

**DISSERTATION TITLE: NARRATING SELVES: ALTERITY AND SIMULTANEITY  
IN LUTANGA SHABA'S *SECRET OF A WOMAN'S SOUL*, PETER GODWIN'S  
*MUKIWA: A WHITE BOY IN AFRICA*, NELSON MANDELA'S *LONG WALK TO  
FREEDOM* AND BARACK OBAMA'S *DREAMS FROM MY FATHER***

BY

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Submitted in accordance with the requirements for

DEGREE OF MASTER IN

AFRICAN AND DIASPORAN LITERATURE

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**DECLARATION**

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I **Tafara Moyo**, registration number **R14216A**, hereby declare that this thesis is my own original work ,has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university,and that the sources I have used have been fully acknowledged by complete references. This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of the Masters of African and diasporan literature Degree in the Department of English and Communication at the Midlands State University.

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## **ABSTRACT**

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This study is an analysis of auto-biographical narratives reinterpreted as auto-heterobiography to open space to an exploration and interrogation of alterity. Analysis of these narratives operated via postmodernist, postcolonial and philosophical discourses. The problem of narrating traumatized, political and hybrid or cosmopolitan selves was sited as resident in the primordial polytropos of the human experience which exposes narratives as aporetic and incomplete once postured as closed or as metanarratives. This study concluded that narratives ultimately assume a paradoxical stance which neither opposes nor accedes to auto-heterobiographical narratives as possible or impossible. The narratives analysed posed the human experience as marked by ambiguity, heteroglossia, polyphony and ambivalence, thus compelling the conclusion that no experience is knowable via a single version of narration. This study posed alterity as both an affirmation and a question of the question of ordinary, unified and coherent selves.

## **KEY TERMS**

Ambiguity

Ambivalence

Autobiography

Alterity

Auto-heterobiography

Cosmopolitanism

Diaspora

Exteriority

Heteroglossia

Hybrid/hybridity

Interiority

Metanarrative

Memory/memorial/memorialization

Narrative/narrativity/narrativization

Obligation

Ontology

Polytropos

Responsibility

Simultaneity

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **Introduction**

#### **Area of study**

This study explores ethical, identity and political issues in autobiography, largely focusing on heterobiography. Derrida (2004) deploys heterobiography to denote the writing of multiplicities of selves resident in a single individual, selves other than selves in the individual, multiple aporetic orders of

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-meaning and genre in self life writing. Hence I will designate my focus as auto-heterobiography. Autobiography as a genre defies any single canonical definition. It can however be referred to as “a literary genre [that] signifies a retrospective narrative that undertakes to tell the author’s own story” (Schwalm, 2014:1).

Auto-heterobiography, implicated in ethical issues (Eakin, 2004:3) collapses the narrative boundary between first and third person narrative forms as it views the self as other. This also means the self tells the biographies of others (Kormann 2004, Coetzee, 2011). Heterobiography implies alterity, otherness, in terms of possibility, other being, identity or meaning. Hetero suggests many; hence identity and meaning are simultaneous presences as opposed to singular presence. Thus being or identity is marked by ambivalence and ambiguity in that they refuse being packaged in essentializing or homogenizing epistemes.

### **Research Objectives**

- To define autobiography and heterobiography
- To explain the political and ethical issues in autobiography in relation to black authored gendered narratives as well as cosmopolitan narratives.
- Recommendation of the ethical implication of auto-heterobiography is given.

### **Statement of the problem**

Autobiography has largely privileged self writing as the story of the self especially the elitist self (Huddart 2005:18). In this form it tends to promote a universalizing and homogenizing project from which the Other as person, gender and identity is subordinated or altogether erased (Anderson 2001: 13). Autobiography largely retrieves and reconstructs the past (times and selves) through memory which poses its own problems. Memory is notorious for hiatus caused by natural forgetting or selective exclusion and inclusion of certain events and facts about the past. In a family or nation, certain authorial figures may censor narratives as true or false, sayable or unsayable, premising this censorship on the priorities of their own self projects. Thus truth depends on the censorship, which is largely arbitrary, especially when it is recognized that it is intended to prop up particular political projects.

Noting the problems that mark memory and the biased politics of self imaging in narratives, this study seeks to circumvent the reconstruction of the past, the interpretation of events and staging of identities in a monolithic mode. This untethering of identities, multiple meanings of events and versions of truth, I argue, can be done through autobiographies being read as auto-heterobiography. Auto-heterobiographical readings of narratives allow multifaceted versions of truth and being. The heterogeneity that marks auto-heterobiography, by permitting the simultaneity of absence and presence precludes the exclusionary moves of biased political, historiographical and self-privileging narratives.

### **Justification of the study**

Autobiography, notoriously lacking canonicity for long, has been peripherised in modes of inquiry into the human condition (Schwan 2014). This has been a consequence of studies that have privileged explorations of groups such as nations or communities as seen in anthropology and sociology. This study seeks to prove that autobiography, especially re-interpreted as auto-heterobiography, has ramifications in the understanding of the complicated ethical relations implicated in the necessary recognition of alterity; that is Otherness as other version of personhood, being, narrative, identity, race and possibility.

Auto-heterobiography, I argue, shows that even in established canons of study such as sociology, anthropology etc., it is the version of the self that narrates realities and identities. The study of auto-heterobiography therefore opens space for discussing how certain versions of truth, history, nation, family and personhood are privileged over others. This study seeks to present being, identity and all reality as simultaneity so as to transcend the univocality of biased selves, national historiographies and family narratives. To do this I analyze Lutanga Shaba's *Secrets of a woman's soul*, Nelson Mandela's *Long Walk to freedom*, Peter Godwin's *Mukiwa* and Barack Obama's *Dreams from my father*. These texts have been selected because they depict the moral/ethical identity, national politics, gender and other issues to be explored in its study. Shaba's text raises issues of complicated ethical responsibility for the other gender and the ambivalence of choices and decisions. Mandela's text provokes discussions of the political self, nation, the other of race and nation. Godwin's text, like Obama's, is a good intervention in issues of the ambivalence that marks identity, nation and belonging. Obama's text also raises issues of the complicated nature of cosmopolitanism.

## Literature review

It has gradually become clear to me what every great philosophy up till now has consisted of, namely the confession of its originator, and a species of involuntary and unconscious auto- biography; and moreover that the moral (or immoral) purpose in every philosophy has constituted the true vital germ out of which the entire plant has always grown (Nietzsche, 1967:16)

I begin my literature review by recapitulating the major focus of this study. It is this, to interrogate and analyze how autobiographical narratives illuminate and complicate our interpretation of the narration of selves in the context of alterity. Alterity, since it gestures to Other as different from the Same: the narrating self, summons us to the orbit of auto-heterobiography. This study submits that alterity is implicated in auto-heterobiographical narratives by the self's bid to construct and affirm difference in its ontology and interactive trajectories. This study explores the paradox posed by selves narrating themselves, that self-narration is also de-narration in that by excluding certain facts or events about itself (through memorial hiatus or schemed exclusion), no complete narrative emerges.

- 1) The evolution of the modern self and auto-heterobiography
- 2) Theoretical issues of autobiography and alterity in philosophical works

- 3) Varied conceptions of autobiography
- 4) auto-heterobiography
- 5) Conceptions of nation cosmopolitanism
- 6) history, truth and memory in auto-heterobiography.

### **The evolution of the modern self and auto-heterobiography**

What conditions opened space for the self to tell stories as subject? Antony Giddens (1991) posits that certain features of modernity shaped the self to speak about itself as the protagonist.

Modernity is marked as a 'troubling and tumultuous phenomenon' (Giddens 1991:14) because of the rupture it makes between traditional and modern societies. A consensus seems now to have been established among scholars, for instance Fukuyama (1998), Gusdorf (1968), Giddens (1996) and Huddart (2006), that the modern self simultaneously emerged with the nation in 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe. The French Revolution is marked as symbol of modernity, irrevocably breaching the ties between ancient Europe and modernity. In his theoretical discussion on modernity Giddens posits;

Modernity can be understood as roughly equivalent to the industrialized

world; so long as it be recognized that industrialism is not only institutional dimension. I take industrialism to refer to the social relations implied in the wide spread use of material power and machinery in the production process (ibid: 60)

Here it is crucial to note that this setting of economic production and social relations produced individualized selves through specialization and division of labour in the factories. Such individualization coupled with the Enlightenment ethic of the sovereignty of the individual, unfettered freedom, and contempt for traditional authority all contributed to the construction of a self that began to question political, social and natural realities in a way that posed a disjuncture between the traditional selves and modern selves. This study emphasizes that it is this questioning and skeptical ethic from which the self in auto-heterobiographical narratives emerged.

The relentless questioning of exterior realities and the reordering of the priorities and protocols of epistemes by the Enlightenment self was synonymous with the self questioning itself and its position in the cosmos and a reflective reordering of identity. Modernity, it has now become a banal statement, as it breaches feudal ties, ushers in the process of reflexivity. Giddens succinctly poses that; ‘modernity reflexivity refers to the susceptibility of most aspects of social activity, and material relations to chronic revision in the light of new formation or knowledge’ (ibid: 141). Here it is worthwhile to quote from some of the leading Enlightenment thinkers who dared to

breach the enclosure of tradition. Michel de Montaigne and Jean Rousseau's autobiography writing illuminate the extent to which an individualized and questioning self had evolved in the Enlightenment period. Montaigne's essays are marked by digressions into anecdotes and personal ruminations that emphasized his innovation and he could boldly say 'I am myself the matter of my book.' His self-interrogation would compel him, to declare in his most famous skeptical remark 'what do I know?'(Montaigne 1575:10). Rousseau's autobiographical writing; his confessions, which was seminal to modern autobiography, exemplified the late 18<sup>th</sup> century movement referred to as the Age of sensibility. The confessions feature increased focus on subjectivity and introspection that later became the staple of modern auto-heterobiographical writing.

Giddens' location of the insemination of autobiography in the modern age also presumes a genesis as the genre but not a definitional project because, as I shall later on demonstrate, autobiography refuses protocols of genre that pin it down to a single definition. Thus the genre itself refuses essentializing epistemic habits like the modern self that defies closure in its varied modes. Modernity's reflexivity, Giddens poses, 'turn out to confound the expectations of enlightenment thought although it is the product of that thought (ibid: 21).

The transgression of enlightenment metanarratives based on rationalization and certainty as installed in social and natural worlds is best performed by modernity's self reflexive process. This process' deployment of skepticism produced 'radical doubt' and, which once exposed to view, is not only disturbing to philosophers but is existentially troubling for ordinary individuals'

(ibid: 21). I submit that it is important to review Giddens` ideas on the emergence of the self and autobiographical writing further. This will elucidate how modernity`s reflexivity not only creates radical doubt but how it shapes auto-heterobiographical narrative selves. Giddens` ideas expose the self`s simultaneous yearning for stable continuity in time and space and the inescapable recognition that meaning, symbols and experiences refuse a fixed code by which they can be known. This study argues that this simultaneity of radical doubt (that even de-centres the subject) and the need for a stable frame of reference, inscribes ambivalence and ambiguity in the modern Self`s lived experience. This in turn implies the impossibility of identity in its essential mode. I shall pursue this point in my discussion of identity as figured in selected philosophical texts.

Giddens poses that unlike the self in the pre-modern era, the self in modernity is impinged on by a horde of risks and possibilities. These are encountered in the self`s itineraries and the self is compelled to reflexively reorder positionalities and has to negotiate through this horde to invent and reinvent itself. In the void left by the erosion of rites de passage in post-traditional societies, the self survives by improvisation, by psychic organization and reorganization. Thus Giddens posits that `The reflexivity of modernity extends into the core of the self`. Put another way, in the context of a post – traditional order, the self `becomes a reflexive project` (ibid: 32). This point is important to this study in that the self as a `reflexive project` has crossed the borders of mere self-questioning to a prioritizing of the self; a privileging of the self that seems to suggest the exclusion of the other as different from the Same. However, this study argues that exclusion and inclusion are simultaneous so much that they can be figured in the paradox: presence is absence and vice versa. Submitting to simultaneity in the place of the stark binaries of exclusion versus

inclusion and absence versus presence escapes the essentializing ontological project of western metaphysics.

Giddens correctly notes that in pre-modern Europe, the unique space marked (in modern times) for the individual as singular agentive self was absent; lineage, gender, social status and other attributes relevant to identity were all 'relatively fixed' (bid: 74). This implies that submerged in the collective priorities of the family, clan or tribe, the individual's potential as an auto-heterobiography writer was remarkably limited. The individual's self was dispersed within the circles of family and tribe as in the mythologizing of the individual's great acts. As such in the name of the tribe there existed no distinction written between individual heroism and collective glory. Myths inserted into narratives about Achilles, Odysseus (The Iliad) and Aeneas (The Ennead) conflates individual ambition, motivation and desire with the will of the gods or fate.

A qualification of this self-understanding is enabled via Gurdorf's ideas on the rupture between pre – modern and modern man where emphasis is placed on the emergence of temporal and historical consciousness. It must be underscored that in Western history, the self gradually disentangles itself from its embeddedness in traditional or archaic culture. Gurdorf therefore emphasizes that:

The man who takes delight in thus drawing his own image believes himself worthy of a special interest ..... , my existence is significant to the world, and my death will leave the world incomplete. In narrating my life, I give witness of myself even from

beyond my death and so can preserve this precious capital that ought not to disappear

(Gusdorf 1987: 29)

Pertinent to this study are three points as raised by Gusdorf. 'Drawing one's image' in rerouting one's participation from exterior images to the interior image. The individual, so to speak, refuses the call of the god or society as the image on the altar of his consciousness. Secondly Gusdorf suggests that auto-heterobiography; by narrating the self is a transcendent activity in that it overarches past and present time as the self speaks posthumously through the auto-heterobiographical text. Third, 'I give witness of myself' implies that the self as subject, who turns himself into an object during the act of narration, has cleared space to weave and impose certain truths about him as incontrovertible. This study poses that the witness's testimony thrives if there is an audience to listen or read it, hence the need of the Other who might have a different version of stories, different from those disseminated by the Same. The difference of the Same can only be configured in the recognition of the otherness of the Other (person, story, possibility etc.).

It is imperative for this study to explore how the embedded personhood becomes a self-articulating individual. To do this the study will focus on humankind's transition from mythical to historical consciousness. Mircea Eliade (1954) summons our attention to 'archaic' people's 'revolt' against concrete, historical time. Eliade poses that:

The 'primitive', the archaic man, acknowledges no act has not previously

been posited and lived by someone else, some other being who was not  
a man. What he does has been done before. His life is the ceaseless  
repetition of gestures initiated by others (Eliade 1954: 5)

Before exploring further on Gusdorf let me mark the significance of Eliade's assertion to this study. It can be noted that 'archaic man' had no defined subjectivity, therefore relating to the other was mimetic as the gaze and act of personhood ceaselessly repeated the gestures of the absent, the transcendent other, most probably the gods or mythical creatures. The modern distinction between the Same and the Other did not exist because archaic Man lacked historical and subjective consciousness. I shall further explore, in its philosophical turn, this Same-Other distinction in the section I discuss alterity in Emmanuel Levinas' context of the other.

Archaic man and woman existed in 'mythical times', a time 'when the foundation of the world occurred' (ibid: 20). Primordial narratives, it can be posed, were essentially recitative in the sense of repeating the same story, the same identity. 'Myth, the most common form of early narrative, was a traditional plot or storyline which could be transmitted from one generation to the next[and] generally had a sacred ritual function, being recited for a community in order to recall their holy origins and ancestors' (ibid: 8)

Let's turn to Gusdorf's description of personhood that is generally associated with the mythical worldview.

Throughout most of human history, the individual does not oppose himself to all others; he does not feel himself to exist outside of others, but very much with others in an interdependent existence that asserts its rhythms everywhere in the community. No one is rightful possessor of his life or his death; lives are so thoroughly entangled that each of them has its center everywhere and its circumference nowhere. The important unit is thus never isolated being – or, rather, isolation is impossible in such a scheme of total cohesiveness as this. Each man thus appears the possessor of a role, already performed to be performed again by the descendants (ibid: 29 – 30)

While Gusdorf is correct about iterated performativity of archaic man's identity and narrative mode he can be criticized for glossing over the irruptive possibility of the 'isolated being'. I posit that even in the mode of mythical narration invariably based on the divide between good and evil, person and monster, person and the gods – there was always the other; the isolated being whose entry into the society, or whose gaze could disrupt the iterated narrative. The monster in archaic man's mythical narratives and equally the innovative individual was always an Other, a figure who could inaugurate change and difference.

To continue, Gusdorf argues that 'Autobiography is not possible in a cultural landscape where consciousness of self does not, properly speaking, exist' (page 30). From a post-colonial point of view the phrase 'properly speaking' can be read as parochial, as the disarticulation of the subaltern by the metro - pole. In Gusdorf's argumentation, autobiography conceptualization as well as autobiography itself emerged at the point humanity debunked the mythical domain. The refused of the mythical domain allowed entry into 'the perilous domain of history:

The man who takes trouble to tell of himself knows that the present differs from the past and that it will not be repeated in the future; he has become more aware of differences than similarities; given the constant change, given the uncertainty of events and of men he believes it is useful and valuable to fix his own image so that he can be certain it will not disappear like all things in this world. History of the world then becomes the memory of a humanity heading toward unforeseeable goals, struggling against the breakdown of forms and beings. Each man matters to the world, each life and each death; the witness of each about himself enriches the common cultural heritage. (ibid: 30 – 31)

Commentary on Gusdorf on this quotation should not miss the adumbration of the entry into the human condition, of the recognition that:

- a) Identities and beings are always in a state of change and flux
- b) Mankind lives in a world without referable certainties, meaning and goals
- c) The Same's self-narration can only be meaningful if the narration recognizes the significance of the simultaneity of Same and Other – if the self-narration is to transcend the limits of the Same.

Thus this study argues that self narration is done paradoxically in the absence and presence of the other; the other person, being, possibility or time. The breaching of the boundary between the mythical domain and the orbit of historical consciousness marks a revolution in both self-understanding and self-representation. Gusdorf notes that:

At the moment it enters history, humanity finds itself engaged in autonomous adventure and man knows himself as a responsible agent. The historic personage now appears, and

biography, taking its place alongside monuments, inscriptions, statues, is one manifestation of his desire to endure in man`s memory. (ibid: 31)

It is critical here to note that the ethical meaning of responsibility to the Other and the agentive individual emerge at this point, if I may say, the epiphanic moment when the self recognizes its difference from the other. This recognition of the other, this study affirms, rather than placing fixed and impenetrable boundaries around the self, in fact enables the self to transcend its limitation by supplicating to and supplanting the other. I formulate that supplicating involves all acts of recognizing the humanity of the other as similar to the one resident in the narrating self. Supplanting the other operates in two ways: the first meaning refers to acts that displace the humanity of the other through disarticulations, the second involves acts that rupture the cocoon of the other`s complacency, thus opening the other to fresh terrains of meaning- making and identity formation.

Gusdorf distinguishes political autobiographies whose aim is ‘providing a sort of posthumous propaganda for posterity that otherwise is in danger of forgetting them or failing to esteem them properly’, from autobiographies that explore the interiority of subtle human existence. He writes:

Rousseau, Goethe, and Mill are not content to offer the reader a sort of curriculum vitae retracing the steps of an official career... In this case it is a question of another truth. The act of memory is carried out for itself, and recalling of the past satisfies a more or less anguished disquiet of the mind anxious to recover and redeem lost time in fixing it forever. Furthermore autobiography properly speaking assumes the task of reconstructing the unity of a life. (ibid: 37)

Here Gusdorf emphasizes the complete emergence of the modern autobiographical understanding of the self. His positing that self-narration is a reconstruction of the unity of the self has implication to an understanding of narration as representation that seeks to impose authenticity (not explored by Gusdorf) operates simultaneously with the fictive element of narration eroding that authenticity. I submit here that this idea of authenticity needs extended exploration and this shall be done in the section I analyze various philosophic texts.

Important here is to note that Gusdorf's writing recognizes that self-narration, in the modern sense, is emplotted in time, though, at this point, I hasten to add that this time refuses a pinning down to a stable space or place. Equally, it is necessary for me to mark the difference between narration as constructing a unified personhood and the notion of the possibility of a unified self. This study emphasizes the fragmentary nature of the self; it refuses perspectives that endorse authenticity as immune from the contamination of the other. This means even from the supposed primal moment of its self-narration, the self cannot stay in a singular route of identity-seeking, rather, in its encounter with the other, it is constantly de-routed as new and different possibilities encroach on its routes. Gusdorf's statement about 'another truth' gestures to truth as relative, invented and arbitrary. This study poses that truth is a contested term since it is simultaneously present with versions of narration that seek to discredit it via palimpsest or total erasure.

Weintruab (1978) poses pre – modern man as one submerged in the morass of an undifferentiated mass of humanity. This mass, he contends, lived within enclosed circumstances of tradition, religious dictates and custom. He figures modern man as marked by a self – conceptualization habit, a habit that questions 'who am I?' and 'how did I become what I am?',

and, 'This self reflexivity stages man as engaged in the process of meaning construction about the self and its environment. He has made a radical departure from individuals in ancient societies who were embedded in the social mass of blood relationships' (Weintraub 1978: 2)

In ancient cultures, Weintraub poses, individuality was recognized but individualism was denied staging. Heroic exploits executed by individuals were celebrated at the same time the exploits were domesticated within the glory of the tribe, clan or the family. Another feature of ancient culture that diminished the stature of individualism was the interventionist act of gods or God in human affairs. Once invoked before a battle or an act of great magnitude to the tribe or family, the gods, ancestors or God would place a signature of execution of this act, thus disallowing individuals to openly stage their individuality. This is a valid point which corresponds with Gusdorf's argumentation in that this study argues that despite the span of time and development between ancient and modern/post – modern societies, certain groups located within race, gender and ethnicity have been submerged or are still submerged in ideologies like patriotic historiography, certain forms of political hegemony and religious embeddedness that have forbidden staging of individual agency and a substantial understanding of the self.

In the context of autobiographical understanding as it figures in the emergence of the modern self, Weintraub's definitional issues are pertinent:

The essential subject matter of all autobiographic writing is concretely

Figuring in Weintraub's positing of these issues is the emphasis on autobiography as premised on the self re-reading and reordering retrospectively its experience of realities; the inward introspection stresses the disjuncture between the pre – modern self and the modern self. Such a reading of the modern self emphasizes, as this study shall confirm, the auto-heterobiographical self as staging difference through even the disavowal of the recognition of God as the other, the exemplar of morals. This point is extended and exemplified by Weintraub, as also reflected in Taylor(1987), as he argues that the Augustinian project of self-reflection is merely preliminary to the actualization of both autobiographical understanding and the autobiographical genre, which 'took on its full dimension and richness when Western Man acquired a thoroughly historical understanding of his existence' (ibid: 821)

This study shall question Weintraub, Gusdorf and Giddens' argument that Western Man and humankind in general, has debunked the Other of the supernatural or paranormal realm, God, gods, spirits and ancestors. This questioning is significant in that the way individuals interpret cosmologies bears on the formation of their ontologies and identities at the play of these ontologies and identities at the core of self narratives. I pose that the other being of the supernatural world, it can be proved via my selected texts, can be viewed as one who intervenes in human affairs to reorder it in either a benevolent or malevolent mode. Giddens, Weintraub and Gusdorf, this study argues, their adulation of the modern self and their disparaging of the pre-modern can be seen as overdone. In *The Republic* (Plato, 2006) the conversation between Cephalus and Socrates in which Socrates exhibits an inward and individualistic reflection of anxieties in the face of death, exemplifies that on some level, autobiographical understanding was already on the stage in Plato's time. This concession to the existence of autobiographical

understanding is permitted, this study submits, juxtaposed to the recognition that it was still closely tethered to those mythical ‘stories’ about ‘another world’ through which personal existence was defined.

This study, while recognizing the rupture of the self and the unhinging of meaning from some transcendent realm of God or the good, argues that the moral domain, confirmed by Taylor as significant in self making, are simultaneously interior and exterior to the individual self. Morality is hinged on the recognition of the self in its positionality to the other; morality presumes responsibility, freedom, will and choice. The terms realize their play in the supplicating to the other and the supplanting of the other by the narrating self. The self’s rupturing of external ties, applauded by postmodern man, and the Hobbesian recognition of the need of a contract between selves, a contract that forbids annihilation of selves in brute staging of selves, foregrounds the ambivalences attendant to the space between the self and the other. It is this ambivalence of the simultaneity of the inside and outside that marks the self that this study interrogates. This ambivalence can be exemplified via Taylor’s reflections on the process of self – examination and self reckoning in which he writes ‘it is in this paradigmatically first-person activity, where i strive to make myself more present to myself,..... That I come most tellingly and convincingly to the awareness that God stands above me’ (Taylor, 1989: 35)

Modernity’s multiplication of possibilities and its posing of the self’s alienation and submersion as simultaneous is explored by Adorno and Horkheimer (2004). They posit that modernity, through mass production and mass consumption erode the self’s individual space. Their argument is premised on what they believe to be the commodification of identities and life-

styles. This argument transposes the form of identity from a transcendent God as other and from that Platonic concept of the Good, to the vulgarized value system generated by monetary and commodity exchange systems. This study argues that such a vulgarized system constructs its own ideals; privileging these identity ideals above the concerns of the self. In other terms, these ideals seek to supplant and fix the self to a supplicatory stance in a world whose social iconography is produced elsewhere. The advent of beauty pageants, fashion icons and pop culture idols is a setting that annihilates the self as individual. While Adorno and Horkheimer's argument is valid in relation to the commodification of values, this study argues that commodification of values, mass production of goods and lifestyles do not necessarily erase the space of the individual self. Thus the self, as Kafka has amply demonstrated in his novels, will always resist a total immersion in the homogenous mass of humanity. It is the assertion of this study that inherent in mankind is both the schizophrenic ability to morph into other forms of identities that defy uninformatization and the pledge to recognize the alterity of the other; the other person, possibility, perspective or God. This study shall prove this simultaneity of the splintered and splintering self and the construction of a narrative of the self in temporal- spatial dimension. Adorno and Horkheimer's argument amounts to a re- entry of the self's submersion as experienced by pre – modern man. It side- steps the unavoidable presence of the modern self's agentive ability to negotiate different and opposing identity spaces to those constructed by a commodified culture of production and consumption. I have noted of this culture's production of icons and idols, figures that have failed to keep the ordinary individual in a mimetic trance, thus proving that the self and autobiographical understanding have refused being eroded. Commodification of culture and values has, to the contrary, provoked the emergence of a self that imposes itself against cultural forces intent on writing it out of existence.

## **The theory of autobiography**

The previous section of this literature review's focus was the emergence of the autobiographical self and auto-heterobiographical understanding. The previous section traced and explored the itinerary of this emergence from pre – modern to modern/ post – modern world. In its exploration of this itinerary, the previous section pointedly posed that the emergence of the self from submersion was contemporaneous with the recognition of the other, the other apart from God, the other as possibility, a different identity and the multiplicity of semantic configuration at play in the human condition. The section posed that the self as it appears in auto-heterobiography emerged in its seminal becoming in St. Augustine's confessions. In its modernist form it appeared when man untethered himself from transcendent value centre as he engaged in introspective reflection of his being. This study intends to explore the ambivalence inherent in the simultaneous presence of interiority and exteriority and the impinging outside play of realities whose call is inescapable.

This section focuses on the theoretical issues that underpin the praxis of autobiography. Autobiography, this study submits, notoriously eludes any single definition. In the broad sense, autobiography is synonymous with 'life writing' and involves all modes and genres of telling one's own life' (Smith and Watson 2000: 10). Its specific project as a literary genre is to mobilize, retrospectively, a narrative whose telos is to tell the author's own life. This means the self is engaged in the acts of reconstruction and re- membering itself in the present by presenting the past or parts of that past to bear on the present. This study argues that the view that the self re- members itself is inadequate. Rather, the self simultaneously re-members and dis-members its past premising this project on the present/future ethical or political self protocols. Dis- membering the past is marked in retrospective acts that deliberately exclude or via memory

lapses, bury certain events. This study notes that the simultaneity of re-membering and dis-membering dis-members and re-members the Other (version of story, person, possibility) in order to project the desired image. This reconstruction and re-membering confirms that the self's narration is both fictional and non – fictional. This erases clear distinction between autobiography and its fictional relatives (auto fiction, autobiographical novel), thus blurring the generic borderlines.

This study argues that the fictive acts of autobiography, since they summon the constructive and imaginative task by the author, breach the self's enclosure to open intersecting space between the self and others. This means reconstructive and imaginative acts presume the entry of the Other other than an essentialized self. The trajectories of autobiography have become diverse and multi – faceted. For instance, an examination of 17<sup>th</sup> century autobiographies, points to the ideas of 'heterologous' subjectivity – self – uniting via writing about another or others (Kormann 2004; 5 – 6). This study figures biography as synonymous with self- life writing. Biography denotes the narrative of the life of another. This act of writing about another is also termed hetero – biography. Hetero-biography's project collapses the conventional 1<sup>st</sup> versus third person boundary, and viewing the self as other, 'hetero – biography has inaugurated its own theory' (ibid: 7). Autobiography as synonymous with life writing entails a multiplicity of acts of writing the self; these include the epistolary or diarial modes. The core activity of autobiography hinges upon the idea of the construction of individual identity via narrative.

Autobiography differs from memoirs in that while memoirs locate a self in the world emphasizing belonging to or contemporaneity with the world (Neumann 1970), autobiography is marked by historical, psychological, fictive and philosophical dimensions. This study posits that memoirs' claim to non – fictionality collapses when an interrogation of generic interaction exposes the blurred boundaries between autobiographical novels and autobiographies and memoirs. In this context, autobiography has proved its proclivity for 'spelling away altogether', refusal to be identifiable by 'its own proper form, terminology, and observances' (Olney 1980:4). Some critics have figured the 'end of autobiography' (Finch 1999:11). This study opposes, therefore, the classic paradigm of autobiography marked by the tenets of coherence, circular closure, interiority as 'historically limited, gendered and socially exclusive phenomenon (and certainly one that erects any clear dividing line between factual and fictional self – writing') (Schwalm, 2014:11)

Before turning to the interrogations and explorations of the origins, content and implications of autobiographical theory, it is crucial for me at this point to underscore that this study explores the subjectivities in auto-heterobiographical narratives in relation to notions of moral responsibility, free will, freedom, emancipatory agency, forgiveness and the other. These subjectivities, I submit, are locatable within gender, race, ethnicity, the nation and the cosmopolitan sites.

To recapitulate, autobiography and in the same mode, auto-heterobiographical theory refuses the fixed canon tenets applicable to other theories. The best that any study can attain is a mobilization of fragments or 'loose assemblage of theoretical positions gleaned from

philosophical treatises on the subject of autobiography' Javangwe 2012: 34). I pose in addition, that in some textual instances, autobiographical theory is implied rather than exclusively explored.

Olney (1972) locates the seminal autobiographical thought to the Greek philosopher Heraclitus. This thought is pinned to Heraclitus' posing that 'every cosmology begins in self-knowledge' (Olney, 1972:4). This positing achieves both an inversion of the assumed modes of knowledge and a reconstruction of the identity and position of the self in the world. Instead of the self being a passive entity, one who refers to an exterior authorial Centre, the self becomes the Centre that propagates knowledge about itself and its world/worlds. The cosmos, when examined in its Greek etymology, refers to a complex and orderly system, its poise opposes chaos. In other phrasing it refers to the orderedness of the universe. Cosmology in turn refers to the study of this ordered system, its origins and nature. The fact that cosmology is a branch of metaphysics pinions it at the Centre of the interrogation of ontology, identity and being and becoming.

Heraclitus' philosophy is oriented to the auto-heterobiographer and the self in that:

- a) As a philosopher, he isolated himself from the mass of people, thus constructing – not only in theory but praxis – a subjective existence
- b) He debunked Parmenides' view of being as purely absolute and inscribed into the cosmos the concept of being and becoming; a dialectic, which as the study will explicate, has a bearing on Hegelian universalism and the origins of the unified self.
- c) He introduced the cosmos as marked by constant flux or change.

However, let me underscore here that the universalism or the Absolute introduced by Hegel has been disparaged by postmodernist and postcolonial theories and critics of culture and

autobiography. I will soon explore this point. Let me begin with the point regarding the philosopher's mode of living as auto-heterobiographical. Diogenes Laertes says (1X.1) Heraclitus began the separation and withdrawal of the philosopher from public affairs and devoted himself in his isolation entirely to philosophy. Diogenes also poses that he was much hated and he in turn hated his countrymen. His isolation from the mass of his countrymen confirms the existence of a subjectivity independent in consciousness. In this isolation, via his subjective consciousness, he could pronounce 'Every cosmology begins in self-knowledge.' Self-knowledge, as this study submits, is the self-questioning and ordering of the self in its "umwelt" and "innenwelt" (to borrow Lacan's term), and its privileging of the hierarchy of its priorities, desires and goals. Umwelt refers to the environment in which an organism or the self is impinged on by realities as the self/organism actively promotes its life project. Innenwelt is Lacan's term for the interior signifying acts of the self. Heraclitus' subjective venture was so pronounced that his works were tagged obscure because he breached rules of proper composition and of perfect language (Aristotle. 335 B.C: 111.5). The deployment of a subjective language is a mark of the presence of a self that figures itself as different, and difference is significant in the understanding of auto-heterobiographical selves. His radical subjectivism could only be possible in relation to his self-distancing from the Others.

Heraclitus' destabilization of Parmenidian stasis introduced being as becoming. It is this dialectic that has a bearing on the auto-heterobiographical troubling ambivalence of existence of the interior and exterior in the subjective self. How can the self claim a separate narrative crossing other narratives which it cannot exclude from its own narrative? He is quoted in Aristotle (Metaph.1V.3 and 7) declaring 'Being and non – being are the same; everything is and yet is

not.’ This means entities, identities appear in existence but underlying this existence are forces of change that disrupt such existence. This paradoxical saying is important to our understanding of the transience of the autobiographical self, in its diacronicity as ordered by the narrative and its synchronicity at the moment of narration, the self defies capture and eludes the pretense of any transparent envelope of language. Heraclitus, to extend this exploration, says: ‘Everything is in a state of flux; nothing subsists nor does it remain the same’. And Plato says of Heraclitus: ‘He compares things to the current of a river no one can go twice into the same stream’ (Plato 1980). This flux, I pose, marks and destabilizes established notions of the essence of the self; a deconstruction applauded by poststructuralist philosophy originated by Derrida. Heraclitus’ synthesizing of being and non – being into becoming poses the simultaneous residence of two apparently conflictual states. Does Heraclitus diminish the other from the standpoint of the Same? ‘Being’ and its other ‘non – being’ are synthesized and the result, becoming, transcends both.

Heraclitus argues that while all beings are in the state of unceasing flux, change itself is marked by permanence. He posits that time is becoming thus debunking the fixities in temporal emplotment that the autobiographer always attempts. This implies that temporal signifiers as past and future are subordinated to the hierarchy of priorities of the narrating self in the present moment. The past in the memory terrain is elapsed time whose acts can be reordered by the self in the present to match the self’s project. The future is time – yet –to come, therefore colonizable by the self narrative in its appropriative acts.

This study poses that it is from the standpoint of the act of self writing that the self relates to the other of its temporal realm; the past and present as the other and the past selves of the narrating writer as either continuous or discontinuous with the project of the present self. Heraclitus' postulation that the human senses are to be chronically doubted ('the eyes and ears are treacherous witnesses' Heraclitus: 1969) is to be understood in the context of his conviction that all modes of interpretations are destabilized by the fissures and falsehoods in de-membering of the past and memory gaps. This study argues that self narratives are invented and that the coherence constructed is fragile; inherent are counter narratives or fictive elements that de-register auto-heterobiographical narratives from the cannon of the wholly factual and absolutely truthful. Heraclitus' project of positioning the self at the centre of the cosmos prefigures the anthropocentric posture and drive of the Enlightenment project. Reinterpreted by Hegel, his concept of dialectics, the merging of opposites and the dividing of this merging is absolutised into a universal principle. The synthesizing of opposites or difference culminates in the erasure of identities of the synthesized entities. It is this erasure of the Other by the Same that this study argues against by appropriating Levinas' philosophy of the ethics of alterity. At this point however, let me turn to Plato to demonstrate how he evolves a concept of the self, a questioning self as in Heraclitus, but a self whose questioning is to be dictated by a mode of moral or ethical conduct absent in Heraclitus.

A point of note is crucial before I begin on Plato. While Heraclitus' postulations about the self and cosmologies are seminal, Plato is credited for formulating the fundamentals of Western metaphysics, ethics and other studies. Plato's dialogues, through which he configures his philosophy, is simultaneously an explication of identities as it offers a biography of Socrates.

Thus Plato's dialogues offer auto-heterobiography in the guise of philosophic explorations. It notoriously eludes most scholars to locate the disjuncture between Plato and Socrates in the dialogues. The notoriety of delineating Plato and Socrates' identities is further complicated by the fact that most scholars can't capture the different selves of Socrates that emerge from the Socratic dialogues. The historical figure of Socrates and the figure of Plato's fictionalization inhabit each other's spaces so much it's difficult to articulate their differences. As Martin Cohen has put it, Plato, the idealist, offers 'an idol, a master figure, for philosophy—a saint, a prophet of God, a teacher condemned for his teaching as a heretic' (Cohen 1990:100).

Plato's dialogues also bear on auto-heterobiographical understanding in that Plato, by his embeddedness in Socratic thought, writes the life of the other as his own while in Heraclitus hetero - biographic concerns are present via alienation. Plato, in his methods, especially in the Republic, Meno, Phaedo, The symposium and Phaedrus, pose the other who is different from the same as important in the Same's configuration of reality, identity, and ethical acts. I shall revisit this auto-heterobiographic and ethical issue soon. It is in order, I propose, if I begin by an exploration and interrogation of Socrates' aphorisms which, like his mode of living, inform on our understanding of auto-heterobiographical theory, especially the act of narrating the self as enmeshed in the other. As is clear such complex issues of attempting to capture selves, to pin them down to some definable context is the staple activity of autobiography.

Duignan (2009) notes that Socrates invented and popularized the phrase 'the unexamined life is not worthy living'. This quotation habitates the praxis of autobiographical narratives in that

examining a life in the course of living entails a questioning of the mode of this living, setting priorities, dissolving hierarchies of interplay with impinging realities, and constructing others that are deemed compatible with the situation or with negotiating positionalities of the narrating self. This dictum poses living as a project with a telos; it is this telos that orders and reorders the narrative of the self in the run of this living. Living and its telos presume a narrative if the self is to make sense of its environment and, most importantly, to make its own space from which it disseminates deference and identity.

Unlike the isolated self of Heraclitean philosophy, the examining self in the Socrates' saying does not limit itself to self-imposed boundaries around the self. Examining life, it can be argued, can refer to an examination of the life of the other as Plato did to Socrates' life. This is further underscored by Socrates' self reference as the divinely appointed 'gadfly' that must vex complacent minds of others out of their stasis by relentlessly questioning them.

The phrase that figures Socrates appropriating the Delphic oracle's maxim and refashioning it into a mode of self narrative is 'know thy self'. This phrase is ubiquitous in Socrates' dialogues, in the Phaedrus, Charmides, and Alcibiades. The project of knowing oneself, as posed by Socrates, is a prelude to an understanding of the ethical acts of how to relate to the other, the god, the other person, moral point of view and possibility. I shall limit myself to the dialogue 'Phaedrus', as a prelude to exploring the implication of this maxim to an understanding of auto-biographical narratives and their intersecting with hetero-biographical issues.

Socrates poses:

I cannot as yet 'know myself' as the inscription at Delphi enjoins, and so long as that ignorance remains it seems to me ridiculous to inquire into extraneous matters.

Consequently I do not bother about such things [myths], but accept the current belief about them, and direct my inquiries, as I have said, rather to myself, to discover whether I really am a more complex creature and more puffed up with pride than Typhon or simpler, gentler being whom, heaven has blessed with a quite, un-Typhonic nature (Plato, 230a, H.8C: 478)

This quotation is an evolved version of the maxim ‘the unexamined life is not worthy living in two ways. The first is its interpenetrability with identity issues; the second is its gaze towards the deity or God. Despite its gaze towards the deity, it still insists that the beginning of the knowledge of the other is irrevocably self-knowledge. Socrates’ reference to difference or similarity in relation to the god Typhon marks his delving into identity issues as synonymous with the packing and repacking of the self in its intersectedness with others, the space of intersection being the play of free will, choice, responsibility and transcendence. The last point needs qualification. This study takes it after Hobbes, Rawls and Levinas (without pre-emptying Levinas) that any dialogue or any face to face human interaction with the other presumes a contract or pledge of acceding to the context of interaction. The accession is not necessarily a deliberate act by the selves involved; it issues from the being – in – the world status and situation of selves.

Now I turn to the interplay between self-understanding, difference and the other in the ethics of Plato. Ethics subsumes self narratives in that we identify as Taylor (1999:25) says, with issues that impinge on our horizons in an ethical mode in that such issues introduce our desires. Desires, this study submits, either comply with or contravene certain moral rules. I shall do the explanation of Plato’s ethical issues in the context of Socrates’s Apologia.

The Apologia of Socrates, in which he refuses the accusations of Meletus that he defies the gods and that he corrupts the youth (Blocker: 1990) is oriented to auto-heterobiographical concerns in that Socrates defends the mode of his life by positioning himself in relation to others (the Delphic oracle, his accusers and sympathizers), he deploys the first person narrative voice and affirms a subjectivity that bears no fixed allegiance to the gods or dictums of culture and religion. Defending oneself is one of the core activities of the auto-heterobiographical self; the self defends its motives, ethical conduct and excuses its errors or misjudgments.

This study shall explore and interrogate the ethical choices and consequences of characters in selected texts to prove that the self, in writing about itself invents itself as ceaselessly active in questioning its particular impinging moral contexts. As shall be shortly made clear, ethical acts are practiced in the context of hierarchies of moral imperatives. In the Apologia, Socrates shows that he privileges his obligation to the other, his fellow citizens and the Deity over other issues like the city's laws, civil rights and religion. Socrates declares that: 'God appointed me, as I supposed and believed, to the duty of leading the philosophic life, examining myself and others' (Blocker and Steward 1987:20). He argues that despite being a 'devoted servant' to the city, he owes a greater obedience to God' than to men. It must be qualified here that his pledge or obedience to God was premised on God imposing a particular identity on Socrates; the identity that he was 'the wisest man alive' (ibid: 21). The project of questioning the Deity and himself clearly stages the introspective acts of a self that refuses submersion in religion or the call of the other at the detriment of active participation in self -making. He claims: 'what does the god mean? Why does he not use plain language ...? What can he mean by asserting that I am the wisest man in the world? He cannot be telling lies; that would not be right for him'. (ibid: 17)

The ironies and dilemmas impacting on self-making as exposed by obeying the god by questioning the god involve both obedience and rebellion to the god. Questioning the veracity of the god's proclamation is rebellion while his being a 'gadfly' is obeying the god: obedience which unsettles Socrates' interior self-imagining. His ethical obligation to his fellow citizens also involves a paradox; serving them is betraying their best laid civil rules which immerse them in harmful complacency and simultaneously a meting of death to Socrates. His death by hemlock poison is both a confirmation of his unique acts as identity and how the others, his accusers, contribute to the identity and death. Thus this study will explore how individual selves rupture conventional moral tenets to stage individual or particular executions of ethical calling in relation to the other, deity or human. At this point it is pertinent for this study to explore Plato's ideas regarding the identity of the self. Plato's theory of self-identity, the ontological structure, routes its emergence from the theory of Forms or Eidos.

The Forms refer to the transcendent authorial Centre of meaning reference residing only in the intelligible realm. In another phrase 'the forms or general principles of things are the proper objects of knowledge and philosophers are not like other persons, for they have their gaze firmly fixed on the unchanging forms, on the eternally true principles of things, not the changing transient world of experience' (Blocker and Stewart 1991:2007). Plato distinguishes between the intelligible world and the world of appearances.

The human body inhabits the world of appearance but the Good and the Forms reside in the intelligible world. The Good is metaphorically defined as light or the sun, thus its deployment is implicated in his theory of both epistemology and ethics. In Plato's scheme of metaphysics,

intelligence (noesis), knowledge (episteme) and Thinking (dianoia) are transposed beyond the physical world of appearances and transience. This implies that the self constituted through the mind and the activity of the memory is unchanging since, within this scheme, immaterial things refuse change. This in turn constructs the essence of being human; the essence of identity as the Forms of humanness fix principles about what is being human. Being 'human' is attainable through excluding 'sensible object(s) but [focusing] only [on] Forms, moving through Forms from one to another, and ending with forms'(ibid 240). As can be inferred, Plato's diminishing of the sensible or material resonates with Heraclitus' disparaging of the 'eyes and ears' as false witness. But unlike Plato, Heraclitus does not evolve ideas that fix the Centre of human identity. While Plato configures identity as fixed on Forms or Ideas, Heraclitus posits identity as ceaseless becoming.

Plato's allegory of the cave (Plato, Republic) illustrates his mode of metaphysics, epistemology and ethics. The allegory refers to the fate of chained prisoners in a cave whose knowledge is limited to the shadowy images within. These images are contrasted to the world of real objects outside the cave to which when one of the prisoners is dragged, he can 'look at the sun and contemplate its nature, not as it appears when reflected in water or any alien medium but as it is' in itself in its own domain'(Republic: books 6 and 7)

The cave is equivalent, Plato poses, to the material world marked by images, appearance, and belief (pistic) and imagining (eikasia). The world of the Forms and the Good contain reality 'as it is'. This study does not subscribe to selves and auto-heterobiographical identities as fixed and unchanging. It argues that realities as mediated through narratives disallow immutability as

narratives in their fluidity refer to heterogeneous and disjunctive realities that refuse to cohere to traceable origins or identities.

While Plato's realm of the Forms and the Good may imply the self's ideal identity, what the self imagines to be its optimal realization, this study poses that even the ideal is a construction of the human mind, confirming that it does not transcend the world of the transient. This study submits that the self's understanding of its positionality and identity is mutable. This mutability is hinged on temporal becoming and the being-in-the-world status of the self in which it encounters a heterogeneous reality – some which impels it to adjust its priorities, thus in turn mutating into the other; so available are possibilities awaiting colonization and possible actualization by the self. The notion of being – in – the world, as it has emerged from this study of the ontology and identity of the self, is crucial to our understanding of auto-heterographical narratives, thus an exploration of Martin Heidegger's theory is pertinent.

This juncture on Heidegger attempts a dialogue between Heraclitus and Heidegger and Heidegger's disparaging of Plato's formulation of transcendent logos (episteme), as I analyze Heidegger's major concepts that orient themselves to the development of an understanding of the auto-heterobiographical self. My analysis of Heidegger's philosophy configures the possibilities of selves narrating themselves in time and space, inexorably marked by historicity. This analysis largely focuses on Heidegger's Being and Time. A registration of the key ideas to be analyzed is important at this point. This involves being-in-the-world, dwelling in the world, Ereignis, thrownness, Dasein authenticity, disclosedness of truth rendered also unhiddenness, discourse and worlding.

Simply stated, being refers to the nature of existence. Aristotle refers to being as that which exists whatever is instanced by the verb 'is' (Aristotle, 2002). Plato configured being through the duality of the intelligible world and the world of the material or appearances. Heidegger's study focuses on the specific type of Being, the human being referred to by Heidegger as 'Dasein' which literally means 'Being – there' (Solomon 1972). His reference to the human being underpinned by this positing that a human being's existence cannot be explored in the exclusion of the consciousness that this being is an existent thrown in the middle of a world amongst other things. Dasein, Heidegger posits, is conscious being that explores its world and appropriates its environment as it lives out its possibilities. This marks Dasein with the self-advancing acts of the auto-heterobiographical self: a self that appropriates possibilities to change its position to align these changes with its project of self imaging.

The thrownness postulated by Heidegger refers to how the human being as Dasein is submerged in the world without knowledge of its existence's origin and without control over its horizon of death. Submerged, however, does not imply a primordial disempowerment of Dasein, but rather, it denotes the inexorability and inextricability that marks Dasein's relation to the world. This thrownness does not inhibit Dasein from ascending beyond its entrenchment of being-in-the-world because for Heidegger, Dasein is an 'entity which, in its very being comports its self-understanding towards its Being' (Heidegger, 1998:200). This implies that Dasein, the human being investigates its own mode of being. It seeks answers to the question of its being as marked by thrownness, death and the paralleled existence of other entities. As can be surmised, these are existential questions that trouble the self and the auto-heterobiographical selves answer about their being-in -the –world: imaging themselves through evolving spatial, temporal and narrative sites that construct and justify an identity.

'Thrownness' (reworfenheit) characterizes Dasein as troubled by angst (fear or anxiety) in the world. This anxiety is not to be understood in the ordinary sense. It refers to the imaging of human life as a troubling question with no answers provided. Phrased in other words, this means the human being's existence is such that it is always impelled towards interrogating its existence as of any other entity. I pose that the inquiry into reality by Dasein is equivalent to the auto-heterobiography self inquiring into the meaning of its life. This questioning, I posit, imports that the human being is conscious of its positionality and the difference which divides it from other entities. The idea of setting boundaries involves the constitution of identity by the self as it narrativizes its existence in time and space.

Dasein is affected by the world in such a way that 'existentially', it is in 'a state – of – mind [which] implies a disclosive submission to the world, out of which we encounter something that matters to us'. (ibid: 201). Dasein, because of its inextricable relation to the world, Heidegger argues, has no option but to encounter this Otherness and contend with it. This study submits that such 'encounter' provides the self with the awareness of its separate ontology which it must safeguard if it is to maintain its place among heterogeneity of entities.

The fact that Dasein seeks what matters to it opens space to the notion that the world is marked by possibility or possibilities. Thus an entity in the world is discovered as 'ready – to – hand – in its serviceability, its usability, and its detrimentality' (ibid: 208). The realization that entities can be employed this way, in this possibility, will in turn invoke the conception and understanding of 'projective' Dasein (de Entwurf). Projecting does not denote deliberate planning by Dasein; rather it refers to how Dasein manipulates the way in which the existence of other entities unfolds as possibility. Heidegger poses, in the context of this unfolding and possibility, a statement that informs on the self's manipulative acts – manipulating its world to construct its

own narrative. He writes “This projecting of the understanding of possibilities has its own possibility – that of developing itself. This development of the understanding we call ‘interpretation’” (ibid; 209)

Dasein’s interrogation of his world and his construction of other worlds is what this study poses as his narrative construction of his identity. Heidegger says through discourse, which is located in the ontological foundation of language, Dasein creates its own worlds. Worlding, he poses involves the matrix of being – along – side entities and the social world of being – with – other human beings. Interpretation involves all the meaning of sense making acts Dasein deploys in negotiating its existence and positions in relation to other entities. Such sense making involves Dasein (here Heidegger adopts Heraclitus) uncovering the being of other beings. This implies that the self seeks to establish the truth about the realities of its being in relation to the being of other beings. Heidegger via his phenomenological mode of explication adopts truth or unhiddenness, deriving this from the Greek word *aletheia*, which when translated becomes that which is ‘not hidden or forgotten’, or he who ‘does not hide or forget’. Thus truth, as he posits, is reached via ‘recollection of the beginning (*aletheia*)’ (Heidegger LXXV, 388). Abiding in Heidegger’s argument is his insistence that Plato’s inaugural metaphysics and ontological ideas deranged our ontic understanding of truth by mediating truth through the forms or ideas. Ontic understanding presupposes a direct pre – categorical grasping of the being of a thing.

This study disengages Heidegger’s idea of truth as unhiddenness but engages his affirmation of the simultaneity of hiddenness and unhiddenness in relation to truth. Posed in this way, it implies that the auto-heterobiographical ambivalence of the self as simultaneously author and undefinable being confirms the act of hiding and unhiding realities which constitutes an incomplete self; one that appears through the act of representation as both resembling and

dissembling. While this study endorses Plato's inauguration of a subjective self that deploys epistemology as mediating ideas, it rejects the fixed identity and transcendence that characterize the Forms or ideas. Heidegger's phenomenological orientation which dictates a direct apprehension of ontological reality fails to engage the auto-heterobiographical projects in that all self-knowledge or autobiographical knowledge 'presumes a narratives' (Giddens 1991). Plato's subjective self who engages the Forms or ideas will soon, this study poses, reinvent the structure of these Forms to coincide with prevailing temporal, spatial and historical events. For instance, selves narrating themselves mutate in the process of narration and hence even their vocabularies of engagement transmute realities as they appropriate memories that confirm their prioritized ethical / moral standards / images.

Heidegger poses that human Dasein is marked equiprimordially by the possibility of both authentically (being – in – the – truth) and the deficient mode (verfalls or fallenness) of inauthenticity. Authenticity in Heidegger's terminology refers to the mode of being engaged by Dasein of its chronic awareness of its state of thrownness and its recognition of death as the ultimate mark of its finitude. Death compels the self to recognize its limitations hence the self tasks itself to perform acts that establish its identity before its demise. In this articulation, authenticity is premised on Dasein's ability to claim its moments as 'mine – ness' and death as its 'own – most'. This means in Dasein's stretch of life certain things or moments stand out as unique to singular selves. This study endorses the implication on autobiographic selves by this meaning of authenticity. Such authenticity suffuses the narrative with the subjectivity that dominates self narratives.

If this notion of authenticity is placed in the context of the human Dasein as one who lives – along – entities and lives – with – other Dasein, we can surmise that Heidegger endorses the act

of the same recognizing the other through its difference to the other. Here there is the recognition of the simultaneity of existence which inheres between, not within the different Dasein. The Other in Heidegger is constructed as totally external to the self. Heidegger's Dasein, these selves, though not self -enclosed like Cartesian selves, will be deficient in their orientation to auto-heterobiographical writing because they pose a non-ethical approach to the Same-Other relations. Ethical or moral issues, if internalized and deployed inter-subjectively by selves, will create the phenomenon of trust, obligation and responsibility in relation to the other. It is such concepts and praxis in culture that configure the self or selves' identity since identity is configured and captured in culture. It is on the point of ethical or moral issues that Heidegger sets a disjuncture between himself and Plato. Heidegger poses that an ontology based on ethics loses its value because the conceptual and structural framework composed through ethics precludes a phenomenological grasp of ontology. Plato, in contrast, invests in ethics as observed through Socrates' (Apologia) claim that his subscription to the Good, the highest point of man perfected, fires in him his obligation to the other, the obligation to make that other a better human being.

This study also disengages the authenticity implied by Heidegger in that this 'mineness and 'own – most' that he inscribes in Dasein cannot impose separate uncontaminated spaces of narration. Narrating selves inevitably become contaminated by the inclusion of others in their narratives. Thus this study submits that it's difficult and even impossible to mark a narrative's boundaries and to capture and preserve an essentialized ontology or identity within these boundaries. Another idea on Heidegger I will explore here is Ereignis. Kenneth Maly and Parvis Emad (2004), in translation, render this word as 'enowning', this means in relation to things that arise and appear, human beings are arising 'into their own' (Maly and Parvis, 2004:7). Heidegger's definition itself underscores Ereignis as signifying the act of appropriating, "The

word Ereignis (from) Er – eignen (to concern) means, originally, to distinguish or discern which one's eyes see, and in seeing calling to oneself, appropriate" (Heidegger 1969:120)

In its appropriating mode, Dasein-- Heidegger poses-- lights up or illuminates being by appropriating being and being appropriated by being. This simply means Dasein enhances its identity and abilities at those moments it appropriates what being offers as possibility; in other words the human Dasein activates and actualizes its innate abilities. This actualization shows the potential of the beingness of humanity in general and the singular 'coming -to- being' of a human agent. Coming-to-being, this study poses, figures the configuration of identity. In the quotation from Heidegger, 'calling to oneself' is equivalent to Maly and Parvis' 'arising into one's own' which means showing one's potential. This is oriented to this study in that narrating selves invariably attempt to depict their 'arising into (their) own', to portray how they inhabit the image of the ethics or moral standards inscribed in culture. Alternatively setting a disjuncture between Heidegger and this study, I pose that the self can 'come into its own', -via its subjective rebellion against the dictations of a culture or a political hegemony.

Here also exists difference between Heidegger and Plato. Plato's self appropriates existing epistemological tools to ascend to the realm of the Good, the Forms or ideas; this constitutes a transcendence in which the self's potential can only revolve in the Good, the Forms or ideas. Heidegger's self, to contrast, appropriates being to enhance its ipseity (its selfhood) without routing its self imaging via external authorial Centre's. In Levinas, as I shall argue, this ipseity constitutes the tyranny of ontology in that Heidegger's Dasein is open to being (its proclivity for self interrogation and interrogation of entities) only to enhance this ipseity. This is corroborated by Heidegger's posing of other non – Dasein entities as mere equipment 'ready – to – hand' for

Dasein's benefit. This may also tie in with Heidegger's sympathetic entanglement with the Nazi Party responsible for the Jewish genocide which happened between 1941 and 1945.

Emmanuel Levinas' philosophy of alterity evolved in the 20<sup>th</sup> century setting both disjuncture and conjunctures between his work and that of Heidegger and Husserl. This study explores Levinas' philosophy to limn how his concepts of transcendence, existence and the human other can be appropriated to the project of understanding auto-heterobiographical narratives. An exploration of the disjunctures and conjunctures his work confirms configures that Levinas uncovers levels of experience unexplored by both Husserl and Heidegger. These experiences focus on the encounter with the world, the interhuman and a reconfiguration of the complexity of interiority marked by sensibility and affectivity. Affectivity refers to that emotive entanglement in the face-to-face human encounters, primarily located on the human face.

The exploration of Levinas' philosophy, this study poses, focuses on selves narrating themselves in the context of ethical/moral issues that characterize humanity's lived conditions. Ethical or moral imperatives engage the self's desire or concern as Taylor (2004) argues. The complex ethical/moral issues explored here include the ambivalence and ambiguity that mark responsibility, freedom and the human will. Ethical or moral issues shape the self in that acts of a moral nature infuse the self with an identity, a difference since ethical acts are not reducible to agents other than the singular agent who performed them.

Levinas poses that humans experience the world in their embodiment. This means the corporeal body becomes a site of meaning construction and interhuman activities such as expressed via love and sexuality, death, pain and suffering. In Levinas, the human face disseminates meaning; 'the face is a living presence, it is expression.... The face speaks. The manifestation of the face is

already discourse....' (Levinas, 2006: 66) and 'Meaning is the face of the other, and all recourse to words takes place already within the primordial face to face language' (ibid 206). By 'face' Levinas refers to the human face (or in French, visage) 'but not... experienced as a physical or aesthetic object. Rather, the first, usual unreflective encounter with the face is as a living presence of another person and therefore, as something experienced socially and ethically' (Young 1990:4)

This means even before a verbal dialogue evolves between human beings, the self is already aware that the other is a face like one; one feels this before even thinking about it. Levinas posits that the face exposes that human embodiment is a form of vulnerability: the skin of the face is that which stays most naked, most destitute.... [T]here is an essential poverty in the face; the proof of this is that one tries to mask this poverty by putting on poses, by taking on a countenance. The face is exposed, menaced' (Levinas, 2006: 86).

The significance of this to an interrogation of auto-heterobiographical narratives is not only that the self can dissemble; it is also that the menaced and exposed existence of the self impels it to recognize the humanity of the other through understanding its own vulnerability. Exterior menace threatens the self's very existence, thus the self contests to maintain the space between itself and the other affirming difference and identity. 'The face is present in its refusal to be contained (ibid: 194). Auto-Hetero biography presupposes that the self's narrative is enmeshed with other narratives of the other. It is important to extend the exploration of the face of the other to answer: But how does the face of the other impact on self narration? To answer this question, let me ground the meaning of embodiment first. Adopting Rosfort and Stanhen (1996), Martin Heinze, poses that embodiment as it figures human beings' vulnerability and enabledness presumes an ontological ambiguity;

The aspect of passivity in human existence in which we are determined by our physiology, our environment, and our biography becomes visible. On the other hand, we also see the active dimension of personhood; the possibility to put ourselves into question, to relate to ourselves, to undergo change, and to invent ourselves anew (Heinze 1999:20)

Levinas argues that the face of the other, via facticity and affectivity communicates paradoxically both a demand and supplication:

This gaze supplicates and demands, that it supplicates is only because it demands, it is deprived of everything because entitled to everything and it is that which one recognizes in giving (as one 'puts the things in question in giving)... This gaze precisely the epiphany of the face as face, the nakedness of the face is destituteness .... To recognize the other is to give. But it is to give to the master, to the Lord, to him whom one approaches as 'You' in a dimension of height (Ibid 75 – 76)

Affectivity denotes the extension of emotions and the intension behind these emotions as issuing from the Same affects the Other by enmeshing that other's emotion in dialogue. Supplication and demand are simultaneous via the self's recognition of its vulnerability and ability to transcend its situation. This implies that the vulnerability of the autobiographical project lies in its limited subjectivity which is however redeemed via heterobiographical inclusions. These inclusions rapture the otherwise Cartesian self enclosures that refuse inter-subjectivity. The Cartesian self is

a derivative from Rene Descartes (1637) who postulated 'I am thinking therefore I exist' (cogito ego sum), in his inquiries on self-identity and knowledge. One can accept that such a self can exist though silenced by its extreme egology; meaning an exclusive reference to the self as self-sufficient. This study refuses such a self because human identity, I argue, only emerges in interactive situations, which, through language, open space for the self to enact and articulate its orientations. In Levinas 'Destituteness' and 'nakedness' imply the primordial incompleteness of the human being outside the inter-human dialogue and transcendence. Transcendence denotes the act of the self surpassing its limits by opening this space of endless possibilities via its interaction with other selves, entities and possibilities. I submit that Self narrating involves the auto-heterobiographer as master of his life and simultaneously as appealing to the readers of the auto-heterobiography narrative to accept his narrative as true because no other person could have written such a narrative in his place. This can be seen as the unstitutability of the singularity of the narrating self. However, the narrating self can be contested in its narrative by other selves or other versions of narratives.

Levinas equates giving to the other to giving to the Lord or God. Here he invents transcendence beyond the embodied self as one enabled via the other (person) to enter the other (God) of infinite. Levinas poses that, 'Finitude is a sign of imperfection, measuring the distance between the creature and God, who is perfect and infinite.' (Levinas 2004: 64). Levinas' posing of the necessity of transcendence from human corporeality to the perfection infinitude matches Plato's argument that material reality is an illusion, thus imperfect, but the realm of the Good and the Forms or Ideas contains perfection.

While this study poses that both Plato and Levinas concur that all ethical grounding is played out in relation to the other, Levinas affirms absolute alterity in that the Other in ethical relation is never graspable though he unsettles the sovereignty of the I:

The alterity, the radical heterogeneity of the other, is possible only if the other is other with respect to a term whose essence is to remain at the point of departure, to serve as entry into the relation, to be the same not relatively but absolutely. A term can remain absolutely at the point of departure of relationship only as I. (Levinas 1992:20)

By routing the transcendence of the self through the other, Levinas circumvents the obsession with self – referentiality (egology) posed by both Hegel and Heidegger and the fixations of self-knowledge in the Forms (Eidos) postulated by Plato. In the above quotation, the ‘term whose essence is to remain at the point of departure’ signifies the elusiveness of the Other, unknowable, ungraspable. This implies that auto-heterobiography involves imaging the Other as affirming a possibility that challenges the self by exposing the absence of that possibility in the self-questioning self:

The natural conatus essendi of a sovereign I is put in question before the face of the other, in the ethical vigilance in which the sovereignty of the I recognize itself as ‘hateful’, and its place in the sun the prototype

and beginning of the usurpation of the whole earth (Levinas, 2006:10).

Here the self is compelled to reorder the hierarchy of its priorities in its realization that the Heideggerian egology ('hateful') limits the plurality of existence by assimilating the other into the Same. My argument is that the Other's face as the primal site of 'discourse' and as 'epiphany', as Levinas poses, informs on how self narratives, even fake ones, cannot be created ex nihilo. The 'discourse' issuing from the face and the epiphanic opening of other worlds provoked by the face suggest possible forms of existence not yet filled by the content of existence of the self. This exposes the fact that auto-heterobiographical narratives are never complete despite all the justification, exonerations and immortalizing the narratives may assume.

Levinas, to proceed, argues for absolute obligation or responsibility for the other. The I that has been unsettled by the other by having its self – sufficiency exposed as a sham becomes inescapably involved in the affairs of the other, this involvement takes the form of responsibility. Thus 'To be an I then signifies not to be able to slip away from responsibility. The I, he equates to an 'upsurgency of ipseity in being' is realized as a 'turgescence of responsibility' (Levinas 1993:353). He further poses, in the context of responsibility that 'the unicity of the I is the fact that no one can answer in my place...' (ibid)

This study argues that ethical or moral encounters in inter-human relations shape the way selves will be compelled to make choices or decisions (exercising their freedom) by disengaging themselves from communal ideals of morality. This disengagement creates acts, as implied in the Levinas quote above, which makes the self unsubstitutable. But what are we to make of Levinas' insisting that we discipline the subjectivity of the self into subjection before the other? Is this not

an invitation to the egotist to overwhelm the self with his own narrative thereby rendering Levinassian ethics into another form of egology? This study poses that the narrating 'I' always faces the other through acts of negotiation which involve change of perspective, revisioning of hierarchy of responsibilities or obligations and imposing itself temporal and spatial sites that prop up its image. This study accedes to Levinas' posing of the asymmetry in selves' relations, however, it further emphasizes simultaneity of supplanting and supplication as the narrating 'I' stages its subjectivity in the play of inter-subjectivity. The narrating self supplants the other (person, version of story, possibility etc.) by dis-articulating or dis-membering it. It supplicates by conceding to the primacy of the interhuman face-to-face interaction, thus by inference the narrating self notes the impossibility or absurdity of writing for no audience/readership. It is important here to register that Levinas infuses the interhuman interaction with fecundity that enables infinitude and immortality. He postulates that a man appropriates the equivalence of infinitude via his son as his son in turn reproduces another child and this child in turn reproduces another, thus fecundity is reproduced ad finitum. This ad finitum translates into infinite. Similarly, this study posits, narrative gains fecundity via its being read and being passed on from one generation to the next, and via its interaction with other versions of realities that question it and open other possibilities through it to futures beyond its present.

I have posited that Levinas' ethics of alterity is a critical divergence from what he famously terms the 'imperialism of ontology' propagated by the phenomenological approach to ontology and human identity. To circumvent the subordination of the other in the Same, Levinas proposes the absolute alterity of the other, unknowable and ungraspable. This creates a tension between his ethics of alterity and Heideggerian phenomenology. It is pertinent at this stage to introduce Jacques Derrida's philosophy of alterity as one that attempts to initiate a dialogue between an

absolute and irrecuperable notion of 'alterity that is always deferred and always to come, and his simultaneous insistence that the other is somehow always present within the self (Reynolds 2000:1), as can be surmised the notion of absolute alterity is Levinassian and the other has residual ideas of the phenomenological approach.

The implication of this on auto-heterobiography is to see how the narrating self navigates between others; beings, possibilities yet unknowable and the same beings and possibilities as already entangled in the project of the self's invention and reinvention of identities, its ordering and reordering of ethical hierarchies that defy the simplistic enframing of binary divides as in being / non – being, soul / body, black / white, good / evil. My exploration of Derrida's (2006) ideas is hinged on explicating how the private acts of ethical claims invariably diverge from the claim of the order of such claims. This in turn implicates how singular acts of ethical practice construct identities at the level of the inter-human, gender, race and ethnicity.

Investing the singular individual with the complex and invariably irresolvable task of deciding on choices to make (in the absence of a precedent) installs that self with the ability to execute acts which no other self can execute, thus prioritizing the subjectivity of the narrating self. Derrida's (2004) deployment of such terms as deconstruction, the undecidable, differance etc, is programmed to disrupt metanarratives of the self, nation and race. Disrupting and even interrupting these metanarratives untethers the subjective voices that appear in auto-heterobiographical narratives writing from the margins of authorial centres or imploding such centres from within. This study, by examining Derrida's essay *The Gift of death's* focus on responsibility to the alterity of the other and his concepts of the Messianic aspects of alterity seeks to prove the complicated and implicated nature of the Self and Other relations. Similar to Levinas, Derrida claims that the other precedes philosophy and 'necessarily invokes and

provokes the subject before any genuine questioning can begin (Derrida 2006: 299), and he also configures his work as ‘a positive response to an alterity which necessarily calls, summons, motivates it’ (Derrida, 1990: 118). The primacy of the other before any questioning refers to the ability of the other’s simultaneity of presence and absence to unsettle the neat positing of the subject’s self narration. This troubling absence-presence of the other, which can be seen as a simultaneous presence (bearing in mind deconstruction’s dissolution of dialectics), disrupts the self via its staging of other versions of truth, being and conceptualization. Contrary to Levinas, Derrida poses that instead of the other being infinite and absolute, the other must also be recognizable as ‘other than myself.’ This means a relationship based on the recognitions of the different being-ness must exist for the other’s otherness to be conceivable (Derrida 1990:120). This invokes the ramification that the narrating self is compelled to recognize the otherness of the other if this self is to understand the extent of its narrative’s entangledness with other narratives.

By arguing that the dissymmetry posited by Levinas, in the face to face encounter, would be impossible without some form of intersecting spaces (Derrida 1990:16). Derrida questions the absolute aspects marking the singularity of this encounter. Derrida endorses Levinas’ disparaging of the phenomenological ‘imperialism of the same’ (Levinas 50). This is the idea that the other is invariably subordinated within the horizons of the Same’s projects. This study endorses such a rejection of ontological imperialism by arguing that self narrating is only conceivable if it is undertaken in a mode that recognizes that the other must exist as other for the same’s identity or narrative to be constructed. Thus a self narrative is only possible in its relational difference to the otherness of other narratives.

In the “Gift of Death”, Derrida appropriates Soren Kierkegaard’s thoughts on the extraordinary Abrahamic sacrifice on Mount Moriah. Derrida’s discussion of the Abrahamic sacrifice shows how he endorses with tact, the invariable mode in which private ethical acts diverge from the public claims of such moral orders. This also stages the ‘incommensurability between the individual and the universal... and consequently the dual demands felt by anybody intending to behave responsibly’ (Reynolds, 1990:6). In other phrases this means auto-heterobiographical narratives expose how the self diverges from the metanarrative of the family, of morals, the nation or race as it faces its own singular encounters with realities. This study argues that the fact that selves in their singularities ultimately decide and act alone imbues their narratives as different from family or patriotic history narratives.

Derrida’s idea of the undecidable, which he deploys to unsettle a modernist or rationalistic accounting for ethical acts, means the self involved in decision making in relation to morals acts, cannot justify with certainty whether what he has decided on is right. Derrida’s discussion of Abraham’s paradoxical responsibility before the demands of God involves the latter sacrificing his only son Isaac (this constituted a betrayal of the public orders of ethics), but had he refused to sacrifice the son he would have rebelled against God. Thus Abraham’s choice and act are to be undertaken in complex situations that defy the simplistic divide between right and wrong or good and evil. This means the self’s narrative about its acts, successes and failures is ultimately narrated to the dictates of radical singular encounters rather to the general template of ethics (Derrida 2000: GD 61, 66). This Derridean notion is similar to the Levinassian appeal to the absolute other in that Abraham’s choice is radically unknowable or uncertain in its moral meaning. A figure like Abraham becomes simultaneously the most moral and the most immoral, the most responsible and the most irresponsible’ (ibid 72). This infection of moral choices with

undecidability leaves moral options open. This openness of moral options becomes especially crucial when narrating selves embark on justifying themselves or settling scores since such selves deem themselves privileged to make claims which they believe are singularly theirs.

Against Critchley (1991:4) who describes deconstruction as a 'philosophy of hesitation', I propose that deconstruction does not hesitate but deliberately and endlessly postpones announcing a thesis. This postponement parallels a narrative's incompleteness and the auto-heterobiographer's uncertainty as to identify with particular acts and memories or not. This is invariably notable when narrators attempt to distance themselves from and simultaneously attach themselves to such acts or memories.

Derrida endorses Kierkegaard's reading of Abraham's interior reserve of subjectivity which can be juxtaposed to the public code of ethics, which, however can also be entangled with this interior reserve in that Abraham's divergence from the public ethical order gives the difference or otherness to the radical singularity of his choice. Derrida adopts Kierkegaard's image of one making uncertain decisions or choices 'as a leap in the dark' (Kierkegaard 1985:250). Derrida posits that radical singularity is illustrated through the phenomena of death and the taking of a decision as no-one can die or decide in the place of me (ibid:60). Such decision making is done with the other of the other of future time and possibilities in mind. This means the self makes decisions knowing that such decisions might not accord with certain future times, however, since this decision making is 'a leap into the dark', the self is not certain of the consequence of such a decision. Therefore even a radical decision is entangled with the otherness of the temporal, spatial, human agent other. Commenting on the paradox of responsibility Derrida poses that:

request, love, command or call of the other, I know that I can respond  
only by sacrificing whatever obliges me to respond, in the same  
way, in the same instant to all of the others (ibid: 68).

This confirms what Derrida termed the 'relationless relation' (ibid:68) between singularity and the 'wholly other' (ibid:27,32). This study deploys the 'wholly other' to refer to the unanticipated happenings or events which disrupt or interrupt the self's narrative. The 'wholly other' Caputo (1997) argues, 'alters (the self narrative) instead of confirming it in its complacency' (Caputo, 1997:24).

This notion of the unknown and unknowable as already encroaching brings this exploration to Derrida's concept of the Messianic. Derrida posits that the term Messianism refers 'predominantly to the religions of the Messiahs – i.e. the Muslim Judaic and Christian religion', (Reynolds 1990:13). The prophetic templates of these religions posit a Messiah in known characteristics. In addition, this messiah is expected to arrive at a particular place and time. The dictum of this template is that the Messiah inscribed in the Koran or Christian bible gestures to an 'other' Messiah who is outside the text. An 'other' because no extra-biblical or extra-koranic Messiah will ever arrive since no Messiah in actual lived experience matches the textual messianic template.

This concept can be deployed to illustrate how the project of self narratives will never establish conformity between the author of the auto-heterobiography, the narrating 'I' of the narrative and the protagonist. The project of self narration is endless because the 'I' of the narratives relentlessly mutates and revises its past, even the pre-figuration of its future is traversed by shifting and oppositional routes. This study poses that even the reading of the auto-heterobiographical text is endless since reading involves interpreting phrases, images and symbols that themselves endlessly relay their meaning to other texts and phrases. Derrida posits this process as *differance*. *Differance* is the disruptive and interruptive undermining of the cult of identity and the imperialism of self over other. In other phrases it refers to the absence of origin or originary unit of self or text. *Differance* promises that some meaning is coming through the text but this meaning never arrives. This does not subscribe to the absolute skeptic's argument that meaning or truth is impossible because such a statement constitutes self contradiction in that for the skeptic to be believed, his argument must assume that meaning is possible. The deferring of meaning in the context of his study means to chronically destabilize ethic codes or truth claims so as to prohibit them from occluding our vision of the other meaning, other possibility and the human other.

As can be surmised, Derrida's philosophy of alterity especially in its register of responsibility, justice and forgiveness transgresses Plato and Aristotle's teleological ethics that poses that 'human purpose' is 'to do what people do best or uniquely' (Blocks and Stewart 1991:258). This study notes that such a moral teleology is open to human agents equally doing their best in evil acts. The Derridean responsibility towards the other also refuses deontological (obligation) ethics, associated with Emmanuel Kant, because Kantian ethics poses that codes of 'ethics are universal, absolute and invariable, applying to everyone in all circumstances' (ibid, 258). The

Kantian ethics neglect cognizance of the radical singularity of the self's encounter with realities. This means it assumes our human experience is Uniform and symmetrical. Just as Derrida rejects the logocentricism inherent in Plato's forms or Eidos, he rejects the Heideggerian imperialism of the Same over the other just as he refuses the universalizing and homogenizing Kantian ethics.

This study poses that though Derrida is cognizant of the intertwining and overlapping space between Self and Other, he emphasizes respect for absolute singularity as opposed to generality in ethical praxis. In this emphasis, he resembles Levinas. I argue that responsibility for the Other is not to be played out underpinned by a universal or homogenizing script; human experience is plural and varied. Derrida can be criticized for not evolving ethical propositions that exceed the theoretical phase and even in the theoretical phase; his mode of enquiry (deconstruction) refuses to submit to the formulation of any specific answer to all the troubling questions of the Same and Other relations. The criticism is broadly what is aimed at Postmodernism theories in general.

Against the context of both Levinas and Derrida's emphasis on the radical singularity of selves in experience, I pose Charles Taylor who postulates that the essential mark of mankind is his dialogical nature (Taylor, 2009). Taylor characterizes human beings with the ability to evaluate desires and to communicate with 'significant others'. He argues that dialogue and this anchorage of the communicative ethic in the significant others is what makes us human. Dialogue, he claims, is pivotal to our identity formation.

The dialogic and communicative capacity with others is, arguably, oriented to auto-heterobiography in that the narrating self writes or speaks with the audience horizon in mind. This means the self's retrieval of the past takes cognizance of the likely response of the reader of

the auto – heterobiography. The self narrator has to censor himself and this involves discarding of certain memories and simultaneously the inclusion of others.

Taylor's adoption of Mead's 'significant others' illustrates his argument that self-identity is constructed in relation to others. Here others refer to the child minder, the mother or father of the child. Taylor posits that the Enlightenment movement destabilized the relationship between self and other by introducing the idea of authenticity and private morality. Taylor does not mark this emergence as negative but problematic. He posits that the emergence of the private self and its private morality did not diminish the public sphere. In fact, he states, it becomes imperative for selves to construct a public space in which authenticity, a mark of identity, could be staged. Taylor deploys the word authenticity to mean the ideal of self narration set by the self; the ideal underpinned by an ethical orientation.

The terms private space and private morality are juxtaposed to public space to show that the order of identity formation should create equilibrium between the self and other. Thus it is surmisable that Taylor differs from both Levinas and Derrida by emphasizing equilibrium between self and other. His refusal of the Levinassian and Derridean asymmetricality in self-other relations is confirmed when he writes 'this crucial feature [dialogue] of the human condition [.....] has been rendered almost invisible by the overwhelmingly monological bent of mainstream modern philosophy' (ibid: 68). Taylor further argues: 'We might speak of an individualized identity, one that is particular to me, and that I discover myself. This notion arises along with an ideal, that of being' (Taylor: 1994:40) In this context subjectivity itself becomes the source of morality. Identity as authenticity, Taylor notes, invests in the self a sense of

autonomy, thus the self can proclaim ‘... The way is a certain way of being human that is my way. I am called upon to live my life in this way, and not in imitation of anyone else’s life (ibid: 68). Taylor’s concepts of the interplay between private moralities and public spheres provokes a questioning, as an extension of explorations on self-other relations, of the interplay between the local and the global. An exploration of Cosmopolitanism, especially developed by Kwame Antony Appiah makes an illuminating and complicating entry at this point as it stages the relation between self and other through the idea of hospitality, obligation and identity.

#### **Cosmopolitanism: auto-heterobiographical implications for the local and global.**

In the context of exploring the relations between Self and Other, it becomes imperative to extent the discussion to the global scale. Here the interplay between local and global will inscribe into autobiographical narratives a heeding of the distant, the stranger other as other in terms of culture, religion and life – style but as inhabiting the human category as the narrating self. To explore the self and global other interplay I begin by analyzing Kwame Antony Appiah’s philosophy on Cosmopolitanism, especially as delineated in his book *Cosmopolitan: ethics in a world of strangers*.

Appiah begins by configuring ancestral and tribal past in which small bands of tribes interacted. Appiah poses that the social terrain here is familiar; its signposts embedded in customs and traditions. The other was familiar to the self and tribal obligations were shared between self and other. The self’s narrative then, this study poses, was localized and imaginations of the unknown and geographically distant other were constructed via myths. Appiah contrasts this tribal past to

the present world characterized by migration, international trade, tourism and the worldwide web of information coming from radios, television and predominantly the internet. Appiah argues that this mass media and overarching cyberspace open space for opportunities ‘not only that we can affect the lives of others everywhere but that we can learn about life everywhere too’ (pxiii). This implies that the impinging of the self on the other must constitute a reciprocal exchange or interconnectedness of worldviews. This proposal by Appiah – for symmetry and reciprocity departs from Levinas` insistence on the non – reciprocal and asymmetrical relations between self and other. It can also be contrasted with Derrida`s emphasis that both symmetry and asymmetry must be allowed play in the self and Other Relations. This study argues for the simultaneity of symmetry and asymmetry, thus aligning with the Derridean concepts. Arguably, an auto-heterobiography by a de-rooted and de-routed self, one who can step into the place of the other with ease, will be characterized by refusal of a monolithic culture, national boundaries and parochial religions.

Appiah`s project as it comes through his text is a seeking for concessions, common ideas and the recognition by the self of the other as equally human. He proposes to ‘equip (minds) with ideas and institutions that will allow us to live together as the global tribe we have become’ (ibid: pxiii). He further poses that ‘...we have obligations to others, obligations that stretch beyond those to whom we are related by the ties of kith and kin, or even the more formal ties of shared citizenship (ibid: pxv). This means that the self becomes unbounded from national borders and culture; this also implies a putting into question of national historiographies and religious fundamentalism. Appiah argues that it is an obligation to understand the other with whom we share this planet. However, he stresses that ‘whatever our obligations are to others [...] they

often have the freedom to go their own way' (ibid: pxv). This study argues that the self does not practically owe any obligation to abstract entities like the nation and family, rather the self ought to show obligation to the other (whatever he is) when this other enters into the space of the self.

Appiah's emphasis of the need of the embodiment of 'universal concern' and respect for legitimate difference' creates the challenge (which he is aware of) of conflict of interest. It can also be understood in the Derridean paradox of the impossibility of hospitality. This study claims that this challenge of the tension between outside and inside, the difficult of ascertaining how much of the interior reserve of the self is affected by external influences suggests that auto-heterobiography becomes a textual web of ambiguity, ambivalence, irony and ceaseless becoming.

This study argues that balancing the interest of the local and global, self and other, summons us again and again to the Derridean recognition that a singular moment of the self's availing of obligation to one of the others is simultaneously a breaching of the principle undergirding that obligation as my focus on one of the others means I betray the interest of the many others. Appiah's key practice in cosmopolitanism is conversation. He deploys this term to describe symmetrical and reciprocal acts of recognition, obligation and respect between self and other. This seems similar to Taylor's deployment of dialogue, but Taylor seems to stress the significance of the interplay between private morality and the public sphere.

This study argues, however, that auto – heterobiography, appropriates the form of conversation between the past- others and present-others, of the self by reconfiguring this form to fit into the

scheme of the self. It refuses conversation as praxis of symmetry and reciprocity. This becomes evident when one understands auto – heterobiography as the intention of a self justified in its triumphs and moments of defeat. It is largely the project of inventing selves that seek to recruit the reader to its causes.

At this point Derrida's paradox and antinomy marking the cosmopolitan ideal are important to illuminate the ambiguity and ambivalence inherent in cosmopolitan praxis. This ambiguity and ambivalence translates to the self's complicated task of negotiating its positionality between its interior reserve and the space and unavoidable influence of the other. In his lectures, 'Foreign question' and 'step of hospitality / no hospitality', Derrida explores the definitions and practices of hospitality via the unsettling image of the foreigner. The reaches of his approaches re-cast hospitality as an ethical problem revolving on 'one's dwelling place, one's identity, one's space and one's limits' (Derrida, 1990 149). Let me emphasize here that hospitality as concept and praxis can be deployed to illustrate how the self's narrative dwells on the auto – hetero biography as it simultaneously positions others, who, because they are entangled with the self, are unavoidable. Their positions in the self's auto – heterobiography is that of guests. But as guests who hold the keys to the self's memories or the past, they may take the self hostage as they assume mastership of the narrative. This can be illustrated in Nkomo's story which seems to be supplanted by Robert Mugabe's story.

In Derrida's scheme, the foreigner offers a face that contests the host's certainties about cultural relativity and subjectivity. In this assertion Derrida confirms Levinas' argument that the face of

the other is a question that inaugurates discourse. However, Derrida's notion seems to ignore Levinas' emphasis that this vexing questioning constitutes positive violence; the rapture of limiting myths, ideals, ideologies etc., while opening the self to self – extending views. I argue, in this study, that self narratives, despite their pretence to re-member this lived experience of the self, fail to reconfigure any core of the self because such a core is non-existent. The fact that other voices speak as variants crossing the self's narrative show the fissuredness rather than coherence. Therefore auto-heterobiographies presume the simultaneous absence and presence of the self in the narrative text.

Derrida, in the context of cosmopolitan identity, posits the paradox of the impossibility of hospitality. He says absolute/unconditional hospitality (utopian) is all inclusive; no geographical, moral, self-identity borders are erected; now because there is no exclusion there is in turn no foreigner and thus no possibility of hospitality. But conditioned hospitality which exteriorizes via demand of visa, passport asymmetrical access to civil rights between citizen and foreigner is also impossible because it refuses symmetry, in access to civil rights, between the citizen and foreigner.

This study poses that the figure of foreigner as Other supplants the self / host simultaneously as it supplicates to the other. I submit that Derrida's paradox can be deployed to elucidate the fact that selves are assemblages of interior and exterior narratives that have intersected in such a complicated way that it's impossible to mark which one belongs outside or inside the self. The posing of identity or self narratives as vexing our query as to the borders or beginning or ending of a self narrative is best apprehended through Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's concept of

Rhizome philosophy. Deleuze calls it 'an image of thought' (Deleuze 1990:40) premised on the botanical rhizomes, it apprehends reality and identities as multiplicities. It allows multiple, non – hierarchical entry and exit points in representation and interpretation(heterachy).Rhizome philosophy posits the significance of the simultaneity of hierarchy and heterachy but leans more on heterachy than hierarchy because the former disallows any privileging of monolithic praxis. The implication of this to this study is that in the dismantling of hierarchies, the prioritizing project of the self is reduced to random play and the arbitrary entry and exit points means the self in auto – heterobiography, cannot with certainty, know when and how a mutation happened in its narrative. In fact, the fact that the self is accounting for its lived experience is itself a confirmation that its existence and identity are invariably put into question by the self and others. Thus the term that figure in Deleuze and Gaultari project of identity is hybridization. This is denoted in their use of the 'Orchid and the Wasp' (Deleuze and Gaultari: 2004:40), a biological concept of mutualism in which the interactive act between two different species forms a multiplicity: a unity that is multiple in itself.

A philosophy that poses identities as hybrid or a unit that is multiple in itself will refuse Plato`s essence of forms (Eidos) and the monolithic ontology implied in Heideggerian phenomenology. Hybridized knowledge systems, in identities and relational schemes defy primal authenticity even as implied by Heidegger in marking Dasein`s acts as authentic in actualizing possibilities in the horizon of death, or Dasein 'coming into his own' in defiance of the thrownness of his existence.

The concept of hybrid and rhizome, applied to history, truth and narratives compel a reconfiguration of modes of epistemes in that first, multiple perspectives on these ideas are deployed, second (according to the Rhizomatic random entry and exit of ideas, identities in

knowledge systems or narratives), no chronology, linearity or primal site of identities is allowed. Deleuze and Gattari posit that the rhizome is characterized by ‘ceaselessly established connections between semiotic chains, organizations’ of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles’ (Deleuze and Gattari, 2000:100)

Another crucial feature of the Rhizome philosophy is its posing of history and culture in cartographic and multiple assemblages imaging which refuses any specific origin or genesis. A rhizome ‘has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, and intermezzo’ (ibid: 201). While this may resonate with the Heraclitean notion of endless becoming, Rhizome philosophy does not concur with identity formations that begin in dialectics like being and non – being, neither does it accede to the synthesizing of these dialectics.

Rhizomatic epistemes, narratives and identities assume a planar configuration that disrupts chronology and organization by posing a nomadic system of evolution and propagation. In addition to the notion of hybridization, the media res (in the middle emergence) and cartographic imaging of reality Deleuze and Gattari posit the principle of rupture which poses that meaning or asignifying systems may be broken to be replaced or to resume at an unspecified time.

This study takes Deleuze and Gattari’s philosophy as defying epistemes that seek to ossify identities and narratives into same fixed grand authorizing Centre. I argue that the Rhizome philosophy suggests that even the ethical constitutions by both Levinas and Derrida are put into question as norms and values, at the Centre of ethics, are denied beginning and destination. True Deleuze’s deployment of the ‘actual’ and ‘virtual’ may remind one of Levinas’ ‘embodied’ self and the transcendental Other, but Deleuze emphasizes that identities do not owe loyalty to the ‘one’ ( reference to the Absolute other).

Rhizome philosophy implies that it is difficult even for the self to locate the source of itself and the author of the auto-heterobiography. This is because, as noted earlier, the self is a multiple phenomenon, different from the unicity of self implied by both Plato and Levinas. I argue that the Rhizome imaging of reality can be deployed to explain the postmodern idea of identity as a process of morphing. The rhizomatic principles of rupture and resumption, random entry and exit apply here. Gergen (1999) has argued that in the assemblage of communicative technology, the radical curtailing of certainty, truth and the refusal by the postmodernist age to allow monolithic cultural impositions, the self evolves into something every moment; this capacity to form multiple evolutions is morphing. Morphing is best understood via another of Deleuze and Guattari's terms; deterritorialization, which refers to the 'fluid and dissipated nature of human subjectivity in contemporary capitalist cultures' (ibid: 230). This frames identity in the postmodern age as schizophrenic in the multiple encounters between selves and the play of mediatization, migration and commodification that mark the modern and postmodern ages. These postulations also figure in Antony Giddens' analysis of globalization and Arjun Appadurai's analysis of modernist cultures.

This section of my review has been engaged in exploring the concept of the self, ontology, identity and narratives in the context of auto – heterobiography as these concepts appear in different multiple philosophies. The section also deployed a comparative and contrastive study of these philosophies in an attempt to locate historical context and philosophical implications in the study of auto – heterobiography. The next section explores the theory of narrativity that both compliments and complicates these philosophies.

## **The Theory of Narrativity**

Onega and Landa (2000) provide an illuminating point in the study of narrativity. They posit that narrative is mediated enunciation. This means auto – heterobiographies, premised on remembering the past imply experiences retrieved via memory and language. Mediation inscribes in the mediated a dislocation in temporal and spatial setting between the time and place of the occurrence of an experience and the time and place of narration. The lapse in time, this study poses, erases truth in the narrator`s claims to truth.

Onega and Landa further state that:

A narrative is the semiotic representation of a series of events meaningfully connected in a temporal and causal way.... Any representation involves a point of view, a selection, a perspective on the represented object, criteria of relevance, and arguably, an implicit theory of reality (2000:3)

This study poses that the privileging of a particular point of view, perspective and selectivity above other criteria of worlding is the domain of politics. The self engages a mode of narration that will ultimately, as the telos of narration suggests, represent itself as ‘entrenched’ (Brunner, 1991) in the culture of its people and as one oriented to the accepted morality of its context, as Charles Taylor(1986) argues.

This study notes that in the practice of narrativity, the self is both subject and object. Subject in the sense that it engages consciously and deliberately in the act of retrieving, discarding and

prioritizing of memories. It is object in that it deliberately sets a distance between the subject narrating and the past selves being narrated, hence, these selves being re – presented by the subject self are defined as ‘objects’ by Onega and Landa.

The ‘semiotic representation’ posed by Onega and Landa figure the mediation of narrative as disseminated through signs, symbols etc. This study is oriented towards a postmodern interpretation of signs and symbols as unfixable to any signified and meaning as fluid, multiple and refusing a primal site of meaning. ‘An implicit theory of reality’ suggests a representation of modes of existence, ontological meanings and forms of praxis premised on such theories. My argument will be based on philosophical modes of representing realities and identities.

Onega and Landa argue that truth, realities and worlding is not pre- narrative but rather; ‘narrativization is one commonest way of applying an order and a perspective to experience’ (Ibid. 4). my submission is that implicated in the ordering of experience is arbitrariness of the act, which, later on in turn, provokes the imperative for the self to chronically re-vision its worlds and selves. This implication also informs our contempt towards grand posturing of nation, ontology, or any other totalizing discourses in their projects to impose identities and positionalities on the self / subject.

An extended exploration of Onega and Landa is necessary to prove that this study marks no difference in the re – presentational act between story telling in novels and self narration in auto – heterobiography. They postulate that:

A story is a fabula which has been given a representational shape: a specific point of view and temporal scheme have been introduced. We could say that a story is a fabula as it is presented in a text – not the fabula as such (2000:8)

Fabula, Onega and Landa posit is equivalent to the raw material of a story and sjuzet refers to the deliberate or discursive organization or reorganization of the raw material into a story. Here I posit that one writer's story can be another's raw material; appropriated as foil or as the site marking difference in ethical or political orientations. The process of narrativity is relentlessly incomplete; marked with hiatus in memory and aporia, ambivalence and ambiguity, it always persists in calling for modifications and remodifications in terms of meaning of events in time and space. Onega and Landa capture this when they write:

The story... may be ideally defined as the result of series of modifications to which action is subjected. These modifications can be relative to time or to information selection and distribution (ibid: 8)

This study asserts that the ceaselessly shifting of modes of perspectives on the re-membered action or event disallow the presence of what might be referred to as the core of the self or an ontology marked by a unified essence. This refusal of essentialized ontologies resonates with Levinas, Derrida and Deleuze and Guattari's philosophies. By positing that 'A narrative text is also an instance of discourse', (ibid: 8), Onega and Landa pose narratives as sites where epistememes contest one another, vying for privilege. I subscribe to the idea that narrative texts are discourses and I further emphasize that the contest among vying worldviews, perspectives or worlding disallow a fixed hierarchy; I submit that hierarchies emerge but they are soon collapsed: this study confirms the simultaneity of hierarchy and heterarchy.

## **Narrative, Identity and History**

To extend exploration of narrative theory especially in the mode in which they are marked by simultaneity, ambivalence and ambiguity, I turn to Paul Ricoeur's philosophy on narrative identity. He posits that narratives contain the simultaneity of harmony and dissonances. This means a narrative orders an otherwise chaotic reality of the past or present so that the imposed order, aligning itself with the time and space of the present self, constructs 'discordant concordance' or 'concordant discordance' (Ricoeur 1984: pp4,21,69-73). This means narrative coherence is simultaneously present with the disrupting hiatus and incompleteness of narration inherent in the text.

Narratives, Ricoeur poses, are both lived and told. This means narrative configurations mediate between the world of action and the world of the reader (Ricoeur 1984; 40). This study submits that the lived experience of the self is understood via the self narrating its experience. But the fact that narrative has to mediate the lived experience exposes that lived experiences are never known in totality. This is because experiences refuse analysis in their moment of actual play since the self's consciousness is submerged in these moments and therefore lacks a panoptic view of the unfolding. Ricoeur poses that:

Self-understanding is an interpretation; the self in turn, finds in the narrative, among other signs and symbols, a privileged form of mediation, the latter borrows from history as well as from fiction, making a life story a fictional history or ... a historical fiction interweaving the historiographical style of biographies with the novelistic style of autobiographies (Ricoeur, 1992: 14)

This means narratives, and in this study's context, auto-heterobiographical narratives are marked by the simultaneity of fact and fiction. It further proves that even historiographical narratives mobilized in the project of nation making are themselves not the purely truthful narratives or truth they pretend to be. In this form auto – heterobiographies construct fictions to mask the gaps caused by temporal lapses and shifting of self agendas.

Ricoeur extends his discussion of history and narrative identity by positing that narrative identity mediates between two poles of self – identity or 'ipse – identity'. These poles are 'self without support from sameness' ('pure ipse') and 'self hood as supported by sameness' (ipse supported by idem') The first pole is marked by self – referential loyalty and the second with character. This means narratives make the self make sense of its supposed ideal self/state as reviewed in the context of the lived experience in which the 'pure ipse' is contaminated by its compromised acts in its existence. Thus Ricoeur calls narrative identity:

An intervention... in the conceptual constitution of personal identity in the manner of a specific mediator between the poles of character... and the pole of self - maintenance where selfhood frees itself from sameness' (Ricoeur 1992, 119)

This means there is both an affirmation of the Cartesian Cogito and a rejection of that Cogito. Here Ricoeur adopts what he terms the Nietzschean philosophy of 'the shattered Cogito' (Ricoeur 1992, 1 – 25). Narrative identity, this study confirms, constructs coherence between these seemingly opposed poles of the self. Ricoeur argues that in narrative identity, the person is simultaneously interpreter and the interpreted as well as the recipient of the interpretations. The self becomes '... both reader and the writer of its own life' (ibid 246).

Ricoueur's philosophy is constructed in relation to ethics and morality. In his scheme of ethics the teleological (means to an end) and deontological (obligation) moral acts are complementary, not incompatible. This means he simultaneously affirms Kantian ethics of duty and opposes its homogenizing of experience. Ricoueur's narrative identity theory is premised on the capability of the self as related to action and imputation. This implies that the self as agent can initiate some new or different performativity as unique; this action is imputable to the self as their own freely chosen deed. Imputability endows an event with the status of action and the human agent's durable identity is enhanced (ibid: 100). Ricoueur's ethics aims at a 'good life with and for others in just institutions' (Oneself as Another, 262). This marks his ethical concern with (ipse – identity) and the Other marked by ipse and idem. Furthermore, the self's acts are performed in relation to Another, a different embodiment.

Ricoueur's contribution to this study has focused on both history and narrative identity. It is pertinent however, to extend the history and narrative relation by reviewing Hayden White' (1982) views. In the context of historical narrativity and selectivity, White argues 'every narrative, however, seemingly 'full' is constructed on the basis of a set of events that might have been included but were left out' (1982: 10). This implies that in the project of the self's auto – heterobiography, certain acts, events or memories are privileged or excluded depending on the priorities of the self. For instance, certain shame marked moments may be deliberately excluded to image the self as untainted or these moments may be restaged in the narrative as a mode of therapy, even to excuse the self as the self is imaged as victim and not the villain.

Selectivity, it can be argued, is also shaped by the mnemonic hiatus; vagaries of the human act of re – membering. Furthermore, political narratives' selectivity deliberately erases certain acts or elides them with fictive narrativization; thus empowering the negotiating positionality of the speaker or writer of the narrative. White's linking of historical narratives with a moral telos upheld by the Self is oriented to this study's exploration of auto-heterobiographical narratives as confirmation of ethical acts; acts done by the self in relation to the Other.

White's study on historical narratives when adopted to auto-heterobiography is pertinent as his deconstructive methods unmask historical narratives' pretense to objectivity, thus exposing that historical discourse, like auto – heterobiographies, must not be privileged over annals, journals and diaries. Citing Tocqueville, Burckhardt and Huizinga's refusal of narrative in their historical work, White proves the falsehood that archival records can speak their own truth. White's standpoint, compatible with postmodernist and postcolonial theories, figures lived experience as raw material for narratives, thus narrative is an act in which the self understands itself, its values, failures and successes. By presenting historical narratives as interpolated by fictive acts of narration, White emphasizes that history postures its content in an ambiguous and ambivalent mode since what it presents is not wholly subjective or objective. Neither can one claim history as wholly fiction or falsehood. Narratives, this study underscores, are a simultaneous presence of the absent and present.

The ambiguity and ambivalence that destabilizes historical narrativization is synonymous with the one marking auto-heterobiographical narratives. To narrate the lived experience means to simultaneously disfigure and encapsulate the experience in time and space, thus preserving it not as it was but as imagined. White for instance poses:

‘Historical narration without analysis (interpretations) is trivial, historical analysis without narration is incomplete’. The end of this narrativization, White poses, is the ‘desire to have real events display the coherence, integrity, fullness and closure of the image of life that is and can only be imaginary (ibid, 284).

The fact that the auto – heterobiography images life as imaginary is traced to the ambivalence and ambiguity that marks human existence. This has been located and explored, in this study, in the philosophies of Heraclitus, Plato, Heidegger, Levinas, Derrida and Deleuze and Guattari. Historiographical narratives are invariably linked to the subject and the concept of nation. It is in relation to the concepts of family, nation and the global social and political terrain that the auto - heterobiography figures the self’s relation to the Other at the site of race gender, nationhood and ethnicity. A discussion of the concept of nation, therefore, becomes imperative.

#### **Nation: The ambivalence of troubled identities**

The concept of nation is traceable to modernity’s project of deposing the old order of authority (tradition, the clergy, monarchy) substituting this for governments elected on the basis of democracy, recognizing the subject’s self sovereignty, liberty and equality before the laws: the great exemplars of nation formation in the modern sense being France and the United States of America. This means the emergence of the self in its reflexivity is synonymous with that of the nation.

This study argues that there is an ambivalence that marks such a synonymous emergence; modernity promised liberation and sovereignty but these did not fully extend to the subjectivities (selves) in colonized countries and the selves in the post colonies suppressed at the level of race,

tribe and gender. Homi Bhabha (1990) questions the 'nation's claim to political rationality', because of the ambivalence of nation formation, which in its imaginary shaping of borders and policies, disfigures the self by compelling it to submit to the arbitrary formulations of laws and modes of national identity. Bhabha posits that the ideological ambivalence of nation making is evident in that the historical necessity of the idea of the nation conflicts with the contingent and arbitrary signs and symbols' assembled deliberately to 'signify the effective life of the national culture' (ibid, 176) This study poses that the enterprise of nation making is premised on Othering, on ordering alterities to the dictates of this imaginary activity.

To better understand the arbitrariness of nation formation, let me turn to Gellner (1988) who posits:

Nationalism is not what it seems, and above all not what it seems to itself.... The cultural shreds and patches used by nationalism are often arbitrary historical inventions. Any old shred would have served as well. But in no way does it follow that the principle of nationalism is itself in the least contingent an accident (Gellner, 1986:56)

Patching up the nation means there is no original example of what a nation ought to be. Just as this study has refused narratives that present primal ontologies so the nation's claim to some origin is discredited. Deploying the Deleuze – Guattari rhizomatic mode of epistemic or historiographical mapping, this study marks nation- making with both the fictive and factual acts that characterize auto – heterobiographical self propping and positioning. This study explores the self as subalternized in the colony and the post colony. It questions the self's Other, the subject who speaks in the tones of the Metropole. Here Edward Said's concept of Orientalism becomes

both illuminating and complicating. I will appropriate only two of Said's strands of Orientalisms or Othering. 'Orientalism is a style of thought based upon ontological and epistemological distinction mode between 'the Orient and [...] the Occident' and:

Taking the late eighteenth century as a very roughly defined starting point Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, in short, Orientation as a Western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient (Said, 1990:105).

Said's ideas become crucial to the study of auto –heterobiography if one considers this study posing this question; Does the self in the colony, post colony, the other race or the third world write its lived experiences on a script designed by the Other self in the Metropole? Do selves in the space labeled third world accept that their narratives need to be censored or authorized by the other?

My argument is that the Other in the nation of the Metropole constructs narratives about itself and the other pretending that such narratives are truthful as they correspondent to its realities. But the other does not docilely accept being written into existence by the Same. Said, for instance says 'We must take seriously Vico's great observation that men make their own history, that what they can know', it is clear, 'is what they have made' (Said 1990:40)

This study takes it seriously that the self knows that the other attempts narratives about itself and Others. These narratives are contestable as figured by Fanon in *The Wretched of the earth* (1968). He argues that the 'colonial', the African, will 'delve' into his past to retrieve myths, songs and artifacts that prove that he has always existed as autonomous from the authorizing tendencies of the 'colonizer' (Fanon, 1968: 40). However, to expose the arbitrariness of this national identity construction Fanon states that the splendor of a 'Songhai civilization' will not erase the reality that Africans are starving at the present moment.

In "Pitfalls of national consciousness", Fanon images the nation as post colony marked by internal Othering at the site of class, gender and ethnicity. He argues that the post colony is still subordinated to the Other of the Metropole because the leaders in the post colony seem to derive their modes, life style and epicurean delights from models set in the west. This study, however, underscores the fact that subjects in a country can stage a contest against the hegemony of their corrupt leaders, thus setting a disjuncture between Achille Mbembe's imaging of African identities trapped in the Homo Ludens role and African identities as morphing according to time, space and historical context.

This study, drawing on Bhabha, Chatterjee and Anderson, concurs with Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger that nations are invented synonymously with the appropriation of 'symbols and devices [...] such as the national anthem... the national flag... or the personification of 'the nation in symbol or image' Hobsbawm (1983:7)

My explorations and analysis of the nation's appropriation of these symbols and images poses that this appropriation is political: the nation intends to position and structure its narrative to image itself and the Other beyond the arbitrary national boundaries. This exploration engages, inescapably, as noted in the section in which I discuss Cosmopolitanism, the ambivalence that inheres in the state of the self as belonging to nation and simultaneously rupturing ties to this nation as it makes interacting gestures with the plurality and heterogenizing habit of Cosmopolitanism. This study poses the 'nation' as an arbitrary assemblage of disparate, ethnicities, races, gender and transgender identities. I submit that this arbitrary assemblage is a form of hybridization of the concept of nation which disallows the total ascendancy of the monolithic discourses of nationalist historiographies.

## **Conclusion**

This literature review, largely premising its explorations of identity, alterity and narrative issues on philosophical frames of reference, has demonstrated that identities and narratives on truth are fissured. Reviewing literature on auto-heterobiography has traced and configured the emergence of personhood or the self and demonstrated that such a self provided a site for auto-heterobiography. The review has posed that personhood is to be viewed as a multiplicity of selves configuring a storied life. It has set space for the exploration and interrogation of the concepts of cosmopolitanism, hybridity and has proved that identity and ontology as concepts operate under erasure

### **Chapter delineation**

Chapter one of this study is the introduction, which defines, autobiography, auto-heterobiography, alterity and simultaneity. It also figures the statement of the problem and justifies the theory on which the study is premised and the literary texts deployed. It also offers a detailed literature review, largely of philosophical texts which inform on issues raised in the literary texts.

Chapter two entitled “Narratives of trauma and transcendence: Paradox and ambiguity in lived experience”: The ambivalence of responsibility for the Other, focuses on the complicated and ambivalent issues raised in family narratives of trauma and HIV Infection and gender violence in Shaba’ *Secretes of a woman’s soul*. It examines decision making as marked by an ‘otherness’ that defies convention but is paradoxically not disapprovable.

Chapter three entitled “Political discourses: Inventing the self and nation” focuses on Godwin’s *Mukiwa: A white boy in Africa* and Mandela’s *Long walk to freedom* to explore issues of how the self narrates itself in relation to nation making. It examines the mutability of the writer’s selves in a complicated web of responsibility for nation, self and family.

Chapter four entitled “Cosmopolitani spaces: Hybrid identities and questions of hospitality”, explores the ambivalence of belonging at the level of nation in Godwin’s *Mukiwa* and at global level in Obama’s *Dreams from my father*. This ambivalence of belonging is explored in relation to race as a binaristic frame in *Mukiwa* (black and white) and as mixed, defying category in Obama’s text. *Mukiwa*’s text shall also be analyzed with reference to the other being of the supernatural/paranormal e.g. witchcraft and the tokoloshi in the context of identity explorations.

Obama`s text raises issues of family history as multi-voiced and belonging as refusing containment in one nation, race and family, thus gesturing to an analysis of the ethics of cosmopolitanism.

Chapter five is the Conclusion and bibliography. It shall summarize the key analysis on texts and the issues of identity, belonging, and the ethical issue of responsibility for the other, nation and history. It shall also offer the recommendations for issues for further study and the implication of this study for world-dominating issues like Truth and reconciliation agendas.

## **Narrative of trauma and transcendence: Paradox and ambiguity in lived experience**

### **Introduction**

This chapter interrogates narratives that claim the possibility and viability of a stable and coherent Self. I shall demonstrate, through an extensive analysis of Lutanga Shaba`s text, the paradox of the impossible possibility of narrating stable unified selves via aporetic narratives.

Shaba's text, I pose, depicts alterity as the difference of the other individual, possibility or meaning that enables the self to transcend itself. Through postmodernist tools of analysis I shall pose self-narratives as `monsters`. This means the postmodern view of narratives is that they defy and shock any stereotypical methodology, tradition or habit of storytelling. A monster always inhabits the outside of the perimeter of tradition, the norm or the sane. A postmodern stance on narratives announces their non-linearity in terms of temporality and placing of events and memories. This is opposed to the traditional view of a story as a linear and complete whole which is characterized by a plot, a unity which is, just like an embroidered quilt,- spatially and temporally structured (Bruner, 1986, 2002; Connelly and Clandinin, 1986,1990; Polkinghorne, 1995, Ricocur,1983,1990). Semjin et al (2012) also posit, following Caruthers, Collins, and Lukes, 1985; Foucault, 1975, 1988; Geertz, 1973; Schnee Bourne, 1969; Shorter, 1977, that `the way people view themselves and tell about themselves is not universal and that the traditional story characteristics ... are no more than effects of discourse'' (ibid: 4). This means stories are constructs that emerge within certain subcultures and in differently placed subjectivities. Although the postmodern view of a story refuses a clear definition (caused by aporia and lack of boundaries) `we do find several characteristics in postmodern narrative theory (see Currie, 1998: Gibson, 2004: Herman and Vervaeak, 2005) that are considered `typical` for postmodern stories (ibid 5).

It is necessary here to quote at length Semjin et al's (2012) compilation of these characteristics as these mark Shaba's text:

-No synthesis of heterogeneity (the story elements are not synthesized around a plot.)

-No hierarchy but rather narrative laterality (a story is a compilation of horizontal story elements).

-Acceptance of the `monster` (of the entirety of elements that do not fit in a traditional story structure). Monstrous time (nonlinearly organized time: e.g., story elements that are different to date or that conflict with the separation among past-present-future).

-Monstrous causality (a lack of clear, linear cause and effect relationships).

-Monstrous space (space that is constantly in motion and lacks a fixed central point).

The postmodern view of self story-telling, as can be surmised, juxtaposes disjunctive elements, temporal discontinuities and selves that refuse to cohere as they defy reference to a stable, originary core. The dismissal of an originary centre of meaning reference in postmodern theory does not forbid announcing the presence of meaning: meaning appears in assemblages of signifiers, images and metaphors made to coincide in temporary temporal-spatio passages. What is forbidden in postmodern philosophy is a stable authorial centre of meaning. In Shaba's text contingency questions life as script or as imposed by cosmic design. Trauma, the dream, death and ngozi (tragedy) refuse containment within rationalist or modernist modes of narration as their excess emotive or irrational play gesture to an alterity, a difference in identity which crosses the borders of language. Shaba's text is therefore, as Shakespeare's Macbeth poses tales, madness in the sense of not fitting in the canon of the rational.

**Unstable storied selves: The paradox of impossible possible aporetic narratives**

The aporia, indeterminacy, ambiguity, incompleteness that mark self-narratives is at play in Shaba's text in which modernist or structuralist modes of narration are simultaneously posed and dismissed as the narrator confesses self-inadequacy, uncertainty or outright ignorance about certain aspects of the human condition in general and her lived experience in particular. Here let me refer to the first paragraph of chapter one: "Opening doors":

Who can say when lightning is going to strike, where it will strike?  
and why it will do so? Who can say when a soul will cry `enough`  
and demand respite? For the greater part only time can, and the  
soul's inert need for survival, for resurrection from whatever depths  
it may be buried under (2005:1).

The unpredictability of lightning is metaphor for the existence of certain phenomena and experience beyond the orbit of the self's control. By extension it also refers to the insufficiency of the modernist privileging of technologies of mechanics and discourse. For this study it is the later. The alterity of phenomena and experience that refuses containment in discourse is a pronouncement of heterogeneity. As is proved in Shaba's text, bio-medicine's claim to hold answers to disease is mocked by alternatives eluding its discourse; Ayesha's therapy session dismisses such discourse, though via ambiguous moves. Lightning's site and time of eruption into being and its exit out of the sensible world refers to the unpredictability of most things even in quotidian runs of life; the self, to refer to both deconstruction and rhizome philosophy, cannot trace its emergence and experiences to any originary point : spatially and temporally. The refusal of such an originary point is phrased when the narrator figures Linga as unable to tell a complete or significant story about the incest she experienced in her early childhood. The fact that her

memory reduces her assailant to "a chest" and a face in the dim room, a face "turned away"(p .90), proves the impossibility of a complete or sufficient memory. If memory is marked by hiatus it is impossible to site an origin since memory attempts the siting. In Shaba's text the images of the dark room and the "face" turned away emphasize the refusal of naming and this transposes to pointing to a signpost on which the sign has not been written. An ordinary site is disallowed especially, in the thought of Heraclitus (fragment 60d) and Freud (1996:78) who pose birth as traumatic. Trauma creates gaps in experience and memory and these gaps ceaselessly demand the traumatic episode to be accounted for (Blackwell, 1993:65). But since the assumed victim of trauma psychically blocks out the details of the traumatic act, as Linga blocks out the incestuous act within its actual happening, the trauma cannot be unknotted: memory cannot retrieve it. Birth as trauma cancels claims to the autobiographical project that the self is knowable. Shaba's text is autobiographical in that it attempts a retrospective re-membering of Linga's past, to order disjunctive events or episodes into a coherent story. The narrative refers to and describes Linga's childhood, days of innocence, schooldays, the sexual encounter and marriage. In an ambiguous mode it attempts to condemn others for instance, the Councillor, for Linga's decisions, choices and subsequent trouble, while justifying, excusing or exonerating both Linga and Beata. In configuring Linga and Beata's selves as multiple, and meshed lives via the shared metaphor of disease, dream, mourning, love and Linga's role as Beata's amanuensis (writing for, about Beata), the text becomes auto-heterobiography

Postmodernist configuration of the self as multi-storied is an alternative to the Modernist idea of the self as unified, coherent and a site of rationalization. This notion of the self as complete and self sufficient is sited in Descartes' `cogito ego sum` and ` Rousseau's argument that the self is

sufficient to itself; to formulate world views and live life radically. The dream, trauma and ngozi in Shaba's text refuse rational telling because human language, a cognitive tool, cannot contain the excess of emotive and singular experience marking such phenomena. The idea of a `true self` is connected to the structuralist understandings of life which implies that beneath the surface of action and experience there is a core set of structures that drive our sense of self` (Walther and Carey, 2000:1)

Michael Foucault(1990), in his critique of modernist epistemes, suggested that structuralist theories have formulated identity as a set of normalizing `truths` empowered to dictate the trajectories of quotidian lives and relationships. Foucault has argued extensively that these normalizing truths or dominant discourses that assume the role of shaping lives and experiences are reproduced and sustained in all aspects of the lived condition as in health, education, prison and therapy. In the autobiography masculine hegemony, biomedicine and the state connive to construct a hegemonic script and attempt to disarticulate Linga and Beata's subjectivities via psycho-somatic reordering of their lives: the Social Welfare department's concluding that Beata and Linga's economic status as stable and good is premised on the healthy and impressive flowers and hedge around their house. This means Linga and Beata, who deserved State help, were disarticulated in terms of identity and Rights by the Social welfare personnel whose files of the poor did not permit the poor to groom a hedge and flowers. The narrator`s (Shaba`s text) claim that a mind or `soul` can resurrect from layers of burials is captured within modernist/ structuralist discourses that define self as a unified core that can be discovered through psychotherapy or experience assumed to figure self-sufficiency.

In its bid to pin down a coherent self, a stable self marked by a seamless narrative, Lutanga Shaba's auto-heterobiography inadvertently gives birth to disjunctive selves whose polyphony confirm a multi-storied individual. In her insistence, through an aporetic text to represent her lived experience as a `script,` Shaba unwittingly and paradoxically affirms the persistence of the postmodern claim that life as script or coherence is illusory. I deploy the metaphor of the rhizome of the French philosophers Deleuze and Guattari as an analytical tool to study the narrative construction of the self. This metaphor privileges experiment over totalising metanarratives schemes of study. A metaphor is "a literary device that figuratively specifies that concept to another" (Schuh and Cunningham, 2004 p.325). X (a target) is Y (a source) thus providing a map of one. Metaphors, to pursue this meaning, "guide our views of the world and our inquiry into its characteristics" (ibid p326). Before exploring Shaba's text as rhizome, it becomes imperative to refer to Shaba's text to illustrate rhizomatic being. Referring to the initial difficulty in writing her narrative, the narrator poses:

It is difficult to order memory to remember its pattern, for like a busy commercial, the images keep flashing past and the mind is slow in catching up. They were tumbling out ... the images. She desperately tried to put them in some kind of order. What was the most important... what was the root cause of the anger... the real root, and what were the built-on layers? When exactly had the nightmares begun? (p. 7).

The chosen vocation by the narrator “to order memory”, to affirm a pattern is simultaneously disrupted by the aporia of the “mind slow in catching up” and the haphazard tumbling out of images" of lived experience, thus prohibiting the emergence of selfhood as a coherent project. If it is difficult to remember in a “pattern” it is equally impossible to trace any narrative to an originary point, an inaugural act of narration. Semjin et al (2012/) posit that:

A rhizome is an underground root system, a dynamic open, decentralized network that branch out to all sides unpredictably and horizontally. A view of the whole is therefore impossible ... it has multiple entry ways ... There is no main entryway or starting point that leads to “the truth” ... There are always many possible truths and realities that can be viewed as social constructs. (Semjin et al 2008: 6)

Shaba`s text defies hierarchy of meaning referencing as her story ambiguously evokes, laterally, an assemblage of images, metaphors and acts that equally vie for a privileged speaking stance. The text`s moment of privilege posed by the Sunlight metaphor: a closure, an end to the trauma, shame and guilt contaminating the narrator`s psyche, is also a privileging of the memory and experience of the closet of shame, guilt and trauma. The text poses that “Linga also knew that to truly forget the pain, she had to remember it first” (page 10). Here the narrative refuses the simplistic view that healing or forgetting and forgiveness are possible through absolute amnesia.

Shaba's text attempts to configure narrative as a cycle and seeks to impose closure and completeness of the act of telling by emphasizing that life is a cycle. The textual inaugural moment of the telling, this cycle theory would like to impose, is at the site of the therapy conducted on and through the narrator by Ayesha. The therapy, which the narrator places as both "opening" and "closing" of the story seems to enframe and contain the narrative. This is explicitly posed through chapter ten as "closing doors". Unsettling the recovery theory, the claim by the narrator that the closet metaphor has been displaced by the sunlight metaphor, is the narrative's announcement that the good and evil co-exist. Hence in the goodness of the perceived recovery 'the doubts and uncertainties' that "had been finally put to rest" still hibernate in the "demons named" but not exorcised because the narrator had "accepted the possibility that in time she may have to deal with a different manifestation of her mother's illness" (ibid page 107-108). The image of hibernating "demons" poses that the event of trauma and the HIV infection have a "haunting" call on Linga and "fail to end, but continue to repeat and return even when it is supposedly over" (Chamber, 2013:190). This means there is incommensurability between the textual import and the desire of the narrator to be set free of the "demons" inhabiting her. This incommensurability prods us to accept Roland Barthes' (2000:45) postulation that because language and its cultural context defy the control the writer attempts to impose on it, the authority of the writer is diminished and vanishes in the "heteroglossic" polyphony of a narrative that owes no pledge to any originary author. Thus the author is pronounced "dead" (ibid, 89). Heterobiography, the writing about multiple selves (intra and inter-individual), is paradoxically authorless. Part of the paradox arises in that none of the multiple selves inhabiting Linga can claim originary and authentic authorship of the story or stories in the text. The other part is that

the written stories insist, against the theory of the death of the author, that the text was authored though no single author can be sited.

Shaba's text configures that after the closure of beginnings and endings, after nightmares are assumed to have started and ended, the possibility of possibility refuses the closure of these beginnings and endings. Here I deploy the phrase closure of beginning after Derridean (2004) deconstruction and Deleuzian (1986) rhizome, who postulate that the claim that a beginning can be sited is an exclusion of other beginnings, hence a closure. To illustrate how the narrative privileges possibility of possibility as difference/alterity that eludes the closure of discourse and narrative. I refer to Shaba's paragraph which confirms the cartographic image of the Rhizome deployed by Deleuze and Guattari:

And they had embarked on their life's journey with hope in their hearts, which was not unlike travelling on an unfamiliar road at night, guided by the narrow light of the headlights fiercely striving to illuminate the darkness ahead, on a road from a map- reading committed to memory, but still unknown. Who knew what stones could come flying at you from that darkness? (p90)

Deleuze, a contemporary of Foucault, figured his philosophy around possibility, difference, and multiplicity and the notion of becoming. Lived experience as a map (cartography) evinces the notion of multiple entry ways into identity, narrative and experience. It dismisses the modernist/structuralist notion of certainty and closure by postulating the possibility of ‘swarms of difference’ (Deleuze, 2000:104) in a narrative, identity or discourse. The “hope”, at the assumed site of the beginning of the narrator and her mother’s life-journey, contains the possibility of the difference of another possibility in that hope in its actualization does not reproduce the imaginary, its arrival at the point of actualization produces ambiguous results; both evil and good. By seeking a job at the council offices, both mother and daughter had hoped to improve their lived condition, and they did but this positive possibility is contaminated by HIV. Hence life as a “map” which is “unknowable” defies the narrator’s assumed closure suggested by the closing of doors.

This means the initial hope by the narrator to inscript a unified self opens into possibilities and the possibility of the difference of selves inhabiting a similar enunciatory moment but disseminating different stories. Hence birthed is an innocent Linga, Linga the traumatised, Linga the "lioness" as expressed by her colleagues at the workshop in South Africa, Linga the teenager and the adult who, it is assumed is telling the stories of mother and daughter.

If narrative is figured via the metaphor of an “unknowable” map it means the entry of multiple interpretations is permitted. Beyond the permissible multiplicity of entryways for interpretation is the possibility of the difference of an unknown alterity erupting on the scene of reading and

writing well phrased when the narrator says “Who knew what stones could come flying at you from that darkness?” The darkness, the narrative presumes, is the unknown or the unknowable alterity whose difference, I argue, unsettles the artificial closure assumed by the narrator which, however, the textual structure defies and eludes; the “journey” and by analogy, the narrative becomes the point or process of engagement with meaning, thus dismissing any imagined destination (the closure) of the narrative. Before moving to the next section of this chapter, it is imperative to set a summary of the disjunctive elements in Shaba’s text that disrupt closure, a unified selfhood and the naive understanding of hope. I shall proceed by juxtaposing the disjunctive elements:

- The dark closet metaphor juxtaposed to the sunlight metaphor.
- The paradox of forgetting so as to remember( page 10)
- The ambiguity of simultaneously knowing and being uncertain( page 4)

The metaphor of life as script(pages 7;33;79;85;94;99;109) juxtaposed to life/narrative as an unknowable map (page 75)

- The posturing of life as script as opposed to the telling of the story around and via unscriptural modes of experience like love, trauma, dream, death and hope

- The ambivalence of named but unexorcised demons(page 108)
- The ambivalence/ambiguity of the simultaneously good and evil (page 7,102)
- The ambiguity of dream inhabiting and intervening in decision making and consequential acts (page 108-109).

In the next section I analyse the role of the paradox of memory as dis-membering and of subjectivities that are absent so as to be present.

### **The simultaneity of the present and absent sovereignty: the secret and the lie in human experience**

The word encryption comes from the Greek word Kriptos, meaning hidden or secret. The use of encryption is nearly as old as the art of communication itself. As early as 1900 BC, an Egyptian scribe used non-standard hieroglyphs to hide the meaning of an inscription (Radworth: 2014).

In Lutanga Shaba's text lived experience is staged as unknowable, as both absent and present, though narratable and the "secret" posed by the title of the text implies this unknowability. The acts of lying by both Linga and Beata stage their agency simultaneously as they implode the duo's individual sovereignty. The nature of the lived experience, via its ambiguity and heterogeneity poses itself as encrypted: it promises to be knowable but postpones or constantly hides its meaning or telos. An exploration of Sovereignty has implications for auto-heterobiographical authenticity, accountability and agency.

But first; What is Linga's agenda? This can be answered adequately by referring to the text:

Linga vowed that one day she would tell people about her mother. She would tell the whole world about her mother, about her life, about how she had struggled to make the best of her world and how humanity had failed her, as it has millions others like her, and that humanity should be ashamed of itself

(p 105)

This section of the study explores and interrogates the idea of the secret in the woman's soul, the concept of events as inaugural or seminal to traumatic memory, the phenomenon of experience as contaminated and therefore prohibiting the posing of the self as sovereign entity. Lutanga Shaba's text figures identity and narrative as diseased, contaminated and thus abjected in the sense Julia Kristeva configures the tension between the inescapable nature of humanity's visceral embodiment and the desire to "spit[oneself] out" (Kristeva 2004; page 8) because this abjection refuses to be tamed (via the body's effusions of tears, urine, faeces, menstrual fluids etc.) by projects of the patriarchal hegemonic norm-script that emphasizes order, purity, cleanliness and normativity.

Shaba's inscription of the self poses a paradox: the secret is the exposed, a hidden-ness that is a manifestation of the self as narrating subject. It can be viewed as exposed hidden-ness like the "...coniferous- like little plant" which Beata gave Anna to induce pregnancy. Its exposed hidden-ness emerges between its quotidian exposed-ness "actually in the garden"(p40) and Linga's blindness to its presence. My deployment of the idea of the secret poses that the unknowability

of the self emerges at the gap between the self's turning on itself, setting this disjunctive between itself as object of narration and itself as narrator of itself, this object. This is as impossible as the idea of the eye turning on itself, to look at itself in the absence of a mirror.

Postulating the self as secret does not, in this study's meaning, mean the self is hidden as to be supposedly found in temporal and spatial sites. The secret is that even the narrator lacks the ability to account for the meaning of her existence and that the narration precludes the future as objective and knowable. At its supposed inaugural moment, a narrative assumes its agenda as narrating the self, but the aporetic nature of narration turns out to figure the self as simultaneously absent and present. Absent in that some selves that preformed in the past are now buried in the subconscious memory of the narrator. Shaba's narrator announces that the soul, at an unknown point, performs "a resurrection from whatever depth it may be buried under" (p. 1). Present in that the narrating self, projecting itself outside the circles of other selves, is performing in the present time of the act of narration. It is possible to know that some selves constituting a discontinuous relation to the narrating self once performed in the past but this does not translate to knowing the selves themselves. The secret then is that there is no known self in the past or present outside the narrative; the narrative performs the self as storied selves. Jerome Bruner, adopting the constructivist view of narrative, poses that:

In the end, we become the autobiographical narratives by which we tell about our lives. And given the cultural shaping to which I referred, we also become variants of the culture's canonical forms. (Bruner 2006; 7)

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Inscribed in Bruner's postulation is the notion of the cultural entrenchment of the narrating self. Culture presumes a cache of norms and values towards which the self orients (Taylor 2004; 4). The project of auto-heterobiography in Shaba's text poses the paradox that the self writes itself within and via a Culture that erases the self's subjectivity and humanity. The self secures its narrative by pinning it on a cultural canon that permits the breaching of its canonicity by certain others, like the councillor, of that culture. In her re-membering of her past, Shaba's narrator is disguised (Ngoshi and Zhou 2013; 7) provoking the conclusion that the act of writing itself is simultaneously a closure around the secret and a disclosure of a traumatised self that writes therapy as the occasion of the emergency of an agentive self. Bruner posits that "For to be worth telling, a tale must be about how an implicit canonical script that has been breached, violated or deviated from in a manner to do violence to what Hayden White calls the "legitimacy" of the canonical script. (ibid; 11). This canonical script or, in Thomas Coucer's book *Recovering bodies*, "hegemonic script" (89) which is opposed by the authors of autobiographical AIDS narratives, is breached by both the supposedly vulnerable innocent mother and daughter and the councillor who is imaged as both monster and ambivalently as benefactor. This complicates the narrative as the narrator's agenda to tell the secret closed in the metaphor of the Closet is implicated in the act of her contamination/infection with the STI and HIV.

In "countering the hegemonic scripts or metaphors of Aids" (Couser, ibid: 86), the narrative exposes the lies, the implicating acts of both victim and villain as it simultaneously attempts to secure the sovereignty of the self. Before exploring this implication which contaminates the narrative's agenda, it is crucial here to explore the ideas of the lie, the secret and the sovereign

self in the auto-heterobiographical project. This exploration clarifies the argument which I pose, that experience is fissured into unknowable forms; the modernist postulation of a Logos, or what Derrida dismisses as a "metaphysics of presence"(Derrida, 1990:100) is exposed as myth. This stance of argument, in which lies, secrets and the propped up sovereignty suffuse the text, ultimately poses the contrary- that the self in attempting to write itself is in fact staging truth as fiction or fiction as truth. It is a stance that exposes memory as aporetic and thus retrieval, recollection or remembering as in fact an invention of selves.

I posit that the passages in Shaba`s text which pose the self feigning or telling the lie to itself or to the other constitute a subtext to the text as narration to reconstruct or invent a stable, continuous and authentic self. Linga, the narrator lies to herself that her mother`s departure would not affect her (page49),` she told herself another lie then, that people have sex all the time` (p. 66). She performs the lie that sex with the councillor "would not change anything". Her third lie is that she has the Councillor as recipient; "she had lied about her age, reduced it by one year from 16 to 15 and she had not needed to draw diagrams for him to realise the implications of pregnancy, statutory rape` (page 71).The fourth lie in the text figures Beata lying to the doctors that she was suffering from stomach problems when in fact it was the STI decomposing her genitals.

The ability to lie poses the self as a sovereign subject, one who can reconfigure truth so that that constructed truth promotes the self`s agenda (Lacan, 2009: 40).The staging of lies also means a narrative, though one cannot say it is wholly fantasy, is marked by a lack, the gaps filled in by

fictive elements of narration. Lacan poses this gap at the supposed site of the core of the self an iterated 'demand' (ibid; 60). This means despite the self lying to itself that it has arrived within a complete narrative, the lie soon exposes itself and the self goes ad finitum in quest of itself, something to gratify and justify its existence. Derrida (2002) in 'The beast and the sovereign' argues that lying is proof that a self postures as sovereign. He poses, however that a secret exceeds sovereignty. I endorse this argument as I simultaneously prove that the sovereign implied by the act of lying is also the sovereign that cannot complete its narrative, neither does it know where to begin its narration. If sovereign implies control over one's selves and protecting one's space and promoting one's projects, lying promotes Linga and Beata's agendas at the same time it opens their bodies and hopes to infection.

This is because lying as in Shaba's text is counter-intuitive, it simultaneously promotes the suppression, subordinating and damaging of other selves within the same individual, while opening discursive space for the self's endless becoming. Lying becomes both a blessing and a curse; evoking the ambivalence and ambiguity inherent in lived experience. Linga, in lying to herself that sex was a quotidian act, presuming to know the effect of the sexual act before experiencing it, damaged both her psyche and body. The self-vitiating effect of the lie, its negative face, can be understood in relation to how discrete moments, instances and events in the lived context have the unnerving habit to recur, or to deploy a stronger term, to haunt any contexts (social, physical, psychical) that are associative with their play. In Shaba's text Linga's lie recurs in effect when she discovers the infection (STI), at the moment she encounters difficulties in conceiving a child and its iterability marks her at the point the doctor diagnoses

HIV within the text of her body. Because of the embodiment of the disease's inscription of its order; the regime of observing diet and punctual and relentless taking of anti-retrovirals, Linga's subjectivity is destabilised. The HIV infection's inscription also writes into her life the termination of her marriage to Simba. Hence, even at the point where the narrator assumes that she has been healed, via the sunlight metaphor, the text slips through such staged coherence when the narrator says:

The doubts and uncertainties had been finally put to rest, and  
it was a relief. It had been a long journey from that hotel room.  
She had confronted her own demons and had named them and  
now accepted the possibility that in time she may have to deal  
with a different manifestation of her mother's illness (page108).

Here the "trace", to deploy Derrida's term, is that which marks the point of rapture between what Linga, in her sovereign subjectivity, poses as her agenda, her normative self, and the subversive subtext of the contamination. The rapture is between what the narrator poses to be true (healing, certainty, rest) and the subterranean subversion of such a claim by the presence of named but unexorcised demons in Linga's life. The rapture is the trace that effaces itself, like the self hiding the obnoxious that vexes its agenda. This "trace effaces itself" (Derrida 2003; 200) not in the sense of disappearing, but by its refusal to be pinned down even by the narrator whose body provides the space for the trace's play. In Derrida's terms, "this does not come down to saying that the trace cannot be effaced". Rather "[I]t is in the nature of the trace that it always effaces

itself” (ibid; 206). This constitutes a subversion of absolute sovereignty and Derrida concludes that nobody, be it ` God, man, or beast, is its master or sovereign subject` or possesses “the power to efface it at its disposal” (Derrida, 2006; page 131).

Here to elaborate a little in the meaning of the lie will elucidate its stance, motion and effect in the text. Linga and her mother do not simply tell something that is "objectively false." Rather, what characterizes a lie, and what distinguishes it from an error or mistake, is that the liar says something that they do not believe –something that is, we might say, "subjectively false" (Barbour, 2013: 121). For instance, Beata lies to the doctors that the point of pain was her stomach instead of her infected genitals. Paradoxically, this lie which was intended to preserve her image, her life, in fact became the point at which death crossed inexorably the text of herself narrative. Referring to Beata`s mortal postponement to face her actual diagnosis, Linga states that she embraced death, maybe

unwittingly as she infused life into herself image. Linga says:

Firstly she was part of a social psyche that dictated that some things are better left unseen and unsaid. It is better to turn a blind eye, for what is the use of knowing when you cannot do anything about it. Secondly, she was from a generation where shame was a worse fate than death. (p.74).



mixture of hurt, loss, anger and guilt.” (p. 5). Despite the narrative’s agenda to exonerate and excuse Beata and to pin the blame on the hegemonic script, one realizes that Linga’s blaming of humanity was also blaming of herself and Beata. This reduces the entire act to something undecipherable, like *Linga blamed herself, Beata and humanity in order to exonerate Beata and herself*. Linga the narrator becomes tied up in an inescapable knot she has created. Linga’s anger towards Beata is simultaneously anger toward herself because she feels implicated in Beata’s death since she stopped buying her the requisite medication, a decision that hurried Beata to death. She feels angry towards Beata because the latter could have sought medication earlier before the disease progressed into the death zone. But she did not and this marred her image before Linga. Ambiguity and paradox inscribed in the text prohibits a clear drawing of the boundary between the cause and the caused, it frustrates the bid to define identity.

This is figured as in Linga’s puzzling over how the Beata who was “a former nursing student...” could be the same Beata who avoided modern medicine by listening to the semi-literate Mai Lukuma who defined surgery via the vicious image of being “cut up (p. 93). Linga, at the moment she blames both Beata and Mai Likuma, blames herself for “virtually putting the plug on her mother” (p. 96), an image that gestures towards murder, an image at variance with Linga’s asserting that by refusing to go through surgery, Beata “... put the stamp on her death sentence.”(p. 93). Here it is impossible to single out the origin of blame, the target of blame and, to extend the complication, the meaning of the blame. Ambiguity also attends to the question, which my study refuses a fixed answer to, whether Linga and Beata are accountable for their infected status or not? Lying agentive/willful selves can open space to an exploration of the happening the narrator names the event (pp. 1, 2) and the concepts of decision and choice. In Shaba’s text event, decision and choice figure Beata and Linga as agentive individuals. But the

event: the sexual encounter, once experienced transcends human agency by its irreversibility and its punctual iterability via the memory. The event overthrows Beata and Linga's agency by infecting their hope with disease thus rendering their plans revisable to coincide with the new imposed diseased identity. Derrida (2094), for instance, has argued that events figure human experience as heterogeneity of encounters and that each encounter introduces its own irreversible difference and effect.

I will avoid easy fixing of blame on the Councillor, though not condoning his Machiavellian egotism and hedonism, as my postmodernist project proves that the complicity of the assumed victims disallows a simplistic drawing of conclusions and boundaries in relation to agency and accountability. On page 77 the narrator terms the sex encounters between Linga and the Councillor "imposed sex work". But later in the same chapter, Linga is figured claiming that her first sexual encounter "had been a deliberate choice to have sex when she did and it had been for a purpose"(p78). Linga's visit to the Youth service centre to seek advice on pregnancy avoidance is in fact a mode of preparing for her first sexual encounter, it shows an agentive individual who can make her own decisions, thus the narrator says "...she had decided that she was going to have sex with the Councillor" (p65). Linga's argument (p78), premising the sex on the exigency of circumstances is both permissible and an exposing site of Linga's complicity in what she condemns. The acts of making decisions and choices endows both Linga and Beata with remarkable cognitive presence and their sex encounters can be viewed as acratia acts: from the Greek word *acrasia*, meaning "lacking command over oneself" or the "state of acting against one's better judgment" (Zoehn 1990:69). But this extends the complication. Socrates in the dialogue *Protagoras* claims "No one goes knowingly towards the bad" (358 d). He poses that people do not chose against their better judgment. Beata and Linga, despite exigency, decide to

use sex as a means to attain their material wealth. A decision as both Kierkegaard and Derrida argue, is a mad act because as the former says "It is a leap into the dark, the unknown" (p. 125). It is reposing trust, faith and hope on the yet unknowable, reposing one's life in the void or absence. If they decided wrongly by getting infected, they play within the tragic existence and experience of humans iterated by narrator, in which the evil and good co-habit. The text poses human experience as marked by contingency, gesturing to the Deleuzian image of the outcome of experience as based on a "dice throw"(Deleuze 2006:123).

This unpredictability of experiences, their proclivity to sudden transmutability, is well captured in the Heraclitean fragments which emphasize the fluidity and therefore the differing presencing of selves in the same individual. As in Heraclitus' fragment 91; "for it is impossible to step twice in the same river", the encounters with the selves of a singular individual are invariably different at different moments. It is a feat of becoming that variance emerges between the Beata who enjoys hedonistic moments with Daudi and the Beata who is brutally thrown out of the house, the Beata who, as the narrator says, could do "the complete antithesis"(39) of her former norms. There is this incommensurability between the Beata who prescribes effective medicine to both Anna and Mucha and the Beata who lets her body decompose in disease without taking agentive healing action. If these differing selves are complicated in that they refuse a unity, their discontinuity is further presented as a puzzle as when Heraclitus poses "I searched into myself" (fragment 101) and the answer: "you could not in your going find the ends of the soul, though you travelled the whole way, deep is the logos (fragment 45). Linga poses, with reference to her trauma, that "At that time she could not even begin to understand what was happening to her" (page 2) and that her soul was buried under the debris of damage and trauma. In Shaba's text the soul is unpredictable and its acts eruptive; "who can say when a soul will cry enough" and "such

soul cries come without warning” (page 1). The name Lingalireni itself defies a single identity. It is possible to phrase it as a statement; there is no need for tears, or as a question why should you cry? Both are marked by ambiguity in that one must not cry because one has already seen the futility of tears in the encounter with an impersonal world or whether there is no need for tears because the tears have already been shed.

But Heraclitus also posited “a rational order within nature, a rational order which exists independently from [the] intelligence” of man, this, he presents as logos or reason. This postulation provides the occasion for an interrogation of selves’ supposed authenticity/inauthenticity and identity as prefigured in some absolute or transcendental realm. It is an occasion for questioning the notion of human agency and its extent.

In Shaba’s text, there is this recurring idea of lived experience as already prefigured in a script; something that will inexorably perform its acts despite the self’s differing agenda. Ayesha, the therapist tells Linga; “when your mother came into this world, she had her own script of her life” (p 7). Linga referring to Beata’s closed subjectivity says “she was not brought up to talk about her feelings” and she believed that “what happened in your life was what had been dealt to you and you took it” (p. 33). On the occasion of her graduation from university Linga comments that this graduation from university was different from Primary school graduations “but the script was the same” (p. 79). Commenting on the birth of Chiedza, Linga poses that any baby born just before menopause, before “the curtains closed must have been clear that she was going to be” (p. 85). With reference to Linga’s grieving over her mother’s suffering and subsequent death the narrator says “In her heart of hearts Linga knew that nothing could have changed the course of events if it was meant to be(p. 94).

Pages 109 and 99 pose a similar immutable cosmic design of events. Here Plato's ideas of the forms can intervene in a quest for the assumed origin and evolution of experience, events and ideas. Shaba's text poses that the difference between morality and immorality, diseased and undiseased death and life, pain and pleasure, ambition and inertia, the good and the evil presumes that these dichotomies are defined within the web of a certain episteme. Such an episteme names the "diseased" or the "infected", for instance as negative and the undiseased as the positive, the normal. Linga poses that "people see the HIV status not the person. You people see our condition, but not our pain, dreams, us. I guess that will never change...." (p. 90). This proves that the dichotomizing hegemonic script, or immutable forms, in Plato's ideas, intrude in an impersonal or indifferent way in the construction of identities. In the Republic, especially the allegory of the cave, Plato privileges the Forms, the ideal or Eideion and compels that human experience and acts ought to mime these transcendental forms. In the Cratylus, Plato mocks the Heraclitean notion of panta rei, all things as in a constant flux. He reduces Heraclitus to a weeping man, a man with an unceasing flow of mucus, a catarrh. In The Timaeus, Plato via Timaeus poses that "the Demiurge (the creator) brought order out of disorder, considering that this was in every way better than the other" (Timaeus) (p. 306).

The script as mode of episteme writes the difference between chaos and order. But Shaba's text refuses a dichotomizing logos, order/disorder, evil/good are simultaneously present. The narrator says "... life in the locations... had a surreal quality to it that sometimes made it all seem unreal. There was a sense of order and predictability on the surface ...The tidy external environment however hid a violence that was shocking in its everydayness.... (p. 17). This means the script of the good, of order and the normal can be read but in its actual interaction with lived experience,

it is crossed by human acts. This crossing, this transgression opens space for shame, anxiety and guilt.

The script or cosmic design theory presents human existence as “thrownness” and “fallenness”, to adopt Heidegger’s phrases. My argument is that, however vulnerable, exploited, abjected and estranged both Beata and Linga feel, they actively participate in the outcome of the decisions they make and they are individuals who define actions and their world in a subjective mode. Shame, anxiety and guilt emerge in the intersubjective spaces in which the script appears luminous against the opacity and versatility/multiplicity of experience. Heidegger’s notion of thrownness can be deployed in Shaba’s text to elucidate that Linga does not chose when or where to be born. She is not given an option in terms of gender or parents. This means she discovers, retrospectively, that she was born of her parents and that, as one can argue, she has no access to any original point where her life begun. Hence the narrator says; “Linga did not have any memories of the early years....she was still too young then....” (p. 11). In his postulation of the human Dasein, Heidegger images the human as a craftsman (p. 140), a figure busy in the play of possibility, authenticity and inauthenticity. Linga, attending the workshop in Cape Town depicts the ideal setting for Heideggerian Dasein as possibility and authenticity/inauthenticity. Dasein discovers himself, Heidegger poses, through quotidian/routine work. Hence the narrator says “The setting was quiet innocuous, a training workshop...in Cape Town ....The exercise had been .....[just] some routine introspection and reflection” (p. 1).

Introspection and reflection is inward gazing, as Heidegger poses. In its phenomenological way “introspection” is Dasein’s existence. It enables Linga to refuse merely “waiting for something to happen that will free the soul” (p. 11) and embrace advice from Rufaro and therapy from Ayesha. Still, Heideggerian application to Shaba’s text refuses that simplistic mode. It is aporetic

in that while Heidegger's Dasein comports towards itself, Linga's possibility of engaging with her mutable identity and experience is opened up by the other, exteriority's otherness in the form of other participants at the workshop who write her identity as "strong, insightful, reflective, passionate African woman" and the ultimate image Linga as "Lioness" (p. 4). The days when she is "hollow and empty inside" (p. 1) are also her days of angst. This is a term Heidegger borrows from Freud. Angst is thrown Dasein's mood, in the sense of affectivity, of being-in-the-world yet feeling hemmed in by that world. This alternatively means it's a mode of anxiety whose origin refuses a determinate cause. Thrownness infects Dasein with shame. However, this eludes the common shame provoked by the inadequacy one feels at the incommensurability between one's acts, mode of life and what is posed as the normal. Heideggerian shame in Shaba's text emerges in Linga's realization that she is not living her life to her ultimate possibility or potential. But once again, these terms, in my postmodern criticism of Heidegger, are not subject to closure, rather they are open to differing subjective interpretations. One can pose the question, for instance: what is Dasein's purpose in the world? Are there any prescribed possibilities? The space and time of this study does not permit a full exploration of these questions here. Rather, let me state that Linga is not authentic, in Heidegger's sense when she avoided getting tested when her mother was diagnosed "HIV positive" (p. 81). The text phrases it in the image of Linga refusing "to look into any mirrors" (p.81) which transmutes to a refusal to examine oneself. Both Linga and Beata have moments of authenticity for instance when Beata advises Linga that; "Be yourself and speak your mind. I spent twenty years pleasing a man when it suited him, he sent me packing" (p. 33). In her advice on marriage to Linga, Beata urges the former to privilege independence and the value of a multiplicity of possibilities above the narrow borders of a married life.

Shaba's text configures fallenness as both disabling and enabling. Heidegger poses that the failure to project the self from fallenness, this living-alongside-others, dooms Dasein. While Linga's interaction with her fellow workshop participants stages a transcending of her "hollow and empty" days (p.1), Beata's friendship with Mai Likuma traps her in a circle of hesitation/postponement (about whether to accept surgery or not) that plunges her to near death. Shaba's text disallows a scripted reading of reality. It crosses Heideggerian thresholds of Care; Dasein's being concerned primarily about its possibilities, by privileging the reconstructive and healing power of alterity and love-alterity in the postmodern sense as possibility of a difference beyond the incumbent possibility. The possible difference enters in the form of Ayesha whose race and therapy refuse domestication within dominant biomedicine discourse. Alterity enters even without announcing its presence, in that subtle and imperceptible way selves mutate into other selves as when Beata stages a steel-core personality in prohibiting masculine hegemony, in the form of her sons, from muting her spirit. This staging of a different Beata or another Beata is at variance with the submissive and muted Beata who used to be Daudi's punch bag.

Love, refused by Heidegger who says 'humanity has not learnt love' (Heidegger 2009:90), enters through Beata's agape for Linga and through Simba's love for Linga despite knowing her diseased condition. In her therapy session, Ayesha poses the multiplicity of possibilities in a life as possible via love's portal. She poses life as a question, life as open to a multiple subjective interpretation. Hence she tells Linga to replace her diseased existence with love... "Replace it with love, love for your mother, those who you otherwise hate for hurting you, and most importantly, for yourself. Love yourself enough to forgive yourself" (p. 110). This goes beyond Dasein's care, or self compartmentment in that there is a disjuncture between Dasein's care as

appropriating others, like equipment, tools, or other Dasein as ready –to-hand-beings; a standing reserve to be used in Dasein`s realization of possibilities.

Love as privileged by Shaba`s text resembles the Levinassian and Derridean notion of unreciprocal giving, or giving without expecting to be given a thank you or a thing of a similar value. The narrative`s portrayal of Death as part of an unending life breaches Heidegger`s idea of death as ultimate terminus, as impossibility. The dream staging of Beata`s visiting Linga and participating in the naming of Chiedza (light cancelling darkness) and stamping her approval of Linga writing the text of meshed lives poses death as the other of Beata`s existence simultaneously staging discontinuity and continuity.

**Paradoxes of radical alterity: death, love and obligation for the other.**

If I am ready to speak at length about ghosts, inheritance, and generations, generations of ghosts, which is to say about certain others who are not present, not presently living, either to us, in us, or outside us, it is in the name of justice. And this being-with-spectres would also be, not only but also, a politics of memory, of inheritance of generations.  
(Derrida 2010:56)

Beata`s sickness and subsequent death stage the entry of the other as disruption and transcendence. Derrida emphasizes the constant return of the spectre: of the simultaneous absence and presences of the other. In my study, the other refers to the possibility of difference

in the presence of entities, phenomenon, identities and narratives. The possibility of any other possibility not even anticipated by the individual as agent, a possibility which however, comes to disrupt the seams of well weaved stories, and by this disruption, writes the story of human life like the idiot whom Shakespeare endows with narrative agency in Macbeth. Love, death, obligation and mourning provide an occasion for an interrogation of narrative through the alterity of the other in Shaba's text. All provide the unavoidable intrusion, participation or inclusion of the other of the narrator's story. Emmanuel Levinas, as exteriority philosopher, invests the self with agency to transcend its absolute singularity via the face of the other; the affective and conscious reading of the other's absolute difference as inevitable in its questioning of the self's identity, integrity and motives.

The infection by HIV as accident and as singular event writes the subsequent sickness and death of Beata. This sickness and this death enter into Linga's lived experience as both benevolent spectre and demon. This is implied when Ayesha says:

All the choices that she made were her own and nobody else's including you. Think of the butterfly. If your mother had not died in precisely the way that she did, you would not have gone through this journey. If you stayed in your cocoon, your mother's life and death would have been futile. You have the choice to go through a metamorphosis or to die off. Take your mother's death gracefully as the gift that she left you to enable your own spiritual transcendence (pp.7 -8)

Here, Beata's absolute singularity as self is posed by her agency to make decisions without reference to the general canon of cultural or conventional norms. There is a paradox here; that the singularity of her decisions/ choices which exclude Linga include her. This is so because

despite Beata's singularity, despite the inevitable fact that she cannot read the future in the present time of her life, her choices contaminate Linga's life via Linga's participation in Beata's face, her infection, suffering and death. When Levinas proclaims "the face of the other questions me" (Levinas, 2010: 102) he is prodding our gaze to the play of ethics, the ethics of obligation / alterity, what he named as first philosophy. The implication as I argue, is that human agents gravitate towards certain moral meanings, and act because of what the acts promise them. As Taylor (2014, 60) has posited, humans narrate their stories coinciding with the web of desires and needs that make demands on them. As I pointed out earlier on, narrative is the play of madness; madness as that which mocks the ideal, the authentic, the pure or the originary as it crosses such a tablet palimpsesting such pretence to incontestable authority. The madness written by Ayesha's speech, the therapy, does not admit the modernist entry of cause and effect, of rationality. Disjointed events, choices and decisions seem to madly cohere to construct meaning. How to justify that Beata suffers trauma in order to emerge from it a different self? How to justify that Linga had to precisely suffer the "journey"; the trauma? How to rationalise that Beata's parents buried six children because of a ngozi? The ngozi, the dream and the event of trauma reconfigure time as nonlinear but the past and the future as camped in the present like in the B-theory of time(Thompson 2009:40). The B-theory of time poses that all events in an individual's experience do not turn 'past' as in the simple scheme of things or events as ended or vanished. For instance, the event of the first sexual encounter refuses to be 'past' in Linga's case: it irrupts within her any moment questioning her morals, bodily health and unresolved injustice. Time as disjointed, as Derrida says affirms his notion of memories of the dead as "spectres" not in the negative sense of malevolent haunting, but in the positive act of gathering the lived experience of the dead as the obligation of the living. Mourning as re-membering lives, Derrida

argues, makes it possible for the living to construct meaning as to why things are what they are in the here.

This passage also poses that, as both Levinas and Derrida posit, that the entry of the other is a punctum that opens the self to other worlds, other identities and possibilities. This is posed when Ayesha refers to self - containment / self - sufficiency as “cocoon”. The psychic cocoon as Giddens (1999:90) posits, is a covering that protects the self from the radical contingency, unknowability and harm that the self is exposed to. To protect itself, the self retreats into this cocoon as it narrates it and promotes its agendas. But here the presence of the other, the face, which in the end is the interfusion of emotive relations between humans punctures that self - containment by introducing other possibilities and identities that question the complacent setting of the self's unitary trajectories.

In the mad becoming of narrative identity, the death which neither Beata nor Linga plan or anticipate, becomes the “gift” that enables Linga's transcendence. Transcendence is the play of change, becoming. The image of the butterfly suggests that the vulnerability of the other's identity or entity is paradoxically its defense; it is at the point of accepting the entry of the other that a narrative or a self is simultaneously strongest and weakest. Strongest because metamorphosis allows the butterfly, the self to mutate to mature stages of growth. Its weakest because by exposing itself outside the cocoon, uncovered the butterfly exposes itself to the risk of being killed off, the self's narrative being doubted, trashed or crossed into oblivion by other stories, it is crossed by the tendency among entities to posture hierarchy, though temporary, as Deleuze and Guattari have posited. Hierarchies collapse as lateral or heterarchal formations of narrations simultaneously exist with hierarchy.

Metamorphosis, as Ayesha poses saves Linga by undoing her self – knowledge, herself containment and opening her to the worlding of other possibilities via the love and death of Beata. Metamorphosis is linked to *metabole*; meta for "over" and bole for "throw", therefore overthrow (its Greek etymology). The self has to overthrow itself via alterity for it to realize its own multiple experiences. Ultimately, like the butterfly that ruptures its own cocoon, the self has to overthrow itself via the other so that it realizes itself in other possibilities.

Death as gift makes Linga to overthrow herself to mutate through the grief, the suffering, the guilt and shame which Beata's face constantly presents before her. Death as gift also reverses and corrupts the common run of thinking and association. If death is a gift then Beata's death does not imply a cessation of existence; Beata's death is paradoxically relayed into Linga's existence as a mixed inheritance; as infection and positive experience, the gift. Death as gift is also the equation of mourning and grieving as not simply bounded by loss and pain but as a site of fecundity and justice. Mourning in this instance performs both burial and rehabilitation as Linga buries Beata's body but rehabilitates her life via memory, dream and the written story. The idea of mourning as a mode of justice is extensively explored by Derrida in his later years when he argues that the memories of the dead, relayed to the living constitute the living, not merely as passive repositories, rather, they provide a site for questioning the lives of the dead and in grieving, to condemn the unjust deeds that befell the dead: to exonerate the dead as Linga does for Beata. The equation of death and life is the feat that confirms the paradox of human existence and the persistence of that undefinable space of meaning, without referent signifier or motive for signification. It is the dwelling of Derrida's *differance* and Plato's *chora*. To say, as Ayesha says, death is a gift, is life, is to rupture the *Logos*, the script, the metanarrative, and hence to concur with Derrida that *differance* of meaning in this surplus or excess of meaning of beings that resists

simple containment. Plato's chora, as postulated in the *Timaeus* (15B, 100) poses an indefinable space or container through which entities and identities are born and pass. The closest metaphor Plato deploys to define it is a mother or wet – nurse. The coincidence of that Beata sacrifices her life for Linga as Linga sacrifices hers for Beata is offset by the asymmetricality introduced by Linga in her privileging her new life, her house over Beata's life. Such asymmetry that displaces symmetricality or reciprocity is the perfect entry of sacrifice, love obligation and otherness as postulated by both Levinas and Derrida. Linga compensates the gap she created in her obligation for her mother posthumously; the gap constituted by her suspension of the buying of anti – retrovirals for Beata. Derrida and Levinas' radical alterity, which the former attempts to modify as intersectedness of selves overthrows the borders of the self, singular experience and existential contexts in the moment of encounter, this alterity gestures to an otherness without sign of return to the self. Here the narrator's entry is crucial:

Even when she was bedridden and knew she was nearing her end ..... she would always drag out a smile from somewhere deep within her. And she always made an extra effort for Linga. Linga, the one who had told her that she was not responsible for her life. The one who had virtually dashed all hopes for Beata by failing to continue to buy her medication (p. 98).

This is the ecstasy or the madness of love that in Plato's Socrates "knocks the lover down" on seeing the loved one (*Phaedrus*2000:30) To be knocked down means to lose all sense of ratio, rationality. Beata's unreciprocated love which is a form of madness because it lacks reference to reason, mocks the narrator when she says "everyone suffered in their own private hell and no one was there for the other, each needed comfort to deal with their own crisis" (p. 100) It is this

radical unknowability of the other, this private space which Levinas posit as the site of transcendence.

Despite the unknowability of Beata's secluded suffering, despite the hidden-ness of her shame, she suffered for Linga, she tried to protect Linga from the horror of the shame and pain that Linga would encounter "as a different manifestation of her mother's illness" (p. 108). The posthumous reconstruction of Beata done by Linga still poses gaps that insist on such an unknowability of the other. Thus the narrator says as "she threw her earth on Beata's casket the next day, Linga tried to draw some conclusions about her mother's life. She could not decide what to think of her" (p. 104) This unknowability is further emphasized by the text's opening to Beata's re-entry in dream. A dream provides the occasion for a radical singularity of relation even the dreamer may fail to understand the dream. It is on this mode of alterity, this unknowable otherness of human existence that Beata makes her ultimate sacrifice makes a double sacrifice. Like Abraham referred to by both Levinas and Derrida, she makes a radical sacrifice. While Abraham makes a double sacrifice, that of his reputation and integrity (in the common law of Moses) and that of his son Isaac, Beata sacrifices her life and reputation by having sex with the councillor and her life by being infected by an STI and HIV. It can be conceded that Linga sacrifices her life too so that her mother retains her job, but then symmetry or reciprocity that might have been is prohibited by Linga's refusal to be singled out by the obligation for Beata. Levinas emphasizes that the "other's face singles me out as responsible" is evident, in the posthumous phase of the text, when Linga replaces the cheap coffin with a better one, dances and sings with passion at the funeral "striving to obliterate with her voice all the pain and insults her mother had suffered" (p. 104). By posthumously rehabilitating the other in herself, Beata in herself, Linga becomes chora via which Beata's spectre can appear and speak.

The radical alterity posed by both Beata and Linga enters in both women`s crossing out of the normative canon via sex with the councillor. It is radical alterity because it has no known precedent in both their lives and it does not refer to existing parameters of norms and values. Hence the sex becomes an act of metabole, an overthrow of their identities and former selves as new selves though contaminated by HIV, come it to being. This obviously reverberates with the Heraclitean postulation of constant overthrow and becoming of selves.

In sacrificing the general or common run of normativity, both Beata and Linga promote their agendas. Derrida extends Levinassian ethics of alterity or transcendence by posing the paradox that in attending the needs of the other, one among the others, one in fact betrays the others (Caputo 2004:20). Therefore obligation for the other is simultaneously present with the betrayal, the cancellation of the collective or general norms and values. Like in Abraham`s case Beata`s sacrifice betrayed the common law. The common norm says *don't cheapen your body through sex for money*. Beata opposes this. By this opposition, she stages subjectivity uncontainable before and after the act of opposition. Hence, it becomes necessary for the narrator to exonerate her, give excuses for her errors (Olney, 1990:200).

But if as Levinas argues, the self should stage a radical alterity like Abraham, an alterity that cancels the common norm, why do both Beata and Linga still feel shamed after the act? In fact this is a criticism of Levinas' non- reciprocal obligation. It gazes on the other neglecting the interiority of the self, who, because relations with the common norm have invested a ration of meaning and adequacy inside her, still feels she owes the common norm a pledge. Hence Derrida moderates the Levinassian alterity to a "relation without relation" (Caputo, ibid:40) where the self's obligation relentlessly criss- crosses between the self and the radical other ceaselessly hesitating to fix its pledge.

The urge to know the other, forever frustrated by the unknowability of the other, the passion to hold on to ideals, canons of norms and the easy transgression of these ideal canons, the inexplicable desire to tell one's life and the opposition of this narration by aporia all affirm the Derridean idea of Messianism without the Messiah. Like the ideal Messiah who is in the canonical script, desired identities and narratives never arrive to gratify anybody. Because they are ideal, they are scriptural, it's impossible for such identities, narratives to emerge in their ideal state in the actual lived experiences.

This is the ideal story that keeps postponing its arrival in Shaba's text. For the justifications of her actions and Beata's, the narrator provokes an array of formidable opposition within the same text. In attempting to present her story as a luminous story, the narrator in fact complicates the story by the simultaneous upholding and tearing down of the canonical norm. In the Parmenides Plato's Socrates casts doubt at the transcendence and incorruptibility of the Forms or the Good. He discovers that if the Forms or the Good do not participate in the actual, if the actual cannot participate in the Forms and the Good because it's not perfect then neither are really useful for each other.

For instance common norms do not participate in Beata and Linga's lives hence they are overthrown. To compel the actual being the same as the Form or the Good will evoke the third man argument. This is premised on the fact that the human mind always defines things by looking at the things and comparing them to the structure of the ideal. This means if the narrator's Beata is read as perfect, or the narrative is perfected by the *closing of the doors*, then the reader should create another ideal above the narrator's ideal. This is because, as Edwards (2010:10) argues, it's impossible for the human mind, as in language, to operate without an ideal.

If ideals are shamed by actual acts as in Beata and Linga`s act, then other ideals have to come into being ad finitum.

In Shaba`s text, the dream, the narrative love, trauma and bestiality stage alterities that always question the canonical norm, the common ideal. In the name of love Beata betrays the norm and suffers for fifteen years. This defies a common or simple understanding of love. It stages rather that tragic aspect of human existence in which what we love most, idolize, in time comes to harm us, most of the times, mortally.

The dream narrative and Chiedza become entries of fecundity. Levinas`s postulations of fecundity pose the self-transcending itself. Beata transcends her identity, both living and dead in the dream and the narrative. Linga transcends her HIV status via Chiedza, the light that displaces the fetid darkness of the *Closet of shame*. Hence identities are constantly overthrown as they are reconstructed.

### **Biopolitics as challenge to the self`s sovereignty**

Biopolitics is a politics for which power “confronts pure biological life without any mediation” (Agamben, 2000:144). In Shaba`s text, via trauma, infection and physical violence written within and on the body of the victim, the life of the ordinary individual is rendered bare, damned and simultaneously excluded and included by the law. Agamben`s idea of the Homo sacer`s life as stripped to its bare or unprotected existence enters here to elucidate, like in Foucault`s analysis of the modern state`s, “technologies of the self” (Foucault 2006:150) how politics can reduce ordinary selves to “objects” of the law or the archive.

The figures of the politics in Shaba`s text are the councillor, the government and Daudi. These figures constitute a masculine hegemony which writes its own script on and against the assumed

sovereignty of ordinary selves. The fact that the councillor, with impunity, takes Linga like a cheap loaf of bread (p.102), that Daudi, via this hegemonic script exiles Beata or metes unmeasured violence on her or that the state sanctions the beating up of Daudi stages the rendering of ordinary lives as Homo sacer or the damned.

The homo sacer is, as Agamben argues, within metaphysical boundaries as it is defined by the law as included in the law but in reality, is really excluded because, as Shaba's text depicts, the man of politics who are supposedly the custodians of the law, set the lives of Linga and Beata outside the law via abjection, by rape, incest, HIV infection and bodily violence.

The self, like Linga and Beata, stripped off its ethical protection "feels defective, degraded and diminished" (Agamben 2006: p12). Hence such a self has to reconfigure its narrative; outside its perimeter it is objectified and abjected. The shamed self seeks to hide as Linga feels "shamed... [h]er spirit de-clothed, abused and left to the element (p. 69) after the event of her first sexual encounter with the councillor. The abjection of her body and the abjecting impulse of the event is posed in metaphors that depict seclusion or quarantine, Linga feels like she has entered "some hidden room, the dreaded closet of secrets and shame and sentenced to forever remain silent about what she had done" (p. 69). But despite the attempt of power, as Foucault might pose it, to empty the interior of the self, to discipline it into an object, Shaba's text poses the self as in Linga's case as a process of change. This is similar to Julia Kristeva's sense of the self as a "vortex of summons" (1982: 1). The ever mutating body especially the female body eludes the atrophying dictates of phallogentric politics by posing its own difference; as in the menstrual blood hinted at by Linga which compels the councillor to postpone the sexual encounter. As Kristeva proves, this refusal of subjectivity, via its body may be extended to the inability of the

Freudian and Lacanian phallic power, reposed in the masculine hegemony, to control the emissions of body waste like sweat, faeces, urine and menstrual flows.

In Shaba's text, the repression posed by Freud, the neat divide between the conscious and unconscious is never complete. Hence Linga's self remains fractured, the sexual event always bids its time "determined to hound her and devour her when she thought she was home and safe" (p 3). The feeling of *unheimliche*, "the uncanny", unhomely or "unfamiliarity within the familiar" derived from Freud(1981) is the evidence of schizophrenic self-uncontainable by either the individual or the Lacanian symbolic order and "law of the father", both translate to patriarchal power. The sense that the self is unhomed, a relentless disavowed arrival at any self-sufficiency, is the postmodernist creed posed by Derrida and others.

Bare life, damned life is closeted because it crosses the originary tablet of masculine hegemonic scripts. Hence newly born but dumped babies, the torture and scarred bodies of women and the murdered body of a man are secluded from the agenda of the phallic space in Shaba's text. In a similar play of seclusion, biomedicine, the preserve of masculine practice imposes a script on what constitutes the permitted identity. The diseased or HIV infected body causes the doctor to "grimace" (p. 70), to reduce the body to an archival statistic (p. 92) the pharmacy orderlies to cast glances of aspersion or damnation at the diseased body (p. 95) and the young doctor to disfigure the body via the inflexible "little" box of what science had told him (doctor) that "they both had to be sick and no other explanation was possible" (p. 84). As Foucault (2009) posits the human body "becomes a mere slab of flesh" (2009: ~~100~~→100), a text on which technologies of power, reconfigure the self to align to its discipline or dictates, reducing it to a manageable quantity or processed archival facts.

The image of the ordinary self as homo sacer is also posed via politicians and “transnational drug companies that sought to cash in on lives like” Linga’s (p 85). The identity of the damned ambiguously confirms the phallic power simultaneously disclosing it as illegitimate: this phallic power, whose authority grounded in symbolic order created by language, as Lacan argues, privileges a norm that adulates material wealth over human values and rights. Levinassian ethics poses that the face of the other, in its bare presence, implores ‘‘Do not kill me’ (Levinas, 2014: 60). But this vulnerability which Levinas stages as a questioning site, is vitiated by the Councillor, the state and Daudi. The Councillor, whose body the text disposes and replaces with the animal, in fact the incestuous encounter is invaded by animal images, incarnates norms that de-humanize. First the Councillor imposed himself on Linga like one riding a donkey, then he lay still on Linga like a dead donkey. The donkey image suggests that the face, the affective centre Levinas emphasizes, is disposable and replaceable with the unemotive, unopening, or non-responsive beast or object. This postulation does not forbid the questioning force of the imploring Levinassian face, it suggests the possibility of egotistic individuals vitiating and ravishing the text of that face as if emptied out of that human emotive / responsive content and ability.

Shaba’s text provides occasions for both grounding of logos and deconstructing that Logos. In her recurring emphasis of the cosmic /cycle design of immutability or the script, the narrator implies logos. In her reiterated emphasis that love, dream and death are sites of a nexus of continuity, it crosses the closure of any script because irreducibly singular experiences like love, dream, death and trauma resist determinate narration.

## **Conclusion**

Autobiographical narratives, this chapter has demonstrated are marked by reference to a heterogeneity of selves within the same individual and beyond and this beyond, some selves assumed to be outside the narrator or narrators, do not live a monadic existence. Rather, as noted, the drawing of boundaries between exteriors and interiors of selves is problematic, it is a source of the aporetic praxis of the self's attempt to be itself at the same time it overthrows itself through the other, another self, difference or possibility. This multiplicity of identities permits the entry of lived experience as marked by simultaneity, paradox, ambivalence and ambiguity.

The postmodern stance deployed in this chapter has proven that Shaba's narrative refuses the traditional or modernist/realist notion of story linearity in terms of plot and temporality. It has emphasized that time is "unhinged" (Derrida 2004:10) or "thick" as Deleuze says. The past, the present and future are configured in a single presence. This ensures that the present task of the narrator is as a relay site of memories, which in Shaba's text is in the form of mourning, death, dream, trauma and love.

This chapter has argued that biopolitics produces its own hegemonic script that attempts to empty selves of their interiorities (private memories, emotive content) to replace these selves with the objectified or archived identities. I have avoided pointedly posturing women as victims because, as I proved, it is difficult to draw the line, in Shaba's text, on the complicity of females themselves in acts assumed to be abusive to them. Linga and Beata promote their agendas in relation to their demands and desires. The fact that they could make choices and decisions figures them as agentive individuals who chose a certain mode to negotiate an advance in their material conditions.

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## CHAPTER THREE:

### Political discourses: inventing the self and nation

#### Introduction

The previous chapter interrogated and explored auto-biography as evinced via self narratives provoked by trauma, disease and alterity. It largely revolved on the individual as an agentive centre for decision and choice making imbricated in the human condition. The chapter explored the concept of the sovereignty of the individual which impacts on identity narratives with implications for a discussion on the (im) possibility of a stable, coherent and originary self.

The next chapter interrogates and explores the auto-biographical self as negotiating a narrating stance imbricated in national politics and nation making. Peter Godwin's *Mukiwa*; subtitled "A white boy in Africa" poses the narrator, a white boy, negotiating a home in Zimbabwe and simultaneously the deferral of the arrival of such a home. This deferral is staged in the ambivalence of the narrator's claim of belonging to the landscape and his realization that such a landscape postures, to borrow Lyotard's word, a differend; a space of the incommensurability between the narrator's heritage (race and history) and the discourse of emancipation espoused by the Chimurenga and subsequently, the historiographical closure imposed by the nationalist government of the new order. In my analysis of *Mukiwa* my focus poses memorials: monuments, landscapes, burial sites and songs as deployed by the narrator to configure a national identity, collective memory and counter memories to the memories posed by the Portuguese, the Afrikaners, the African liberation movements and particular Rhodesian configurations of nation making. The narrator places himself in the discourses, the symbolic and political centres of

meaning like the Pioneer memorial, Moodie`s rest, the heroes cemetery and the Rhodesian war memorial in Filabusi, setting their allegorical presence to disseminate discourses in modes that privilege his narrative above other vying narratives. However, the narrator`s stance, because of the ambivalent zone he moves in, does not subscribe to either the historiographical closure of the new government especially in the post genocide phase in Matabeleland, or to the totalizing discourse of settler norms.

Nelson Mandela`s *Long walk to freedom* (hereafter *Long walk*) intervenes as a counter-text to the othering discourse of *Mukiwa*. Here, I deploy *Long walk* in a postcolonial mode to interrogate and dismantle the colonial/imperial vocation of museumising African epistemes, culture and cosmologies that marks *Mukiwa*. *Long Walk* erects counter-monuments and memorials to the ones privileged by the imperial order. *Long Walk*, like *Mukiwa*, poses the self gravitating, via narratives, to the centre of political power. But unlike *Mukiwa* it proceeds beyond memorial and monument staging to the actual imbrications of the self in the politics of nation making. Both are however marked by the ambivalence of inheritance. In *Mukiwa* it is the simultaneous (im) possibility of belonging and the (im) possibility of renouncing one`s inheritance. In *Long Walk* it is the (im) possibility, for Mandela, to include the whites in the new order yet at the same time co-existing with the disarticulations and dehumanizing results of apartheid.

In this chapter I analyze *Long Walk* via a conversation with Plato/Socrates, Deleuze and Guattari and Derrida. Plato`s Socratic dialogues of the *Republic*, *Ion* and *The laws* provide insights into how a nation hedges its norms, ideals and hopes against instabilities, mutabilities and mobilities

of identities. Deleuze and Guattari (1984) provide the occasion for a critique of the mobilized closure of meaning assumed by national historiographies. Here Deleuze and Guattari's ideas of "deterritorialization" and multiple "lines of flight" from the tether of tradition, culture, national narratives and collective memory shall be deployed. Derrida's critique of the archive shall provide a site to interrogate the paradox of sites of memory's simultaneous absencing and presencing of meaning.

#### **The enlightenment self as arbiter and adjudicator: Bifurcated/ bifurcating discourses**

If I am to explore and interrogate Godwin's autobiographical selves (the child, the student, the B.S.A.C policeman, the lawyer and Journalist) I must first emphasize that these selves operate within the Enlightenment /modernist ethos of the cult of the individual. It is here also I should emphasize that the imperial project, though it antedates the Enlightenment/modernist era is one among numerous other projects under Enlightenment. The enlightenment cult of the individual is important here because it shows how Godwin can act and interpret realities against the plotting of empire yet he is part of that empire.

Foucault (1990) in *The Archeology of knowledge* has argued that the Western episteme has become sophisticated enough to criticize itself, to reorder itself to coincide with changing histories and scientific discoveries. Godwin deploys the Western episteme to image his selves and to comment on the realities he encounters. Some of his satirical commentary on the imperial project, which shall be analyzed here, is composed from an Enlightenment view, aimed at the foibles of empire by a self that is reflexively inside and outside the acts of empire. Thus his

ambivalent relationship with settler norms in which he is active in the service of these settler norms but confesses that he almost shot Smith and that the war he was involved in was just “a little war” voided of grand meaning, stages him as an Enlightenment self who can cross the borders of nation, community and ethics. As enlightenment self, he invests himself with the roles of arbiter, adjudicator of values and morals and as appointed testimony/witness bearer. His ambivalent role as testimony bearer of the Gukurahundi (Matebeleland genocide) revibrates with the Enlightenment / modernist faith in “the truth” (p 340): the conviction that the physical or embodied presence of a self at a site of an event validates the veracity of his narrative.

Godwin invests himself with the aura of the authentic testimony bearer by posing the mysterious entry (in the narrative) of the Security agent (p 382) and the old woman who claims that she has "been told that [he] reports the truth"(p 340).Both infuse Godwin's news reporting with necessity and urgency: they become, in Godwin's representation, emissaries of the collective conscience prodding him to investigate what he had already concluded to be a genocide in Matabeleland. This provides an instance of the Enlightenment Positivist self who poses the truth and ironically proceeds by 'investigation' and compilation of information to prove that truth while not heeding that the acts of investigation and information compilation constitute the construction of truth. Godwin also attempts to underwrite his testimony as authentic in a curious way. While inspecting the Filabusi memorial, a vicious bolt of lightning reminds him of another white man struck down by lightning on his way to testify against Chief Maduna's grandfather and he "wondered briefly" if he too would be struck down "before he could bear witness" (p 418). If the reader engages a hermeneutic reading here, it becomes exposed that since Godwin survived the lightning bolt, by implication he is invested with divine appointment to give testimony of the

Matabeleland genocide. This lightning survival/escape suffuses the entire autobiography with the mark of that divine approval that promotes Godwin's narrative above and beyond other narratives: by both blacks and whites. But the fact that the bolt unsettles him means his Enlightenment self questions its testimony, thus bursting the seams of his constructed testimony-coherence.

Enlightenment/ modernity is marked by a relentless reflexivity (Giddens 1999:60) in which the self chronically reviews and revises its positions in the contingency of politics and the dynamic play of the human condition. It is this ceaseless re-visioning of positions and meaning constructions that mark *Mukiwa* with bifurcating/bifurcated discourses. In revising white identities in Zimbabwe, Godwin poses that "not all [whites] were whinging Rhodies. There were thousands of whites and blacks who came back from abroad to take part in the bold new experiment of constructing a multiracial society"(p 327) that would be a model for Africa. I am prompted to pose here that Godwin's multi racialism is different from postmodernism or high modernity's (Giddens 1999) hybridity .Multiracialism—repulsed by Bhabha—stages only the parallel existence of many races and therefore is deficient in the multiplicity of selves and races in an individual played out in hybrid acts and spaces. Sufficient here is to note that Godwin as Enlightenment self valorizes experiment above the closures of tradition, regimes and inheritance. It is this experimenting self that permits Godwin to ridicule certain settler/imperial norms via satire and simultaneously appropriate some of these norms in his re-imagination of both self and national/collective identity. Godwin's project, I argue, is to re-imagine a new nation in which a reinvented self has debunked both the Ian Smith and ZANU PF regimes as scandals. However, in

this re-imagination he privileges the Enlightenment discourses, which sometimes collide and connive with the imperial discourse: imperial discourse is subsumed in Enlightenment discourse.

The Enlightenment/modernist self's project is to subordinate environments via a naming/classificatory episteme. Edward Said (2002) and Mudimbe (2010) have postulated that this episteme postures discovery and knowledge of the physical environment and the worlded environments of the other as its prerogative. Godwin poses that as part of his training as a B.S.A.C security agent he had to attend "classes" in "...African languages and customs..."(p 221). Such classes were structured on ethnographic compilations of what this Enlightenment episteme had constructed on the assumed nature and meaning of the other's culture. As a student at Melssetter school, Godwin went for "...nature study walks and caught insects in jars and pinned them on the board on the classroom wall"(pp 58-59). Pinning the insects to the wall constitutes knowing by decimation of the organism reduced to an object and therefore subordinated by the episteme. This pinning of insects on walls as the objectification of the organism is similar to the reduction of the African's body to a cadaver. Godwin's (the child) knowledge about diseases is posed to posture the Enlightenment episteme as privileged in the control of death and health, while the African episteme is ridiculed, mystified or antiquated. The disease metaphor, extensively postulated by Javangwe (2014), is intended to emphasize the binaries: black/white, poor/rich, illiterate/literate and healthy/unhealthy, with the Africans being pinned to the negative side of the binary. The conclusion, as posed by this episteme, is that the other's episteme is an object for erasure. Thus Harry Lovat claims that Isaac's proverbs, maxims and teachings are "...half baked munt philosophy"(p 127).And Father Kennedy, the Carmelite priest provided students with knowledge about African religion in a ridiculing mode that erased all differences among Africans (p 75). Mudimbe (ibid: 86) poses that Christian missionaries, priests and hunters

compiled pseudo-ethnographic studies on Africans teleologically structured to "know the African" and enable his colonization and subalternization.

**Monuments and memorials: staging the self and group via sites of memory.**

A typology of memory precedes its analysis in auto-biographical narratives. Here I pose the ambivalent relationship between collective and subjective memory. This means the tension between Godwin's individual memory and his posturing it as the collective memory. I should pose that a complete disquisition on this typology is beyond the scope of this study. To traverse such a typological terrain would be impossible, as Nora (2008) posits, in a limited space. Pierre Nora poses:

Our interest in lieux de memoire where memory crystallizes and secrets itself has occurred at a particular historical moment, a turning point where consciousness of a break with the past is bound up with the sense that memory has been torn, but torn in such a way as to pose the problem of the embodiment of memory in certain sites where a sense of historical continuity persists. There is lieux de memoire (sites of memoire because there are no longer miliex de memoire (real environments of memory. (Nora2008:7).

In *Mukiwa*, sites of memory embodiment posture as memorials: monuments, recorded speeches, graves, heroes' acres, the Birchenough Bridge and certain buildings named after the pioneer column leaders and the Chimurenga leaders. Memorials are marked by multiple competing purposes among which are nation building ,reconciliation, reparation, political legitimacy and the "pedagogical tool to inculcate the preventative lessons of "never again"(Moore 2009:70).Memory is "torn", as Nora poses, by the mobilities of instabilities inherent in the human condition. In the case of *Mukiwa* instabilities shaped by the settling of whites in Africa and the subsequent Chimurenga (which expatriated a considerable population of the settlers) marked the settler identity with discontinuities. On traversing the urbanscape and landscape of his childhood, the narrator looks "through the phone book for names [he] recognized but there was not much continuity to be found [t]here". He notes that "[t]here had been more than three hundred white farmers here once. Now there remained only three" (p. 406).

Nora inscribes ambivalence or tension between memory and history. Memory, he poses, is infused with the irreducible primal conception of experience while history, via archiving memory, imposes a monopoly on how experiences are to be narrated. Godwin's subjective memory of the settler community sometimes breaches containment of the official history of that community. For instance, he diminishes the glory and heroism the Smith regime invents around the battles against ZANLA and ZIPRA .Godwin remembers Smith as the "bastard" who had "screwed" his commencement of studies at Cambridge by not having the "...the imagination or leadership to sue for peace" (p 394).While Nora poses that the ambivalence between history and memory must be permitted play, Paul Ricoeur argues for complementarity between them. He argues against the "...hubris of history to reduce memory to one of its objects"(Recoeur2004:346) and refuses the totalizing act "... of collective memory to subjugate history by abuse of memory

that privileges events commemorating" (ibid: 204) officially programmed sites of memory. I am prompted here to pose that the historicization of memory via national narratives forbids the entry of subjective memory which is invariably marked as dissident. It is however crucial to note that the subjective memory of individuals in national political positions can constitute hegemony of memory: pretending that their subjective memories are the collective memory. Godwin's narrative pretends to be a record of collective experiences where he deploys the second and third narrative voices when in fact the irreducible singularity of his experiences resist collectivity. For instance, the childhood Godwin experiences which image him diagnosing leprosy, tuberculosis and attending unnerving exhumations and postmortems is refused by the prototype childhood even in Rhodesia. It is impossible to mark the boundaries between collective and subjective memory in any narration that involves the first person narrative voice stitching its acts and motives to what it would have invented as collective memory. Godwin exercises the hegemony of the Enlightenment self who invents himself as the exemplar of memory and knowledge and proceeds by turning this invention into the norm.

The acts of traversing his childhood landscape and of writing the autobiography are synonymous. They are acts that seek to re-inscribe the sign or trace of the previous existence of the settler self. The marks and symbols of such an existence are embodied in the memorials and landscape that serve as signposts to a vanished glory, a disfigured and displaced identity. Nora's posing of the voiding of a memory environment as necessitating sites of memory, one can argue, is validated in *Mukiwa* where such an environment has been set to rout; the narrator says:

White society was seriously wounded. Peace had achieved

something fifteen years of war could not. It had robbed us of our  
identity. All around me, as I watched, white society shriveled  
and changed. In search of a divine reassurance, whites flocked  
in great numbers to ...churches...peddling the sedative of certainty  
in an uncertain world (p.326)

The settler interior memory-scape had been traduced and vitiated by the war, the self's interior environment had been made void. The exterior sign, image or symbol, therefore, *Mukiwa* poses, can reinvent this voided interior; can fill the void via the symbolism of the monuments and memorials. But how do memorials and monuments reconstruct the routed identities of the whites? As a mode of answering I refer to Mircea Eliade (2000) who poses that "In so far as it is forgotten, the past... is homogenized with death. The fountain lethe, 'forgetfulness', is a necessary part of the realm of Death. The dead are those who have lost their memories"(2007:7).And "Nature has no memory' ...and that's why we have memory" (Charters, 1998:42).This is precisely the purpose of sites of memory like monuments and memorials to "stop time, to block the work of forgetting... to immortalize death, to materialize the immaterial" (Nora, 1994: pp 295-296).

Sites of memory, I pose, are therefore mnemonic devices that can stud the landscape as iconography for group identity, national historiography and as scaffolding for certain mythologies; the stories of legitimation and authentication staged to justify identity, colonialism or the imposed right to authority. Hence for this purpose:

[T]he familiar material world becomes studded with symbolically-loaded sites and events--as well as silences--that provide social continuity, contribute to collective memory, and establish spatial and temporal reference points for society (Harootunian 1988; Fogelson 1989; Osborne 1996).

#### **Landscaping identities: Can death and memorials transcend mortality and forgetting**

Death, as Heidegger(1968) has posed, is the horizon of the ending of Dasein`s possibilities. The inglorious death of Piet Oberholzer, indelibly inscribed into the child narrator`s psyche in *Mukiwa* and the ubiquitous anonymous deaths of Africans, most probably invoke the fear of ultimate endings which leave no trace. Monuments, landscapes and memorials transcend the Heideggerian horizon of death by symbolically multiplying meanings associated with identity, belonging and legitimacy beyond the event of death. The narrator in *Mukiwa* invents belonging via the landscape. The sheer density of the land, especially the Chimanimani Mountains provide a site for generating narratives of home, identity and belonging. On an excursion up the mountain--trapped in a storm--the narrator almost wills the lightning to strike him down so that death would immortalize his belonging to the mountains.

Godwin`s desire for immortalization via the landscape coincides with that of Cecil John Rhodes whose grave was carved out of rock on the Matopos hills. In Rhodes` case death immortalizes his name and deeds by enjoining his name to the spirits dwelling in the hills and the names of Ndebele kings buried there. Here appropriation of belonging is by engrafting the self on the other to enable entrance into infinitude and immortality. Rhodes` burial spot on Matopos, which he named 'World`s view', was the spot he used to escape to , “ to contemplate his imperial vision'(p284) This appropriation, unlike exclusionary, souverniring or museumising imperial acts, includes the local landscape and episteme with the telos to surpass the local or be legitimated by them. In this case appropriation of the local religion and physical environment apotheosizes Rhodes while the colonized remain in obscurity.

In *Mukiwa* the narrator constructs his identity via the monuments and landscapes that generate narratives of settlerism; conquest and legitimation of settler authority. This poses the multivalent stances of monuments and memories in that while they stage the settlers` narratives of legitimacy and belonging, they erase the memory of the subaltern, in this case the colonized Africans. The ambiguity of monuments and memorials, provoked by their multivalence prods one to dismiss a simplistic tagging of colonial monument as only pro-colonial agenda; the monument itself, as the Pioneer monument, instead of evoking mythologies of white claim to legitimacy and belonging, can disrupt that mythology by exposing its constructedness. In its scaffolding of the legitimacy of settlerism the pioneer monument as sign and symbol claims the settlers pioneered settling in Mashonaland. Such pioneering voids the settled landscape of previous human inhabitation. The word Pioneer evokes origins, beginnings and the heroism of crossing into the unknown, undocumented as the first human beings to do so.

In *The Republic, Ion and The Laws* Plato sets out to propose the ideal (utopian) state. Plato, “wrote his works during an age of instability and decline; an age when the role of Athens as a leading power in the Mediterranean was beginning to be questioned” (Juan-Navarro 2007:1). Similarly, Godwin’s text is composed to hinge settler identities in a period when political instabilities have set them to rout. In book 111 of the *Republic*, Socrates opens a discussion on the topic of what art ought to privilege in a state; which I transpose to nation here. He poses that art should privilege courage, loyalty, boldness and heroism. The construction of monuments constitutes works of art: matter like rock, metal or brick is shaped to represent the ideal values or privileged memories.

In Plato’s political teleology, art provides a utilitarian service to the state. Autobiographical writing, because it is marked by both factual and fictive elements (Onega and Lands, 2009) whose teleology is to stage the self as authentic and legitimate, hence the entrenchment of the self at these sites of memory, is a political negotiation.

The masculine hegemony of the pioneer column subordinated both the landscape and the subaltern in its project of nation making. Subordination here enters as both disfiguring the subaltern’s references of meaning (cultural, epistemic) in the process of worlding a new episteme; there was violence in the disfiguration. However, Homi Bhabha (2006:202) poses that this disfiguration did not utterly write out the subaltern’s epistemes, it rather imposed a palimpsest. I shall develop Bhabha interventions in the next section. Here my emphasis is on how the construction and erection of the memorial is a double to the process of colonization, and in Plato’s philosophy, the insemination of an order of ideals that privilege the new State’s legitimacy. The narrator, with reference to the pioneer monument says;

The memorial was a statue of a wagon pulled by a span of oxen. It was carved from Chimanimani granite and set on a plinth made up of river pebbles from the Sabi river crossing, one of the main barriers facing the pioneers. Underneath was a plaque which said simply:

Erected in memory of the Pioneers of Gazaland.

Next to the inscription was a list of twelve names of people who had died on the treks. (p 58).

Plato's deployment of the term mimesis in his theory of art, state politics and ethics is ambiguous. While in Book 11 of *The Republic* he raises a tirade against imitating Homer's iconoclastic poetic values, in the *Laws* mimesis is configured as axiomatic in the transference of values from poetry, song and statues to the youth. In the erection and imposition of the Pioneer memorial, the carving and hewing of granite from Chimanimani is symbolic of the conquest and subsequent subordination of the locals. This comes out clearly in the petrification of the Sabi river pebbles in the memorial. Immobilizing the pebbles constitutes a conquest of the river which had once posed as barrier to pioneer invasion. The inscription on the memorial enforcing the imperative to remember the Pioneer invasion and the twelve dead and the fact that the memorial commands the centre space of the square, is all calculated to legitimate the mimesis, to adapt

Plato, of Pioneer ideals of masculine heroism, the ethic of subjecting others to the values of the invader and palimpsesting the subaltern's code of culture and episteme.

The exclusionary protocols of Plato's theory of the ideal self in the state can be emphasized by invoking Palammbiu-Pio's theories of ethnic autobiography .Palammbiu-Pio, 1996:211) as quoted in Anthony Chennells (2000), argues that if an ethnic history is "to carve out an area for revision...[it] must legitimate itself by laying claim to a firmer epistemology than that claimed by the dominant history" (p 136).I pose that epistemology configures the way a people creates values and a hierarchy of those values. The values of the dominated or subalternized are subordinated by the colonizer. The Pioneer project was plotted to undermine the values of both the MaShonas and the Ndebele whose epistemes were vying for dominance before the invasion.

### **Multiple Significations: Memorial Polyvalence**

In my deployment of postcolonial and postmodern strategies of theory, it is easy to see lacunae in the inscription of memorials as sites of memory that authenticate the legitimacy of the superaltern in *Mukiwa*. Here i allow the ambivalent and ambiguous narrative trajectories to enter and emphasize that the multiple signification of memory sites is posed when counter-memorials, for instance, the Heroes acre are created, when a new ethnic authority comes to power,( the black government displacing the white one) or when post memory, ( the memory of those not involved in the memorialized event) interprets the memorial differently from the interpretations of the people who constructed and erected the memorial.

The narrator in *Mukiwa*, especially in his childhood stages, does not pledge any fixed loyalties to the pioneer ethos because he never views himself as invader despite the suggestion that he

privileges the imperial project over the local episteme. That he does not pledge fixed loyalties to the settler norms does not necessarily forbid him appropriating imperial sites of memory to invent his identity. Post-memory's acts are always already ambivalent. The double speak of memorials in moments of political instability or change marks the ephemeral nature of identity and narratives.

The image of the laager in the shape of the Williemes` house and the white pioneer memorial at the entrance of the Earl Grey building, renamed Mukwati, memorialize the impulse by whites to protect themselves against "marauding natives" (p 409). This cancels out the meaning of pioneering as entering a void; the meaning the majority of the pioneers projected to the world. Laagering in fact inscribes the project of pioneering with criminality: a conscience aware of transgressing the values of the other, hence the need to laager that conscience and its embodiment.

How does the narrator`s visiting or reference to memory sites profit his project of auto-heterobiography? To answer this question one should take cognizance of the complexity in narration and identity introduced via ambivalence and ambiguity premised on satire: the humour and ridicule generated simultaneously towards the subject and object of the satire. This is clearly configured in the narrator`s visit to and inspection of the Filabusi war memorial, an obelisk erected in memory of some white troopers killed during the 1896 war.

To portray the trivialization of the memorial by the new black government, the narrator says his urge to piss led to his discovery of the memorial (p 417). That 'There was no longer a signpost' (p 417) to point to the memorial exposes the de-centering of the imperial order. And the fact that "Two of the troopers, Johnston and Koch, were without Christian names" shows that " a hundred

years on, the memorial was unfinished” (p 418). This incompleteness which marks “gap(s)” where their “Christian names should have been” (ibid) exposes the pioneering ethos and white rule as assemblages of white mythologies. Chennells (2000) poses that when Godwin proclaims: “Imagine that, fighting for queen and country, and then no one can even remember your bloody name” (p 418), “We are returned to empire, and satire registers futile deaths among loose ends of imperialism’s grandiose schemes” (Chennells 2000:150). This satire, I pose ridicules Godwin as subject and the incomplete memorialization as object. Susanna Torres, in her article “Constructing Memorials” poses that the disseminatory acts of memorials go dormant with the cessation of rituals or commemorations that keep the memory site active by constructing narratives that iterate the re-inscription of the memory (Torres 2013:348). This means memorials become what they become or mean what they mean as written by the political agenda of the sponsors of their erection or as constructed by the viewer. For instance, Godwin as narrator says that the periodic visits to Matopos by students, in the company of their teachers, was marked by the teachers’ inscription of settler values and heroism: the teachers provided a manual on how to interpret the memorials. Against such manuals, the concept of Deleuze and Guattari (2004) on artistic dynamism as uncontainable, exposes the artifice and bias of state sponsored interpretations of memorials. Deleuze and Guattari propose that interpretations of artistic constructions like monuments constantly elude manuals because they operate at an irrational level where the artistic object’s indeterminable meanings connive with the viewer’s subjectivity to de-stitch the weaving of metanarratives. This means the affectivity, the emotive impact of the monument on the viewer, refuses the sealed boxes of State grand narratives because affectivity or the emotive transgresses the borders of language and therefore opposes Platonic utopic fixations of meaning. The dismantling of the pioneer memorial by the ZANU PF youths marks

the arbitrary construction of meaning attached to memorials and the fact that the legitimacy disseminated by a memorial in the nation is hinged on the political "agenda of the ruling group"(Torres 2014:389).One can therefore conclude that placing the self at impermanent sites of memory, as Godwin does, implodes identity narratives at the point when such sites are rendered obsolete or antiquated.

As in the polyvalence of ambiguity and ambivalence`s bifurcated/ bifurcating enunciation, one must resist the closure of claiming that Godwin is privileging empire or that he sympathizes with the new black government. My argument is that he advances his autobiographical self by placing himself at memory sites composing his narrative as the adjudicator appraising both the imperial ethos and the new order constructed by the blacks. As arbiter and adjudicator, the narrating self can negotiate and advance its position as it comments via satire, on the politics of value and meaning construction. The satire is shaped to ridicule the imperial order, the subaltern`s episteme or the new order`s politics simultaneously as it privileges the narrator as a centre of rationality, sound moral values and the exemplar of a new Zimbabwe that dismisses as obsolete both the imperial and Zanu Pf ideals.

His commentary on the unkempt Heroes acre in Meselter places him in a position as the adjudicator who knows that ZANU PF has never been and will never be a revolutionary movement that protects the ideals of humanity and heroism it verbally espouses. He says the memorial cemetery:

[Was] overgrown and neglected. It had a faded sign at  
the gate: Heroes acre. This was where guerillas who died  
in the war were buried...The graves had rough cement

headstones without crosses, without names even-on one of them

I noticed a rotting plank. I turned it over and there amidst the

termites and the red ants was carved the words: Unknown comrade

(p 140).

Juxtaposed to the Filabusi memorial, the narrator would like to convince the reader, the Heroes Acre oozes a similar abandonment which points to official or authorial transgression and reversal of ideals proclaimed by both the settler and ZANU PF government. The imaging of the Heroes Acre cemetery via images of absence, for instance, “faded sign”, “rotting plank” and the phrase “Unknown Comrade” is poised to expose ZANU PF as a scandal; a government that neglects the ideals it proclaims verbally is a morally bankrupt government and therefore one that has delegitimated itself. The self who has exposed such a scandal privileges himself by being the arbiter between a callous self-important regime and the neglected lives of those buried.

Deleuze and Guattari’s ideas can enter here to show why the narrating self invariably views realities differently from the versions offered by official authority. Via the concept of “deterritorialization”, they pose the possibility of ideas, identities and individuals to be displaced from the locales of assumed origin. Simply phrased, this means meanings are mobile and their deterritorialization exposes both possibilities and limits of their actuation. As a narrator without a fixed terrain of loyalties Godwin makes himself a candidate for a new Zimbabwe unmarked by the scandals of both the imperial and ZANU PF projects. It is difficult to territorialize a self that moves in the unpredictable or unmappable zone of satire because like in the Derridean deconstruction, this self mutates into positions where it speaks as always already deterritorialized. Hence it is simplistically reductive to image Godwin as completely championing

the imperial cause or as completely inscribing into memory sites the conviction that white rule was better than black rule. I deploy, against both ZANU PF and settler norms, Deleuze and Guattari's mobilities of meaning in their phrase "lines of flight" to denote the instabilities of human actions, motives and narratives. Simply phrased it means the closure of State metanarratives is opposed by the alterity of the other possibilities.

The memorial as a semiotic system site is haunted by what it hides. What it selectively chooses not to speak. In *Glas* (1994:79) and *Specters of Marx* (2004), Derrida develops the idea of Hauntology to counter the phenomenological philosophy of embodiment or physical presence posed by Merle-Ponty. Hauntology proposes that in every narrative, every physical presence and every episteme, there are gaps and shadows that dismantle a logocentric /phallogocentric mode of identity creation. The absence/gap inscribes, therefore, incompleteness and incoherence in the narratives generated via the memorial. This means Godwin selects deliberately, the memorials to present and by irony, satire or omissions generates his own narrative he wills the reader to accept.

### **The self as amanuensis: The souvenir and museum**

An amanuensis is "one who writes from dictation or copies manuscripts" (Dipolos, 2008:67). Amanuensis etymology emphasizes that a significant synonym of amanuensis is acolyte; a disciple. In this section of this chapter I will configure the complex self/selves of the autobiographical individual reinventing its childhood; constructing itself as amanuensis for the settler community. The complexity emerges in my merging of amanuensis and recording, translating or copying as anacoluthon; lacking sequence or original semantic order of the

dictation. Derrida (1994:63) in discoursing on the role of amanuensis inscribes it with both fidelity to and betrayal of the copied or recorded. The narrator in autobiography retrospectively reconstructs the child in him or the child in the past. Between the present narrating self and narrated childhood, the recording of settler norms and meanings is constructed, hence this retrospective posturing of the adult narrator framing narration in the figure of a child will not reproduce a faithful copy of settler norms and the subaltern's cultural norms. The adult narrator manipulates the child recorder to fit the agenda of the present autobiographical self. This amanuensis involves the invented child as prism via which the lives, experiences and bodies of the subaltern (subaltern as including some subordinated white groups) are reduced to souvenirs and are museumized. A souvenir is an "object, resized... that is testimony of your visit or presence and experiences" (Benson 2001:5). A museum is an institution "that conserves a collection of artifacts and other objects of artistic, cultural, historical or scientific importance and makes them available for public viewing through exhibits that may be permanent or temporary" (Edward Porter and Mary Alexander 2007:60). Both souvenir and the museum reduce, resize or transform concepts, beings or even events into objects; objects in the sense of rendering them passive to naming, reordering or classification. Both souvenir and museum bear testimony that something was present somewhere at some certain time.

In my analysis of *Mukiwa* I pose the autobiographical text as souvenir, a testimony that the writer experienced settler life as child and adult. That as both child and adult he was present in both Rhodesia and Zimbabwe. The text is an object that signifies experiences and by being published becomes available for viewing: being read and thus constructing views and even the viewing by the reader. *Mukiwa* as text also transforms the subaltern's episteme, culture, histories and symbolic sites of meaning into souvenirs, simultaneously museumizing them.

This conversion of epistemes and the other into souvenirs or museumizing them performs the construction of hierarchies of authority and legitimacy. In *Mukiwa*, the narrative privileges the Enlightenment self while marginalizing, by scandalizing and stigmatizing via negative stereotyping, the other and his world views. The museum or souvenir need not necessarily be present as physical objects. A museum can be that memorial repository of images or symbols constructed/invented of the other by the superaltern. This means the collective and subjective memory-bank of the superaltern contains images of the other as antiquated.

The opening address of *Mukiwa* marks Piet Oberholzer's body as souvenir that bears testimony to the imperial vocation--by Rhodes and others--that the Afrikaners race did not belong to Zimbabwe. The dead body, reduced to a position of helpless passivity becomes a soma-text on which the imperial ambition writes its historiographical conclusions of its corpus of justifying and legitimating its presence in Africa.

The souveniring and museumizing of Piet Oberholzer body is performed to confirm two things. First to bear testimony to the acolytes of empire as present bearing testimony to the ending or the death of the Afrikaner ambitions in Zimbabwe/Rhodesia. The death of Oom Piet becomes a temporal and spatial marker; the body is immortalized in the negative gesture of pointing to decline, ending. Here the narrator, in an eschatological tone says:

I think I first realized something was wrong when our next-door neighbour,

Oom Piet Oberholzer was murdered. I must have been about six then.

It was still two years before we rebelled against the Queen, and another

seven years before the real war would start (p. 3).

Like in biblical dating system, marking time by reference to a monumental event like a flood or the death of the king is foundational to narrative and national historiography. While the somatext of Oom Piet is posed as supine, dead and signifying an ultimate ending, the narrator's race is re-membered as agentive and ambitious, rebelling "against the queen"(p. 1).

Paul Celan (2006:87) has argued that the politics of dating is crucial in the legitimating or falsification of epistemes and historiographies. The narrating self as the one constructing/plotting the dating monopoly accrues to his name/self "the authority of presence" (Chennells 2000:14) and the authority to order events, places and acts to invent a knowing self.

In his Enlightenment authority to invent the dates, the narrator says "After Oom Piet's murder my parents decided... I would be a boarder" (p. 59), "Until Oom Piet's murder I lived an insular existence at home in Silverstream" (p. 22), "Father Galvin came to live at the Carmelite seminary... just past the spot where Oom Piet had been murdered" (p. 163) and "Father Mac's dead now. He was ambushed in his car by guerrillas not far from where Oom Piet had been killed"(p. 165). This dating system which deliberately omits numerical dating is orchestrated to infuse the narrator with unprecedented authority in this constructed knowledge while simultaneously and iteratively inscribing Oom Piet as a permanent failure, a dead body which becomes an object for temporal and spatial marking. His body is deposited as a trophy to the triumphant imperial historiography of conquest. It is reduced to an artifact in the collective psychic museum of the imperial acolytes.

The reduction and erasure of the Afrikaner identity, legitimacy and history is also posed when the Oberholzers are configured as "the poorest white people [the narrator] knew". And "They had gone bust while trying to farm... the Dutch Reformed minister, had asked my father to give

Oom Piet a job” (p. 4). Going “bust”, being poor and being servant to the narrator’s father images Piet as a failure and subaltern. In a similar derogatory tone, the narrator’s Great Aunt Diana, commenting on the Afrikaner memorial in Bloemfontein, reduced the Afrikaners to the position of the conquered, the starving and refugees. Aunt Diana’s biased commentary is poised to emphasize the imperial historiography that images the Afrikaner race as illegitimate in Southern Africa. In her commentary, and by proxy, the narrator’s commentary, she absolves the imperial project of any wrong doing and reinvents the British as saviours who came to the mercy of the wretched Afrikaner against the terror “of marauding natives” (p. 141). Here Godwin appropriates the imperial heritage to advance his position as a self equipped with an archive that defines legitimacy/ illegitimacy. I must emphasize here that his privileging of this imperial narrative is ulterior to his imagining of himself as legitimately placed to reconstruct a new nation in the post settler and ZANU PF hegemonies. This self realizes the absurdity of imperial iconography and imposition of Occidental identities on the African environment (p. 160) simultaneously as it claims Zimbabwe as home (p. 204). Ostensibly, Godwin's re-imagining of a post Smith and ZANU PF nation, cancels the naming of the locals as "marauding natives".

This construction of a semiotic system of naming and classificatory acts marks the Occidental epistemes of colonization (Mudimbe 2004, Slemon 2010). This semiotic system inscribes, in *Mukiwa*, Moodie’s rest, Thomas Moodie’s grave, with allegorical signification acts that speak double and even treble. Moodie’s rest divides the colonizer and the colonized, setting an overarching master code that names or a discourse of “Othering” (Spivak 2000). In his retracing of his childhood home, a mode of retrospection, the narrator comments on Moodie’s Rest:

There inside its little enclosure was a stark iron cross marking

Moodie`s grave. The inscription said: For Queen and Empire.

T. Moodie. Pioneer. 1893. Underneath was a quote from the book of Timothy: I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course (p. 411).

Allegory (from the Greek allos – “other”+ agoreuein– to speak) is a "trope in saying one thing also says some “other” thing; it is doubling of some previous or anterior code by a sign”, or “by a semiotic system, that also signifies a more immediate or literal meaning” (Slemon 2004:9).The cross on Moodie`s rest infuses pioneering with a civilizing teleology. The tradition of Christianity assumes the mission to bring values of love, charity and brotherhood. But the fact that the pioneers mowed down natives by gun and dislocated them into arid areas which the colonizers named Tribal Trust lands or Native reserves, poses the bifurcating strategies of this allegory. Moodie`s rest is “marked” but the death and lives of the shona people mowed down or driven to obscure Native reserves are not marked. The haunting absence of these unmarked lives inscribes anacoluthon in the semiotic system of empire. The phrase “for Queen and empire” invokes the master code that disarticulates other codes and the inscription from the bible legitimizes the violent enterprise of the pioneer invaders. Moodie`s Rest, to borrow Slemon`s comment on imperial monuments, is:

[L]ess a historical monument than a monument to history,  
and as such it works not only to construct the category of  
“history” as the self-privileging inscription of the colonizer,  
but also to legitimize a particular concept of history; that is

history as the record of signal events, the actuations of great

men upon the ground work of time and space (Slemon, 2010:10)

*Mukiwa*'s narrator as recorder or as reproducer of the master code's history becomes a disciple or acolyte of that master code. But as narrator who records and reproduces via translating the child's memories through the adult Enlightenment self's reinvention of that record: the memories, the master code's enunciation is disrupted by that lack of fidelity, the sequence of balance; anacoluthon. *Mukiwa*, the text as souvenir, available for public viewing, poses as the self-privileging inscription of the writer whose teleology is to legitimize his version of Rhodesia/Zimbabwe. To legitimize his experiences as authentically reproduced, in the Preface to *Mukiwa* Godwin writes:

In *Mukiwa* I have written as I remember with all the foibles and

imperfections brought on by the passage of time... I have tried

not to be wise after the event but to describe things as they seemed

at the time, even where that may have portrayed as unattractively.

I have tried not to preach or to politic. I have tried not to be

sentimental or censorious (preface).

Godwin's assertions here are bifurcated and bifurcating. They pose the autobiography as simultaneously a record of his past and collective memory and not; the "foibles" implode the mastering of coherence. There is a disjuncture between the time of narration and the time of the narrated events marked by re-membering as both fidelity and betrayal of the thing narrated.

Godwin's archived memory sites and archiving memory remain the remains of the project of remembering and reinventions and not the event, thing or truth purportedly reproduced. In this case these remains, like the Derridean "cinders", pose that something happened or existed in the past, but is irretrievable beyond the "trace"(Derrida 1994:96). *Mukiwa* poses this via Godwin's ambivalent claim that his text is a genuine record of the collective settler community's past and its disavowal of a seamless merging between the self and the collective. His claim that he has not been "wise after the event", which means he has not revised his past, points to the haunting gap in every autobiography; the gap where "the truth", the "authentic" should be but will never be. Every autobiography is a revision (Gusdorf 2004) of the writer's past and reordering of the past to fit the exigencies of the present and the future self's project (Smith and Watson, 2006). The preface declaration reproduces the speaking stance of the Enlightenment self's civilizing episteme which thrives on binaristic classification, the construction of hierarchies of naming that divide. By claiming that he is not "sentimental or censorious", Godwin, despite his satire's unsettling of some of the settler's norms, names his record--his autobiography--as ideal. He privileges his record above other records by writers/explorers as Fredrick Courtney Selous, David Livingstone and others in the same act he dismisses records and narratives by Africans that appropriate the past to counter accusations of inferiority as sentimental. This emphasizes why, from the inception of this chapter, I resisted regimenting Godwin as an authentic imperial acolyte. His project is to promote his own narrative above and beyond those of his white predecessors, ZANU PF and other indigenous groups.

Godwin's ambivalence towards the Smith regime and the war; that he is active in the war to preserve settler lives and myths and simultaneously undermines them, does not exonerate him

from appropriating imperial discourse; he reproduces its discourse and deploys it to privilege exclusionary modes of onomastics and other forms of politics.

The souveniring and museumizing of the subaltern, culture and history; their acts of worlding is posed in the fate of Nyaminyami, the Tonga river god. In selective and traducing phrasing the narrator says:

The local Tonga tribe, who had to be shifted out of the way when the dam was built... still, believed that he [Nyaminyami] would strike down the wall one day and return the river to its natural state.

The few Tonga left in Kariba town were reduced to selling carvings of Nyaminyami, once a powerful god, respected and feared by the Tonga, now reduced to a decoration on top of a tourist souvenir (p. 198).

This quotation confirms the tone of my argument that Godwin is amanuensis for the imperial order despite his claim in the preface to write the “unattractive truth about ourselves”. If the adult Godwin permits the child Godwin’s views to be a truthful record of the past, then the narrative privileges the imperial vocation. If the autobiography is a retrospective telling of the past (Smith and Watson: 2006) it is also a revisioning of that past and therefore never “truthful” or completely factual, nor completely fictional (Onega and Landa 2000:7). Godwin deploys the binaristic terminologies of the Enlightenment self’s civilizing project; the Tonga are a “tribe” and this term is infected with inferiority, illiteracy, pre-modern worlding. His euphemistic “shifted out of the way”--with reference to the violent displacement of the Tonga to create room for damming the river--does not accuse the settlers of any crime. The fact that he is a recorder or

scribe for a civilizing mission that violently transforms the ecology to privilege its own master-code agenda does not permit him to condemn such a project. Rather, he ridicules the heavily decimated Tonga population by saying "I wondered what Nyaminyami made of it all, the pride of his Tonga men spending their lives incarcerated on steel platforms tricking little fish into a net". And the privileging of modernist prowess: "still, it was a beautiful sight, a galaxy of twinkling lights bobbing on the swell of this vast man-made ocean"(p. 200).

Godwin's autobiography images the self as embedded in the Enlightenment's anthropomorphism; man ordering the biological and physical environment to his designs. His reduction of Nyaminyami, and by transpositions, of the subaltern's epistemes, to a souvenir constructs a personal museum to each tourist who appropriates Nyaminyami via global capitalism's exchange system. A souvenir invests captured time and place in the tourist's experiences: the time and place of the subaltern. Tourism therefore constitutes an appropriation of the souvenir to validate the tourist (invariably from the west) claim that he knows the subaltern. Appropriation of the past and culture of the subaltern via the souvenir is premised on the narratives generated about and around the souvenir.

As in Edward Said's postulation in *Orientalism*, the Occidental episteme constructs stereotypes and narratives that configure the other as always already known. In a similar stance, the tourist is exposed to narratives of the places to be visited and "[t]ourist consumers may quickly seize upon the orthodoxy of the already known, grasping for the creature comforts of the canonical" (Steiner 2006:55)

Godwin's narrator resembles a tourist in his recognition that empire's attempt to reconfigure Africa in its taxonomies and axiomatics has been futile and that his belonging and identity in

Africa are constantly slipping (p. 135) despite the attempt to anchor them via monuments, memorials, historiographical palimpsesting, landscapes and depletion of indigenous epistemes. The narrator's claim to know the other, the African culture, constitutes the essentialising 'othering' of the Enlightenment episteme's knowing and naming project: "Africans often died of spells" (p 79), "Africans were forever falling into rivers" (p 83), "Only black people got leprosy" (p 96) and e.t.c

As Javangwe (2011:102) argues, the hierarchizing of races in *Mukiwa* privileges the narrator's race. At the top is the British race, the Portuguese who settled in Zimbabwe first are reduced to blundering and outmoded people (pp 153,154,157,) and the Fado, a Portuguese song rendered as sign of homesickness, re-invents the Portuguese era began by Diaz as merely a nostalgic memory; disfiguring the Portuguese actions in Africa as decontextualized: an anachronism. The representation of the Fado reduces Portuguese history to merely a curiosity like an object in the museum. This reconfiguration of the Portuguese past is necromantic: It conjures, in the reader's mind, images of the Portuguese as always already dead only to mock them:

Look gentlemen, at this Lisbon of days gone by,

of the Crusades, the Esperas.

And of the royal bullfights;

of the Fiestas,

of age-old Processions,

of street-cries in the morning,

that are no more (p 159)

The Fado itself is not an anachronism as created by the narrator, but as collected and pointedly selected to reduce Portuguese presence and activity in Africa as futile. In the same gesture of anachronizing or antiquating the other's history, the Great Zimbabwe is reduced to "a ruin" (p 158), thus posing the Shona epistemes as out of joint with Enlightenment's ethos of progress. Chipikiri, the expert Khoisan tracker is imaged as an experienced scrounger and one out of sync with modern technology. He is posed as one detesting guns, preferring bows and arrows and when he eventually accepts the gun, he never uses it. This reinforces the stereotype that the Khoisan, despite historians' (Ranger 1989; Beach 2000) postulations that they are the original/aboriginal inhabitants of what is now modern day Zimbabwe, are illegitimate as providers of a guiding episteme. The Enlightenment self deploys a double maneuver of appropriation and exclusion to negotiate a position of power. Thus passages in the autobiography where Godwin appears as including Shona philosophy and culture in his worldview are instances of appropriation and engrafting, as Rhodes did, to create space for legitimacy. Godwin's narrative, in the postmodern sense, is fissured and therefore forbids a simplistic superaltern/subaltern, occident/orient and colonizer/colonized binarism. In Godwin's *Mukiwa* the subaltern is not given room to speak, but in the next section on Mandela, the subaltern speaks and negotiates a position of political agency. Mandela untags the badge of subalternity as he re-imagines a new South Africa. This re-imagination is not immune to the generation of contradictions in the act of imagining a new nation.

**Inventing political selves :cultural and historical counter discourses**

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The banality of the erasure of the subaltern implied by the Oberholzer boy that his 'uncle shot a kaffir once' and 'it was OK because he had a license'' (p. 30) is crossed by the agentive positioning of Mandela as a political self. While Godwin places himself in proximity to the landscape, multicultural spaces and colonial memorials to reinvent identity, legitimacy and belonging, Mandela exploits cultural and historical resources (his and the oppressor's) to provide counter-memorials to apartheid's iconography. As it vibrates with notions of global concepts of human rights, Mandela's cultural discourse itself becomes a memorial. In colonial and anti colonial studies ,Ngugi waThiongo (1981,1980) in *Moving the centre* and *Decolonizing the mind*, Amilcar Cabral (1970) in *Return to the source*, Frantz Fanon (1963) in *The Wretched of the earth* and Vambe and Zegeye (2004) in *Close to the source* provide sites of conversations and contestation with *Long Walk*. In both the *Post colonial Reader*(2000) and *The empire writes back*, the editors engage writers who explore and critique the subversive modes by which the subaltern speaks back to empire. This critique prohibits a simplistic reading of the subaltern's speaking back as a coherent mobilization of cultural and historical resources by marking such writing back with ambivalence and aporia .Mandela stages a discursive insurgency against the superaltern by appropriating both local and the oppressor's resources of culture and history. In Mandela's political enunciatory stance the superaltern's discourse is disarticulated simultaneously as it is written as a necessary tool by the insurgent.

Abdul R.JanMohamed (2006) has interrogated colonial literature and concluded that this literature operates via what he poses as 'The economy of Manichean allegory' in which the subaltern is 'othered' as a biologically regressive being, a perennial child and one whose culture and history are denied rationality and modernist progress. Texts like Conrad's (1983) *Heart of*

*darkness*, Rider Haggard's (1980) *King Solomon's mine* and Joyce Cary's (1989) *Mr Johnson* set a binaristic difference between the subaltern and the colonizer. In postcolonial literature-Mandela's autobiography is post colonial--the subaltern vitiates the colonial text by inscribing insurrectional and revolutionary agency in the act of writing. Texts such as Achebe's (1983) *Things fall apart*, Ngugi's (1980) *The river between* and Geoffrey Ndhlala (1988) *Jikinya* reinscribe the humanity, culture and history of the subaltern disarticulated by the colonial text.

Mandela's writing back to empire or apartheid *from and within* cultural positions is to be read intertextually or contratextually with the theorizing of Achille Mbembe (2001) in *On the Post colony* and Kwame Appiah's (2002) in *In my father's house*. Mbembe, by imaging the subject in the post colony as endlessly homo luden, adulating power and as conniving with that political power to perpetuate corrupt acts and marginalization of the subject, writes out the possibility of the subject transcending marginal positions. Appiah crosses the text of returning to the sources of culture by arguing that such a venture merely writes a reverse racism against empire but does not overthrow it. While Mandela places himself at memorial sites like the Egyptian pyramids to counter the Hegelian erasure of African history and culture, Appiah promotes a dismantling of all sources of 'native' identity because, he poses, such identities constitute another mode of essentializing or stereotyping stuck in the orbit of the Western episteme's 'othering' acts. With reference to Mandela's *Long Walk* it may be permissible to ask the troubled and troubling question: When is it necessary to construct essentializing images? What stereotypes should remain and when and how should they be conscripted in the staging of the autobiographical selves?

If I am to explore how Mandela writes back to apartheid from vantage sites of culture, I am compelled to define culture. Raymond Williams` (1985) etymological complication notwithstanding, I pose that for the purpose of this study culture can be defined as being the whole way of life found in a particular society, culture is learned and shared by members of a society. Ralph Linton posits that; "The culture of a society is the way of life of its members; the collection of ideas and habits which they learn, share and transmit from generation to generation". (2000: 664). That culture is learnt--a counterpoise to culture as imposed to structure a passive self denuded of active role--is coterminous with the varied and sometimes conflictual self narration stemming from different individuals socialized within the same culture. And as in Mandela's narratives, the operation of conflictual multiple narratives between individuals is extended/complicated by multiple discordant stories in a single individual. For instance, the Mandela who wears "a leopard skin kaross" (p 229) as a badge of identity is interrupted by the Mandela who confesses that he is an "Anglophile" (p 202).The Mandela who espouses peace and civilized modes of conflict resolution is interlocuted by Mandela who dismisses Ghandism by promoting violent bombings. This discordance is provoked by the self shifting or mutating to match the multiple and different becomings of political experience.

Culture, since it is posited as a whole way of a people`s life; a way that implicates and is implicated by habits and ideas, is a constituting conduit for autobiographical narratives. It constitutes the frame of reference that infuses potential in a people`s signifying practice, provoking, in varied ways contestations and negotiations between cultures whose trajectories and teleology are different and antagonistic. Mandela`s *Long walk* to freedom figures a narrator who enunciate his positions from the vantage structures of cultures. In fact, the tribulations of a self

facing the possibility of discontinuity in self narration is invariably synonymous with the possibility of cultural continuity. Giddens comments that “socialization among the young allows for the more general phenomenon of social reproduction—the process whereby societies have structural continuity over time” (p 163). Giddens' postulation can be complicated by posing that the dynamism of local culture and its openness to the influence of other cultures, for instance global culture, necessitates the recognition of the simultaneity of continuity and discontinuity. Mandela's becoming different selves who operate differently within and outside local culture emphasizes these continuities and discontinuities. The irruptive emergence of autobiographical narratives like Mandela's experiences affirms the possibility of cultural insurgency irrupting to counter or subvert totalizing or marginalizing cultures expressed via apartheid.

Within culture, the individual, as symbolic interactionists argue, seizes language as a communicative tool. The individuals have to appropriate and deploy symbols which have the same meaning for different people. For instance, Mandela after rupturing tribalistic boundaries (p 33) evolves a politics of representation that permits marginal ethnic groups to participate in nation making. Socialization installs both vocabulary and grammar in the individual, thus shaping enunciatory and articulatory standpoints that figure the desires or intentions of the self. Culture, through socialization, enables the emergence of a sense of self. Adopting the work of the symbolic interactionist Charles Horton Cooley, Handel defines the configuration of self as “the ability to take oneself as an object, to be conscious that one is an object, distinct from other objects” (2000:14). I pose here that the Mandela who takes himself as object is in fact the subject exercising cognition of this object.

By marking boundaries between himself and superordinate othering selves, Mandela enters, to adopt Giddens, the space of self reflexivity; the ability to chronically monitor and regulate his

mental and bodily activities to answer the summons of desire. Mandela inspects and orders his motives and actions via culture's configuration of how a royal and political individual behaves in a crisis that threatens group identity. This self-monitoring extends to an inspection of how other selves view the self. Cooley argued that people come to possess a "looking-glass self" — their sense of self narration emerging in the specular gaze of other selves. However, this specularity must not be overemphasized because an individual inscribed with reflexivity has potential to align his behaviour with this specularity or to subversively write a self deliberately disarticulating this reflection.

Hebert Mead (1986:34) marked a difference between two aspects of the self, by designating that the "me" is one's definition of oneself in a specific social role. For example Mandela's self-reading as subalternized or marginalized, prompts subversive acts against his apartheid tormentors. The "I" is equivalent to one's "self-concept", its emergency is shaped by the reactions of others to the self and the way the self interprets the reactions of others. In Mead's theorization, the evolution of a self-consciousness is coterminous with the process of becoming a human being.

By becoming self-conscious Mandela plots his actions, for instance, the creation of the Umkhonto WeSiswe and the staging of sabotage violence, in spatio-temporal dimension, thus colonizing the future temporalities by projecting his plans and clearing space for its mapping of that future. Self-consciousness enables strategic decision making and political negotiations for the self to gratify its desires. Mandela's political activism is shaped towards an imagined South Africa which answers the demand for racial tolerance, equality and freedom. Hebert Blumer (1996) extending Mead (his mentor's ideas), posed that selves act in relation to the meanings they attach to objects and actions. He dispensed with structuralist perspectives (such as

functionalism) of the self that valorize consensus. Hence he emphasizes that meaning is created through both constructive and subversive interaction. This means Mandela's selves evolve via his interaction with multiple and different experiences and other individuals. Lodge (2006) has posed that the "media", as evinced by the construction of the elusive "black pimpnel" "myth, constructed mythologies around Mandela, posing him as invincible. In this interactive zone, in which Mandela's selves are invented between his political party's imaging of a charismatic leader and Mandela's desire to satisfy party and popular demand, a "messiah" (Lodge 2006:201) is invented.

Mandela invents his selves by appropriating cultural resources but since these resources are limited, they may not answer the demands of multiple experiences in unstable political times. Thus Mandela crosses cultural borders to coincide his acts with political contingency. He poses the difference between scripts of the norm and the disruption of that norm by the contingency of experience by posing that reading a newspaper article about a lapsed event makes one wiser after the event "but when you are in the centre of a heated political fight, you are given little time for reflection"(p 114). Selves are invented within the contingencies of our desires and the impinging desires of others on us. These desires or demands define the trajectory of the self through languages of interpretations. "Languages of interpretation do not take shape once there are selves existing to shape them, but themselves frame the taking shape of selves"(Huddart 2002:9). This means Mandela's selves evolve in the dynamic zone between his agentive interpretation of apartheid as totalizing and his realization that the irreducible singularity of his experience as experiment permits him to cross culture. Burr posits that "the person as social actor is seen as primarily struggling to represent herself or himself in an acceptable way with respect to their

culture's local rules'', (2006:99). This means Mandela constructs mythologies--with the connivance of the media and his fellow revolutionaries--that stage him as the legitimate icon and leader whose moral capital is inscribed with human rights, democracy and civilization. To adopt Burr's diction, Mandela invents "metaphors" of the self that are poised to negotiate a different identity from that posed by othering discourse. Burr posits that these "metaphors" (self imaging) pose the self as a "site of a battle" between conflicting forces, thus forcing the self to realize its agency and agenda. Mandela for instance, poses himself as the symbol of the struggle against apartheid:

I was the symbol of justice in the court of the oppressor,  
the representative of the great ideals of freedom, fairness  
and democracy in a society that dishonoured those virtues (p 215).

The self's subjectivity, lived and experienced, is constructed on "stories about the nature of humanity that are to be found embedded in our language''. In the narratives constructed by Mandela language is deployed to exclude and appropriate: exclude stories that disrupt the theories or moral values valorised by the self. "We craft our tale according to a theme; has our life been an adventure story, a comedy or a tragedy? Who are the heroes and anti-heroes'' (Burr, 2006: 103)

#### **Performing national identity: insurgency via song and dance**

In Mandela's narrative, songs and theatrical or artistic performances are sites of identity performativity; identity as unfixed but as becoming. This becoming is enacted through imagining

the exploits of Shaka, the legendary Zulu king warrior, imagining the entire African continent united and blessed by God ( Nkosisikeleli I Africa) , imagining the revolution as progressing, moving fast like the train in ‘shosholoza’ and imagining the oppressor as vanquished in the song “Strijdorn be aware”.

MasabalalanYengwa`s appropriation of the Imbongi`s role, his incarnation of Shaka (for impersonification is similar to incarnation) is a metaphoric resurrection of Shaka, the warrior. In selecting Shaka`s military prowess as exemplary, Yengwa Imbongi performance--embedded in Zulu culture--mobilizes his listeners/ audience into a heightened sense of militancy against apartheid. The language deployed, in this case the metaphor of the predatory bird imaging Shaka displaces the status of subaltern from the psyches of the audience, and Yengwa and his audience become victors. The contagion of this imagination ruptures racial and tribal boundaries among the audience as they become a united revolutionary group: because of the Imbongi performance there were:

No Xhosas, no Zulus, no Indians or Africans, no  
Lefts, no rights, no religious or political leaders,  
we were all nationalists and patriots [...] in history,  
our culture, our country, our people [...] (p 136).

In the song “Strijdorn beware”, a song Mandela and his mates sang in Johannesburg Prison, the narrator asserts his defiance, his refusal to be regimented as the inferior. It is a song that postures the identity of the narrator as a conscious equal to the white man, threatening or promising revolution. The song “God bless Africa”, Nkosisikeleli I Afrika, a song that affirms the African

nationalist “atmosphere” in the 1960s, is a tag of identity of the African as both victim and fighter. The song homogenizes Africa, dis-imagines all the diversity and difference among Africans. The similar experience (though its modes were different across the multiple geographies of Africa) of colonialism becomes the rallying point of identification. God is invoked as benefactor for the colonized, thus dismantling the template of the whiteman’s religion that relegates the Blackman to the menial status of “hewer of wood and drawer of water” for the white master.

In the song Shosholoz, which Mandela and his mates sing on Robben Island, the narrator, to countermand the disfigurations of apartheid, emphasizes the urgency and agency of the revolution. Shosholoz, a song by Rhodesian black migrant labourers to South Africa, images the movement of a train, fast moving from home through the mountains. It is also a song the migrants deployed to mark solidarity, thus identity. Mandela appropriates the song as an African in solidarity with the guerrilla war staged by Zimbabweans at the time of his incarceration.

#### **Narrativizations: inventing history and the nation.**

Onega and Landa (2002:3) posit that “a narrative is a semiotic representation of a series of events meaningfully connected in a temporal and causal way” .Mandela's reconstruction of history; family, tribal and African history, means to counter metaphors of the African as perennial subaltern, a Calliban. Mandela’s narrative is marked by the temporality of apartheid and I pose that Mandela's motive is to discredit the othering discourse of apartheid. Thus Verwoerd's bantustanization of identities and geographies is cancelled by Mandela staging himself as the "symbol of justice, democracy"(p 215) and multiracialism. Autobiography involves re-

presentation or the reinvention of selves; this representation “involves a point of view, a selection, a perspective on the represented object, criteria of relevance and, arguably an implicit theory of reality” (ibid).

The implication of Onega and Landa’s postulations is that *Long Walk* emerges as a singular manifestation out of the possible multiplicities of narratives that might have been told. *Long Walk* invokes culture via which Mandela’s selves construct a history imaging the African as other who can speak within and outside the illocutionary authority of the Metropolitan court. Mandela’s mobilities of speaking positions can be elucidated by Hayden White’s (2005: 78) postulation that a narration of experience is informed by certain codes or structures of morality or laws that enframe the telos of action and experience. Charles Taylor, (quoted in Huddart, 2009) confirms that the actions of the self and its interpretive acts gravitate to the performance of the morally good. White has always emphasized the fact that stories or experiences do not speak themselves; the self’s narrativization constructs meaning —through language in the context and implications of particular experience. The Mandela who is a tribal boy (in the inaugural chapter) becomes both a national and international icon, thus prompting a revision and reinvention of identity, morality and culture.

For Heraclitus, true being is the endless becoming of change’s interruptive circular path; things changing, being turns into not-being, life turns into death—change--to emphasize, is cyclical, repeated forever. Becoming becomes change. For instance, Mandela the child who is an active stick-fighter in the veld becomes the revolutionary, the lawyer, the prisoner, the statesman and the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. Here I have dispensed with the Platonic and Hegelian state

of being as perfect spiritual or ideal existence to posit being as the site of becoming. This becoming is interpenetrated with temporality and historicity because becoming performs transcendental acts inescapably linked to phenomenal selves.

In his boyhood, whose becoming has transcended birth and naming, yet transposing the mark of naming across different spatialities and temporalities, Mandela's being and becoming posture their performativity. Thus the name Rolihlahla, literally meaning "pulling the branch of a tree" or "trouble-maker", is the site of Mandela's subversive acts against the apartheid regime; because pulling the tree branch implies intention to dismantle. His being a trouble-maker marks the temporality and his historicity in the context of apartheid.

The self becomes different selves in the context of the body, culture, consciousness or ideology/discourse. Foucault (1990) has already elaborately demonstrated how subjects are constituted through discourse. But his constitution of bodies as passive slab-texts can be modified by Giddens who inscribes the body with an active role in the self's reflective project. Thus Mandela becomes selves in the context of his and the superaltern's culture, history and the decontextualizing chaos of experience. His culture is marked by an emphasized sense of justice as fairness, egalitarian ideals, democratic principles and a sense of integrity and honour (p 21). His history as retrieval of the past or accounting for the past is marked by battles in which his ancestors contested and negotiated for space, geographies and honour by defeating other tribes or ethnic groups. Therefore a history and culture of resistance and heroism is affirmed by his father and mother:

Whereas my father once told stories of historic battles  
and heroic Xhosa warriors, my mother would enchant

us with Xhosa legends and fables that had come from  
numberless generations (p 15).

All human historicities and temporalities are marked by particular contestations that compel modes of transcending them, modes of becoming other selves not subjected to the tyrannies of particular historical moments. If contestations appear literally in each generation, then this affirms the Heraclitean and Nietzschean endless cyclical return of phenomenon. This quotation from Mandela's narrative does two things.

It infuses Mandela's consciousness, with origins, or imagined originary antecedents in the form of heroic warriors who, in the act of historical narrativization by the father, are becoming exemplars of resistance, contestation and heroism in Mandela the boy. But the adult Mandela also reinvents himself by writing into his political self the Western modes of defending one's rights and collective rights as he does in court. Secondly, the mother's Xhosa fables and legends 'atmosphere' both the particular historical moments and the collective intergenerational experience of the Xhosa with heroism that transcend temporal strictures, thus marking certain warriors with heroism as it infuses the totality/sum of Xhosa experiences with the consciousness of heroism.

In the construction of his identity, Mandela infuses this with royalty as his father was a chief of Mvezo, appointed by the King of the Thembu Tribe. And "the Thembu tribe reaches back twenty generations to King Zwide" (p 11). Mandela's narrative presents the narrator's father as a "tall, dark skinned man with a stately posture" which the narrator believes he has inherited. All this marks Mandela with legitimacy in the orbit of power. The fact that his father arbitrates in the

King's court and that he is a King maker constructs Mandela as the predestined leader who would contest, like the Xhosa heroes before him, an enemy of his time and historical context.

The narrative of his father's insubordination and insolence against the magistrate is an instance of the warrior spirit, the resistance spirit inherited by Mandela which slips into place as naturally as the genes Mandela inherited from his father's genealogy before him. Mandela's father's resistance has a political stance:

My father's response spoke his belief that the  
magistrate had no legitimate power over him. When  
it came to tribal matters; he was guided not by the laws  
of the King of England, but by Thembu custom. (p. 12).

The father's defiance becomes an active site of becoming, because it is this defiance that configures Mandela's revolutionary ethos, for instance his boldness in court before the white judges. A culture becomes the site of identity (de)construction because it provides the telos of being and becoming and as Taylor (1989) has posited, culture provides the economy of the values of good and evil. The narrator says in his boyhood "[His] life and that of most Xhosas at the time was shaped by custom, ritual, and taboo. This was the alpha and omega of our existence, and went unquestioned" (p 15).

The phrase "alpha and omega "translated to beginning and ending" presupposes an unchanging cultural structure. Its closure is merely textual; in practice the individual self can transgress these structures and in the interval between transgression and the formation of another structure, the

self becomes another and the other, the pre-transgressing self becomes not or unbecomes. This is exemplified when Mandela and Justine defy the Regent's forced marriages by escaping to Johannesburg. Mandela the adult punctures the closure of local custom, ritual and taboo by posing that he fancied himself as a sort of an "Anglophile" (p 205). Tom Lodge poses that Mandela's childhood in which he was exposed to royalty etiquette coincided with the British values of "chivalry": valour, integrity, loyalty and bravery/ heroism. (Lodge 2006:215).

Mandela, in his narrative poses that "As a Xhosa, I count my years as a man from the date of my circumcision" (p 24). The rite de passage, as noted by Levi Bruhl (1980) constitute the site of identity formation; identity as becoming as posited by Stuart Hall. The boy becoming a man means the unbecoming or death of boyhood, thus affirming Heraclitus' assertion that "being turns into death". The death of boyhood-being in Mandela is posed by his becoming of a man, an identity marked by moral responsibilities and penalties emerging in the becoming.

The historical narratives; told by the father and chief Joyi, at different times, involve the narrator retrieving from the past, names of heroic figures, places of battles and the prowess of the Xhosa warriors who defeated their enemies. Chief Joyi's historical narratives, performed in the historical context of apartheid, forms an emancipatory discourse. And as Coullie (2006:3) has posited "Accordingly, autobiographical accounts function as sites that produce normalized subjectivities as well as practice that promise emancipation and autonomy."

The emancipatory agency of such historical narratives depends on the narrator's point of view dwelling on the heroism of the fighters. This point of view and perspective whose exclusionary practice leaves out the undesired constructs identity. True to form, the point of view and perspective has the intended effect on Mandela; the intention to make him become a warrior, a

defender of his nation, thus Mandela says; “Chief Joyi’s war stories and indictment of the British made me feel angry and cheated, as though I had already been robbed of my own birth-right” (p 23).

It is also via chief Joyi’s narratives that Mandela the boy learns of the fragmenting discourse and praxis of colonialism, that through its Western practice of defining reality through Sameness rather than difference, divided the originary abantu family; instituting the divide and rule strategy; “Thembu, the Mpondo, the Xhosa and Zulu were all children of one father [ ... ] The Whiteman shattered the abantu, the fellowship of the various tribes”.(p 23).Chief Joy’s narrativizations,I pose, are choreographed to represent white settlers as disruptive simultaneously as it erases the history of tribal wars, for instance, the mfecane/difacane that decimated and displaced thousands of Africans. Tom Lodge (2006:106) has also noted the "inaccuracies" in Chief Joyi's narratives by exposing these inaccuracies as disjunctive to other historians' accounts. Chief Joyi's narrativizations enjoined to Mandela's re-membering of king Cetyawayo's defeat of the British at Isandhlwana in 1879,the Sharpeville massacre and his commemoration of other black leaders(Marcus Gurney,Fan Louw Harries,Malcolm X,Harriet Tobias...etc), constitute, in Benedict Anderson's postulation, "a mechanism of imagining a new nation". Anderson develops this postulation by posing that such an imagining appropriates "suicides, martyrdoms, assassinations, executions, wars and holocausts" to construct “the nation's biography” ( Anderson 1991:205-206).

Mandela’s autobiography, riding on cultural and historical narratives that disrupt the discourse of apartheid, can also “become the door through which the marginalized enter into the house of a non-familiar tradition of literature or culture, often irreparably modifying it in combination with other cultural forms” (Gready, 1994: 165).At this stage cultural and historical narratives are

interlocutionary; laying charges of illegitimacy against apartheid agents, laws and practice. As interlocutors, Mandela's father and chief Joyi, coming in from the margins with their oral reconstruction of the past--a form of literature that disrupts the illegitimate juridical authority of the oppressor--subvert the text of apartheid. Mandela, commenting on the court practice at the Regent's house poses that "everyone who wanted to speak did so. It was democracy in its purest form" (p.21). Thus the democratic and egalitarian ethos of Mandela's culture on entering the house of apartheid disarticulates the egocentric, racist and segregatory ethos of the oppressor. In the "house" of the British culture Mandela's presence and enunciations are marked by irony symbolically posed by him being named after Lord Nelson, a British hero. The irony emerges in the uneasy contestation for space between Rolihlahla, "the dismantler" and the desire of British culture to implant the Lord Nelson icon in the native's psyche. In the 'house' of British culture, the narrator enters as subaltern:

The education I received was British education, in which British ideas, British culture, British institutions were automatically assumed to be superior. There was no such thing as African culture (p. 18).

The exclusionary and parochial nature of British culture (and here it must be noted that the exclusion is marked by irony, the colonizer stuffs the subaltern with his culture but refuses to recognise him as an equal) is reconstructed in language or grammar (Burr 2002, Harre 1989) that poses the gaping difference between the narrator's indigenous laws, culture and history and the superordinated's discourse. In his numerous court appearances, Mandela imagines himself as the icon of the black people's dreams for freedom and independence. He recounted the legends and

historical narratives his “elders” told him “many years ago [...]. The elders would tell tales of the wars fought by our ancestors in defense of the fatherland, as well as the acts of valor by generals and soldiers during these epic days” (p 222). In his speech particular vocabulary is deliberately deployed to prove that Africans were not just bands of nomadic savages but were governed by the council, “variously called “Imbizo” or “Pitso” or “Kgotha”. The grammar of his language rehabilitates the subaltern’s disfigured humanity as it contests the discourse of “othering” by the Whiteman. Describing his past as “epic” displaces the obscurity and chaos imposed in the construction of the African past by the invader-settlers.

The regent, at whose court democracy is performed, is metaphorically imaged as Shepherd and his subjects are depicted as “nimble”, going ahead of the shepherd. The metaphor poses the African leader, in this case the Regent, as protector. Deployment of language of difference; ultimately constructing a discourse of defiance and resistance is also locatable in Mghayi’s classificatory rhetoric in which the whites are posed as “interlopers to be defeated” and the French, German and English are the milky way marked by “greed and envy” constantly “quarrelling over plenty”(p. 35). It is here that Appiah interposes that constructing a counter discourse that deploys binaristic methods similar to that deployed by the colonizer constitutes “reverse racialism”(Appiah, 2006:67); the subaltern remains colonized by the dictates of the binaries.

The grammar of this language is the grammar of resistance, constituting, to adopt Taylor, Mandela not as passive subaltern, but as agentive enough to interlocute and indict the colonizers as inhuman. In this instance, language, as Foucault has elaborately elucidated, constructs discursive formations in identity as the subject’s becoming, through “enunciative modalities” (Foucault 1990: 216), and demonstrates that the power of the superordinate is not absolute. Thus

Mandela the child who used to regard whites as “grand as gods” (p 16) has become a militant interlocuter of this invented divinity of the oppressor. In his revolutionary role Mandela poses insurgency as a site of opposition and also the invention of a subject conscious of its humanity. “The campaign” created the consciousness that he was “not inferior” and hence he could now “...walk upright like a man...” (p 97). Mandela’s discourse refrains from turning his tormentor into an object as Hegelian philosophy proposes, rather, it reverberates with Fanonian theorization that the anti colonialist revolutionary seeks to “sit in the master’s seat” and that the human being is a “yes to life, freedom and love” (Fanon 1968:78). Mandela also deploys violence as proposed by both Fanon and Che Guevara. Mandela like Fanon poses this violence as simultaneously cathartic and emancipatory: he realizes that via violence he has not “...succumbed to oppression and fear” (p 97). Mandela transcends Hegelian objectification of his tormentor by rehabilitating him through reconciliation.

In contesting the Whiteman’s claims to superiority, Mandela deploys what Homi Bhabha terms “mimicry”; an agentive and subversive mode of insurrection in which the subaltern mimics the oppressor “slipping” (Bhabha 2002:68) through his political hold: thus Mandela says;

A freedom fighter learns that it is the oppressor who  
defines the nature of the struggle, and the oppressed is  
often left no recourse but to use methods that mirror  
those of the oppressor (p. 114).

In the context of the above, the subaltern’s being and becoming are ironically constituted within the oppressor’s discourse of exclusion as the narrator appropriates the master’s discourse to

disarticulate it through the resources of both the superaltern and subaltern's history and culture. In the courtroom, Mandela, for instance, appropriates the superaltern's justice and legal institutions turning its discourse against the oppressor to expose the disjuncture between whites' claim to be civilized and their practice of injustice and unfairness. Mandela also appropriates and exploits the pantheon of world leaders as represented in history by reinventing himself as one of them: a leader faced with the exigency to emancipate and protect his people and their values. Thus he is enthralled by "...pictures of Roosevelt, Churchill, Stalin, Gandhi and the storming of the winter palace" (p 140). He appropriates these leaders' audacity to create history by opposing, as in Churchill's case, totalizing and anti-human agents. Hence the culture of the subaltern has already lost any claims to authenticity in contestation with the interloper's imposed culture because of its appropriation of "methods that mirror those of the oppressor". The audacity of the narrator to contest the white man's discourse is not only premised on historical narratives and legends; it is informed by the visible archaeological monuments that prove the existence of a glorious past in Africa. In commenting on the pyramids on his visit to Egypt Mandela says:

This was not amateur archaeological interest; it is important for African nationalists to be armed with evidence to dispute the fictitious claims of whites that Africans are without a civilized past that compares with that of the West. In a single morning I discovered what Egyptians were (p.203).

Identifying with the Egyptians, despite the geographical and temporal divide between the Xhosa and the ancient Egyptians, exemplifies a mode of becoming, a becoming in the imperatives of discourse. The narrator, via appropriated resources of history, becomes an equal of the oppressor

simultaneously as he unbecomes the subaltern. Identification, Hall(1996) poses, marks similarity by exclusions; in this case the whiteman is excluded from the heritage of a glorious African past with which Mandela identifies. Frantz Fanon(1968) postulates the way the anticolonial revolutionaries conscript cultural and historical resources as insurgency against the othering by the colonizer and as sites of agentive reconstruction of identities by the subaltern. The narrator, through the singular glory of ancient Egypt, 'atmospheres' the entire African continent with splendour, despite the heterogeneity in tribes, cultures and traditions in Africa's vast geographies. Mandela's reinvention of the African past is aporetic in that a great past can't be known in a "single morning" and the temporal and geographic gap between the ancient Egyptians and the narrativizing self disavows such a simplistic conclusion. It is here that a conversation with Appiah's *In my father's house* exposes "identities" and "histories" as "invented" (Appiah, 2006:106) via mythologies that are positioned as authentic. Appiah advances, against what he poses as 'nativism', a transcendence of tribal, racial, national and ethnic inventions of identity because they are mere simulacra.

### **Contradictory vocations: masking and performing identity**

Here I argue that Mandela's identity as political self and nationalist patriot erases the cultural constructions of Mandela the father and Mandela the husband. In his reflections on the relations between singular identities, family and collective/national identities, Mandela poses:

I wondered—not for the first time-- whether

one was justified in neglecting the welfare  
of one`s own family in order to fight for the  
welfare of others (p.125).

Then on the next page he says, “It is important for the freedom fighter to remain in touch with his own roots” (p.125). Mandela`s narrative elides, through its exorbitant nationalist ethos, the fact of his failure as a father; the role to provide material comforts and mentorship to his children. Thus in justifying the divorce between him and his first wife, Evelyn, he says “her church taught passivity and submissiveness” (p.139). This sets a binaristic construction of difference and therefore, as the narrative implies inevitable divorce. Mandela is militant while Evelyn is submissive; she attends a church, Jehovah`s Witness that promise a heaven in Utopia, while Mandela is constructing a heaven on earth. Mandela`s children are alienated from the mentorship of their father during his long stay in prison, thus undermining his cultural role as father. Therefore he unbecomes a father and husband as he becomes a national icon for revolution and independence. Mandela`s narrative poses that he believes that individual agenda must be submerged in national agenda; the results of the limitations of the assertion have been demonstrated; Mandela`s failure to be a family provider and mentor.

While identities in Mandela`s narrative are culture and historically specific, some of the identities he constructs as in the black Pimpernel period are not specifically shaped by a single culture but emerge as improvisations. The individual narrator invents them, for instance, his disguise as a driver or menial worker, is pure invention unbound by culture. Mandela notes that “Prison [...] attempts to take away your identity” (p. 225) by homogenizing the experience of all prisoners via imposing similar uniforms, cells and food. And as fugitive:

Living underground requires seismic psychological shifts, one has to plan every action [...].Nothing is innocent. Everything is questioned. You cannot be yourself; you must fully inhabit whatever role you have assumed (p.181).

Here, the narrator deploys the language of fracturing (seismic), unstable meanings/realities as “everything is questioned” and then the fissured self “you cannot be yourself”. The phrase “you cannot be yourself” refuses a unified self that Mandela assumes at the inauguration of his narrative. The multiple selves implied by “you must inhabit whatever role you have assumed” are the ones emerging in the interval (Derrida 1996, Hall 2002) between appearing and vanishing. They are multiple and unstable, befitting a culture ( far removed from Mandela’s originary culture) which fragments in its modernist poise, chronically putting traditions and cultural grammars under erasure as it simultaneously writes into existence a new temporary frame of reference.Lodge poses Mandela's "political actions as performance", actions choreographed to "meet public expectations or calculated to shift popular sentiment (Lodge 2006:xv).His role as Creon in Oristes' version of Sophocles' Antigone establishes "links between political leadership" and "theatrical performance" ( ibid:189).Metaphors of masking deployed in the Antigone performance pose Mandela's character and motives as hidden or constantly shifting thus disbanding discourses that seek to regiment his re-imaginings of identity, cultural and historical resources. Mandela’s mobilities of identity and worlding in both the apartheid and post-apartheid era poses African characters that refuse Achille Mbembe's stereotypical imaging of Africans as corrupt homo ludens trapped in endless orgies of violence and squandering of

national resources. Mbembe's postulations about violence, while being confirmed by *Long Walk* (the Inkatha Freedom Party's genocidal attempt), are prohibited by the worldview constructed by Mandela. Against Mbembe's subject who fails to negotiate a position of agency within hegemony/commandement, Mandela stages his selves and other selves like Oliver Tambo, as agentive political selves who disband all modes of "othering", oppression and subalternization.

Therefore, in the end, Mandela as national/international icon inhabits global culture which privileges identities above clan, tribe, family and nation. His global traversing and lobbying for international assistance, his admiration of the British parliamentary system and his acceptance of the Nobel Peace Prize from the Metropole, demonstrate his becoming multiple selves; selves appropriating and performing culture, identity and history to coincide with political exigency and contingency. On the global arena the Nobel Peace Prize disseminates political legitimacy that inflates Mandela's moral capital, thus enabling the invention of his iconicity as international champion or exemplar of human rights and international law.

### **Cosmopolitan spaces: Hybrid identities and questions of hospitality**

*“I am a citizen of the world (cosmopolites)”*

*Diogenes of Sinope (c.412 BC)*

If the previous chapter analyzed the self as strategically placed at memory, cultural and historical sites to promote its project of political self and nation-concluding that the nation be multicultural – the next chapter places this multiculturalism under prohibition, arguing for hybridity as played out in Cosmopolitan spaces. For Godwin’s Enlightenment self, alterity presents an occasion for excluding, appropriating or interiorizing the Other in the same. For Mandela, this othering of the Enlightenment self must be countered as the self advances democracy and multiculturalism. Obama’s *Dreams from my father* (hereafter *Dreams*) traverses multiculturalism, the vernacular (local culture, traditions) as it opens hybrid spaces. It stages both rooted and rootless cosmopolitan staging its own aporia and antinomies.

Deploying the image of Babel in *Dreams* (p. 140), Bakhtin’s concepts of heteroglossia and polyphony, a comparative application of Heidegger and Levinas’s concepts on home, dwelling and alterity and Appiah’s rooted cosmopolitan, I analyse cosmopolitan and hybrid identities in *Dreams*. Derrida’s ideas on cosmopolitanism expose the aporia in claiming to be rooted yet exteriorizing the self in hybrid spaces: where does one place the boundary between the vernacular and the cosmopolitan space? Who writes the norm in hybrid spaces and within what

episteme? And in his Babel- the heteroglossic and polyphonic spaces – who translates the vernacular into hybrid spaces and the converse? And if the self and other are to be radically rootless then is all difference not erased and with it any speaking position? Speaking and identities are possible from positions of difference. How does one offer hospitality in a context of unrelenting rootlessness? To offer that hospitality, an injunction emphasized by Levinas, is to revive the citizen/stranger categories and thus questioning cosmopolitanism's marking of territorial and psychic borders as easily porous. Borders mark a limit to the performativity of hospitality.

#### **Traversing the Vernacular: Cosmopolitanism as hybrid space**

Configurations of cosmopolitanism will emerge soon in the course of analysis. In the Preface to *Dreams*, Obama poses the autobiographical re-presentation of his “family” in conjunction with an articulation of “ the fissures of race that have characterized the American experience...” (p 3) It is important for the exploration and interrogation of Cosmopolitanism's hybridity to emphasize that the American experience provides sites of racial, cultural, temporal and spatial diversity as evidenced by the “fluid state of identity- the leaps through time, the collision of cultures- that mark our modern Life "(Preface :1) Cosmopolitan hybridity, this seems an injunction, has to be analyzed not in the limited sense of spatial geographies and the mobilities of migrants or refugees into or across these spatialities; hybridity includes the temporal dimension. For instance, while in Nairobi Obama notes the adjuncture of the Nairobi city of colonial architecture” and “another city... a city of high rise offices and elegant shops” marking Nairobi as an intoxicating elusive mixture ... as if Nairobi's history refused to settle in orderly layers, as if what was then

and what was now fell in constant, noisy collision (p.122). This means a complication of hybridity not in Bhabha's "in-between-ness" (Bhabha, 2004:202), not as sited in the liminal space between entities but as sited in the entities and between the entities. If we recognise the dynamism of the heterogeneity of hybridity within entities themselves, we can postulate a difference within these hybridities, opening space to the "collision" that Obama notes and - beyond "interstitial spaces"(Bhabha 2004:105)-at another level, the possibility of the re-entry of totalizing acts of one mode of cosmopolitan hybridity over another. This point shall be explored further. Here I configure Dreams` positing difference between Cosmopolitanism (rooted/rootless) and the essentializing parochialism of immobile vernaculars. Commenting on the apocalypse of 9/11 bombings, Obama poses that because of his postmodern cosmopolitan political stance, he became a "target of mocking websites from overzealous Republican operatives" and that the:

underlying struggle – between worlds of plenty and worlds of want; between the modern and the ancient; between those who embrace our teeming, irksome diversity, while still insisting on a set of values that binds us together, and those who would seek, under whatever flag or slogan or sacred text, a certainty and simplification that justifies cruelty toward those not like us – is the struggle set forth ... in this book (p. 2)

Quoting Faulkner, Obama poses that "the past is never dead and buried- it isn't even past"(p.3). This is in conjunction with the Derridean concept of hauntology discussed in the previous

chapter. It also affirms the B-theory of time as simultaneity; the past and present or the “thickening” of time in the Deleuzian mode. This means temporal hybridity, a hybridity that may or may not be traversed by the mobility and hospitality norm of Cosmopolitanism. It also means the claim of cosmopolitanism to be modern or postmodern becomes contaminated with atavistic or ancient impulses of empire or the Enlightenment ethos of constructing difference and diversity as a mode of identity imagination by the same. As noted by Said in *Orientalism*, Bhabha in *Location of culture*, the Same constructs its monopolizing identity by configuring the other as exotic, inferior, barbaric or backward.

The difference between “worlds of plenty and worlds of want” is significant in this study for three reasons. It marks the geographies of the post colonies or the third world, as sites from which the migrant or refugee is assumed to emerge: crossing borders to escape poverty, war and disease in the world of want. It stages geopolitics as written in the Metropolitan spaces, thus putting into question the possibility of the foreigner in these metropolitan spaces as one who can really be at home. Third, it re-opens the debate on the re-entry of a totalizing power from the Metropole staging its operations in the guise of Cosmopolitanism. Such a totalizing operation is prompted by Metropolitan organizations like Al-Qaeda, who through “sacred text”, stage a simplistic and dangerous binarism; a reverse “othering” whose catastrophic results Obama poses by saying “And then, in September 11, 2001, the world fractured”(p.3). But the attentive reader does not assume that the world was a homogeneous entity before the apocalypse, that there were no fractures between differently configured cultures and causes. The attentive reader will discover the difference in the performativity of this statement as the difference between the locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts of the utterance.

The locutionary is the utterance as it is, the illocutionary imposes the recognition of the existence of fractures before the apocalypse date, the perlocutionary is infective, it is contagious in that Obama teleologically shapes it to create outrage in the reader, he intends the reader to take a stand against what he views as the irrational or rabid acts of Al Qaeda, in short he wills the reader to take a side. And this taking of a stand questions the possibility of the Cosmopolitan ethic if the Other is still viewed as a menace, atavistic, regressive and violent while the Same views itself as democratic, humanitarian and a site of refuge or hospitality. Yet this claim is interrupted by the Bush administration stance's "insinuated" appropriation of "hybridity as a feature of globalization that fully exposes the ... irony of hybrid fundamentalism contesting the assumed rabid fundamentalism of the other (Kompridis, 2009:8), in this context Al Qaeda. The irony is interposed between the two fundamentalisms unsuturing the work of justice and hospitality.

Obama's cosmopolitan imaging, marked by ambiguity and ambivalence as shall soon be proved, is implicated in the project of his self reinvention. This contemporaneous imaging of hybrid community and self invention merits a quotation:

I saw the African-American community becoming more than just the place where you'd been born or the house you'd been raised. Through organizing, through shared sacrifice, membership had been earned. And because membership was earned- because this community I imagined was still in the making, built on the

promise that the larger American community, black, white and brown, could somehow redefine itself- I believed that it might, over time, admit the uniqueness of my life (p. 54).

This configures the notion of mobilities of communities, cultures and traditions across borders (Meredith 2012). It means identities have become disembedded from spatial locales and that even without the trans-border mobilities of communities and individuals, the distant cultures from other geographies enter the space of the indigenous or aboriginal, setting a reconfiguration of the locale (Giddens 1999; Appadurai 2003). Cultures and communities migrate embodied in the individual migrants or as mediated images on TV, the Web or social media like Facebook, twitter and multiple internet chat rooms. Giddens' analysis of postmodernity also inscribes temporal and disparate spatial merging-under the GMT sign-as implicated in the invention of a global culture. This means a heterogeneous community as imagined by Obama emerges in the possibility of diffused and shared cosmopolitan values re-defining identities and the practice of hospitality.

The ambivalence between “home” as embedded in spatial location and tradition and home as mobile (Bhabha 1994) can be explicated via Heidegger’s “in-dwelling” and Levinas’ espousal of radical migration and alterity. While Heidegger valorizes – what Obama rejects – the ontology of place; that place is a site of being, possibility and authenticity, Levinas privileges technology and modernity/post modernity’s disbanding and dispersing of identities into diasporas; and this is

what Obama imagines, a community of all races (black, brown, white) that prohibits the tyranny of traditions, tribe, in short the vernacular.

The context of Obama's autobiography is postmodernity or high modernity as Giddens terms it. It is the context when "Internationally, writers announced the end of history, the ascendance of free markets and liberal democracy" and " the replacement of old hatreds and wars between nations with virtual communities and battles for market share" ( p. 2). Obama views, though marked by contradictions to be discussed in the next section, the self-inventing act of the postmodern self as the end of history. Here end of history is different from that posed by Hegel and Marx; homogenization through an arrest or dissolution of binaries and dialectics: constituting a changeless society insinuating that all alternatives of possibility for change have been exhausted. In the postmodern sense, Obama's reference to the " end of history" means "the peculiar ways in which the past was historicized, (was conceptualized in modernist, linear and essentially metanarrative forms) has now come to an end of its productive life" ( Fukuyama 2006:230 ). It has been replaced by the postmodernist's fracturing of linear temporal emplotment, spatial displacements / dislocations, the chronic revision of worldviews (Giddens, 1996) and the invention of 'virtual communities" (Baudrillard 1998:96) in which simulacra, the invention of signs and inscription of mimesis obscure reality or pose as reality (Baudrillard, 1998). It is the "virtual community" as Obama poses, in which sites of communication media become sites of identity's unceasing morphing, de-morphing and re-morphing, (Gergen, 2000).

In this case Levinas` rigorous postulation advocating departures from places is crucial. It means the individual, as Obama notes about his grandfather Onyango, has “to reinvent himself... [t]hrough force of will, he will create a life out of scraps of an unknown world, and the memories of a world rendered obsolete” (p.166). Self reinvention means an appropriation of exteriority and the interior reserve of the self`s being. It figures the past as unknown and unknowable and culture and tradition as transgressable because of their arbitrariness.

Levinas poses the difference in homing and unhoming in the case of Abraham and Odysseus. While Abraham like Obama`s uncle Omar, departs home without returning, Odysseus makes homing his project. A project Levinas stigmatizes as the self`s desire for the Same, an ontology of place and being that ultimately constitutes an egology; the Heideggerian hoarding of `care` for oneself that manifests itself in metanarratives of ethnocentrism, racism and tribalism. The fact that the self discovers itself in “an unknown world” can be explicated via Levinas` emphatic avowal that it is in fact this unknowability that dispossesses the self of parochial blindness or the self-limiting Heideggerian self`s return to what it erroneously takes as its source of being and existence. If the postmodern self projects itself in its multiple engagements with worlding activities-across vast and multiple geographies- it should accept unknowability, uncertainty and non-closure of the cosmopolitan ethos. The distant, different other, the stranger`s unknowability “questions the self” (Levinas 2012) and the result of this questioning is a transcendence of the self. This transcendence, (like Obama transcending his adolescence and teenagehood in which he depended on exterior narratives about his past from mother, Toot and grandpa) marks departures without returns but revisions; this is conjunctured to Abraham`s departure in which he gives an injunction to his servant "never even to return his son to the point of departure"(ibid:57).

Heidegger holds Levinassian and by conjunction, Obama`s postmodernist technologies of self-mutabilities and mobilities as symptoms of inauthenticity which he poses as the alienation from the “home of being” (Heidegger, 2006:84 ). Heidegger configures mechanical, media/virtual technology as ultimately capable of seizing control over humanity and emptying human\ity`s ability to exercise its possibilities. In sinister and apocalyptic language, Heidegger lumps the fracturedness of selves in the postmodern age with the banality of “planting human bones in gas chambers” (Malpas, 2013:10); a reference to the Jewish Holocaust. As beings alienated from their place of Being, human beings will be placed in the world in-being –with technologies that reduce them to a "standing reserve" (Heidegger 2006:67) in the sense of being tools or instruments to be exploited for some other ends.

This Heideggerian ambivalence (that he views Dasein as one who inevitably exercises possibilities via tool making and use and Dasein's susceptibility to being instrumentalized by this technology: media, chemical and mechanical) is posed when Obama says he expected Ruby (who had fixed blue eye-contacts to her brown eyes to enhance beauty) and other black leaders “to possess some immunity from the onslaught of images” themselves a site and praxis of iconicity “ that feed every American`s insecurities”, prescribing images of “ the slender models in the fashion magazines, the square-jawed men in fast cars- images to which I myself was vulnerable and from which I had sought protection” (p.77).Obama`s nervousness about scripted identity images in the media, images that constructed normativity around certain images and disallowed others, revibrates with Adorno and Horkheimer`s postulations on the possibility of the uninformatization of identities and lifestyles in postmodernity. I bundle Heidegger, Adorno and

Horkheimer as overly pessimistic, though granting some of the obverse results of what technology can write or re-write on postmodern identities. Their pessimism, founded in the fear of the self being voided of authenticity for Heidegger and subjectivity for Adorno and Horkheimer can be countered by Obama's posing that despite his recognition of the instabilities of identity in a hybrid community he "believed that [such a community], overtime, might admit the uniqueness of [his] life" (p.54). In this quotation uncertainty haunts the possibility of the admittance but not the uniqueness of his self. A self that images itself as unique and simultaneously promotes identity as migrant and hybrid does not submit to a submergence and dissolution in technology or mediatized images of identity. Uniqueness is only possible and viable if the self first assumes a distance- marking difference from the other. A difference which, in Levinas' words, constitutes the other's unknowability. The danger in hoarding one's home, Levinas posits, is that the Same inhibits its potential for multiple becomings of uniqueness via the tyranny of ontology to which Heidegger's ontology distils.

Obama images such an ontological tyranny, a tyranny that exposes itself in "Othering" discourse and colonization, by posing his observation that "The emotions between the races could never be pure; even love was tarnished by the desire to find in the other some element that was missing in ourselves."(p.52) This does not traverse Levinas' concept of self discovery via alterity, but seeking "our demons or salvation" in the "other race" certainly constitutes an egological appropriation of "the other who would always remain just that, menacing alien; and apart" (p.52). Here Obama configures two Levinassian things. First he establishes that alterity is a gravitating towards the other; which leads to infinitude rather than the circular Heideggerian ontology

homed between “sky, earth, the mortals and divinities” (Heidegger, 1989:78)- an ontology that circulates in the home of being and prohibits the self as existence to escape this orbit of home.

Levinas poses the “alien” or the stranger in the Cosmopolitan spaces as necessary to disband and disperse any totalizing ontology (political, identity) before it homogenizes differently placed geographies, cultures and subjectivities within its home. Therefore, the second thing Obama`s text achieves is to set a tension between how Heidegger and Levinas would interpret the word “menacing” as it appears above. To Heidegger, the other, the alien outside the self would create a-being-with that promotes “idle talk”, that is activities that occlude, as he poses, Dasein`s authenticity, Dasein`s realizing himself or "coming into his own" potential. (Heidegger, 2006). Thus the “other” is menacing in a negative sense. In Levinas' stance “menacing” is what he interprets as a pre-requisite of the questioning, the opening of the other; he says “the face of the other menaces me” but in that “gentle way” which opens me to infinitude” (Levinas, 2012:106). Infinitude here is heterogeneity, multiplicity and the relentless slipping away of meaning that refuses insular dwelling. Both Levinas and Heidegger pose gravitating towards the other as important, but as demonstrated, they are opposed as to the reason for this gravitating. Heidegger`s gravitating is for plunder, colonizing and a return to the home of self to enrich that home. This is implied by Obama's imaging of the Same seeking its "demons" in the Other: an ambiguous assertion which can mean the Same appropriating/annexing the Other to reproduce itself (demon can mean one's double) or the Same projecting its inadequacies or images of degeneracy on the Other. As Fanon (1990) notes, the Same, in his context the white man, invents his racial superiority by stereotypes that cast the black man as uncivilized or barbarous while privileging himself as paragon of progress and civilization. Levinas' gravitating is for opening

the self to infinitude and because the self "is hostage to the other" (Levinas, 2012:134), the self gives itself, thus dispossessing itself of home. This dispossession is in an equation to the postmodernist and Abrahamic nomadism which refuses to dwell at a single site of culture, history and existence. Obama's deployment of De Chirico's images (p.118) is intended to extend his conviction that arrivals of certain ontologies or at certain homes/locales enigmatically happens inscribed by the notice or caveat that such an arrival is a departure. This is imaged in Grandpa's enthusiasm for nomadism (p; 10). But what does Obama pose about hospitality? And how would Levinas and Heidegger's concepts of home and hospitality converse with Obama?

#### **The hybrid self: sites and images of hospitality**

Hospitality as the practice of opening doors and borders to guests, foreigners or strangers can be deployed to question cosmopolitanism's claim on the viability of world citizenship. Appiah in "The Cosmopolitan patriot", (2013) is convinced that the self can stay in its reserve of the vernacular and simultaneously cross national borders to make multiple homes distant from the spatial site of the vernacular home. But aporia and antinomies haunt Appiah's theorization. I have noted earlier in this chapter that epistemes and cultures can be dislocated and be migrant across borders embodied in the human migrant. Spatial ontology has lost its hold on the vernacular to mediatizing technology and modern global travelling. If Appiah's migrant crosses borders in his reserve of the vernacular then he is at home and is foreigner within that vernacular at the moment of crossing the border. At home because he is in familiar signs; the vernacular but simultaneously a foreigner because this vernacular, put under the scrutinizing gaze of the host, the other, questions the migrant embodying it as to its own acceptability under this gaze. Appiah

poses his mode of rooted Cosmopolitanism as “conversation”. Does the embodied vernacular of the migrant not re-arrange itself in such an interlocutionary engagement? In such a conversation the migrant is unhomed/ de-rooted by the signs of the other, thus the aporia is that he is rooted and de-rooted at the same moment.

The phrasing that hospitality be an opening of borders and doors to strangers or foreigners will inevitably place the injunction that physical borders and doors do not open if the mental doors and borders are locked up. This means I will complicate the notion and practice of hospitality by posing the self as a site of home, a site of hospitality. The quotation, from 1 Chronicles 29, inaugurating Dreams, poses migrancy and the presence of the stranger on the horizon as inscribed in the human condition. This disrupts fixations of home, metanarratives and ontologies (temporal, spatial and epistemic) as the self performs a radical transcendence or escape of these ontologies without return (Levinas 2011). The verse marks the earth as a temporary home on which the self invents other temporary homes (our days on earth are like a shadow, and there is no biding: 1 Chronicles 29v15). Obama feels the need to escape the ontology invented around his hybrid body, this ontology poses the hybrid as an aberration: he views interracial marriages as “hunchbacked”, meaning against the norm. Obama’s narrative intends to erase such vocabulary and replace it with one that opens to difference. The ultimate escape Obama poses-- also posed by Levinas and Chronicles-- is death: death as both metaphorical and literal. Death as dissolution of ontologies, thus setting the self to exile and different experience. Death as the decomposition of the physical body from which he can escape the ‘ghost’ of ‘in-betweenness’ (p8, 9) and the somatic hybridity. This constitutes utter or absolute escape posed by Levinas. Death as escape evacuates earthly ontologies of meaning as the self as spirit enters the spiritual cosmopolitanism

advocated by St Paul and St Augustine in which race and gender labels are erased. However, this is not the place to explore the nature and contradictions of this mode of cosmopolitanism. Cosmopolitanism, I emphasize, is not necessarily premised on the embodied migration and mobilities of selves in foreign lands. The foreign and the indigenous can contest for space in the vernacular as Giddens (1991) has posited. The self as site of home and by conjunction, cosmopolitan hospitality is staged in Dreams in multiple ways. For instance, he claims that the interior reserves of subjectivity “that you had assumed to be an expression of your black, unfettered self- the humour, the song [were] freely chosen by you” can constitute "refuge; at worst a trap” (p.36). Here I am not yet addressing the aporia between the home being refuge and simultaneously a trap that shall come in the next section.

The self as home mobilizes the Freudian idea of the Heimlich/familiar: the comforts of shelter, food and protection from strangers. The subsistence of the internal reserve of subjectivity is not physical but psychological or spiritual. Hence both Freud and Heidegger deploy the opposite of the Heimlich; unheimliche to expose the uncanny or the simultaneous residence of familiarity and unfamiliarity in this home: this subjectivity. Obama images this by posing that the aporia of the application of Law (the juridical enthusiasm for the impossible attainment of higher moral principles and the instability of principles and values themselves) exposes the subjective refuge of the self to the unheimlichand: “even after laws were passed and lynchings ceased, the closest thing to freedom would still involve escape, emotional if not physical, away from ourselves, away from what we knew” (p.110).

This means the self must be in exile from its private world if it is to escape the trap of a subjectively constructed ontology of self that excludes on the basis of difference. Hospitality thrives in contexts of exile and estrangement. A self that refuses exile prohibits self reflexivity and hence constructs an illusory mode of self-sufficiency. Closed selves like the Cartesian selves permit no breach of boundary and hence no acts of revision and mutability.

In Obama, however, the self is open to revision and hospitality in the mode of autobiography. In commenting on his autobiographical project, Obama poses that “in spite of a stubborn desire to protect myself from scrutiny, in spite of the periodic impulse to abandon” the writing, what he has written “is a record of a personal interior journey” (p. 3). And his project refuses “a certain closure” (p.4) which will be disjunctive to his age and experience. Autobiographical projects are also projects of hospitality in that the host, the writer, opens his “interior journey” to the scrutiny of strangers. The host/ writer’s project is marked by ambivalence; the host realizes that to open borders and doors is to open/expose the self to the danger posed by the stranger. But to seal the self in insular subjectivism permits a limiting closure. Obama intends to transcend such a sterile insularity by writing about his interior journeys to invent “a granite slab of truth upon which [his] unborn children can firmly stand on (p.4). Hence hospitality here is Levinassian in that it is premised on the unknowable future status of Obama’s children entering the interior home of the Father and inscribing continuity or infinite in the genealogy of a family. The autobiographical project’s hospitality in Obama is cosmopolitan both in the mobilities of the book across borders and across other autobiographies, political narratives and historiographies situated in differently placed geographical terrains and epistemes. The cosmopolitanism I pose here has departed from

the common/simple cosmopolitanism actuated by the presencing of a migrant's body. As migrant Obama's autobiography moves in diasporic spaces despite its deficiencies marked by "plugging holes in the narrative" of his family and "projecting individual choices against the blind sweep of history" (p.4). Thus his metaphor of autobiography as "interior journey" approximates the fact of human existence and identity as migrant, exile and in short a dispossession of home and a claiming of home. Levinas suggests that the home is a site of hospitality: "I welcome the other who presents in my home by opening to him." (1978:15) Furthermore the opening of the home to strangers / others enables the self to dispossess itself materially: "But in order that I be able to be free myself from the very possession that the welcome of home establishes, in order that I be able to see things in themselves, that is, represent them to myself, I must know how to give what I possess" (ibid: 16).

Levinassian ethics therefore underwrite Obama's project of giving his home, this interior refuge, to diasporic spaces in which in its encounter with the Babel of the Cosmopolitan spaces it becomes Other than the one Obama intended: the autobiography "speaks to those aspects of myself that resist conscious choice and that – on the surface, at least contradict the world I now occupy" (p. 3). This means the journey- the metaphor comes in again- of the self is radical in a Levinassian sense in which there is a prohibition of a return to an ordinary Obama; nothing returns. Hospitality extended to the other is a dispersal of the host into infinitude.

This infinitude or heterogeneity summons the self to enter the cosmopolitan space prepared for the multiple varieties of linguistic, social and ideological utterances from differently placed

individuals. Hence: "within the capital building of a big industrial state, one sees every day the face of a nation in constant conversations: inner-city mothers and corn and bean farmers, immigrant day labourers alongside suburban investment bankers all jostling to be heard, all ready to tell their stories" (p.3). This evokes Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of heteroglossia; multiple varieties of utterances conversing, vying for the privileged position. It also means a narrative like Obama's, on entering this space, becomes part of that infinitude of voices and its different meanings constructed by differently positioned readers will puncture the closure of a monoglossic reading.

This idea of infinitude can be extended by appropriating one of Bakhtin's terms: polyphony, originally meaning multiple voicedness. Obama's text as a colony of multiple voices is posed in his commentary on the inceptive comment of writing his autobiography:

"When I actually sat down and began to write...distant voices appeared, and ebbed, and then appeared again. I remembered the stories that my mother and her parents told me as a child, the stories of a family trying to explain itself. I recalled my first year as a community organizer in Chicago ...I listened to my grandmother, sitting under the mango trees...describing the father I had never truly known" (p.3).

This quotation is convocation of different spatial, temporal and memorial geographies in a singular disseminating site: Obama. It confirms the polytropos of the postmodern self as

theorized by Giddens (1996) and configures autobiography as a hosting of multiple contesting voices. If other voices, this "flood of memories", interrupted Obama's "well ordered theories" rendering them "insubstantial and premature", it means the narratives in the autobiography refuse to be unitary by speaking the multiple versions of the family that enter and exit Obama's site of hospitality: the writing and his subjective memory. And this translates to Obama's memory as enjoined and exceeded by these multiple voices. Here, the meaning of polyphony is that Obama's voice(s) speak within and via Toot, Grandpa, his sister, brothers and grandmother. And the "stories", especially those told by grandmother, allude to other stories of different times and unknown selves in the family genealogy. Thus a single utterance is a moment of hosting other voices and by rephrasing and paraphrasing these voices Obama offers them, as host, the Levinassian gift of infinitude. This evokes the cosmopolitan citizen as a site hosting different and multiple cultural voices from different epistemic and geographical terrains. The self as host translates or paraphrases the foreigner's language and demands sometimes, as Obama poses, breaching the cocoon of subjective solitude via moves of impulses and emotive acts (p. 140). This confirms the phenomenological claim that language as structure is inadequate to capture and enframe the perplexingly heterogenous acts of human experience.

But this analysis is being summoned, by a set of questions, to account, for instance, how an utterance rephrased/paraphrased enters infinitude if in the course of paraphrasing/translating; no exact replication is possible (Unamuno, 1992; Derrida, 2004). In the cosmopolitan space who writes the norm of Appiah's cosmopolitan interaction or "conversation"? Is it possible to be a world citizen while simultaneously obligated to offer service to one's nation? And is the moment of encounter in the acts of hospitality asymmetrical or symmetrical? This set of troubling questions shall be addressed in the next section.

I deploy aporia in the Derridean sense to “indicate a point of undecidability, which locates the site at which the text most obviously undermines its own rhetorical structures, dismantles, or deconstructs itself (Derrida 2004:39). Antinomy, in the Kantian usage borrows from the Greek meaning of the simultaneous existence of two valid incompatible laws circumscribing a position of utterance. These aporia and antinomies emerge between the private /subjective and public space, the national and cosmopolitan/ diasporic space, hospitality and sovereignty (both national and subjective) and heteroglossia/polyphony and (un)translatability.

A nation state is a mode of authority unique to modernity comprising institutions such as the legislature, judiciary, police, armed forces, and central and local administration. “It claims monopoly over power and legitimacy within a bounded territory” (Held 2003:200). This definition has implications for interrogating positions and relations between the cosmopolitan space and the bounded space of nations. In Kenya, in Obama’s narrative, Ouma poses that Asians “call themselves Kenyans, but they want nothing with [Kenyans]. As soon as they make their money, they send it off to London or Bombay” (p.137). In conjunction with this Obama observes the multiple presences of nations within the same bounded territory of America. Rafiq, for instance, promotes a Muslim nationalism and Minister Louis Farrakhan’s Nation of Islam imagines a different nation from that advanced by the American political administration. Rafiq poses that America is fissured into multiple and different nations vying for political and economic privilege: “I tell you one thing I admire about white folks... They know who they are. Look at the Italians. They didn’t care about the American flag and all that when they got here...”

(p.90). The fact that the Jews and the Irish also, as Rafiq views them, inscribe nation in blood inheritance means the hegemonic discourse of the American political administration constructs a simulacra (via narratives of nation invention) of a homogenized nation opposed to the fragmented status posed by reality.

The Kenyan and American fissuredness of nation and the arbitrary invention of nationalist coherence image aporia and antinomies variously explored by Anderson, Bhabha, Gellner and Derrida. Both Anderson (1983) and Bhabha (1992) subscribe to the notion that the nation is “imagined” and together with Gellner (2000), pose that nations and their borders are invented arbitrarily. The nation’s monopoly on power and legitimacy has the implication to limit the subject within its bounded territory and beyond. This transposes into the interference of this subject in Cosmopolitan spaces. Lolo for instance, had forcibly been “summoned without explanations” to Indonesia, his “passport revoked” and had been interrogated before being “conscripted” to go to “the jungles of New Guenea.” The notion of power as sovereign in the Foucauldian poise is posed when Obama comments: “Power had taken Lolo and yanked him back into line just when he thought he’d escaped, making him feel its weight, letting him know that his life wasn’t his own.” (p.21) In this case the nation’s authority, it seems, reverses the bid of the subject to enter cosmopolitan spaces as citizen of the world free to exercise mobilities across borders and cultures.

Obama marks a difference between what he terms the Indonesian government’s “undisguised, indiscriminate, naked, always fresh in the memory” and the “hidden” or sublimated power in America which however manifested itself in “an Indian Reservation” or when one “spoke to a

black person...” (ibid: 21). The antinomy in relation to cosmopolitanism is that the nation’s laws construct a legitimacy of regulating the site of home/citizenship equally as the International Declaration of Human Rights which accords the self with the freedom to cross borders and invent multiple homes in different geographies. Kant for instance, claims that natural law, law as it exists in the conscience of humanity, law as different from the coded rules applied by politicians, does not limit the mobility of any migrant across the globe because "originally no one individual had more right than another to live in any one particular spot" (Kant 1819:2009 :76)

This nomological antimony seizes the cosmopolitan ethos questioning it whether it must claim more privilege over the tribal law/custom, whether national rule of law must be conferred with the authority to cancel the authority of custom and tribal law. Dr Rukia Odero, whom Obama meets on his visit to Africa, poses that to “modern sensibility”, female circumcision among the Kikuyu and Maasai is “barbaric” and similarly “rule of law” may “conflict with tribal loyalties” and “ you cannot have rule of law” and “exempt certain members of your clan” or nation (p.170). Here emerges both nomological aporia and antinomy. The antinomy has been elucidated; the aporia is in the inclusive and simultaneously exclusive act of law. The rule of law which forbids tribal laws includes the Kikuyu and Masai by registering them as citizens but in prohibiting them from performing their tribal identities, it excludes them from its ambit. This presents an occasion for Derridean undecidability and Agamben’s (2011) argument that the law is simultaneously an act of including and excluding. In cancelling tribal identity performativity and the subject’s right to invent homes outside its borders, the rule of law imposes the sovereignty of the nation-state. And this sovereignty, Obama poses, inscribes “an unambiguous morality tale that [is] easily communicated and easily grasped’, but which fails to homogenize the stubborn multiplicities of worlds, nations and identities within its borders.

The cosmopolitan ethos has generated its own hegemonic discourse (Tchuh 2009) in which Metropolitan countries decide-itself a re-entry of othering discourse- who is civilized and who is terrorist. Obama refers to the seizure of this privilege when he poses that “We were always playing on the white man’s court ... by the whiteman’s rule... If [he] wanted to spit into your face, he could, because he had power and you didn’t”. His benevolence is also suspect “because he knew that the words you spoke, the clothes you wore, the books you read, your ambitions and desires were already his (p.36).

This means the self from Third World countries and blacks in the African Diaspora enter cosmopolitan spaces as always already circumscribed identities, constituted, in Foucauldian terms, as subjects already classified and policed by the Western discourse on the civilized or democratic/ terrorist and backward binaries. This opposes Appiah’s theorization of cosmopolitan spaces as sites for symmetrical conversations. Obama’s narrative locates the ascendancy of the Metropole in its monopoly of International AID organizations, transnational organizations and the free market (p.51). International Aid organizations erase the notion of rooted cosmopolitanism as symmetrical relations between the imagined world citizens by developing a “dependency” complex in the third world subject. Hence instead of being embraced as equal world citizens, these subjects are viewed as a ‘burden’ and “inferior” (Ratstock 1988:103).

The West also appropriates hybridity as its norm by presuming to be its exemplar (Kompridis 2009). The other is viewed as perennially tribalistic, disabled by non-democratic political contexts, stigmatized and limited by the parochialism of nation and clan. Conversely, the

Metropolitan self is configured as democratic and always already open to change and progress. As Obama poses: “The minority assimilated into the dominant culture, not the other way round. Only white culture could be neutral and objective. Only white culture could be nonracial”, and was ready “to accept the [...] exotic into its ranks (42).

This postures what Kompridis (2005) has posed as the process of the “normalization” of “hybridity” in which “hybridity turns into a difference –erasing concept, negating the foreignness of the foreigner, the otherness of the other” (2005: 322). Kompridis notes that the normalization of fluidity and change of identities figures its opponents as anti-modern and guilty of “primitivisation, exoticism, backwardness, and childlike naivete” (ibid: 12). And in the same hegemony of cosmopolitanism the privileging of “infinite contestability and renegotiability of cultural identity” makes it impossible to resist the pressure to contest and renegotiate one’s cultural identity without “appearing to be unreasonable” (ibid: 322)

This means hybridity as discourse of monopoly incorporates cultural Darwinism (that some cultures deserve to survive more than others) to reorder the cultural identities of the other to obey the demands of its agenda. I am also prompted to note that the valorization of hybridity’s fluidity must be accepted with caution. If all cultural identities are fluid-relentlessly –then nobody will pass on any cultural identity to children as Obama hopes to do when he merges his “interior” effort to understand his identity “with a broader public debate”, in which he is “professionally engaged” and one that will shape our lives and the lives of our children for many years to come” (p.2). Obama balances postmodern fluidity with the demand of inheritance; a balance that seeks

to install some signposts: of past and present configurations of identity. Any notion of inheritance is impossible without the evidence of predecessors.

Within the circuit of theorizing hybridity and the cosmopolitan space and citizenship, there emerges the aporia of the self simultaneously inhabiting multiple morphing zones and claiming to be one thing/person at the moment of exercising agency. In Obama's narrative Sayid queries Barack senior's morphing into a Matatu cab driver and simultaneously claiming to be Kenya's

Minister of Finance: "But I think once you are one thing, you cannot pretend that you are something else" (p.154). This aporia of the cosmopolitan multiple citizenship is imaged in Mr Wilkerson's claim that Kenya is his "home" and not his home: "Perhaps I can never call this place home" and he "felt a foreigner" (p.140) in England, thus presenting a de-rooted identity that names no place home; this rewrites citizenship as an empty sign because to be a citizen is to presume to have a home.

If the global space is to be cosmopolitan or is cosmopolitan, then in the interstitial space between cultures and worlding modes, a sort of translatability zone must be made viable if the Babel of heterogeneity of languages and world views is to negotiate difference and legitimacy. Obama, in his narrative, poses that he is "reminded of a conversation" he had with an Englishman who had worked for an international aid organization throughout Africa and Asia" who had told him that the Dik of Sudan were the strangest" of all the different peoples he had met because they neither smiled nor showed "some semblance of recognition" of a joke and "at the end of a year with the Dik, "they remained utterly alien"(p.102) to him. The reciprocal incomprehension or untranslatability of language, the vernacular or idiom between the Englishmen and the Dik poses

two things. First it is impossible, as Derrida argues in "Force of Law", for a word situated in one language to be reproduced in its context of attendant nuances in another language, some omissions are committed or some erasures are permitted.

Second, the space of incomprehension becomes agonistic in the sense of interlocutors in the encounter imposing their interpretations of the situation against those of the other. The Englishman most probably expects the Dik to comprehend him because he represents Metropolitan culture and represents the globalizing authority and presence of the International Aid organization; his interpretation is skewed. Similarly, the Dik might have imaged him as strange or ridiculous; which the Englishman does not realize. The point here is the site of the differend, as Lyotard poses, incommensurability between different orders of epistemes, languages or discourses in phrasing reality. This means ultimately nothing is translated, if something is translated the result of translation is a disfiguration of the text of utterance and difference; performed to privilege a certain narrative of reality. The image of the Englishman in "a patched desert, his back turned away from a circle of naked tribesmen, his eyes searching an empty sky, bitter in his solitude" (p.52) emphasizes this differend especially when the metaphors of absence or erasure monopolise the configuration of encounter; the empty sky, the parched desert that interpose between the alien and the native/Local, pose the absence of mutual comprehension. Beyond encounters of language encounters of different value systems or world views also poses the differend. In Obama's grandmother's narrative, Onyango's value system comprised respect for strength, discipline, authority, order and custom. He "could not understand such ideas as mercy towards your enemies, or that this man Jesus could wash away a man's sins" (p.160). Here Onyango's posing of the differend confirms two things: it proves Bhabha's notion of "mimicry as mockery" in which the subaltern misreads or reinterprets the discourse of empire

by both collusion and vitiation of the super-ordinate's text of values. Onyango, as grandmother poses, obeys some of the demands of the Metropolitan text but remains rooted in his indigenous episteme. Secondly, Onyango's posing of the differend introduces matters of ethics and justice. This is the occasion for questioning the legitimacy of the authority of Metropolitan/cosmopolitan hegemony in formulating global values whose telos is to homogenize heterogeneity of values. This authority, premised on the Law (International human rights law, Laws investing authority in elite organizations like the G8 or group of eight nations from the first world) has consequences for geopolitics and justice. Obama notes that "The...Law can be disappointing at times" because it applies "narrow rules or arcane procedure to an uncooperative reality" whose telos is to privilege authority and to "explain to those who do not have [authority] the ultimate wisdom and justness of their condition" (p.173). Derrida exposes the aporia of founding authority on "mystical foundations" (Derrida, 2004:30) and therefore legitimating the Law and authority on a foundation that cannot be legitimated or justified. This means to adjudicate and arbitrate in matters of politics and justice the law or authority deployed must be legitimated first. But such a legitimation exposes the arbitrariness of the foundation of such authority. It means the foundation is invented and postured as incontrovertible.

It is the authority of law and politics in national and global spaces that determines justice; justice as fairness as Rawls (1986) claims or justice as minding one's lot as Plato poses or as the application of the coded law to particular contexts. The ethical emerges in the act of forgiving sins or wrongs, for instance, Jesus' forgiving sins as grandmother notes. If Onyango's value system enters cosmopolitan spaces it enters as interruption or interference; acts of reconciliation themselves purported sites of forgiveness will be unsettled by a value system that is closed to

forgiveness. Onyango's values would advance revenge or retribution, thus disarticulating a globalizing or cosmopolitan dissemination of forgiveness/ reconciliation.

In this ethical ambit Obama poses the question (Irresolvable): "what is our community, and how might that community be reconciled with our freedom? How far do our obligations reach? (p. 172). These questions beleaguer the notion of hospitality as the opening of doors and borders to strangers/foreigners. The aporia that marks hospitality in this mode- an aporia exposed and explored by Derrida- is the simultaneous possibility and impossibility of hospitality. When the first whitemen arrived in Kisumu- as grandmother narrates- most Africans regarded them as strange but welcomed them. This gesture of hospitality is posed via the missionaries' construction of their houses. But the whites exceeded the guest norm by extending their stay to permanent residence and latter to a usurpation of the native by gun violence and epistemic reordering of the native's culture and history. In this case the Host/Guest dichotomy and norm were erased as the whitemen took the African hostage in his homeland.

Derrida poses that utter/true/complete hospitality is when the foreigner is inscribed with the rights accorded to the host. But subscribing to this demand means an erasure of the boundary of difference between host and foreigner and also a collapse of hospitality. The Levinassian postulation of the self/host being hostage to the other is being critiqued here. By postulating that the Other approaches the self from the height of divinity, the monotheistic God, Levinas poses a triangular set of relations which permit a version of fixed ontology-posed by Derrida as a positive modified monopoly of the ontology of this God. And the Other, the Third (other people

other than the self) may appropriate this theo-ontology, the height of divinity to take the host hostage- as the whites did- and thus writing binaries of super-ordinate and subaltern. But hospitality that limits the rights of the foreigner refuses its own ethos, hence it ceases being what it claims to be. Therefore in its utter mode and limited mode hospitality becomes simultaneously possible and impossible. Utter hospitality is resisted in modern times by acts of Xenophobia as in South Africa, Islamophobia and hostility toward foreigners in America and UK, since the bombings in America. Because of Islamophobia and other phobias, Western countries have made visa attainability difficult thus undermining the ethos of Cosmopolitan hospitality.

Illegal immigrants, like the ones Obama alludes to as “hungry hordes crossing the Rio Grande”(p.170) into America, are viewed as a menace to demographic and sustainability balances, thus they inhabit the space of the ‘camp’ which is a result of “states of exception” (civil wars, droughts, political persecutions) which reduce the refugee to “bare existence”, that is denied the “protection of home” and most “human rights” (Agamben 2012:56).The illegal immigrant is in a “camp” mode of existence because no formal hospitality can be extended to him and it is assumed he can be soon deported. Such immigrants and refugees in fact encounter dehumanizing and demoralizing conditions meted to them by state authorities or workers for international organizations who view them as "victims" or alternatively as "burden" (Petchesky et al, 2007)

But do the aporia and antinomies in the cosmopolitan ethos presume an overthrow of the ethos? Obama advances a vigilant cosmopolitanism that is open to revision yet his inscription of this

reflexivity of cosmopolitanism may also be vulnerable to targeted revision by a hegemony that hides behind this reflexivity to speak through polyvocality while advancing its agenda. He poses that none can "re-create himself alone", that modern technology can be deployed in a humane mode "alongside a faith born out of hardship ... that wasn't black or white or Christian or Muslim but that pulsed in the heart of the first African village and the first Kansas homestead – a faith in other people (p.168). This implies a re-modelling of Cosmopolitanism that checks its unquestioning posturing by hyper-globalists like Kenich Ohmae (1990). It vibrates with transformationalist globalists like David Held (2001) (who proposes modifications of globalization which empower the subject in marginal spaces) making a detour on skeptics like Hirst and Thompson (1990) who imagine cosmopolitanism in negative rhetoric.

Obama like Appiah privileges conversation: And yet in the conversation itself, in the joining of voices, I find myself modestly encouraged, believing that so long as the questions are still being asked, what binds us together might somehow, ultimately prevail (p.171). Here can be the irruption of the questions: who shapes the questioning of the questioning acts? And in whose language or episteme are the "joining voices speaking?"

Obama's re-imagining of a pre-Babel site of human community, beyond being hypothetical can subsume a naïve or sentimental desire for the authentic or pure community uncontaminated by the "heresy of hybridity" (Salman Rushdie 2005:40). He poses: "I imagined the first man ... If only we could remember that first common step, that first common word- that time before Babel (p.140). The phrases "common step" and "common word", it can be argued, are an adequation of homogenizing or universalizing acts.

The fracturedness, polyvocality and heteroglossia that mark Obama's family geneology and history refuses such an imagination of any originary site of human community. Rather, relations in the Cosmopolitan or globalized spaces must be invented in the momentous and quotidian encounters with multiple experience. Hence: "It was as if Auma, Roy, Bernard and I were all making it [identity; meaning] up as we went along." Emphasis is on the total absence of any coherent guiding script: "As if the map that might have once measured the direction and force of our love, the code...had been lost" (p.130). The cosmopolitan practice can be staged in the tension between a cosmopolitan hegemonic discourse's othering and appropriation and marginal voices coming in to interrupt or decenter that discourse.

In *Dreams* cosmopolitanism engages the concepts of hybridity, globalization and hospitality to pose the autobiographical self as migrant and hybrid. Cosmopolitanism both as enrooted and de-rooted, advances multiple citizenship: the staging of home in multiple countries opening space to hybrid cultural and epistemic acts. This chapter configured cosmopolitanism as promoting hybridity not only in the limited act of "in-betweenness" of identities as posed by Bhabha. Hybridity is inscribed in each individual manifesting itself in the multiple interacting selves resident in a single individual and these selves' fissuredness open them to heteroglossic and polyvocal narratives. Globalization as acts that "disembed"(Giddens 1996:90) ruptures the link between the self and home as spatial ontology as it invests selfhood in acts of morphing, demorphing and re-morphing, marking the cosmopolitan self with the polytropos to inhabit

multiple homes and cultures. But the cosmopolitan practice is beleaguered by aporia and antinomies. The antinomies of conflictual Laws of cosmopolitanism and the nation asserting their legitimacy of authority simultaneously, the aporia of hospitality as both welcoming guests/foreigners and the foreigners taking the hostage and the converse. Here the aporia is the impossible possibility of hospitality (Derrida 2004). I posed the self as site of hospitality relentlessly exiling itself from the ontology of tribe, family, home, religion and nation (Levinas, 1998) contrary to the ontology of home and tradition posed by Heidegger (1968). This chapter analyzed the differend posed by difference and the possibility of cosmopolitanism morphing into a hegemony that re-plays acts othering. A dream, despite these and other aporia and antinomies, vigorously promotes the postmodern mutabilities and mobilities of selves across geographies of space, time and epistemes.

## **Conclusion**

### **Self invention as polytropos: Departures from fixed/fixating ontologies and identities**

This study, via postmodernist, postcolonial theories and conversations, with/ and interrogation of multiple philosophical discourses, has explored and interrogated the invention of selves, alterity, ambivalence and simultaneity in auto-heterobiography. This range of concerns, when analyzed, opens space to the polytropos of human and individual experiences whose excess slips through the hold of metanarratives and fundamentalisms, prohibiting absolute, certain coherent and stable centres of authority and meaning. The rehabilitation of the renegade acts of interpreting meaning, always countering essentializing and othering discourse, mocks the hubris of metanarrativization marking human existence as a terrain of telling truth into existence and posing acts of experience as escaping explicability via a study of their absence as present in their presence.

Chapter one postulated that autobiography is a retrospective invention via narrativization of events, imagined truth and the populating of the individual with selves whose simultaneous speaking interrupts the speaking of univocal authority at the same time they intercept multiple hegemonic utterances before the latter erase insurgent and resurgent identities. Simultaneity and heterogeneity have been deployed in a poise that generates a discourse that refuses temporal linearity, the insularity of metanarrativity and the homogenizing acts of closed ontologies. This discourse disclosed that the artifice of narrativization invariably postures binaries in terrains of race, multiple epistemes, questions of existence/non-existence, presence/absence. The consequence of imposing such binaries, it has been proved, is the hierachization of invented

orders of epistemes whose repercurcation is the othering discourse that limits or erases the difference of the other and its attendant possibilities. The other has been posed as the other person, episteme, possibility and temporality. This study has posed that the self emerges in the Enlightenment/modernity's refusal of the stockades of tradition, fate and knowledge as superstition or myth (Giddens, 1996).

Such a self possessed the ability to write its reflexive presence in history (ibid) and to revise and rewrite the meaning of human existence and experience. The modern self who postures scripts and metanarratives of his own is superseded by the postmodern self whose fracturedness is polyvocality. This study posed the heterogeneity mobilities and mobilities of identities as calling forth an aporia- that narrating identity is simultaneously an ordering and disordering: humans demand stability but are always already conscious that such a demand is impossible to satisfy. If terms like identity, coherence and stability are deployed, then they operate under erasure: they are deployed for lack of replacement simultaneously as they are denied authority.

Alterity, posed in this study as the otherness of the self, summoned an interrogation of questions of obligation, responsibility, cosmopolitanism, hybridity and hospitality. Alterity has been staged in acts of essentializing/ homogenizing/universalizing; acts which include by exclusion as posed by Said's (2005) *Orientalism*. Alterity has also been posed as rooted in ontologies of identity, tradition, nation, tribe and home and alternatively, in a radical sense, as a transcendence of any circumscribing ontology (Levinas 1998; Derrida 2004), an exiling that has already happened in the self as the self exceeds itself through the other; God and others (Levinas 1987). The alterity of the other, for instance in *Secrets of a woman*, are posed via acts of obligation and

responsibility, while in Mukiwa and Mandela it appears as the othering of the subaltern in discourse whose telos erases or disarticulates this subaltern's voice. In *Dreams* alterity has been posed as difference within and between entities: difference as enabling mutabilities and mobilities opposing the ontology of the Same.

Chapter two, an analysis of Shaba's text, is placed first because it images the self's experience as an alterity that is irreducible to law, norms and metanarratives, thus opening questions which confront *Mukiwa's* privileging of testimony as reducible to texts that refer to the general run of human experience. Human choices, decisions and convictions are invariably made in the very moment of their betrayal of multiple other choices, decisions and convictions (Derrida 1984).

Shaba's text proves the impossibility of domesticating experience under domains of general rules and future mapping. The author's attempt to assume closure of narrative via metaphors of opening and closing doors is prohibited by her autobiography's textual incoherence, fracturedness and incompleteness. Hence selves' autobiographical inventions and re-inventions are marked by aporia, instabilities and contingency.

Shaba's text configures selves as diseased because their assumed authenticity or originary narrations are traumatized from the point of birth and have thus ceded the authority to (dis)articulate identities and ontologies to acts of relentless becomings. Becomings as overthrowing being marks acts of re-membering with artifice and fictionality as the self's re-imagination of its pasts posts inventions to justify/excuse/accuse in that past and to colonize the present and future with legitimacy.

*Secrets of a woman's soul* also posed oppositionality between selves as disciplined and scripted as objects (Foucault 1990) and selves slipping past State sovereignty's scriptural acts. The selves' unknowability was posed as the secret of the soul; the selves' eluding of teleological epistemic regimes. This unknowability stitched to the ability of the self to escape the totalizing acts of States constitutes the irreducible singularity of the sovereignty of the self.

Despite being reduced to bare life (Agamben 2011) the self in *Secrets* refuses to succumb to narratives that cede narrative authority to exterior telling authorities. This is because the self, as has been demonstrated, can invent its own norms legitimating departure from the common capital of values by posing the singularity of its experience as exceeding any precedent or written norm (Derrida 2004, Levinas 1969), itself being a precedent that does not necessarily demand a descendant.

Chapter three discoursed on Godwin's Enlightenment self's construction of alterity via sites of memory, monuments and the autobiographic act of grafting selves in temporalities and historical events as a mode of posting the self into immortality or the assumed fixity of historiography. The chapter posed the self as pretending that it is attending to certainties and established truth that privilege culture, memory and history without providing adequate self criticism of this privilege.

The chapter posed alterity as the othering and erasing of the subaltern and a privileging of the Same via metanarratives and stereotypes. The autobiographical self emerged as an agent that legitimates its own legitimation of the authority of the creator, arbiter and adjudicator of values,

meanings and possibilities for future mapping. In *Mukiwa*, the autobiographical self accrues moral worth and legitimacy capital by museumising and souverning of the other. Hence the blacks, Afrikaners, Portuguese and other races are relegated to some Darwinist evolutionary regression, while the Same postulates a multiracial community in which its norms-masked as universal and stable-erase or palimpsest other norms and by conjunction heterogeneity. But the postulation hides the complication of race relations and the Same and other relations in that community. It fails to limn the difference between multiracialism as relatedness among races and the actuation of such relatedness.

In the same Chapter Mandela's autobiography interrupts the othering discourse of *Mukiwa* by imaging the African other as subverting apartheid via insurgent and insurrectionary acts. It poses the self as writing into existence alternative modes of being by mobilizing cultural and historical resources. This mobilization complicates the Same and other divide by conscripting into its acts even resources of the other, here the white/metropolitan other. Mandela configures multiple selves' shifts; the individual to political party identity, tribal to the national, and national to the international or multiracial positions.

Via acts of masking and incognito role playing, Mandela's text marks autobiography with the simultaneity of fictionality and reality; the later written in the necessity of its existence in the invention and existence of the autobiographical text itself pointing to a historical Mandela. It is the validation to the existence of an author; whether impersonated or the individual as attempting a re-membering of its past.

In a postcolonial mode, Mandela introduces the terrains of othering between races and sexes. While he interrogates othering by the Whiteman, his exploration of othering between the sexes is limited. In fact his autobiography does not open adequate space for the agency of females. The re-presentation of women in Mandela is limited to the domestic space while male figures (both black and white) act as authority figures.

Chapter four conversed with and questioned some of the assumptions posed by the autobiographical selves in Chapter two and three. In its privileging of cosmopolitanism and hybridity, it self-consciously flaunts the fracturedness of the narrating act posing the instabilities, discontinuities and incoherence that mark human experience. While it confirms the fissuredness of narration in *Secrets*, it opposes the latter's vocation to move towards a closure. These gaps in narration, unexplored in *Mukiwa* and hidden in *Long walk* are in a postmodern sense flaunted as inscribed in narration as self invention in *Dreams*. *Dreams* moves this study's argument of the unknowability mutabilities and mobilities of identities to the zone of meaning evacuation from ideals, self narratives and nation, family and global identity inventions.

*Dreams* affirms the agency of the self in *Mukiwa* while refusing that self's vocation for insularity and unitary assumptions of ontologies. It also accedes to the multiple selves in a singular individual as evidenced by *Long walk* but surpasses *Long walk* via an overthrow of the fixed ontologies of both history and culture; it has advanced identity as empty brackets confirming Hall (1990) and Derrida's (2004) postulation that identity as a denoting term has been put under erasure.

In its confirmation of Appian rooted Cosmopolitanism *Dreams* ruptures the circle of culture, custom and tradition by permitting the self its migrancy from a rooted home/ontology so that it establishes multiple other homes across multiple borders .The aporia and antinomies of such cosmopolitan and hybridity valorization have been interrogated in this study. They interpose their interruption between the self's obedience to international and national/ tribal/ family law simultaneously. They irrupt between the cosmopolitan self's vocation and right to seek home in foreign territories and the obstructing existence of unattainable visas or, having crossed the border, the limited rights that the migrant experiences as asylum seeker or refugee. The migrant who is neither asylum seeker nor refugee still encounters certain inhibitions which disallow the enjoyment of all privileges and opportunities enjoyed by citizens of a particular country. This study has also demonstrated that the cosmopolitan ethos can also morph into a hegemonic discourse as Metropolitan political powers appropriate hybridity and democracy as their preserve by normalizing them as originating from their ambits. It has been proved that such appropriation de-legitimizes the difference posed by other modes of being and existence, thus muting heterogeneity's polyvocality/polyphony via an othering centre masked as universalism.

The philosophical ideas of Heidegger, Levinas and Derrida were deployed to elucidate and complicate the concepts of hospitality and hybridity in Cosmopolitanism. While both Levinas and Derrida advocate a radical Cosmopolitanism, the later posing the other as always already present in the Same, Heidegger casts aspersions on technologies and multiple morphing selves that have de-centered the ontologies of home, insular self and nations.

*Dreams* imagines a Cosmopolitan community in which hybridity enters not as a mark of deformity but as norm. It argues that all entities, human and otherwise, are hybrid; it is metanarratives and fundamentalisms which seek to hide such hybridity. In *Dreams* the postmodern form of narration and vocation of experience and existence refuses the easy regimentation of epistemes in *Mukiwa* and the certainties of political self inventions imaged in *Long walk*. This mode of narrating in *Dreams* approximates the post structuralist death of the author by configuring the image of Babel (heterogeneity, and polyvocality/ polyphony) displacing traceable origins or foundations of family, nation, genealogies and selves.

This study refuses closure thus it gestures to the possible interrogations of issues provoked in its discourse. I pose them as questions: How does God question his existence in the presence of a discourse that prohibits foundations and originary sites? Does there exist certain fundamental values whose dismantling opens to a radical nihilism in which even polyphony ceases to be a contestation , negotiation and settling of speaking and identity positions as no voice is heard above and within the noise of heteroglossic voices? How do the biographies of animals question the invented humanity of the Homo sapiens and by conjunction the legitimacy of the primacy of the human and his proclivity to tell stories about himself and even the audacity to attribute to God what he himself invented? These and other questions can extend and complicate the study of auto-heterobiography.

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