Niger	August 3, 1960	France
Burkina Faso	August 5, 1960	France
Côte d'Ivoire	August 7, 1960	France
Chad	August 11, 1960	France
Central African Republic	August 13, 1960	France
Congo, Republic of the	August 15, 1960	France
Gabon	August 17, 1960	France
Nigeria	October 1, 1960	Britain
Mauritania	November 28, 1960	France
Sierra Leone	April 24, 1961	Britain
Tanzania	September 12, 1961	Britain
Burundi	July 1, 1962	Belgium

Rwanda	July 1, 1962	Belgium
Algeria	July 3, 1962	France
Uganda	October 9, 1962	Britain
Kenya	December 12, 1963	Britain
Malawi	July 6, 1964	Britain
Zambia	October 25, 1964	Britain
The Gambia	February 18, 1965	Britain
Botswana	September 30, 1966	Britain
Lesotho	October 4, 1966	Britain
Mauritius	March 12, 1968	Britain
Swaziland	September 6, 1968	Britain
Equatorial Guinea	October 12, 1968	Spain
Guinea-Bissau	September 10, 1974	Portugal
Mozambique	June 25, 1975	Portugal
Cape Verde	July 5, 1975	Portugal
Comoros	July 6, 1975	France
São Tomé and Príncipe	July 12, 1975	Portugal
Angola	November 11, 1975	Portugal
Seychelles	June 26, 1976	Britain
Djibouti	June 27, 1977	France
Zimbabwe	April 18, 1980	Britain

Namibia	March 21, 1990	South Africa
Eritrea	May 24, 1993	Ethiopia
<b>AFRICAN TERRITORIES AND ISLANDS NOT INDEPENDENT</b>		
Spanish North Africa		Spain
Madeira Islands		Portugal
Canary Islands		Spain
St. Helena, Ascension, & Tristan da Cunha		Britain
Socotra		Yemen
Mayotte		Dependency of France; claimed by Comoros
Réunion		France
French Indian Ocean I		France
Western Sahara	Occupied and claimed by Morocco; contested by Polisario Front	
<p>Source: Griffiths, Ieuan. <i>The Atlas of African Affairs</i>. New York, N.Y.: Routledge, 1994.</p>		

**Figure 1.8 Map of Africa: Post-Colonial Period**



**Analysis**

This map represents the independent states of Africa. Compared to the pre-colonial (see p. 5) and the colonial map (see p.12), countries are renamed for example, on the post-colonial map there is Zimbabwe and on the colonial map is S. Rhodesia.



### **1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM**

The downfall of the dictatorial regime of European powers in the African continent at large, has brought about visions of new identities such as *Ubuntu* and restoration. However, the colonial trauma seems to be blocking the pathways out of the ills of imperialism. Equally important, when independence began to crop up in the states of Africa, new identities juxtaposed with European features rose austerely and propagated across the continent, planting a seed of colonial influence within the minds of the new leadership and its followers.

In line with the preceding paragraph, South Africa is a state that was governed by a colonial strategy called apartheid which used the barrel of the gun to impose and perpetuate dictatorial tactics. Auspiciously, this apartheid leadership was forced out of power by the government of the people (democracy). As Rafapa (2014: 3) notes, the ending of the ills of apartheid has meant that South Africans have had to review issues that come to grips with identity. Nevertheless, 23 years after authorising democracy, identity crisis lingers as one of the colonial challenges still unaddressed.

### **1.4. DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS**

#### **1.4.1 Apartheid**

The broad use of the term apartheid means a policy of racial segregation formerly followed in South Africa (Encarta, 2009). It denotes separateness in the Afrikaans language and it described the rigid racial division between the governing white minority population and the non-white majority population (Hunt, 2009).

#### **1.4.2 Colonialism**

Colonialism entails the deprivation of one country's independence by another and violence coupled with diplomacy is often used to regain the lost independence by the colonised. It is a practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of people. Usually involves the settlement of citizens from colonial power in the colony (Bishop *et al.*, 2006: 3).

### **1.4.3 Democracy**

The free and equal right of every person to participate in a system of government, often practiced by electing representatives of the people by the majority of the people (Encarta, 2009).

### **1.4.4 Diaspora**

Throughout this study the term, Diaspora, refers to an ethnic population forced to leave their homelands and disperse to other parts of the world (Encarta, 2009). For example, Diaspora Pan-Africanism relates to solidarity among all black Africans and peoples of black African descent outside the African continent.

### **1.4.5 Feminism**

Feminism is collective term for systems of belief and theories that pay special attention to women's rights and women's position in culture and society. The term tends to be used for the women's rights movement, which began in the late 18th century and continues to campaign for complete political, social, and economic equality between women and men (Encarta, 2009).

### **1.4.6 Heterosexuality**

Heterosexuality is the sexual orientation towards people of the opposite sex. This is in contrast with homosexuality, which is sexual orientation toward people of the same sex, and bisexuality, which is sexual orientation toward people of either sex (Simon, 2009).

### **1.4.7 Homosexuality**

Homosexuality is sexual orientation toward people of the same sex or sexual attraction to or sexual relations with somebody of the same sex (Encarta, 2009). People with a sexual orientation toward members of both sexes are called bisexuals. Female homosexuals are frequently called lesbians whilst male homosexuals are called gays.

#### **1.4.8 Hybridity**

Hybridity refers to the assimilation of traditional values, cultural signs and practices from the colonisers and colonised's cultures (Ashcroft, 1989: 10). For instance, the concept of *cultural hybridity*, in which an individual's physical self and cultural self can be two different halves of the same whole, is a uniquely American phenomenon.

#### **1.4.9 Identity**

While a variety of definitions of the term *Identity* have been suggested, this study will use the definition suggested by Bornman (2003: 24) who succinctly delineates it as a social construction through which people acquire meaning and a sense of belonging. Furthermore, *The Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2003: 622) defines identity as 'who a person is, or the qualities of a person or group which make them different from others.'

#### **1.4.10 Masculinity**

Condition of male human: the state of being a man or boy. Traditional manly qualities: those qualities conventionally supposed to belong to a man such as physical strength and courage (Encarta, 2009).

#### **1.4.11 Racism**

Racism refers to making the race of other people a factor in attitudes or actions concerning them (Encarta, 2009). Racism implies a belief in the superiority of one's own race. It is a prejudice or animosity against people who belong to other races (Frederickson, 2000).

#### **1.4.12 Patriarchy**

Patriarchy is a rule by the father or male authority (Encarta, 2009). The word *patriarchy* comes from the Latin word *pater*, which means *father*. It most often refers to the political

power and authority of males in a society. Patriarchy can also refer to the power of fathers within families (Cruikshank, 2009).

#### **1.4.17 Prejudice**

According to *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2008), prejudice could be defined as an unfair and unreasonable opinion or feeling, especially when formed without enough thought or knowledge.

#### **1.4.18 Post-Colonialism (With or Without a hyphen)**

In the literature, the term to *post-colonialism* (post-colonial theory or post-orientalism) tends to be used to refer to an intellectual discourse that holds together a set of theories or philosophies, films, political science, literature and “cultures affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonisation to the present day” (Aschcroft *et al.*, 1989:2). Furthermore, Mogoboya (2011: 32) states: ‘as a term, post-colonialism comes from the Latin words *post*, which means after, and *colonia*, which means to settle. In other words, post-colonialism concentrates on Africa after the end of the reign of the colonial settlers.’

### **1.5 THE ROLE OF THEORY**

Theories are important because they give the study perspective and grounding. They are lenses through which the study is understood.

#### **1.5.1 Post-Colonial Theory**

Post-Colonial Theory addresses the colonial legacies that are still existent in the countries that were colonised in the past. This theory seeks to unravel challenges that sprung into existence after the ending of colonialism. This approach involves major theorists such as:

**Homi K. Bhabha** *The Commitment to Theory*

**Edward W. Said** *Orientalism*

**Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak** ‘*Can the Subaltern Speak?*’

Aschcroft *et al.* (1989: 2) note: 'all cultures affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonisation to the present day.' In addition, post-colonial theory attempts to dispatch the ordeal of countries that were formerly colonised by Europe. Eegunlusi (2017: 15) maintains: 'after independence, a major crisis that persists as a result of the governance pattern of British colonial administration is that of Nigerian tribes' unceasing agitation for unreserved pursuit of tribal interests and, covertly, pursuits of self-interests by those in power.'

### **1.5.1.1 Afrocentricity**

Afrocentricity is a strand of post-colonial theory whose focus is on the African continent, meaning centered on or originating in Africa or African cultures. It embraces the ideology of Africanism. Asante (2009: 2) states: 'the Afrocentric paradigm is a revolutionary shift in thinking proposed as a structural adjustment to black disorientation, decenteredness, and lack of agency.'

Rafapa (2005: 11) asserts: 'Afrocentrism refers to an attitude that directly combats European hegemonic discourse in order to negate its inherent Eurocentrism as a pole diametrically opposed to that associated with Africanists.' Afrocentrists such as Asante ask the question, 'What would African people do if there were no white people?' Moreover, Asante (2009: 1) notes:

Afrocentricity is a paradigm based on the idea that African people should reassert a sense of agency in order to achieve sanity. During the 1960s a group of African American intellectuals in the newly-formed Black Studies departments at universities began to formulate novel ways of analysing information. In some cases, these new ways were called looking at information from 'a black perspective' as opposed to what had been considered the 'white perspective' of most information in the American academy.

From Asante's general characteristics of Afrocentricity, the latter seems to challenge colonial attributes in Africa. This is because the theory of Afrocentricity addresses the odds that threaten Africa and colonialism is singled out as a major crisis that Africans

have ever confronted. Thus, Mahasha (2014: 20) asserts: 'Afrocentricity aims to challenge social ills such as racism, group marginalisation, prejudice, genocide and subjugation of black people by Europeans among other injustices.' Asante in his research on Afrocentricity uses five general characteristics of the Afrocentric method to corroborate the full-blown unfolding of this theory:

1. The Afrocentric method considers that no phenomena can be apprehended adequately without locating it first. Phenomena must be studied and analysed in relationship to psychological time and space. It must always be located. This is the only way to investigate the complex interrelationships of science and art, design and execution, creation and maintenance, generation and tradition, and other areas.

1. The Afrocentric method considers phenomena to be diverse, dynamic, and in motion and therefore it is necessary for a person to accurately note and record the location of phenomena even in the midst of fluctuations. This means that the investigator must know where he or she is standing in the process.

3. The Afrocentric method is a form of cultural criticism that examines etymological uses of words and terms in order to know the source of an author's location. This allows us to intersect ideas with actions and actions with ideas on the basis of what is pejorative and ineffective and what is creative and transformative at the political and economic levels.

4. The Afrocentric method seeks to uncover the masks behind the rhetoric of power, privilege, and position in order to establish how principal myths create place. The method enthrones critical reflection that reveals the perception of monolithic power as nothing but the projection of a cadre of adventurers.

5. The Afrocentric method locates the imaginative structure of a system of economics, bureau of politics, policy of government, expression of cultural form in the attitude, direction, and language of the phenomenon, be it text, institution, personality, interaction, or event.

(Adapted from Asante, 1998)

## 1.5.2 Feminism

Frank (1984: 35) states: 'feminism traverses a broad spectrum oscillating from the sociological, prescriptive and polemical to the formalist, rarefied and aesthetic.' Furthermore, feminism is perhaps a paradigm that seeks to remedy the odds against women in societies and conscientise the masses about the importance of women's rights and responsibilities.

In the light of the term feminism, it seems to have developed from the word female. On the basis of the latter, the movement and theory of feminism was established to represent the female figure. Nkealah (2011: 51) asserts: 'feminism becomes a multifaceted concept that could easily be applied to different texts and contexts and can be appropriated and redefined to acquire meaning in any given culture.' Women who advocate the theory of feminism call themselves feminists. In most cases, they are clamouring for equal rights with men. Feminism theory has several purposes such as:

1. to understand the power differential between men and women.
2. to understand women's oppression—how it evolve, how it changes over time, how it is related to other forms of oppression .
3. how to overcome oppressions.

The concept of feminism is vast and involves various kinds of features such as Liberal feminism, Radical feminism, Ecofeminism, Multicultural and Global Feminism, Marxist Feminism, Socialist Feminism, Psychoanalytic Feminism, Existentialist Feminism, Postmodern Feminism. To point out some of the feminists' view:

Marilyn Frye: *The Possibility of Feminist Theory*

The project of feminist theory is to write a new encyclopaedia. Its title: *The World, According to Women....* What feminist theory is about, to a great extent, is identifying those forces...which maintain the subordination of women to men....Our game is pattern recognition. Patterns sketched in broad strokes make sense of experience, but it is not a single or uniform

sense. They make our different experiences intelligible in different ways...Our epistemological issues have to do with the strategies of discovering patterns and articulating them effectively, judging the strength and scope of patterns.

(Adapted from Collins, 2001)

### **1.5.3 Historical-biographical**

This compound term *Historical-biographical* is made up of two adjectives, Historical which describes past event and biographical, which means factual. Mogoboya (2011: 30) believes that the Historical-Biographical approach argues that factors out-side the text has a direct influence on it. In other words, writers mirror their lives and times in the context of their texts. On logical grounds, there seems to be a compelling reason to claim that historical-biographical approach questions the authenticity of an account of something or someone.

## **1.6 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

### **1.6.1 Aim of the study**

The aim of this study is to reconstruct identity in the Post-Colonial Black South African literature by critically examining Magona's *Mother to Mother* and *Beauty's Gift*, and Matlwa's *Coconut*, and *Spilt Milk*.

### **1.6.2 Objectives of the Study**

- To explore the theme of identity in black South African literature, with special focus on Magona's *Mother to Mother* and *Beauty's Gift*, and Matlwa's *Coconut* and *Spilt Milk*.
- To evaluate the extent to which the colonial impact has shaped the lives of the citizens of South African in the present-day life.
- To conscientise South Africans about the demeaning historical elements that are silently attenuating the progress of the country.



- To investigate the merits and demerits of political transition from imperialism to independence in (South) Africa.

## **1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Schwardt (2007: 195) defines research methodology as ‘a theory of how an inquiry should proceed. It involves analysis of the assumptions, principles and procedures in a particular approach to inquiry.’ According to Schwardt (2007), Creswell and Tashakkori (2007), methodologies explicate and define the kinds of problems that are worth investigating. This section focuses on research method and design, data collection and quality criteria of the study.

### **1.7.1 Research Method and Design**

This study is based on qualitative research method which will, hopefully, help the researcher to better understand the phenomenon under study. Textual analysis will be working as a research design to critically analyse the literature based on identity in the post-colonial South Africa. This design is relevant to this study because it assists the researcher collect texts (data) and closely analyse them.

### **1.7.2 Data Collection**

This study will be a textual appreciation Sindiwe Magona’s *Mother to Mother* (1998) *Beauty’s Gift* (2008), *Coconut* (2007) and *Spilt Milk* (2010) by Kopano Matlwa) as primary sources. These novels are chosen because of their relevance to the topic under discussion. Critical works on Matlwa and Magona’s novels are collected and used as secondary sources, from the internet and libraries.

### **1.7.3 Data Analysis**

Both the primary and secondary sources will be examined in order to juxtapose, analyse and interpret different ideas. The ideas obtained from the sources outlined (6.2) will be critiqued and synthesised.

#### **1.7.4 Quality Criteria**

In order to ensure and assure quality, the study will reflect current trends and debates in the field as well as prominent scholars who debate the issues. It also will exude the ethos, terminology and epistemology of the field. Furthermore, the study will be systematic, scientific and scholarly in that it will follow principles of research. The researcher will defend his proposal at the Departmental, School and Faculty levels. The dissertation will be externally examined in order to assess its credibility.

#### **1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Identity is a recurrent theme that captures the interest of scholars within the theoretical framework of post-colonial literatures. Each African state seems to be in dire need of special attention. Mporu (2014: 83) states that the anti-colonial movements have helped create emerging African states and not necessarily nations. This study, therefore, attempts to draw attention to identity crisis that has disturbed and continues to destabilise post-colonial South Africa. Every moment in South Africa, colonial relics are breeding new colonial vestiges such as oppression, violence, xenophobia, corruption, inequality, tribalism, HIV/AIDS, poverty, racism, education-crisis, alienation and stereotypes. This study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge in this field as this area has not been fully researched on.

#### **1.9. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

This study does not require any ethical clearance because it does not use human subjects.

#### **1.10 CONCLUSION**

This section has outlined some of the prevailing bad legacies of colonialism in South Africa democratic era. It has mapped out the political, economic and social problems that have arrested growth in post-colonial South Africa. These challenges will be evidenced in Magona's *Beauty's Gift*, *Mother to Mother*, Matlwa's *Coconut* and *Spilt*

*Milk* using the following theoretical framework: Post-Colonial theory, Afrocentricity, Feminism and Historical-biographical.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The literature that carried the images of Africa and the Africans ranged from that, depicting the self-effacing African as the real human being, or the fun-loving, always smiling type as the more sympathetic being, to that which showed the African resistance fighter as the very reincarnation of cruelty, cowardice, ignorance, stupidity, envy, and even cannibalism. The collaborationist African was glorified. The one who opposed colonialism was vilified. Of course it was not always so directly stated. It was simply the way the author guided the emotions of the readers to make them identify with the African who saw no contradictions between himself and colonialism and to distance themselves from the African who argued back, the one who demanded his rightful dues, or the one who, in the banana plantations, plotted against the master (Ngugi, 1993: 130).

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The quotation above points out African literature as a contrivance that endeavours to integrate distinctive theoretical perspectives that delimit how the colonial experience has shaped relations amongst former imperial societies and the present. These theoretical perspectives have been inscribed on to literary texts of African authorship. As Binebai (2012: 204) contends, the pursuit of identity makes literature a branch of philosophy for arbitration and carrier of eccentricity. This section, therefore, serves to critically analyse literatures that delineate identity in (South) African colonial and post-colonial societies. Pictures will also be used to substantiate and relate on the theme of identity.

#### **2.2 THE THEME OF IDENTITY**

The subject of identity consistently captures the attention of African scholarship. It is profoundly featured in post-colonial literary discourses. Adams and Van de vijver (2017: 115) declare: 'we consider the importance of identity and acculturation in (culturally diverse) Africa.' This substantiates the point that the conceptualisation of identity has become a fundamental subject of post-colonial studies.

## 2.3 IDENTITY IN AFRICAN LITERATURE

Hall (1997: 53) proclaims: 'identities are the points of identification, the unstable points of identification or suture, which are made, within the discourses of history and culture.' Identity seems to be the leading phenomenon that maintains capacity for progressive development in African literature. By the same token, Bhabha (1990: 1-4) cogitates: 'the locality of national culture (identity) is neither unified nor unitary in relation to itself, nor must it be seen simply as other in relation to what is outside or beyond it.' This, therefore, means that (South) African literature mirrors African people's identity.

The question 'What is African identity?' lingers as the main concern of the peoples of Africa in the post-colonial societies. Eegunlusi (2017: 2) attempts to retort the aforementioned question:

In simple terms, the concept of identity points to an identifying mark of something or that which depicts the character or nature of a particular thing. In this sense, certain identifying features show the structure of a thing. This definition will be the researcher's limit in defining identity in this work.

The basic premise behind African identification is perhaps origination, culture and language. Be that as it may, scholars such as Ngugi Wa Thiong'o believe that language is a challenge that unhinges the true African identity. This expert presumes that African literary works penned in English do not embrace Africanism. He regards the English language as a colonial conspiracy to sustain influence in Africa (Ngugi, 1993).

Albeit to Ngugi's argument, Achebe (1975: 285) affirms: '...But for me there is no other choice. I have been given the language and I intend to use it.' As a junction that juxtaposes Ngugi and Achebe's views, Fanon (1983: 27) notes: 'decolonisation, the meeting of two forces, opposed to each other by their very nature, which in fact owe their originality to that sort of substantiation which results from and is nourished by the situation in the colonies.'

African literature is a multifaceted discipline which consists of a wide range of studies from old priorities of historical framework to socio-cultural, political and economic spheres. Adams and Van de Vijver (2017: 115) maintain: 'African contexts are complex; countries are often vastly multicultural; and in many countries no group clearly dominates all aspects of social, political, economic, and cultural life spheres.'

### **2.3.1 (South) African Oral Traditions**

Prior to modernity in Africa, the continent exulted in its culture and values that underpinned their identity and sense of belonging as the traditional oral artistry of Africans was the definition of African literature. This assertion can be substantiated by a collective body of oral texts which is distinctively delineated as folklore, verbal art oral literature or orature. This body of oral texts encompasses a broad range of traditional practices such as myths, legends, songs, folktales and proverbs which they usually use for entertainment, instruction and commemoration to a lesser extent (Owomoyela, 2009).

Ngugi (1993: 74) places premium on African oral tradition as a stand out and authentic portrayal African literature. Along similar lines, oral traditional arts can be drawn from the character of the Praise-singer in Soyinka's play, *Death and the King's Horseman* which elucidates the clash of cultures in Yoruba city of Oyo over the course of colonialism. For instance, the praise-singer exclaims this: Proverb: 'our world is tumbling in the void of strangers' (p. 75).

### **2.3.2 Written Literature**

Over the past century, there seems to have been a dramatic increase in African written literature which has received plenty of scholarly attention and inconclusive debates were fostered to corroborate the authenticity of African written literature. In the wake of African literature, lies the ideology of Western bias. Notably, it had come to a point that majority of African scholars knew few, if totally no other African language except their own coupled with English. Consequently, the western language became the most supreme language

in Africa. Thus, Mkuti (1996: 120) avers: 'African languages in South Africa (Africa) were encouraged by the white regime for the wrong reasons, consequently, people formed negative attitudes towards their own languages.'

Achebe's (1965: 18) essay, *English and the African Writer*, elicits a question which could not be answered at University of Makerere in 1962:

Was African Literature to be limited by being: ...produced in Africa or about Africa? Could African literature be on any subject, or must it have an African theme? Should it embrace the whole continent or South of the Sahara, or just Black Africa ? And then the question of language. Should it be in indigenous African languages or should it include Arabic, English, French, Portuguese, Afrikaans, etc ?

A year later at a conference held at *Faculte des Lettres* of Dakar University in Senegal thrived in addressing and coming up with an answer the above mentioned question.

Ezekiel Mphahlele in his conference report for transition recorded the answer as:

...creative writing in which an African setting is authentically handled or to which experiences originating in Africa are integral. This therefore includes among others, writing by white Africans like Nadine Gordimer, Dan Jacobson, Doris Lessing, Elspeth Huxley, Alan Paton and so on, and that by non-Africans like William Plomer (a man of many fascinating worlds), Joyce Cary and Joseph Conrad (specifically, *The Heart of Darkness*). Graham Greene's *The Heart of the Matter* could have been given any setting outside Africa, and so it does not qualify.

#### **(a) African literatures in European languages**

European languages are competitive in Africa. The most frequently used in Africa are English, French, and Portuguese. The question: is literature about Africa or about the African experience? 'Is it literature written by Africans or a non-African who wrote about Africa?' (Ngugi, 1981: 6), evaluates the authenticity of the use of European languages in African literature.

Ojaide (1992: 43) affirms: 'there is the Eurocentric temptation to see modern African literature written in these European languages: English, French and Portuguese as an extension of European literature.' Correspondingly, African literature in the English

language outside Africa is known as Anglophone literature, followed by Francophone (French-language) and finally, Lusophone (Portuguese-language) literatures.

### **i. Anglophone African Literature**

The British annexed Africa in the early 19th century. Their control extended to an extent of the establishment of the formerly colonised Egypt, Sudan, Uganda, and Kenya in the North. Then East Africa; Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria in West Africa; and in the Southern part of the continent, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, and South Africa (Owomoyela, 2009).

Cloete (1996: 27) asserts: 'English-speaking writers (Anglophone) started coming into the picture in the late fifties with the Nigerian writers such as Achebe and Soyinka featuring prominently.' One of the first African poets to publish in English is Lenrie Peters of the Gambia, whose poems examine the disorienting discontinuities between past and present in Africa.

### **ii. Francophone African Literature**

The French also invaded parts of Africa in the mid-19th century. The countries that submitted under the French empire are: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal and Madagascar. Bokamba (1991) notes: 'Francophone African countries that maintained the French colonial language policy and legacies in education had higher rates of illiteracy and wastage than their Anglophone counterparts.'

### **iii. Lusophone African Literature**

Lusophone African Literature comprises of literary works from Portugal's former colonies which are Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Mozambique. Portugal's empire in Africa was diminutive in opposition to France and Britain. Portugal's attachment to Africa appears to be the longest (Owomoyela, 2009). This link gave birth to people of mixed African and European ancestry (*mesticos*).



## 2.4 AFRICAN DIASPORA AND IDENTITY

Diaspora is an implement that signify alteration in the world as a result of colonial intervention. The dispersal of Africans to other distinctive parts of the world during the period of colonialism led to diaspora. Makgoba (1997: 197) contends: 'people of African descent are linked by shared values that are fundamental features of African identity and culture.'

Abodunrin (1992: 113) states: 'the origin of the African diaspora is traceable to the discovery of the New World.' Diaspora is yoked with shift of identities such as cultures, lifestyles and beliefs. Negative and positive acts led to diaspora such as slavery, migration, education, exile or banishment from one's country and oppression. The Jamaican musician, Bob Marley (1945-1981), in his song, *Buffalo Soldier*, explicates the manifestation of diaspora:

Buffalo Soldier, Dreadlock Rasta:  
There was a Buffalo Soldier in the  
Heart of America,  
Stolen from Africa, brought to  
America,  
Fighting on arrival, fighting for  
Survival.  
I mean it, when I analyse the stench to,  
Me makes a lot of sense...

In the song, Marley avows: 'Stolen from Africa, brought to America' (line 4-5). This indicates his ordeal of identity-crisis. He confesses that he is originally an African but forced to become an America. Eegunlusi's (2017: 5) notes: 'there are white South Africans. Also, in many nations of the west that had colonial interactions with Africa are

offspring of African people that are products of colonial and post-colonial miscegenation.’ These white South Africans are an epitome of diaspora. One of the entrancing aftermaths of diaspora is the birth of African Americans.

### **2.4.1 African Americans**

African Americans, sometimes called Black Americans, are black people who are born and bred in the United States of America. It is believed that their ancestry is from Africa. Obichere (1975: 35) states: ‘Afro-Americans should look to Africa as their homeland and they should get involved in African affairs just like the Jews, the Irish, the Germans and other groups in the United States of America...’ The African Americans were given several pet names like Negroes, Niggas, Coloureds, and Afro-Americans. Haris (2009) notes:

According to 2000 U.S. census, some 34.7 million African Americans live in the United States, making up 12.3 percent of the total population. 2000 census shows that 54.8 percent African Americans lived in the South. In that year, 17.6 percent of African Americans lived in the Northeast and 18.7 percent in the Midwest, while only 8.9 percent lived in the Western states. Almost 88 percent of African Americans lived in metropolitan areas in 2000. With over 2 million African American residents, New York City had the largest black urban population in the United States in 2000. Washington, D.C., had the highest proportion of black residents of any U.S. city in 2000, with African Americans making up almost 60 percent of the population.

### **2.4.2 Practices: Music and Language**

The popular practice of African Americans is their infatuation with Hip Hop music. According to *Encarta dictionary* (2009), ‘Hip Hop is a popular music, art, and dance: a form of popular culture that started in African American inner-city areas, characterised by rap music, graffiti art, and breakdancing.’ Furthermore, it is one of the famed traditional practices that mark African Americans in the United States of America.

In the light of the use of language, offensive terms and expressions are used more frequently especially in rap song and ordinary conversations.

## US offensive terms and expressions:

The following key words and phrases are defined according to *Cambridge Advanced Dictionary 3<sup>rd</sup> edition* and their usage in America

### **Bitch** /bɪtʃ/ *noun* **UNPLEASANT PERSON**

2. [ C ] OFFENSIVE an unkind or unpleasant woman

*She can be a real bitch.*

**E.g. Son of a bitch** *noun* [ C usually singular ] ( ALSO **sonofabitch** , ABBREVIATION

**S.O.B.** ) MAINLY US OFFENSIVE

an unpleasant man

*What low-down son of a bitch took my clothes?*

*I'm going to beat that sonofabitch if it kills me!*

### **fuck** /fʌk/ *exclamation* OFFENSIVE

used when expressing extreme anger, or to add force to what is being said

*Fuck - the bloody car won't start!*

*Shut the fuck up!*

*Who the fuck does she think she is, telling me what to do?*

**Motherfucking** /'mʌð.ə.fʌk.ɪŋ/ /-ə-/ *adjective* US OFFENSIVE

*He's a motherfucking son of a bitch*

### **sucker** /'sʌk.ə r / /-ə-/ *noun* **THING OR PERSON**

6. [ C ] US INFORMAL used to refer to a thing or person that is unpleasant or difficult

*I've been working on that paper for weeks and almost have the sucker finished.*

*He's a nasty little sucker, isn't he?*

### 2.4.3 Hip Hop Costume illustrations

Figure 2.1 Female hip hop stars



#### Analysis

This picture displays the culture of hip hop practised by women, notably with their dressing and pose. There are four women in this picture and cut short to end all of them have worn a black piece of clothing that covered only the upper body and revealed half of their torsos except the woman on the second left who added fine black clothing on her body. Their pose is charismatic. The first lady from the left and the second lady from the right perched their elbows on the shoulders of the remaining two women.

**Figure 2.2: Male Hip Hop stars**



**Analysis**

The picture above shows three men performing a captivating Hip Hop pose. Their dressing is quite unique. They all appear to have worn sneakers and long t-shirts that virtually cover their knees along with jeans and caps. Two of them have built a bridge using their arms and the other one is below that bridge waving his hand.

**Figure 2.3 Hip Hop culture**



**Analysis**

This picture incorporates three men showcasing different Hip Hop styles. The first man from the left is half naked and is showing off his tattooed body. He is wearing a silver necklace and performs signs using his right-hand fingers. Second from the left is a man who has worn a blue cap with a bronze necklace and silver t-shirt. Lastly, the third one has more clothing on his body than the lot. He has worn a blazer with black spectacles and is standing behind a microphone.

**Figure 2.4: Hip Hop style**



### **Analysis**

This photograph reveals two men showing serious faces. They have worn gold chain necklaces with jackets. Their styles are not too different from one another and what they have in common from the picture, that embrace their Hip hop culture, are their gold chains.

## **2.5 POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA**

South Africa suffered from difficult conditions meted out by the apartheid regime. In spite of the brutality of apartheid, South Africans relentlessly fought for liberty. The leader of Black Consciousness Movement, Steve Biko (1946-1977) in an interview in the late 1960s argued: 'They need to defeat the one main element in politics which is working against them, and that is the psychological feeling of inferiority.' Eventually, South Africa defied the odds and recouped independence.

Although the democratic forces in South Africa defeated the tyrannical government of apartheid, the vestiges of the latter are still dominant. Fai (2014: 158) claims that the youth in post-apartheid South Africa, especially the blacks, belong to the generation who grew up with the humiliations and deprivations of apartheid and expect to enjoy the fruits of freedom under democracy. However, they are confronted by competition and new social ills such as unemployment, poverty and HIV/AIDS. The results of this phenomenon are frustration, despair and outbursts of violence.

Notwithstanding the end of the racial political system of segregation, affectionately known as apartheid, South Africa is still recuperating from inequalities in terms of political privilege, opportunity, and lifestyle. In support of this point, Rafa and Masemola (2014: 90) note that the ethnic identities of black people before and after apartheid may be seen as lower order nationalisms that had to be subsumed into some kind of multi-ethnic nationalism inspired by the struggle against apartheid. The available evidence seems to suggest that the battle against colonisation is still far from over.

South Africa is a country comprised of Black, Coloured, White and Indian communities supplemented by African immigrant population. As a result, identity conflicts sprung into existence in the new South Africa as these distinctive identities seek to define and re-define themselves in the context of the hybrid post-apartheid society. Moreover, Wale's (2013: 41) argument in favour of the above runs as follows:

We can constructively build on the shared desire to unite and move forward from apartheid. To do so, however, South Africans of all races need to come together on the same page about the pressing need to rectify the economic, cultural and psychological imbalance which pervades our society.

The post-apartheid South African literature lingers as rhetorically distinctive as that of earlier periods. Hassan (2011: 42) aptly posits that since the transition to democracy, literature around identity, identity politics, identification and construction of identities has undergone a considerable change.

The newly independent South Africa is challenged with breaking away from the apartheid identity and re-defining herself in the democratic realm owing to the extermination of the apartheid rule which gave birth to racial, cultural and professional identities. In support of this point, Ndlovu (2015: 25) affirms that the South African state has seen more community struggles re-emerging to challenge these forms.



## 2.5.1 Freedom Charter

Subsequently, the extermination of apartheid led to a full-blown reformation of the government. In effect, the freedom charter established in 1995 became active.

*Adopted at the Congress of the People, Kliptown, on 26 June 1955*

***We, the People of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know:***

that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people; that our people have been robbed of their birthright to land, liberty and peace by a form of government founded on injustice and inequality; that our country will never be prosperous or free until all our people live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities; that only a democratic state, based on the will of all the people, can secure to all their birth right without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief; And therefore, we, the people of South Africa, black and white together equals, countrymen and brothers adopt this Freedom Charter; And we pledge ourselves to strive together, sparing neither strength nor courage, until the democratic changes here set out have been won.

### **The People Shall Govern!**

Every man and woman shall have the right to vote for and to stand as a candidate for all bodies which make laws;

All people shall be entitled to take part in the administration of the country;

The rights of the people shall be the same, regardless of race, colour or sex;

All bodies of minority rule, advisory boards, councils and authorities shall be replaced by democratic organs of self-government.

### **All National Groups Shall have Equal Rights!**

There shall be equal status in the bodies of state, in the courts and in the schools for all national groups and races;

All people shall have equal right to use their own languages, and to develop their own folk culture and customs;

All national groups shall be protected by law against insults to their race and national pride;

The preaching and practice of national, race or colour discrimination and contempt shall be a punishable crime;

All apartheid laws and practices shall be set aside.

### **The People Shall Share in the Country's Wealth!**

The national wealth of our country, the heritage of South Africans, shall be restored to the people;

The mineral wealth beneath the soil, the Banks and monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole;

All other industry and trade shall be controlled to assist the wellbeing of the people;  
All people shall have equal rights to trade where they choose, to manufacture and to enter all trades, crafts and professions.

### **The Land Shall be Shared Among Those Who Work It!**

Restrictions of land ownership on a racial basis shall be ended, and all the land re-divided amongst those who work it to banish famine and land hunger;  
The state shall help the peasants with implements, seed, tractors and dams to save the soil and assist the tillers;  
Freedom of movement shall be guaranteed to all who work on the land;  
All shall have the right to occupy land wherever they choose;

### **All Shall be Equal Before the Law!**

No-one shall be imprisoned, deported or restricted without a fair trial; No-one shall be condemned by the order of any Government official;  
The courts shall be representative of all the people;  
Imprisonment shall be only for serious crimes against the people, and shall aim at re-education, not vengeance  
The police force and army shall be open to all on an equal basis and shall be the helpers and protectors of the people;  
All laws which discriminate on grounds of race, colour or belief shall be repealed. All Shall Enjoy Equal Human Rights!  
The law shall guarantee to all their right to speak, to organise, to meet together, to publish, to preach, to worship and to educate their children;  
The privacy of the house from police raids shall be protected by law;  
All shall be free to travel without restriction from countryside to town, from province to province, and from South Africa abroad;  
Pass Laws, permits and all other laws restricting these freedoms shall be abolished.

### **There Shall be Work and Security!**

All who work shall be free to form trade unions, to elect their officers and to make wage agreements with their employers;  
The state shall recognise the right and duty of all to work, and to draw full unemployment benefits;  
Men and women of all races shall receive equal pay for equal work;  
There shall be a forty-hour working week, a national minimum wage, paid annual leave, and sick leave for all workers, and maternity leave on full pay for all working mothers;

Miners, domestic workers, farm workers and civil servants shall have the same rights as all others who work;  
Child labour, compound labour, the tot system and contract labour shall be abolished.

### **The Doors of Learning and Culture Shall be Opened!**

The government shall discover, develop and encourage national talent for the enhancement of our cultural life;  
All the cultural treasures of mankind shall be open to all, by free exchange of books, ideas and contact with other lands;  
The aim of education shall be to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace;  
Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children; Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit;  
Adult illiteracy shall be ended by a mass state education plan;  
Teachers shall have all the rights of other citizens;  
The colour bar in cultural life, in sport and in education shall be abolished.

### **There Shall be Houses, Security and Comfort!**

All people shall have the right to live where they choose, be decently housed, and to bring up their families in comfort and security;  
People cattle, and forced labour and farm prisons shall be abolished  
Unused housing space to be made available to the people;  
Rent and prices shall be lowered, food plentiful and no-one shall go hungry;  
A preventive health scheme shall be run by the state;  
shall not be robbed of their

Free medical care and hospitalisation shall be provided for all, with special care for mothers and young children;  
Slums shall be demolished, and new suburbs built where all have transport, roads, lighting, playing fields, creches and social centres;  
The aged, the orphans, the disabled and the sick shall be cared for by the state;  
Rest, leisure and recreation shall be the right of all:  
Fenced locations and ghettos shall be abolished, and laws which break up families shall be repealed.

### **There Shall be Peace and Friendship!**

South Africa shall be a fully independent state which respects the rights and sovereignty of all nations;  
South Africa shall strive to maintain world peace and the settlement of all international disputes by negotiation - not war;  
Peace and friendship amongst all our people shall be secured by upholding the equal rights, opportunities and status of all;

The people of the protectorates Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland shall be free to decide for themselves their own future;

The right of all peoples of Africa to independence and self-government shall be recognised, and shall be the basis of close co-operation.

Let all people who love their people and their country no say, as we say here:

**THESE FREEDOMS WE WILL FIGHT FOR, SIDE BY SIDE, THROUGHOUT OUR LIVES, UNTIL WE HAVE WON OUR LIBERTY**

Mazibuko (2016: i) notes: ‘the Freedom Charter represents a desire to create a society that is based on common citizenship and democracy in a society divided in all aspects of its life.’ The Freedom Charter has become the thought-provoking matter in the post-colonial South Africa. The former prompted students from different universities to embark on a quest for free education. Hlophe (2015: 70) asserts: ‘the youth is reclaiming its power. Liberation heroism alone may not save the political leadership of South Africa from a scorned youth.’

In the light of this law: ‘The Doors of Learning and Culture Shall be Opened!’ (The Freedom Charter, 1955). There is a subordinating regulation under it that declares: ‘Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children; Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit’ (The Freedom Charter, 1955). This decree led to splintered dreams and confusions. Karodia *et al.* (2016: 76) affirms: ‘Civil unrest, strikes and protests in almost all sectors of the economy now permeates the political landscape of South Africa.’

Samoff (2008: 50) states: ‘privilege, often in post – apartheid education in South Africa is still based on race and increasingly on class and this asserts itself at every turn and the gains that exist post 1994 are regularly swamped by education’s debilitating disabilities. The struggles are more about survival than social transformation.’ Students from different universities waged chaotic strikes demanding free education as it is validated by the freedom charter.

EFF student command Mpho Morolane during a protest in 2016 states: ‘Students are raising legitimate concern and it must continue. We want free quality education now as a matter of urgency.’ By 2016 September, the students’ strikes were already their prime and a wave of tragedy distressed the entire South Africa as classes were disrupted and universities had to be shut down for a little while. Vally and Motala (2014: 50) asserts: ‘The government should acknowledge that all education in South Africa is a public good and therefore, the direct responsibility of the state to provide free education to all South African students.’

Karodia *et al.* (2016: 83) note: ‘There is thus no doubt that South Africans after 21 years of democracy, face the consequences of incomplete economic transformation leaving many excluded from enjoying the benefits of democracy.’ As has been noted, one of the challenges that South Africa is still yet to address is poverty (see chapter 1). During the #Fees Must Fall Campaign, students muttered that universities are highly expensive. Nkosi (2015: i) affirms: ‘state spending on higher education has dropped at an alarming rate over the years and, government has been critically underfunding institutions and students for years. It’s been ticking and who’s been sleeping on it? Both the government and university vice-chancellors have been sitting on it.’ Karodia *et al.* (2016: 83) presents a table that discloses the cost of studying at five different universities in South Africa:

**Table-1.** Comparison of the Annual Cost of Studying for a BCom Degree at Five Universities Comparison of the annual cost of studying for a BCom degree at 5 universities.

University of Cape Town fees	University of the Witwatersrand fees	University of Pretoria fees	Stellenbosch University fees	University of KwaZulu-Natal fees
R 50 000 to R 62 500	R 42 010 to R 43 320	R 36 250	R 33 164	R 39 170
Plus accommodation:	Plus accommodation:	Plus accommodation:	Plus accommodation:	Plus accommodation:
Baxter Hall single room R 43 800 Double room, per	Per student in a single room R 33 660	R 28 800	<i>In Dagbreek men’s residence</i> Single room R 36 360 Double room, per student R 29 880	Dependent on room, campus allocation R 25 892

student R 38 500 Small single room R 42 200				
Plus meals	Plus meals	Plus meals	Plus meals	Plus meals

**Source:** (Nkosi, 2015) October 23. Mail and Guardian

## 2.5.2 Land Deliberation in South Africa

Żukowski (2017: 76) asserts: ‘Land reform in the RSA is a very complex issue, rooted deeply in history, politics, race relations and socio-economic conditions.’ The regulation under the subject of land declares: ‘Restrictions of land ownership on a racial basis shall be ended, and all the land re-divided amongst those who work it to banish famine and land hunger’ (Freedom Charter, 1955). South Africans such as the Economic Freedom Fighters president Julius Malema, believe that the distribution of land in South Africa is racially-motivated. During his address to supporters on 07 november 2017 after making a brief court appearance he states:

I want to go to prison for the land because that’s what Sobukwe was willing to do. He was prepared to die for the land. Mandela was prepared to die for the land. Chris Hani was prepared to die for the land. Christ Hani was prepared to die for the land. Steve Biko wanted a return of the land of the rightful owners. And who are the owners? The black people, our people.

The redistribution of land is a post-colonial challenge in South Africa that is affixed to identity-crisis. Mamabolo (2017: 155) argues: ‘a democratic South Africa’s and reform institutional frameworks together with the liberationist constitutional governance have merely papered over the longstanding political-economy inequities that were founded of racial spatialisation.’ Land dispossession during the apartheid rule produced a highly unequal pattern of land ownership and widespread rural poverty (Khoza, 2016).

In a debate against Clem Sunter at the Cape Chamber, EFF president Julius Malema claims: '...80% of land owners in South Africa are white people yet 80% of the population is black people...almost 10% of the population owns the land...' In support of Malema's proclamation, Żukowski (2017: 75) notes 'In 1994, 80% of the land was still owned by whites and 50.000 white farmers owned 85% of entire agricultural land.'

Land reform programme of the South African government has three legs: restitution, tenure reform and redistribution. Restitution appears to be concerned with historical rights in land, and tenure reform with forms of land holding, then redistribution with transforming the racial pattern of land ownership (Moyo, 2015).

### **2.5.3 Analysis of the National Anthem of South Africa**

Forthwith, the democratic leadership of South of Africa formulated a national anthem that signifies a unity. It was composed by Enoch Mankayi Sontonga and Marthinus Lourens de Villiers:

#### ***Xhosa***

Nkosi Sikelel  
' iAfrika  
Maluphakanyisw'  
uphondo lwayo

#### ***Zulu***

Yizwa imithandazo yethu  
Nkosi sikelela,  
Thina lusapho lwayo.

#### ***Sesotho***

Morena boloka sechaba sa heso  
O fedise dintwa le matshwenyeho,  
.  
O se boloke, o se boloke,

Sechaba sa heso,  
Sechaba sa South Africa

**Afrikaans**

Uit die blou van onse hemel, uit die diepte van ons see,  
Oor ons ewige gebergtes waar die kranse antwoord gee.

**English**

Sounds the call to come together,  
And united we shall stand,  
Let us live and strive for freedom,  
In South Africa our land.

The national anthem of South Africa expresses a new identity that South African citizens are obliged to embrace. Mnyaka (2003: 99) asserts: ‘...the issue of identity is a very important, central and popular one. It becomes a matter of social, religious and political solidarity.’ Given the centrality of democratic identity, Unity seems to be a basic premise of emancipation (Ferguson *et al.*, 2017).

In the light of the structure of the national anthem of South Africa, it is configured of four official languages, namely; *Xhosa* (first stanza: first two lines), *Isizulu* (first stanza: last two lines), *Sotho* (second stanza), *Afrikaans* (third stanza) and English (last stanza). Each language carries an identity of its tribe and all these different identities are brought under one umbrella in an effort to attain a solitary identity as a nation. Moreover, this national anthem provides confirmatory evidence that unity has been one of post-colonial South Africa’s ambitions. Greyling’s (2007: 29) view in support of the above argument runs as follows:

Their idea of social justice involved transmitting into civilian life the unity and co-operation among races which was achieved on the battlefield, to oppose moves to undermine the principle or practice of democracy, and to support a society working for Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.



## **2.6 RACISM IN THE POST-COLONIAL SOUTH AFRICA**

Amongst a host of issues within the political landscape of South Africa post 1994, racial dilemma appears to be a dominant factor of resistance to reconciliation. Schensul and Heller (2010: 2) affirm: 'The rich and diverse literature on race and class in post-apartheid South Africa has generally drawn a picture of, at best, no progress towards social and economic transformation and, at worst, increasing inequality and fragmentation.' Racial division has affected the post-colonial South Africa in terms of unemployment, leadership and economic growth. Schensul and Heller (2010: 4) state that South Africa under apartheid was characterised by extreme spatial mismatch between the residential location of disadvantaged, primarily African workers and areas of economic opportunity.

Before 1994, white people and black people took umbrage at one another. However, the odds were in favour of the race in power which was the leadership of white people. Thereafter, a turn of events occurred when black people took power and democracy was ushered in. Bennett (2013) states that democratisation has meant that communities that were exposed to ethnic authorities under the subjugation of apartheid were now anticipated to play a role in liberationist democratic processes of governance.

The leadership of black people in South Africa forgave their nemesis and clamoured for reconciliation. President Nelson (1918-2014) Mandela in his inaugural address states: 'We understand it still that there is no easy road to freedom. We know it well that none of us acting alone can achieve success. We must therefore act together as a united people, for national reconciliation, for nation building, for the birth of a new world.'

Jacobs (2016: 250) declares: 'the settlement between the apartheid regime and the African National Congress as the series of political, social and economic deals in which the racial inequalities of apartheid and wealth disparities largely remain intact and which benefits whites in general.' Furthermore, inequality in the post-colonial South Africa seems to be still predominant. This could be substantiated by Ndlovu's (2015: 105)

concluding remark on his research on *Understanding the local state, service delivery and protests in post-apartheid South Africa*:

I conclude that community protests in Duncan Village are a reflection of different understandings of a decent life by protesting communities and those who represent state interests. Twenty years after democracy, the South African government has not been able to address the inequalities of the past. In fact, the commodification of basic services has deepened levels of poverty and led to community fragmentations in Duncan Village. Protests have therefore continued to challenge forms of exclusion and to fight for realisation of the promises of democracy understood to be a decent life.

## **2.7 Unemployment-crisis in the Post-Colonial South Africa**

To date, the number of unemployed graduates in South Africa has been constantly increasing. Karodia *et al.* (2016: 78) note: 'the massive unemployment burden curtails the growth of the economy drastically, lowers morale of citizens and the youth and contributes to an already faltering economy.' The widening unemployment seems to be directly proportional to rising unstoppable poverty in South Africa.

In a talk show, *Big Debate on Racism* (2011), there have been several claims that most unemployed graduates were blacks. Pierre De Vos, a Law lecturer at University of Cape Town avers: '...after one year of graduation a white graduate is about 10 times likely to have gotten a job than a black graduate.' As rebuttal to this point, the leader of Red October Movement Sunnete Bridges in the same debate argues: '...the fact that there is white poverty is completely ignored.' The two speakers did not see eye to eye when it comes to the question of which race in South Africa relishes more benefits than the other. Essentially, the crisis of unemployment prompted jobless graduates in South Africa to stage a protest that was featured on SABC NEWS on 17 May 2017.

**Figure 2.5: Unemployed graduates**



**Analysis**

The image above shows a multitude of graduates wearing their graduation regalia and holding placards. One of the students Zikho Letshabane avows: 'The government hasn't been creating jobs where as it has closed opportunities that existed before. Our call to the government is to advertise all positions that are vacant and stop exploiting workers by giving them more responsibilities while human capital is available in the form of unemployed graduates.' Moreover, these unemployed graduates also demand that the department of social development to give them a graduate grant.

On the basis of the above information, unemployment seems to be one of the challenges that South Africans need to visit and re-visit. Karodia *et al.* (2016: 78) assert: 'The privatisation of higher education at public level in the pursuance of profit making is in contrast to the need to fight unemployment and poverty through increasing access.' The incident of the graduates mentioned above draws attention to the complexity of unemployment in the post-colonial South Africa and also raises concerns about the success of education. Thus, Cloete (2015: 513) avers: '...unemployment poses a threat to human dignity and should therefore be a theological concern.'

In *The Big Debate on racism* (2011), Siki Mgabaledi draws a distinction between the amount of poverty existent in black and white families. She avers: '...we have 13 million of black in this country without a plate of food.' This could suggest that there are more poor and unemployed people in South Africa than whites. Schensul and Patrick's (2010: 16) argument in favour of the above mentioned point runs as follows:

Unemployment reflects the overhang of apartheid's race-based labour markets, with moderate unemployment in White areas, compared to a continued and increasing crisis of joblessness in African areas. Indian areas fall between the two, as is the case geographically. Housing and service figures (the latter using in-home toilet access as a proxy) show the near-universal formality and servicing of White and Indian areas, in stark contrast to far lower figures for African areas.

In essence, unemployment takes a place amongst the devastating upsurge of social ills caused by apartheid. To prop up this point, a South African movie called *Jerusalem* starring Rapulana Seiphemo demonstrates how unemployment has sustained supremacy in the democratic South Africa.

## **Analysis of the movie, *Jerusalem* (2008)**

*Jerusalem* divulges the *status quo* of South Africa after democracy. Two friends; Lucky Kunene and Zakes Mbulelo resort to crime in an effort to escape poverty. They became the notorious gansters that robbed people and stole cars. In the scene where the lot are with the criminal mastermind, Nazareth in his car after picking them from school, Lucky states: ‘...we didn’t fight apartheid so that we can become criminals,’ and Nazareth responds: ‘I didn’t fight apartheid to be poor either.’ Fast track crime rate continues to deteriorate at the infamous Hillbrow where men and women practise prostitution, smuggle drugs and murder each other for money and power. A Nigerian drug lord, Ngu, is seen promoting drugs in South Africa and eventually lures a white drug addict to his death using drugs.

*Jerusalem* denotes the colonial ills that are still torturing the democratic South Africa. People are tempted to do mischievous things to get out of financial problems. Black in the movie people annihilate one another to survive. This is evidenced by the evil acts of a Nigerian drug Lord, Ngu, who comes to South Africa to do an illegal business of drugs which without destroys the future of the citizens of South Africa.

Phaswane Mpe’s novel, *Welcome to our Hillbrow* (2001) further expatiates on the challenges at Hillbrow. It unveils the tremendous odds such corruption, HIV/AIDS, sexual immorality and poverty against the youth of South Africa with Refentse and Refilwe being the central figures. Rafapa (2014) notes: ‘Mpe’s post-apartheid novel *Welcome to Our Hillbrow* asserts black society’s undergoing of introspection as an antidote against some grovelling at the feet of the ever-invincible ogre called apartheid.’

Mpe affirms: ‘I wish those girls and boys in our villages had more respect for their genitalia and did not leave them to do careless business in Hillbrow, only so that we can attribute the source of our dirges to Nigeria and Zaïre ...’ (p.20). The jobless youth of South Africa have fed themselves to a roaring wolf of drug abuse. They are taking a drug called *Nyaope* which has been discussed and proven to have destroyed the lives of many youngsters. Radebe (2012: 114) remarks: ‘Special Assignment 22 aired a programme on

drug consumption in the Western Cape Province. What was reported is that many young girls have turned to prostitution in order to make money to buy this particular drug.'

### **2.7.1 The relationship between unemployment and prostitution**

Prostitution is usually described as the exchange of sex for money and similar benefits (Tomura, 2009; Williamson, 2000). This categorises prostitution as a form of employment where the sex worker is the employee and the sex client an employer. Women as young as 18 years are already active in prostitution. Most of them claim that they were forced into prostitution because of poverty and unemployment (Jolin, 1994). This has led to a rise of HIV/AIDS, sexual immorality and adultery. Luiz and Roets, 2001: 25) depict various kinds of prostitution blatant in South Africa:

There are brothel prostitutes where the prostitute resides in a brothel that is frequented by patrons and that is owned by a madame who takes a percentage of the prostitutes earnings, escort agency prostitutes (where an escort agency provides the escort services to a client and where sex is a private negotiation between the patron and the escort), call girls (where the prostitute operates independently and makes contact directly with the client or through advertisements in the newspaper and street prostitutes where the revenue is shared between the pimp and the prostitute in exchange for protection.

Ronda (2010: 4) declares: 'the demand for prostitution acts as a catalyst for both the further exploitation of prostitutes and women, while making them vulnerable to sexually transmitted diseases.' Despite this, an attempt to decriminalise prostitution has been made several times in South Africa and ultimately became successful. Other prostitutes have come forward to testify in documentaries that they depend on prostitution for a living and are forced to do it. Thus, Smith and Marshall (2007) posit that a damaging misconception exists within the societies that prostituted women choose to sell sex for a living. In a study conducted by Smith and Marshall (2007) it was found that:

Majority of prostituted women disliked selling sex. Participants reported feelings of resentment toward their clients. They also disclosed their own feelings of shame and self-loathing due to their involvement in prostitution. Similarly, in a different study, conducted across 9 countries including South

Africa, it was found that 89% of the participants wanted to exit prostitution but could not because they did not have the means to survive

Along similar lines, sex seems to be a mode that both men and women use to turn the odds in their favour during awkward situations. 'Sexuality within relationships is not just enacted out of sexual desire or for reproduction functions; it is related to other dimensions of the relationship, such as intimacy, commitment, power, conflict, love, or obligation' (Castaneda, 2000: 57). Radebe's (2012) study on sexual relationships brings forth this testimony:

Tumi stated: 'For someone to spend money on you, he must trust you and trust is earned'. She meant that a man must be convinced that the woman loves him alone in order for him to spend money. Sex can, thus, be used as a tool to show trust: this is done by giving someone (most probably the man) control over sex. As Bond points out, 'Any sexual relationship between women workers and supervisors, for example, is not necessarily a clear case of sexual harassment or exploitation, since some women openly like power to negotiate a favour in exchange for sex, and would see this as a good thing (Bond, 1997: 81). Female informants in the dependant category did not view giving away control over sex as a bad thing, as they received support in return.

## **2.8 EDUCATION IN THE POST-COLONIAL SOUTH AFRICA**

Rodney (1973: 14) affirms: 'there are many features which aid in keeping underdeveloped countries integrated into the capitalist system and hanging on to the apron strings of the metropolises...equally important has been the role of education in producing Africans to service the capitalist system and to subscribe to its values.' Succeeding democracy, South Africa is set to re-configure educational structures. Karodia *et al.* (2016: 77) notes: 'The demands straddle a wide range of issues, chief amongst these are transformation of the higher education landscape because of slow transformation over 21 years of democracy, the scrapping of Afrikaans as a language of instruction at certain universities, insourcing of worker demands...'

In 1953, the apartheid regime passed The Bantu Education Act (Act No. 47 of 1953) which subjected black people to inferior education. Rodney (1973: 77) states: 'The policy of mock respect for African culture reached its highest expression in South Africa in the notorious Bantu Education Act of 1953, which sought to promote the differences between

Zulu, Sotho, Xhosa, Venda.’ The impoverished Bantu Education seems to be a colonial tool used to serve the European capitalist class in its exploitation of (South) Africa. This is vindicated by the dominant use of European languages in Arica.

Students in Soweto resisted Afrikaans imposed upon them by the apartheid government and ‘by implication it was a rejection of Bantu Education in South Africa under apartheid’ (Karodia *et al.*, 2016: 76). Consequently, chaos rose between the apartheid government and students in 1976 which resulted in the massacre of the black students. ‘Schools became staging grounds for the struggle against apartheid. Activists, researchers, and communities collaborated to develop new policies and reforms were grounded in community discussions’ (Weber, 2008).

Figure 2.6: Apartheid Killings



### Analysis

The image above shows black South Africa reading a newspaper account of a clash between police and black people that resulted in 11 deaths. UPI/Corbis

Tensions escalated to great lengths between the black population and the advocates of apartheid. In midst of 1933 and 1990, it was difficult for black people to get admission in some of the best universities in South Africa such as Rhodes University and University of



Witwatersrand. In support of this point, Greyling (2007: 24) affirms: ‘...the first black student applied for admission to Rhodes. George Singh, an Indian graduate of Fort Hare, applied to be accepted for an MA in English. His application was brought to Senate by Professor Dingemans...Singh’s application was rejected...’ Further confirmatory evidence could be drawn from the Union of South Africa (1959) which notes:

Apartheid was carried out despite opposition by the universities, and by educators and students in many countries. Under the title Extension of University Education Act, the Universities of Witwatersrand, Cape Town and Natal were forced to close their doors to further registration of non-whites, except in the medical colleges; present registrants would be permitted to complete their studies. The University of Witwatersrand cancelled all classes for a day to protest the intrusion of the government upon its autonomy, and the debasement of educational and humanistic ideals. The Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Jewish religious communities protested the omission from the act of the 'conscience clause' which protected members of university faculties against being questioned about their religious beliefs. The act further provided for the establishment of several non-white universities. The Minister of Bantu Education, W. A. Maree, announced that the first of these would be opened in 1960. Some 300 African students qualified annually for university training; over 2,000 took the examinations in 1957. Complete control of African education was made possible by the act — the basis of opposition to it by professional educators who believed that this would depress standards.

**Figure 2.7 : First Summit of the African Union**



## Analysis

The image shows South Africans holding up placards of African presidents at the inaugural summit of the African Union in July 2002. The African Union consisted which substituted Organization of African Unity consisted of 53 countries. AFP/Corbis.

The reigning leadership of apartheid accumulated an epic control of schools and churches by 1955 in South Africa. Nonetheless, South African icons such as Es'kia Mphahlele berated the Bantu Education Act (1953). Consequently, Mphahlele was banned from his teaching profession due to scolding the Bantu education. In his autobiography, *Down Second Avenue* (1959), he recounts:

My whole outlook resisted journalism: my attitude towards the white press; towards the double stream of newspaper policy in South Africa where there is a press for whites and a press for non-whites; towards *Drum's* arbitrary standard of what the urban African wants to read: sex, crime and love stories; its use of Sophiatown as the yardstick of what the South African non-white should read (p.187–188).

Rafapa (2005: 10) notes: 'In this book (*Down Second Avenue*), Mphahlele contrasts robust exemplification of African humanist consciousness.' Mphahlele obtained his BA, BA honours and Masters in English (*cum laude*) at University of South Africa against all odds. He was the first black South African to be awarded an M.A. degree with distinction by the University of South Africa.

### 2.8.1 Decolonised Education

Karodia *et al.* (2016: 83) asserts: 'There is thus no doubt that South Africans after 21 years of democracy, face the consequences of incomplete economic transformation leaving many excluded from enjoying the benefits of democracy.' Amongst the petitions of South African students is a clarion call for decolonised education. (Karodia, 2014) notes:

Far from dismantling the apartheid edifice of inequalities, these have become entrenched. The historical legacy of apartheid has accordingly been legitimised. The question is whether the nation can continue to entrust the future of higher education in the hands of the very people who have steered it to the brink. In other words, the time is now opportune for the decolonisation of South African higher education. A new narrative must now

take form and shape in respect of the South African higher education system and landscape.

Molefe (2016: 32) asserts that South African students and a small number of progressive academics began a campaign in 2015 to decolonise the curriculum at universities ‘by ending the domination of Western epistemological traditions, histories and figures.’ Majority of South Africans after the ending of apartheid were still learning and some taught in Afrikaans which is the language that was enforced on black people during the apartheid era. The former Minister of Education Naledi Pandor in 2005 addressed concerns about the distortion by the press of how the new language in education policy was interpreted. She states:

It (the new policy) opens up the possibility of developing the other official languages into languages of learning and teaching. Clearly while we work to achieve this noble objective, the current choice of English and Afrikaans as the languages of learning and teaching will remain. In the past, before 1998, pupils were locked into a system that privileged Afrikaans and English for those in search of a matric endorsement. That is now no longer true and all languages will now be equally available as subject choices. (Parliamentary Budget Address, 2005).

Student in South Africa during the #FeesMustFall Campaign clamoured for the decolonisation of education. (Heleta, 2016: 4) notes: ‘students have questioned not only the lack of transformation in the higher education sector but also the settlement that ended apartheid more than two decades ago.’ Wingfield (2017) contends: ‘university students...argue that it is time to decolonise higher education. What does this mean? What would acquiescing to the students mean for research, science and academic collaboration?’ These rhetorical questions seek to question the meaning of a decolonised education and its objective.

In the light of the definition of decolonised education, proponents of #FeesMustFall movement such as Wingfield (2017) and Karodia *et al.* (2016) perceive decolonised education as the education system based upon exclusion on race, class, gender and sexual difference whereas the whole apartheid edifice and its extension in post 1994

under the supposed control of black government has been based upon a rejection of the building blocks that created it. Nwadeyi (2016) argues: 'colonialism, apartheid and other vehicles for entrenching white supremacy did not only affect political rights or economic freedoms but have affected every aspect of life and their effects and legacies are still entrenched in South Africa.'

The Minister of Higher Education, Blade Nzimande, at UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education in 2009 states: 'over the last few decades, some things have not changed. There's no break in significant break knowledge of production between the colonial and post-colonial eras. African universities are essentially consumers of knowledge produced in developed countries.' The educational transformation failure creates a crisis in the sphere of education in South Africa. Hooks (1994: 12) avers:

Students often do not want to learn and teachers do not want to teach. More than ever before [...] educators are compelled to confront the biases that have shaped teaching practices [...] and to create new ways of knowing, different strategies for the sharing of knowledge. We cannot address this crisis if progressive critical thinkers and social critics act as though teaching is not a subject worthy of our regard.

Wingfield (2017) believes that decolonised education could mean that 'a nation must become independent with regards to the acquisition of knowledge skills, values, beliefs and habits.' This researcher also postulates that South African students defectively misinterpret this term. In her article, she quotes a student from University of Cape Town stating: 'for a decolonised education to be introduced, the existing system must be overthrown and the people it's supposed to serve must define it for themselves.'

Mbembe (2016: 32) posits that the majority of universities still adhere to the hegemonic Eurocentric epistemic canon that attributes truth only to the Western way of knowledge production. Pillay (2015: 40) accedes: 'the idea of Europe, as a metaphor, and turns all others into bit players or loiterers without intent on the stage of world history, either too lazy to do anything ourselves or always late, and running behind to catch up with Western modernity.' In an interview in 2017 on Decolonising education in South Africa, Aslam Fataar declares:

The call for decolonising education is not a new one. It first emerged in the context of decolonialist struggles against colonial rule during the 1950s and 1960s. At its basic level it is a call for education founded on the principle of 'all included', the idea that education has to 'speak to', and generate intellectual capacity for developing the full humanity of all concerned.'

As Shay (2016: 40) notes, the students have inexorably requested for the downfall of domination by white, male, Western, capitalist, heterosexual, European world-views' in higher education and incorporation of other South African, African and global perspectives. On account of the information noted above, South African students are perhaps clamouring for the purported decolonised education by the government of democracy. Heleta (2016: 3) avers: 'although the oppressive and racist apartheid system came to end in 1994, the epistemologies and knowledge systems at most South African universities have not substantially altered; they are still ingrained in colonial, apartheid and Western worldviews and epistemological traditions.'

## **2.9 BLACK SOUTH AFRICAN LITERATURE**

As trends of time evolve in the African states, post-colonial literatures also evolve and they are defined and re-defined. Within the armpit of post-colonial literatures rests a purported Black South African Literature which encapsulates political challenges, turning points and milestones that South Africa has experienced along its voyage to democracy. Masilela (2009: 2) notes that all the fundamental figures of black South African literature are fused by their total resistance to Apartheid.

The period of South Africa's political transition in the late 1980s and 1990s also saw a number of interesting developments in the field of cultural production, especially within the field of literature. A number of literary scholars, critics of all realms, writers and adventurers showed interest in the direction of literature after the repressive years of apartheid (Owomoyela, 2009).

Ndebele (1994: 1) defines South Africa as 'a one country where social and political contradictions have been so stark that the influence of politics on other social activities and vice versa, has been most easily observable.' Moreover this could be so because South Africa, as Heywood (2004: vii) notes:

has one of the world's most extensively creolised societies: apartheid was a last attempt to fly in the face of that reality. Each of South Africa's four interwoven communities Khoisan, Nguni–Sotho, Anglo-Afrikaner, and Indian – has an oral and literary tradition of its own, and each tradition is a strand in a web of literary forms.

South African literature comprises the literature penned by different racial groups with English being the most frequently used language. Nevertheless, a negligible number of South Africans such as the legend of praise poetry Mzwakhe Mbuli and other icons of literature like Ok Matsepe, NS Mogale, SJ Chokoe and Serudu use their African languages to showcase their talents and propagate essential messages to South Africans. This is evident in their works such as Ok Matsepe's culture-centred novel, *Leshitaphiri*, NS Mogale detective novel, *O ipolaila* as well as SJ Chokoe's detective *Lengwalo* and lastly, Serudu's *Naga ga di Etelane*. Gina Mhlope embraces her native language through her literary works. For example, this could be noted from her poem *Qinisan Uthando* (2007):

#### **QINISANI UTHANDO!**

Qinisan MaAfrica!

Qinisan uthando

Aluqine uthando luthi nqgi!

Ukhisimui awusho lutho

Uma singathandani, singazwelani

Abanye balala bengadlile

Abanye bakhomba ngophakathi

Abanye sebashonelwa ngabazali

Abanye bayabathuka, bayabazaonda

Ingabe sokhula kanjani ma kunje

Sokhula kanjani na?

Ingabe sophumelela kanjani

Ma singahloniphi?

Sozithola phi na izibusiso

Ma Singenyanyo inkuthalo nokubambisana?

Sophila kanjani uma singenabuntu

Futhi singathandani

Qinisani MaAfrica!

Qinisani uthando nokuzwana

Qinisani MaAfrica!

Gina Mhlophe is one of the South African authors who showcase their talents in both English and African languages. Her poem *Qinisani Uthando* is penned in isiXhosa. This poem serves as an effective example of Black South African literature. The most significant attribute categorising her poem under the aforementioned kind of literature is the perceptible African language, isiXhosa. Ngugi Wa Thiongo as the notable writer who pens in his mother tongue has passed a legacy of promoting African literature using African languages to the present and future generations.

In this poem, she pleads with Africans to love one another. In stanza 2 (line 4—5), she recites: 'Ukhisimui awusho lutho, Uma singathandani, singazwelani.' She means Christmas is meaningless without love. Conjoining the message of Gina Mhlophe with identity, it could be disclosed that she rebukes one of the colonial legacies which is hatred and tribalism amongst (South) Africans and the loss of the meaning of Africanism. In the light of her tone, she sounds alarmed, concerned and worried throughout the poem. The English translation of the poem runs as follows:

### **STRENGTHEN LOVE**

Strengthen love, dear Africans!

Strengthen love

Let it stand rock solid!

Christmas means nothing  
If we do not love each other  
With no compassion for one another

Some go to bed with empty stomachs  
While others have everything

Countless children have lost their parents  
Others swear at them, they hate them

How can we grow strong  
When the situation is like this  
How will we grow and prosper?

How can we be successful  
When we do not respect each other  
Where will our blessings come from?

Where are we headed  
If we have no dedication or collaboration?  
We need to show each other love and humanity

Strengthen love, dear Africans!  
Love and harmony is what we need  
Strengthen love, dear Africans!

Heywood (2004: 7) claims: 'Comparable to the nineteenth-century tension between the Slavist versus Europeanist elements in Russian literature, South African literature reflects the tension between Africanist and Europeanist readings of its past.' Furthermore, Chinua Achebe as one of the remarkable African writers that have robustly argued to use the English language to promote African literature also passed a legacy to African generations. Other South African writers such as Kopano Matlwa and Sindiwe Magona use the English language to express their talents. Masilela (2009: 1-2) refutes:



The very same ideological state apparatuses that have literally destroyed black literary culture in South Africa by repressing and scattering into exile two outstanding literary movements or schools: in the 1950s, the Drum writers (Can Themba, Lewis Nkosi, Ezekiel Mphahlele, Bloke Modisane, Arthur Maimane, and many others) who had initiated the Sophiatown Renaissance modelled after the black American Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s; in the 1970s the Staffrider writers (Njabulo Ndebele, Mbulelo Mzamane, Assop Patel, and many others) who had revived the literary brilliance of black culture which had nearly perished in the Sharpeville massacre of 1960.

## **2.9 CONCLUSION**

This chapter sought to explore the complexities of identity in the post-colonial South Africa. As has been noted throughout this section, identity-crisis is integral challenge that rests in between the colonial past and the democratic present age. Boehmer (1995: 245) coincides: 'while the neo-imperial world continues to camouflage the reality, a certain incommensurability of historical worlds has to be conceded.' Be that as it may, the concept of identity has garnered plenty of research within the literature and carries a vast degree of academic weight (see, Bhabha, 1990, Hall, 1997, Mogoboya, 2011; Mahasha, 2014; Rafapa & Masemola, 2014; Eegunlusi, 2017).

## CHAPTER THREE

### REDEFINING BLACK IDENTITY OF THE YOUTH IN THE POST-COLONIAL SOUTH AFRICA AS DEPICTED IN KOPANO MATLWA'S SELECTED NOVELS

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Youngsters in the post-colonial period seem to be overpowered by a wave of colonial influence in their lives of liberty. This could be substantiated by the deterioration of the number of drop outs in schools, gansterism, teenage pregnancy, drug addicts, and unemployment regardless of attaining tertiary qualifications. Ndima (2015: 25) affirms: 'glaring ramifications of the fiscal conservatism policies of the mid – 1990s which encouraged privatisation and outsourcing and have now come back to haunt the country.' This chapter seeks to investigate the challenges that affect the youth of South Africa as a result of the colonial past. Kopano Matiwa's *Coconut* (2007) and *Spilt Milk* (2010) will be used to endeavour to validate the claims domineering in the literature.

#### 3.2 LIVING IN THE COLONIAL SOUTH AFRICA

In the course of apartheid in South Africa, black youth endured the ordeal of abject poverty, illiteracy and humiliation. The aforementioned insidious issues substantiate the difficulty of growing up in the colonial South Africa. Osafo-Kwaako and Robinson (2013: 7) note: 'whatever the impact of the colonial period might have been on state formation in Africa, at a factual level the evidence seems to suggest that Africa developed centralised states later than the rest of the world.' The aftermaths of the demise apartheid seem to be having a negative influence in the lives of South African youth. Mamabolo and Tsheola (2017: 156) point out youth as one of the themes that have been prevalent in the comprehension of the African Renaissance and emancipation of suppressed groups in societies.

Rafapa (2014: 2) asserts: 'apartheid was a system of racial segregation enforced through legislation by the National Party (NP) government which was the ruling party of South Africa from 1948-1994 under whose rule the majority black inhabitants of South Africa were curtailed and Afrikaner minority rule was maintained.' Black parents struggled during the colonial period under the governance of apartheid regime in South Africa. They were

not privileged to access a wide range of opportunities such as high status education or occupying of top positions in the work environment.

The average black South Africans were either jobless or worked for the whites as domestic workers, baby-sitters and gardeners. Moreover, their remuneration was diminutive and with it they could hardly send children to school as well as feed them. In the wake of the aforementioned information, Athol Fugard's play, *The Coat* (1993) attempts to provide authenticity to the predominance of poverty lives of black people during the colonial period.

In Athol Fugard's *The Coat*, a breadwinner of a family is arrested and leaves his wife and children reeling in extreme poverty. Before the police could take him away, he handed his wife a coat which he believed she would use to make a living. The breadwinner's arrest created an upheaval for the entire family.

Fugard presents the challenges chimed in as a result of no income in the family. The children found themselves on the edge of being homeless, their education threatened and beginning to have both good and evil thoughts of generating money. However, the husband left hope for his children, which is the coat. Because of poverty, the son in the house resorted to dropping out of school and go to find a job to help his mother. Significantly, poverty at this point led to a youngster abandoning his education in an effort to make money in order to survive.

Ndlovu (2015: 9) states: 'Dating from the apartheid era, protests have been understood to be the main mechanism for engaging the state by mostly poor black communities.' Harsh conditions that the South African youth endured during the apartheid era were seemingly insurmountable, for instance, they were given restrictions at different occasions such as denied access to study at certain institutions of higher education like Rhodes University.

The most notable incident that seeks to validate the agonising moments that black South African youth bore in the colonial period is the Soweto Uprising 16 June 1976 (see Chapter 2) which entails the brutal killings of black South African youth by white police. Today, the day of 16 June is marked and commemorated. It is celebrated in South Africa at large and has been declared a holiday in remembrance of the black youth that lost their lives. The petitions of the murdered youth in 1976 were dedicated to the future generation. Nevertheless, democracy was attained and it came with several changes and ways to free black people from the colonial attachments. Hence, the youth of the colonial past and post-colonial present will be compared and discussed.

### **3.3 LIVING IN THE POST-COLONIAL SOUTH AFRICA**

The youth of South Africa possess rights and privileges as outlined in the freedom charter (see chapter 2). They have the right to go to school, earn bursaries and study at any institution of their choice. The youth of today seem to possess better opportunities to succeed than the ones of the colonial era. However, success appears to be something that is far from their reach. Fintel (2015: 1) notes: 'Given South Africa's history of apartheid, it is not surprising that the divide between rich and poor also remains a division along racial lines.'

There is a rapid growth of South African youth smuggling drugs, dropping out at schools, becoming gangsters, falling pregnant at their teenage stages, becoming rapists, failing to pass at schools, stealing money and items from people to quench their drug and alcohol addictions. To a larger extent, they are found in possession of unsavoury elements such as knives, drugs, cigarettes and alcohol. Despite the opportunities provided for them to improve their lives, they still fail to break away from suffering. Mncube and Steinmann (2017: 203) note:

Fear of gang-related violence at school can be as harmful as primary victimisation and personal experiences of violence, causing learners to drop out or avoid school, or to lose concentration in the classroom and in learners developing healthy pro-social relationships as actual victimisation. Furthermore, gang violence is a destructive phenomenon and has a negative effect on the delivery of quality education.

Black children during the colonial period were not privileged to easy access of education as opposed to the present. The situation gets worse as girls as young as primary school learners fall pregnant. In most cases, they are impregnated by their peers who are still learning and are not financially stable. If they are not fortunate enough to have their families raise their children whilst they continue going to school, they will be forced to drop out in order to raise the child. It seems difficult, if not impossible for a 13 year old to raise a child.

To prop up the conditions of growing up in the post-colonial South Africa, the *Big Debate Youth* (2011) opens up with a brief story of a young adult from Cape Town, Monde Gwele, 23 years old, who shares his experiences and what lured him to commit wicked deeds. Gwele dropped out of school in grade 9 after getting involved with a gang called the *Gazas*, after growing tired of robbing people and getting shot at, Monde joined a group reformed gangsters consisting of the *Gazas* and rival gang *buteos* who called a truce. The group is now trying to make a fresh start but Monde says lack of work and education opportunities for young people like him is discouraging (*Big debate, 2011*). He states:

Everyday i wake up, clean the house and go check on the house. My friends work at the car wash. I just watch because I can't wash cars for a living. I get frustrated just chilling on the corner with no money. I feel like misbehaving but I stop myself.

From Monde's story, it could be noted that the post-colonial South Africa is still experiencing crucial challenges that are severely affecting the youth of South Africa. If youngsters have nothing to focus on and are idling all over the streets, they are likely to get tempted to engage in unacceptable things. This calls for the youth to be kept busy but this will not completely terminate their idle minds as sooner or later they will be looking to find a way to make money. Duplesis and Smith (2007: 668) aver: 'young people and unskilled people are mostly affected by unemployment. In contrast with the fact that unskilled people struggle to find employment, the unemployment rate amongst educated people (skilled people) is also increasing in South Africa.'

Problems arose when Monde dropped out of school. Now he is 23 years old without matric and in the midst of his fresh start, it would be difficult for him to find a decent job. He is currently confronting the consequences of dropping out of school. Although the reasons to why he found being a gangster more attractive than school were not mentioned by him, it could be suggested that there could have been a missing touch in his life.

The struggle of the youth in the post-colonial period seems to be getting worse. The colonial past perhaps shaped the *status quo* of the youth in the post-colonial South Africa. Adjai and Lazaridis (2013: 193) note: 'although the transition to democracy in South Africa ushered in the formal removal of racial discrimination that formed barriers to people accessing their political, social and economic rights, it did not eradicate inequalities.'

As Nelson Mandela (1918-2014) states: 'Education is most powerful weapon that you can use to change the world,' all hopes for a better life are on education. However, it is worthy to examine whether education has provided the youth a way out of suffering. Cloete (2015: 514) assert: 'Although there are various reasons for youth unemployment such as population growth, lack of experience, inappropriate ways of searching for a job, and lack of career guidance in schools, the unemployment rate for first-time job-seekers in South Africa is unacceptably high.'

### **3.4 FAILURE TO EMPOWER SOUTH AFRICAN YOUTH**

It had been hoped that encouraging education in the lives of youth would help curb the crisis of poverty, crime and other social issues. Nevertheless, amongst the youth loitering around streets are well qualified graduates. These graduates pursued their dreams but ultimately hit a setback when they found no jobs. In spite of being in possession higher education qualifications, they are found on the streets poverty-stricken and jobless. Grunow (2014: 5) asserts: 'The negative impact of unemployment on subjective well-being is mitigated by high regional unemployment rates, providing evidence for reference-dependence.'

Measures such as the availability of financial schemes, bursaries and scholarships are taken to improve the atmosphere of education but students still drop out and if not, graduate but only few find jobs. Karodia *et al.* (2016: 85) observe: '...except for social

grants, little progress has been made in fighting unemployment, poverty and inequality.’ Furthermore, there seems to be a huge gap in terms of equality between the white and the black youth from the phase of colonialism to date in the post-colonialism era. Cloete (2015: 516) avows: ‘Unemployment thus reflects other social challenges like racial and sexual inequalities in our country and could also be linked to poverty.’

### **3.5. MATLWAS’S COCONUT**

Matlwa’s *Coconut* is an enthralling tale that unravels the dichotomy of issues that youngsters in the post-colonial South Africa are challenged with. Muray (2016: 92) states: ‘The salience of race in the South African context demands that we read the experiences of Matlwa’s characters through lenses of racial as well as gendered politics.’ *Coconut* confronts the challenges that the youth of South Africa experienced from childhood to adulthood as a result of colonial inspiration.

*Coconut* tells the story of two different girls with various personalities but both shaped by colonial attributes in different ways. Matlwa in this novel demonstrates how past problems can breed future problems if not addressed. Two girls (Fikile and Ofilwe) are used to mirror post-colonial crises that the youth in South Africa is grappling with.

Matlwa raises the authentic voices of women Ofilwe and Fikile who unravel the odds against them. Ofilwe and Fikile have different lifestyles and are from unequal backgrounds but are allied by the identity-crisis that they experience in the post-apartheid South Africa. Ofilwe is from a rich family while Fikile is hails from a poverty-stricken world. *Coconut* portrays the aforementioned characters as young South African women that find themselves in the heart of cultural-crisis, sexual violence and racial discrimination. The trilogy of appalling events in *Matlwa’s Coconut* unfolds at the infamous Johannesburg.

Matlwa structured and divided *Coconut* into two partitions. The first part enumerates the life of wealthy Ofilwe and the second revolves around the destitute Fikile. Comparatively, these two characters reflect on daily dilemmas that young South Africans wake up to meet such as identity.

### **3.5.1 Characterisation of the Central Figures**

#### **3.5.1.1 Ofilwe**

Ofilwe is from a wealthy family and is well provided for. She attends a model C school and affords to shop at luxurious stores. She lives a typical lifestyle and embraces the English language and culture. Moreover, she enjoys her privileges to an extent that she finds herself on the edge of losing her true identity and denying her own heritage.

When the real hints sink in concerning her identity, she starts to be double-minded and question everything about her life. In support of this point, she went to a multi-racial school where whiteness dominated. For example, English was enforced. When Ofilwe started facing discrimination in her school, she started to be inquisitive about her real identity.

#### **3.5.1.2 Fikile**

In the second section of the novel, readers are introduced to the character of Fikile. The latter is from a poor background and does not have the kind of familial support that Ofilwe gets on the other hand. She is one of the victimised and poverty-stricken young South Africans. She lives in a slum and her abject poverty contributes to the deterioration of the challenges she confronts as a young South African woman. Fikile appears to be an aspiring intelligent youngster who is determined to make it in life and escape the life of poverty.

Fikile's heart is 'heavy with ambition' (p.110). In spite of her discouraging poor background, she excels and goes beyond to reach her dreams. However, along the path to success, she encounters challenges that attempt to hinder her from reaching her full potential. Firstly, Fikile is nurtured by her uncle as her mother abandoned her at a young age. She goes through great challenges of living with her uncle. Her relationship with her uncle becomes clouded by a wave of enmity. When Fikile eventually learns about sexual abuse at school, she realises that she is a victim because of her uncle. This causes the former to develop rage and loathing for her uncle.



### 3.5. RELIGIOUS IDENTITY

Williams (2008) defines religion as a 'sacred engagement with that which is believed to be a spiritual reality.' In addition, it could be defined as an identity that an individual chooses to acquire on the basis of his belief. For instance, people can choose to believe in Christianity and acquire an identity as Christians, believe in Muslim and acquire an identity as Muslims, Hinduism and be identified as Hindus. In Matlwa's *Coconut*, there is a religious crisis lives of Fikile and Ofilwe.

The relationship between religion and colonialism seems to be a controversial subject that has garnered plenty of discussion. Nonetheless, churches played a major role in asserting the identity of South Africans during the colonial era. Mafuta (2016: ii) notes: 'Churches have led the way in deconstructing the perceived or realised power or disempowerment that is residual to the Apartheid.'

In the colonial South Africa, churches and schools were introduced by the apartheid regime. Most schools were religious and predominantly practised Christianity and Catholic. Historically, black people considered Christianity as a white man's religion not a black man's and therefore perceived it as strategy used by the colonialists to uphold control upon them. This could be noted from Mafuta's (2016: 52) explication on how religion was used to colonise the African Zulu tribe:

The discovery of religion among the Zulu emerged when King Shaka died and his successor King Dingane took the throne. By all accounts, Dingane was more diplomatic than Shaka and wanted to foster political and economic relationships with the British imperial power. In exchange for letting missionaries work in his territory, he wanted 'gunpowder, horses, and some innovative technology in agriculture. But this endeavor would cost him the annexation of Natal to the colony.....To better control the Zulu, missionaries discover religious affinities with their own religion, to elevate the Zulu to the status of human beings. Henry Callaway, for example, was of the opinion that there were intellectual, moral, and religions affinities between Europeans and Africans.

In *Coconut*, Ofilwe is seen arguing with Tsempe over religion where he tries to convince her that Christianity is one the elements of oppression that robbed her her cultural identity. Goodhew (2004: 11) declares: 'although for most part, these churches were pro-active,

supporting the people when it came to social and moral issues, they were not, however, unanimous in their stand.'

Murray (2016: 21) notes: 'Churches, for their part, incarnated imagined communities either to propagate or challenge the ideological system of Apartheid.' In *Coconut*, Matlwa points out that the cultural African identity is swallowed by the Western identity. She portrays this through the argument of Ofilwe and Tsembo. In addition, Modisane (1986:7) affirms: 'the Dutch Reformed Christianity preached the love of the neighbour while at the same time denounced him, defined him as savage and classed him among the beasts....' Furthermore, Modisane states:

According to the 2001 population census, 80 per cent of South Africans, all races combined, belong to one of three religious traditions, which are constructed along linguistic lines.<sup>33</sup> They are (1) the English-speaking churches, also known as 'Mission Churches' that include but are not limited to Methodists; the Anglican Church of the Province of South Africa known as CPSA (Baptists, Congregationalists, and Presbyterians); and (2) the Afrikaans-speaking Churches. Of the latter, the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) is the largest. (3) In the African Initiated Churches (AICs), the leading group is the Zion Christian Church (ZCC) (Stats South Africa, 2001).

Matlwa develops an argument over religion in the opening events of the novel. She presents Tsembo arguing with Ofilwe. Tsembo believes that Christianity is the coloniser's legacy and therefore, white people vehemently enforced their Christianity on Africans. Ofilwe did not get pleased to hear this as she was a Christian. From Tsembo's argument, it could be argued that he refers to Ofilwe as a black person who chooses to wear the white man's identity (Christianity).

Religion is reason why Ofilwe has become the subject of criticism and this makes her life difficult in spite of coming from a financially stable family. In the light of the above mentioned information, Matlwa seems to demonstrate that one of the effects of colonialism in the post-colonial times is the loss of cultural roots. This is shown through the character of Ofilwe who is bred in a white society.

### **3.6. RACIAL IDENTITY**

South Africa consists of a variety of racial groups namely: Black people, White people, Coloured people and Indian people. All these racial groups carry an identity that defines

them according to their races. Furthermore, the basic element of racial identity that is palpable in the aforementioned groups is skin colour. Ezeliora (2007: 41) states:

First, the notion of 'post' in 'post-apartheid' indicates a period: 'after-'. It situates the temporal interest at the moment following democratic non-racialism. If our notion of 'post-ness' for racial separatism is appropriate in the literature of the new South Africa, however, it immediately triggers off the allied concern to define the nature of the *nation-ness* of South Africa, a 'nation' built on a crafty deployment of *difference* or ethnicity and *race* for many centuries.

In the post-colonial South Africa, racial discrimination seems to be one of the trending discussions. Matlwa illustrates racial identity in her novel. Growing in a wealthy family, attending model C schools, being a Christian and getting used to speaking English all the time, Ofilwe is exposed to the white-cultural influence. Nevertheless, some of her dimensions that signify her black identity cannot be changed nor influenced notwithstanding her full conformity to the lifestyle of white people from an early age such as her skin colour, descendants and roots.

Ofilwe's failure to change her physical characteristics such as skin colour led to problems in her life. She started experiencing discrimination at school from her teachers and peers. Although at times she lived a lifestyle that was influenced by the white society, her skin colour made her school mates to single her as someone different from them. At school she was teased because of her different characteristics from the white people. Coupled with the help of her brother Tsembo, this ultimately prompted Ofilwe to later realise that colonialism robbed her her true identity.

The division amongst black people and white people appears to deteriorate as reflected in *Coconut*. Ofilwe is segregated by her fellows at school and this paves the way to several issues that are likely to occur to Ofilwe: emotional, psychological and spiritual neglect. She is subjected to the aforementioned factors owing to her skin colour and this has made her be on a quest for her true identity as she perceives that she has lost her culture and pursued another's.

### 3.7. COLONIAL MINDSET

As Yenjela (2017: 13) notes, colonialism is one of the chief historical burdens that ...African literature spiritedly grapples with. Correspondingly, Woods (2007: 20) notes: African literatures represent history through the twin matrices of memory and trauma.' Matlwa's *Coconut* defines the colonial mindset that South Africans have adopted and applied in the democratic society.

*Coconut* echoes how black youngsters are swayed by white influence. There are things that black youngsters commit as a result of colonial intervention such as impersonating white people through skin bleaching and hair extensions. Matlwa portrays this through the character of Fikile and some of Ofilwe's actions that attempt to define her as a white person.

Poor individuals like Fikile envy the luxurious lifestyle that majority of white people delight in. This could be substantiated by Fikile stating that she recalls telling her teacher that when she grows up she wants to be a white person. 'White, Teacher Zola, I want to be white' (p. 135). When asked the reason, she states it is 'better.' Then her fellow classmate said she will be 'black as dirt forever' (p. 135). To achieve her wish to be a white person, Fikile says she is afraid of 'losing complexion' (p. 51). She goes to extreme lengths to maintain her complexion which makes her feel close to whiteness. She uses sunscreen to sustain the whitening effects of her 'Lemon Light skin-lightener cream' (p. 117).

Most young black girls are bleaching their skins to be brighter. It could be suggested that these girls were not satisfied if not abhorring their black skin colour and therefore consider the white or brighter skin more beautiful which could be why they bleach their skins. Black South African women marched against skin bleaching in August 2016. The march was organised by, among others, the University of Kwazulu Natal and the provincial health department. *DailySun* newspaper 26 August 2016 presents the story of Nombulelo Pakkies (49) from Lamontville who confirms that she used a face lightener for over 18 years not knowing harmful it was to her health until her skin started to become itchy when exposed to the sun. She states: 'I didn't know there was a problem until a doctor told me how the cream was affecting my skin.'

**Figure 3.1 Skin bleaching**



### **Analysis**

The aforementioned image shows the image of young black South African woman. On the first picture, her skin colour appears to be dark. That was before she resorted to skin bleaching. On the second image, her complexion is dramatically brighter than before. This is after she had opted for skin bleaching which brought her skin colour close of the whiteness.

Another challenge for women that Matlwa unravels in *Coconut* is the practice of hair extensions that appear to be critical issue in the lives of women in the novel. Erasmus (1997: 12) argues: 'racial hierarchies and values of colonial racism have left a deep mark on our conceptions of beauty.' By the same token, Weitz (2001: 667) notes: 'women's hair is central to their social position and that women can use hair to attempt to access power, however limited such power might be.' The infatuation with hairstyles in *Coconut* could be expatiated by the quotes below:

'The most beautiful hair.....all eight years of life' (p.1)

'straight and silky soft' (p.1)

'.... spoiled, haughty, rude and foul-mouthed, hair ...glorious' (p.1)

'Charming young waitress...soft, blow-in-the-wind caramel-blond hair' (p.117)

Fikile envies to be a white woman and this could point out that she is not proud of who she is. She wishes to be 'white, rich and happy' rather than 'black, dirty and poor' (p.118). Furthermore, the coloniser perhaps influenced the mindset of people to define beauty on the basis of skin colour. The eager to live a fancy life like white people made Fikile to develop hatred for black people and be ashamed of them. She views black people as an insignia of failure and poverty and hence, she associates whiteness with wealth and black with poverty.

Another factor that contributes to Fikile's revulsion for black people is her sexual abuse incident that she unearthed at a later stage. Her uncle sexually abused her when she was young and at that time she had no idea of what was going on. When she eventually found out, she got disappointed to an extent of not only developing hatred for her uncle, but also regarding every black man as a rapist. '...thief like all the other men in this train, and probably an alcoholic and a rapist too' (p.133).

Ofilwe also mirrors a colonised mindset. She embraces the English language and places a premium on it. She speaks English at home and she believes that it is her first language despite her skin colour not being in her favour. When asked about her mothertongue at school she points out English but this seems to be far-fetched to her teachers. Although she could be physically referred to as black, she considered herself as white until she decided to find out about her parents' background.

Matlwa has demonstrated the colonial influences in the lives of Ofilwe and Fikile. Both of them are challenged by the immeasurable desires to be white and live according to white people's cultures. Moreover, Fikile struggled to accept her black identity and hated it because of some of the legacies of apartheid in the post-colonial South Africa such as poverty, definition of beauty and the rise of sexual and physical violence against women.

### **3.8. LOSS OF CULTURAL HERITAGE**

The concept of cultural identity in Matlwa's *Coconut* is evaluated through the characters. Predominantly, Ofilwe and Fikile appear to have lost conscious of who they are and where they come from. Colonial features that managed to warm their way into the post-colonial societies of South Africa lured youngster to adopt the white's culture and mindset.

The loss of African cultural identity could be noted in the changes that occur everyday as a result of modernity. Children are introduced to new identities that shape their lives. For instance, Fikile's loathing for her own race began at an early age after finding out that her own uncle had sexually abused her. This anger and grudge developed as Fikile grew up and paved the way for her departure from black identity.

Ofilwe's parents exposed her to a society that was motivated by whiteness. As a child she grew up acknowledging the culture of white people while cementing her ignorance about the fundamental element of her black identity. Ofilwe's parents failed to teach her her roots and this resulted in the loss of her true heritage.

Fikile deliberately denies her heritage. She feels trapped in the blackness that she grew up in and wishes to be a white person. Her negative perception on her black identity is the emotional scars that she has as a result of her own black race failing her. As a consequence, she sees perfectionism in the white man's culture.

#### **3.8.1 REVIVAL OF HERITAGE IN THE POST-COLONIAL SOUTH AFRICA**

Matlwa's *Coconut* shows that the youth of South Africa are gradually losing their heritage. Fikile denies her heritage and wishes that she was white and Ofilwe had her black identity swayed by her parents who conditioned her to the white-societal influence. In an effort to revive the heritage in outh Africa, the latter introduced a public holiday that is celebrated on 24<sup>th</sup> September every year.

The tradition of celebrating the heritage day is by means of African performances such as story-telling, folklores, traditional dances, praises, poetry, drama, ceremonial practices, recreation, socialisation, improvisation and community sharing. The aforementioned practices seek to remind South Africans about their roots, who they are

and where they come from. In South Africa, there are diverse cultures as displayed by the rainbow nation and therefore, heritage day marks the celebration of each culture.

Heritage day can bring unity amongst cultural groups. For example, on heritage day the Zulus would unite and perform their dances and celebrate their cultures and the same will apply to other cultures and heritage could be regained. Desmond Tutu declares: 'We are going to have this wonderful thing on the 24<sup>th</sup> of this month...when we all gather around one fire.' Through this heritage, cultural identity could be cemented against all odds.

There are different activities that are frequently performed to mark the celebration of heritage day such as the four day Zulu Royal reed dance festival. This performance involves a multitude of young girls coming together to celebrate their preparation for womanhood. Only virgins are permitted to take part and it is a great delight to be amongst the selected. The event promotes purity among young girls and respect for women in the region.

Another activity frequently performed on heritage day is the Gumboots dance. The latter is motivated by the hardships of working in the mines, forced into silence by oppressive bosses, used to communicate with each other through stamping their feet, rattling their ankle chains and slapping their boots.

### **3.9 KOPANO MATLWA'S *SPILT MILK***

Another novel that discloses the aftermath of the colonialism through the government of apartheid in South Africa is Matlwa's *Spilt Milk* (2010). It is a poignant novel that discourses the critical challenges that are present in the world of democracy as a result of colonialism. It explicates the possible causes of the failures to rebuild South Africa as a nation of unity.

Matlwa's *Spilt Milk* focuses on two enthusiastic characters that both experience challenges in their lives. This is the headmistress *Mohumagadi* from *Ditlhora* School and a preacher called Father Bill who was employed by *Mohumagadi* as a teacher against all odds.

In the light of the title of novel, the phrase Spilt milk is a constituent of the proverb: 'There is no use crying over Spilt milk.' Notably, this proverb could refer to crying or being angry



over something that is done and cannot be undone or the reluctance to move on from the past and something cannot be changed. In the context of South Africa, the title of Matlwa's novel could be associated with the inability to undo the damage that apartheid has done and the averseness to move on from the past.

Subsequent to democracy in 1994, the first black president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela (1918-2014) the ANC demonstrated a different leadership style compared to the apartheid government. Matlwa's *Spilt Milk* portrays how some of the South Africans who were tortured by the apartheid regime anticipated their leader, Nelson Mandela to lead them into combat with their former torturers. It appears that revenge was expected to be taken against the white empire. However, Mandela came up with the strategy of reconciliation and this led to him and FW de Klerk to be awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in 1993.

Rosenberg (1996) elicits the South Africans' views concerning reconciliation, Ncediwe Mfeti states: 'All I want is the security policemen to give me back the photograph they took away 20 years ago,' she said testifying about the disappearance of her husband, Phindile. Incidences such as the one outlined above perhaps leads to the revival of the pain of apartheid. In the novel, it seems difficult to find closure and completely forget about the past through the lives of the characters.

Matlwa's *Spilt Milk* argues that despite reconciliation, there are scars that cannot be erased and sometimes remind South Africans of the pain they endured and hence, dissipating the love tried to be restored amongst black people and white people. In support of this point, Matlwa presents the character of *Mohumagadi* as one of the black South Africans who grew up during the dying days of apartheid and on one side, she seems to be still angry and bitter over the difficult experience of apartheid and on the other side, she seems to believe that lamenting over the what happened in the past is useless. This could be evidenced by her relationship with father Bill and allowing him to teach at *Ditlhora*.

In *Coconut*, there is a bitter taste between white people and black people. Learners at *Ditlhora* are conscientised about the ills of apartheid to an extent of resenting the race of white. They are dissuaded from watching movies such as King Kong, Lord of the Rings

and Titanic that seemingly embrace the culture of white people. 'A pupil states to Father Bill: 'We do not watch stupid movies. Movies about white people's fantasies, their minor problems and crises' (p. 85).

In the course of colonialism, religion was also singled out as the idea to colonise Africans (see Chapter 1). Moreover, white priests such as father Bill appear to be still recognised as products of colonialism. Although *Mohumagadi* hired the white priest to work at her school, she does not believe in what he preaches. 'God was not there when we were chained ... so why only now does God want to involve Himself when it appears we are winning?' (p.115). Matlwa uses *Mohumagadi* to emphasise the link between religion and oppression.

### **3.10 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has examined the apartheid ills that still haunt the post-apartheid South Africa as verified in Matlwa's novels, *Coconut* and *Spilt Milk*. It has shown the dire consequences of identity-crisis that hurled South Africans out of their comfort zones to seek their true identities.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONCEPTUALISING BLACK FEMINIST THOUGHT IN SINDIWE MAGONA'S SELECTED NOVELS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Sindiwe Magona is one of the established South African authors whose literary works accentuate both the historical and contemporary hierarchies of South Africa. Mirza (2002: 27) asserts: 'Magona is caught in the gap, in the chasm, between past and present, between tradition and modernity, between two opposing systems of knowledge.' On the basis of this point, Magona seems to challenge the missing link in the midst of the past (Colonial era) and present (post-colonial era). In addition, Rafapa (2017: 282) notes: '... in the discourses of her fiction Magona refines her trope of black feminism or womanism progressively.'

Altogether, Magona's works seem to underscore the sheer pain of identity-crisis that black women bare witness to. This is evident in her novels: *Beauty's Gift* (2008) and *Mother to Mother* (1998) which mirror the downtrodden atmosphere of agony, emotional despair, and humiliation that black women endure. This chapter aspires to give a critical evaluation of identity in the post-colonial South Africa from black feminism perspective with Magona's literary works being the basic premise of attestation.

#### 4.2 BACKGROUND

Literary scholars such as Alice Walker, Sloan Hunter and Naomi Nkealah show a great interest in the concept of feminism coupled with womanism. The spheres of feminism and womanism are endorsed and prominently recognised in the world at large. Frank (1984: 35) states: 'feminist criticism covers a broad spectrum, ranging from the 'sociological, prescriptive and polemical to the formalist, rarefied and aesthetic.' Women find solace in the feminism movement and regard it as flawless platform to raise their authentic voices. This involves women making demands such as clamouring for equality with men in societies and legitimising some of their deeds which were hitherto deemed as unacceptable such as lesbianism.

## 4.2 WOMANIST THOUGHT

The pioneers of the womanist thought comprises; Alice Walker Poet and author of the famous novel, *The Color Purple* and activist in the 1960s Civil Rights movement, Margaret Sloan-Hunter Feminist, lesbian, and civil rights activate who founded the National Black Feminist Organization (NBFO) in 1973, Audre Lorde Radical lesbian feminist activist, poet and writer of *Sister Outsider*, 1980s, Elaine Brown the only female leader of the Black Panther Party from 1974-1977. Furthermore, these researchers proposed a number of definitions of the term 'womanist, however, this study will use Walker's (1983) definitions of 'Womanist thought' which run as follows:

1. From *womanish*. (Opp. of 'girlish,' i.e. frivolous, irresponsible, not serious.) A black feminist or feminist of color. From the black folk expression of mothers to female children, 'you acting womanish,' i.e., like a woman. Usually referring to outrageous, audacious, courageous or *willful* behavior. Wanting to know more and in greater depth than is considered 'good' for one. Interested in grown up doings. Acting grown up. Being grown up. Interchangeable with another black folk expression: 'You trying to be grown.' Responsible. In charge. *Serious*.

2. *Also*: A woman who loves other women, sexually and/or nonsexually. Appreciates and prefers women's culture, women's emotional flexibility (values tears as natural counterbalance of laughter), and women's strength. Sometimes loves individual men, sexually and/or nonsexually. Committed to survival and wholeness of entire people, male *and* female. Not a separatist, except periodically, for health. Traditionally a universalist, as in: 'Mama, why are we brown, pink, and yellow, and our cousins are white, beige and black?' Ans. 'Well, you know the coloured race is just like a flower garden, with every colour flower represented.'

Traditionally capable, as in: 'Mama, I'm walking to Canada and I'm taking you and a bunch of other slaves with me.' Reply: 'It wouldn't be the first time.'

On the basis of definitions noted above, it could be argued that Walker postulates that womanism is actually black feminism. Collins (2001: 20) state: 'Current debates about whether black women's standpoint should be named womanism or black womanism or black feminist reflect this basic challenge of accommodating diversity.'

### **4.3 BLACK FEMINIST THOUGHT**

Emenyonu (2000: 29-30) posits: 'feminism has become the spade with which women have dug the grounds of imaginative writing and planted the seed of an authentic female portraiture.' Through feminist discourse, challenges that affect women are sought to be addressed. Mirza (2002: 12) affirms: 'Magona's autobiographies of Black South African women writers such as Sindiwe Magona provide important testimonies of black women's empowerment, of the frequency and normalcy of their involvement in the masculine public domains of the economy and politics.'

#### **4.3.1 Waves of Feminism**

Nkealah (2006: 133) notes: 'feminism is often interpreted as being anti-male, anti-culture and anti-religion in its theoretical framework.' Moreover, feminism could be asserted as a fundamental approach that seeks to deconstruct gender based theories on femininity. Feminism can be divided into two waves; First and second wave.

##### **4.3.1.1 First wave feminism**

The first wave originated in the 1800s and presumably came to a halt in the 1930s, was largely concerned with gaining equal rights between women and men. It is predominantly concerned with the revival of the core opportunities for women. This earliest form of feminism petitioned for equal rights between men and women. This meant equal standing as citizens in public life and equal legal status within homes. These ideas emerged in response to the American Revolution (1775-1783) and the French Revolution (1789-1799), both of which advocated values of liberty and equality (Encarta, 2009).

##### **4.3.1.2 Second Wave Feminism**

The second wave, which began in the late 1960s, has continued to fight for equality but has also developed a range of theories and approaches that stress the difference between women and men and that draw attention to the specific needs of women. The original impetus for the second wave of feminism stems from the civil rights movement that emerged in the 1960s in North America and from social protest movements in Europe and Australasia. The women's liberation movement, which started in the United States,

incorporated liberal and rights-based concerns for equality between women and men with demands for women's rights to determine their own identity and sexuality (Encarta, 2009).

#### **4.4 KINDS OF FEMINISM**

Karen (1988: 128) states: 'by 1900 a veritable taxonomy of self-described or imputed feminisms had come into being: familial feminists, integral feminists, Christian feminists, socialist feminists, radical feminists, and male feminists, among others. Already at that time, socialist feminists had begun to cast aspersions on bourgeois feminists.' Although feminism is generally known as a movement that aims to protect and empower women, there are divergent approaches within the heart of this theory such as cultural feminism, liberal feminisms, Marxist feminism and radical feminism.

##### **a) Cultural Feminism**

Cultural feminism attempts to protect women's cultural identity. This movement seeks to embrace the culture of women without attaching patriarchal doctrines on it. This means women can practise any culture of their choice.

##### **b) Liberal Feminism**

This kind of feminism works within the structure of a society. Its roots stretch back to the social contract theory of government instituted by the American Revolution and seeks individualistic equality of men and women through political and legal reform without altering the structure of society.

##### **c) Marxist Feminism**

Marxism recognises that women are oppressed, and attributes the oppression to the capitalist or private property system. Thus they insist that the only way to end the oppression of women is to overthrow the capitalist system.

##### **d) Radical Feminism**

Radical feminists view the oppression of women as the most fundamental form of oppression, one that cuts across boundaries of race, culture, and economic class.

Radical feminism seeks to usher in social change. It considers patriarchy as the main cause of the oppression of women, and therefore, confronts it vigorously.

#### **4.5. BLACK FEMINISM**

Black feminism could be defined as 'a power-shifting relationship and critical social theory that Black women self-define and design to oppose a system of racial, gendered, sexual, and class oppression and to resist the negative images of Black womanhood existing in patriarchy and discriminatory social practices' (Collins, 2001: 9).

The initiation of Black feminism has given black have a voice, and with this new-found voice comes a new series of concerns. For example, 'we must be attentive to the seductive absorption of black women's voices in classrooms of higher education where black women's texts are still much more welcome than black women ourselves' Collins (2001: 9). Conversely, Smith (2000: 51) declares: It is a mistake to characterise Black feminism as only relevant to middle-class, educated women, simply because Black women who are currently middle class have been committed to building the contemporary movement...Van den Berg (2017: 1) enumerates some of the anti-feminism ideas:

- Claim that feminist theories of patriarchy and disadvantages suffered by women in society are incorrect or exaggerated.
- Claim that feminism as a movement encourages misandry and seeks to harm or oppress men.
- Hostility towards women's rights.
- Extreme version of masculinism (machismo), in which, 'men are in crisis because of the feminization of society'.
- 'Feminazi' is a pejorative term used by fervent, antifeminists, mainly American Christian conservatives.

Figure 4.1: Feminism



### Analysis

The images outlined above portray the societal-view of feminism. From the conversations in these images it could be argued that there are people who still struggle to come to grips with feminism. This is substantiated by the first image where a bearded man wearing a blue shirt tells the woman wearing purple that he does not understand why she basically refers to herself as a feminist not an equalist or humanist.

### 4.6 LESBIANISM

The practice of female homosexuality which is affectionately known as Lesbianism, appears to be often viewed negatively in societies. As a consequence, cases of the killings and rapes of women have been constantly reported over the past few years and



the surviving ones endure harsh judgements and negative treatments from their communities.

Strudwick (2014: 10) notes: 'in the last 15 years there have been at least 31 murders linked with lesbianism and an average of 10 lesbians are raped per week to correct their sexual preferences.' The issue of lesbianism has become one of the major crises that the post-colonial South Africa is still trying to remedy as others persist on believing that lesbianism is unacceptable and those who practice it do not deserve to live.

Koraan and Gedul (2015: 8) note: 'in South Africa it is believed that lesbians from the African community are more prone to fall prey to this crime, due to their cultural environment.' As noted above, majority of South Africans consider homosexuality as an abomination. According to Morrissey (2013: 72) the 'black skin of lesbians is of particular concern, because much of the popular discourse in South Africa implies that lesbianism is taboo and that same-sex desire is not native to South African culture.'

Today, homosexual relationships and marriages are witnessed in our societies, and there are organisations that protect and promote homosexuals' rights such as LGBT (Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender). Furthermore, this is because most lesbians feel that they are not treated equally in their societies and their rights as human beings are violated. Koraan and Gedul (2015: 10) assert: 'realising that South Africa is a heteronormative society leaves one wondering whether the transformative constitutionalism project, which is grounded in the law, is capable of enabling South African society to transform to a truly equal society in all respects.'

The negative mind-set towards lesbians gave birth to the idea of corrective rape. Abrahams *et al.* (2009: 21) define corrective rape as 'an instance when a woman is raped in order to cure her her lesbianism.' On close examination, the word corrective according *Encarta dictionary* (2009) means acting or intended to correct something and the word rape means forcing somebody into sex. However, with the word corrective attached on the term rape, there seems to be a misconception that this kind of rape can do more good than harm. It is believed by the perpetrators that having sex with a man will correct a homosexual woman's sexual orientation (Brown, 2012: 46).

Koraan and Gedul (2015: 8) in their research titled *Corrective Rape* bring forth some of the brutal cases of lesbian rapes that received plenty of media coverage such as:

The story of 24 year-old Noxolo Nogwaza, whose lifeless body was found in an ally in Kwa Thema, outside of Johannesburg on 24 April 2011 (Rossier, 2011).<sup>48</sup> She had been stoned, stabbed with broken glass and gang-raped: 'She had been raped and her head and face were crushed'(Anon, 2013). To date the perpetrator or perpetrators have not been found.

On 28 March 2011 Nokuthula Rdebe's body was found by children playing in an abandoned building in Thokoza Township, east of Johannesburg. The 20-year-old was found strangled with her shoelaces, her face covered with a plastic bag and her pants pulled down (Dumsa, 2013). To date her killer or killers have also not been apprehended.

**Figure 4.2: Homosexuality**



### **Analysis**

The above image represents lesbianism. It reveals two people of the same sex as demonstrated by the skirts, holding hands with a symbol of love in between. The drawings outlined above exhibit the dressing style of a woman as the people drawn seem to be

wearing dresses. Therefore, it could be argued that they are women and the whole picture demonstrates lesbianism.

### **Figure 4.3 Lesbianism**



### **Analysis**

Anguita (2012: 12) notes: 'although South Africa has some of the most progressive legislations pertaining to homosexuality, many still view homosexuality as unacceptable.' This image also represents lesbianism. Two women are displayed hold one another intimately.

### **4.7 ABUSE AGAINST WOMEN**

Women abuse is a subject that captures global attention. According to Ellsberg and Heise (2005: 5), this abuse against women acquired prominence in the in the 1980s as female groups organised locally and internationally to demand attention to the physical, psychological, and economic abuse of women. Filip (2017: 1) states: 'this violence against women may be experienced in the private or public sphere, and the perpetrators are often intimate partners, family members or persons known to the victim.'

#### 4.7.1 Physical violence

Physical woman abuse could be defined as the non-accidental infliction of physical injury to a woman. This is often characterised by injury, bruises, lesions and fractures that result from hitting, punching, shaking, kicking, beating, choking, burning throwing, stabbing or otherwise harming a woman (Sigsworth 2009). Moreover, some of the possible effects of physical women abuse can include pain, suffering, medical problems, physical disabilities, neurological alterations and poor hygiene.

Njezula (2006: 3) asserts: 'a woman is killed every six hours by an intimate partner (*Sunday Independent*, 2006). It is further estimated that the chances of women being murdered in South Africa are 24.7 per 100 000 women, compared to the global rate of four per 100 000' (*Sunday Independent*, 2006). Gruber (2014: 10) states: 'Different societies have different perceptions of how men and women are supposed to behave, there are some gender-expectations which are generally more common than others.'

Women in the post-colonial South Africa have become victims of domestic violence in their families, homes, schools and in the work place. Watts and Zimmerman (2002: 78) note: 'women are two or three times more likely than men to report having felt in danger of being physically hurt during violent conflicts with intimate partners in South Africa.' The violence inherited from apartheid still resonates profoundly in today's South African societies.

Researchers such as Anderson and Umberson 2001; Bloom 2008; Jewkes et al. 2010, argue that females are more likely to be victims of physical abuse than males. Boonzaier and Rey (2000: 443) assert: 'violence against women is a widespread social problem affecting millions of women. For more than three decades, researchers have explored the experiences of women in abusive relationships.' Equally important, feminism is the basic theoretical premise in underpinning the dimensions of violence against women. A feminist analysis focuses on how traditional ideas about marriages, families and gender roles support patriarchy (Dobash & Dobash, 1979).

In most cases, victims of physical abuse are found to have endured the hardships for a quite number of years. Questions regarding the reasons why the victims kept quiet with the pain for such a long time are raised by those that get the chance to intervene. Dlamini (2015: 11) notes: 'having been published at a historical moment when South Africa is transitioning from apartheid to post-apartheid epochs, they talk to and reflect some of the challenges of masculinities and femininities.' There seems to be a variety of factors that influence physical violence against women such as financial stability, cultural obligations and social issues at large. The aforementioned setbacks can prevent women from leaving abusive relationships.

Victims that solely depend on their abusive partners financially might often find it difficult walk away from the relationship. Other reasons could be fear of losing families. For instance, financially unstable women could put the interests of their children first and this can influence them to stay in the abusive relationship for the sake of children's future.

Cultural traits also play a role in influencing violence on women especially in marriages. Chesler (1997) asserts that violence is a result of gender role inequality found in patriarchal cultures which oppress women and empower men. This substantiates one of the reasons why some women choose to dwell in abusive marriages. An effective example can be drawn from one of the episodes of the SABC soapie, *Intersex ions*.

### **Analysis of *Intersex ions* 2 Episode 12**

In *Intersex ions*, a polygamist cheats on his two wives without any guilt on his conscience. However, to his amasement, he is compelled to confront dire consequences of his actions. He is a traditional man and so are his wives but when they unearthed the truth about his affair, one of them reacted in a way that he never thought she will. She neglected all the thoughts and traditional beliefs that would have had her bear her husband's insidious actions and packed her bags, and left while the other one chose to honour her tradition and remain. In addition, Gelles (2008: Encarta) notes:

People who are dependent on their partners emotionally and economically learn to endure abuse and remain in unhealthy relationships, a process that has been labeled learned hopefulness. Learned hopefulness refers to an

abuse victim's belief that the abusive partner will change his or her behaviour or personality. Some scholars assert that the process of socialisation teaches boys and girls a belief system that devalues women—especially unmarried women—and creates a sense of female responsibility for the maintenance of the family. Women who believe that the end of a relationship or of a marriage represents a personal failure are less likely to leave abusive relationships.

**Figure 4.4 Physical violence**





#### **4.7.2 Sexual Violence**

Sexual violence is a social problem that has garnered plenty of attention in the present times. Cases about sexual violence are reported almost everyday in South Africa. Although men are also sexually violated, the domineering victims of sexual abuse are women and children. Furthermore, sexual violence could be described as:

making a person wear clothes or perform sexual acts that makes that person feel uncomfortable; pressurising or forcing a person to perform sexual acts that the person does not want to perform; forcing a person to have sex when they do not want to, raping or threatening to rape a person; and forcing a person to have sex with other people (People Opposing Women Abuse, 2000).

Mathews (2010: 15) defines sexual abuse as the most common form of gender based violence and may involve rape, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and trafficking for sexual purposes. Possible effects of sexual abuse on the victims could involve low self-esteem-feeling of worthlessness, lack of trust in adults, psychological problems, Fear aggressive behaviour self-harm, discomfort with physical touch and isolation.

The lives of women in the post-colonial South Africa are threatened to the core notwithstanding their age. Most women, both young and aged have become victims of rape. South Africa has the highest levels of rape in the world (Jewkes & Abrahams, 2002). Chesler (1997) maintains that sexual violence is caused by gender role inequality found in patriarchal cultures which oppress women and empower men

Susan Brownmiller is the pioneer of feminism that published the first major feminist work on the discourse of rape, *Against Our Will* (1975). This feminist refers to rape as 'a conscious process of intimidation by which *all men* keep *all women* in a state of fear' (Brownmiller, 1975: 15). Moreover, she argues that 'rape contributed to the sexual exploitation of women and that rape should be seen as a social and political problem rooted in gender inequality.'

Rohland (2009: 7) asserts that a motivation for men to rape women is their ability to exert power. Further evidence could be drawn from Sikweyiya *et al.*'s (2007: 56) study on the theme of rape. This researcher carried out a study with 20 Xhosa men recruited from Mthatha in the Eastern Cape. It was found that:

the majority of these men believed many rape myths. These rape myths included the belief that rape could only occur when a man had used considerable force with a woman, and if perpetrator had scratches on his skin from the protest of a woman. These men believed that rape was a serious problem for men as women used accusations (that men had raped) against men in order to protect their reputations (even though they were thought to have 'asked for it'). They used language which distanced themselves from past acts of sexual coercion. For example, one of the respondents said 'sometimes you do things not knowing their repercussions or even because of age, because it is something that I would not do now, maybe it was because of my age.'

By virtue of the information noted above, it could be argued that there could still be men who believe that some victims of rape are as guilty as rapists. This could be evidenced by the rapidly growing debate on whether women who wear sexually appealing clothing such as mini-skirts are inviting rape or not.



The crisis of rape is worthy of being labelled as one of the apex challenges of the post-colonial South Africa. Young girls below the age of 1 year are raped, gang raped and murdered (Deborah Patta: 3<sup>rd</sup> degree). This horrific problem was featured on 3<sup>rd</sup> degree by Deborah Patter where it was proven to be a devastating concern of the society at large.

In one of the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree episodes on Rape Horror, it was assumed that 360 women are raped everyday in South Africa. Deborah Patta notes: '...violence against women knows no boundaries.' She features the case of two women allegedly raped by someone they knew. The incident of this women infused rage and violence on the people of South Africa demanding justice.

In the episode, it is revealed that a 17 year old woman is attacked, gang raped and disembowelled but was able to name her attackers before she could die. In addition, it was also noted that another 15 year old girl was gang raped and stabbed 53 times and her throat slit, and she too was able to name her attackers before she could die.

During the episodes, views were invited from different experts. Kelly Moulton of Gender & Justice Unit, UCT affirms: 'one of the fundamental misconceptions about rape is that it is about sex. Rape is not about sex, it is about power. It is about exerting often for somebody who feels entirely powerless...' Correspondingly, Mbuyiselo Botha of the Sonke Gender Justice network acclaims: '...it gives you a sense of dominance, you suppress this person, you take over their voice and independence...' Moreover Desmond Tutu's plea runs as follows:

...what it means of being people of honour, dignity, loving power and guiding strength and when we forget we struggle, we become angry, we fight. Sometimes rape is a response to an overwhelming sense of disempowerment both here in South Africa and in any countries. Like a cornered animal, a man might lash out in anger, frustration and revenge...'

Figure 4.5 Sexual violence



## Analysis

The above outlined images respond to questions raised against sexual violence victims. First image shows a lot of young girls gathered together and all of them are holding placards. On the pink placard held by the girl on the fore front, it is written, 'Don't tell us how to dress tell not to rape. Furthermore, the second image shows the communities of South Africa united together to fight against rape and the third picture provides a sensitive message. It states that mini-skirts do not commit rape but rapists do. A short red skirt is used as an illustration. Finally, the last images only shows naked legs which can be presumably argued to be of a woman. On one leg it is written, 'I didn't ask and on the second, 'To be raped'.

### **4.8 Mother to Mother**

Sindiwe Magona *Mother to Mother's* unravels the malaise of colonialism in the democratic South Africa. Mirza (2002: 49) states: 'Magona in *Mother to Mother* engages directly in an attempt to understand an affected black South African culture in relation to their killer instinct She travels the boundary between responsibility and judgement, finding accountability in the killer, and finally his country.' Magona portrays how the lingering colonial traits in the post-colonial South Africa give birth to severe state of affairs.

In *Mother to Mother*, a narrator enumerates the tale of two victims: one, her son who was refused an education opportunity by the government, and the other an idealistic young American, visiting South Africa to assist the nation work toward all-race elections (Mirza, 2002: 49).

Williams (2011: 15) notes: '*Mother to Mother* paints a picture of the brutality under apartheid, gives voice, and provides history to a character who, prior to the TRC, would remain unheard.' Magona's *Mother to Mother* gives an account of the complexities and atrocities that revolve around the demise of Amy Biehl. In addition, Williams (2011: 14) asserts: 'however, more than simply telling the events of the 1993 killing, Magona delves into the collective South African memory and provides an account of one of Biehl's killers, Mxolisi, and his mother Mandisa.' Magona seems to depict the voyage of the existing

colonial attributes in the post-colonial era from the root. In line with the above, Rafapa (2017: 285) asserts:

The dramatisation of white apartheid police harassing the mother's family at the dead of the night conjures up a vivid image of the overall insecurity in the lives of black parents in the apartheid era: 'Police! Open up! ...Is this the police? ... At this time? A new fear stabs my heart. Mxolisi! Did he return last night? Has something happened to my child? ... In the back of my mind I know that the police wouldn't come like this, in the middle of the night, to tell us about something happening to Mxolisi' (p. 91-92).

#### **4.9 BEAUTY' S GIFT**

*Beauty's Gift* is a poignant novel written in the post-colonial era. The former has heartily captured the attention of many South Africans as it unearths the dire challenges that threaten their lives of such as marital problems, promiscuity, dishonesty, HIV/AIDS pandemic, power and gender roles. Moreover, it was shortlisted for the Commonwealth Writer's Prize in 2009.

Magona's *Beauty's Gift* focuses on five firm friends (FFF): Edith, Cordelia, Amanda, Doris and Beauty that have different problems but always stick together. Their lives were thrown into a whirl of sorrows when one of them, Beauty gravely fell ill and ultimately died due to the deadly HIV/AIDS. Beauty's demise deteriorated the FFF's challenges and initiated a war between them and HIV/AIDS.

*Beauty's Gift* is a tragic narration that confronts tremendous odds stacked against post-colonial South Africa. It presents an atmosphere of sombre throughout. With a wrathful tone, Magona rebukes South Africans, mostly men presumably, to stop their immoral acts such as promiscuity. Thus, Hove (2014: 536) asserts: '*Beauty's Gift* sets out to demand for social action and it is couched in the discourse of women's rights and the rights of potential AIDS victims.' This could be drawn from this exclamation:

Let me remind you maAfrika amahle, let us to talk to the children about sex... [We} have abandoned shepherding our children through puberty. My people wake up! Vukani! Let us not abandon all the things that make us who we are. There may be a very good reason our Ancestors put those things in place (p. 88).

Magona's *Beauty's Gift* encapsulates the demeaning ills that overrun the democratic South Africa and turned it into a desert of despair. The full-blown unfolding of this tale sets out in Cape Town and is primarily based on HIV/AIDS coupled with other post-colonial challenges such as the role of women in societies as well as patriarchy dominance and masculinity versus feminism.

Hove (2014: 533) states: 'FFF is an umbrella term that Magona uses to assign new and assertive identities to all woman figures in the novel thus provides a narratological representation of women, a normative function of language which either reveals or distorts what defines and, indeed, destabilises the category of woman.' Furthermore, although there is masculine intervention in the *Beauty's Gift* and probably the cornerstone of most atrocities as depicted in the novel, the latter centers on the hallmark of black women.

Nkealah (2006: 46) notes that patriarchal subjection of women transcends borders, peoples and cultures. Hove (2014: 540) states: 'patriarchal binaries of femininity and masculinity which privileged power and subordination, including exclusionary projects and practices are currently problematised in liberatory poetics and the search for equity.' This is evident in the case of the three women in *Beauty's Gift* who are at peace after knowing that their husbands have concubines and children outside marriage (p.160-165).

In the wake of the preceding information, lies the thought-provoking incident of spilling the beans accidentally by Zakes' sister. Zakes fathered two children outside his matrimony and it was kept a secret from Amanda (p.163). When her sister-in-law breaks the unsigned code of silence, the most troubled is Makhulu, Zakes' mother. Being the matriarch of the family, she has kept this secret because of multiple identities as repository of traditions, a mother and mother-in-law (Hove, 2014: 540).

In most societies throughout the second millennium, women were deprived of property, education, and legal status. They were made the responsibility of their husbands if married, or of their fathers or other male relatives if not. This is reinforced by African traditional proverbs that state:

Northern Sotho proverb : *Lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi.*

English translations : A woman's grave is her in-law

The above mentioned Northern Sotho proverb could be interpreted as stating that a woman should be married and spend her entire life in her in-law until death. This proverb could encourage women to stay in their marriages until death takes them away which could be viewed. Nevertheless, there are several negative effects that this proverb can portray. This proverb can negate women from leaving abusive marriages because of honouring the belief that they should die in their marriages.

Northern Sotho proverb: *Monna ke thaka o a naba*

English translations : A man is a pumpkin seed and stretches

As Masemola & Rafapa (2014: 84) coincide, this proverb literally means that it is appropriate for a man to have more than one sexual partner. Along similar lines, another proverb in support of the above mentioned one runs as follows:

Northern Sotho proverb : *Monna ke selepe re a adimišana*

English translation : A man is an axe and we borrow each other

Northern Sotho proverb : *Monna ke kobo re a apolelana*

English translation : A man is a blanket we share

The underlying meaning behind the above proverbs is that different women can share one sexual partner (man). These proverbs seem to be unacceptable to other women as they have led to broken marriages, hatred and violence. This could result in promiscuity as men might hold a belief that there is nothing wrong for them to have different sexual partners even to an extent of practising polygamy which seems to be authorised by these proverbs.

In the ancient days, African women had omens which they were obligated to abide by, of which, in the contemporary states, feel that they are unjust and impartial. For instance, in the African culture, women were groomed at an early age for household chores like cooking, cleaning, farming and ultimately get married and be a good wife.

Masenya (2010: 256) notes: 'every culture has its own definitions of what a worthy woman is. These definitions include the expectations of society concerning the roles which women are expected to play in order to qualify as worthy women in their communities.' The most enchanting example to substantiate the role of women in cultural societies could be drawn from Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* (1988) which expounds the inequitable treatment of African women. *Nervous Conditions* is a heartrending tale that dovetails the ramifications of womenfolk and gender identity. It opens up with this excruciating assertion, 'I was not sorry when my brother died' (p.1). These words exude hatred, anger, mercilessness and personal rage.

The central figures of this novel are Tambu and Nhamo who both struggled with gender roles in the Shona society. As a young girl, Tambu abhors her brother when the family raises funds to pay for his schooling and not hers. Her father uttered these words to her when she tried to complain, 'can you cook books and feed them to your husband? Stay at home with your mother. Learn to cook and clean. Grow vegetable' (p. 15). Tambu realised that the needs and sensibilities of the women in her family were not considered a priority, or even legitimate. Therefore, when his brother Nhamo died she was not sorry because that meant her parents no choice but to send her to school since she was the only child left.

Patriarchy in *Nervous Conditions* (1988) is domineering. All the men have the same mindset of being superior to women. To demonstrate, Nhamo says these words to his sister Tambu, 'Why are you jealous anyway? Did you ever hear of a girl being taken away to school?' (p.3) Moreover, Tambu later realises that the patriarchal society is the one that made her brother to be hurtful towards her. She states: 'my brother was sincere in his bigotry. But in those days I took a rosy view of male nature' (p.4).

#### **4.9.1 CLASH OF FEMININITY AND MASCULINITY IN *BEAUTY'S GIFT***

*Beauty's Gift* elicits the influence that lies in the midst of femininity and masculinity. Moreover, Magona appears to present challenges that both male and female figures encounter as a consequence of their immoral actions, with men appearing to be a dominating factor of wretchedness. Magona (2009) asserts: 'black masculinity is being corroded and we must address it by naming the crisis, by examining what a black man is to a black woman.'

Reid and Walker (2005: 208) argue: 'masculinity is analytically seen as homogenous and evasive of scrutiny.' Furthermore, (FFF) in *Beauty's Gift* believe that Beauty's husband, Hamilton, dug the grave for her with his promiscuous deeds. In line with the above, Hove (2014: 535) notes:

Based on this critical observation, this article contends that specific masculinities and femininities are generated when individuals consciously and conscientiously choose to respond to a given context in different ways, enabling or debilitating. If there is any consensus on the point that masculinity and femininity are inherently relational constructs, then in reading Magona's *Beauty's gift*, it is possible to argue that men (and women) construct versions of masculinities in relation to 'familiar' femininity. Following on this, masculinities are enacted also relative to other 'men' and such performances are framed by variations in race, class, ethnicity, age and, more critically, by location in the global economy.

Subsequent to Beauty's demise, the remaining FFF avowed to never have unprotected sex with their husbands until an HIV/AIDS test is done. However, their husbands found this avowal clumsy. Mamkwayi notes: 'Don't let sex kill you. Use condoms. Stay faithful. Test and test again' (p. 150). This has led to squabbles emerging in marriages as the husbands at first, refused to take the test but the wives were rigid about their decision. This could be corroborated by Amanda's refusal to be intimate with Zakes despite all the stops he pulled to convince her to relinquish the idea of the HIV/AIDS test but Amanda would not yield until Zakes gave in and took the test.



#### **4.9.2 HIV/AIDS**

Magona discloses various ways in which HIV/AIDS warms its way into the lives of people as well as the consequences of living with it. Hove (2014: 533) maintains that reviewers have called it 'a book that breaks many taboos', and 'a manifesto on AIDS and black feminism' with one adding that it is a 'book with a purpose.' In essence, medical practitioners in the entire world have sustained that HIV/AIDS is a lethal disease.

HIV/AIDS is one of the post-colonial challenges that South Africa seeks to curb. 'HIV represents the primary burden of disease in South Africa, with an estimated national prevalence of 12.2% in 2012. The HIV annual incidence among individuals aged 15 - 49 years is estimated at 1.9%, and 2.3% among youth aged 15 - 24 years' (Southern African HIV Clinicians Society). Magona's *Beauty's Gift* vindicates the wickedness and transmission of HIV/AIDS pandemic. Radebe (2014) states that the spread of HIV/AIDS in South Africa is ingrained in its history which is characterised by the mobility of large populations. From this point, there seems to be a compelling reason to argue that the dominion of HIV/AIDS in the post-colonial South Africa is moulded by the colonial experience.

Beauty dies due to HIV/AIDS as result of his husband's promiscuity. On her deathbed she bids adieu to her friends with this gift *Ukhule* in an effort to tell her them not to let HIV/AIDS deny them an opportunity to grow old. In an attempt to uphold Beauty's gift, the remaining FFF refrained from sex until an HIV/AIDS test was done. Most probably, HIV/AIDS is known to be excessively transmitted through sexual intercourse. Which could be why the FFF stressed the idea of no sex until proven HIV/AIDS negative.

#### **4.9.3 Marital-crises**

Cracks within the marriages of the FFF begin to develop because of the conscientiation that the women received about the fatal HIV/AIDS. When the women suggested no sex until an HIV/AIDS test, all hell broke loose within their marriages as their husbands struggled to understand the meaning of no sex in marriages and the proposition of HIV/AIDS test was nothing but an insignia of no trust. In line with the above, Radebe (2014: 2) avers: 'If sex is viewed as an act of expressing love not pleasure, the couple is more likely to practice unsafe sex.' It could be assumed that this is the notion that the

male figures in *Beauty's Gift* upheld. Amanda's marriage is an interesting example to validate the theme of matrimonial problems in the novel.

#### **4.9.3.1 Amanda's marriage**

Amanda is the FFF member and was the closest to the late Beauty and her last words to her: '*Ukhule*' made her become sensitive to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. It could be noted that she abhorred Hamilton more than the other FFF. During Beauty's funeral, Magona notes: 'a silent message of loathing passing between the two of them (Amanda and Hamilton) (p. 13). As a consequence, Amanda stressed the No Sex boundary and this resulted in tensions rising between her and her husband Zakes to a degree of making shocking discoveries.

Amanda denied Zakes sexual intimacy despite his persuasive attempts to lure to her to sleeping with her. 'Mama Ama please let sip some of the honey on the rock...' (p. 80). Zakes gave in when he finally accepted that his charms and tricks would never work on Amanda and took the HIV/AIDS test. Amanda declares: 'That thing dangling between your legs, if or when you poke it into any hole that lets you in, may come out there wearing death, spitting disease...Disease that could kill me like a thief in the night' (p. 148).

After Zake and Amanda both tested HIV/AIDS negative, the excitement that filled Zakes for a moment was brought to an abrupt end when Amanda figured out that Zakes was not confident that he would test negative and concluded that this could be because slept elsewhere. Problems arose between Amanda and Zakes which led to the revelation of deep dark secrets. Amanda found out about the other children that Zakes has outside the wedlock. 'You do know that Zakes has two children, don't you?... Zakes has what children Sihle' (p.126). Her sister in-law mistakenly unearthed the aforementioned secret, augmenting fuel on the blazing mountain of problems that the couple already have up their sleeve. This drove them apart until a tragic end of Zakes' due to an accident.

#### **4.10 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has outlined the distressing challenges that the democratic South Africa is grappling with as evidenced in Magona's novels, *Mother to Mother* and *Beauty's Gift*, with special focus given to the issues that are particularly affecting South African women as result of the colonial past. It has consistently argued that women are more vulnerable to colonial legacies in the post-colonial period.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

What's made us dig deep and ask ourselves hard questions is that this inequality has slightly worsened post-apartheid, and it's always been easy to be the victim of apartheid, to blame everything on apartheid, but now we have to ask ourselves hard questions on what we are doing as a country. --  
--Matlwa (2010)

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The independent states of Africa were and are still shaped by preconceived ideas that reigned during course of colonialism. The ending of the latter in (South) Africa has bred both blissful and wretched identities. This is substantiated by the existing colonial legacies reflected in Magona and Matlwa's novels written in the democratic era. In this chapter i seek to provide inferences concerning identity in the post-colonial South Africa. I will attempt to enumerate recommendations for further research.

#### 5.2 IDENTITY

South Africa is one the African states that submitted under the colonial rule. The latter deprived South Africa of her wealth: mines, livestock and farms. However, South Africans toiled for democracy until they achieved it in 1994. Kotzé and Loubser (2017: 38) assert: 'early in 1990, South African President F. W. de Klerk announced the beginning of the end of apartheid. The costs of maintaining the system of racial segregation and white minority privilege were staggering.' Since then, South Africa has been on a quest to find their lost identity prior to colonial intervention.

The apartheid regime meted out agonising conditions upon black people which have consequentially forged a pathway of attack for colonial ills to diminish the democratic South Africa. The country is yet to remedy problematic issues such as inequality, racism, crime, abuse, sexual violence, poverty and unemployment. Kotzé and Loubser (2017: 35) note: 'South Africa has experienced significant social, political, and economic changes since the start of its transition to liberal democracy twenty-six years ago. It is to be

expected that such immense changes would be accompanied by value shifts among both the South African public and its leaders.'

### 5.3 MATLWA'S NOVELS

Matlwa's *Coconut* and *Spilt Milk* vindicate the shift of identities in the lives of South African youth. Adams (2014: 51) notes: 'complexity associated with identity allows people to draw from personal values, goals, aspirations, relationships, roles, multiple affiliations, and group memberships in a quest to define themselves.' Although Matlwa's focal point is the female figure, the challenges that occur in the novel are existent in the post-colonial South Africa and are affecting the youth. Women are still victims of subjugation notwithstanding the attainment of freedom. In *Coconut*, Matlwa uses the character of Fikile to buttress this point. She is sexually abused by her uncle at an early age and learns of this through a lesson at school.

A variety of challenges concerning the identity of women are palpable in Matlwa's *Coconut* and *SpiltMilk*. In *Coconut*, Fikile wishes to be a white woman. She pulls all the stops to be closer to whiteness. She impersonates white women to a degree of loathing her own race of black people. Fikile tries to change her looks and is concerned about her dressing and lifestyle. In *SpiltMilk*, a female character too, *Mohumagadi* wrestles with her identity. On the one hand, she seems to have forgiven the difficult past of apartheid but on the other hand, she appears to have grudges still lingering in her heart.

Sam and Berry (2010) state: 'changes in values, beliefs, norms, language, and cultural and religious practices are considered indicators that could be influenced by acculturative change.' In *Coconut*, Matlwa exemplifies the hatred of black by their own. Fikile despises black identity and to her it is an insignia of failure, wickedness and poverty. Therefore, seeing white people delighting in their luxurious life, drives Fikile to reject her true cultural identity and pursue a goal of becoming a white woman. She becomes mindful of her complexion and nurtures it in an effort to become brighter and white.

Fikile develops the mindset of changing her identity from black to white at a young age. This is evident when she recalls that her teacher once asked her what she wanted to become when she grows up and her response was that she wanted to be a white woman.

From Fikile's unmatched desire to become white whereas she is black, it can be noted that she believes that black identity is ugly and the white identity is beautiful. Women in their societies pulling strings to attain a brighter complexion (see Chapter 4). The former bleach their skins to transform those skins from dark bright which can also be explicated as black to white.

Matlwa also brings up another demeaning challenge that women are facing in the post-colonial South Africa which is the issue of hairstyle. In the novel, hairstyle appears to be one of the defining factors of beauty. For instance, Fikile is told by her boss to have her hair beautified. Fikile glorifies the hairstyles that she observed from her customers and bosses, and regards them as beautiful.

Ofilwe's character also portrays the issues that youth of South Africa meet in their daily lives. She is exposed to white influence through school and religion. Her parents imposed the white culture on her life. Her caliber of living is approximately at the level of the white society that she is exposed to various kinds of ways that inspired her actions.

Ofilwe at home is introduced to a language that does not originate from her roots. She spoke, behaved and lived like a white person. She regards English as her mother tongue but she is hardly believed at school. This is the language that she picked up at home despite not being white. This channels Ofilwe to embark on an introspection of identity.

Ofilwe also appears as a devoted Christian. Reservations begin to knock in her mind following the argument with Tsempo who attempts to make her think that Christianity is the White man's religion enforced on black people and therefore, it was used to replace the African culture. This saddens Ofilwe as she loves being a Christian. From this argument, Matlwa brings attention to the authenticity of African culture. It is questionable, whether the youth in the world of modernity know and embrace their true cultural identity.

#### 5.4 MAGONA'S NOVELS

Magona's *Beauty's Gift and Mother to Mother* also unwrap the odds assembled against post-colonial South Africa. In *Beauty's Gift*, Magona uses the FFF who defend their lives against the challenges that are gaining the upper hand in South Africa. Their great nemesis is the deadly HIV/AIDS. The FFF's war against HIV/AIDS transcends boundaries and goes beyond extreme lengths to threaten their marriages. This becomes notable after one of them, Beauty, dies because of HIV/AIDS.

HIV/AIDS appears to be one of the major challenges that threaten the societies of South Africa. Magona raises awareness through *Beauty's Gift* and tries to warn South Africans to take HIV/AIDS seriously. She does this by demonstrating unacceptable actions that can cause South Africans to find themselves as victims of HIV/AIDS such as promiscuity. In *Beauty's Gift*, Hamilton, Beauty's husband, passes HIV/AIDS to his wife as a result of his adulterous actions that lead to contraction of the disease.

Magona's *Beauty's Gift* demonstrates how this challenge of HIV/AIDS threatens and wrecks marriages. In the light of the marriage of Amanda, problems spring into existence ever since the demise of Beauty who is Amanda's best friend. This prompts Amanda to question significant elements in marriages such as trust, faith, love and honesty. For example, Amanda unearths a deep dark secret about her husband Zakes, having other children outside their marriage. Due to Zakes's lack of honesty, this breaks the trust that exists between them and ultimately wrecks their marriage with a tragic ending resulting in the death of Zakes.

The tragic events that Magona brings up in *Beauty's Gift* could serve as warnings to South Africans. However, Magona provides possible solutions that South Africans can carry out in order to protect themselves against HIV/AIDS. She consistently stressed the rule that the FFF adopted after the death of Beauty which states: 'No sex until HIV/AIDS test is done.' She emphasises this rule throughout her novel.

Magona presents the male figures in *Beauty's Gift* as victimisers and the female as victims. This can be substantiated by Amanda's prime suspicion of Hamilton being Beauty's killer. However, when Amanda stumbles upon shocking discoveries about

Zakes's secrets, her wrath against Zakes contributes to his demise but she still do not see herself as a victimiser and Zakes as victim. This can be reinforced by actions of not following the customs of an African widow to sit on the mattress and mourn for her husband.

Karodia *et al.* (2016: 118) note: 'In the African context, the traditional conception of minority and majority ...does not necessarily exist because the diverse nature of many countries, regions, and societies was established during colonisation or has an even longer history.' Women are most likely to be victims of sexual abuse, domestic violence and inferiority. This could be explicated by the dreadful rate of rapes in the democratic societies (see Chapter Four). In Magona's *Beauty's Gift* women are the dominating element of victimisation. The latter is perhaps influenced by a variety of factors such as financial background, lobola and cultural proverbs.

In *Beauty's Gift*, husbands of the FFF are presented as victimisers. For instance, despite Cordelia introducing the no sex rule until HIV/AIDS test, her husband keeps on persuading her to engage in sexual intercourse before the test was done. This could point out that the men in the novel are reckless and not mindful of the dangers that they can contract due to their actions. The women try their outmost best to be safe against HIV/AIDS but the men show reluctance when it comes to this part.

## **5.5 UNITY IN THE POST-COLONIAL SOUTH AFRICA**

In 1913, apartheid passed the Natives Land Act which set aside as 'native reserves a specific amount of land that could be owned and occupied by blacks. The territory included in the reserves amounted to only 7 percent of South Africa's total land' (Encarta, 2009). This land was used to establish *bantustans* to divide and place diverse tribes such as Pedis, Sothos, Zulus etc. The apartheid government forbade black people from sharing public accessories such as transport and toilets with white people. The division of black tribes through *bantustans* and restriction of black and white people to share public facilities gave birth to tribalism and racism in the post-apartheid South Africa.

With apartheid demised, diverse races in the democratic South Africa are set to unite. Kotzé and Loubser (2017: 40) assert: 'elites in many societies play a crucial role in the making of public policy as well as in the process of democratic consolidation.'



Nevertheless, achieving unity between white people and black people seems to be a challenge. This is evident in the event of 'Rhodes Must Fall campaign' where students claim that there is 'institutional racism' at Rhodes University (Karodia *et al.*, 2016: 83).

**Figure 5.1: Rhodes Must Fall**



### **Analysis**

The Rhodes Must Fall Movement has drawn a great attention in the post-apartheid South Africa. Cecil John Rhodes is believed to be a colonialist whose statue does not deserve a prominent place in the new South Africa. Some of the students from University of Cape Town raised their voice against colonial attributes in the democratic South Africa by ravaging Rhodes' statue.

Racial discrimination still exists despite the efforts of trying to bring unity in different ways. For instance, the national anthem of South Africa (see Chapter 2) attempts to instill unity by incorporating different official languages of South Africa from different tribes. Thus, the national anthem amongst other efforts, tries to bring unity amongst the formerly segregated black people and white people.

In Matlwa's *Coconut*, there are insignias of unity between black people and white people. Ofilwe goes to a multiracial school and studies with white people. A multiracial school brings children from different races together to learn the same content and have one identity as learners. The aforementioned kind of a school seems to be one of the efforts of bringing unity amongst different races in the post-colonial South Africa. However, despite the attempt of multiracial schools to bring unity, Ofilwe experiences discrimination on the basis of her skin colour at the school.

Countless efforts such the multiracial school discussed in the preceding paragraph are made to bring unity in South Africa. Nonetheless, there seems to be a minority that goes against this plan of action. In *The Big debate on Racism* (2011), an Afrikaner man states: 'there is a certain amount of people which wants to create a nation of unity and then there is us the Boers. We don't take part in this and we are not going to and we are not going to go away. We are the rightful owners of this land...' From the aforesaid elucidation, it is evident that the colonial mindset of segregation still exists amongst other South Africans and this could delay the achievement of unity in the democratic state.

The South African national flag points out traits of unity. From the national flag, it could be noted how urgent and dire the ideology of unity is. Black and white colours are perched on the same design. In Matlwa's *Coconut*, Fikile works with white people. Her bosses are white as well as her other customers. Therefore, attempts to demonstrate the initiation of unity are mirrored through the characters of Fikile and Ofilwe.

**Figure 5.2: The South Africa National flag**



## **Analysis**

The national flag of South African was designed by Frederick Brownell to represent the post-apartheid South Africa. It has traits of unity written all over it. This flag consists of six colours inclusive of both black and white colours which could be assumed to refer to black and white population in South Africa (Encarta, 2009).

## **5.6 COAT OF ARMS**

Encarta (2009) states that coat of arms is a design on a shield that signifies a particular family, university or city. The South African coat of arms takes a place amongst the insignias of unity in the post-colonial South Africa. It bluntly indicates that unity is a fundamental aspect of building a nation. This could be noted from the motto at the bottom and as well as the features which will be closely examined.

**Figure 5.3: South African National Coat of Arms**



**Details**

<b>Armiger:</b>	<b>Republic of South Africa</b>
<b>Adopted:</b>	<b>27 April 2000</b>
<b>Crest:</b>	<b>A Knobkierie and a Spear, a Protea flower, a Secretary bird with its wings expanded and a rising sun.</b>
<b>Escutcheon:</b>	<b>Or, representations of two San human figures of red ochre, statant respectant, the hands of the innermost arms clasped, with upper arms, inner wrist, waist and knee bands Argent, and a narrow border of red ochre</b>
<b>Supporters:</b>	<b>Elephant tusks and ears of wheat</b>
<b>Motto:</b>	<b>Ike e: Ixarra Ike 'Diverse People Unite' in  Xam</b>

## 5.7 RAINBOW NATION

The rainbow nation is another command for unity in South Africa. Cilliers and Aucoin (2016: 4) declare: 'South Africa is a complex country and, just as few foresaw the transition from white minority control to democracy some three decades ago.' Analytically, a rainbow is a multi-coloured arc in the sky and a nation refers to people of the same ethnicity. Therefore, the phrase rainbow nation consists of the two aforementioned defined terms and combined together forge one meaning which could be assumed to refer to a multicultural united nation.

**Figure 5.4: Rainbow Nation**



The term rainbow nation was coined by the Archbishop Desmond Tutu to depict post-apartheid South Africa, after the latter's first democratic election in 1994. Manzo (1996:1) quotes Nelson Mandela's elaboration on the rainbow nation in his first month of office: 'each of us is intimately attached to the soil of this beautiful country as are the famous jacaranda trees of Pretoria and the mimosa trees of the bushveld--a rainbow nation at peace with himself and the world.'

## 5.8 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study sought to examine the concept of identity in the democratic South Africa using Matlwa's *Coconut* and *Spilt Milk*, and Magona's *Beauty's Gift* and *Mother to Mother*. Both Matlwa and Magona's novels demonstrate identity-crisis in the post-colonial South Africa. However, possible remedies have been suggested by their novels. For instance, in the light of the HIV/AIDS pandemic that threatens the lives of South Africans, Magona's *Beauty's Gift* provides warnings and solutions through the characters. Her warning runs as follows: 'that thing dangling between your legs, if or when you poke it into any hole that lets you, it will come out of there wearing a spitting disease...' Furthermore, a possible solution that Magona attempts to bring to attention is the rule of no sex until HIV/AIDS test is done which is constantly emphasised by the married women throughout the novel (p. 80).

## 5.9 CONCLUSION

This study has raised a few questions which require further investigation. It is recommended that further research be undertaken to determine the core elements of an identity crisis existing amongst women who resort to skin bleaching, expensive hair extensions and the use of dangerous creams in an effort to attain a bright complexion. Matlwa brings this into limelight through the character of Fikile who desires to be a woman against all odds. She applies creams on her face and does all that is within her ability to achieve a brighter complexion. Therefore, further research might explore the loose ends that need to be tied up in the lives of women living in the post-colonial South Africa.

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