

**The mapping of urban spaces and identities in current
Zimbabwean and South African fiction.**

Irikidzayi Manase

**Submitted as the dissertation component in partial fulfillment
of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts In
The Department of English, University of Natal,
Pietermaritzburg.**

Y-211813

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March 2003

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Supervisor: DR C Woeber

Signature-----



Declaration

Unless specifically indicated to the contrary in the text, this dissertation is entirely my own work


Irikidzayi Manase



Acknowledgements


I thank my supervisor Dr. Catharine Woeber for her patience, dedication and insightful suggestions in the writing up of the dissertation, as well as other members of the Department of English, my friends and family for being supportive. I also thank the National Research Foundation for offering me financial assistance for my studies. Above all, I wish to express my greatest appreciation and affection to my wife Ndakaitei and daughter Anesu for their endless support and the sacrifices they made in my absence.

Abstract

The dissertation focuses on the mapping of the southern African urban spaces and how it is linked to the urban dwellers' constitution of their identities, agency and subversion of the obtaining bleak and hegemonic conditions as represented in current fiction set in South Africa and Zimbabwe.

Chapter 1 of the dissertation gives an overview of the social and historical developments characterising the construction of the southern African city from the colonial up to the current global city. The subordinate and marginal identities inscribed upon the Southern Africans as well as early forms of agency and subversion of the Western social, political and economic hegemony that has defined the city through out history will be looked at. Michael de Certeau's (1993) ideas showing the hegemonic Western socio-economic agenda's creation of ordinary urban dwellers' invisibility and fragmentation, which they later subvert by renaming and remapping the alienating urban spaces of New York to improve their own lives, will be taken into consideration in this chapter's definition of the construction of the city and urban identities.

In Chapter 2, the representation of the southern African urban spaces' cartography in the fiction is discussed. The characteristic spaces ranging from the socially and morally decayed inner-city, the well-built postmodern and elite Central Business District, the affluent low-density suburbs and the far-away impoverished high-density suburbs will be explored. The discussion attempts a complex unpacking of linkages between the mapping of Harare and Johannesburg with the hegemonic western social and economic agenda as well as the current urban dwellers' state of individual and psychological fragmentation.



Chapter 3 examines the way in which the current southern African urban social dislocation is represented in the fiction. The complexity of the urban dislocation signified by the prevalence of violence, xenophobia and HIV/AIDS is discussed. There is also a dialectical analysis of how the depicted urban dislocation is located within the legacy of colonialism and apartheid, the western global cultural and economic influence as well as individual effort and decision-making in the chapter.

Chapter 4 explores the ways in which gendered urban spaces are portrayed in the fiction. The subordination of primarily women, as well as the weak and dependent irrespective of gender is discussed. The resultant anxieties, alienation, marginalisation of women and the subservient are viewed from the traditional and colonial patriarchy's construction of the city as a predominantly masculine space excluding women. The western global cultural and economic hegemony's creation of a new gendered ideology characterised by the exclusion and feminisation of the poor, invisible and dependent is also discussed in this chapter. Nevertheless, the chapter ends with a discussion of the existing possibilities of female empowerment notably inscribed in the city's open education system, informal trade space as well as the provision of a social space encouraging pragmatic female decision-making especially in relation to HIV and AIDS.

Finally the dissertation's concluding note is based on an evaluation of the postcolonial condition of southern Africa in relation to the mapping of the urban spaces and various identities represented in the fiction. An attempt is also made to place the research within the problematic of whether the mapping is based on postcolonialism or postmodernism. The objective here is to offer the importance of a cross-reading between the two as enabling a more meaningful conception of the region's current urban space.



Contents

Introduction-----	1
Chapter 1	
An overview of the construction of the southern African city, identities and space-----	13
Chapter 2	
Mapping the city and the representation of identities-----	33
Chapter 3	
Urban dislocation and the representation of violence, xenophobia and HIV/AIDS-----	49
Chapter 4	
Gendered city spaces and the representation of possibilities of female empowerment---	66
Conclusion-----	83
Bibliography-----	92

Introduction

The dissertation explores the mapping of the city as represented in current fiction set in South Africa and Zimbabwe. The major focus of the dissertation is based on an analysis of both countries' urban spaces ranging from the Central Business District (CBD), the inner city to the low and high- density suburbs. It examines how the spaces are linked to the urban dwellers' constitution of identities, their ultimate agency and subversion of the predominantly bleak and hegemonic conditions obtaining there.

The southern African postcolonial condition

The postcolonial condition considered in the dissertation is located within the social and economic hegemony associated with the region's European -based historical trajectories from colonialism to the current western global agenda. An attempt is made to link the current southern African city's predominantly bleak conditions to the legacy of European colonialism and its associated economic, social and political philosophies which privileged the coloniser as the superior self while reducing the colonised African into the subordinate and inferior other. The legacy's influence is also analysed in consideration of its linkage to the ideology of discrimination and apartheid characterising the late 20th century as well as the current entrenchment of western -based economic and cultural practices in the cities. Hence an attempt will be made to examine the majority of southern African urbanites' condition of exclusion, invisibility and misery and locate it within each country's long history of contact with and domination by the West. Chapter 1 of the dissertation gives a historical overview of the construction of the region's city from the colonial to the current globalised state. It also examines how this is related to the majority urbanites' condition of anxiety, restlessness and dislocation on the one hand and

the subversion of the imposed economic and cultural domination on the other. Nevertheless, the specific locations and histories of each country are taken into consideration as well as the complexity of the current postcolonial condition notably inflected by an anxiety and social fragmentation arising from the ravages of HIV/AIDS - related diseases and death.

The mapping of the urban landscape and socio-economic spaces

I will examine the possible linkages between the legacy of Western cultural and economic hegemony and the current urban segmentation in the dissertation. The representation of the city's spaces, which are characteristically divided into a well-built and modern CBD juxtaposed with an overcrowded, impoverished and restless inner-city area, moving out towards a well planned and wealthy low-density suburb, and an isolated majority African high-density suburb, characterised by similar conditions to those obtaining in the inner city, will be mapped. This is noted in chapter 2's analysis of Refentse's walk in Hillbrow where the influence of colonialism and apartheid is signified by the predominantly bleak and miserable conditions obtaining in the flats and streets as well as the dominance of global commerce and finance as represented by Kotze Street's multinational shops and banks (Mpe, 2001). Similarly the low and high-density suburbs of Harare, with their inscribed and specific condition of alienation and dislocation, are represented by the living conditions of the narrator and his wife (Chinodya, 1998) and Nhongo (Mungoshi, 1997). As a result there will be an attempt to examine the links between the defined urban spaces and the urban dwellers' anxiety and alienation with the various dislocated identities and general societal dislocation.

Also included will be the representation of the associated gendered divisions. I will explore the influence of Western domination in the construction of the city as a male space and how it favours the masculine. The legacy of patriarchal, colonial and apartheid authority and how it informs the current urban gendered divisions and perceptions will be considered. This is also linked to the current globalised gender hierarchy which is characterised by the subordination of mainly women but also the weak, unemployed, poor and dependent (Peterson and Runyan, 1999) as will be shown in the dissertation. This will be discussed together with the various attempts made by the urban dwellers to subvert the alienating conditions and how they work towards the creation of meaningful and better conditions. Various forms of agency will be examined and these include the act of writing, opening up dialogue, the pursuit of education, entrance into the exclusively male public space as well as pragmatic decision making aimed at economic survival in the face of adverse global economic domination.

Fictional representation

The considered research focus will be applied to the following Zimbabwean and South African fiction. I will look at Shimmer Chinodya's two short stories, the first one being "Can We Talk"- set in Harare- where the nameless writer- narrator is portrayed in a state of anxiety and alienation. He feels left out and ignored by his successful company executive wife. The relationship between husband and wife becomes fragmented and non- communicative. This is seen in the way the wife spends most of her time attending to her professional life and church business. Hence the writer- husband feels alienated and psychologically displaced from his family and the low -density area in which they stay to the extent that he opts to write as a way of opening up dialogue with his wife. He

also restlessly searches for companionship away from his home by frequenting the popular high-density braai and drinking place called Mereki. The narrator develops a warm relationship with an old high school mate called Alice, who is a recent widow. He discusses with her, among other things, issues such as the ravages of HIV and AIDS and how society can survive by abstaining from casual sex, and the married being faithful to each other. And in the second story "Strays," Sam, an architect, his wife Ndaizivei, a high school teacher, and their daughter Natasha, are shown immersed in the pressures associated with an alienating and dislocating 'new life' in one of Harare's upmarket low-density suburbs. The family is seen under pressure from running after their troublesome dog called Sango. The dog is always straying out of their fenced yard into the neighbours' and onto the road. As a result of the alienating cultural demands and the enclosed private low-density life, Sam drifts away from his wife and home as seen by his journeys back to the high-density night clubs and bottle stores. These journeys are emblematic of a restless search for companionship and the lost collective life. He however degenerates into an alcoholic and unfaithful husband and the story ends with Ndaizivei demanding that Sam should start using condoms for her own protection from sexually transmitted diseases.

Charles Mungoshi's "The Hare" is also another short story set in Zimbabwe that I will look at. In the story, Nhongo, who has been recently retrenched from his middle management job at a local textile company, is seen reeling under psychological pressure in the face of his wife's current success as a cross-border trader. He feels left out of his wife's new life, does not like the sense of dependence on his wife for clothing, food and the expensive outings to some of Harare's hotels, and, more importantly, suspects that his

wife is having an affair with a fellow cross -border trader Mr Magaso. All these pressures make him feel so vulnerable that when the story begins, we see him going to his rural home to visit his old parents, who like his relatives in Chitungwiza –a high -density suburb in Harare- disapprove of Sara’s informal trade business. On the way, Nhongo’s car hits a hare, which, being emblematic of the vulnerability of life, noted when he picks it up, reminds him of the impending breakdown of his marriage. And when he gets to the rural home in Chivhu, his parents not only show their disapproval of their daughter- in- law Sara, but also welcome the house girl as the new daughter- in- law since she had replaced Sara in looking after their son and grand-daughters. The story ends with Nhongo and his children going back to Harare with a seemingly successful assimilation of the house girl into being the new “mother” of the family.

The other Zimbabwean -based fiction comprises Nhamo Mhiripiri’s three short stories. The first one “ Elista,” is set in one of Harare’s high -density suburbs and shows a nameless narrator’s attempts to help a neighbour’s girl child called Elista from feeling restlessness and anxiety arising as a result of the disconnection of their home’s water and electricity. This occurs after the mother’s boyfriend has been imprisoned for bigamy. The narrator tries to help Elista by offering her a bucket of water but she refuses as she senses the further humiliation associated with accepting the offer. She also dislikes the suspicious way the narrator eyes her. Later on she enters into an early sexual relationship with a local gangster, Badboy Joel, which is plagued by abuse. In one incident the narrator eavesdrops on the two while they are together in a disused car, tries to rescue Elista when she is being physically abused by Badboy and gets beaten by the gangster. Meanwhile, Elista’s mother has also chosen prostitution as a way of raising money to

support her family. The highest level of social and moral decay in the story is represented in Elista 's mother's uncaring attitude and turning a blind eye to her daughter's victimisation by Badboy. This typifies the current urban bleak conditions in Harare's high -density suburbs. ✓

In the second story called "The Lodgers," Mangwiro, a lowly paid Harare milling company worker, is seen suffering from a heavy burden. He has to provide for his talkative and scornful wife and playful eight children as well as meeting the demands made by his callous landlord. His burdensome poverty and subservience to the landlord emasculates him to the extent that he feels socially and psychologically displaced. In one of his walks around the city, he comes across a schizophrenic old man in Harare Gardens engaging in shadow boxing and the scene becomes an eye opener for him. He realises the need to fight for his rights and reclaim his dignity which has been trampled on by the landlord for so long. When he returns to his backyard shack, he sees what is left of it since it had been burnt down accidentally by one of his children. His son has also been burnt to death and the landlord who ordered him to have the funeral conducted somewhere else, is assaulted by Mangwiro as a way of asserting his rights and dignity against the exploitation and humiliation he has suffered for so long.

And in the final story called "No More Plastic Balls," Nhamo Mhiripiri portrays overprotective parents who order their house girl to keep their son Franklin inside their high- density house's fenced yard to prevent him from playing on the road with other young boys from the neighbourhood. Soon Franklin yearns for more than just getting plastic balls and other toys from the narrator who stays next door. He sneaks out of the fenced yard and plays with other boys of his age who teach him toy- making skills and ✓

prove to be better companions than the house girl and the narrator. Efforts to hide the key are undermined as he continued to sneak out. On one afternoon he is hit by a car while trying to escape from the house girl who wanted to take him for a bath and to make him stay indoors in anticipation of the parents' return from work.

On the South African front, I will analyse Phaswane Mpe's and Ashraf Jamal's fiction. I will look at Phaswane Mpe's novel Welcome To Our Hillbrow, which is set in Johannesburg's Hillbrow and traces the life experiences of a group of friends, namely Tsepo, a rural Tiragalong-raised young man, who becomes the first university graduate from his home area but dies soon after graduation after being struck by lightning, and Refentse, a fellow Tiragalonga, who also rises to become an MA graduate from the University of the Witwatersrand and also a lecturer there; he is also boyfriend to Lerato, a girl raised in Johannesburg's Orlando. The other parties to the circle of friends include Sammy, a fellow Hillbrowan, and his girlfriend Bohliwe. The novel traces the rise of these characters from rural poverty, especially Tsepo and Refentse's whose professional success represents the capacity of the South African city to support social and educational improvement, just as Refilwe -a former childhood lover of Refentse- comes to the city later on to pursue a publishing career. However their current life in Hillbrow is punctuated by pressures arising from the rampant poverty and moral decay plaguing the inner-city area. The main characters are not spared from it either as evidenced by the unfortunate and accidental entrance of Sammy into drugs and prostitution after his drink was laced with some drugs. And more importantly the urban moral and social decay renders their relations vulnerable and fragments them. For instance, Refentse ends up having sex with Bohliwe and yet he was supposed to counsel her. She had been

disappointed by Sammy who had degenerated into prostitution and drugs. Ironically the same act of betrayal is repeated this time by Sammy, who wants to help save the vulnerable Refentse and Lerato's relationship. The relationship is under pressure from the rural mother's disapproval which is based on the view that all Johannesburg women are evil and immoral. This link between urban anxiety, alienation and family pressures leads to a chain of suicides. Refentse commits suicide after seeing his friend Sammy and girlfriend Lerato in bed together. Lerato later commits suicide due to the profound guilt arising from her betrayal and the pressure from an acquaintance called Terror, who demanded sex as a reward for keeping quiet about her contribution to the suicide. Sammy himself becomes psychologically unstable due to the suicides, and death of his girlfriend Bohliwe – she dies from a stray bullet in a car hijacking incident. Meanwhile the city is shown as ambivalently bleak as noted in the rampant deaths, betrayals, poverty, prostitution, AIDS and the popular inner-city xenophobia against foreign African dwellers. It is also supportive of individual and societal social and economic improvement. This is noted in Tsepo and Refentse's educational success and Refilwe's rise in the publishing world, her further studies at Oxford and her pragmatic decision to fight on and not commit suicide after being diagnosed HIV- positive and suffering from AIDS-related diseases.

Finally I will look at Ashraf Jamal's five short stories. The first one, "Apple Green", is set in Petermaritzburg and shows a couple whose marriage is plagued by fragmentation. The husband, who has just returned from a hunting expedition, gets into the bedroom where his wife anxiously waits for him naked. The wife is rendered invisible by her husband as he chooses to leave the bedroom to get a beer while waiting

for her in order for them to go to the local Golden Horse Casino. The wife fragments psychologically and runs into the street naked as if attempting to escape the dead relationship but is caught by the husband who takes her into the car and orders her to put on an apple green coloured dress. The story ends with the husband and wife putting on hypocritical smiles and pretending to be happily married on the gambling floors.

The second story, "Black Bag", is set in an unnamed city and is based on a paranoid French professor who is burdened by painful divorce proceedings. His marriage to an African woman has just broken down due to her discovery of his obsession with pornography and sex with black women as evidenced by the videotapes kept in his black bag. The professor suffers an inner psychological turmoil due to the impending loss of custody of his son. He also feels that everyone is aware of his immoral obsession as well as the problems associated with his decision to leave his job, the failure to get a job in France and the unattractive option of going to Reunion Island. Interestingly enough, "The Shades", set in an unnamed city in KwaZulu- Natal, depicts an almost parallel situation as in the above story, especially in the sense of "unhomeness" and the contemplation of exile. The story is set at night where we see the wife making dinner for her husband and child, but goes on a psychological journey in which she shows her fear of the violent crimes and general insecurity felt in the city. She even suggests that they migrate to Canada or New Zealand as has been done by their friends. The husband on the other hand, researching local Zulu dreams and prophecy, gets to think about the family's vulnerability to crime and is seen restlessly searching for a self - assurance that he will be able to protect his family and offer their child a bright future. He dismisses his wife's

suggestion that they leave for foreign greener pastures, in a way confirming a pragmatic decision-making based on a desire to help build a new nation.

The fourth story is "D.I.Y." which is set in Hillbrow, where we see the main character, a white woman in a state of shock and misery, as her friend Christopher –a homosexual -has just been murdered by some policemen - who had forced him to jump from the second floor. She is so psychologically affected by the fact that the suspected policemen are not going to be investigated despite her statement that, as a result, she ends up thinking that she will be the next victim of the rampant urban violent crimes and victimisation of women, children and homosexuals in Johannesburg. This is evidenced by the newspaper cuttings pasted on the walls round all the rooms of her flat. Her psychological dislocation is fully developed in her masochistic casual sexual relationships with vulnerable and subservient young black boys. These relationships are punctuated by her violent attacks of the young boys, non-commitment to them and a search for other victims spurred by a conscious desire to use her body to wreak vengeance on all men for hurting the weak and her friend Christopher. However, along the way she also becomes a victim as she develops an acute level of paranoia and vulnerability, the solution to which probably lies with the decision by the boy she has slept with the previous night to stay and not leave her.

And the final story by Ashraf Jamal to be looked at will be "Nuptial." This is a story set in the Northern Province where a group of Johannesburg parastatal management employees are attending a leadership seminar. The main female protagonist and leadership consultant implements various skills based on teamwork such as group confessions of one's weakness and fears. Along the way, the representation of the need

for truth, confession and a sense of connectedness to achieve corporate success and indeed for nation building is hinted at. The parastatal employees are representative of the current South African nation because it includes almost all the nation groups and races in South Africa as well as foreigners. It also depicts the existing possibilities for women to enter the corporate and public world and thus assume social and economic power.

The fiction is set in the city and to a large extent maps the postcolonial condition of both countries as introduced in the above. The spatial analysis of the represented cities will be based on Michael de Certeau's (1993) views informed by his observations on the condition of ordinary New York pedestrians. I will employ his views on urban alienation and invisibility, the part played by global finance and the subsequent inhabitants' remapping of the city and subversion of the cultural and economic hegemony and relate it to the southern African city's specific history and conditions.

The representation of the urban dwellers' anxieties, liminalities, dislocated identities, agency and the associated reconstitution will be examined in the following chapters. In **Chapter 1** I will give an overview of the historical construction of the city and the associated identities in both countries and will also examine the theoretical ideas that inform the dissertation. **Chapter 2** looks at the mapping of the current southern African city spaces, the representation of identities as well as the individual and social dislocation obtaining there. **Chapter 3** focuses on the representation of urban social dislocation and its close relationship to the rampant urban violence, xenophobia and the ravaging effects of HIV/AIDS-related diseases and deaths. **Chapter 4** explores the ways in which the gendered spaces are represented in the southern African city and also examines the various forms of women's agency and how they strive towards social and

economic empowerment. Finally in the **Conclusion** I will evaluate the nature of the southern African city's postcoloniality as inferred from the analysis of the fiction as well as make an attempt at placing the research within the problematic of whether the mapping of the urban spaces and identity is based on postcolonialism or postmodernism.



Chapter 1 An overview of the historical construction of the city, the associated identities and theoretical views on space and identity

The city in both South Africa and Zimbabwe has evolved over time from being a colonial administrative and mining centre to become the current globalised one. This socio-historic development of the city went hand in hand with the peripherisation of the colonised, especially the blacks, and the privileging of the whites as the superior colonials. The urban space was racially segmented and bent on the exclusion of the dominated; Africans were only wanted in the urban centre as a source of cheap labour whose residence was temporary. Nevertheless the peripherised blacks, coloureds and Indians were able to engage in some form of remapping and appropriation of the city space in defiance of white colonial domination. In most cases they reconstituted themselves into urban and detribalised identities. Indeed many urban anti-colonial agitations were witnessed as the excluded colonised other fought against colonial segregation and apartheid in southern Africa. Women also carved their own space in urban areas as they demanded residence status, freedom of movement and respectability in the predominantly colonial, exclusive and male city. Finally, after independence, in Zimbabwe in 1980, and in 1994 in South Africa, many openings within the social, economic and political spatiality of the city were made. Both countries introduced national programmes to transform the segregated city. Zimbabwe followed Socialist and Marxist reforms from 1980 to 1990 and South Africa introduced a national reconstruction project tinged with some Socialist aspirations from 1994-1996 as a means to rid the country of the legacy of apartheid. The postcolonial transformation, especially after 1990

in South Africa, occurred at a time when the Western global social and economic agenda was gaining a strong hold on the region and the rest of the Third world.

The creation of the colonial city and the construction of colonised identities

The city in southern Africa started off as a colonial administrative and economic centre. These facilitated colonial entrance and consolidation of capitalist exploitation of African raw materials such as game, ivory and minerals. They were also sites for the establishment of colonial repressive state apparatuses such as the army, police, courts and prisons (Althusser, 1971: 143). In South Africa the pre-industrial establishment of urban centres started with the building of military forts and commercial centres such as Cape Town and Durban as far back as the 1650s. The process of urbanisation in colonial Zimbabwe occurs much later on in the late 19th century as noted in the imperialist establishment of military and colonial forts such as Forts Tuli, Victoria, Charter and Salisbury in 1890 by the British South Africa Company (BSAC) as the Pioneer Column invaded Mashonaland (Raftopolous &Yoshikuni,1999 :3). The minority Europeans who occupied these centres expropriated the land, renamed it and only accepted Africans into their spaces as cheap labour. However the late 19th century industrial expansion influenced by the discovery of minerals marked the beginning of a fully fledged colonial capitalism.

The discovery of gold and diamonds in South Africa led to a massive industrial and urban development in southern Africa. Settlements were established on the Rand and the Reef mining areas; these later developed into major colonial urban centres such as Johannesburg. The search for minerals and colonial expansion saw the BSAC establishing urban centres such as Que Que, Gwelo, Selukwe and Bulawayo in colonial

Zimbabwe, after the successful 1890 invasion and 1893 subjugation of the Ndebele Kingdom. These developments demanded a huge labour pool, hence the growth of urbanisation and migrant labour. South Africa recruited local migrants from their homesteads and from neighbouring countries such as Swaziland, Mozambique and Zimbabwe to work in the mines and the growing manufacturing industries. Zimbabwe on the other hand recruited her labour from the indigenous people and the neighbouring Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia. These recruited labourers formed the source of urban African dislocated residents who made an immense contribution to the development of the modern and colonial city.

The colonial urban city became a European -dominated space which excluded the colonised. The space was segmented along racial lines and mapped the colonised as the inferior other. Colonial legislation was enacted to seize and divide land along racial lines as noted in the Natives Land Act of 1913 and the Native Trust Land Act of 1936 in South Africa (Christopher, 1994: 32-35), and the BSAC Land Ordinances made from 1900-1902, dividing the land into Company and Crown land. These laws meant that the urban zone was to be a divided one. In fact the migrant labourer residential area in both countries' cities was located in the peripheral compounds and private locations (Christopher, 1994: 24-26; Raftopolous & Yoshikuni, 1999: 5-6). This indeed placed the colonised into a racialised and dominated identity within a non- integrating urban planning as noted by Cooper (1993: 27).

It must be noted that in both countries urbanisation followed along similar segregated lines up to 1945. This mostly hinged on the colonial desire to create an industrial and labour- based economy. The colonialists introduced economic and social

push factors such as land seizures, forced labour recruitment and numerous taxes to force Africans to enter into the colonial urban economy. The migrant workers then entered into a divided urban space whose different infrastructure was characterised by high standards for the white areas while the black labour residential areas in the outskirts were poorly developed. This shows that from the beginning the colonised were constituted as the subordinated and segregated other. Nevertheless, most migrant labourers still had an element of independence as they could opt to do seasonal work or stay in private inner-city locations.

Early forms of subversion and agency against colonial domination

The colonial city in existence up to 1945 was not fully segregated. Most of the colonial legislation (pointed out earlier on), which was enacted to achieve a segregated urban spatiality, was never fully implemented. The majority of Africans and other colonised urban dwellers were still able to find some space to freely establish themselves in the city centre. This is certainly evident in colonial Zimbabwe as noted in Raftopolous and Yoshikuni's (1999) introduction which makes reference to Ranger's research and Muzondidya's MA thesis which show that up to 1940, Africans in Bulawayo and Salisbury respectively, could choose to stay on private white-owned locations outside the city. In fact, up to 1945 the colonial Zimbabwean city still afforded the urban worker space to creatively reconfigure and place himself in the city as noted here:

For despite the intention to segregate, compartmentalise and divide the cities, a significant feature of urbanisation was the many ways in which different groups of African workers, both men and women as well as territorial and extra-territorial workers, made the city their own. (Raftopolous & Yoshikuni, 1999: 4).

Similarly, the intended segregation legislated and structured through means such as deeds and the separation by roads, was easily subverted, leading to multiracial interaction in the South African urban space. Hence the pre-1945 colonial city is at best noted as mimetic of the desired segregated space, as the majority of the colonised urban dwellers could still afford a fair amount of freedom to defy colonial legislation and reside where ever they wanted.

It is interesting to note that apart from defying the intended spatial segregation, the colonised other were also able to construct new identities. The workers defined themselves into urban and detribalised identities and subverted the colonialist desire to make them temporary urban residents by defiantly establishing permanent urban residence. Women were also able to establish themselves permanently in the city as independent and defiant subjects by engaging in white domestic work, beer brewing or prostitution. This migrant labour's establishment of belonging and the creative conquest of the colonial city space is clearly described by Cooper:

As workers sought to shape their lives as individuals and as members of collectives, they shaped the life of the city. The woman who brewed beer at night might refresh a downtrodden workforce for the benefit of capital, but she was a dangerously autonomous person, with too many ties to other people, with too few official eyes on her. The men who frequented her shebeen might dull their senses, but they also participated in an urban culture that was antithetical to hard work, that accepted forms of conduct that the state defined as criminal, and whose very cultural separateness made it at least a potential base for political organisation .(1983: 8).

It is also important to examine the effect of urban segregation on the South African Asian community during the same period. Asian migrant labourers, most of whom were concentrated in the Transvaal and Natal Provinces, also faced various forms of urban discrimination. Land laws which restricted their commercial activities to the periphery where they were allowed to establish Asiatic Bazaars and residential places away from white areas, were enacted. The same kind of appropriation and defiant remapping of the city, noted amongst the blacks, was initiated by the Indians up to the early 1940s much to the displeasure of the whites. As a result new laws aimed at fully discriminating the Indians from white areas were made as given by Christopher:

White complaints of Indian "penetration" into predominantly white residential areas in Durban resulted in further government action.

The enactment of the Trading and Occupation of Land (Transvaal and Natal) Act of 1943 and the more restrictive Asiatic Land Tenure and Representation Act of 1946 sought to confine Asian ownership and occupation of land to certain clearly defined areas of towns. This was to be achieved first through preventing inter-racial property transfers and then by establishing a Land Tenure Advisory Board to draw up plans for a permanent division of the city's Indian sectors. (1994:41)

Therefore the so called Indians, just as the blacks, were placed into segregated urban spaces where they were peripherised and categorised as the colonised other.

Divergent urban development- a continuation of segregation in Zimbabwe and the creation of an apartheid city in South Africa

The post-Second World war period is marked by a divergent trajectory in southern Africa's urbanisation. The apartheid city came into existence in South Africa in 1948. Zimbabwe continued to have a segregated city entrenched by white conservative interests

which were being challenged by liberal ideas located in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland's agenda, and the growing African nationalism. Both cities remained predominantly white and exclusive but the difference is in the severity of racially based separation obtaining in South Africa.

The Afrikaner National Party's (NP) 1948 election victory ushered in politics of replacement and marginalisation based on the policy of separate development. This saw Blacks, Coloureds and Asians being separated from the mainstream social economic and political sphere. The separation was achieved through a rigorous enforcement of the already existing legislation such as the 1913 Land Act and 1923 Natives Urban Areas Act, and other new legislation such as the 1950 Population Registration Act, 1950 Group Areas Act, 1952 Coordination of Papers Act and 1953 Reservation of Separate Amenities Act. These were enacted to separate and contain the movement of the "non -Europeans". The separated Africans and Asians could not move into or stay in white areas, there were separate amenities and they also received inferior education in accordance with the Bantu Education Act. Christopher (1994: 180) describes this as apartheid control through spatial separation and containment.

The policy of separation impacted heavily on the South African post -World War Two rapid urbanisation and spatial planning. The manufacturing industry's boom necessitated a huge African labour influx into the city and most of these labourers became permanent residents in the inner- city, much to the displeasure of the NP. As a result the government sanctioned slum clearances from the inner city and the location of Africans into newly created African townships on the outskirts of the city. The destruction of the multiracial Sophiatown in Johannesburg and the creation of racialised

separate locations in Orlando, as well as the creation of the Cape Flats for Coloureds removed from the infamous District Six, exemplify the apartheid urban replanning. The resultant apartheid city was characterised by separate white residences which were well built and had modern infrastructure and a white Central Business District (CBD), whose amenities were not open to “non-Europeans,” separated by clear boundaries such as railway lines, and burgher zones from the poorly facilitated and overcrowded Asian, Coloured and African townships.

This unequal development and separation had negative effects on the “non-whites” location and conception of themselves in the city. For instance, the slum relocation to far-away townships meant that they were the excluded and restricted visitors into the CBD. Worse still, movement into the city centre and around their townships was contained through the pass system. Lemon (1991:18) notes that in the 1960s over 500 000 people were prosecuted annually for violating the pass restrictions which discriminated against the urban South African majority, who were therefore subjected to some form of imprisoning containment as their whole social fabric and everyday life became subject to apartheid political and cultural domination.

Though the Zimbabwean city remained a segregated space it came under various historical challenges. These included the demands from the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and the effect of the nationalist movement beginning in the 1950s. The establishment of the federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland from 1953 –1963 forced the colonial government to ease up on its policies of urban segregation. Both Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland demanded a liberalised non- racial city before federating, since the University which was to serve the federation was to be located in Southern

Rhodesia's white suburb of Mt Pleasant. This resulted in some opening up of Salisbury as legislated in the 1951 Land Apportionment Amendment Act, which allowed black students to move around the university's campus. At the same time the nationalist movement grew in stature from the 1950s City Youth League into political parties such as the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) in the 1960s. These fought running battles in the African locations such as Highfield in Salisbury, in an attempt to dislodge the policy of segregation and in demand of the black vote and majority rule. During this period's African challenge of the city's and indeed national segregation, the majority of urban dwellers assumed nationalist identities which were realised with the attainment of independence –1980 for Zimbabwe and 1994 for South Africa.

The post independent and post apartheid cities

From 1980 to 1990, Zimbabwe's postcolonial city was defined along Socialist Marxist lines. The government's objective was to redress the socio-economic imbalances inherited from colonialism. The urban areas were officially desegregated. Blacks and other excluded races were given the freedom of movement and ownership of permanent residence in the former white areas. This spatial desegregation had however been initiated earlier on in 1979 during the short lived Zimbabwe –Rhodesia regime's revoking of the Land Tenure Act. The period saw many affluent blacks moving from the townships into low cost white suburbs such as Malbereign (Dewar, 1991: 198). Nevertheless, the post- colonial city in Zimbabwe witnessed a huge transformation where black ownership of property anywhere in the city was allowed and the CBD's buildings and First Street malls were opened up. The townships were upgraded through electrification, low -cost

housing projects, the provision of schools and hospitals as well as a committed city council management of services provision. Blacks were now officially included and had regained their pride and national confidence.

On the other hand, the South African city's apartheid hegemony came under increasing pressure in the 1980s from a fierce multiracial anti-apartheid agitation under the United Democratic Front. The urban streets and other spaces such as schools and colleges became battlefields which saw many deaths and detentions. Worker union movements coordinated demonstrations against poor living and working conditions and the general apartheid oppression. Blacks, Indians and Coloureds had started from the 1970s onwards to slowly move back into the inner city residential areas such as Hillbrow (Morris: 1999), as a way of subverting the policy of racially separate residences. The increased insurrection, international economic sanctions and global isolation then forced the NP to enter into negotiations with the anti-apartheid movement. As a result political parties such as the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) were unbanned and political prisoners such as Nelson Mandela were released. By 1994 South Africa had made a relatively smooth transition into a democratic post-apartheid country.

The post-apartheid city's development has been characterised by a contradiction between the nationalist interest and a backdrop of fear from some whites. Of course the white suburbs, the CBD and inner city flats and commercial buildings as well as amenities were desegregated, just as what was witnessed in Zimbabwe in the 1980s. And apartheid laws such as the Group Areas Act, Separate Amenities Act and pass laws, were repealed by the F.W. De Klerk government as a gesture of commitment to the

negotiations and transition to a post-apartheid era. The Nelson Mandela-led government embarked on a national reconstruction programme to address the apartheid socio-economic imbalances. Lester et al (2000: 248-249) describe the implemented Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of 1994-1996 as having targeted job creation, construction of new houses, provision of modern infrastructure such as electricity and water sewerage and free education. As a result most urban areas benefited from RDP projects. However, as Blacks, Indians and Coloureds moved into white suburbs, relations were tense and characterised by suspicion so that some whites migrated to exclusive suburbs or opted for foreign migration. This is a characteristic element of the current South African postcoloniality where relations between whites and blacks are punctuated by suspicion and anxiety.

The current and globalised southern African city

The 1990s however, saw the southern African city become heavily influenced by post-cold war and global socio-economic policies. On one hand, Zimbabwe accepted the International Monetary Fund (IMF) structural adjustment programme. The prescribed liberal economic policies include the devaluation of the local currency, doing away with tariffs that protect local industries from foreign competition, and reduce state funding of the non-productive sector such as health, education and housing projects. The first five-year economic structural adjustment programme in Zimbabwe ended in 1995. This was followed by a second one, whose tenure was characterised by huge company closures and job retrenchments, as state companies privatised and cut down on labour costs. There also arose urban housing shortages, foreign currency shortages and difficulties due to an IMF stand-off on balance of payments until its tough conditions were met. The effects are

represented in the fiction under study as portrayed for instance in Mungoshi's "The Hare," through Nhongo's job retrenchment. His subsequent emasculation is noted in his restlessness over his wife's attempts to save the situation through cross-border trade. The resultant urban poverty is signified by Mangwiro's wallowing in urban destitution (Mhiripiri, 2000).

On the other hand, South Africa proud with the RDP and an eagerness to redress the apartheid inequalities, found herself courting the IMF as well. The massive reconstruction programme could only be financed by local corporate and international finance; as a result she came under the IMF's influence. It is interesting to note that for Zimbabwe, Western globalisation was externally imposed as the country could only join the multilateral institution's camp after the fall of Communist Russia and the end of the Cold War from which she had enjoyed much support. In the case of South Africa, her attainment of independence occurred in the post Cold War era and as Carmody (2002:1-3) argues, the multinational corporations' domination of the economy meant an easy internally generated movement into the global economy. Both Zimbabwe and South Africa found themselves in between the demands of the IMF and those of their local constituents. Such a predicament impacts on and shapes the way in which the current city and its inhabitants live.

It is plausible to describe the current city in both Southern African countries as a global one. This is especially so when referring to the major cities such as Harare and Bulawayo in Zimbabwe, and Johannesburg, Pretoria, Durban and Cape Town in South Africa. This global nature is noted through the existence of postmodern high rise buildings, shopping and office plazas as well as exclusive suburbs such as Sandton north

of Johannesburg and Borrowdale in Harare which are replicas of metropolitan city developments. Other factors confirming the current globalised city include the dominance of Western capitalism. This is represented by the existence of global financial and commercial institutions such as the IMF and multinational companies, affiliation to globalising institutions such as the United Nations in both countries, as well as the influence of global media systems such as Cable News Network and the internet, and the hosting and participation in international events such as world games and international conventions (King, 1993: 89). Mpe's (2001) representation of Johannesburg's Hillbrow actually maps this Western cultural and economic domination as will be examined in great detail in Chapter 2. These cities have therefore become appendages of the Western socio-economic trends as described by Westwood and Williams:

The localities of the city are part of a wider set of relations, an ensemble of the economic, political and cultural moments which are also shaped by the effects of changing global and national positions of cities bound, as they are, to the changing fortunes of capitalism. (1997 :7)

The global city space, identity and theoretical views

The global city is also interestingly a “a two cities in one city,” to use a Williams term (1997:11). This captures the way in which the city is mapped into two different segments characterised by, on the one hand, affluence and modern town planning while the other is dominated by urban squalor as well as social and moral decay as observed in his study of London. The CBD and the affluent suburbia are replicas of the first world in terms of the architecture and living standards while the inner city and townships are characterised by overcrowding, poverty, unemployment and violence. In fact the city

centre imposes itself coldly and is aloof to the demands of the ordinary people wallowing in fragmented invisibility. In most cases there are limited projects to improve the deteriorating standards of the excluded majority. Hence the inner-city and outer townships degenerate into “black spots” peopled by migrants and the indigenous people, both employed and unemployed, students, vagrants and prostitutes. Good examples are the Avenues suburb in Harare and Hillbrow in Johannesburg. Such is the hybridity of the global city space in both Zimbabwe and South Africa.

The global city’s postcolonial condition of fragmentation and invisibility brings us to the theories of spatial analysis. The CBD is theorised by De Certeau (1993) from an analysis generated by the high rise buildings of New York, as imposing and detached leading to the reduction of the ordinary people walking down there into invisibility. The mapping and planning of the city space does not take into consideration the ordinary people. In fact the space represents the hegemony of corporate investment as it houses the high rise buildings, shopping plazas and office complexes. The city planners who are representatives of the global patriarchy name the streets and design them for the benefit of global commerce. As a result the ordinary people walking in the city feel excluded and are rendered invisible. De Certeau describes their movement as “the chorus of idle footsteps” (1993: 47), thereby strengthening the socio-economic inadequacies felt by the urban dwellers. This is a typically Western- based urban analysis which can however be applied to the current southern African situation especially when taking into consideration that the cities were constructed and are still located within the influence of Western capital as well as architectural and urban planning philosophy.

This invisible urban space also provides an interesting site of multiple dramas, to use a Westwood and Williams (1997:5) concept based on their analysis of the social trajectories of London's indigenous and foreign inner city residents. This can as well be linked to the southern African situation where a city like Johannesburg is populated by different nationalities, witnesses different reactions to the colonial and apartheid legacy as well as the globalised nature of the city punctuated by among other things socio-economic decay and attempts to subvert the alienating and dislocating effects as represented in the fiction. The urban dwellers occupying this space of social inadequacies attempt a reconstitution of their society. On the one hand, the memories of a lost order and ideals after considering the inner-city and high-density residential areas' degeneration, force the once privileged urban society to wallow in an obsessive nostalgia of a glorious past and fear of a bleak future. On the other hand, the drama includes the majority of the ordinary people's attempts to come to terms with their situation and search for possibilities and moments to make a creative relationship with the urban space as well as improve their lives, society and nation as a whole. This search for possibilities creates a hybrid space which is described by De Certeau as "a place of transformations and appropriations, the object of various kinds of interference by new attributes" (1993: 155).

Those city dwellers suffering from the adverse effects of globalisation such as poverty, unemployment and social fragmentation can seize the moment and engage in a discursive transformation of their urban spaces. This can be in the form of pursuing further education, social awareness as well as the desire and intentions to improve relations. They may simply subvert the existing hegemonic culture by redefining

themselves as will be noted in my discussion of the dislocated lives and agency of characters such as the narrator and Alice in Chinodya's stories, Mangwiwo and Elista in Mhiripiri's stories set in Harare, as well as the South African urbanites Refilwe and Refentse in Mpe (2001). De Certeau theorises this renaming and remapping of the urban space:

Linking acts and footsteps, opening meanings and directions, these words operate in the name of an implying out and wearing away their private role. They become liberated spaces that can be occupied. An indeterminateness gives them, by means of a semantic rarefaction, the function of articulating a second, poetic geography of the literal, forbidden or permitted meaning. They insinuate other routes into the functionalist and historical order of movement. (1993: 159)

These "linking acts and footsteps" signify the reintegration borne in the predominantly fragmenting urban spaces, and are clearly linked to the opening up of new meanings and directions as well as "insinuat[ing] other routes," thus portraying the associated remapping and agency by the urban dwellers.

This renaming and remapping goes hand in hand with the reconstitution of the urban dwellers' social and national imagination. A critical examination of the dysfunctional male-female relationships haunted by silence, detachment and betrayals, and an unimaginable vulnerability to psychological tensions and haunting deaths characterises some of the concerns represented in the fiction under focus. They also react restlessly to the effects of global cultural mixing due to migrations which locates them in the realm of fear as especially portrayed in the popular Hillbrow attitude towards foreigners in Mpe's Welcome To Our Hillbrow. The majority of the urban dwellers feel threatened by the foreigners with whom they do not share any past memory, language or

imagined connectedness (Anderson, 1983: 9-36). A re-evaluation of identities occurs and in most cases shows itself negatively in the form of xenophobia and violence against the foreign other. The rich and in most cases the formerly privileged, opt for exile to escape what they view as a bleak present and future. This is noted in Jamal's "The Shades," where the wife suggests to her husband that they emigrate as their friends have done. The attempts at reconstructing new identities are characterised by shifting and multiple forms of agency aimed at an improved sense of the self and at ensuring survival and a meaningful conception of life in the predominantly dislocating city. This hybrid urban space, within which the current global southern African city figures, is a feverish and "restless urban landscape" to borrow Knox's (1993) title phrase.

And perhaps interesting in the mapping of the urban spaces and identity, is the way in which the global social and economic agenda creates new gendered divisions in the southern African city. While the city was created as a male space and marginalised women into the domestic space, as has been mentioned earlier on, it is important to note how globalisation has further complicated the obtaining gendered divisions in southern Africa and the rest of the Third World for that matter. It is clear that the global social and economic hegemony entrenches the peripherisation of women into the private and domestic space by limiting female entrance into the public realm of the corporate world and formal employment. Those in the informal economy, the dependent, weak, poor, unemployed and the invisible urbanites such as vagrants and street children are also defined as feminine. And those in authority and occupying the public domain are defined as powerful irrespective of sex, in that way portraying new global gendered divisions (Peterson and Runyan, 1999:138-151). The fiction under study represents the traditional

gendered divisions in which women such as Mangwirot's wife (Mhiripiri, 2000) and Sara (Mungoshi, 1997) are portrayed in the peripheral and domestic space as housewives, and more importantly how they are silenced as noted in the male voice which dominates the narratives. Added to this is the global social and economic agenda's effect on the urban spaces where characters such as Mangwirot (Mhiripiri, 2000) and Nhongo (Mungoshi, 1997) are portrayed as the emasculated and marginalised due to poverty, unemployment and dependence on the powerful such as landlords and enterprising wives respectively. Nevertheless the southern African city is still portrayed as possessing the potential to support women's entrance into the exclusive male domain of formal employment and authority. This is noted in Refilwe's rise to become the Commissioning Editor in a Johannesburg publishing company (Mpe, 2001) and in the position of the narrator's company executive wife (Chinodya, 1998). There is also the subversion of dependence on men and patriarchal oppression as clearly noted in Sara's assumption of personal confidence and financial freedom as a cross-border trader (Mungoshi, 1997) which will be looked at in detail in chapter 4. Hence the southern African city's gendered divisions as well as possibilities of female empowerment are represented as emanating from a link between the legacy of patriarchal views, colonialism, apartheid and the global socio-economic agenda.

And before concluding it is perhaps important to acknowledge that the above discussed current southern African postcolonial condition has other complicating factors such as the effect of HIV and AIDS and that of the current national leadership's collusion with the western global forces. Indeed the ravaging effects of AIDS have led to a massive sense of anxiety, fear and hopelessness among the southern African urbanites as depicted

in Chinodya's "Can We Talk" and in Mpe's Welcome to Our Hillbrow. Nevertheless the fiction portrays that humanity can still survive through pragmatic decision-making and a change of attitude to casual sex. This is clearly depicted in Alice's views on the need to abstain from casual sex and to tackle the rampant deaths by developing a new discourse and way of handling the deaths for life to go on (Chinodya, 1998). Also significant in understanding the current urban socio-economic anxiety and dislocation is the way some of the leadership of the region and the rest of the Third World has unquestioningly endorsed the Western social and economic agenda such as the IMF programmes and sometimes abuse their public offices for their personal enrichment at the expense of the majority, in that way assisting Western domination. Thus the effect of AIDS and the neocolonial positioning of the southern African region, which is however not shown thematically in the texts under focus, depict the complicated nature of the current Zimbabwean and South African postcolonial condition.

Therefore the current globalised nature of the postcolonial southern African city is a product of a history stretching from colonial urban planning up to the current international capital's socio-economic hegemonic control. Nevertheless, control of the Western-dominated urban space has been contested by the colonised and excluded who appropriated moments of possibility and potential to remap and creatively make it suit their own collective and national desire. The moments of creative energy have sustained the reconstruction of collective and national identities throughout the history of the city, and actually play a significant role in understanding the current Southern African post-colonial condition. This reconstitution is in a state of continuous flux as the dwellers grapple with the continually changing nature of the city. As will be noted in the analysis

of the fiction, the predominantly different forms and effects of a European- based cultural and economic domination, as well as other forces such as AIDS, and their resulting individual and societal dislocation are subverted through various means which include the pursuit of education, pragmatic decision making, entrance into the exclusive male and global economic space. This therefore maps the current Southern African space and identities and shows that they exist in a not entirely gloomy condition without any possibility of personal and societal life's improvement.

Chapter 2 Mapping the city space and the representation of identities, the individual, the psyche and fractured relationships

Refentse, child of Tiragalong and Hillbrow, welcome to our Hillbrow
of milk and honey and bile, all brewing in the depths of our collective
consciousness. (Mpe , 2001: 41)

The above description of Hillbrow represents the ambivalent nature of the current South African city. It is inhabited by the majority of dwellers whose identity is between the rural area in which colonial and apartheid hegemony placed their permanent homes and currently the city where life experiences mirror a hybridity emanating from a paradox that is located in possibilities of achieving success and failure at the same time. This condition is viewed by Kurtz (2000:103), as depicting the current African city as a “venue for fundamental conflicts and contradictions on all levels of the social formation.” This hybridity is noted in the links between poverty, wealth, life, death, home and homelessness due to various postcolonial influences. These forces include the impact of global social and economic hegemony, and the legacy of colonialism and apartheid as well as personal decisions and actions by especially the middle and upper-class inhabitants. As a result the urban dwellers’ life is dominated by restlessness and anxiety. A majority of the urban inhabitants who include the lower working class, the urban poor and the invisible such as prostitutes and vagrants, as well as the professionals such university professors and corporate employees, are portrayed as detached and vulnerable to the extent that they suffer from a displaced psyche as well as schizophrenic and suicidal tendencies. On the whole, personal relationships are fractured and consumed by a fear of the present and future whose bleakness is seen in the prevalence of violence,

poverty, disease and death. However, the urban space is notably still in possession of the capacity to nurture the inhabitants' reconstitution of their identities from fragmentation and displacement. This can be achieved through various means such as the act of writing, opening up dialogue and remapping the hegemonic and exclusive city space, as well as by making bold and pragmatic decisions to improve their living conditions.

Mapping the current urban spaces and their postcoloniality

The contemporary Southern African urban space represents two cities in one, a Westwood and Williams (1997) concept discussed in chapter one, in that way showing a post-colonial condition placed within the Western global socio- economic hegemony and the legacy of colonialism and apartheid. The region's specific two cities in one is noted in the existence of an open CBD with high rise buildings and postmodern shopping and office complexes¹ surrounded by an overcrowded, violent and poorly facilitated inner city residential area, and a far-away but equally overcrowded and neglected high-density suburb. This spatial division-minus the low-density and the high-density suburbs- is clearly represented in Welcome to Our Hillbrow, (Mpe, 2001), through Refentse's walking in the city of Johannesburg. He walks from the unexpectedly quiet area around Vickers Place in Hillbrow where he is staying with his cousin. The inner city's commercial and entertainment centre is in Kotze Street which has multinational corporations such as Spar, OK Bazaars, Standard Bank and First National Bank juxtaposed with the noisy pubs, streets overcrowded with fruit and vegetable vendors, prostitutes and drug dealers, as well as being a home to vagrants and street children. As he gets out of Hillbrow on his way to Witwatersrand University, the cartographical portrayal indicates contrasts on the economic and social level. This contrast is also

confirmed in Gunner's discussion on how the novel Finding Mr Madini (2002) contributes towards the representation of the mapping of Johannesburg's city centre. The existence of a well structured and postmodern designed CBD² noted in Refentse's walk and low density suburbs, signified in the brief reference to Hyde Park, next to a high density and impoverished inner-city and townships represents the current city's postcolonial condition. The physical mapping of the urban space is still located within the philosophy of colonialism and apartheid, now compounded by the global capital hegemony. The majority of blacks are still the excluded in the current city, especially on the economic level though they can legally walk freely in it.

And on an interesting note there exists a paradoxical structuring of the urban space noted in the contest between opportunities and vice seen in street vending and drug dealing, honest street walking as in Refentse's walk to the university and the corrupt movements of prostitutes and drug dealers. One might also take note of the social cartography as influenced by the post-apartheid democratisation of the city which opened up the space to the huge population living there without augmenting it with social and economic opportunities that go along with such a move, thus leading to the current overcrowding and bleak atmosphere. Hence the urban space is a hybrid space punctuated by openings and opportunities at loggerheads with the global social and economic hegemony coupled with the legacy of colonialism and apartheid as well as the post-colonial democratisation and the opening up of the city.

It should be taken into consideration that the contemporary city in Zimbabwe exists along the same lines as the South African. One is certainly aware of the differences in spatial design between the CBD and the low density-suburb in Chinodya's "Can We

Talk” and “Strays,” and the high-density suburbs of Harare which are dominated by socio-economic decay as seen in Mangwiro’s living in a backyard shack and the degeneration of Elista and her mother into prostitution due to financial problems in Mhiripiri’s “The Lodgers” and “Elista” respectively. The opportunities in a globally dominated city are signified in the self transformation of Sara into a cross-border trader in an attempt to rescue the family from poverty after her husband’s retrenchment due to the effects of the structural adjustment programme (SAP) as well as Refentse, Tsepo and Refilwe’s rise from rural poverty into university graduates and professionals. Hence, despite the specificities of each country, both southern African cities are dominated by similar socio-economic and historical conditions in which the urban space is largely bleak and fragmented but offering a limited capacity for individual and societal reconstitution and transformation.

More importantly, the southern African city is portrayed within the background of global socio-economic influences whose impact dislocates and fragments the inhabitants. Harvey (1989) in his first chapter examines the Western postmodern city’s development after the 1960s and postulates that the urban planning philosophy was based on asserting global capitalist domination and difference by encouraging the celebration of local history, memory and even ethnicity. The southern African city as discussed in chapter 1, develops as a colonial space for capitalist exploitation and is currently a globalised one as seen mostly through the linkages with Western economic institutions such as the IMF and other transnational companies. It accommodates different cultures, the indigenous from the rural areas, symbolised by those from Tirigalong (Mpe, 2001) and Chivhu in Mungoshi’s “The Hare,” and regional as well as current migrants from Europe-although

the texts under focus do not refer to the current Western migrants. The narrator in Welcome To Our Hillbrow depicts Johannesburg's Hillbrow as an overcrowded space also accommodating African immigrants such as Nigerians, Zaireans and Zimbabweans scorned as "makwerekwere," who have also made the inner-city their home, in that way showing the current level of cultural mixing. The Zimbabwean global cultural mixing is noted through reference to Sara's trading excursions to Johannesburg (Mungoshi, 1997) and in the reflections made by the narrator husband on his trips overseas from where he brought presents for his wife (Chinodya, 1998). This globalised cultural mixing engenders feelings of anxiety, vulnerability and hatred in the urban dwellers. For instance, Refilwe (Mpe, 2001), in a spate of jealousy blames foreigners, as evidenced by the self deceit and spreading of the story that the lost lover of her life, Refentse, had succumbed to the seduction of a kwere kwere woman, Lerato, yet her own unfaithfulness seen in having multiple boyfriends leads to her undoing. The same restless identity in contemplating the global movements is noted in Nhongo who feels left out, vulnerable and even suspicious as he thinks that his wife Sara is having an affair with a fellow cross-border trader, Mr Magaso (Mungoshi, 1997). Therefore the resultant cultural mixing obtaining in the globalised southern African city has an alienating effect on the inhabitants of both the host city as noted in Hillbrow Johannesburg and from where they are coming as in Nhongo's case in Harare. And as Gunner (2002) puts it, such a mixing interrogates the conception of a national home especially when it becomes 'home' for other African nationals as witnessed by the anxiety in Hillbrow.

These feelings of vulnerability, restlessness and self hatred³, should be viewed from the region's specific postcoloniality. The self hatred, restlessness and anxiety seen in

Lerato and Nhongo's case as discussed above, can be explained from the social and economic impact of the global economy. Space, time and distance have been reduced due to modern developments (Harvey, 1989: 284-306). This explains Refentse's relationship with Lerato, a girl from Johannesburg, who is stereotyped as immoral by the people of Tiragalong. For urban imagination and view of the self and society are no longer localised but broadened and global. Ironically, Refilwe later pursues postgraduate studies in Oxford, England, where she acquires a global perspective through her interaction with flatmates described as "a United Nations of sorts" (Mpe, 2001: 105). She even ends up in a relationship with a Nigerian student, something she would never have done in Johannesburg. Of significance too, is the global economy's largely disruptive impact on the city as noted in Nhongo's case, where the IMF economic reform programme in Zimbabwe led to the textile company that he worked for closing down due to the periodic devaluation of the local currency, high production costs and competition from cheaply produced foreign textiles. Hence his vulnerability stems from the negative effect of the globalised economy. Sara embarks on her cross-border trading in order to save the situation as seen in her statement when she started selling second hand clothes: "I would like to help." (Mungoshi, 1997: 10).

The representation of individual and social dislocation

This southern African postcolonial condition defined by, among other things, the Western global agenda and the legacy of colonial cultural and economic hegemony, makes the African urban dwellers feel excluded and estranged. Refentse is a stranger in Hillbrow from the moment we are introduced to him. He walks carefully trying to discover the city and the University and feels out of place at the same time. One feels that

he remains a stranger who never got to understand the city; no wonder that when he is shocked by the betrayal by Sammy, he commits suicide (Mpe, 2001). The same footsteps representing an urban Zimbabwean inhabitant's displacement are depicted in "Can We Talk," where the narrator "links in and out (of the city centre) as fast as [he] can; ... gasp[s] like a stranger at the new buildings, at the walk-aways, at the one way streets" (Chinodya, 1998 : 127-128). The CBD is here portrayed as imposing its global capitalist structures such as the new buildings and therefore excluding the ordinary man. Sam's sense of displacement in "Strays," is represented as being based on the pressure associated with imitating colonial and European suburban culture on how to keep pets, maintain gardens and live enclosed private lives after moving into one of the upmarket suburbs of Harare (Chinodya, 1998). Hence the southern African urban space, whose hybrid nature is noted from its construction during the colonial period's cultural and economic legacy and the current western-based architectural and planning, leads to the creation of dislocated identities within its inhabitants. Added to this is the impression that some of the urbanites, especially those from the middle and elite class, also contributed to this dislocation through their own personal decisions and initiative as noted in Refentse's decision to commit suicide, in that way complicating the hybrid and dislocated nature of the city.

The Southern African city's disrupted space indeed impacts heavily on the psyche of its inhabitants. The city's impersonal, socially and economically alienating characteristics, notably represented in Refentse and the narrator as discussed above, lead to the urban dweller's fragmented psyche. In most cases the urbanites' psyche is characterised by feelings of exclusion and being out of place. This is noted in Fanon's

(1982) analysis of the anxiety and displaced psyche of the wretched in Algeria which he attributed to colonial exploitation and oppression. The current city's displacement is however chiefly due to the hegemonic legacy of colonialism and the global economy. In the Zimbabwean city, Mangwiro, in Mhiripiri's "The Lodgers," lives a hellish life of urban poverty represented by his living in a backyard shack rented from an exploitative landlord whose callousness is noted in his order that the funeral of Mangwiro's son should not be done at his place.⁴ Mangwiro's displaced psyche is noted in the way he "walked all the way into town thinking nothing and seeing nothing" (Mhiripiri, 2000: 163). He is reduced to nothingness due to urban poverty which can be linked to the 1990s IMF programme's negative effects which include the prescribed stoppage of government social investment in areas such as low-cost housing.

Refentse's cousin "complain[s] about the crime and grime in Hillbrow, for which he held such foreigners responsible; not just for the physical decay of the place, but the moral decay" (Mphe, 2000:17). His warning to Refentse that he should not greet everyone he sees in the streets can be viewed as an example of extreme restlessness and anxiety. The cousin is a former apartheid policeman who used to benefit from the system in one way or another and the memory of past privileges has played a great role in his psychological displacement. He however finds a new and corrupt way of benefiting from the current situation as noted in his demand for bribes from the illegal immigrants he rounded up in the streets of Hillbrow. This portrays another cause of urban anxiety which is associated with the memories of lost privileges and not necessarily related to the dislocating effects globalisation. Hence the adverse effects of the globalised southern African city are clearly shown as resulting in a displaced psyche in its inhabitants. In fact

this link between the state of the mind and one's socio-economic reality is acknowledged by Foucault;

Man is a thinking being. The way he thinks is related to society, politics, economics, and history and is also related to very general and universal categories and formal structures (Martin, 1988 :10).

It is quite interesting to note that fear and memory play a significant role in the creation of the urban dwellers' psychological displacement. Most of the dwellers are engulfed in a sense of fear as they imagine themselves socially excluded or victimised in the current city to the extent that some end up developing self hatred, anxiety and even schizophrenia. Various forms of memory and fear are noted in the texts under study. The use of the first person narrative appropriately portrays the fear and memory felt. For instance both narrators, in Chinodya's "Can We Talk" and Mpe's Welcome to Our Hillbrow and "Occasion of Brooding," retell their painful memories to the readers and also depict elements of fear as they think about their present and future. There is so much fragmentation, detachment, loss and death to contemplate. The narrator in "Can We Talk" is thinking about the drift that has developed in his marriage –the wife is obsessed with personal success. As he goes down memory lane he fearfully realises the painful emptiness and vulnerability in himself;

Your life is crowded and mine is empty. Seemingly empty. I have kicked down my ladders and deluded myself that I am in search of simplicity; but the vacuum is killing me. (130).

This psychological dislocation is also portrayed as resulting from the state of the unhomeliness within the southern African city. This is a state of displacement characterised by the intertwining between the public space and domestic space in a

dweller's life as postulated by Bhabha who is referred to by Erlmann in his examination of South African urban oral song performances;

Unhomeliness is a condition in which the border between home and world becomes confused, in which the private and the public become part of each other. The home no longer remains the domain of domestic life, nor does the world simply become its counterpart. The unhomely, Bhabha concludes, "is the shock of recognition of the- world – in-the- home, the- home- in- the- world." (1996: 103).

The unhomeliness in the current South African city is clearly evident in the short stories by Jamal. The French professor in "Black Bag" is haunted by the painful divorce proceedings in which his African wife cites among other reasons his obsession with sexual relations with African women and watching pornographic videos which he keeps in his black bag. He feels as if everyone, including his secretary, knows about the contents of his bag, to such an extent that he thinks of quitting his job and migrating to Reunion Island. The source of his undoing is the popular global cultural obsession with sex and pornography and of course a reminder of the continued existence of suspicion and tension in multiracial relationships in post-apartheid South Africa. One is also inclined to acknowledge that his obsession with sex and pornography accounts for his personal weakness and figures as the human impetus in the creation of his state of unhomeliness. Again in "Shades," the unhomely is noted in the way the province's prevalent violence comes in to haunt the husband and wife in their KwaZulu -Natal urban home to the extent that they become uncommunicative. Each one feels vulnerable and tries to search for a secure environment either by having more security as in erecting a security wall added to the electric gate or, in the husband's case, research into the

society's philosophy. This is also noted in the Zimbabwean city where IMF policies have intruded into the family relations as depicted in "The Hare" already discussed. As a result the majority of the urban dwellers feel insecure or uncomfortable in their homes and for some, like the professor, national identities are interrogated as he cannot stay here in South Africa and cannot go back to France. It however must be noted that some characters actively engage in various forms of agency to restructure their unhomely space and reconstitute their identities as will be discussed later on in the chapter.

It should be noted that the current fragmented and detached Southern African city leads to dysfunctional personal and societal relationships. A majority of the urban inhabitants' relationships are plagued by silence, hatred and detachment. These fragmented relationships are however a result of the disruptive conditions obtaining in each city. In the Zimbabwean city, the dislocated personal and family relations are a result of a hybrid condition influenced by reasons already pointed out in this chapter such as the split between the humble rural or high density upbringing, an obsession with global cultural consumerism and pursuit of individual success. This is noted in the relationships between husband and wife as in Sam and Ndaizevi in "Straws," the narrator and wife in "Can We Talk," and Nhongo and Sara in "The Hare," which are characterised by loneliness, anger and detachment as referred to throughout this chapter. Even the families suffer as parents' relationships become cold. For instance Nhongo, in "The Hare," becomes short tempered with his children on their drive to the rural home Chivhu, due to anger at his wife's trips to Johannesburg. And on a more interesting note Franklin in Mhiripiri's "No More Plastic Balls," becomes rebellious as he sneaks out of the fenced yard to play with his neighborhood friends on the streets. There he learns important

township skills such as making plastic balls, something his parents disapprove of. In the end one sees the complexity of urban alienation which exists on the individual, family and societal level in the Zimbabwean city.

Similarly dysfunctional personal and family relationships are also witnessed in the South African city. The highly populated spaces such as the inner-city Hillbrow, are occupied by residents living divergent lives dominated by social and moral decay which contribute greatly to the undermining of their personal relationships. The impact is noted in the unfortunate and sometimes accidental situations where a partner gets entangled in the widespread urban immorality and anti-social behaviour leading to the dislocation of the relationship. This is best represented in the accidental way in which Sammy (Mpe, 2001) gets into drugs and prostitution in Hillbrow's bars and streets which undermines his relationship with Bohliwe. Ironically, Refentse who tries to bring the couple together ends up betraying his friend Sammy, by sleeping with Bohliwe. This is repeated again when Sammy sleeps with Refentse's Lerato while trying to console her from the pain of being shut out by her partner, who was under pressure from his rural mother that they should separate. The city space is here shown as frighteningly trapping its inhabitants in a vicious cycle of immorality and betrayal leading to unstable relationships. Added to this is the current spread of Western global cultural practices valorising individual glory and satisfaction. This is noted in the dysfunctional relationship portrayed in Jamal's "Apple Green," where the wife has been rendered invisible by her husband-he did not "hunt" her when she was standing in front of him naked, as he was more interested in going to the casino with her to engage in globally sanctioned consumerism and hedonistic cultural practices.

Possibilities of agency and subversion

Despite the shifting identities placed within the realm of agony, there still exist attempts and desire by the urban dwellers to reconstitute themselves and their place in the city. The city as already noted, is represented as a hybrid space of opportunities and failures and facilitating diverse cultural mixing but more importantly it enables one to engage in various forms of agency such as remapping the city, remaking personal relationships and making pragmatic decisions depending on one's conditions. Harvey (1989: 4-6), in his comprehensive analysis of the postmodern condition, refers to this potential for reconstitution in the city and defines it as the concept of the soft city. The most significant form of agency is noted in the urban dwellers who appropriate the city's space and restructure it to suit their own intentions and desire. In the texts under study, the restructuring occurs on the social level, for the majority of the urban Asian and African dwellers embark on a conscious redefinition of their urban geography for their personal and societal benefit. For instance, in a quest to avoid becoming a victim of the urban violence and vice, Refentse remaps Hillbrow metaphorically by walking along the safe streets, minding his own business. In essence he is able to conquer the violent space by walking his own footsteps in the socially and morally decayed Hillbrow for his own survival. Nevertheless the violence is still rampant as noted in the way he is pursued by the thugs when he visits his aunt's workplace in Hyde Park.

Evidence of urban restructuring in the Zimbabwean city is noted in the way public spaces are remapped and used to construct a meaningful perception of the self and one's condition. For instance Mangwiro in Mhiripiri's "The Lodgers, " appropriates a park in Harare and turns it into a space of reflection and recollection- he becomes aware of his

poverty-induced loss of pride worsened by the callousness of his landlord that he decides to fight back. He becomes literally aware of the city and the need to reclaim his dignity to such an extent that later on he punches his callous landlord on the mouth (164-166). On a similar note the narrator in "Can We Talk," runs away from the alienating city centre and fragmented domestic space to find companionship with Alice an old high school classmate, recent widow and fellow beer patron of the popular Harare high-density drinking and braaing place called Mereki. This public space usually associated with moral decay is restructured into a place where the narrator and his female companion openly share views on family relations and fears on issues such as AIDS and death. Both characters even make important decisions such as resolving to abstain from casual sex and being faithful to safeguard their health and lives from the AIDS scourge (149-151). Hence despite the domination of urban decay, the southern African urban dweller shows a tenacious character noted in his restructuring of the socially and morally disrupted space into one where meaningful relationships, decisions and views of the self and society are reconstituted. This can be linked, to some extent, with the De Certeau (1993) idea of the fragmented New Yorkers' remapping of their alienating city so that it portrays their own desires, meanings and intentions. However the specificities are different. The southern African remapping is located in the desire, and intended decisions, to reconstitute the individual and society from the socio-economic decay and the effects of HIV and AIDS, while the New York one is based on the walker's desire to have a meaningful relationship with the postmodern city whose architecture and streets render him or her invisible.

Another form of active reconstitution is given in the urban inhabitants' desire and intentions to remake their social relations. The form of agency in this area is creative, and represented through the act of writing. The autobiographical element is included in the texts and made more pronounced through the use of the first person narrator as noted in Chinodya's "Can We Talk," and Mpe's Welcome to Our Hillbrow. In Mpe's novel, the narrative represents an on-going self-reflexivity and attempt at coming to terms with the death of his friends Refentse, Lerato and Bohliwe as well as the physical and mental pain suffered by Refilwe and Sammy. To a great extent, this resonates with Gunner's (2002) idea that the act of writing figures as an act of redemption amidst the urban bleakness and death. The narrator also shares their fears, anxiety and vulnerability as he reflects on their lives in Johannesburg, in that way coming to terms with his city and developing insights into how to improve his personal and societal relations as well. Again in "The Shades," the male protagonist is researching local Zulu dreams and prophecy for a lecture he has to present. This can be viewed as an active desire to connect with his fellow countrymen and thus alludes to the reconstruction of national identities necessary in the post-apartheid condition. Through the research he gets to think more about his family, city and nation as a whole and one certainly hopes that a pragmatic insight will be realised from the engagement. In fact, a writer's agency is represented as a reconstructive act. This is noted in the way the narrator in Chinodya's "Can We Talk," writes as a means to open dialogue and in that way reconstruct the relationship with his wife and family. In fact his writing is also a means of contemplating his own inadequacies and searching for ways to improve from his inner fragmentation. This dialectical relationship between writing, self

reflexivity and the reconstitution of the dislocated family relationships is noted in the narrator's moment of realization:

Writing this story, I have thought a lot about tenderness and imagination
and simplicity and about how we are wasting our lives in squabbling and
silence and competition . (144)

Therefore the city is portrayed as a hybrid space influenced by the legacy of colonialism, apartheid and global social and economic influences where the architecture and spatiality represent this hegemony and entrench the exclusion of the majority of the urban dwellers who are seen wallowing in socio- economic decay. The overall impact on the majority of African and Asian dwellers in the southern African city has been the engendering of personal, social and psychological displacement and making them assume shifting identities located within this dislocated space. Nevertheless the city is also shown as a site where failure and opportunities co-exist. As a result there are some urban dwellers who in their search for opportunities engage in a multiple restructuring of the city, pragmatic decision-making and reconstitute their identities as well, in the hope of having a meaningful personal relationship, sense of belonging and walk in the city space.

End notes

¹ Foucault comments that architecture and space denotes the dominant political hegemony of the period (Lolinger, 1996: 335-339) in this case being the dominant capitalist triumph.

² Harvey (1989: 72-93) notes that the shiny skyscrapers, office and shopping complexes inscribe the iconography of international and historical memory associated with the post-1970s postmodern infrastructure and architectural developments.

³ Ashcroft .et al (1987) give these as some of the major concerns in post-colonial studies.

⁴ One is reminded of the urban squalor and poverty experienced by Azaro's family under a similarly exploitative landlord in Okri's The Famished Road.

Chapter 3 Urban social dislocation and the representation of violence, xenophobia and HIV/ AIDS

A majority of the current southern African city's inhabitants, whose individual and personal relationships are characterised by various forms of displacement as described in Chapter 2, are located within a wider urban social dislocation. The sense of individual and psychological displacement, unbelonging and "unhomeness" felt by the urbanites effects a social disruption interwoven with urban violence, xenophobia, HIV and AIDS - related diseases and death. This characteristic social dislocation results from a bleak and complex urban link between the failure of the current Western- dominated and globalised city to provide adequate social and economic conditions in the equally diverse and highly populated space, as well as the unforeseeable disruptive impact of HIV/ AIDS on society. However within this urban social dislocation, the inhabitants are still able to tap the city's reconstitutive capacity by carving out new conceptions on how to relate to the predominantly disordered city. The reconstitution includes an active involvement and development of a new discourse and cultural ethos on how to handle the rampant HIV / AIDS condition and deaths as acquired by Alice in Chinodya's "Can We Talk." It also includes the growth of a complex and global social awareness which debunks the prejudiced and myopic xenophobia fragmenting the city, as noted in Refilwe's development of social being in Welcome to Our Hillbrow .The southern African city is portrayed as an intricate one characterised by social disorder, threatened by disease and death, yet still endowed with a capacity for positive human creativity and action aimed at a reconstituted society.

Social dislocation and the southern African urban space

The majority of the urban dwellers' livelihood in both southern African cities is predominantly disordered. This is noted in the working and professional class's alienated and marginalised condition. The major social dislocation is noted in the way the urban dwellers suffer from a sense of "unhomeness" in the city. Indeed the majority African high-density, inner-city and low-density residents, such as Sam and the narrator in Chinodya's stories and Lerato, Refentse and Refilwe in Mpe's, are split between a rural upbringing and current urban experiences, hence they fail to belong in either space. For instance, Nhongo (Mungoshi, 1997), retrenched from his company in Harare and burdened by family financial demands, sees himself emasculated and left out by his enterprising cross-border trader wife, Sara, and as a result drives to the rural home in Chivhu. The journey to Chivhu represents an economically marginalised urban dweller's "unhomeness", a search for refuge as well as a desire to reclaim personal pride and hope. Unfortunately, Nhongo discovers that the rural home has nothing to offer as signified by the predominantly sterile fields and dry river bed¹. This sterility ravages his nostalgic perception of the rural home, in that way portraying further his state of "unhomeness." Earlier on, on his way to Chivhu, Nhongo's and his family's vulnerability is hinted at in the bumping of a hare along the highway. Zhuwarara (2001: 98) argues that the incident signifies the fragility and impending destruction of his marriage due to the cross-border trade engaged in by Sara. Hence a sense of social dislocation placed within an identity split between an excluding and marginalising city space and a nostalgic rural refuge is represented in the lives of the majority of urban dwellers.

It is clear that this urban dweller's "unhomeness" and sense of vulnerability is also felt by the urban-born- and -raised African majority as especially seen in the Zimbabwean city.² Some of the urban dwellers in Harare are split between the high-density life and suburban life to the extent that some like Sam seek a "sense of community and belonging in an alien environment"- to borrow Kurtz's phrase used in his analysis of the possibilities for a fulfilled life in the slums of Kenya (1998:75). He opts for the high-density bottle store and night club life as already discussed in the previous chapter. This ironically subjects his family and marriage to suffering as he degenerates into alcoholism and infidelity. Hence a complex urban alienation composed of the residents' split identity accruing from the interplay between urban and rural, and between high-density and suburban spaces is evident. Nevertheless a pragmatic conception and development of control over one's disrupted life can be achieved as noted in the way Ndaizevei boldly tells her husband Sam that they will be using condoms to protect herself against likely diseases from his promiscuity (99).

The same condition of "unhomeness" and vulnerability affects the urban majority in South Africa. The majority of African urban inhabitants in South Africa's Hillbrow are split between a rural and urban life experience and way of looking at life. This is signified by the way the narrator in Welcome to Our Hillbrow describes Refentse, Tsepo and Refilwe's dislocated identity by calling them both the children of Hillbrow, the city, and Tiragalong, the rural place of origin. Despite their social development from rural poverty into becoming professionals, as noted in the rise of Refentse from rural poverty into becoming a university lecturer and Refilwe's rise to become a publishing editor in Johannesburg, their livelihood is still defined from inside and outside the city. This marks

their state of “unhomeness”, hence an element of social dislocation. In fact this urban hybrid identity is paradoxically represented in the South African city as noted in the text Welcome to Our Hillbrow. On one level it results in the prejudiced conception of the city by those from rural Tiragalong as a social space ridden by vice and immorality to the extent that rural born urban dwellers risk being corrupted. The dominance of the Tiragalong naïve rumours and stereotyping of Johannesburg women like Lerato as prostitutes, confirms this disordered social conception of the city social space. The fragmenting effect is noted in the way Refentse’s mother disapproves of the relationship between Lerato the Johannesburg girl and her son to the extent that the two drift apart leading to the sexual encounter between Sammy and Lerato and the following suicides and deaths as discussed in Chapter 2.

On another level, the hybrid identity encourages the urban dweller to carve out a complex rounded identity and conception of reality and society. This is mostly noted in the transformation of consciousness in Refilwe, a childhood girlfriend of Refentse who is heart-broken due to the failure of the relationship and even develops a restless and xenophobic identity. Nevertheless she develops from holding a rural-based prejudiced perception of Johannesburg women and the associated discriminatory scorn of African immigrants as the “makwerekwere,” whom she blames like many South Africans as the source of all the social and economic ills in the country, and assumes what Lester (2000: 287) terms a globalised discourse of universal humanity. She notices that non-South African, African immigrants were discriminated against at Heathrow Airport and that all non-English foreigners were excluded and shunned in England when she went there to study at Oxford. Her ultimate development in consciousness is perhaps noted in her

getting into a relationship with a Nigerian, a people popularly subjected to xenophobic stereotyping back home in South Africa. Hence an urban dweller's positioning within the global perspective is noted as having a capacity to encourage the development of a new consciousness within the generally dislocated community.

The southern African social dislocation is also represented by the existence of high levels of moral disorder, especially noted in the prevalence of urban prostitution and sexual immorality. The degeneration of the young girl Elista, in Mhiripiri's "Elista," because she and her mother "were having it hard"(152), is typical of Harare's high-density bleak social life. The same societal moral degeneration is noted in the reference to the prevalence of prostitution and loose sexual morals in the streets of Hillbrow in Mpe's fiction already looked at in the last chapter and in Jamal's "D.I.Y.," where the immorality is insinuated through the female protagonist's engagement in various casual sexual relationships with young black boys in Hillbrow. This immoral behaviour represents an urban social degeneration partly encouraged by urban poverty as in Elista's case and the prostituting foreign women in Hillbrow seeking to "gather a thing or two to send back to their families at home" (Mpe, 2001: 21), and partly due to individual degeneration as noted in the masochistic pursuit of sexual pleasure by the female protagonist in "D.I.Y." (56-57).


It is interesting to see that the urban society itself is segmented into the visible and invisible. The former includes professionals as well as the well- to -do like Refentse and Lerato in Mpe's fiction and the corporate staff represented by Johannesburg parastatal leadership and team work seminar participants in Jamal's "Nuptial." Among the invisible are lowly paid workers like Mangwiwo and the urban poor like Elista in

Mhiripiri's "The Lodgers" and "Elista" respectively as well as the informal residents such as vendors, prostitutes and drug dealers referred to in Welcome to Our Hillbrow. The society is thus fragmented, with the excluded and marginalized forming the bulk of the inhabitants. And this dislocated status can be linked to De Certeau's (1993) idea of the postmodern and global city's reduction of the ordinary walker and perhaps inhabitant into exclusion and invisibility.

Urban violence and the representation of social dislocation

Urban violence is one of the major signifiers of the current southern African dislocated condition. The violence is closely related to factors such as the existence of a multiplicity of urban cultures, encouraged by global and local migration, and the resulting marginalisation into unemployment, poverty and exclusion. This is portrayed through an intricate linkage between an urban dweller's vulnerability and his or her ultimate violent victimisation. For instance, Elista (Mhiripiri, 2000), suffers due to lack of adequate provisions as noted in the disconnection of water and electricity after her mother's supportive boyfriend is imprisoned for bigamy. As a result she becomes so helpless and vulnerable and thus becomes a victim of Bad Boy Joel's physical and sexual abuse:

The girl started sobbing a bit more loudly whilst Joel held her...I suddenly saw Elista scuttling and falling on the tarred road while Joel snarled. "I hate tears and softies. I told you before. I hate them bad!" (157)

Mpe uses the South African urban space, as represented by the conditions in Hillbrow to show the emotional vulnerability of Lerato after Refentse's suicide and how this leads to her victimisation resulting from Terror's traumatic stalking and blackmail.  Terror demands sexual favours from Lerato in return for keeping quiet about her

contributory role in the suicide of Refentse, in that way showing how the vulnerable are easy victims of psychological and physical violence in the city. The horror of Terror's capability is noted in his image as a habitual Johannesburg rapist: "He did not care who. Any vulnerable woman or girl was fair game for him." (65). Even vulnerable men are not spared in urban violence as evidenced by Refentse's close shave with muggers in Hyde Park as discussed earlier on in chapter 2. The same urban thug and robber- related violent victimization of the ordinary inhabitant is portrayed in the Cape Town urban space as evidenced by the robbery and rape on Tsepo and his family shown in Sello Duiker's novel (2000). This indeed depicts how the majority of the urban dwellers' dislocated, weak and vulnerable condition is interwoven with their victim and violated identities. ✓

As a matter of fact women, as will be discussed in depth in the next chapter, are portrayed as the main victims of violent men. These men are to a larger extent engaging in this violence on women because they are also victims of urban societal alienation and exclusion. One can view Badboy Joel's abuse of Elista as an extension of the complex cycle of urban economic and social dislocation which forces him into this gangster identity (Mhiripiri ; 2000) .The same line of thought can be extended to the female protagonist in Jamal's "D.I.Y," who engages in a violent relationship with young boys as a part of her agenda to hit back at the men and the male police who murdered her friend Christopher.

It is also interesting to see that violence to some extent figures as a redemptive force. This is perceived in the way Mangwiro, a lowly paid milling company worker and a victim of the exploitative landlord in Mhiripiri's "The Lodgers," punches the same landlord on the mouth as a way of reclaiming his pride trampled on for so long (166). In

that way, he reconstitutes his stature from the inferior otherness inflicted upon him by the urban propertied class. This is akin to the Fanonian (1982) concept of the wretched and colonial-dominated developing in consciousness from a state of restlessness into appropriating violence to liberate themselves. In Mangiro's case, he appropriates violence to reclaim his dignity from the current urban propertied domination over the poor and homeless, in that way showing the complexity of the existence and impact of violence in the current southern African urban society.

The southern African urban society also suffers from dislocating psychological experiences. The cities witness rife stereotyping and labelling of the vulnerable and excluded other, resulting in a high level societal psychological disorientation. This is noted in Nhongo's case in "The Hare," by Mungoshi. On one level his marriage and family relations suffer from an emotional fragmentation as he suspects that his wife is having an affair with a fellow cross border trader Mr Magaso. On another level, he feels personally demeaned by his failure to provide for his daughters. He hates himself for failing to bring some ice cream for his youngest daughter (9). This is an individual and family disorientation resulting from the economic structural adjustment as discussed in the previous chapter, also attributed to the way the Harare society scorns him for allowing his wife Sara to engage in her new business:

And then there were his cousins and friends from home. It was unheard of that a married woman, somebody's wife, had male friends and left her husband at home to go on business trips to foreign countries with them.

The way they pronounced the word "business" made Nhongo's heart sink . (14)

One can also view societal scorn and alienation of an already helpless and emasculated man as representing a culturally based attack and alienation of the

condemned. In this case the urban and rural traditional perspective as noted in Nhongo's old parents and the Tiragalong collective voice effects an inner personal and psychological turmoil in the victim. Nhongo is disoriented due to the traditional expectations that he as the father and husband should provide for the family, a situation which cannot be since he is now unemployed. The same traditionally based and disorienting stereotyping is noted in the way urban South African women are categorised as whores by the Tiragalongs. This is clearly noted in the description of Refentse's mother's perception of Lerato and other urban women in Welcome to Our Hillbrow :

Your mother knew that all Hillbrow women were prostitutes, who spend their nights leaning against the walls of the giant buildings in which they conduct their trade of under-waist bliss... (39)

As a result of this prejudiced stereotyping, Lerato like Nhongo, is psychologically and emotionally disoriented and this triggers a chain of events leading to Refentse's and her death by suicide as discussed in the previous chapter. This societal prejudiced stereotyping is also evident in the way HIV/AIDS-affected rural and urban inhabitants are shunned by society as will be discussed later on in the chapter. Hence the urban social dislocation also manifests itself from a potentially violent and disorienting traditional and cultural dimension.

The concept of urban dislocation is also represented within the realm of societal undermining and marginalisation of the artistic and literary creative effort. The urban writer attempts to come to terms with his society and its disrupted condition signified by the prevalence of HIV and AIDS, violence, xenophobia etc, but is alienated by society and degenerates physically and psychologically. This is seen in the way the Harare-based writer-narrator in Chinodya's "Can We Talk," suffers from family and societal exclusion

as discussed in the previous chapter. In the South African city, Refentse's story of the female writer in Welcome to Our Hillbrow, shows this. The female writer is marginalised by the publishers and society on the grounds that her "story of Hillbrow and xenophobia and AIDS and the nightmares of rural lives" (58) was bad literature and possessed questionable morals as evidenced by the way the manuscript "realistically called things by their proper names- names that people of Tiragalong and Hillbrow and everywhere in the world used everyday "(57). The writer suffers a physical and psychological breakdown as signified by her association with the scarecrow imagery in the novel. Therefore the southern African nations are criticised for undermining the writer's creativity under the guise of morality and culture as well as due to corporate domination in decision-making and shaping the social and critical thinking trend in the city.

This dislocation of the creative capacity actually cuts across the social classes in both southern African cities. As already noted in the representation of the Zimbabwean city, the narrator- writer in "Can We Talk" is from the upper-middle class with a wife obsessed with high-class and globalised consumerism. And in the South African city, Refentse's writer is an up and coming working-class writer from "the kitchens " (56) carving new literary and cultural views in the post apartheid urban space. Jamal also portrays a white artistic creative journalism exemplified by the way the female protagonist in "D.I.Y," makes newspaper cuttings as the means to tell the story of the urban South African violence. And in her case the creative attempt seems so overwhelmed by the powerful societal violence that she degenerates psychologically into an obsessed horror:

Her walls are papered with jagged stories. Stories in the bedroom. Stories in the toilet. Stories on every conceivable surface in the flat she rents. Laminated

stories in the shower , on the kitchen table too. She eats, sleeps, shits, fucks, in a state of shock. Her walls are wastelands, her kitchen table a war zone, her bedroom is papered with the faces of missing children, her shower is a Psycho's shower. (56)

Hence a complex artistic dislocation cutting across class and race is noted in the southern African city.

Xenophobia and the construction of an essentialist national identity

The southern African society is also disjointed and violent due to the prevalence of a xenophobic disposition permeating through its societal relations. This is mostly represented in the South African city of Johannesburg, whose economic allure and linkages with global capital and multilateral organisations encourage diverse cultural mixing and perceptions. The majority of South Africa's Hillbrow community especially the unemployed, those rendered invisible by the new nation such as the ex-apartheid policeman cousin of Refentse, and others who generally feel excluded in the global city, vent their feelings of vulnerability by scorning the West and Central African foreign community. A typical xenophobic comment is that:

It used to be fine until the Nigerians came (Mpe. 118)


This popular sentiment arises from a post-apartheid economic situation characterised by rampant unemployment and poverty:

The persistence of unemployment in the post –apartheid era has certainly increased the pressure on foreign black Africans and intensified the tendency to blame foreigners for lack of order and progress in the post-apartheid society. (Morris. 1999: 316)

In their article on the postcolonial construction of the South African nation in relation to aliens, Comaroff and Comaroff show how immigrants fall victim to the anxiety of the unemployed:

Small wonder, then, that unemployment is a ubiquitous anxiety; that is seen as a major impediment to post-colonial prosperity ; that routing the alien, who has come to embody the threat to work and welfare, presents itself as a persuasive mode of confronting economic dispossession. (2001: 646)

A sense of national connectedness based on blame and fear has been created among the majority of the South African urban and even rural citizens. Its dislocating effect is noted in the way the current society has been segmented into the authentic nationals and the foreign other. This sense of national identity is superficial and resonates with the past colonial and apartheid discrimination. In fact the politics of blame is likely to develop into a vicious cycle in which the different national races will end up blaming each other for their own condition of exclusion and marginality. The controversy surrounding Ngema's song "Amandiya," part of his musical play in which he criticises the Asian community for an alleged racism and exploitation of black employees as well as an apparent aloofness to national political projects (Natal Witness 30/05/2002) is a clear example of the destructive nature of a national connectedness based on xenophobia. Comaroff and Comaroff succinctly show this ironic sense of national connectedness and identity:

...it is undeniable that, in post-apartheid South Africa, outrage against aliens has provided a versatile call to arms uniting people long divided by class, colour and culture: it is enthusiastically mobilised by those who seek to conjure a new nation not merely by bridging familiar antinomies 

but by erecting finite frontiers under conditions that, by all appearances, threaten to dissolve them altogether. And, with them, the coordinates of material and moral community. (2001: 648-649)

Xenophobia provides a superficial sense of national identity. The text Welcome to Our Hillbrow, confirms an across-the-colour and class connectedness from the white police superintendent to the Tiragalong voice noted in Refentse's mother, all based on the dislike of African immigrants. Nevertheless, Mpe shows the limited capacity of such a concept of national identity through the narrator's critical perception which shows that both foreign immigrants and South African nationals share the blame for the social and economic ills bedeviling Hillbrow and the rest of the country (2001: 22-23). Perhaps the most poignant dismissal of such an essentialist construction of national connectedness is noted in the way Lerato, an arch xenophobic character while at home in South Africa, later suffers from the same xenophobia and exclusion as a foreign student at Oxford with other African and non-English European students. It seems therefore, that perhaps a broader and more critical perspective on the southern African society will yield a more pragmatic construction of national identities.

AIDS /HIV and death's dislocating effect on the urban society

Finally, the impact of HIV and AIDS-related deaths figures as a disorienting and unfathomable force in the city and nation as a whole. The dislocating impact of the HIV and AIDS condition has left the southern African society grappling with how it can construct a new discourse and perception to meet this threat to humanity. For instance the disoriented state of the urban society is noted in the haunting and deathly burden of

HIV/AIDS- related diseases and deaths in the Hillbrow community which forces many to blame the scourge on foreigners:

Migrants...deduced from such media reports (that HIV and AIDS originated from a West African green monkey eaten as meat by the region's inhabitants) that the AIDS travel route into Johannesburg was through makwerekwere, and Hillbrow was the sanctuary in which makwerekwere basked. (Mpe , 2001.4)

This confirms the current South African disoriented condition as far as HIV and AIDS is concerned which is characterised by denial and the politics of blame. And while Harare has not been spared either by the disease and death, an element of urban indifference seems to be pervading the society. This is evidenced by the cynic juxtapositioning of an always lively braai and drinking place in Warren Park with the ever busy Warren Hills graveyard in Chinodya's "Can We Talk." Nevertheless, the unfathomable intertwining of death and life in Harare is noted in the following:

Graveyards . Death. Alice's sizzling pork and corpses rotting
away in expensive coffins deep in the earth a stone's throw away.
Rhumba blasting away from speakers in the night club and the
quiet dirges of the burial processions a wall away.

Life. Death. Life.

"Did you know that they are burying ten AIDS cases
everyday in this grave yard alone?" Alice asks. " Very soon the place
will be full." (150)

While the disorienting effect and sense of futility seems to be overwhelming the urban society, the fiction shows that a capacity for humanity to survive beyond the crisis exists. Refilwe, in Welcome to Our Hillbrow, becomes aware of her HIV status while in England, bravely accepts it and returns home well aware that she will become the major

topic of sneering talk and labelling among the Hillbrowans and Tiragalongas. Her bravery and sense of hope is given in the decision she makes that she would not give up on life:

Her mind was not ready to give up the fight. She thought
of the dark Chamber, beckoning to her seductively from six feet
under the earth .And she said :

No, I am not going there yet...(117)

Therefore, acceptance and hope are associated with the societal capacity to tackle the dislocating effect of HIV/ AIDS-related disease and death ravaging the southern African society.

The development of a new discourse based on open discussion, as well as new skills to manage the eventual and numerous funerals is also given as another way of engaging with the devastating effects of AIDS. The more society talks about HIV and AIDS, the more likely the solutions on piecing together a survival are made. This is portrayed in the way the narrator and Alice -a former high school classmate, recent widow and drinking mate - in “Can We Talk,” discuss openly the enormity of HIV and AIDS- related deaths in Harare and the nation as a whole. The openness between the two depicts the implicit call for a new discourse and attitude based on hope and support for each other irrespective of one’s HIV status. For instance, Alice who openly states that she has abstained from sex since the death of her husband, advises the male narrator to stick to his wife (151). Added to this is the way Alice narrates her newly acquired skills in handling the ever -occurring funerals from the processing of death notices to the conducting of the actual burial (149-151). This can be viewed as a new consciousness needed to combat the disorienting effects of HIV and AIDS- related deaths within our

societies. All in all, despite the profound dislocation and sense of futility gripping the southern African region, there still exists a capacity for society to reconstruct itself and develop new perceptions and skills aimed at combating the scourge and in that way ensure the survival of humanity. ✓

Therefore the urban society in southern Africa is mapped within a state of dislocation where violence, xenophobia and the ravaging effect of HIV and AIDS represent the major fragmenting and disruptive forces. The larger vulnerability and sense of “unhomeness” are a result of the bleak economic conditions obtaining in both countries’ cities where poverty, unemployment and exclusion from the mainstream economic projects stimulate a societal disruptive reaction mostly in the form of violence and xenophobia as clearly postulated by the Comaroffs referred to in the chapter. Nevertheless the individual and human hand in contributing to the urban dislocation should not be discounted. For the likes of the female protagonist in Jamal’s “D.I.Y” and Terror in Welcome to Our Hillbrow are representative of the individual contribution to the complex urban dislocation. And more importantly, society has also been caught within a shocking helplessness due to the ravages of AIDS. But as has been noted in the transformation of Refilwe in the South African city, and Alice in Harare, all hope is not lost since the city and humanity still have the capacity for creativity to reconstitute and position themselves pragmatically for future survival.

End notes

¹ This is a common image employed in Zimbabwean literature to portray the spiritual and physical alienation felt by the characters, postulated by Zimunya (1982) in his analysis of the significance of drought-stricken and sterile rural settings in texts such as Mungoshi’s Waiting for the Rain.

2 Veit Wild (1992) describes this urban –born-and- raised crop of dwellers who did not go through Mission education as the non- believers.

Chapter 4 **Gendered city spaces and the representation of possibilities of female empowerment**

The growth of the southern African city from the colonial to the globalised state went hand in hand with the creation of gendered divisions, a majority of which influence the nature of current gender relations. Generally speaking, the city was constructed into a masculine space privileging men over women. This gendered inequality is represented in the southern African city through various binaries of opposition hinged on a gendered hierarchy where masculine authority, freedoms and inclusion in the public space dominate over the feminine subservience, domesticity and invisibility (Peterson and Runyan, 1999: 7-8). More specifically though, socio-cultural traits and beliefs located in the region's tradition and patriarchal perceptions as well as the legacy of colonialism, apartheid and the Western global economic agenda are engaged in a dialectic which results in the privileging of the masculine over the feminine. It is apparent in the fiction's representation that the city's gendered divisions empower the masculine as confirmed by Peterson and Runyan that, "gender is about power, and power is gendered"(1999: 7). Closely linked to this gendered division are various stereotypes created to perpetuate male domination. These include the patriarchal and traditional holding of women as immoral and evil, taking the female body as an object of male sexual pleasure and control, placing women in the private and domestic space and others bent on the continued subordination of women. Nevertheless, the current southern African city offers possibilities –albeit limited –supportive of female agency and the associated social and economic upliftment. These possibilities can be realised through, among other things, the

pursuit of education as in Refilwe's educational rise which lands her a top publishing job (Mpe, 2001), as well as through an entrance into the informal trading sector as noted in Sara's case (Mungoshi, 1997). In that way the city is represented as a predominantly masculine space which is contested by a marked female activity and individual growth aimed at an upliftment from their subordinate and invisible status.

Mapping the gendered southern African city space

The current and predominantly globalised southern African city is characteristically masculine. The hegemonic global financial and corporate institutions such as the IMF and World Bank, led to the creation of an urban gendered division. As a result, men are on the one hand, privileged in this gendered hierarchy, where they are recognised as central and powerful, as noted in their occupation of positions of control in public institutions and dominance in productive labour. On the other hand, women are codified as marginal and are mostly confined in the domestic space as mothers and housewives. This is clearly noted in the fiction under study through the representation of men as central characters in the narratives while the women assume peripheral roles. For instance, while Welcome to Our Hillbrow is based on the narrator's reflection on the lives of his male and female friends in Johannesburg, it is only the male characters, especially Refentse, who dominate the unfolding of the narrative. In fact it is Refentse who becomes central in the mapping of Johannesburg's space, the resulting fragmentation that affects the circle of friends and the developments leading to the suicides as already discussed in the previous two chapters. Even when Refilwe seems to have a life of her own after his death, she is still traumatised "by her broken-heartedness over Refentse's suicide" (Mpe, 2001:96). Moreover her professional life is governed by

male power which is witnessed in the domineering publishing company's rendering her powerless by making sure that "she could not take a crop of newly-emerging, critical writers on to her list" (Mpe, 2001: 95).

The same South African gendered division is evident in Jamal's representation of the centrality of the husband in "The Shades." The husband in the story has access to the public sphere and has an aura of rationality as noted in his research insights into local Zulu culture and prophecy as well as the possible solutions to the violence threatening his family. Meanwhile, the wife is seen in her domesticated identity as a mother and housewife making dinner for the family but in a state of psychological restlessness due to fear of the violence plaguing the city. Even her suggestion that they emigrate to the North just as their friends Phil and Jane have done, is made to appear illogical and insignificant as noted in the husband's comment that "Jane and Phil are not the first to go" (Jamal, 2001: 6). Thus the binaries of opposition privileging the masculine as objective, rational and logical as opposed to the feminine as subjective, emotional and illogical are hinted at (Peterson and Runyan, 1999: 40). Hence the southern African city is shown as a male dominated space where the few women who enter into its public and corporate space such as Refilwe, are oppressed to the extent that they fail to make any meaningful impact.

A similar representation of male domination is noted in Harare. The male characters are just as central in the portrayal of current urban anxiety, restlessness and exclusion, as discussed fully in the previous chapter, while the females' role is peripheral. This is clearly depicted in Chinodya's "Strays," where the narrative is centered on Sam's alienation from the up-market residential area and as a result, he moves from one night club and pub to another, while Ndaizevei remains in the house taking care of the child as

is expected of a submissive wife. Even her professional job as a teacher of food and nutrition, while her husband is an architect, falls within the gendered ideology where women can freely enter into formal work only in the fields defined according to their nature as care-givers such as nursing and teaching while men take the more challenging jobs (Peterson and Runyan, 1999: 57). Indeed if the designing and planning of urban infrastructure and buildings is a male domain as seen in Sam's architectural job, it is no wonder then that the city space is masculine and marginalises women.

The same peripherisation can be seen in the representation of Mangwiro's wife (Mhiripiri, 2000). She occupies the domestic space as a housewife whose reproductive capacity is confirmed by the eight children she has borne. And her representation as a talkative and scornful wife – she calls Mangwiro a coward for not disciplining the kids and for failing to provide fully for the big family (160-162)- actually fits within the Gaidzanwa (1985) analysis of the representation of Zimbabwean women in literature where they figure mostly as quarrelsome, talkative and dominant housewives. This domesticity typified in Mangwiro's wife, is also characteristic of Sara's early married life of "motherhood and full time career as a housewife" (Mungoshi, 1997: 7) which she later subverts when she becomes a cross-border trader much to the displeasure of her husband.

In fact, the current southern African city which is reeling under the adverse effects of the Western global economic agenda compels a majority of its urban women to enter into the informal labour economy. The readiness of the hegemonic globalised economy to limit female entrance into formal labour, and its failure to provide adequate employment opportunities, as well as adverse economic restructuring effects such as company closures and job retrenchments, forces women to enter into the informal sector (Afsher and

Barrientos, 1999: 3-6). Peterson and Runyan actually describe some of these informal jobs and put them within the gendered global economic perspective as follows:

The most prevalent forms of women's informal work, beyond sex and domestic service, are "petty" trading of mostly small, inexpensive commodities ranging from vegetables to handicrafts and subcontracted home-based piecework. Such work has become vital to the survival of poor and working-class families as wages in the formal sector have plummeted due to SAPs [structural adjustment programmes] and other forms of economic restructuring. (1999: 141)

This imposed informality of female labour is evident in the current southern African city. The existence of fruit vendors and prostitutes in the streets of Hillbrow (Mpe, 2001) represents the entrance of women into the informal sector. In Harare, economic hardships after the imprisoning of her bigamous boyfriend force Elista's mother to "just bring man after man from the pubs and her electricity and water were never disconnected again" (Mhiripiri, 2000: 159). On a similar note Sara becomes a cross-border trader after her husband's retrenchment and in the process is able to provide adequately for the family so that "she occasionally took the family out to eat at some expensive restaurant in town, or some international hotel like Holiday Inn, the Sheraton or Monomotapa" (Mungoshi, 1997: 12). While this is representative of the gendered nature of informal labour as the only economic sector in which women can enter easily and hence their peripherisation, this also signifies the capacity of the southern African city to support female agency and their economic empowerment as will be discussed in detail later on in the chapter.

It is also interesting to note that the southern African city excludes the poor, unemployed and economically vulnerable such as women and children, in that way feminising them while at the same time privileging the wealthy and successful as the

masculine. The fact that both economies are appendages of the global economic hegemony has resulted in gendered divisions in which the economic elite such as bankers, managers, executives, the propertied and wealthy become associated with power and masculine traits, while the poorly paid working class, the unemployed and a majority of women and children are viewed as feminine. Peterson and Runyan quote Ling (1996) in their analysis of the global division of labour and show that the new masculine traits of professional and elite men and women include authority, resourcefulness and control, while those who are enjoying a limited benefit or are in a state of complete exclusion, are associated with socially constructed feminine qualities such as dependence, subservience and subsistence (1999:146).

This new gendered division of labour is noted in both the Zimbabwean and South African city. For instance in Chinodya's "Can We Talk," the narrator's business executive wife in Harare is associated with masculine traits signified by her professional and personal authority represented in the husband's description:

And I see you, my dear wife, clambering up the greasy ladder of success. I
 envy you your crowded life. You go to gym in the morning, spend the day
 quarreling usefully with figures at work, drive your parents or sisters around,
 visit the sick, cook, study sleep. (1998: 128)

The wife's characteristic masculinity acquired from her professional and social success, towers over her writer husband who works from home and is seen to be emotionally and restlessly worried about being left out. His situation is representative of a majority of the excluded and hence emasculated men in Harare such as Mangwiro, a lowly paid milling company worker, who is always on the receiving end from his wife. She expects him to act like a man in their situation of poverty and exploitation by the callous landlord

(Mhiripiri, 2000). Similarly Sara's realisation of financial freedom as a cross-border trader and the assumption of a new confidence, noted in the way "she was quite cheerful about it all" (Mungoshi, 1997: 11), resonates with the assumption of masculine traits by the narrator's wife as discussed above. Thus new gendered divisions are demonstrated where the current urban inhabitants who are not making it, irrespective of sex, are feminised and marginalised.

A comparative gendered division of labour is also evident in the South African city. The informal and invisible inhabitants of Johannesburg's Hillbrow such as the street children, vendors and beggars are portrayed as vulnerable, helpless and dependent on the "haves" for their survival. Refentse's walk in Hillbrow on his way to the University of Witwatersrand (Mpe, 2001) as discussed in chapter 2, is a good example. These inhabitants' state of exclusion, dependence and marginality is the source of their feminisation in a city which valorises the wealthy and those in the formal structures such as the commercial, financial and government sectors. Refente's policeman cousin as well as the recent graduates and successful professionals such as Tsepo, Refentse and Refilwe figure as the "men" in a city dominated by poverty, unemployment, crime and invisibility. Even sexual relations are reversed depending on who has the power. The case of the dominant female protagonist in Jamal's "D.I.Y." confirms this gendered division. She engages in numerous casual relationships with younger black students whom she dismisses at will and abuses sexually and physically as noted in her violent sexual demands. Her power over younger men is based on her economic and social independence noted in her ability to own a well furnished flat, besides the fact that she is also on a revenge mission against men over the murder of her friend by a group of

homophobic Hillbrow policemen. One can also take the black boy's decision to stay and not walk out after being given marching orders by the female protagonist (Jamal, 2001: 59) as signifying his subservience to her and hence his feminisation which is typical of the current gendered subordination of the marginalised obtaining in the southern African city.

It should be pointed out that the current gendered divisions obtaining in the southern African city are also attributed to forces other than the global gendered ideology. These forces include the legacy of colonialism and apartheid. Colonialism marginalised the Africans into a source of cheap labour for the exploitative colonial economy. This was achieved by releasing the men from the homestead and the subsistence economy into the capitalist one, while women remained at home to raise the children, till the land and take care of the cattle (Walker, 1990). In this way the colonial capitalist ideology colluded with traditional patriarchy to control and keep women as wives and mothers in the domestic space while the government complied by setting up departments such as Native Affairs, to enact laws aimed at limiting the movement of women into the city and the colonial economy (Schmidt, 1996:15-16). As a result gendered relations throughout the colonial and apartheid period have been privileging men to the extent that the legacy is still relevant in shaping current gender relations. This explains why Nhongo who had all along been the breadwinner suffers from personal and social dislocation when his wife subverts the domesticity entrenched by the patriarchy and colonialism by becoming a cross-border trader (Mungoshi, 1997). In the South African city, colonialism and apartheid subjugated women by also tying

them to the homestead and preventing their movement into the city. There was no escape from this confinement as the majority of women who moved into the colonial and apartheid city worked in the kitchens, as we see in Refentse's story of the frustrated writer (Mpe, 2001), and they also suffered from gendered stereotyping. Urban women were, and are still, largely homogeneously labelled immoral and evil by the patriarchy as noted in Refentse's cousin's view that she had administered some love potions to blind him. Refentse's mother also disapproves of Lerato, which also portrays how mothers and aunts collude with the patriarchy on matters such as marriage in oppressing other women. This confirms a patriarchal myopic view which holds all women as immoral and evil. It also alludes to the significance of stereotypes in entrenching a gendered exclusion and the marginalisation of women.

Perhaps one should also acknowledge the significance of the legacy of apartheid masculinity which was defined in the philosophy of exclusion and separate development, and how it influences the current urban gendered relations in South Africa. The legacy of apartheid still ensures a gendered marginalisation of Africans to a marked extent. While the current South African democratic principles do not condone discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation or ethnicity, it is common for a majority of Africans to suffer gendered exclusion and marginalisation, especially those who would have entered into the newly opened up economic and corporate spaces. Refilwe's rise from rural poverty into the corporate publishing industry in Johannesburg represents the spaces available for a few educated African women and perhaps men in South Africa (Mpe, 2001). However her authority and success as a Commissioning Editor soon gets undermined due to the legacy of apartheid- gendered divisions whose influence is still

felt in these spaces. For the industry frustrates her innovative attempts to commission literature written in indigenous languages, thus showing how the legacy of apartheid censorship and corporate culture still prevents new ideas from Africans and undermines female authority as noted in the following comment:

The legacy of Apartheid censors still shackled those who dreamed of writing freely in an African language. Publishers, scared of the censorship border, still rejected manuscripts that too realistically called things by their proper names- names that people of Tiragalong and Hillbrow and everywhere in the world used everyday. (Mpe, 2001 : 57)

Representation of gendered stereotypes and violence in the southern African city

Interwoven with the gendered inscription of the current southern African city are the associated stereotypes and violence. Most of the stereotypes, which enhance the marginalisation of urban female dwellers, are based on the perception of women, using ideas based on supposed limitations imposed by their biology as well as the effects of socialisation and other patriarchal expectations. As such, a girl child is socialised in a way ensuring that she internalises feminine qualities such as submissiveness and aspires to her ultimate entrance into the domestic space as a wife and mother. The patriarchy guards this gendered construction of female identity by making sure that all women occupy a private, silenced and invisible status. This is evidenced in the texts under study, notably through the male writers' representation of most of the female characters in positions of marginality. A majority of the women in Harare, as represented by Ndaizevei, and the narrator's wife, in Chinodya's "Strays," and "Can We Talk," are clearly central to the narrative's concerns but kept in the background and given a limited voice. In fact

in “Can We Talk, ” the narrative voice is predominantly the husband’s as previously discussed. Hence the silencing of urban women becomes synonymous with their marginalisation which interestingly cuts across class-for while Ndaizevei and the narrator’s wife are professional middle class women, fellow marginalised women include Mangwiro’s wife (Mhiripiri, 2000) and Sara (Mungoshi, 1997) who are permanent housewives.

Added to the silencing of the female voice is the definition of women within gendered stereotypes. This is especially noted in Mangiro’s wife who scornfully calls her husband a coward (Mhiripiri , 2000), in that way fitting into the stereotyped codification of women as irrational and illogical people. And while Ndaizevei (Chinodya, 1998) and Sara (Mungoshi, 1997) are portrayed as possessing an element of financial independence derived from their occupations as a teacher and a cross-border trader, they still fall within the realm of what is generally termed women’s work (Peterson and Runyan, 1999: 130-131). It is perhaps in the narrator’s wife (Chinodya , 1998), that we see an urban woman who has challenged the gendered inequality by rising within the masculine corporate world as already discussed in full before. Yet the fact that she is at the receiving end of her husband’s criticism for ignoring him and concentrating too much on her work and church business, typifies the male desire to control women and the associated stereotypical perception of successful women as irrational and in possession of a destructive potential to the family as they blindly pursue personal glory .

A similar stereotyping of urban women is seen in the South African city. The resonant patriarchal silencing and marginalisation of women into the private and peripheral space is noted in the way Lerato and Bohliwe are denied a significant voice in

Welcome to Our Hillbrow. We do not hear much of each one's side of the story on issues central to the narrative such as their succumbing to bodily desire and betrayal of their boyfriends. In fact the denial of voice makes the incident appear "as one of those things expected from women" and at the same time absolves men who take advantage of women from any blame. Added to this is the representation of women "in their right place"- the domestic and private space as noted in Jamal's "The Shades" where the wife is seen doing wifely duties such as cooking while the husband tackles the difficult tasks such as research on local Zulu culture as looked at earlier on. This gendered stereotyping renders the majority of urban women marginal and invisible as amplified in Jamal's "Apple Green," where the husband who is obsessed with gambling – "a man's game"- does not even take notice of his wife even when she is standing in front of him naked and expecting him because his mind is already at the Golden Horse Casino where they are supposed to go (24-26).

This patriarchal subordination and gendered stereotyping is greatly linked to the majority of cases of urban physical and psychological abuse. Indeed the privileging of the masculine in the city, the patriarchal construction of public city spaces, such as streets, as male and the gendered stereotyping of women as mothers and wives fit for the domestic and private space, are interlinked factors with a great bearing on the prevalent psychological and physical abuse of women in southern Africa. The majority of the violated are the gendered underprivileged who include the voiceless, weak, unemployed and other marginalised inhabitants defined by Spivak as the subaltern (1988,1993). Nevertheless, in most cases the violence victimises women as evidenced by the rampant physical and sexual abuse of women in Harare and Johannesburg. For instance, Elista is

forced by poverty into early sexual relations with Badboy Joel and becomes a victim of his abuse for being a “softie” and she is constantly beaten in public after eloping to him (Mhiripiri, 2000: 157-158). The violence is based on a misguided male desire to exercise their power and superiority through sexual and physical abuse of the female body.

On a similar note, Lerato is tormented psychologically by Terror, a vengeful and vindictive homeboy and former classmate of Refentse. He demands sexual favours as a condition for keeping quiet on her betrayal and contribution to Refentse’s suicide. The psychological and physical pain suffered by Lerato culminates in her suicide by “swallow[ing] numerous lethal tablets” (Mpe, 2001: 66). Again gendered violence based on a male construction of sexual conquest and violation of the female body figures here. In fact Terror represents the violent subordination of women by males through his serial raping of women in Johannesburg discussed in the previous chapter. All women are viewed as sexual objects for his violent domination:

Terror wanted to take Lerato’s thighs for a playing field, in which his penis would be player, referee and spectator simultaneously. He wanted to be able to say, later :

But what can you tell me now! I have eaten her! She is as cheap as they are all. (Mpe, 2001: 65)

Gendered violence is also seen victimising other urban dwellers especially the feminised. These subaltern inhabitants, as pointed out earlier on, are also victims of urban violence as noted in their dependence on others for survival- the beggars and street children (Mpe, 2001) -as well as the assumption of invisibility by poor workers and the unemployed such as Mangwiwo (Mhiripiri, 2000) and Nhongo (Mungoshi, 1997). More

importantly, most of these characters, as already discussed, suffer a fragmented and traumatised life, due to their state of gendered exclusion from the city. This shows how the majority of urban inhabitants become victims of what Peterson and Runyan describe as “structural violence and insecurities generated by structural inequalities” (1999:115).

Possibilities of empowerment and agency in the gendered city

Despite the predominantly gendered construction of both the Zimbabwean and South African cities, possibilities for women to empower and liberate themselves from male subordination and silencing exist. The most powerful vehicle enabling the oppressed women to tap the city’s capacity to support empowerment and socio-economic liberation is the pursuit of education. Refilwe’s rise from rural poverty into a university graduate, Commissioning Editor in a Johannesburg publishing company and her travel to study at Oxford are some of the possibilities that women can achieve after successfully completing their education. Indeed this success opens up doors into the exclusive public and corporate space as noted in her publishing job, the position of the narrator’s wife who is also a company executive (Chinodya, 1998) and that of the female team leader consultant in Jamal’s “Nuptial,” who manages the seminar activities for the multicultural Johannesburg parastatal’s top managers and imparts teamwork, transparency and other leadership skills. These women become what they are because of a positive engagement with the alternatives such as educational chances for all, irrespective of gender, and the easy access to the informal economic sector as will be examined later on, which exists in the predominantly male dominated city as argued by Kurtz (1998: 71-79). However, it must be noted that the empowerment track is not smooth. For gendered obstacles bent on

undermining female social and economic upliftment are littered along the way. The frustration of Refilwe by the publishing company's owners (Mpe, 2001) as well as the narrator husband's criticism of his company executive wife (Chinodya, 1998) as discussed earlier on, are representative of such an undermining.

In my own view, the major empowering move is represented by the bold female entrance into the city's and indeed the country's economic space. The global economic developments in southern Africa have resulted in economic hardships for the majority of urban inhabitants as evidenced by high levels of unemployment and retrenchment – Nhongo (Mungoshi, 1997) – the exploitation of the workers -Mangwiro (Mhiripiri, 2000) - and the rise of the urban informal economic sector such as prostitution, street vending and cross-border trading. I posit cross-border trading as a major and interesting public space entered by urban women in an attempt to empower themselves and their families. This engagement in the informal but public sphere and the consequent attainment of financial independence is noted in Sara's case (Mungoshi, 1997). As discussed earlier on, Sara changes from being a housewife to a liberated, confident woman and provider for the family while the husband wallows in a fragmented psyche due to an anxiety associated with retrenchment from his job and feeling left out of his wife's success. Despite the ensuing family's vulnerability, Sara's case represents a typical current southern African and in particular Zimbabwean female agency achieved through cross-border trade which subverts the patriarchy and facilitates the acquisition of new business and organisational skills. Muzvidziwa (2001) aptly describes this liberated and entrepreneurial identity acquired by these women in the following statement based on his study of traders from Masvingo;

Cross-border trade as an occupation has given rise to the images of

a strong, independent class of women with the savvy to engage in the uncertainties of long-distance trans-border business. It was quite clear that cross-border women traders' shrewd business strategies and cross-border trade was helping them to 'climb out of poverty.' (75)

Perhaps a good way to round off the examination of urban female agency and empowerment will be an evaluation of their position in relation to the fight against HIV/AIDS. The southern African region is currently battling with the devastating social and economic effects of HIV-related diseases and death as noted in the disillusionment and restlessness of characters such as Alice and the narrator in *Chinodya* (1998) and the Hillbrow community, as represented by Refentse's policeman cousin and Refilwe before she goes to Oxford, as discussed in the previous chapter. The pragmatic decisions made by the key female characters in relation to the AIDS situation portray a commendable female agency. Alice shows an open mindedness regarding the disease which is noted in her discussion with the narrator, on the disease, deaths and her abstaining from casual sex since the death of her husband (*Chinodya*, 1998). Refilwe, despite her declining health due to HIV/AIDS, boldly goes back to Johannesburg to face the humiliating societal discrimination of people living with HIV. She even makes a decision that she will fight the disease and not commit suicide, which is unlike what Refentse and Lerato did earlier on in the text. Both examples are representative of a pragmatic female decision-making and hence characteristic of the appropriate agency needed in an urban society which has been dislocated by rampant disease and deaths. The female decision-making and agency becomes even more significant especially when contrasting it with the perception of a majority of the urban men and some women. A typical one is Refentse's policeman cousin's view, that local South Africans are getting infected through sexual contact with

immigrant women, as discussed earlier in chapter 3. Hence some urban southern African women develop a new consciousness which positions them strategically in the face of life-threatening experiences such as HIV/ AIDS as noted in Alice's decision to abstain from sex (Chinodya, 1998), in that way showing an element of urban social empowerment.

Indeed the southern African city is defined within gendered divisions which primarily privilege the masculine. The resultant gendered inequality marginalises a majority of women into the private and domestic space where they exist mostly as unpaid and silenced reproductive labour, while the men occupy the central roles in the public space and often preserve the paid productive labour for themselves only. Interestingly enough, the gendered divisions are a result of an interweaving of beliefs and perceptions associated with patriarchal, cultural, colonial, apartheid and the current global economic hegemony. Nevertheless, the definition of gendered divisions has been continuously changing over time. This is noted in the way the current global economic and cultural agenda has created new gendered divisions where the economically excluded and those who are weak and dependent on others for survival, irrespective of sex and gender, become victims of gendered subordination as well as the associated social and cultural victimisation where psychological and physical abuse are common. However, within this gendered inequality, some urban women are able to engage in a constructive agency noted through the pursuit of education, entrance into the predominantly male public domain and achieve certain measures of success as well as making bold decisions in the face of destructive forces such as AIDS, in that way empowering themselves socially and economically.

Conclusion

The southern African city as a site of struggle

It is certainly clear from the textual analysis that the current southern African city is a contested space. Global economic and cultural forces located in Western economic and cultural hegemony over the South and the rest of the Third World, define the city space and the dwellers' life which is characterised by bleakness, individual and social dislocation. The specific region's current postcolonial condition is attributed to the long history of European social and economic subordination of the colonized, and definition of the colonial city's space as one in which Africans were only wanted as temporary urban labour and segregated into specified squalid townships. The segregation continued in Zimbabwe up to 1980. In South Africa it took a more racist route after the imposition of the apartheid ideology of separate development in 1948 which lasted until 1994. This history of a European-imposed cultural and economic definition of the city space and the associated exclusion and non-recognition of the colonized, can be viewed as the source of the contestation in the city from that period up to the present.

The colonial and apartheid eras witnessed a struggle between the colonised majority and the colonizer. This struggle was characterised by various forms of agency aimed at subverting the imposed identities which defined the colonized as the subordinate, discriminated against and separated other. These included a defiant assumption of permanent urban residence in the exclusively white city, moving into designated white areas and sometimes residing there (Morris, 1999) as well as agitating for the democratisation of the city and the nation as whole. The contest between colonialism and apartheid, and the anti-colonial as well as the anti-apartheid movement

culminated in the attainment of nationalist independence in 1980 in Zimbabwe and much later on in 1994 in South Africa. Hence the southern African city has been a site of struggle between colonial and apartheid socio-economic hegemony and the colonised and excluded other, whose objective was to carve a space for full residential and national belonging. The legacy of this struggle is still felt in the current globalised southern African city.

The city's complicated hybridity

On a quite significant level, the current southern African city is portrayed in the analysed fiction as a hybrid space defined by the legacy of colonialism and apartheid as well as Western global economic and cultural influence. While the city space has been democratised as aptly represented by Refentse's walk in the city of Johannesburg (Mpe, 2001) as well as Sam and his family's movement into one of Harare's upmarket low-density suburbs (Chinodya, 1998), the legacy of colonialism and apartheid is still felt. A majority of the urban dwellers feel left out as noted in Sam's sense of alienation from the recently bought low-density home in Harare (Chinodya, 1998). Similarly, in South Africa, the inner-city Hillbrow, is represented as characterised by limited job and life opportunities in the face of a huge informal and invisible sector of the unemployed, vagrants and prostitutes (Mpe, 2001) in that way portraying the dislocated identities and postcolonial condition obtaining in the southern African city.

Added to this is the visible influence of the Western global socio-economy, whose hegemonic technological, financial and cultural influence defines the mapping of the city's space. This is seen in the negative effects arising from the global financial and economic presence noted in South Africa and in Zimbabwe through IMF-sponsored

economic structural programmes. More specifically the adverse effects of the neo-liberal global economic agenda are represented by the prevalence of job retrenchments and the associated poverty in Harare as seen in Nhongo's case (Mungoshi, 1997) and Mangwi's (Mhiripiri, 2000). In South Africa, the global financial and commercial presence is noted in the existence of multinational shops and banks in Johannesburg juxtaposed with streets and a neighbourhood characterised by social and moral decay, in that way depicting the characteristic Western neglect and exclusion of the majority urban dwellers from its agenda (Mpe, 2001). Hence the majority of both countries' urban dwellers figure as the impoverished, unemployed and excluded, restlessly in search of the means to come to terms with and improve their conditions. This maps the city as a site of struggle located within the interwoven relationship between the legacy of colonialism and apartheid and the impact of current global cultural and economic influence.

The shifting identities

The struggle for the city and its hybridity locates a majority of the urban dwellers in a liminality characterised by dislocation, fragmentation and anxiety. As has been discussed, the legacy of colonialism and apartheid as well as the effect of current globalisation dominate the mapping of the city. It must also be noted that the fiction also depicts the destructive effects of AIDS as complicating the city's hybridity and constitution of individual and societal dislocated identities. Nevertheless the majority of the urban inhabitants are dislocated psychologically as in Sam's and the narrator's case (Chinodya, 1998). This is closely linked to the family and societal dislocation as shown in the non-communicative relations plaguing the narrator and his wife, as well as Nhongo and Sara's fragile marriage (Mungoshi, 1997). In fact extreme representations of urban,

social and psychological dislocation in the southern African city are characterised by immorality, betrayal and the violation of the weak as well as personal decisions resulting in suicide as noted in the action of both Lerato and Refentse (Mpe, 2001). As a result most of the urban dwellers assume various identities which shift with each specific situation, but are mostly associated with the predominantly individual, social and psychological displacement.

Added to this are gendered identities associated with the construction of the city as a masculine space. The city is represented as generally a male space whereby the majority of men appear as central, powerful and authoritative figures, as noted in the husband researcher in "The Shades" (Jamal, 2001) and in the male voice which dominates most of the studied fiction. However it is interesting to note that a global gendered hierarchy influencing the southern African city's mapping renders primarily women, as well as the weak, subservient and dependent urbanites, irrespective of sex, as feminine and hence subordinate in the city's corporate and public space. Nevertheless the identities shift with each specific condition and character. For instance, Nhongo is emasculated after losing his managerial job and the associated financial power, and thus becomes dependent on his cross-border trader wife. She has shifted from her domestic and housewife identity into the masculine one of financial independence and being the family provider (Mungoshi, 1997). The complicated and shifting identities are also represented in the development of the social being of the characters. This is noted in Refilwe's development from being xenophobic and possessing a shallow perception of urban women as immoral and evil into a responsible and globally aware individual after going to Oxford University, falling in love with a Nigerian and being diagnosed HIV-

positive (Mpe, 2001). Therefore the possibility of attaining reconstituted identities in the southern African city is shown in the fiction.

Representation of agency and the subversion of urban misery

The current southern African city offers possibilities for agency and the construction of better conditions out of the predominantly miserable conditions. The city's bleakness is portrayed as not fully encompassing nor denying any capacity for the urbanites' remake and subversion of the existing oppressive conditions. De Certeau's (1993) idea of remapping the city and the capacity of reconstitution within the excluding and domineering urban space is represented in the way the Harare and Johannesburg dwellers are able to make informed decisions, create means aimed at self preservation and work towards their own socio-economic empowerment. For instance Refilwe empowers herself by moving away from the oppressive publishing authority by going to Oxford, in that way appropriating educational empowerment, and when she becomes aware of her AIDS condition, she boldly decides to come back home and even makes the decision that she will fight the disease and not commit suicide (Mpe, 2001). A similar agency is noted in Alice's decision to abstain from casual sex and her entrance into the male domain of funeral arrangements as a way of coming to terms with the devastating effects of AIDS and moving on with life (Chinodya, 1998). Finally, a plausible reconstitution and empowerment is noted in the way Sara moves from the private and domestic space of housewifery into the public domain as a prosperous cross-border trader (Mungoshi, 1997). Hence the current southern African city is portrayed as possessing possibilities for active remapping and reconstitution of the self and the general improvement of individual and societal life.

Is it a postcolonial or postmodern mapping?

One may also consider, as a concluding remark, where to place the analysed mapping of the urban space and identities between postcolonialism defined by Ashcroft et al as “cover[ing] all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonisation to the present day” (1989: 2), and postmodernism whose tenets include a location within Western social and historical thought especially capitalism, hence the commodification of objects, experiences and cultural practices (Quayson, 2000 : 134-141). In my opinion postcolonial perceptions greatly illuminate the analysis of the current southern African city. Its mapping is predominantly located within a Western economic and cultural hegemony from the legacy of colonialism and apartheid up to the current globalised state as traced in Chapter 1. In fact, the predominantly southern African dwellers’ identities as the subordinated and excluded other, can be traced back to the creation of the colonial city, and this has continued to influence their current mapping as the invisible, excluded and dislocated urban dwellers. For while the advent of the democratisation of the nations opened up the cities, the architecture and planning is still indifferent to, and excludes the majority of the Africans due to the legacy of colonialism and apartheid. This is compounded by the West’s economic and cultural agenda of international finance and commercial domination as noted in the Kotze Street and Johannesburg’s CBD represented in Refentse’s walk (Mpe, 2001) and the IMF’s adverse programmes in Harare as typified by Nhongo’s case (Mungoshi, 1997) as discussed fully in chapter 2. This confirms the continued domination of the city by the West, which is one of the concerns of the postcolonial theory. Moreover, the theory’s relevance to the

analysis of the way in which the city is portrayed, is seen in the urbanites' anxiety, restlessness and sense of dislocation which is best understood as arising from Western domination. The way characters attempt to remap the city and subvert the induced invisibility and misery through education and entrance into the exclusive male spaces shows the importance of the postcolonial perspective in the analysis.

It should be noted however that postmodernism also plays a notable role in facilitating a plausible analysis of the mapping of the southern African city and the constituted identities. The significance of a postmodern mapping is tied in to the concept of the market-related definition of space, culture and perceptions as discussed by Quayson (2000:132-135)¹ and Appiah (1991: 336-357)². In the current fiction the city space and socio-cultural practices are heavily defined from a global capitalist influence. This is noted in the way the city's architecture and planning is emblematic of global capital interests, much to the exclusion and hence dislocation of the majority of the urbanites. For instance Hillbrow's mapping is predominantly commodified as noted in Kotze Street's various retail banks and shops seeking global profit, while the majority of the urban dwellers wallow in misery as vagrants, the unemployed and prostitutes (Mpe, 2001). In this case postmodernism assists in the modification of one's understanding of the current southern African spatiality and dislocatedness as based on Western commodification of the city space as well as the social and cultural experiences of fragmentation.

At the same time one notices that postmodernism is interwoven with the postcolonial grounding in the representation of the social and cultural forces associated with a history of Western domination both in the past and the present. Even the spread of

Western- based consumption habits and perceptions, a typical postmodern concept represented by the French professor's obsession with sex and pornography, and the husband's with gambling in Jamal's "Black Bag" and "Apple Green" respectively, can also be interpreted from the postcolonial concern with individual anxiety and dislocation which is mostly understood from a postcolonial point of view on the level of the current Western cultural domination. Hence in my opinion the analysis of the representation of the current southern African urban space and the associated identities, subversion and agency is best understood from a cross-reading between postcolonialism and postmodernism. The postcolonial perspective becomes more important especially when considering the notion of agency and subversion employed by some urban dwellers as discussed at length in the dissertation. The notable significance of cross-reading between concepts from postcolonialism and postmodernism and the valorising of the former is aptly given by Quayson:

Without reducing the two theoretical perspectives to simple polarities, we might say that the key dimension that postcolonialism forces us to consider is that of agency, whilst the postmodernist angle would make us settle on the economy of the image and the potential for the fragmentation of the subject positions. For postcolonial theory, the question of agency is crucial because merely identifying the purview or ambit of the regulative parameters set up by the images is not enough. The next step has to be how such images ought to be subverted or how their effects are to be challenged with a view to setting up a better order of effects. (2000: 146-147)

As such the southern African city is mapped as a hybrid space and site of struggle arising from the legacy of a dominating European social and economic hegemony, the current

global capitalist agenda and the urban dwellers' agency and subversion of the dislocating and miserable conditions aimed at improving their lives.

End notes

¹ Ato Quayson analyses the relationship between the concerns of both postmodernism and postcolonialism and shows how a cross-reading of both helps greatly in achieving a more meaningful explanation of the contemporary world. He even attempts a cross-reading of Arjun Appandurai's introductory essay to The Social Life of Things and the popular television series The X Files in the chapter and clearly shows the importance of a cross-reading between both postmodernism and postcolonialism for a clear textual understanding.

² Antony Kwame Appiah also gives his views on the problematic between postmodernism and postcolonialism in his article where he examines the Western-based criticism of a West African piece of art called "Man with a Bicycle." Although he does not give a clear definition of and view on both theories, he is able to show how the basic tenets of both theories are located in Western cultural and economic thought and actually demonstrates how the piece of art, just like all social and cultural objects from Africa and the other Western-dominated parts of the world, has been commodified.

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